





NEPAL MANDALA

A Cultural Study of
the Kathmandu Valley

VOLUME 1: TEXT

Mary Shepherd Slusser

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FRONTISPIECE: THE KATHMANDU VALLEY
VISUALIZED AS IT IS CONCEPTUALIZED,
A DIVINE MANDALA WITH KATHMANDU
THE SOVEREIGN OF ITS INNER MANSION

TO DIDI AND B. T.

VERILY EVEN THE ARCHITECT WHO BUILT IT FELT
ASTONISHMENT, SAYING: "[THE UTMOST] PERSE-
VERENCE WOULD FAIL TO ACCOMPLISH SUCH A
WORK AGAIN; AHO! HOW HAS IT BEEN ACHIEVED
BY ME?"

Comment of an Indian architect,
A.D. 812/813 (Fleet 1883:159, 163)

A MANDALA IS A CIRCLE, A MYSTIC DIAGRAM OF
VARIED FORM, AND IN ANCIENT INDIAN USAGE
SIGNIFIED AN ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT OR A COUNTRY.
FROM AT LEAST THE SIXTH CENTURY A.D., IN
CONJUNCTION WITH THE WORD "NEPAL," IT
SIGNIFIED TO THE NEPALESE THE KATHMANDU
VALLEY AND SURROUNDING TERRITORY.

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PREFACE

WHEN I first went to Nepal I needed the book you are about to read. It was because I couldn't find such a book that, finally, I came to write this one.

Lumbering slowly up from India in one of the small planes that not long ago were the most sophisticated link between the Kingdom of Nepal and the outside world, I came to the Kathmandu Valley in late 1965. Although it was my husband's job with the United States AID mission that brought us to Nepal, as an anthropologist I had been recruited by the Smithsonian Institution to collect ethnographic materials. Because of an eleventh-hour bureaucratic switch of assignment, we were almost totally ignorant of the country to which we had come. And so, as our official car squeezed through the crowded lanes of the medieval capital city, Kathmandu, we could only marvel at the storied temples and the diverse peoples about whom we had everything to learn.

From our quarters, those first days in Kathmandu, we gazed out at a distant and mysterious shrine on a green hillock. The white and gilt-spined mass of the shrine repeated the shape of the more distant Himalayan peaks. American colleagues knew it only as the "Monkey Temple"; the Nepalese identified it as Svayambhū, a Buddhist shrine and "very old." But who built it, for what purpose, and in what age, none could say. Traditionally, Nepalese interest does not turn to history. The Nepalese answer echoed the response of a Puerto Rican elder I once asked about the age of a Catholic church, "cuando yo nací, estaba" (when I was born, it was).

Wherever I turned, I found either contradictory information about the shrines and deities, or none at all. One person wisely asserted that a god was Śiva, another said Viṣṇu, while elsewhere the same image was at once named Devī, Indrāṇī, and

Ajimā. And if another god was indeed Gaṇeśa, as all the children certified, why was this rotund prankster being offered a bleeding chicken instead of the sweets and flowers welcomed by his Indian counterpart? And where, in the Buddhist *vihāras*, full of domestic life, were the saffron-robed monks I had known in the monasteries of Cambodia, Laos, or Ceylon?

The temples of Kathmandu called to mind those I had encountered elsewhere in Asia—the pagodas of Vietnam, the ancient towers of Champa, the multiroofed *wats* of Thailand and its neighbors, the tiered temple towers of Bali. How had they come to Nepal, I wondered. Or had they, as many Nepalese asserted, originated there?

I read what I could find in Western languages. Taken together, these published sources not only failed to answer my questions, but raised more. Information on temples and shrines, sculptures and other aspects of Nepalese culture was in short supply, and what there was was often confused and contradictory.

Take for example Kāṣṭhāmaṇḍapa, a significant building and the namesake of the capital city. The sources asserted that it was a temple, that it was built in A.D. 1595, and that Lakṣmī Narasiṃha was the reigning king of the time. But it was immediately clear that something was wrong: Lakṣmī Narasiṃha was not reigning in 1595, even according to these same sources. Ultimately I discovered that Kāṣṭhāmaṇḍapa was not a temple, but a community rest house, that it was built not later than A.D. 1143, and that Lakṣmī Narasiṃha reigned during neither of those times.

Most records of events, wars, and kings were similarly confused, often outdated altogether. For example, the sources universally referred to the con-

quest of Nepal in the early fourteenth century by one Harasiṃha of Mithilā, a kingdom on its southern borders. Harasiṃha was held to have introduced the important goddess Taleju into Nepal. This was of profound cultural and political importance. Having discovered on a multitude of occasions how unreliable the historical sources were—no two sources seemed to agree even on the basic dates of a king's birth, death, or reign—I was suspicious. Indeed, I later found out that Harasiṃha died a refugee without even reaching the Kathmandu Valley, and that Taleju had been familiar in Nepal at least two centuries before Harasiṃha's birth.

Sylvain Lévi's monumental study, *Le Népal*, published at the turn of the century, might have answered my questions had it been written three-quarters of a century later. But as a pioneer investigator, Lévi was neither in Nepal long enough nor permitted to move about freely enough to substantiate his work through adequate field research; moreover, much historical material has only come to light in the twentieth century. For example, Lévi's reconstruction of the history of the Licchavi period, ca. A.D. 300 to 879, is based on fewer than fifty inscriptions. But the history of that period as published here is based on almost two hundred inscriptions and, in addition, is supplemented by archaeology and art historical studies.

In sum, the best efforts of earlier scholars did not seem to provide a cogent, or even credible, history, and was often at odds with the cultural evidence that slowly began to unfold. More significant, these works did not provide a rational explanation of the origins and evolution of the remarkable culture so grandly evident in the Kathmandu Valley.

With respect to available dynastic and political history, there seemed little to be done except to make the best of what there was and to fit the cultural aspects into it as best I could. Thus I turned increasingly to my own disciplines—anthropology, archaeology, and art history—as the means of understanding the physical remains that crowd the Valley—the temples and shrines, the stone sculptures, and the old cities themselves.

Soon I was spending my days in the streets among the Nepalese, poking into courtyards, studying shrines and sculptures, and (with help) the inscriptions which, although unnoticed by most Nep-

alese, often identified and dated the monuments. I attended the yearly cycles of public festivals and, as an invited guest, observed family rites in homes. As my competence in the Nepali language grew, I began to learn from priest and temple guardian, yogi and merchant, farmer and urchin, a rich folklore and tradition.

Although excavation was not possible, I soon became aware of the potential of "surface archaeology." Through it, for instance, I was able to affirm that the old cities had been walled, and even to reconstruct accurately their bounds. The walls were recoverable not only from physical indices—half-buried gate thresholds, for example—but in people's memories and in their rites. Similarly, bits and pieces of ancient buildings, lying forgotten by the wayside or reused to other ends, began to speak eloquently of bygone architecture. As art historian, I looked with fresh eyes on the images of the gods, many unstudied and others too well known. Take, for instance, a seventh-century stone masterpiece that had long been disdained as a work of the seventeenth century. With a Nepali colleague, I was able to show it to be earlier than the sculpture it was alleged to copy.

In two years of unremitting field work, the first haphazard notes had become a notebook, then two, and finally a dozen. The towns and monuments were photographed and mapped; where possible they were identified and securely fixed in time. By 1967 I believed I had a book, though it was un-assembled and unwritten.

At first I gathered the material for myself alone. Then I thought to write a serious guide to the Kathmandu Valley cities and their compelling monuments. The Smithsonian Institution Press thought so too, and contracted for the work I planned to do. But when, in the third year of residence in Nepal, my book was almost done, I made a startling discovery, at once exciting and sobering. In the course of studying the Nepali language I stumbled on a hitherto unsuspected and untapped reservoir of historical data. Quite unknown in the West, this data had been quietly accumulating for a quarter of a century in Nepali-language journals. The contribution of the historical society known as Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala (Correction Circle) was particularly important. Their work derived from justi-

fiable dissatisfaction, that mirrored my own, with historical interpretation that precedes sound evidence. It was based on incontrovertible documented evidence, and was uncompromising in accuracy. It was also voluminous.

Scattered among Nepali-language writings I found recorded more than a hundred early, otherwise unknown, inscriptions for the Licchavi Period. These more than doubled the inscriptions published in Raniero Gnoli's compendium in 1956, heretofore the primary source for the period. It was in these same sources that I found proof that Harsimha had not conquered Nepal, but had died a refugee on its borders; that Taleju was worshiped in Nepal from at least the early twelfth century; that Sthitimalla, one of Nepal's greatest and most enigmatic rulers, had not come "from Sankhu," a Kathmandu Valley village, to marry a Nepalese princess, but "from the south."

The latter, one might think, is surely a minor point. But this bit of evidence makes all the difference. No wonder, if Sthitimalla came "from the south" (most probably the Indian state of Mithilā), rather than a Nepalese village, that his political and cultural impact was so great: he was an outsider.

It became increasingly clear as I made my way through this wilderness of unexplored sources that here was the material from which the broad outlines of Nepalese history could be set down. This had purposely not been done by the Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala, who felt that such a venture was premature. First, they said, let us gather the data. Assembly of it as history lies in the distant future. They thus provided the pieces, unevaluated and uninterpreted, but not the structure that I needed to make the cultural materials understandable.

Slowly forming in my own mind was a narrative account of the Kathmandu Valley, at variance with the Western-language sources not only in detail, but in broad concepts. Accepted history averred, for example, that there were four distinct periods, the Licchavi, Ṭhakurī, Malla, and Shah, with a political rupture bringing each dynasty to power. From the Nepali sources I could now see that from A.D. 300 to 1769 there was an unbroken political continuum that harmonized with what was clearly an unbroken cultural continuum.

I felt I had no choice but to abandon my first

book, together with the comforting contract to publish it. I began anew. Thanks to a generous grant from the JDR3rd Fund, I spent the next two years in Nepal dividing my time between field work and Nepali-language research. My grant allowed me to bring in others to help with this task—notably, a young draftsman to translate my sketches into finished architectural renderings and readable city plans and maps, and two young Nepali historians to assist me in reading and comprehending the sources. My photo archive expanded to more than ten thousand prints and slides recording the physical aspects of Kathmandu Valley civilization. To these were added two thousand more slides taken in frequent treks into the mountains and visits to the plains. I also made several trips to India to compare Indian with Nepalese art and architecture.

It took me a decade to answer the questions that had sprung to mind when I first encountered the enchanted and mysterious Valley. Could I have seen the work entailed, who knows?—I might not have asked the questions. But, as it turns out, I asked them just in time. For although the culture of the Kathmandu Valley has continued for two thousand years, it is becoming progressively more difficult each year to salvage the past. In the fifteen years prior to 1965, when I began my study, the closed kingdom opened to the outside world and forces of acculturation and change began their work. Between 1965 and 1971, when I left Nepal, these forces had rapidly accelerated and were taking their toll. The fine old brick buildings, mantled with exquisite wood carving, daily ceded to concrete. People began to slough off their traditional ways, loosing the ancient bonds that had linked them to family and gods. Transistor radios and Datsuns came to be valued more than ancestral paintings and images. The latter were increasingly sold to tourists, whose numbers have grown from none in 1950 to over 100,000 a year as I write in 1976. That a large, high-quality exhibition of Nepalese art could be assembled recently in New York from American collections (mostly private), speaks eloquently in this regard.

It is the nature of our world that civilizations founder and pass. But in this case I have tried to read the past from the rapidly changing present

before it is too late. This I have done in as much detail and with as careful explanation of the evidence as possible. I have sought to rectify widely accepted inaccuracies of fact and, without polemics, have contradicted many established notions. I have tried not to romanticize, but also not to deny the wondrous romance of Nepal Mandala. That romance now rests on as secure a historical foundation as I have been able to perceive. My primary aim has been to render in broad outlines as cogent and comprehensive a history of Nepalese culture as is now possible within the limitations of one book. I do not presume that this will be the final word. The story is only begun. But I have taken pains to provide future scholars with a solid accounting.



There are many persons who by their counsel, encouragement, or assistance have helped with this book. Most are here nameless, but my gratitude to them is no less sincere. Some must be named, for without them the book could not have achieved its present form. Foremost are two Nepali colleagues, Mahesh Raj Pant and Gautamvajra Vajracharya, Sanskritists and impeccable historians of Saṃsōdhana-maṇḍala. For more than a year we worked as a team. I asked questions; their knowledge of Sanskrit, Newari, and Nepalese culture unlocked doors for me. To Mr. Pant I owe a special debt for his unwavering friendship and support over the years I have been writing in Washington, D.C., and in Tunisia. Despite his own scholarly commitments, he has never been too busy to tell me of new Nepali research, to seek some needed reference, to check something in the field, or to read critically some troubling manuscript pages. Words cannot express what his friendship has meant to me.

Though I did not work personally with other members of Saṃsōdhana-maṇḍala, I would like to record my appreciation of their contributions, which are in my bibliography. The work of Naya Raj Pant both as uncompromising teacher and author is particularly important, while the studies of Dhanavajra Vajracharya have provided the backbone of almost everything we know today about the Licchavis. Upon their works I have therefore drawn unabashedly and with gratitude.

Dr. Pratapaditya Pal's generous acceptance of me as a colleague, his willingness to review critically drafts of the formidable manuscript, not once but twice, the insights reached during numerous animated discussions, the hospitality of his home, his own publications, and especially his unflagging enthusiasm and support, are gifts beyond measure. Without Dr. Pal there would be no *Nepal Mandala*.

I am grateful to Mr. Porter A. McCray, former director of the Asian Cultural Program of the JDR3rd Fund (now the Asian Cultural Council) and to his successor, Richard Lanier, and to its Trustees, who provided the means to expand and conclude the research I had begun alone.

To my sister Dorothy Shepherd Payer I also record my profound gratitude for help with the manuscript, and especially for her inexhaustible moral support, which was indispensable to its becoming a book. I can never properly thank my husband and mentor, Robert, for his continued faith and forbearance through the highs and lows and the forced separations that have accompanied it.

To Yeorgos Lampathakis I owe the supervision and coordination of all the graphics in manuscript, the imaginative creation of the maps and their skillfully planned colors and distinctive symbols, the inventive frontispiece, and many of the text figures. Aside from his exceptional artistic skills, Mr. Lampathakis' unstinting gift to me of endless time, wise counsel, enthusiasm, and confidence can never be adequately recognized or compensated.

Catherine Dick, A. Peter Burleigh, and Liane Norman have all rendered services far in excess of the decent demands of friendship. It is a pleasure to acknowledge my thanks to Dr. Margaret H. Case, who as editor for Princeton University Press, provided sound criticism cushioned with chivalrous devotion.

I owe much to my predecessors who also quested for understanding of, or made valuable observations on, the Nepalese past—two seventh-century Chinese, the envoy Wang Hsüan-t'sê and the pilgrim Hsüan Tsang, the Capuchin missionaries, Colonel Kirkpatrick, Brian Hodgson, Dr. Oldfield, Daniel Wright, Bhagwanlal Indraji, Cecil Bendall, Sylvain Lévi, and many others, without whose work my own would not have been possible.

PREFACE

I owe a still greater debt of gratitude to the Nepalese kings and nobles, priests, pandits, and monks who for almost two millennia, year after year, set down their records on stone and copper-plates, in chronicles, journals, and manuscripts; to the artists and artisans who left their records in

brick and mortar, stone, copper, paint, and gilt; and the living Nepalese who shared with me, a stranger, their festivals and their gods, their memories and themselves.

Washington, D.C.

1978

ORTHOGRAPHY AND TRANSLITERATION

THERE is a considerable gulf between written and spoken Nepali. In written form, Nepali conforms to Sanskrit in preserving the "inherent vowel," that is, the short "a" understood to accompany each consonant in Devanāgarī script. Thus, one writes Bhīmasena but says Bhimsen, while Nārāyaṇa becomes Narayan (or Narain). The letters "v" and "b" are largely interchangeable; one writes Bhairava but says Bhairab. There are many other differences.

Whether to render Nepali as it is written or spoken is a dilemma without a satisfactory solution. Rather than resort to awkward and inconsistent spellings, which in any event are inaccurate representations of Nepali pronunciation, I use the written form. The inherent vowel is preserved; if the symbol and sound which the interchangeable "v/b" represents occurs as "v" in Sanskrit, I follow. In instances where it seems useful, I have supplied an approximation of the spoken word in parenthesis, thus Gaṇeśa (Ganesh) or Brahmāṇī (Brahmani).

The system I use to transliterate Devanāgarī characters to Roman letters is consistent with that accepted by most scholars of Sanskritic languages.

With three exceptions, transliteration will place no burden on the nonspecialist reader, who can ignore it. The exceptions are in the use of ś, ṣ, and c. The two letters ś and ṣ differ almost imperceptibly in sound and both may be pronounced "sh," thus Śiva, "Shiva," and Viṣṇu, "Vishnu." The letter c renders the Devanāgarī character "ch." Thus, *caitya* is read "*chaitya*," Cārumatī, "Chārumatī." The combination "ch" is reserved for the Devanāgarī "chh," as in Macchendranātha or Licchavi.

For ease in reading, I believe the fewer transliterated words the better; scholarship must be wedded to common sense. Thus the following categories of words are rendered without diacritical marks: place names in Nepal and India in common usage, the names of authors, and proper nouns in current usage from the beginning of the Shah Period (late eighteenth century); thus Prithvi Narayan Shah, not Pṛthvinārāyaṇa Śāha. Also exempted from transliteration are several Sanskrit words that have entered English usage and occur in Webster—Aryan, Himalaya, Hindu, stupa, linga, sati, dharma, yogi, mandala, tantrism, Brahman, and many more.

DATES

THE SYSTEM of paired dates used in the text, for example A.D. 590 (S.S. 512), may seem distracting, but has a purpose that transcends pedantry. The Nepalese in the course of their written history have employed four different eras (Appendix I). The epoch year for two of them has been determined only in very recent times. Agreement is still pending whether they began in the spring or the fall; conversions to corresponding Christian era dates can thus still be wrong by a year. Even when the exact conversion is known, namely from A.D. 879

on, there is a purpose to the paired dates. By providing the original dates, Nepali readers can convert with ease and accuracy directly to their own familiar era, the Vikrama Samvat. In all instances, the retention of the original dates permits verification against the cited documents.

Because of the variety of era designations, to avoid ambiguity I have usually modified all dates with the abbreviated era designation. In cases of omission, the year is to be understood as A.D.

PART I

**DRAMATIS PERSONAE:
THE MORTALS**



CHAPTER 1

PERSPECTIVE: PLACE AND PEOPLE

THE KATHMANDU VALLEY is a very small part of the earth's surface. Embracing scarcely more than two hundred square miles, it lies at an average altitude of forty-four hundred feet among the steep southern ridges of the Himalayan foothills. These ridges, together with the towering peaks behind, comprise more than eighty percent of the territory of the Kingdom of Nepal, of which the Valley is a part (Plates 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-13).¹ The kingdom, like the Valley, is small, a narrow rectangle some five hundred miles long and an average one hundred miles in width (Maps 1 and 2).² It lies between China and India, a tender "yam between two rocks," as Prithvi Narayan Shah, one of Nepal's outstanding kings, once said with reference to the delicate political situation of his country.³

The Kathmandu Valley is a deep, slightly elliptical free-form bowl (Map 3). Dotted with hamlets, its terraced and wooded sides sweep up to an irregular rim dominated by peaks ranging in height from six thousand to more than nine thousand feet. Beyond the northern rim loom the snow peaks of the Himalaya proper, from the Valley normally visible only from October to March. The saucer-shaped, intensively farmed bottomland is punctuated with compact villages and scattered

¹ More than one-third of Nepal's territory consists of snow-covered mountains. Of the remainder, about a third lies in the Tarai, geographically part of the Gangetic Plain, while the rest consists of the lower mountains and hills that encompass the Valley.

farmhouses, occasional hillocks, and low ridges. It is traversed by deeply eroded ravines through which course rivers and streams. Of these, the most important is the sacred Bagmati. This, together with its main confluence, the Vishnumati, is tributary to the Ganges River, and like that sacred stream in India, both Bagmati and Vishnumati play an important role in Nepalese religious life. The Valley extends some fifteen miles from east to west, and is about twelve miles at its maximum width. One can cross it on foot in less than a day. Woodcutters and dairymen, for example, walk as a matter of course a daily round trip from villages high on the Valley's rim and beyond to markets in the center of the Valley floor. On foot one can make the circuit of shrines around the Valley in a single day.

The Kathmandu Valley achieved a cultural importance wholly disproportionate to its relative physical insignificance. It was the scene of a remarkable cultural efflorescence and continuing development that is unmatched elsewhere in the Kingdom of Nepal. There were other pockets of culture in this territory; the Śākya of the Tarai and the Khasas of the Karnali Basin in western Nepal, for example, had their brief moments of

² Its 54,400 square miles make Nepal comparable in size to the state of Tennessee, but small as it is, it is twice the size of Ceylon and three times the size of Switzerland.

³ "Yo rāje dūi dhūngāko tarula jasto rahecha" (N. Pant et al., 1968:322).

glory (Plate 209). But it is only in the Kathmandu Valley that a continuum of cultural development can be traced through some two millennia into contemporary culture. The historic line may waver, and political dynasties break off altogether, but the present always remains firmly bonded with the past. The tangible ancestral monuments of the Valley—temples and shrines, sacred sites and images—are by no means disconnected “historic” monuments. They function vigorously in contemporary Nepali culture. Through legend and folklore the names of rulers whose dynasties have been extinct for a thousand years or more remain vividly alive, if historically garbled. Outstanding tantric practitioners and the remarkable deeds that won them fame live on in legend as if such persons had but recently crossed the stage of Valley history. The great body of primary institutions that govern contemporary Nepalese life—religious, social, and often political—are the lineal descendants of those that governed Valley society of the past.⁴ Indeed, it is perhaps the total merging of the past and present that gives to the Kathmandu Valley the charm—or perhaps more properly, mystique—that captivates most outsiders who make their way within.



The Kathmandu Valley, a diminutive pocket of flatland among the wrinkled ridges surrounding it, is geographically isolated. Before airplanes (from 1949) and the even more recent motor roads (from India, 1956; from China, 1966) (Plate 13), the Valley could only be entered along the timeworn footpaths packed hard by human feet—ancient routes still frequented by the majority of Nepalis (Plates 12, 14). Often difficult and dangerous, many Nepali paths can still be appropriately described in the words of an early eighteenth-century Catholic missionary.

⁴ While the Sherpa or the Tharu, by virtue of their incorporation into the nation, are no less “Nepalese” than the inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley, they have other cultural antecedents. Hence, it is not to these Nepalese I refer, but only to those who come within the confines of the study, the Kathmandu Valley.

⁵ A description of the section across the Kodari Pass leading to Kuti, from Father Georgi’s compilation of the Catholic missionaries’ descriptions of the route from India

The tracks are very narrow, steeply inclined and wind constantly around extremely high mountains. Often chasms are crossed by suspension bridges without guard rails. It is necessary to traverse a dozen times these narrow, shaky little bridges made of sticks and branches. The traveller’s terror is increased even more to see beneath him the steep abyss and to hear among the boulders at the bottom the noise of the rushing waters. Especially, there is one place particularly difficult which frightens to the utmost the timid or the novice, so much that the fear of falling augments even more his chance of it. It is a projecting rock about sixteen feet long which slopes steeply downward over the precipice and is made slippery by the waters which course from its summit to bathe and polish it. On it depressions have been scratched and dug out from step to step where the traveller can place, if not his entire foot, at least the ball.⁵

Similarly, the tenth-century Tibetan lama, Marpa, about to go home at the conclusion of his studies in India, listed among the chief anxieties of travel the “swaying rope bridges” and mountain passes, the mere contemplation of which made him “tremble more than quicksilver.”⁶

Separated from the Tibetan plateau by the high ramparts of the Himalaya, most of whose passes are closed much of the year (Plate 11), the Valley can be reached only with difficulty from east or west. The steep and serried ridges and valleys are north-south oriented, with rushing torrents bridged by primitive structures unsuited to animal transport (Plate 15).⁷ Although relatively open toward the south, the Valley was traditionally sealed off from the Indian plains by a swath of deadly malarial jungle that made an effective barrier for more than half the year. Father Giuseppe, an

to Tibet via Nepal (Lévi 1905:1, 126). Father Grüber described it much the same way earlier, and Landon later (Landon 1928:11, 34). The Chinese road linking Tibet and Nepal now follows the historic route (Plate 13), and is often closed by landslides and other calamities.

⁶ Snellgrove and Richardson 1968:118-120.

⁷ On the fearful bridges of Nepal see Hagen et al. 1961:pls. 44-46.

eighteenth-century Capuchin missionary in Kathmandu, observed that the good roads of India could be reached by the "bad, narrow, and dangerous" Nepalese mountain paths within a matter of four days. But "at the foot of the hills the country is called *Teriani* [Tarai]; and there the air is very unwholesome from the middle of *March* to the middle of *November*; and people in their passage catch a disorder called . . . *Aul*, which is a putrid fever, and of which the generality of people who are attacked with it die in a few days."⁸

Other early missionaries to Nepal and Tibet also noted the pestilential fever and one of them, forced to cross the Tarai in December, almost died of it.⁹ The fearful Tarai fever did not escape the notice of nineteenth- and twentieth-century observers. Perceval Landon, for example, remarked on the Tarai's reputation as the "unhealthiest region in all Asia," particularly at night. "Sundown in the Tarai," he wrote, "has brought to an end more attempted raids into Nepal and has buried more political hopes than will ever be known. The English learned their lesson early [and] withered and retreated before the miasma of this paradise. . . . The local pestilence is known far and wide as *awal* [*aul*], a name which hums an undertone of death throughout the chronicles of Nepal. Between October and March its teeth are drawn."¹⁰

The Tarai remained as described by these early observers until scarcely a decade ago, when the malarial eradication program of His Majesty's Government and the United States AID Mission to Nepal opened the Tarai to year-round passage and homesteading.

Despite its geographic insignificance, isolation, and relative inaccessibility, the Kathmandu Valley

⁸ Giuseppe 1801:307.

⁹ Lévi 1905:1, 121 and n.

¹⁰ Landon 1928: 1, 172-173.

¹¹ Lévi 1905:11, 63; 1908:111, 181-185. Śrāvastī, one of the eight holy places of Buddhism, is today the dusty little village of Set Mahet on the Rapti River; at this time it lay at the junction of two great Indian trade routes, and was also a terminus on the trans-Himalayan route (Map 1). Its importance as a trading center is made clear in Buddhist literature. Almost all the cast of characters from Śrāvastī are bankers, money lenders, merchants, shopkeepers, traders, or caravaneers (Mitra 1971:19-22, 24-25, 28).

¹² Although the *Arthasāstra* (Treatise on Polity) may not

was long a renowned center of trade. That traders were already making their way into the Valley in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C. is suggested by Buddhist accounts of monks at Śrāvastī, an important trading emporium, who attached themselves to a troupe of wool merchants bound for Nepal.¹¹ This venture is made credible by the Mauryan statesman, Kauṭilya, who referred in the *Arthasāstra* to woolen blankets from Nepal.¹² The continuing importance of Nepalese commerce in the Licchavi Period, about A.D. 300 to 879, is also evident from Licchavi inscriptions. One frequently encounters the names of persons identified as chiefs of merchant companies and caravaneers; the Licchavi exports they carried—such as musk, wool, yaks' tails (for fly whisks), iron, and copper—were appreciated in India.¹³ Hsüan-tsang, a Chinese pilgrim to India in the mid-seventh century, heard in Vaiśālī about the "red copper, the *Yak*, and the *Mingming* bird" produced by Nepal, and noted that "in commerce they use coins made of red copper."¹⁴ Nor did the busy commercial activity of Licchavi Nepal go unnoticed by the Chinese envoy Wang Hsüan-t'sê who, en route from the T'ang court to that of Harṣavardhana at Kanauj, visited the Kathmandu Valley in the mid-seventh century A.D. "The merchants there, fixed and itinerant, are numerous," he observed in his memoirs, but "cultivators rare."¹⁵ Perhaps with an eye to trade, the Nepalis sent among their presents to the T'ang court—always appreciative of foreign exotics—rare plants such as spinach, some kind of onion, a "bitter leaf vegetable," a "vinegar leaf vegetable," and an aromatic "Western celery."¹⁶

The Valley's specific relationship to the trans-Himalayan trade exercised a profound influence on

be dated in its entirety to the age of Kauṭilya in the fourth century B.C., the bulk of the material is generally regarded as pre-Guptan.

¹³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 10, 12 (50-54, 59-60), see especially commentary pp. 52-54, 60, 313-314; Lévi 1905:11, 112-113.

¹⁴ Beal 1914:11, 80.

¹⁵ Lévi 1905:1, 164; Jayaswal 1936:238.

¹⁶ Schafer 1963:147. It can scarcely be coincidence that the name the Chinese recorded for spinach, *palinga*, and said to be the name of a country, bears a close resemblance to the Nepali word for spinach, *pālunḡo*, similar forms of which occur in most north Indian languages.

its development and history. Of some two dozen passes into Tibet, the lowest are a few miles northwest and northeast of the Valley, at Rasua Garhi and Kodari, respectively the gateways to the Tibetan entrepôts, Kyirong (sKyid-grong) and Kuti (Nyalam Dzong) (Map 2). Following the bed of the Bagmati to cross the southern rim of the Valley, or through the hills via the Chandragiri Pass on the western rim (Plate 8), the traditional routes through the Kathmandu Valley were important arteries whose southern termini abutted the great northern Indian trade route, the Uttarāpatha. From at least the sixth century B.C., this route linked the eastern Gangetic basin with the civilization of the Near East.¹⁷ The Uttarāpatha was also joined by another great trade route, the Dakṣiṇāpatha, along which trade flowed as far south as Vidiśa (the town near the Buddhist community at Sāñchi and Ujjain (Map 1)).¹⁸ The importance of the Nepalese route was increased in the early seventh century A.D. by the establishment of the Tibetan nation and the resulting tranquility this brought to the surrounding territory. The route through the Kathmandu Valley and Tibet was shorter than the traditional land and sea routes that linked the cities and monasteries of the Gangetic lowlands with the Chinese urban centers. When secure, which it frequently was not, the Tibet-Nepal route was a preferred north-south highway.¹⁹

The position of the Kathmandu Valley was unquestionably a primary determinant of its economic and, ultimately, its cultural development. Since snow closed the mountain passes in winter and malaria the jungle paths of the Tarai in the summer, traders found it expedient to cross one or the other as they could, and then pause in the Valley to await the onset of summer (for the northern passage) or of winter (for the southern one) in

¹⁷ Irwin 1973:717, fig. C.

¹⁸ Kosambi 1972:122-126, 139-140.

¹⁹ Hodgson 1971:part 2, 94-95, writing in 1830 or 1831, still recommended this route for its commercial advantages in British India's trade with Tibet and China. But partly because of the Nepal-China war at the end of the preceding century, and the difficulty of reaching an accommodation with Nepal, the British found other routes. By the late nineteenth century trade had almost entirely shifted east to an improved route through Sikkim and the Chumbi Valley (Landon 1928:11, 51-52, 112-113; Cammann

order to continue their journey.²⁰ Thus, the Kathmandu Valley became a vital entrepôt in the trans-Himalayan trade, and until the late eighteenth century, trade was the primary source of the Valley's wealth, its fundamental *raison d'être*, and the cornerstone upon which were erected the cities filled with golden-roofed temples and monasteries overflowing with magnificent bronzes, stone sculptures, and paintings. Moreover, the Valley's position made it not only a trade entrepôt but a cultural transfer point between pilgrim and scholar, mendicant and monk, artisan and ambassadorial entourage, where exchanges took place between hands and minds that profoundly affected Nepalese history. In the Tibetan view, because of its "abundance of wealth and religion . . . [Nepal was] no mean country."²¹

But the flourishing trade and wealth of the Valley tempted nearby hill princes, most notably Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha, who took the coveted basin for his own in A.D. 1769 (Plates 71-75). The role that trade played in the Kathmandu Valley was a major factor in his strategy of conquest. By instituting an economic blockade, Prithvi Narayan not only sealed off the Valley from its normal revenues, but by blocking basic consumer goods—salt and cotton, for example—he exacerbated an internal social discontent that aggravated the already crumbling political structure.²² The firmness with which the blockade was enforced is attested by Father Giuseppe's complaint about the "horrid spectacle" of the bodies of would-be blockade runners hanging from the trees.²³ Ironically, the protracted blockade and constant military action in and around the Valley permanently diverted trade to other less troublesome routes, and at length destroyed, along with its fabled wealth, the ancient basis of the Valley economy.²⁴

1951:149-150).

²⁰ Pashupati Rana 1973:219.

²¹ Wylie 1970:12.

²² N. Pant et al. 1968:484, 489, 818-819, 1009-1014; Giuseppe 1801:317; Shakya and Vaidya 1970:colophon 23 (xiv-xv, 49-50); Stiller 1973:121-122; Banda 1962:vv. 56, 64 (126-127, 133-134). Banda (133-134) writes about how happy the people were after the conquest because these goods flowed freely again.

²³ Giuseppe 1801:317.

²⁴ Pashupati Rana 1973:220; Lévi 1905:1, 174-176.

The Kathmandu Valley owed its prosperity and cultural development not only to trade and the wake of other wayfarers, but also to its equable climate and remarkably fertile soil. Fields do not lie fallow but produce a year-round succession of crops. Not unlike the fertile river valleys that cradled the growth of civilization elsewhere, the Valley was able to support dense populations and its agriculture promoted the growth of prosperity.

"Nepal" long meant the sequestered mountain valley, until surrounding tribes and principalities began to be united with it from A.D. 1769 to form the greater nation. Now commonly called the Kathmandu Valley, after the capital city, traditionally it was known as Nepālamāṇḍala (Circle or Country of Nepal), the Nepal Valley, or merely Nepal. Even now unsophisticated Nepalis still think of the Valley as "Nepal." Those whom one meets on the trails leading toward the Valley, and at times not a day's journey distant, still speak of "going to Nepal."

There is no question that the political boundaries of ancient Nepal transcended the exact physical limits of the Kathmandu Valley, in a pattern fluctuating with the ambitions of its rulers and the fortunes of war. As indicated by the distribution of the stone inscriptions of the Licchavis, the first historically attested dynasty, ancient Nepal almost always embraced the contiguous ridges and valleys eastward through Banepa and Palanchok to the Sun Kosi and even beyond, north to Nawakot, and at times, at least, even west to Gorkha (Map 2).²⁵ Occasionally, as is made clear by inscriptions and other documents, there were fingers of power stretching temporarily this way or that far beyond these limits. That these more distant regions were under nominal, and probably ephemeral, control of the Licchavis is suggested by an inscription recent-

²⁵ D. Vajracharya 1968b:96-97; 1973:inscrs. 23, 73, 74, 82, 92, 104, 141, 151, 189 (previously published by M. P. Khanal 1971:inscr. 1 [1-3]; Shakya 1969 a:inscrs. 4-7 [8-14]; Vaidya and Vajracharya 1972:inscrs. 1, 2 [11-14]; Rana and Vajracharya 1972:14-19). D. Vajracharya 1973 (*Licchavikālākā abhilekḥa* [Licchavi Period Inscription]), represents the most recent, complete, and authoritative compendium of Licchavi inscriptions known to date, and will be cited, therefore, as the primary reference to them. All Licchavi inscriptions published up to 1973 are listed in chronological order in Appendix IV in accordance with

ly found at Gorkha. Significantly, it is addressed to *jānapada* (inhabitants, subjects) as distinguished from *paura* (citizens), the term used to address the residents of the Valley.²⁶ Thus, to view the "Nepāla" mentioned in early sources as a large, permanent state comparable in any way with the present nation should very likely be attributed to national enthusiasm rather than to adherence to fact.²⁷

In any event, despite the appeal of the issue to the Nepalis, the exact boundary of ancient Nepal has limited relevance to a study of the Kathmandu Valley. Whether, as the Nepalis hold, there was indeed a larger Nepal, and whatever its size may prove to be, the Kathmandu Valley was unquestionably its most important segment. The Valley has served every principal dynasty of Nepal as the political, cultural, and economic center, the site of the capital city, and the seat of royalty. It is within its confines that generation after generation of artists and scholars, priests and monks, have lived and worked—inscribing on stone, metal, and paper the record of their passing; raising glory after glory of temple and shrine; and shaping in stone, metal, and paint the infinite forms of the gods. For the gods, too, have especially preferred Nepal Mandala as their dwelling place.

THE BEGINNINGS

It is only well into the Christian era that we begin to move into the realm of documented history in the Kathmandu Valley. The first tangible document and the epochal dividing line between the prehistory of the Valley and its history is a dated stone inscription corresponding to A.D. 464 (Plates 47, 48).²⁸ The historic period and its monuments most deeply concern us, but to understand them

Vajracharya's numeration. Six others, largely later finds, provide an addendum. The date and name of issuing ruler (if present) and the location of each inscription is listed together with a concordance in which the places of previous publication may be readily consulted.

²⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 151 (578-579).

²⁷ D. Vajracharya, ed. 1962:main part, 21-28; G. Vajracharya 1964:43-45.

²⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 2 (9-30). See Appendix I for an explanation of Nepalese eras and the methods of converting them to Christian era dates.

we must briefly examine the undocumented more distant past.

Legend avers that the Valley of Kathmandu was once a hill-ringed lake. The Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (or in Hindu opinion, Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa) cut with his sword a passage through the hills, draining the Valley of its waters.²⁹ From this time forth, men worked and worshiped in the fertile vale given to them by the gods. Modern research confirms that the legend mythologizes an actual geological event. The Valley is filled with alluvial soils deposited under lacustrine conditions with characteristic telltale ripple marks, diatomaceous clays, and peat lenses. The presence of fossils dates the soils to the Pleistocene age.³⁰

In time, the relatively level expanse of grazing and farm lands and the exceptionally fertile soil of the former lake bed began to attract settlers. Where they came from and when, we do not know. A recent chance find of a Neolithic polished stone axe provides our first clue to early man's presence in the Valley.³¹ But the limited archaeological excavations undertaken so far in the Kathmandu Valley reveal nothing before the historic horizon.³² We can only surmise that Valley prehistory is one of gradual infiltration of people from the surrounding hills, some groups of which may have drifted south from the harsh Tibetan plateau. These immigrants were probably ancestral to contemporary Nepalese hill tribes, the Magar, Gurung, Kiranti (Limbu, Rai) and others living outside the Valley, and to the Tamang, who are also well established on the slopes within. All are of Mongoloid physical type, and speak related languages belonging to Tibeto-Burman stock (Plates 16 to 18).³³

Historical documents establish the presence in the Kathmandu Valley at least by the Licchavi Period, about A.D. 300-879, of representatives of Sanskrit/Prakrit-speaking groups—Licchavi, Vṛjī, Śākya, and Koliya—peoples well-known to north India from the time of the Buddha.³⁴ But in the instance of the Licchavis and Vṛjīs, we do not

know whether they were of Mongoloid or Caucasoid origin.³⁵ If they were Mongoloid, major penetration of the Valley by Caucasoid peoples took place only in late historic times.

The Muslim conquests in northern India at the end of the twelfth century propelled many Indian refugees into Nepal. Some, such as orthodox Brahmins from Mithilā directly south of the Valley, and Buddhists from the devastated monasteries of Bihar, found refuge in the Kathmandu Valley, while others settled in the hill regions of western Nepal. The latter belonged to well-defined Hindu castes, particularly the Brahman priesthood, the Kshatriya military aristocracy (known as Chetris in Nepal), and, at the bottom of the social scale, occupational castes such as tailors, shoemakers, and blacksmiths (Damai, Sarki, Kami). This influx fortified other Indian immigrants who had long filtered northward, and had mixed in various measure with the established local population. The latter essentially issued from two streams: the Khasa, Indo-Aryans who spoke a Sanskritic language ancestral to Nepali, and who for centuries had drifted eastward through the Himalayan foothills; and the Mongoloid tribes, particularly the Magar and Gurung. Like the locals, the Indian immigrants farmed or pursued their traditional caste-ordained roles and occupations. By the sixteenth century, an ethnically mixed military aristocracy, who often claimed Rajput descent and emulated the latter's preoccupation with military chivalry and the purity of Hindu religion, had carved out numerous petty hill states. Gorkha, immediately west of the Valley, was one of these (Plates 72, 73). It was founded by Dravya Shah in A.D. 1559; his descendant, Prithvi Narayan, conquered the Nepal Valley in the latter half of the eighteenth century. By this time the Valley inhabitants had been transformed by centuries of miscegenation and acculturation, and were known as Newars (Nevāra) (Plates 23-28, 39, 43, 45, 46, 48). At the time of the Shah conquest, the Newars were politically organized into

²⁹ Often mistakenly identified as the Chobar Gorge, in the middle of the Valley, it is in fact the gorge known as Kotwal (Kotvar, Kotwaldar) (Sword Cut) through which the Bagmati cuts through the southern rim of the Valley on its way to the Ganges (Map 3).

³⁰ *Kathmandu Valley* 1969:31-32.

³¹ Banerjee and Sharma 1969:56.

³² Deo 1968.

³³ Bista 1967:29-79, 91-98.

³⁴ G. Vajracharya 1965; D. Vajracharya 1968b:99-101; Lévi 1908:181-185.

³⁵ Basham 1967:41; R. Majumdar 1966:11 (1971), 7.

several culturally Indianized city-states governed by rulers with the dynastic name of Malla.

KIRĀTA AND NEWAR

The name Newar to signify the indigenous (or virtually indigenous) population of the Kathmandu Valley is now well established, but it appears to be of very recent origin. It may have been bestowed by the Gorkhalis³⁶ and given currency by the domiciled Catholic missionaries; both appeared on the scene in the seventeenth century, when the name became prevalent. In Nepalese inscriptions the name Newar occurs for the first time in A.D. 1654,³⁷ and in 1667, a diarist mentions a "Newar from Lubhu [village]."³⁸ The word Newar is generally assumed to be interchangeable with and derived from the word Nepal and to signify simply the people of Nepal Valley, specifically the indigenouses.

The origin of the name Nepal is even more obscure, although a number of interpretations have been suggested.³⁹ The first unquestionable usage occurs in the famous pillar inscription at Allahabad, India, inscribed in the fourth century A.D. Linked, as it frequently would be, with Kāmārūpa, Nepal's southeastern neighbor, "Nepāla" is listed as a frontier state.⁴⁰ The Allahabad pillar reference may be preceded by that in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, but whether in this instance we are concerned with an original entry dating from Mauryan times or a later interpolation, we do not know. Similarly, although the name Nepāla appears in Buddhist and other Indian literature, most of these works are equally difficult to date with exactitude.⁴¹

³⁶ I shall use the term Gorkhali to designate the Nepalese who, speaking Nepali (Gorkhali) as their mother tongue, came from or are historically associated with Gorkha. Gorkhalis are also Parbate/Parbatiya (Parvatiyā), "mountain people," a term that embraces all hill-dwelling ethnic groups. "Bhote" is a colloquial (and somewhat pejorative) term applied to Tibetans and Tibetanized northern border peoples; "Madhese" to the peoples of the Tarai. All citizens of Nepal, all categories—Gorkhali, Newar, and all ethnic groups of the hills and plains—are "Nepali" or "Nepalese."

³⁷ D. Regmi 1969:14. Only a small part of the lengthy inscription has been published (D. Regmi 1966:part 4,

Taken together, they do seem to establish the currency of the name Nepal in the early centuries of the Christian era.⁴² In any event, the name must have been employed by the Licchavis for their adopted country. Their contemporaries of T'ang China transcribed the name of the country as "Ni-po-lo,"⁴³ and on occasion the name Nepal occurs in Licchavi inscriptions. The first local occurrence is in the early seventh century, when King Amśuvarman began an edict with the expression *svasti nepālebhyah* (peace to the Nepalis).⁴⁴ Seventh- and eighth-century Licchavi inscriptions follow with mention of Nepāla and Nepālamāṇḍala.⁴⁵

It seems probable that the sector of the Nepalese people who have been so recently designated "Newar" are descendants of the Kirāta, a name familiar in early Indian literature, and one with strong traditional associations in Nepal. In Indian literature the name Kirāta has been employed ubiquitously to denote a people (or peoples) of the Himalaya. In the epics the Kirāta are often mentioned. In the *Mahābhārata* we find Kirātas enlisted on the side of the Kauravas, and it was in the guise of a Kirāta that Śiva appeared to Arjuna to give him the celebrated weapon, Paśupāta. In the *Raghuvamśa*, Kālidāsa describes Raghu's subjugation of the north countries and his encounter with the Kirātas of the mountains. In his play *Kādambari*, Bāṇa includes Kirātas in the palace retinue, along with hunchbacks, dwarfs, and other unusual persons. In these and similar references,⁴⁶ it is conceivable that rather than "Kirāta," a specific ethnic group, the word is in fact *kirāta*. As suggested by the components *kira* (edge) and *at* (to roam), *kirāta* may refer broadly to any aboriginal people who "roamed the edge" of the Aryanized settlements of the Gangetic

inscr. 52 [90-91]).

³⁸ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. 111, 80.

³⁹ Lévi 1905:11, 66-68; D. Regmi 1969:17-19.

⁴⁰ Fleet 1970:8, 14 n. 1; Sircar 1965:262-268.

⁴¹ Lévi 1905:11, 61-65; 1908:111, 184; Bharati 1965:60.

⁴² Lévi 1905:11, 62-63.

⁴³ Lévi 1905:1, 163; Jayaswal 1936:241; Beal 1914:11, 80.

⁴⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 74 (310-314); J. Regmi 1970:4.

⁴⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 118, 150 (448-451, 573-577).

⁴⁶ Lévi 1905:11, 74-77; Chatterji 1974:27-28, 30-36.

plains. The Puranas, however, leave no doubt that there was also a particular people by the name, since they specify the Kirāta as one of the peoples of the Madhyadeśa.⁴⁷ Kirāta territory is generally held to be in the Himalaya, and at times is located adjacent to Kāmarūpa (Prāgyotiṣa), an ancient kingdom of Assam (Map 1).⁴⁸ Thus it seems probable that the Kirāta were once a specific Himalayan people, but that the term was later expanded to embrace any hill tribe.⁴⁹

That such a people did dwell in the Himalaya also appears to be supported by the Nepalese testimony. One of the largest single ethnic groups in Nepal today is known as the Kiranti (Kirānti) (Plate 17).⁵⁰ Subdivided into smaller tribal units such as the Limbu and Rai, the Kiranti inhabit a large area in the eastern middle hills known as the Kirant Pradesh.⁵¹ Kiranti tradition traces a long succession of rulers, the last of whom, at least, was a historic person whose land and people were annexed by Prithvi Narayan Shah.⁵² Father Giuseppe noted that at a distance of five or six days journey east of the Valley there was an independent nation "called *Ciratas*, who profess no religion."⁵³ The early chronicles identify the Kiranti with the Kirāta when they affirm that the Valley Kirāta, vanquished by the Licchavis, settled in the region between the Tamur and the Arun rivers, a region embraced by the Kirant Pradesh (Map 2).⁵⁴ The late chronicles also imply this relationship by writing that the Kirāta "dwelt originally to the eastward."⁵⁵ Traditional ties of these eastern hill people with the Kathmandu Valley are apparent from customs that ordain the annual return to the Valley of some Kirantis for the observance of religious ceremonies.⁵⁶

That some of the Kirāta were dwelling in the Kathmandu Valley at the time of the Licchavi con-

quest is lent a certain credibility by Nepalese records. The early chronicles (*vamśāvalis*), primary sources for Nepali history,⁵⁷ provide impressive genealogies of the Kirāta kings. These kings, claim the chronicles, wrested the Kathmandu Valley from certain pastoral dynasties, the Gopāla and Mahiṣapāla (Cow and Buffalo herders), before they were in turn conquered by the Licchavis.⁵⁸ The Licchavis are silent about their own conquest of the Kathmandu Valley, but in a unique occurrence the isolated word Kirāta or *kirāta* appears in a newly discovered but disappointingly fragmentary description (Plate 53).⁵⁹

More telling with reference to Kirāta occupation of the Kathmandu Valley is the vocabulary of Licchavi inscriptions. Although written in Sanskrit, they rely heavily on a non-Sanskrit vocabulary for many administrative terms, personal names, and more than eighty percent of the place names.⁶⁰ The latter include hamlets, towns, rivers, ponds, and other physiographic features. These names have often survived to present times with little change, frequently as alternate names employed exclusively by Newari speakers. Certain other non-Sanskrit words used by the Licchavis are also clearly recognizable in modern Newari,⁶¹ a language that appears to be closely related to that of the Limbu (Kiranti), Tamang, and similar hill tribes.⁶² The marked Sanskritization of the Newari vocabulary tends to obscure this relationship, but it becomes evident when comparing the vocabulary of Old Newari documents with that of contemporary hill languages. Thus, although the non-Sanskrit aspect of Licchavi inscriptions awaits intensive study, tentatively it seems justifiable to identify it as "proto-Newari" or, as a more exact term, Kirāti.

The name Kirāta is also inextricably woven into the web of Valley tradition, and is perpetuated in

⁴⁷ Sircar 1971:31, 35, 46.

⁴⁸ Sircar 1971:160-165.

⁴⁹ This is the considered view of Sircar 1971:102. See also Lévi 1905:11, 74-83, and Ronnow 1936.

⁵⁰ Bista 1967:29.

⁵¹ Bista 1967:29-47.

⁵² Chemjong 1967:part 2; Bista 1967:30. One of the most exciting anthropological studies that might be carried out in Nepal would be that of the Kirantis' relationship with the Newars.

⁵³ Giuseppe 1801:308.

⁵⁴ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvali*, fol. 18b.

⁵⁵ Wright 1966:58.

⁵⁶ See Chapter 5.

⁵⁷ See Chapter 2 respecting the reliability of these chronicles.

⁵⁸ Lévi 1905:11, 78-83; D. Regmi 1969:56-59.

⁵⁹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 91 (374-376).

⁶⁰ D. Vajracharya 1968a; B. Acharya 1963.

⁶¹ D. Vajracharya 1968a:6.

⁶² G. Vajracharya 1964. See Appendix 11 for a description of Newari.

folklore and legend. Traditional sites where Kirāta fell in battle or with which they were believed to be otherwise associated are commemorated in place names. Ruins of Kirāta palaces and the sites of their capital cities are gravely pointed out by the Nepalese, and an impressive Śivaliṅga of Licchavi date is worshiped as Kirāteśvara (Plate 336). The belief that the Kirāta once peopled the Kathmandu Valley is by no means confined to popular tradition, moreover, but is widely shared by the Nepali intelligentsia. Some Nepali scholars have even been so bold as to define a Kirāta art style, apart from Indian currents, and have viewed certain sculptures as the portraits of Kirāta kings.⁶³

Although the chronicles declare that the Licchavis conquered the Kirāta kings, there is no mention of fire or sword, or of a diaspora of the indigenes,⁶⁴ and the Licchavis made no boasts respecting their conquest. Indeed, on the admittedly slender evidence of Śiva's prophecy in the *Paśupati-purāna*, there is a suggestion to the contrary: "the powerful king of Vaiśālī will conquer the Kirāta king and reign by inspiring confidence through gentle words."⁶⁵ It seems reasonable to suppose that whatever dynastic changes took place with the advent of the Licchavis, the common people were not severely dislocated. The frequent reference in Licchavi inscriptions to persons bearing non-Sanskrit names—Rogamācau, Sindhira, and Kedumbāta, for example—is also suggestive in this respect.⁶⁶

On the basis of varied evidence—literary, historical, anthropological, linguistic, and that of tradition—we may, then, speculate that the Kirāta, metamorphosed by millennia of miscegenation and acculturation, form the matrix of the Kathmandu Valley population, which in contemporary Nepal is designated Newar.

The Newars are today fully integrated into the nation. They participate in the civil service, staff the palace secretariat, enjoy a leading role in business and commerce, and in the Kathmandu Valley

⁶³ Bangdel 1969; Kaisher Bahadur 1960. For opposite views, see D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 199-203; D. Regmi 1969:136-138.

⁶⁴ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 19b.

⁶⁵ Chapter 18, v. 12; D. Vajracharya, ed. 1962:main part, 206.

⁶⁶ D. Vajracharya 1968a:6; 1973:inscrs. 8, 149 (44-47, 563-572).

are the chief artisans and farmers. With the exception of the conservative farming communities, the Newars usually speak as a second tongue Nepali, the national language,⁶⁷ wear national dress, and to the casual observer blend indistinguishably with the general Nepalese milieu (Plate 28). The Newars are nonetheless still a well-defined group of people who preserve their mother tongue and their own distinctive customs and institutions.⁶⁸ As a group they would be considered predominantly Mongoloid, although there is wide individual variation in physical appearance. The Newars compose more than half of the population of the Kathmandu Valley,⁶⁹ and they are the chief component of a number of old Newar towns just outside, such as Banepa, Panauti, or even further away, Dolakha (Map 2). Particularly since the eighteenth century, in the exercise of their traditional metiers—trade and the arts—the Newars have spread far afield into the bazaar towns throughout Nepal, where their combined numbers now almost equal the Newar population of the Kathmandu Valley. Newars are also numerous in neighboring Sikkim and Bhutan. In Tibet, as a consequence of recent political events, the once flourishing colony of domiciled Newar traders and artisans has now largely dissolved.

Like Nepalese society in general, the Newars are profoundly influenced by the caste-oriented values of the Indian subcontinent. They are hierarchically organized by occupational castes and subcastes into two parallel groups according to their faith, Buddhist or Hindu. But Newar society is particularly distinguished from other sectors of Nepali society by its pervasively communal nature. This is evident in the Newar preference for compact urban settlements, with houses closely packed along the narrow streets and lanes (Figure 4; Plates 8-10, 34-42, 83, 85, 94). Even the farmers are town dwellers, occupying special quarters of the large towns, or established in separate, tightly knit villages sur-

⁶⁷ See Appendix 11.

⁶⁸ Amplification of Newar anthropology may be found in Chattopadhyay 1923; Nepali 1965; Rosser 1966; Fürer-Haimendorf 1956; Bista 1967:15-28.

⁶⁹ The 1971 census tabulates 1,496,971 persons for the Bagmati Zone, an administrative division roughly corresponding to the Kathmandu Valley.

rounded by their fields. More than sixty percent of the Valley Newars live in the three largest towns, Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhaktapur, all ancient foundations and former capitals of medieval Newar city-states. The remainder dwell in some thirty-five essentially all-Newar villages, many of which also date back at least to Licchavi times. The communality of the Newars is also apparent in the closely knit social organization of the patrilineal, extended (joint) family, a traditional pattern that is now beginning to erode under pressure of modernization.

The communal nature of Newar society is most conspicuous in the innumerable associations of common interest groups, corporate bodies known as *gūthīs*. Originating in the *goṣṭhī* of ancient India and Licchavi Nepal,⁷⁰ the *gūthī* is a basic integrating factor of Newar society, whose primary function is to enable the individual Newar to fulfill his many socio-religious obligations through group action. Association is in some instances voluntary, in others compulsory, and in either case entails a balance of privilege and responsibility. Recruitment for and purposes of the *gūthī* are variable. In some, membership may be determined by common descent, and in others by locality. The *gūthī*'s purpose may be the collective responsibility for the funerals of its members, the worship of a particular deity, the upkeep of a given shrine, or one of a host of other obligations, including organizing social events and feasts. Each *gūthī* is headed by a *thakālī*, the oldest living male of the association group. Traditionally, one of the chief functions of the *gūthī* (and of the ancestral *goṣṭhī*) was the administration of the proceeds from lands given as endowments to certain deities and their temples, shrines, and monasteries. Indeed, the unbroken continuity of Nepalese socio-religious institutions and the monuments themselves is closely related to the *gūthī* system. In modern Nepal, however, this tradition is fast losing ground, and many endowments are allowed to lapse or the proceeds filtered off to other purposes than the original usage intended.⁷¹ This factor has had a marked effect on the physical condition of the monuments of the Kathmandu Valley (Plates 59, 176, 177, 510), for whose care funds must now be sought largely

in the treasury of His Majesty's Government.

Among contemporary Newars the most distinct sector comprises the Jyapu (Jyāpu), a name broadly applied to Newar farmers, a group that is further internally stratified by numerous subcastes. The Jyapu are the least educated and the least acculturated to national Nepali norms. The most traditional sector of Newar society, the Jyapu preserve and assiduously observe what are clearly very ancient customs rooted in the Newar heritage. Some of these, like the *gūthī*, can be traced back to the beginning of written records in the Kathmandu Valley, and others to the Neolithic period in India. Most of the Jyapu cling to a distinctive costume, carry their burdens suspended from a shoulder pole (*nol*), as no other Nepalis do (Plates 25-27, 95), and are enthusiastic in the celebration of innumerable Valley festivals. The majority of festivals, linked to the calendar round of farming activities, reveal their agricultural origin. As the principal repositories of indigenous culture in the Kathmandu Valley, the Jyapu afford a window on its past.

To focus on the Newars is not to disparage the culture, history, or contribution to the nation of the Parvatiyā, the hill peoples. But that is another story, whose genesis and development was not in the Kathmandu Valley, the subject of this study. Such development of Parvatiyā culture—especially Gorkhali—as did take place within the Kathmandu Valley dates only from the eighteenth century, and is therefore unrelated to the origin and development of the Valley monuments before the recent historic period. But both streams, Newar and Parvatiyā, were influenced by Indian culture, and with the Gorkhali conquest their confluence was in the Kathmandu Valley.

INDIANIZATION

As the close southern neighbor of Nepal, India has been, despite the malaise of the intervening Tarai, a fundamental force in the development of Nepalese culture. But while the Valley's cultural debt to India is unquestionably immense, it must be recognized that the Nepalis have always exercised

⁷⁰ Sircar 1965:226-227; 1966:118; D. Vajracharya 1967a.

⁷¹ On *gūthī* tenure of land see M. Regmi 1976:46-70.

choice and fashioned new combinations that formed the unique Valley culture, one by no means "provincial Indian," but distinctively Nepali.

When the long and continuing process of Indianization of the Kathmandu Valley began we do not know. There is evidence that contact had begun at least from the time of the historic Buddha, the sixth century B.C., and that it was well under way with the early centuries of the Christian era. The Buddha Śākyamuni was born at Lumbini in the Tarai, a region now within the Kingdom of Nepal (Map 1). But despite the persistence of Nepali legend that affirms otherwise, there is no evidence that he came into the Kathmandu Valley. On the contrary, on the basis of the well-known details of the Buddha's life, we may be almost positive that he did not. We cannot be so certain about the visits of his disciples and of Buddhist monks of his time. That some actually did come into the Kathmandu Valley receives support from the vivid accounts in a Buddhist text: monks with the Buddha at Śrāvastī, a trade center on the Uttarāpatha, spying a troupe of wool merchants bound for the Valley, asked their permission to go along. The hardships of the journey and the discomforts of the Valley altitude induced them to return at once with another southbound caravan.⁷² Although this tale is part of the fundamental body of the text,⁷³ suggesting it to be an authentic happening, it could be interpreted as a later gloss to excuse a tardy introduction of Buddhism in the Valley. Despite the probable exaggeration of another account, concerning the mission of Ānanda, the Buddha's favorite disciple, to the Valley, its simple intimacy in describing his weather-beaten hands and feet—results of the hardship of the trail—gives the tale a ring of authenticity.⁷⁴

There is no evidence that the Kathmandu Valley was part of the Mauryan Empire of India or, despite the widespread belief to the contrary,⁷⁵ that Aśoka, its ruler from about 269 to 232 B.C., visited it. The ample Indian and Ceylonese sources con-

cerning the Mauryan ruler are silent about Nepal or a Himalayan visit. Aśoka's closest approach to the Kathmandu Valley seems to have been the Tarai, where in 257 B.C. he erected at each of two places, Rummindei (Lumbini) and Nigali Sagar, an inscribed pillar to commemorate his pilgrimage to these holy Buddhist sites.⁷⁶ Nor may the four large mounds spaced around the outskirts of Patan, locally designated "Ashok stupas," be attributed to Aśoka (Map 8; Figure 26; Plates 220-221). That these stupas date from Mauryan times is possible, however, for in their primitive and unembellished form they closely compare to the characteristic mounds erected by the Mauryas. It is also quite possible that the Patan mounds are in fact pre-Mauryan and pre-Buddhist cult objects.⁷⁷ Similarly, the "Ashok chaityas," small Buddhist votive monuments that the Nepalese traditionally assign to the emperor's time, almost certainly belong to a much later period.⁷⁸

If there is no evidence for Aśoka's presence in the Kathmandu Valley, there is even less for that of an alleged daughter, by name Cārumatī. She is supposed to have married a Valley prince, to have cofounded with him the sacred city of Deopatan surrounding Paśupatinātha, and to have established a Buddhist monastery to which she subsequently retired. As with Aśoka's supposed Himalayan connection, the Indian and Ceylonese sources are significantly silent about the existence of such a daughter or her deeds. In fact, the written account concerning both Aśoka's visit and the exploits of such a daughter appears initially in an eighteenth-century chronicle of Buddhist persuasion.⁷⁹ Thereafter the tradition seems to have captured the imagination of Nepali and Westerner alike, and has now gained credence as historic fact.

The earliest Indian influences in the Kathmandu Valley were certainly not planned imperial implantations, but limited and casual. Indian acculturation must have begun with the random importation of objects and ideas by unconscious agents of

⁷² The *Mūla-sarvāstivādā-vinaya-samgraha*, Lévi 1905: II, 63; 1908: III, 181-185.

⁷³ Lévi 1908: III, 184-185.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 182-185.

⁷⁵ An exception is Baburam Acharya, as attested by his thoughtful essay "Aśoka and Nepal" (B. Acharya 1953a).

⁷⁶ Sircar 1965: 67-68; Mukherji 1969; Irwin 1973: 714.

⁷⁷ See Chapters 5, 6, 10.

⁷⁸ See Chapter 7.

⁷⁹ Wright 1966: 74-75. As the name of a river, the word Cārumatī is mentioned in the *Svayambhū-purāna*, chapter 6.

cultural expansion, pilgrims and especially traders, in their passage through the Kathmandu Valley. More intensified contact with Indian culture occurred through the Licchavis, the first historically known dynasty of the Kathmandu Valley.

Since the northern border of Nepal now coincides with the Chinese border, one might wonder whether the Kathmandu Valley had not been similarly marked by the Chinese tradition. But it must be remembered that until recent times these political frontiers did not coincide; the two countries were separated by the vast Tibetan plateau and its distinctive culture. China was thus infinitely more distant from Nepal than was India, its traditional routes to the south lay elsewhere,⁸⁰ and the great Central Asiatic trade routes ran well north of the Himalayan ramparts.⁸¹ Although there was occasional intercourse between the countries, as we shall see, only slight and superficial influence on Nepalese culture can be traced directly to China. These are essentially in art motifs, and with few exceptions they are confined to the late historic period.

In the formation of Tibetan culture one can discern traits of both the Indian and Chinese civilizations. Because of the close social and commercial relations of the Nepalese with Tibet over the centuries, there was naturally an exchange of ideas. By way of Tibet were also transmitted some influences from China and Central Asia. But in contrast to the great Indian flood, the southward flow into Nepal was a very small stream indeed.

THE CONTEMPORARY MILIEU

Beginning at the end of the eighteenth century, with the advent of Prithvi Narayan Shah, the Kathmandu Valley became essentially closed to foreigners other than to Indians, who shared the social and religious conceptions of the Nepalese. Under the Ranas, the oligarchy in power from 1846 to 1951, foreign exclusion became the policy.

⁸⁰ Schafer 1963:14.

⁸¹ This factor undoubtedly spared Nepal from the ravages of the Black Death, which was carried westward along the Asian trade routes to decimate medieval Europe (Dols 1977:35-58).

⁸² For the calendar year 1974, the entry into Nepal of

No more than a few score Westerners were allowed into the Tarai to participate in official hunts, and fewer still permitted into, but no farther than, the narrow confines of the Kathmandu Valley. Except for the most superficial trappings of Western culture, imported by the Ranas for their own delectation (Plates 77-81), the Kathmandu Valley remained suspended in time as it had been under the later Mallas in the seventeenth century. Malla culture itself, as we shall discover, was firmly rooted in the past, and preserved ancient cultural patterns of Nepal and India that may frequently be traced back for millennia.

With the overthrow of the Ranas and the restoration of the Shah kings to power in 1951, the Nepalese policy of exclusion came to an end, and the gates were flung wide to the twentieth century. Western and Asian diplomatic and economic missions were established within the country in ever-increasing numbers. The Nepalese intelligentsia, freed from Rana restraint, increasingly ignored the Hindu taboo against defiling contact with outcasts (as non-Hindu foreigners—*mlecchas*—are traditionally viewed), and went not only to India but farther afield to study. This quarter-century of accelerating traffic into and out of the country, and the resulting exposure to the twentieth century, has affected both the physical and psychological milieu of Nepal, and particularly of its nucleus, the Kathmandu Valley.

Since the completion of the Arniko/Aniko Raj Marg, the Lhasa-Kathmandu highway, in 1966 (Plate 13), road building has been accelerated in an effort to create a network of routes suitable for vehicular traffic. The cow pasture (*gocara*) near Paśupati temple, whereon grazed sacred cattle when the first plane landed in 1949, has been converted by stages to Gauchar, a modern jet airport, at which daily arrive people from every quarter of the globe. From an initial trickle of foreign visitors, by 1974 they had swelled to an overwhelming tide of some 75,000 overseas tourists,⁸² and with them

72,601 overseas tourists and 17,000 Indians was registered, while the estimated total number of tourists expected in 1975 was 90 to 100,000 (*Foreign Economic Trends and Their Implication for the United States*, U.S. Department of Commerce, October 1975). Moreover, these tourists not only visited the Kathmandu Valley; in fiscal year 1974-

came a concomitant increase in hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and other tourist-related services. With the assistance of foreign missions, light industries have been developed, rural electrification projects undertaken, a forestry program established, the telephone system expanded and modernized, and Western-style buildings constructed. Hand in hand with development has gone progress in health, education, and social welfare. With foreign help, programs of malaria eradication and family planning, the upgrading of clinic and hospital facilities, the establishment of additional leprosariums, and the expansion and modernization of the education system have all been undertaken to improve the quality of Nepalese life and to bring the hitherto medieval country into the twentieth century.

The Nepalese confrontation with the twentieth century has unquestionably begun to affect the traditional system of values, particularly of the younger intelligentsia of Kathmandu Valley. This, as might be expected, is primarily expressed in a relaxation of the individual's ties to his family and his gods in favor of the primacy of self. For some, therefore, the ancestral gods and the practices associated with their worship have been laid aside, or at least retired to a less significant role. More especially, the nuclear family has increasingly begun to replace the traditional joint family with its built-in system of social services for the orphaned, needy, physically and mentally handicapped, and the aged.

After a quarter-century, however, the impact of these various outside influences, although felt to at least some degree by all Nepalis, has so far profoundly affected only a very small sector of society.⁸³ Some Jyapu may ride a bus, attend school, or even hold a government post, but the majority still follow their ancestral ways. For most Nepalis, even the sophisticated, the vast concourse of deities, an invisible host inhabiting the Kathmandu Valley, is still paramount. The traditional devotion is rendered with undiminished fervor. This is expressed in individual daily worship (*pūjā*) and in

the collective observance of a seemingly endless cycle of family, local, and national festivals. The life of most Nepalis is not only circumscribed by the physical limits of their milieu—in the Kathmandu Valley a diminutive oval of terrain—but by their traditional values and institutions. Moving between temple and *vihāra*, deity and sacred site, each linked to each in an ancient web of interrelations, the Nepalis worship their gods in traditional ways under the influence of traditional beliefs colored by legend, and by the pervasive influence of tantra-derived mysticism and magic.

If the psychological climate of the Kathmandu Valley has resisted the impact of the outside world, so too has its physical appearance. Progress, it is true, has wrought undeniable (and unforgivable) changes, but the Valley is still today a palimpsest whereon the ancient designs are clear. The walls of the Malla capital cities and other towns have fallen away through disuse and planned demolition, and in Kathmandu and Patan the amorphous suburbs closely impinge. But the heart of each of the three capital cities is still the palace, or *darbar*, square filled with the temples of the gods, fitting neighbors to the house of the king and its one-time immortal resident, the incarnate Viṣṇu (Plates 29-33, 93). For the most part, the Western-style Rana mansions, the new royal palace (Narayan Hiti), the police club, civic center, large hotels, and multistory office buildings lie well beyond the confines of Old Kathmandu, and such structures are almost nonexistent in or near Patan and Bhaktapur. Even within Old Kathmandu, the most changed of the three cities, the increasing number of three and four-story concrete houses has not yet been able to disrupt the traditional harmony of the Newar town (Plates 84, 85).

The Newar town plan is characterized by compact settlement along narrow streets and congested lanes (*galli*) (Maps 7-9; Figure 4; Plates 35-38). In most villages and towns there is at least one main street wide enough for vehicular traffic,⁸⁴ often the old trade routes along which the community devel-

1975, the Nepalese Central Immigration Office extended permits to almost 15,000 persons for trekking in the hinterlands (*The Rising Nepal*, August 21, 1975).

⁸³ Recommended reading in this respect is Malla 1973.

⁸⁴ Oldfield 1880:1, 98 said that the diagonal road pass-

ing through the Kathmandu Darbar Square was the only one in the city that a four-wheeled carriage could be driven on, and Lévi 1905:1, 56 commented that it was the only paved one.

oped. The capital and former capitals, Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhaktapur, have several large temple-filled squares, one of which is a royal plaza, the Darbar Square, and seat of the palace compound. From them, and from the main streets or from some important temple square in smaller towns, radiates a web of narrow lanes. These open out at irregular intervals into minor squares, each a neighborhood (*tol*) center and each with its own assembly of temples, shrines, images, and traditional community buildings (Plate 34). Still largely cobbled, bricked, or of rutted dirt, the streets are traditionally pedestrian ways. They are closely hemmed with tall, multistory houses of mellow brick, tile, and intricately carved wood, whose neighboring eaves almost canopy the narrowest passages below (Plates 35-40, 83, 100-104).⁸⁵ Low narrow doorways lead into interior courts (Plate 40). These usually contain a *caitya* or domestic shrine, and if the house is a traditional one, are surrounded with elegant façades of brick and carved wood. Everywhere the streets and squares serve as the accepted extension of personal living space and in them the people work, play, and rest.

The busy streets, often cluttered with offal and human feces, are also the realm of the gods, where shrines, temples, and images are in familiar juxtaposition with the dwellings and daily activities of the mortals (Plate 42). Some of the images are authentic representations of the Hindu-Buddhist pantheon. Many are superb works of art that date to the early centuries of Licchavi rule. Others—a natural stone or a nail-studded timber—although appearing to the uninitiated as mere curiosities, are just as venerated as the sculptured or painted gods, and each, no less than they, receives its daily due of worship. Each day as dawn breaks the ritually purified and fasting devotee hastens to attend the gods. Bearing a brass tray or an intricately chased vessel, he or she makes the round of the sacred places of the neighborhood, and often more distant ones, offering a flower, a scattering of rice, a lighted lamp, or a touch of vermilion (Plates 43, 44). In the nonsectarian ambience of the Kathmandu Valley, these gods include without distinc-

tion Hindu, Buddhist, and ancient indigenous gods and demigods. Although the identities of many are often unclear to the worshipers, their needs and influence on mortal lives are conceived to be no less significant for that.

Among the houses, and at first glance scarcely to be distinguished from them, are the Buddhist shrines, the *vihāras* (Plates 145, 152). Monasteries in name only, the *vihāras* now double as lay residences and Buddhist temples. *Vihāras* are few in Bhaktapur—a city whose orientation is strongly Hindu—but there are still almost a hundred in Kathmandu, and their ubiquitousness in Patan gives that city its distinctive character (Map 8; Plates 97, 98). But everywhere Buddhism is moribund as Hinduism gains the field.

In the villages there are no commercial centers per se, and commerce is conducted in a few stalls and shops incorporated into private houses. Similarly, although commercial activity in the cities is concentrated around the Darbar Square or along the main arteries, as in Bhaktapur, their homes often serve Newar merchants as a shop and Newar artisans as atelier (Plates 45, 46). At home, usually on the ground floor, are hammered out the copper and brass pots that since at least the Licchavi Period have been the favored Nepalese household and ritual utensils. In his home labors the stonemason, the potter, woodcarver, and goldsmith, the weaver, dyer, and, particularly in the residential part of the *vihāras*, the bronze caster. The villages have no special quarters, since they are inhabited by a homogeneous population of farmers, but the cities are very loosely ordered in accordance with occupational—and therefore caste—groups. In Patan, for example, most of the farming Jyapu dwell in the northeastern sector, the bronze casters in the *vihāras* in the southeastern sector, the goldsmiths in the northwest, and the coppersmiths near the city center. In Bhaktapur, the Brahman quarter is contiguous to the palace square, while less exalted caste groups live progressively farther away. Occupations are also frequently the specialties of certain towns; for example, the dyeing and printing of cloth is character-

considerable street resurfacing and still further modifications in the appearance of the traditional Newar town, particularly the capital city, Kathmandu.

⁸⁵ I am writing of the time to 1971, when I left the Kathmandu Valley, but the extensive beautification of the city at the time of the coronation of February 1975 included

istic of Bhaktapur, pottery making of Thimi, oil pressing of Khokana, and metallurgy of Patan. In Patan, as in the other two large cities, the out-castes (a condition invalidated by law but not by custom) still dwell on the city periphery, just beyond what were once the city walls.

Through its essential architectural unity, not the least important element of which is the common house, the Newar town achieves a pleasing visual continuity (Plates 8-10, 29-37, 41, 83-85, 92-94, 99-104, 111, 112). Despite the narrow streets and density of structures—the tall, closely packed houses, temples, shrines, and crowding images—the Newar settlements do not seem closed in. Congestion is avoided and the perspective given variety by the incorporation of open spaces that are skillfully balanced against the occupied areas. Space is provided not only in the many open squares, but by means of ponds and fountains, and occasional semi-enclosed garden areas (Figure 4; Plates 41, 112, 231). Many of the ponds and fountains, like the surrounding sacred structures and images, are ancient foundations that have remained in continuing use to the present. For the majority of the Valley population, it is the ponds and fountains, together with the rivers and wells, that still must satisfy domestic needs for water.

The Newar town is aesthetically satisfying both in its internal design and in its relation to its surroundings. It is logically fitted into the terrain, its compact form accords with the Newar's thrifty regard for the intensively farmed land, and its earth tones and sloping roofs are in harmony with the total landscape into which it blends (Plates 8-10, 84, 92, 94, 99, 100).

The artistic sense of the Newars is expressed not only in the harmony of their town and cityscapes, but in the sensitive shaping of the land. The sloping sides of the Valley, together with its random hillocks and ravines, has led—as everywhere in upland Nepal—to an elaborate system of terracing to obtain sufficient flat terrain suitable for wet rice culture. Shaped over millennia from the earth itself by no more than man's will and a single tool, the short-handled hoe (Newari, *kū*, Nepali, *koḍālī*), the terraces rise tier upon tier, their reced-

ing steps mirroring the terraced pit fountains and the tiered roofs and stepped plinths of the characteristic Newar temple ("pagoda") (Plates 5-7, 9). And just as the urban roofs and temples assume different shapes and colors with changing skies and light, so also the terraces and diked bottomland alter their appearance from one season to another. After the fall harvest the land, sere and geometrically austere against the white Himalayan backdrop, may be sown with winter wheat, with vegetables, or serve for a spell of domestic brick production. Turned to gold in the latter part of the winter by the brilliantly flowering mustard plants, each paddy and each miniature pocket of terraced land is transformed by June rains into innumerable shimmering lakes and pools in which are reflected the turbulent monsoon sky (Plate 4). After the collective preparation of the fields, the watery reaches soon turn to the greens of the maturing rice; and at length, closing the yearly cycle, to harvest golds. Accompanying the annual farming cycle is a corresponding cycle of ceremonies, domestic and communal. These guide each individual through his life and define his reciprocal relation with the gods and demigods with whom he shares the splendid Valley of Kathmandu.

As I have already pointed out, the Valley is not a Newar preserve, but is shared with the Parvatiyā, who are both townspeople and farmers. Effectively absent from the Newar villages, the Parvatiyā, and particularly the Gorkhalis—traditionally fighters rather than builders—have unobtrusively fitted themselves into the existing Newar cityscapes with minimal disruption. Parvatiyā farmers, as late-comers to the Valley, tend to dwell on the higher slopes of the Valley rim, typically in isolated houses attached to their terraced farms or in amorphous settlements of a few scattered houses (Plates 7, 82). Possessed of the same warmth and deep spiritual qualities that mark the national character, these people, no less than the Newars invite serious study. But here we are essentially concerned with the indigenous roots of the Valley culture, which are to be found in the Newar community, and the emphasis must of necessity lie there.



CHAPTER 2

THE LICCHAVIS: CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATE, A.D. 300–879

SOURCES FOR NEPALESE HISTORY

THE HISTORIC PERIOD of the Kathmandu Valley may be divided for convenience into seven political periods, most named for the successive dynasties that controlled the destiny of Nepal Mandala. These periods are:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Licchavi | ca. A.D. 300 to ca. 879 |
| 2. Transitional | ca. 879 to 1200 |
| 3. Early Malla | 1200 to 1382 |
| 4. Late Malla | 1382 to 1769 |
| 5. Shah | 1769 to the present, but interrupted by loss of power for a century |
| 6. Rana | 1846 to 1951, when a local family usurped the power but not the throne of the Shahs |
| 7. Shah "restoration" | 1951 to the present |

These bones are often tantalizingly bare. The history of the Transitional and Early Malla years, almost to the end of the fourteenth century, is really unknown. Relieved only occasionally by the certainty of some specific event—a temple repaired, a fire, or a famine—our knowledge of the Valley for these six centuries is essentially a tentative,

fragile, and variable reconstruction of a succession of phantom rulers known to posterity almost by name alone. By contrast, the history of the Licchavi Period is far more ample, and the later Malla Period is quite well known. Archaeology is still an infant study in Nepal, and except for token excavations has not yet been brought to bear on the problems of Valley history. What is known is derived from a variety of sources, local and foreign. These include inscriptions on stone slabs (*silāpatra*) and pillars, on sculptures and paintings, on copperplates (*tāmrapatra*) and gilt copperplates (*suvarṇapatra*). Coins are another source. So also are documents and manuscripts written on palm leaves (*tālapatra*, *tādapatra*) or on handmade paper. A particularly important source is the manuscripts' closing passages, the colophons, which are frequently dated and include the name of the reigning king and the locale where the manuscript was copied. Still other sources for Nepali history are the local chronicles (*vamśāvalis*), religious texts (*mahātmyas* and *pu-rānas*), journals (*thyāsaphus*), letters, and gleanings from the literature of India, Tibet, China, and the West. There is also the very important artistic testimony of the monuments themselves, which at times speak more eloquently of Valley history than the written documents.

Most of the historical sources for the history of

Nepal have already been described by Sylvain Lévi and, more briefly, for the period roughly A.D. 750 to 1480, by Luciano Petech.¹ However, two other important sources for the history of the Late Malla and Shah Periods have not hitherto received the attention they deserve. They are land transfer records and private journals. The former, known by the same name as the palm leaf manuscripts, *tālapatra*, *tādāpatra*, are written on narrow strips of palm leaf that coil tightly for storage (Plate 63). Stamped in clay with an official seal, the *tālapatras* may be dated with exactitude, and since they frequently bear the name of the reigning king, they are of value in establishing the chronology of Nepali rulers.² Such transfer records have been in use since at least A.D. 1283, the date of the earliest such document now known.³ Despite their importance, these records have been largely ignored by scholars, and many *tālapatras*—perhaps the majority—have found their way into dust bins or the shops to be dissipated as curios.⁴

More important than the *tālapatras* because of the variety of dated information they contain are the journals in which priests and pandits recorded the daily minutiae of the religious and political life of their time. Known as *thyāsaphu* after the type of accordion-folded paper manuscripts on which they are usually written (Plate 62), such journals are fairly abundant, beginning with the early seventeenth century. They have been put to good use by Nepali historians, and a few have been published.⁵ Most remain unpublished, in private hands.

Another primary source for Nepali history, the *vamśāvalis*, call for special comment. Literally ge-

nealogies, the chronicles are in fact abridged dynastic histories in which the deeds of kings respecting the gods are the first consideration. These chronicles comprise two groups, one compiled in the fourteenth century and one in the eighteenth and nineteenth. The later chronicles rely heavily on the early ones, and in the political sphere, at least, are generally less reliable. They are usually redacted in Nepali, and there are both Buddhist and Brahmanical rescensions. The Buddhist *vamśāvalis* are exemplified by the *History of Nepal* edited by Daniel Wright, first published in 1877 and as a third edition in 1966. The Brahmanical rescensions essentially follow the Buddhist chronicles, despite a difference of emphasis, and exist in a number of manuscript and printed forms. One version is published in English⁶ and another, as the *Bhāṣāvamśāvali*, in Nepali.⁷ Other useful published Brahmanical chronicles, also in Nepali, are the *Rājabhogamālā*⁸ and the *Rājavamśāvali*.⁹

The older chronicles are represented by a fragmentary text known as the VK (*Vamśāvali* from the Kaisher Library),¹⁰ by a lost work apparently very similar to the VK published in part by Kirkpatrick in 1811,¹¹ and by the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvali*, the *Chronicle of the Gopāla Kings*. Of these the most important is the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvali*, so titled by modern Nepali scholars because it begins with the history of the Gopāla kings. It is also known as the *Bendall Vamśāvali* (VBd) after its discoverer, Cecil Bendall, and segments of it are known as V¹, V², and V³ for the separate portions that comprise the chronicle.¹² The existing works

¹ Lévi 1905:1, 75-218; Petech 1958:5-12.

² Cf. D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. v, 130-135; Burleigh 1976.

³ Nepal Saṃvat (N.S.) 403 Māgha (D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. v, 130).

⁴ Cf. Burleigh 1971, one of the first European scholars to call attention to the importance, and loss, of this national resource. Jayaswal 1936:192 and n. 1 noted how abundant they were in Nepal in contrast to India, where only the clay seals have endured.

⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. III; G. Vajracharya 1967, 1967a, 1967b, 1968, 1968a.

⁶ Hasrat 1970.

⁷ N. Paudel 1963, part 1; and Lamshal 1966, part 2. Concerning the late chronicles see Hasrat 1970:xv-xix;

Lévi 1905:1, 193-198; Petech 1958:8-10.

⁸ *Rājabhogamālā* 1969, 1970.

⁹ B. Sharma 1968; 1968a; 1969.

¹⁰ Petech 1958:7-8 describes the VK and transliterates it in app. v, pp. 213-217; D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. C, 158-163 publishes the VK in Devanagari.

¹¹ Kirkpatrick 1969:255-275.

¹² First discussed by Bendall 1903:3-5, reported by Lévi 1905:1, 198-199, and described by Petech 1958:5-7, who transliterates a portion as app. vi, pp. 219-224. The complexity of the language employed—corrupt Sanskrit and scarcely known classical Newari—has defied a full translation. Two Devanagari versions are available (Naraharinath 1959a and D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. B, 112-157). Both transcriptions have been greatly improved by scholars of

are redacted in corrupt Sanskrit and Old Newari. Although the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* and the other early chronicles were not compiled until the late fourteenth century at the court of Sthitirāja Malla (ca. A.D. 1382-1395), they do attempt to outline the reigns of all the preceding kings. Oral tradition was surely the chief source of information for the chroniclers, supplemented by documentary materials that have largely disappeared.¹³ While the political and cultural events to which the chronicles of both periods allude were never wholly forgotten, they were often chronologically misplaced, and at times muddled to the point of being misleading. All the chronicles share a common fault of time exaggeration, particularly in the matter of regnal periods of improbable duration.

By themselves, none of the chronicles is wholly reliable. But because the assertions of the chroniclers about events even quite remote from their own time can frequently be corroborated by other evidence, considerable weight can be placed on their testimony. This has been amply proven by the analysis of folios of the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, which describe the Ābhīra Gupta rulers and their deeds.¹⁴ Further, although often dismissed as a minor historical source "serving the economic interests of the priests and their faith,"¹⁵ the chronicles, early and late, are actually of prime importance. Not only are the historical indices of the early chronicles often quite accurate, but the cultural materials they supply are of great significance. The chroniclers' interest in recording pious undertakings frequently assists in clarifying the history of the Valley monuments. There is no doubt that certain material that the chroniclers, especially the later ones, set down as political or religious history is fantasy. But even these entries are valuable in providing an extraordinarily perceptive insight into the cultural environment of the writers' times.

the Samśodhana-maṇḍala, Kathmandu, but publication is awaited. Recently another rescension of the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* has come to light in Nepal, but also awaits study and publication.

¹³ Lévi 1905:1, 198 reports that both Bhagvanlal Indraji and M. Minayeff, both sound scholars, saw in Patan "long bands on which were inscribed in chronological order all the kings of Nepal." Lévi did not see these, nor did I, nor have I heard of them. But if they did exist, they may

SOURCES FOR THE LICCHAVI PERIOD

The primary source for the history of the Licchavi Period is their own inscriptions, a preponderance of which are on stone, the *śilāpatras*. Many are royal edicts and charters engraved on thick stone slabs and erected as public proclamations to the concerned subjects (Plates 50-52, 54). Others, of kings and wealthy persons, relate to acts of piety (Plate 49). Many *śilāpatras* still stand in towns and villages, in the busy squares, the crossroads, at the temples, and particularly in the public fountains. Often a mute stele now addressed only to the surrounding paddy fields bears testimony to a Licchavi settlement long disappeared, and many inscriptions surely lie underground. Inscriptions are also found engraved on the pedestals of lingas and images, on votive pillars and architectural fragments, on waterspouts, reservoirs, and other objects. Contemporary Nepalis, except for a few scholars, cannot comprehend the inscriptions, and subject the steles to varying local conditions. In some instances they are conceived as mysterious and sacred, and like any deity are honored with vermilion daubs or other offerings. More often, they serve utilitarian purposes—a handy rack for drying clothes, a building stone, or an occasional prop (Plate 55)—and they are particularly attractive to the destructive attention of children at play. Miraculously, many inscriptions have weathered all this and are remarkably preserved; others are damaged almost beyond usefulness (Plates 52, 53).

Since Raniero Gnoli's compendium of ninety-one Licchavi inscriptions appeared in 1956,¹⁶ published Licchavi inscriptions have more than doubled through the efforts of Nepali scholars publishing in diverse Nepali-language journals. One hundred eighty-nine of them have been brought together by D. Vajracharya in the compendium *Licchaviḥālakā abhilekha* (Licchavi have represented a traditional system of recording royal succession also used by the chroniclers. One wonders, however, whether the reference is actually to a type of scroll paintings, horizontal cloth banners preserved in some of the *vihāras*, which do depict certain historical events in a religious context (Plate 508).

¹⁴ Slusser and Vajracharya 1972, 1973, 1973a.

¹⁵ Lévi 1905:1, 200.

¹⁶ Gnoli 1956.

Period Inscriptions). For the most part arranged in chronological order, the inscriptions are published in the original Sanskrit, together with a Nepali translation and extensive commentary.¹⁷ Most of the inscriptions have also been published by Hari Ram Joshi, *Nepālaḷo prācīna abhilekḷha* (*Ancient Nepalese Inscriptions*), together with a very useful index to the contents of each.¹⁸ A concordance of the serial numbers employed in the two works will be found in Appendix iv, "An Inventory of Licchavi Inscriptions," together with reference to previous publication. The inventory also contains the name of the ruler and date of issue of each inscription (when known), the inscription's location, and the type of object on which it appears. Inscriptions can thus be quickly traced by means of one of these indexes.

After the inscriptions, the most important source of Licchavi history is in art and architecture. Scores of stone sculptures, some bronzes, and the ruins of buildings speak eloquently of the Licchavi past. Other sources for Licchavi history are the *vamśāvalis* and the brief but important notes in foreign records, especially the memoirs of two seventh-century Chinese travelers, the pilgrim Hsüan-tsang and the envoy Wang Hsüan-t'sê. Curiously, although copperplate inscriptions such as those used in ancient India¹⁹ are found in Nepal from at least A.D. 1100²⁰ and are referred to in Licchavi stone inscriptions,²¹ no Licchavi copperplate inscriptions have been recovered. Some may have disappeared in the foundry melting pots in order to finance other projects, as we know occurred with royal archives in later times.²² And although "coins made of red copper" are reported by Chinese

travelers, and there are ample references to them in the inscriptions, Licchavi coins are disappointingly few and of limited assistance as a historical resource.²³ Considering the relative paucity of sources for Licchavi Nepal, it is surprising not that we know so little about it, but that we know so much.

THE LICCHAVI PERIOD

CA. A.D. 300 TO CA. A.D. 879

The name "Licchavi" is familiar in Northeast Indian history for almost a millennium, from the time of the Buddha into at least the fourth century A.D. The Licchavis were the chief element of the Vṛji tribal confederation, and their republic bordered on the left bank of the Ganges, south of what is now Nepal. Vaiśālī (modern Basarh), their capital, lay across the river from Pāṭaliputra (modern Patna), the capital city first of the Mauryas and later of the Imperial Guptas (Map 1). The closeness of the Licchavis and Guptas was not in geographic proximity alone, for at least by the time of the Imperial Guptas they were allied through the marriage of Candragupta I (ascended A.D. 320) and a Licchavi girl, Kumāradevī. This relationship was proclaimed on the Gupta coinage of the time, and Candragupta's son and heir, Samudragupta, later proudly acknowledged the Licchavi relationship in his Allahabad pillar inscription.²⁴

In Nepal, King Śivadeva I (ca. A.D. 590-604) and his descendants claimed to belong to the Licchavi lineage. The common expression used to describe this relationship is *Licchavi kulakḷetu*, literally

¹⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973. Unfortunately, this convenient source and its invaluable Nepali translation and commentary was not available during the period I was engaged in research in Nepal. There are 190 entries but inscription 171 does not appear to belong to the Licchavi Period (Pal 1972:60-61, n. 10). There are six more Licchavi inscriptions that were either inadvertently omitted from the compendium or discovered later, making a total of 195 published inscriptions through 1977. The additions to the compendium will be found in: M. P. Khanal 1973:inscr. 37 (79); H. R. Joshi 1973:inscr. 105 (381-382); G. Vajracharya 1976a:inscrs. 1, 2; D. Vajracharya and Shrestha 1976:doc. 1 (3-4); and Manandhar 1977: 86-87.

¹⁸ H. R. Joshi 1973.

¹⁹ Sircar 1965:139, 270-274, 287, *passim*. Fā-hien notes, in the fourth century A.D., that land grants were recorded on metal plates in Mathura and in Ceylon (Legge 1965:43, 109).

²⁰ M. R. Pant and Sharma 1977. Until the recent discovery of this copperplate, dated N.S. 221 Mārga, and a second, N.S. 282 Mārga (A.D. 1161), the earliest corresponded to A.D. 1333 (N.S. 454 Mārga) (D. Regmi 1966: part 3, app. A, inscr. 27 [18-19]).

²¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 126 (474-478).

²² See Chapters 8, 9.

²³ Lévi 1905:1, 164; Beal 1969:11, 80; Walsh 1908; S. Joshi 1960:45-62.

²⁴ Fleet 1970:8; Sircar 1965:262-268.

“glory of the Licchavi clan,” which occurs in the panegyric (*praśasti*) prefacing the king’s name. The first and only epigraphical record of the connection of these Licchavis of Nepal with the Indian Licchavis occurs in an inscription of King Jayadeva II established at Paśupatinātha temple in A.D. 733.²⁵ Beginning with an impressive list of Puranic ancestors of the solar dynasty (Sūryavaṃśa), Jayadeva at length comes to an illustrious ruler by the name of “Licchavi.” This name, he writes, thereafter replaced the more general dynastic designation, “solar.” Some scholars have doubted that the rulers prior to Śivadeva I belonged to the Licchavi dynasty, because they did not expressly refer to themselves as Licchavis.²⁶ Such doubts can be dispelled not only because Jayadeva, an avowed Licchavi, includes many of these same early kings in his genealogy, but also because the daughter of Mānadeva I, the first king for whom there are inscriptions, states expressly that he was “born into the Licchavi lineage.”²⁷

The chronicles, both early and late, explicitly support the Indian ancestry of the Licchavis. In conformance with Jayadeva’s inscribed genealogy, the *Gopālarāja-vaṃśāvalī* traces the Valley Licchavis to Ikṣvāku, legendary founder of the solar dynasty and son of Manu, the Hindu lawgiver: “Into this dynasty Viśāla a king was born, after him ten more, and then after conquering the Kirāta king the Licchavi dynasty began with Vikukṣi.”²⁸ The *Bhāṣāvamśāvalī* also takes the southern Licchavi source of the Nepali kings for granted: “In the time of the reign of the Kirāta king Galija, Nimiṣṭānkaravarmā, Lord of Vaiśālī and a descendant of King Viśāla, came from the south with many soldiers, and having made war became king.”²⁹

We do not know what circumstances impelled certain Licchavis of India to establish a new state

in the Himalayas in the early centuries of the Christian era. In the time of the Buddha, the Licchavis were noted for their prosperity, and Vaiśālī was the most opulent city of northern India. This condition apparently was related to the Licchavis’ strategic location on the great northern trade route, adjacent to the Ganges traffic.³⁰ Politically assimilated by the expanding Mauryan empire, the Licchavis nonetheless continued to command a certain respect in northeast India into the fourth century A.D., as witnessed by the Guptas’ proudly contracted matrimonial alliance with them.³¹ Perhaps some of these renowned traders, recognizing the advantages of controlling the Nepal Valley, determined to seize the prosperous entrepôt for themselves. In any event, the well-known republicanism of the Licchavis of India must by then have been a thing of the past, for in Nepal Mandala the regime was clearly monarchical.

Beyond the chronicles’ record of the Kirāta defeat, we have no information about the circumstances under which the Licchavis established themselves in the Nepal Valley, or when it happened. Without preamble, their history opens dramatically with the Changu Nārāyaṇa pillar inscription of King Mānadeva I dated Śaka Saṃvat 386 Jyeṣṭha (A.D. 464) (Plates 47, 48).³² However, three preceding rulers, Vṛsadeva (the furthest removed), Śaṅkaradeva, and Dharmadeva, are named in the Changu inscription, again in Jayadeva’s Paśupatinātha inscription, and are confirmed by frequent reference in the chronicles.³³ The chronicles also name still earlier kings, some of whom appear to be historical personages. An example is Haridattavarman.³⁴ Jayadeva in his Paśupatinātha inscription further extends the ancestral line by some thirty-seven kings previous to

the possibility that Kumāradevi came from the Licchavis of Nepal (R. Majumdar 1966:111 [1971] 3-4).

³² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 2 (9-30). If Licchavi reckoning is *kārttikādi*, as it now seems, the corresponding Christian era date is A.D. 465, as discussed in Appendix 1.

³³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 148 (548-562). Cf. the lists in Lévi 1905:11, 92 or D. Regmi 1969:66. The spelling of these names, as well as those of the documented kings, varies. For example, Dharmadeva is found as Dharmadatta and Dharmagatadeva, and Vṛsadeva as Viśvadeva.

³⁴ See Chapter 9.

²⁵ Mānadeva Saṃvat (M.S.) 157 Kārtika (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 148 [548-562]). Respecting Licchavi eras and their conversion see Appendix 1.

²⁶ D. Regmi 1969:120-121.

²⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 20 (82-87); D. Pant 1964.

²⁸ Fols. 19a, b.

²⁹ N. Paudel 1963:51-52.

³⁰ Irwin 1973:718-719; H. Jha 1970:71-74.

³¹ The later history of the Licchavis in India, at the time of this matrimonial alliance, is by no means clear. It is unknown where their seat then was, and there is even

Vṛsadeva.³⁵ The most remote is the Hindu creator, Brahmā, followed by Sūrya, another deity and the eponym of the lineage; then come legendary figures of Hinduism, Manu and Ikṣvāku. The thirteenth king antedating Jayadeva is another Jayadeva, referred to by historians as Jayadeva I; the twelve kings between the two Jayadevas are unnamed. At an average twenty-year reign per king, Jayadeva I would have ruled sometime in the second century A.D. Thus, although the first historically fixed king is of the fifth century, as a conservative estimate it seems reasonable to assume that the beginning of the Licchavi Period in Nepal is no later than A.D. 300. Most likely it is earlier.

A terminal date for the Licchavi dynasty is no less difficult to establish. The last known dated record issued by a Licchavi king is Jayadeva's Paśupatinātha inscription in A.D. 733. The next most prominent landmark in Nepali history is the institution of a new era, the Nepal Saṃvat, on 20 October A.D. 879. Between these two dates, A.D. 733 and 879, there are a few inscriptions, the last in A.D. 877,³⁶ which continue to use the Licchavi script and era. None is a royal issue, but they refer to kings named Balirāja, Baladeva, and Mānadeva. We know nothing about these kings or whether they were even the lineal descendants of the known Licchavis, either in the main line or collateral ones. All the evidence at our command suggests, however, that there was no dramatic extinction of the Licchavi dynasty after Jayadeva II. In weakened and attenuated form some of the Licchavi descendants may have held sway over parts of Nepal Mandala for several more centuries. This was politically and culturally a transitional period. The Nepal Saṃvat epoch year one, A.D. 879, will provide a convenient, if arbitrary, dividing line between the Licchavi Period proper and the succeeding Transitional Period.



Despite our increasing knowledge about Licchavi Nepal, one can still only crudely reconstruct the dynastic and political history. In this work I shall set aside the conflicting evidence of the *vamśāvalis*, which despite decades of intensive juggling have

failed to yield a reliable chronology of rulers, and depend solely on the inscriptional evidence. This method leaves lacunae, and by it one cannot establish exact regnal dates. But the inscriptions provide a sound framework that can be amplified in time with the discovery of new inscriptions or other pertinent evidence. Hence, in Table 1, Appendix III, I have listed in chronological order only the verified rulers together with the range of their dated inscriptions. I have not attempted to reconstruct their regnal dates, which are unknown. The names of persons who almost certainly ruled but for whom no incontrovertible dated documentary proof has been found are given in brackets. The Roman numerals are a convenience used to distinguish rulers of the same name, but they do not occur in the original documents.

The Early Licchavi Kings

Our information respecting the kings who reigned before Mānadeva I is derived from the latter's Changu Nārāyaṇa pillar inscription, from Jayadeva's Paśupatinātha inscription, and from the chronicles. From these sources we know that Mānadeva's great-grandfather, Vṛsadeva, who must have reigned about the beginning of the fifth century, was probably a ruler of some consequence. Jayadeva, who only listed the Licchavi rulers he believed had enhanced the glory of the lineage, refers to him as a matchless and most excellent king (*rājottoma*). Whether he was one of the "frontier kings" whom the Imperial Guptas claimed paid them obeisance, is unknown. However, we are told that Vṛsadeva was "not given to war," so he may have accepted a subservient status for Nepal Mandala vis-à-vis the powerful Gupta Empire. Vṛsadeva was a Buddhist who ensured his everlasting fame by the foundation of Svayambhū stupa, the most important Buddhist monument in Nepal (Plates 2, 217, 223, 225).³⁷ Among Vṛsadeva's many sons, "well-trained, bold, and brave," Śaṅkaradeva was the one to succeed him. The sources affirm that Śaṅkaradeva was reputed for his valor, ruled well, and made the country prosperous. His son,

racharya 1973:inscr. 190 [599]).

³⁷ Respecting Vṛsadeva's foundation, see Chapter 10.

³⁵ A few effaced letters preclude an exact count.

³⁶ The *Sūsruta-saṃhitā (sahottara-tantra)*, a treatise on Ayurvedic medicine, dated M.S. 301 Vaiśākha (D. Vaj-

Dharmadeva, according to the words of his successor, Mānadeva, embodied the virtues of an ideal king (*rājaṣcarita*). Dharmadeva's reign was cut short by sudden death. That this was caused by an accident of some sort seems evident from Mānadeva's inscription: we are told that the panic-stricken servants interrupted the religious devotions of Queen Rājyavatī with the terrible news. Leaving her rites unfinished, the queen left the temple determined to immolate herself with the deceased king. She was dissuaded by her son Mānadeva's threats to commit suicide in her wake.

Because of the long inscription Mānadeva caused to be inscribed on the Changu Nārāyaṇa pillar, together with a number of shorter inscriptions, he is the only Nepali king before the end of the sixth century who emerges as a person of substance. He therefore occupies an important and heroic place in Nepali history, which may be greater than is in fact warranted. From the Changu Nārāyaṇa inscription we know, however, that Mānadeva was a strong-willed person determined to keep intact the patrimony that Dharmadeva's untimely death had vested in him.³⁸ On learning of Dharmadeva's death, various tributary chiefs (*sāmantas*, *mahā-sāmantas*) seem to have seized the occasion to free themselves of Licchavi suzerainty. They abstained from coming to the Licchavi court when called to make obeisance to the new, and apparently very young, king. Furious at this flouting of authority, Mānadeva, with his mother's permission, seems to have set off with an army to force them into submission. He first went to the east, where the feudatories again accepted the Licchavi ruler as suzerain without a struggle. Referred to in the inscription as *śaṭha* (deceitful, wicked), these eastern feudatories were most likely the Kirātas. Then, "undaunted, like a lion shaking his mane," Mānadeva turned to the west in an effort to negotiate the submission of the Mallapurī feudatories. These apparently lived west of the Kali Gandaki River in what is now western Nepal (Map 2).³⁹ Less tractable than the eastern feudatories, the western ones had to be subdued by arms. In this venture Mānadeva was aided by a maternal uncle who seems to have

come with a separate army from some nearby Indian state. Conquering the rebellious western *sāmantas* and reintegrating them into his kingdom, the victorious Mānadeva recorded all these exploits in A.D. 464. For this purpose, at the prestigious hill-top temple of Nārāyaṇa near Changu, he raised the customary Garuḍa-crowned pillar of victors, the Garuḍa standard (Garuḍadhvajā) (Plate 47). The text is written in Sanskrit, inscribed in the script then current in the Gupta Empire, and employs the Indian Śaka Saṃvat.⁴⁰ It seems likely that the pillar's original crowning emblem is the anthropomorphized Garuḍa now on the ground, and that it represents a portrait of the king (Plate 64).

If Mānadeva issued any edicts or granted any charters in his long reign of some forty-one years, as did most of his successors, they must have been on copperplates or other media now lost; no *śilā-patras* have been found. The pillar inscription is supplemented only by a number of short stone inscriptions, for the most part concerned with the consecration of Śivaliṅgas and Viṣṇu images (Plate 395). Mānadeva also established at least one Buddhist *vihāra*, and probably two important stupas, royal gifts to be examined further along. It is also most likely that it was he who built the first known Licchavi palace, Mānagrha, from which all subsequent kings of the Licchavi family ruled until the middle of the seventh century.

The name of this celebrated Nepali king occasions special comment. The names of other Licchavi kings, before and after, for the most part derive from well-known Hindu deities.⁴¹ But in incorporating the vocable *māna*, Mānadeva's name compares to that of various Indian saints and scholars. In Sanskrit *māna* has two homonyms, one (from the root *mā*) signifying "measure," the other (from *man*), "to think," and in both the idea of "pride," "self-esteem" appears to be innate.⁴² We do not know what the Nepali king's name signifies. But Lévi asks whether it may be interpreted as "the king who entertains for God (*deva*) an esteem equaling that in which he holds himself." As a motto that seems applicable to the king bearing such an unusual name, he proposes "Who takes

³⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:22-27.

³⁹ D. Vajracharya 1973:25-27.

⁴⁰ On the Śaka Saṃvat, see Appendix 1.

⁴¹ Lévi 1905:11, 104-105 seems to have been the first to draw attention to this anomaly.

⁴² Monier-Williams 1899:783, 809.

pride in himself, Fortune follows whether she wishes or not."⁴³ In any event, the prefix *māna* was attached to many things related to this king, and occurs with regularity in various applications throughout the subsequent history of Nepal.

At least eight Licchavi kings reigned in the century after Mānadeva's death in A.D. 505. Some, such as Mahīdeva, are known only from Jayadeva's genealogy. Others, such as Manudeva, Vāmanadeva, and perhaps Rāmadeva, are known from a single inscription each. For others, namely Vasantadeva and Śivadeva I, a number of inscriptions have been found (Appendix iv). Those of Vasantadeva, beginning in A.D. 506, represent the first of the royal charters and edicts. Each is engraved on a substantial stone slab, rounded off at the top and decorated with sacred symbols; below is the Sanskrit text, inscribed in Gupta characters and framed in accordance with a well-established formula. The latter corresponds to the formulae used in the late Gupta Period in India, where they were engraved on copperplates rather than stone.⁴⁴ Both in physical form and formula, the type of stele instituted by Vasantadeva persisted throughout the Licchavi Period and afterward (Plates 50, 51, 54, 56). That Vasantadeva or the other sixth-century kings were not of Mānadeva's stature seems probable from the powerful role that the *sāmantas* and other nobles were allowed to play at their courts. The most important of these were the Ābhīra Guptas and the *sāmanta* Aṃśuvarman.

The Sāmanta Aṃśuvarman

There is no doubt that Aṃśuvarman (alternately, Aṃśuvarmā) is one of the most interesting, best known, yet enigmatic kings of Nepal. Not unlike Mānadeva, he is one of the few rulers of ancient Nepal to emerge from the arid genealogies as a

⁴³ Lévi 1905:11, 105.

⁴⁴ Lévi 1905:11, 118.

⁴⁵ The first dated inscription in which his name appears corresponds to A.D. 594 (s.s. 516 Jyeṣṭha), but is preceded by slightly earlier undated ones (D. Vajracharya 1973: inscs. 58-60 [233-248]).

⁴⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:235-236.

⁴⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973: inscs. 58-65, 68-70 (233-265, 274-289). Sircar 1966:289 defines *sāmanta* as a feudatory ruler, subordinate chief, or minister. It seems that in

distinct and powerful personality. Aṃśuvarman's declared rule lasted from about A.D. 605 to 621, but his assumption of power at the court of Śivadeva I preceded this by a decade. Beginning about A.D. 594, his name appears regularly in the inscriptions of Śivadeva as a powerful officer of the realm.⁴⁶ Moreover, from the beginning, when we first encounter his name, it is clearly Aṃśuvarman who wields the power, even though the inscription is issued in the name of the Licchavi king.⁴⁷ In this inscription and other early ones Aṃśuvarman has even attached the honorific *śrī* to the title *sāmanta* and soon refers to himself as *śrī mahāsāmanta* (illustrious high feudatory).⁴⁷ Later, probably at Śivadeva's death, when Aṃśuvarman became sole ruler, he continued to use the title *śrī mahāsāmanta*. Still later, perhaps as he consolidated his position, he abandoned it in favor of "śrī Aṃśuvarman," Aṃśuvarman the Illustrious. On one undated coin issue he assumed the exalted title King of Kings (*mahārājadhīrāja*), as no Licchavi predecessor had, together with the brief identification "śrī Aṃśu."⁴⁸ Although the chronicles aver that Aṃśuvarman was Śivadeva's nephew—"the son of Śivadeva's sister"—Aṃśuvarman was almost certainly not a Licchavi.⁴⁹ He not only did not claim this relationship, but symbolized by his coin device that he belonged to the family of the moon (Somavamśa), rather than the solar lineage the Licchavis claimed. Further, although he was one of the most outstanding rulers of the period, his name is pointedly omitted from the Licchavi genealogy recorded by Jayadeva II only a century after Aṃśuvarman's reign.⁵⁰ It is doubtful, however, that he was a foreigner, nor was he a Ṭhakurī, a meaningless designation when applied in a dynastic sense.⁵¹

Shortly before or immediately after Śivadeva's death, Aṃśuvarman had built for himself a new and opulent chancery, naming it after Śiva's abode, effect both senses should be understood as used in Nepali inscriptions, since *sāmantas* such as Aṃśuvarman were apparently both feudatories and ministers at the court.

⁴⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973: inscs. 71-74, 77-79, 81-86 (290-314, 320-341, 345-365), also p. 295; S. Joshi 1960:55.

⁴⁹ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 22b; N. Paudel 1963:84; D. Vajracharya 1973:235-238, 295-296.

⁵⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973: inscr. 148 (548-562).

⁵¹ See Chapter 3.

Kailāsakuṭa-bhavana, the Mansion of Kailāsa Peak. From it were issued all of his edicts as sole ruler. He assured the maintenance of the older palace, Mānagr̥ha, and scrupulously provided for the Licchavis, whose seat it continued to be. One of the Licchavis, Udayadeva, was pointedly named crown prince in Aṃśuvarman's later inscriptions, and in fact did succeed him on the throne. The location of the two seats, Mānagr̥ha and Kailāsakuṭa, is yet to be proven. As discussed in Chapter 5, it seems almost certain that Mānagr̥ha lay in what is now Hadigaon (Maps 4, 5) and Kailāsakuṭa in Kathmandu. It is not impossible that the latter represented the traditional territory over which Aṃśuvarman's family held feudal rights. It is also not impossible that Aṃśuvarman was related to the Ābhīra Gupta, as we will examine below.

Far more interesting than Aṃśuvarman's ancestry or his right to rule Nepal is the man himself. Of all the kings of Nepal (insofar as our documents reveal) it is Aṃśuvarman who most closely approximates the Indian ideal of kingship, virtues epitomized in the celebrated King Vikramāditya.⁵² As records of the Licchavi Period go, Aṃśuvarman's are prolific. Together with those issued jointly with Śivadeva, they account for more than a fifth of the total number of known Licchavi inscriptions. They reveal his deep concern for the state over which he presided; almost without exception they refer to administrative matters, and often with surprising attention to minor details. The creation of judicial regulations, according to his own words, gave him "pleasure like unto a festival." Not only the impersonal state but the lives of its individual subjects were Aṃśuvarman's compassionate concern. This is evident from his own words as they speak to us from one of his inscriptions, "How can I make my people happy?" His good deeds, moreover, were noted in the records of others. He was a man of sensibility and learning,

⁵² King of Ujjayinī, India, patron of letters for whom the era with an epoch year corresponding to 57 B.C., the Vikrama Saṃvat, is named. In Nepali legend, King Vikramāditya is often identified with Mānadeva I.

⁵³ D. Vajracharya 1964:4-7; 1973:inscrs. 77, 85, 88 (320-335, 357-363, 368-369).

⁵⁴ Beal 1969:11, 81. Beal writes *śabdavidyā* and translates as "sounds." But the treatise must refer to the Sanskrit preoccupation with *śabdālamkāra* (embellishment of the

who proudly claimed to have studied the *śāstras* night and day.⁵³ He is credited with having written a treatise on rhetoric,⁵⁴ to have introduced the study of Sanskrit grammar into the Valley,⁵⁵ and to have convoked in his reign a symposium on Sanskrit grammar and other subjects.⁵⁶ Rather than use the conventional exalted titles favored by most rulers, he distinguished himself with a more individualistic expression. This was "Śrīkalahābhīmānī," literally, "proud of dissension with Lakṣmī (goddess of wealth)," that is, he placed wisdom before wealth.⁵⁷ Aṃśuvarman was apparently above all a devotee of Śiva. He chose the name of the god's Himalayan abode, Kailāsa, for that of his own palace; he was the first Nepali king to declare himself "favored by the feet of Lord Paśupati," an avowal adopted in the *praśastis* of almost all his successors;⁵⁸ and he was the first to introduce the reclining bull, Śiva's beloved companion Nandi, as a symbolic and decorative motif on inscriptions (Plate 51). Like other Nepali kings, Aṃśuvarman was by no means sectarian. He often employed Vaishnavite, and sometimes Buddhist, symbols in his inscriptions (Plates 50, 52) and made bountiful donations to all the other gods of the Nepali pantheon.

It was in the reign of Aṃśuvarman that the use of a new era became current. It began either in October A.D. 575 or, less probably, in March 576, antedating by more than a quarter-century its first known use. This was in Aṃśuvarman's first personal inscription, established in Bungamati village, and dated Saṃvat 29 Jyeṣṭha (A.D. 605).⁵⁹ The new era appears to have been introduced by a second Mānadeva, after whom it is now known to Nepali scholars, viz. the Mānadeva Saṃvat. Because it was first observed in Aṃśuvarman's inscriptions, it was long thought that he was the founder. It was therefore known as the Aṃśuvarman Saṃvat. Since the epoch year of the new era predated its apparent use (sound of a sentence, a figure of speech) or rhetoric and aesthetics.

⁵⁵ Kirkpatrick 1969:220. This is an overstatement, of course, since inscriptions previous to Aṃśuvarman's attest to the command of Sanskrit.

⁵⁶ *Gopālarāja-vamīśvalī*, fol. 22b.

⁵⁷ D. Vajracharya 1964:5.

⁵⁸ See Chapter 9.

⁵⁹ M.S. 29 (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 71 [290-300]).

by twenty-eight years, scholars generally concluded that it must commemorate Aṃśuvarman's then undeclared assumption of power.⁶⁰ Although we now know differently, until documents dated prior to M.S. 29 are discovered, Aṃśuvarman must be credited with putting the new era into active use.

Considering the limited size, minor political influence, and sequestered nature of Aṃśuvarman's kingdom, it is astonishing that his fame was not confined to the Valley or restricted to his lifetime. But more than a decade after his death his praises were sung to the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Hsüan-tsang, probably at Vaiśālī, who set them down in his important passage concerning Licchavi Nepal: "Lately there was a king called Aṃśuvarman (An-chu-fa-mo), who was distinguished for his learning and ingenuity. He himself had composed a work on 'sounds' (*Śabdavidyā*); he esteemed learning and respected virtue, and his reputation was spread everywhere."⁶¹ Given the brevity of the pilgrim's memoir on Nepal, the fact that so much of it was devoted to a deceased king seems particularly revealing of Aṃśuvarman's stature and renown. Moreover, in his own country Aṃśuvarman was remembered for his wisdom. Even after his death, the title he himself preferred, Śrīkala-hābhīmānī, was still applied by others with exclusive reference to him.⁶²

The Ābhīra Guptas

On the testimony of contemporary stone inscriptions, it is clear that from A.D. 506 to 641, almost a fourth of the period of Licchavi reign in the Kathmandu Valley, their power was intermittently contested by another lineage, the Ābhīra Guptas. In contrast to the Licchavis, who claimed descent from the solar dynasty (Sūryavaṃśa) these Gup-

⁶⁰ Jayaswal 1936:170-171; Petech 1961:230-231.

⁶¹ Beal 1969:11, 81.

⁶² D. Vajracharya 1964:6-7; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 92 (377).

⁶³ G. Vajracharya 1966b:6-7; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 38, 115 (170-174, 433-437).

⁶⁴ This is made clear by entries in the Sanskrit lexicon *Amarakośa* (s.v.), and is further substantiated by Licchavi inscriptions in which Brahmins and Kshatriyas are designated Gomī; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 29, 61, 125 (141-142, 249-252, 472-473).

tas claimed lunar descent (Somavaṃśa) and to be Ābhīra or Gomī (Gomin).⁶³ Although these names are often translated "cowherd," and have been considered caste or occupational designations, their literal sense is "cattlemen," wealthy persons who were the proprietors of herds but were not themselves herdsmen.⁶⁴ As in Gupta India, *gomin* also seems to have been affixed to names as a sign of respectability.⁶⁵ For reasons unknown, the Guptas abandoned the Ābhīra and Gomī designation in their later documents.⁶⁶

The identification of these Guptas poses a problem. It is doubtful that they were in any way related to the well-known Guptas of India; if they were, the relationship is still to be demonstrated. The name Ābhīra, however, is familiar in India from ancient times. The Ābhīra apparently once inhabited the desert regions of northwest India, but drifted south, and by the third century A.D. had established a kingdom in the Deccan. The Puranas, however, list the Ābhīra among the inhabitants of several regions of north India, a location in which Indian epic literature identifies certain tracts of land as theirs.⁶⁷ Thus, while it seems probable that the Indian and Valley Ābhīra are related, there is nothing to document it.

The Ābhīra Guptas who dwelt in the Kathmandu Valley in the Licchavi Period may be the same as the Gopāla, the seemingly legendary cowherders with whom the chronicles begin the dynastic history of Nepal. This is suggested by the fact that all of the Gopāla kings bear the Gupta name, and that the chronicles, early and late, identify the Guptas of the Licchavi Period as Gopāla.⁶⁸ Perhaps, as some scholars have speculated, the chroniclers mistakenly assigned to the Gopālas a separate, anterior chronology instead of one parallel to the Licchavis.⁶⁹ We know that they erred in this way

⁶⁵ Lévi 1905:11, 129-131; Jayaswal 1936:204-205; Sircar 1966:118. Cf. also its usage in the above-noted inscriptions. *Gomin* seems originally to have denoted a learned Buddhist lay brother.

⁶⁶ G. Vajracharya 1966b:6.

⁶⁷ Sircar 1971:30, 32 n. 7, 39, 98.

⁶⁸ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 21b-22b; *Rājabhogamālā* 1969:part 2, 18-19; N. Paudel 1963:81. Curiously, the Buddhist rescension is silent about the Guptas.

⁶⁹ D. Regmi 1969:53-54.

when chronicling the Ābhīra Guptas of the Licchavi Period; they listed in succession kings who actually ruled at the same time.⁷⁰ That the Gopāla and Ābhīra Gupta are in fact two distinct sets of kings, probably belonging to the same family but separated by some years of Licchavi rule, seems evident from the testimony of the chronicles. The early chronicles affirm that in reasserting themselves, the Ābhīra Guptas were merely reclaiming what the Licchavis had taken away. The *Gopālarāja-vaṃśāvalī* expresses it thus: "King Bhīmadeva [Bhīmārjunadeva] reigned 14 years. After that the Gopāla dynasty conquered the solar dynasty and reigned powerfully again."⁷¹ Similarly, Kirkpatrick's source states: "Bhem Deo Burmah [Bhīmārjunadeva reigned] 16 [years]. In his reign the Aheers [Ābhīra], who were originally the sovereigns of Nepaul, recovered their dominions."⁷² The late Brahmanical chronicles simply state that the Gopāla/Gupta conquered the Sūryavaṃśa (Licchavis) and established themselves in their place.⁷³

Whether the Gopālas were, in fact, the ancestors of the Ābhīra Guptas, and whether the latter therefore had a legitimate right to the throne is a matter that cannot be settled in the present state of our knowledge. From documented history we only know that the Ābhīra Guptas first make their appearance as functionaries at the Licchavi court. This is attested by more than fifty Licchavi Period inscriptions—almost a third of the corpus—in which the Ābhīra Gupta name appears. But some of the Guptas soon emerged as powerful individuals who, like Aṃśuvarman, shared the rule with the Licchavis in name, and in fact wielded the real power. Moreover, in three instances the Guptas appear for a time to have shaken off the Licchavis altogether and governed alone.

⁷⁰ Petech 1958:26-27.

⁷¹ Fol. 21b.

⁷² Kirkpatrick 1969:260.

⁷³ Rājabhogamālā 1969:part 2, 18-19; N. Paudel 1963:81.

⁷⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 22 (91-109); Sircar 1966:103-104.

⁷⁵ Sircar 1966:80, 259, 302, and *passim*. See D. Vajracharya 1973:114-120 for the specific meaning of these terms in Licchavi inscriptions.

⁷⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 24, 25, 26, 27, 31, 32 (112-137, 145-152).

The Gupta bid for control of the state seems to have come into the open first in the reign of Vasantadeva, the successor of the illustrious Mānadeva I. In his first edict, Śaka Saṃvat 428 Mārga (A.D. 506), Vasantadeva employs a Virocanagupta as his official envoy (*dūtaḥ*), one of the most important offices of the court.⁷⁴ In Vasantadeva's subsequent edicts this key role is enjoyed by one Ravigupta, who for almost two decades as both *mahāpratihāra* (chief chamberlain) and *sarvadandanāyaka* (commander-in-chief)⁷⁵ was one of the most powerful personages of the realm.⁷⁶ On at least one occasion he was joined by one Kramalīla, who in the Licchavi king's own edict boldly styles himself *mahārāja mahāsāmanta śrī Kramalīla*.⁷⁷ Ravigupta apparently retained his power until his death about A.D. 532 (s.s. 454 Jyeṣṭha), the date of his last official record; in the following year he and other members of the Gupta lineage were honored posthumously with the consecration of a Śivaliṅga (Plate 49).⁷⁸ The family ties of Ravigupta to an even more powerful successor, Bhaumagupta, are unknown.

Bhaumagupta (alternately, Bhūma- or Bhūmi-gupta) was apparently the first Ābhīra Gupta to assume the full political power that in effect made him a king.⁷⁹ His name first appears in Śaka Saṃvat 462 Jyeṣṭha (A.D. 540), inscribed on a Śivaliṅga consecrated by his mother in the memory of her deceased husband, Anuparama.⁸⁰ But we first hear of him in office in s.s. 479 Vaiśākha (A.D. 557) in the reign of Gaṇadeva; like Ravigupta, he enjoyed simultaneously two of the highest administrative posts, *mahāpratihāra* and *sarvadandanāyaka*.⁸¹ Bhaumagupta's name appears regularly thereafter in Gaṇadeva's inscriptions, s.s. 482-487 (A.D. 560-565), and that of Gaṅgādeva, s.s. 489 Śrāvaṇa (A.D. 567) under whom he continued to hold these same

⁷⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 31 (145-146).

⁷⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 32, 34 (147-152, 155-157).

⁷⁹ It is assumed by most scholars that all three names refer to the same person. However some, such as B. Acharya 1970:10-11, 19, believe that Bhūmagupta and Bhaumagupta were two different persons, father and son.

⁸⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 38 (170-174).

⁸¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 42 (182-184). The ruler's name is missing from this damaged inscription, but it may almost certainly be assigned to Gaṇadeva.

high offices.⁸² That he may have exercised nearly absolute authority sometime in his career is suggested by Gaṇadeva's last inscription, which confers upon him a royal title "*paramadaivataśrī* Bhaumagupta,"⁸³ by two posthumous inscriptions that name him as a former king,⁸⁴ and by the chronicles, early and late, which also refer to him as a king.⁸⁵ There are no documents of his own time, however, that name him king. Bhaumagupta may have wielded his power during some part of the undocumented quarter-century between Gaṅgādeva's single record, s.s. 489 Śrāvāṇa (A.D. 567), and the first of Śivadeva I, s.s. 512 Jyeṣṭha (A.D. 590).⁸⁶ At that time he was very likely the de facto ruler, in company with a Licchavi de jure incumbent; this would correspond to the subsequent relationship between Śivadeva and Aṃśuvarman. In any event, in A.D. 590 it is the Licchavi Śivadeva who is named king, and Bhaumagupta chief chamberlain and commander-in-chief.

By about A.D. 594, however, Bhaumagupta either had died or had been displaced by Aṃśuvarman as the power behind the throne, and for the next quarter-century the name Gupta or Gomin is rarely recorded.⁸⁷ We know that Aṃśuvarman had designated the Licchavi prince Udayadeva to succeed him on the throne. That Udayadeva did so is evidenced by a single inscription, dated a month after one in which Aṃśuvarman was still reigning, A.D.

621.⁸⁸ The new king's rule was apparently very brief. With the restraining presence of the powerful Aṃśuvarman removed from the scene, the Ābhīra Guptas once again usurped Licchavi authority. The lawful sovereign, Udayadeva, was apparently deposed; his heir, Narendradeva, fled to Tibet. By A.D. 624, a puppet Licchavi, Dhruvadeva, had succeeded to the Licchavi throne and to the traditional seat, Mānagrha. But authority was vested in an Ābhīra Gupta, a grandson of Bhaumagupta, by name Jiṣṇugupta.⁸⁹ His seat of authority was the chancery so recently vacated by Aṃśuvarman, Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana.

In the first document in which his name appears, Jiṣṇugupta ruled jointly with Dhruvadeva, and afterward with the latter's successor, another puppet, Bhīmārjunadeva. This partnership apparently marks the first attested occurrence of dual sovereignty in Nepal Mandala, a typical pattern in later years.⁹⁰ Jiṣṇugupta was clearly a powerful personality. He probably played a key role in altering the rightful order of Licchavi succession after Aṃśuvarman's death and, like his grandfather, apparently also ruled alone for a time. He minted a coin in his own right and issued two inscriptions in his name alone; there are two more inscriptions, one posthumous, that name him a king. The chronicles also concur that he was a king.⁹¹

Finally, a third Gupta appears to have arrogated

⁸² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 44, 50, 51 (187-188, 198-207). Previous sources identified this king as Ganadeva rather than Gaṅgādeva, as D. Vajracharya reads it, but it seems plausible that the same person is meant.

⁸³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 50 (198-203).

⁸⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 109 (414-418), "*bhaṭṭarāḥmahārājāśrī-Vasurāja . . . śrī-Ganadevāsmatpitāmahāśrī-Bhūmagupta ity etaih pūrvarājābhir* (venerable great kings śrī-Vasurāja . . . śrī-Ganadeva, and my grandfather, śrī-Bhūmagupta, these former [kings])," and inscr. 124 (463-471), in which Narendradeva bitterly refers to the misconduct of śrī-Bhūmagupta in arrogating to royal use the proceeds from lands that predecessor kings had assigned to the support of a temple, and which by this edict Narendradeva restitutes.

⁸⁵ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 22a; Kirkpatrick 1969:261; *Rājahogamālā* 1969:part 2, 19; N. Paudel 1963:81-82. The *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kaḥpa*, a work redacted between about the eighth and tenth centuries, lists Bhāgupta/Bhūgupta as a Nepalese king (Jayaswal 1936:213).

⁸⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973: inscrs. 51 (204-207) and 54 (214-224). J. Regmi 1969:19 believes that he ruled the entire period, and the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 22a, followed by the later chronicles, credits him with an exaggerated forty-five-year rule.

⁸⁷ It does occur occasionally, however, for we find the boundary of endowment lands measured from "the land of Ādityagupta"; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 80 (342-344).

⁸⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 93, 104 (378-379, 398-400).

⁸⁹ If Bhūmagupta and Bhaumagupta are different persons, father and son (B. Acharya 1970:10-11, 19), then Jiṣṇugupta was the son or nephew, rather than the grandson, of Bhaumagupta.

⁹⁰ Bhaumagupta, however, may also have ruled jointly. G. Vajracharya 1966b:5-6 considers that joint rule actually began following the reign of Vasantadeva, who ruled ca. A.D. 506-532 (inscriptions from s.s. 428-454).

⁹¹ S. Joshi 1960:56; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 112, 113, 114, 119 (426-432, 452-453); *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 21b

the Licchavi throne for a time, and to have ruled supreme.⁹² This was Viṣṇugupta, Jiṣṇugupta's son. Viṣṇugupta's role as supreme monarch is attested by an edict issued from the Gupta seat alone, Kailāsākūṭa-bhavana, rather than, as was customary, from both Kailāsakūṭa and the Licchavi seat, Mānagrha. Although the ruler's name is now missing from the inscription, it seems clear that it is Viṣṇugupta's, since the *dūtaḥ* is the crown prince (*yuvārāja*) Śrīdharagupta, who was the *dūtaḥ* in other inscriptions issued by his father.⁹³ That Viṣṇugupta was a king is also affirmed by the chronicles, which unanimously accord him royal status.⁹⁴ His deeds in the cultural realm also suggest the great power that this third and last known Gupta wielded in Licchavi Nepal (Plates 65, 376).⁹⁵

During the period of increased Gupta influence in Nepal Mandala, the Guptas exercised the real power, while the Licchavi kings were essentially figureheads. This is abundantly clear, even though the Licchavi kings' names are cited first in the inscriptions, and though they claimed the traditional royal palace, Mānagrha. For example, while an inscription at Thankot village purports to be a joint issue of Bhīmārjunadeva and Jiṣṇugupta, it is clear that only Jiṣṇugupta speaks.⁹⁶ In memory of a Gupta ancestor's intimate association with a particular village—certainly no concern of the Licchavi Bhīmārjunadeva—Jiṣṇugupta abolished one of the village taxes to reaffirm the former Gupta tie. Similarly, in another inscription, issued jointly with Dhruvadeva, the words "my grandfather King Bhūmagupta," reveal that in fact only Jiṣṇugupta speaks.⁹⁷ More importantly, from Jiṣṇugupta's time the Guptas' sons, not the Licchavis', were boldly named to the succession as crown princes. Jiṣṇu-

(where he is called Jivagupta; D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. B, 117 reads "Śivagupta"); Kirkpatrick 1969:261; *Rājabhogamālā* 1969:part 2, 19; N. Paudel 1963:81.

⁹² J. Regmi 1969:14, 16-19, 27-28 considers that only two Guptas became kings, Bhauma/Bhūma and Jiṣṇu.

⁹³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 116 (438-441).

⁹⁴ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 22a; Kirkpatrick 1969:260; *Rājabhogamālā* 1969:part 2, 19; N. Paudel 1963:81.

⁹⁵ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:82-124, 127, 131.

⁹⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 115 (433-437).

⁹⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 109 (414-418).

⁹⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 118 (448-451).

⁹⁹ One more inscription, issued in Viṣṇugupta's name,

gupta's son, Viṣṇu, succeeded his father as joint ruler with Bhīmārjunadeva, and Viṣṇugupta's son in turn, Śrīdharagupta, was named the next crown prince. The latter apparently did not succeed his father, for after Viṣṇugupta's last dated inscription, issued jointly with Bhīmārjunadeva in A.D. 641 (M.S. 65 Phālguna),⁹⁸ the Ābhīra Guptas disappear from Licchavi history.⁹⁹ Two years later, A.D. 643, Udayadeva's son, Narendradeva, apparently restored with Tibetan help, was ruling alone and unencumbered; he had also abandoned Mānagrha palace for Kailāsakūṭa, the prestigious residence of Aṃśuvarman and the Ābhīra Guptas.¹⁰⁰

There are a number of factors that suggest that Aṃśuvarman was in some way related to the Ābhīra Guptas. He emerged in the period of Gupta influence, between Bhaumagupta and the latter's descendants, Jiṣṇugupta and Viṣṇugupta, and we find Jiṣṇugupta at once occupying Aṃśuvarman's seat in Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana. As evidenced by Aṃśuvarman's coin devices, he claimed lunar descent like the Ābhīra Guptas; his nephew, Bhogavarman, designated himself Gomī, as the Guptas did.¹⁰¹ An intimate family relationship between the nephew Bhogavarman and the Guptas is suggested by an inscription at Changu Nārāyaṇa, in which Viṣṇugupta expresses his concern about a dilapidated fountain, a previous gift of Bhogavarman.¹⁰² This family intimacy is also suggested by an inscription of Aṃśuvarman's sister-in-law, who donated a fountain in memory of her deceased husband.¹⁰³ She mentioned only the reign of Jiṣṇugupta, totally ignoring the Licchavi incumbent, Bhīmārjunadeva. But beyond such circumstantial evidence, there is nothing to document Aṃśuvarman's ties to the Gupta line.¹⁰⁴

may follow, but it is undated and its chronological position unverified (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 119 [452-453]).

¹⁰⁰ In M.S. 67 Pauṣa-śukla (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 123 [458-462]).

¹⁰¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:296; inscr. 61 (249-252).

¹⁰² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 119 (452-453).

¹⁰³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 114 (431-432).

¹⁰⁴ H. Jha 1970:111, 145 also speculates that Aṃśuvarman may have been a Gupta, but D. Vajracharya, the most eminent authority on the Licchavis, has not mentioned this relationship (D. Vajracharya 1973:235-238, 295-296). If Aṃśuvarman was the "son of Śivadeva's sister," it may be that she had married a Gupta; if so, it is a situation

The Later Licchavi Kings

Only three Licchavi kings are known to have ruled after the termination of Ābhīra Gupta influence. These were Narendradeva, his son Śivadeva, and his grandson, Jayadeva II. Whether such kings as Baladeva, Balirāja, and two more Mānadevas (whom historians designate the third and fourth) were lineal descendants of Jayadeva, or even Licchavis, is unknown. For each of the three known Licchavis—Narendradeva, his son, and grandson—there are several inscriptions. But these charters, edicts, and dedications tell us relatively little about the kings themselves or their particular reigns. Narendradeva's was one of the longest of the Licchavi Period; Jayadeva seems to have been absorbed by judicial matters; all appear to have been sovereign monarchs who governed their state without interference from powerful officers like those who shared and often usurped the rule of so many predecessors. But it seems possible that Narendradeva, beholden to the Tibetans for his throne, and his son after him may have been subservient in some way to Tibet, a relationship discussed below. All three kings ruled from Kailāsakūṭa, the chancery that had once been Aṃśuvarman's and then the Ābhīra Guptas'.

The period from about A.D. 600 to 733 is especially significant in the history of Nepal. It was dominated by these three Licchavi kings and by three non-Licchavis: Aṃśuvarman, Jīṣṇugupta, and Viṣṇugupta. Whatever may have been the internal problems occasioned by dynastic succession, Nepal Mandala was then viewed by its neighbors as a country of consequence. In maintaining the essential independence of their small mountain state—squeezed like Prithvi Narayan Shah's proverbial yam between vigorous empires on either side—these rulers ensured a stable and prosperous milieu. In it were created some of the greatest triumphs in the history of Nepalese art.

Foreign Relations: India, Tibet, and China

The most important cultural ties of Nepal have been with India, and to this tradition the period of

similar to that of modern Nepal, where the royal family often chooses as marriage partners the very family, the Ranas, that so long vied with it for political power.

the Licchavis was no exception. Originating in India, the Licchavis naturally brought to the Nepal Valley their Indian heritage. Although it is doubtful that they introduced Hinduism or Buddhism, their arrival and continued presence in the Nepal Valley must have nurtured the seeds already disseminated through casual introduction by traders, monks, and mendicants. The Licchavis established Sanskrit as the court language, used the script they had known at home, and their society was clearly ordered in accordance with the accepted patterns of contemporary India. Many of the administrative, judicial, and legislative terms found in Licchavi inscriptions are familiar in Indian documents. The Licchavis used an Indian era, the Śaka Saṃvat, until the late sixth century, and their coinage had the same names, and therefore probably the same values, as Indian coins of the time.

We know very little about the political relations of Licchavi Nepal with the succession of Indian states on its southern exposure. In its initial years Licchavi rule of Nepal Mandala just overlapped in time that of the Kuṣāṇas, who controlled northern India for the first three centuries of the Christian era. The reigns of the early kings—Vṛṣadeva through Rāmadeva—correspond in time to that of the Imperial Guptas of India, A.D. 320 to ca. 540. Aṃśuvarman, Jīṣṇugupta, Viṣṇugupta, and Narendradeva were contemporaries of Harṣavardhana of Kanauj (A.D. 606-647), while the reigns of Narendradeva's son and grandson, Śivadeva II and Jayadeva II, apparently the last Licchavi rulers of eminence, drew to a close with the emergence of the Pāla dynasty of eastern India, about A.D. 750.

The relations between Nepal and these Indian states appear to have been cordial. In the mid-fourth century, the Imperial Guptas claimed to command obeisance from the "frontier king" of Nepal.¹⁰⁵ Perhaps they did. But the Gupta assertion may also have been confected of the same stuff as those of some of the Nepali kings—Mānadeva's claims of conquest in India, or Jayadeva's to have exercised supremacy over "Aṅga, Kāmarūpa,

¹⁰⁵ This claim is on a pillar erected by Candragupta II at Allahabad, but records an undated issue of his predecessor, Samudragupta, who ruled ca. A.D. 350-380. The

Kāñchi, and Magadha."¹⁰⁶ Strong rulers such as Mānadeva I or Aṃśuvarman, who took a firm position against "bowing with joined hands before other kings,"¹⁰⁷ seem to have successfully guarded their own country's sovereignty. Geographic isolation must have also helped in the avoidance of the recurrent squabbles that characterized the relationships of neighbors on the open Gangetic plain.

Politically independent, the Licchavis were by no means cut off from their Indian neighbors. That there was constant intercourse of their peoples through commerce and through pilgrimages can hardly be doubted. North India was the continuing fountainhead of Nepalese Buddhism, and the Licchavis' intimacy with their southern neighbors is registered in their extant art monuments. The products of the ateliers of Kuṣāṇa Mathura are echoed in a host of early stone sculptures, and the imprint of the art of Gupta India is apparent in all the known arts of Licchavi Nepal.

The two countries were also brought together through frequent matrimonial alliances between Indian and Nepalese royal families. Mānadeva's mother, Rājyavatī, was apparently an Indian princess whose brother came with his army to help her son Mānadeva suppress the rebellious western feudatories. Aṃśuvarman's sister, Bhogadevī was married to Śūrasena, who is probably to be identified as a prince of the powerful Maukharis of Kanauj.¹⁰⁸ Their son, Bhogavarman, was *dūtaka* in the joint edicts of Śivadeva and Aṃśuvarman, and later, in Aṃśuvarman's, was *mahāsāmanta*.¹⁰⁹ Bhogavarman himself married a daughter of the later Gupta king Ādityasena of Magadha, and their daughter, Vatsadevī, became the queen

reference to Nepal reads: ". . . whose imperious commands were fully gratified, by giving all [kinds of] taxes and obeying [his] orders and coming to perform obeisance, by the frontier kings [*pratyanta-nṛipati*] of Samatata, Dvāka, Kāmarūpa, Nepāla . . . and other [countries]" (Fleet 1970:8, 14 n. 1; Sircar 1965:262-268). According to Fleet the wording of the inscription is imprecise respecting the political position of these countries; Lévi 1905:11, 115-116 seems to show conclusively that Nepal was not a tributary, but one of the frontier countries beyond the Gupta imperial domain.

¹⁰⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 2, 148 (9-30, 548-562).

of Śivadeva II. Similarly, Rājyamatī, the bride of Jayadeva II, came from some nearby Indian state. She was a daughter of an unidentified King Harṣadeva, described by Jayadeva as a descendant of the famous Bhagadatta lineage and "lord of Gauda, Odra, and other lands as well as Kalinga and Kośala."¹¹⁰ The claimed extent of this Harṣa's empire, however, may probably be viewed as poetic excess.¹¹¹ That Licchavi Nepal also had relations with the neighboring kingdom of Kāmarūpa is suggested by the mission that King Narendradeva is alleged to have sent to bring the yogin Matsyendranātha to Nepal. Of this more will be said in Chapter 12.



More difficult to resolve is the question of the political relationship of Licchavi Nepal and Tibet. The external sources—Chinese, Tibetan, and Indian—concur that Nepal was for a time a dependency of Tibet. The T'ang Annals, Old and New, twice report this relationship. "Recently the orders of the Empire passed by this kingdom [Nepal] and from it spread afar. Now it depends on T'ou-fan [Tibet]."¹¹² Elsewhere the Annals explain that Nepal became vassal to Tibet in return for Tibetan help in restoring the legitimate heir to the throne. "The father of Na-ling ti-po [Narendradeva] was dethroned by his younger brother. Na-ling ti-po fled in order to escape his uncle. The Tibetans sheltered him and restored him to the throne. In consequence he became their vassal."¹¹³ The T'ang historians further aver that about A.D. 705 Nepal rebelled against Tibet, the Tibetan emperor took the field against them but was killed, and Nepal threw

¹⁰⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 84 (354-356).

¹⁰⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 85 (357-363). R. Majumdar 1966:111 (1971), 101-102 identifies Śūrasena as a probable Maukhari, although neither the inscription nor D. Vajracharya alludes to this relationship.

¹⁰⁹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 61, 62, 81 (249-256, 345-347).

¹¹⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 148 (548-562).

¹¹¹ Sircar 1971:165-166; R. Majumdar 1966:111 (1971), 138.

¹¹² Lévi 1905:1, 159; Jayaswal 1936:243.

¹¹³ Lévi 1905:1, 165.

off the Tibetan vassalage.¹¹⁴ The story of Nepal's successful revolt is also recorded in the *Mañjuśrīmūla-kalpa*, an Indian text redacted between the eighth and tenth centuries.¹¹⁵

The Tibetan records are silent about Nepal's vassalage or its revolt against Tibet. However, they do contain an account of two Buddhist princesses, one Nepalese, the other Chinese, who were sent to wed Srong-brtsan-sgam-po (alternately, Song-tsen Gampo), the powerful king of Tibet about A.D. 627 to 650. Under the queens' influence, so says tradition, Srong and his people were converted to Buddhism. Known variously as Bhrukuṭī, Bhrikuṭī, Bṛbtsun, or Khricuna, the Nepalese princess is alleged to have been the daughter of a "King Go-cā"; this name is generally taken to be the Tibetan rendering of Aṃśuvarman, "Radiant Armor."¹¹⁶ Bhrukuṭī is said to have carried Buddhist images and texts with her and to have been accompanied by a retinue of Nepalese nobles as far as the Kyirong pass (Map 2).¹¹⁷ Although Nepalese tradition does not corroborate the matrimonial alliance between a local princess and the Tibetan king, the marriage between a Chinese princess and Srong-brtsan-sgam-po ca. A.D. 641 is supported by Chinese sources.¹¹⁸ A similarly contrived alliance between Nepal and Tibet may not be altogether impossible. Moreover, the strength of the tradition that these two princesses existed and introduced Buddhism into Tibet cannot be lightly set aside. Each was canonized as a particular manifestation of Tārā, and the holy relics the princesses are said to have

brought with them are enshrined in temples at Lhasa.¹¹⁹

If a marriage did take place about A.D. 641 between a Nepali princess and the Tibetan king, then it is most unlikely that she was Aṃśuvarman's daughter, since he had been dead for twenty years, but more probably the daughter of the reigning king. Thus Bhrukuṭī's father would have been Bhīmārjunadeva or Viṣṇugupta or, given the inexactitude of the wedding date, even Narendra-deva, who came to the throne in A.D. 643. In view of the latter's apparent intimacy with Tibet, discussed below, this paternity seems the most likely.¹²⁰ It is also possible that Bhrukuṭī was in fact the daughter of some minor chieftain. A Nepali king might have been pleased to contract a marriage alliance with the Hindu Maukharis or the illustrious line of Bhagadatta; for reasons of caste it is not likely that he would willingly have given a princess to a barbarian outcaste (*mleccha*), as Srong would certainly have been viewed. Although this problem is sometimes resolved by tracing Srong's ancestry to the noble families of India,¹²¹ a solution based on this fiction will hardly do. The time of Srong-brtsan-sgam-po marked a period of Tibetan militaristic expansion, which T'ang China—and therefore surely Nepal—regarded with respect.¹²² Thus, it does not seem unlikely, however the actual event was later embroidered, that the Tibetan king did demand and receive princesses from both countries. In any event, the tradition of the Nepali princess is a fact in

¹¹⁴ The date ascribed to the Nepalese revolt varies between A.D. 703 and 705; some accounts write of an attack by Tibet in 703, provoked perhaps by withholding the annual tribute, followed by the successful Nepali revolt in 705 (Jayaswal 1936:234-235; D. Regmi 1969: 218-219; 1966:part I, 60, 63, 66; 1960:162; H. Jha 1970:167; Petech 1958:29).

¹¹⁵ Jayaswal 1936:211-214.

¹¹⁶ Apparently with equal correctness, the name Go-cā can be translated in other ways (D. Regmi 1969:104). The name Bhrikuṭī is one of the manifestations of the Buddhist goddess Tārā, but the other terms are said to mean "eyebrow." Tucci 1971:606 translates K'ri btsun as "the royal wife."

¹¹⁷ Lévi 1905:1, 155, 156 n. 1.

¹¹⁸ Snellgrove and Richardson 1968:27, 275; Tucci 1971.

¹¹⁹ Snellgrove and Richardson 1968:73; Snellgrove 1957: 145. There is also a bronze image of the Nepali princess enshrined in the Potala (Snellgrove and Richardson 1968: facing p. 89). Dated by Snellgrove and Richardson as possibly of the fourteenth century, the Lhasa image is probably considerably later, and may be closely compared to seventeenth-century images of Malla queens which, with their royal consorts, surmount several pillars in the Kathmandu Valley. Tucci 1971:610-611 concludes that until documentation is discovered, the existence of a Nepali wife should be treated skeptically.

¹²⁰ D. Regmi 1969:186 also holds this view.

¹²¹ H. Jha 1970:160.

¹²² Richardson 1962:28-30.

Tibet—in recent years it has become firmly entrenched in Nepali folklore—and may be suggestive of the status of Licchavi Nepal vis-à-vis seventh-century Tibet.¹²³

Modern Nepali scholars hold that at no time was Nepal under even brief domination by Tibet. In support of this view they turn to the evidence of the Licchavi inscriptions. During the period corresponding to the alleged vassalage, in the reigns of Aṃśuvarman through Narendradeva (ca. A.D. 605-679), no inscription—of the sixty-seven now known—affords the slightest hint of Tibetan vassalage, and the Nepali kings bear full royal titles. But this is not convincing. If they were vassals, one would hardly expect the kings themselves to announce it. More importantly, the lack of evidence provided by the inscriptions must be weighed against the foreign sources; they unanimously attest to Nepal's subservient political status vis-à-vis Tibet. There are also other Nepali records, contemporary and later, to be considered. The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* twice affirms that Nepal was subject to "Bhoṭa." In a sequence at marked variance with the chronology established through contemporary inscriptions, the chronicle lists a number of Licchavi kings and the durations of their reigns. This terminates with Śivadeva I (ca. A.D. 590-604), immediately after which follows the terse entry, "After that Bhoṭa came."¹²⁴ Further along, after a similar list concluding with a King Vasantadeva, who probably reigned in the ninth century, the chronicle again avers this dependency: "After then the

¹²³ Because of an erroneous identification of the Bal-yul of the Tun-huang chronicle as Nepal, the fact that Tibetan kings of the eighth century spent their summers there is often adduced as evidence of Tibetan suzerainty over Nepal (Snellgrove 1957:140; Rose 1971:11). However, Bal-yul has been conclusively shown not to be Nepal (Tucci 1958:34-36). Other considerations aside, the patent improbability of a summer sojourn in Nepal is attested by Tibetan behavior today; for whereas Tibetans enjoy spending the winters in the Kathmandu Valley, the monsoon summers there are avoided as a pestilence. The possibility of the rule of a Tibetan king "Namoyāti" in Nepal (Petech 1958:29) may also be discarded, since the interpretation apparently depends on a faulty transcription of the text (D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 66-67, a view in which scholars of the Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala concur in discussion).

Bhoṭa king came and ruled over Nepal. [After that] King śrī-Rudradeva reigned 27 years. He reigned up to the bank of the Kumbhī [River?] freely."¹²⁵ That by or in the reign of this Rudradeva, another undocumented king of the ninth century, the Nepalese had regained their sovereignty is also made explicit in the VK: "again [Rudradeva] reigned unhindered up to Bhoṭa."¹²⁶ These three entries seem to suggest one of two things: that there were two periods of Tibetan domination, or one that lasted for more than two centuries until Rudradeva, or a predecessor, regained Nepal's independence. This might have occurred at the time of the dissolution of the Tibetan Empire, A.D. 842.

Caution is enjoined respecting these later sources, however. At least by the time the chronicles were redacted, the name "Bhoṭa" signified two quite different places. Bhoṭa, Bhoṭ, Bhoṭah, Bhaṭṭah in Sanskrit and Nepali refer to Tibet (from the Tibetan "Bod"); "Bhoṭe" is the somewhat derogatory Nepali referent to all northern border peoples, Tibetan and Nepali. But in the Malla Period "Bhoṭa" also signified the "Kingdom of Banepa," which lay just east of the Kathmandu Valley.¹²⁷ Newars still refer to the people of Banepa as "Bhōmi." Thus although the chronicles seem to refer to Tibet, we cannot discount the possibility that they actually mean the Banepa kingdom.¹²⁸

There is one further piece of contemporary Nepali evidence to consider in this connection. In A.D. 695 (M.S. 119 Phālguna), Śivadeva II instructed his

¹²⁴ Fol. 21b.

¹²⁵ Fols. 22b, 23a.

¹²⁶ VK (1) (Petech 1958:213). On the evidence of these folios, Petech 1958:30 writes that Rudradeva "expelled the Tibetans from Nepal and made the country secure." The chronicle entries are less explicit, and the Tibetan domination may have been broken by one of his predecessors. Actually, we do not know when this Rudradeva ruled, but it was presumably previous to A.D. 879 and the reign of Rāghavadeva, whom the chronicles place after Rudradeva in their chronology.

¹²⁷ See Chapter 4.

¹²⁸ In support of his thesis that Nepal was never subordinate to Tibet, D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 66-68 concludes out of hand that the references to Bhoṭa are all to the Banepa kingdom, an unfounded assumption, however possible it may be.

officers to take as forced labor "five porters for the annual trip to Bhoṭṭa." Most scholars have taken this to refer to the transport of tribute to Tibet, but others have disagreed.¹²⁹ There is nothing to suggest that at that time the name Bhoṭṭa also referred to Banepa, then part of the Licchavi realm. In any case, it seems unlikely that the king would have sent an annual expedition there. Banepa, after all, is not twenty miles from Kathmandu, the place at which Śivadeva issued his edict. But if Bhoṭṭa did imply Tibet, as it seems, it is peculiar that only five porters would be thought sufficient to make an annual trip to that country either for trade or to bear tribute.¹³⁰ At best, the inscription is very provocative respecting Nepal's position vis-à-vis Tibet.

Despite the absence of reliable Nepali sources, the general tenor of all available evidence, internal and external, suggests that Nepal was Tibet's dependent for a half-century or more. We know through a recently discovered inscription that Udayadeva, Narendradeva's father and the Licchavi crown prince whom Aṃśuvarman named in his later documents, was the Nepali king in A.D. 621 (M.s. 45 Āśāḍha).¹³¹ This corresponds to the date of the last reference to Aṃśuvarman as king, and presumably followed his death by a month. However, three years later the documents reveal Dhruvadeva and Jiṣṇugupta to be in command. These inscriptions seem to support the assertions of the T'ang Annals that Narendradeva's father was dethroned by his brother. If there was a Licchavi usurper, he was very likely assisted by the Ābhīra Guptas, who afterward shared the throne. According to the Chinese historians, Narendradeva was restored to his throne by the Tibetans almost a quarter-century later, as a consequence of which Nepal became at least nominally their suzerain. Narendradeva's son, Śivadeva II, ruled at least from A.D. 694 to 705, the range of his known inscriptions. In A.D. 695, if we take the evidence respecting the annual trip to Bhoṭṭa at face value and with reference to Tibet, the subordinate position of

Nepal was unchanged. Thus it is not impossible that the Tibetans did play some role in helping the legitimate Licchavis regain the throne of Nepal in the person of Narendradeva. In that case, it would not be surprising if Narendradeva and his son Śivadeva II maintained friendly relations with Tibet, and even sent annual presents out of gratitude, if not as tribute. And we must not forget that Tibetan and Nepali soldiers are alleged to have fought side by side to avenge the insults laid upon the Chinese envoy Wang Hsüan-t'sê by some Indians.¹³²

Even if the chronicles' references to the Tibetan expulsion by Rudradeva more than a century and a half later were true, it would be wrong to presume that for the entire period between the reigns of Narendradeva and Rudradeva, Nepal was politically dominated by Tibet. In describing his father as one who had conquered his numerous enemies, Jayadeva II may be telling us that his father, Śivadeva II, was a sovereign monarch.¹³³ On the other hand, the political history of the period between Jayadeva and Rudradeva is quite unclear, and considering the militant nature of the Tibetans at this period, it is not impossible that they did indeed at least raid Nepal Mandala from time to time.

The equivocal political relationships between Tibet and Licchavi Nepal notwithstanding, there were clearly economic and cultural ties. Trade between the two countries was of long duration, but was intensified through Srong's consolidation of the Tibetan Empire. The Bhrukuṭī legend aside, Nepal obviously exercised some influence on Tibet in the propagation of Buddhism. Nepal was a gateway to the great monastic centers of the south, through which constantly passed by way of Lhasa Buddhist monks and teachers traveling the route between India and China. In the time of Srongbrtsan-sgam-po, however, Nepal itself seems to have had only a limited appeal as a source of Buddhist doctrine. Tibet turned to Kashmir, a prestigious

¹²⁹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 139 (514-518); pp. 504-506, 517-518; 1967c:113-114 points out that since all labor associated with the Licchavis' foreign affairs was forced, the corvée for the annual trip to Bhoṭṭa signifies nothing beyond the fact that there were relations between the two countries.

¹³⁰ There is, of course, the possibility that porters were also requisitioned from other communities for this annual trip.

¹³¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 104 (398-400).

¹³² See below.

¹³³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 148 (548-562).

center of learning that then equaled Magadha as the Buddhist holy land. It was also to Kashmir that Srong sent his ministers in search of a script that would serve the Tibetan language.¹³⁴ Moreover, in the two centuries following Srong's death in A.D. 650, a period corresponding to the final centuries of Licchavi strength, Tibet continued to turn to Turkestan and China for Buddhist learning. There was even opposition to teachers from Nepal and India. At one point, when Buddhism met with reverses in Tibet, the gods and religion of Nepal were designated as particularly reprehensible. Later, in a Tibetan edict of A.D. 821-822, Nepal was compared unfavorably to China.¹³⁵

In time, Nepalese art would profoundly affect that of Tibet, but it is doubtful that there was any appreciable impact in the Licchavi Period. Similarly, the arts of Tibet may have been the intermediary through which a few isolated Asian art motifs were transmitted. One of these was almost certainly the "flying ribbons" attached to the necks of the symbolic deer of contemporary Buddhist reliefs (Plate 324).



Although China was far removed from Nepal Mandala and had little cultural impact on it, the relations of Licchavi Nepal with China are nonetheless of some consequence. These did not commence until the mid-seventh century, when the activities of Srong-brtsan-sgam-po made the route from China to India possible by way of Lhasa and Nepal. But from then until the close of the Licchavi Period, there were cordial relations between the two governments, and a constant flow of Chinese pilgrims and diplomats passed through the Nepal Valley. It was by way of Nepal that Harṣavardhana of Kanauj had sent an emissary to the T'ang em-

peror in A.D. 641, and three of the ensuing Chinese embassies to Harṣa's court followed the same route.¹³⁶ The first of the three took place as the celebrated pilgrim, Hsüan-tsang, began his own roundabout homeward journey, which did not lead him through the Kathmandu Valley.¹³⁷ The first attested Chinese diplomatic mission to India, via the Kyirong-Rasuwa Pass, traversed the Valley about A.D. 643 or 645, the last in A.D. 657. In all of them, first as lieutenant envoy, then as ambassador, was Wang Hsüan-t'sê. Perfect diplomat and man of perception, the envoy's attentive eye and industrious hand left an account of Nepal Mandala for which there is no parallel in early Nepali history. Apparently compiled in China ca. A.D. 665, and the original subsequently lost, the envoy's memoirs are only preserved in brief and scattered notes in the Annals of the T'ang Dynasty.¹³⁸

The cordiality of the relations between Licchavi Nepal and China is evidenced by the somewhat bizarre events that, according to the Chinese, surrounded Wang Hsüan-t'sê's last mission to Harṣa's court. Arriving at Kanauj in A.D. 647, the Chinese entourage found Harṣa dead and his throne usurped by a petty prince, who is supposed to have attacked them. The ambassador alone escaped death and fled to Nepal in search of help. Mustering a force of Tibetans and Nepalis provided by Srong and Narendradeva, Wang Hsüan-t'sê returned to India to avenge the honor of the T'ang. Victorious, he returned to China with considerable booty and the usurping prince as his prisoner.¹³⁹

In addition to this service to Imperial China, Narendradeva also sent his own gift-laden embassies directly to the emperor.¹⁴⁰ From the Nepali side, at least, these gifts do not seem to have been meant as tribute, although they have been so construed by the Chinese. Among the illuminated manuscripts,

¹³⁴ Snellgrove 1957:140-144.

¹³⁵ Snellgrove 1957:148, 150.

¹³⁶ R. Majumdar 1966:111 (1971), 120-121; the three embassies appear to have been preceded by an earlier Chinese embassy under Ambassador Liang-hoai-King, but there is no record respecting the mission's route.

¹³⁷ Although in modern literature one encounters references to Hsüan-tsang's visit to Nepal, the internal evidence of the pilgrim's memoirs admits little doubt that he himself did not go there, and his notes on Nepal were composed from hearsay (cf. Lévi 1905:1, 152 n. 1).

¹³⁸ These exist in two redactions, the *Chiu T'ang-shu*, the "Old" History, and the *Hsin T'ang-shu*, the "New" History, from which later Chinese sources also drew (Lévi 1905:1, 158 n. 1, 159 n. 1, and 163 n. 2). The portions of the Annals respecting Nepal may be most readily consulted in Lévi 1900:440-443 with commentary pp. 443-447; 1905:1, 157-159, 163-166; and in part in Jayaswal 1936:238-243.

¹³⁹ Lévi 1905:1, 165-166; cf. R. Majumdar 1966:111 (1971), 124-126 on the authenticity of this event.

¹⁴⁰ Lévi 1905:1, 162, 166.

bronze images, intricate jewelry, and wood carvings that must have been included in the porters' baskets, there were almost certainly many plants. A number of these were not native to Nepal but represented fancy exotics originating in other countries, and passed on to the Chinese by way of the Nepalese entrepôt.¹⁴¹

Like the Chinese court, the Buddhist church also profited by the newly safe seventh-century route through Lhasa and Nepal to India. From about the fourth century A.D., when Chinese monks and scholars began to visit India directly in search of Buddhist texts and teachers, they traveled largely by sea or by the long overland route through Central Asia. They were quick to adopt the Tibet-Nepal route, however, and Chinese Buddhist pilgrims must have been frequently encountered on the swaying bridges and precipitous paths that led to India through Nepal. One of these pilgrims was Hieun-tch'ao who, passing through Lhasa soon after the arrival of Srong's Chinese bride about A.D. 641, was assisted on his way by her. Of some fame by the time of his return toward China about A.D. 663, Hieun-tch'ao was provided by the Nepali king with an escort as far as Tibet. Other Chinese became permanent residents of the Nepalese monasteries. Two are known to have lived in Śiva-vihāra; another, by name Tao-fang, after visiting India settled in a *vihāra* in the Valley, where he died about A.D. 690. Many other returning Chinese pilgrims had the misfortune to die en route in the Nepal Valley, most probably from the malaria they had contracted in an ill-timed passage of the Tarai. By the eighth century and the close of the Licchavi Period, the Chinese had largely ceased to travel to India in search of Buddhist instruction, although one last mission seems to have traversed Nepal as late as the end of the tenth century.¹⁴² The cessation of Chinese travel to India, the breakup of the Tibetan Empire in A.D. 842, and the years of politi-

cal turmoil between China and Tibet effectively severed Sino-Nepalese relations. The Chinese seem to have totally forgotten the little mountain-ringed country until the fourteenth century, when the Ming emperors sought to resume diplomatic relations with it.

Licchavi Culture

Licchavi inscriptions leave no doubt that the state was skillfully administered in accordance with rigorously established law, and that society was regulated by complex institutions that not only governed the relationship of ruler and ruled, but of men and gods.¹⁴³ The monarch was absolute. He administered the state through various offices, some corresponding to those familiar in contemporary India and others that were indigenous holdovers. A certain amount of autonomy was enjoyed by religious congregations, and by lay communities through their local administration, the *pañcālīs* or *pañcālikas*. Diverse taxes were levied by the state, and compulsory labor (*viṣṭi*) was exacted; these were returned to the people in the form of irrigation systems and similar beneficial public works. Some taxes were used to fund national religious celebrations or public spectacles, such as bull fighting in the capital city. Frequently the ruler's gratitude for his subjects' cooperation in state undertakings led to the remission of taxes or the granting of special favors and privileges to them. Land tenure was closely regulated, and the state concerned itself with the farmers' production in agriculture and animal husbandry. Trade was fundamental to the economy, and that Licchavi caravaneers plied the trade routes themselves is clear from inscriptions.¹⁴⁴ Trade was facilitated through the use of metal currency, known as *ḥarsāpna* and *purāna*, as were also the coins of contemporary India.

Insofar as possible, Licchavi society was regulated in the compendium of Licchavi inscriptions (1973). Other useful works devoted to the Licchavis are D. Regmi 1969; J. Regmi 1969; and H. Jha 1970. N. Pant, D. Pant, and M. Pant, G. Vajracharya, M. P. Khanal, and H. R. Joshi, among others, have also written on certain aspects of Licchavi culture and together have been especially instrumental in publishing inscriptions and clarifying the numbers and eras used in them.

¹⁴⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 10, 12 (50-54, 59-60).

¹⁴¹ Schafer 1963:146-147.

¹⁴² Lévi 1905:1, 159, 161, 166 n. 1.

¹⁴³ The remarks in this section, and the corresponding sections in Chapters 3 and 4, are to be considered an introductory essay that, where appropriate, will be enlarged on in the following chapters. An understanding of Licchavi culture may be amplified by consulting the bibliographic entries consecrated to Licchavi studies by D. Vajracharya, and particularly his voluminous commen-

in accordance with the norms of contemporary India, but many of the local indigenous patterns continued to flourish. This is evident in what appear to be distinctive survivals in Newar culture. Inscriptions attest that the Indian *goshthi* (common interest group) was a fundamental institution, that society was hierarchically stratified by caste, and that occupations were not only caste-determined but enforced through a special office, the *bhattādhiḱāraṇa*. The cow was an object of respect, polygyny was the rule, divorce possible, and sati (widow immolation) a fact.¹⁴⁵ One inscription explains that all women are not good, and sets down elaborate rules of conduct. Other inscriptions provide frequent insights into daily life, and illuminate diverse aspects such as food, drink, and entertainment. Even the Chinese envoy's notes are illustrative in this respect. In addition to observations on Nepali clothing, ornamentation, and personal hygiene, Wang Hsüan-t'sê noted that the Nepali utensils were of copper, and that they eschewed spoons and chopsticks but ate, as they still prefer to, with their hands.¹⁴⁶

Although the indigenous population clung to its mother tongue (Kirātī, proto-Newari), Sanskrit was the official language of Licchavi Nepal and the script of Gupta India was employed in writing. The simple, pure Sanskrit employed in the inscriptions testifies to the high level of literacy at the court and to the existence of accomplished poets and panegyrists.¹⁴⁷ Familiarity with the rich body of Sanskrit literature is evident in the epigraphic allusions to the religious texts (*śāstras*, *Puranas*) and to the epics. That the Licchavis were also familiar with the poetry of Bāṇa, Kalidāsa, and others is equally apparent through reference to them and from the obvious influence these poets exercised on the Licchavi literary style. Drama and music were also a part of Licchavi life, as evidenced by their inscriptions and by the comment of Wang Hsüan-t'sê that they "enjoy drama and the blowing of trumpets and beating of drums." The calendrical reckonings required for dating their inscriptions testify to a mastery of this and allied arts, a matter

¹⁴⁵ Sati was by no means compulsory, however, as attested by the survival of Mānadeva's widowed mother, Rājyavati; of Anuparama's widow, the Ābhiri; or of Śiva-deva's queen, Vatsadevī. These women observed instead *sativrata*, that is, rules of behavior believed proper for the

Wang Hsüan-t'sê also thought worthy of record: "They understand rather well fortune telling and researches in physical philosophy. They are equally capable in the calendrical arts."¹⁴⁸ In the first centuries of their rule the Licchavis employed the Indian Śaka Saṃvat, but in A.D. 575 (or less likely, 576) they instituted their own, the Mānadeva Saṃvat.

The Licchavi religious climate, not unlike neighboring India of the time, encouraged the practice of many faiths. Foremost were Hinduism and Buddhism, but the Vedic tradition and popular cults also flourished. Only the Jain religion seems not to have prospered in Nepal. Not only were all the deities of the formal Hindu-Buddhist pantheon worshiped, but also autochthonous mother goddesses and a multitude of godlings and demigods, many of which must have originated in local cults. By the fourth century at the latest, the paramount deity of Nepal, Śiva Paśupati, was worshiped in the form of a symbolic linga on the sacred bank of the Bagmati (Plates 343, 344). At about the same time, another illustrious deity, Dolaśikhara-svāmin (Changu Nārāyaṇa) was installed in a sanctuary crowning the Hill of the Palanquin (Cāṅgum) (Plate 410). The frequency of inscriptional references and the number of extant symbols and images of Śiva and Viṣṇu attest to the high esteem with which the Licchavis regarded these two principal Brahmanical deities. That worship was also rendered the paramount female deity of Hinduism, Durgā (Bhagavatī), is also attested through inscriptions and sculptures. Epigraphs and images reveal the presence of tantrism and the cult of a host of lesser Brahmanical deities, some of whom we will encounter later.

By the beginning of the fifth century, the arch holy place of Buddhism, the stupa of Svayambhūnātha—almost certainly a foundation of Vṛṣadeva—crowned Cowtail Hill (Syengum) (Plates 2, 217). Gifts of successor kings, other exalted stupas soon followed it—Dharmadeva (Chabahil), Bodhātha, and others (Plates 215, 218). Clustering about the stupas, in the *vihāras* and domestic court-Hindu widow.

¹⁴⁶ Lévi 1905:I, 163-164.

¹⁴⁷ Lévi 1905:II, 111-112; N. Pant 1973.

¹⁴⁸ Lévi 1905:I, 164.

yards, by the wayside, and at the fountains, were thousands of miniature stupas or *caityas* of stone, exquisitely carved (Plates 254-266, 268-271, 273-279, 282-288). Both Theravāda (Śrāvīkayāna, Hinayāna) and Mahāyāna Buddhism were practiced, and by Aṃśuvarman's time at least, Vajrayāna (tantric) Buddhism. There were scores of monasteries (*viḥāras*), many of which were royal foundations. In them dwelt separate communities of monks and nuns as affiliates of a number of different sects. These communities, as well as their Hindu counterparts in the *maṭhas*, enjoyed considerable autonomy and played an influential role in secular affairs. Images of the Buddha, the Vajrayāna pentad, and certain favored Bodhisattvas were consecrated, as both epigraphs and extant images attest (Plates 273-277, 281-283, 286, 448-452, 455-457, 464). The cult of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, which would burgeon in the following centuries, was firmly established. The ancient indigenous deity Bunga-dyo, installed at Bugāyūmigrāma (modern Bungamati village), had already been assimilated into the Bodhisattva's cult as Buga-Lokeśvara, apparently in part by King Narendradeva's influence. In this guise the village god (*grāmadevatā*) would remain until his further transformation centuries later as the yogin Matsyendranātha (Plate 593).

As the corpus of inscriptions attest, religion in Licchavi Nepal was an all-pervasive influence characterized by tolerance and nonsectarianism. Vṛṣadeva may well have been a Buddhist; his descendant Mānadeva perhaps Vaiṣṇava, perhaps Buddhist; and with the exception of the puppet rulers, Dhruvadeva and Bhīmārjunadeva, from the time of Aṃśuvarman all kings, Licchavi or Ābhīra Gupta, proclaimed their primary allegiance to Śiva Paśupati. But whether Buddhist, Vaiṣṇava, or Śaiva in name, each ruler gratified the other gods as well, establishing images, proffering endowments to temples and monasteries, and supporting Brahman and *bhikṣu* without distinction. One of the most revealing inscriptions in this respect is the hymn of praise composed by Buddhist monks for the avowed Śaiva Śrīkalahābhīmānī (Aṃśuvarman).¹⁴⁰ Even at Vaiśālī it was well known that

the Valley temples and monasteries stood harmoniously side by side, a marvel the pilgrim Hsüan-tsang's informants thought worthy of mention to him.¹⁵⁰

Licchavi inscriptions teem with references to towns and to types of structures that filled them—temples and shrines, stupas and monasteries, *dharmaśālās*, fountains, votive pillars, and other architectural features. Although most of the principal national shrines, the temples and stupas, can be traced to Licchavi foundations, for the most part the superstructures represent restorations. But there are a few extant Licchavi shrines, votive pillars, and a number of fountains (Plates 230, 240-242, 245, 246, 250-253); the many scattered architectural fragments above ground attest to the splendor of Licchavi architecture, and permit us to reconstruct its history. There was more than one royal palace, and Kailāsakūṭa, built by Aṃśuvarman, was almost certainly the object of Wang Hsüan-t'sé's admiration.

We know nothing with certainty of Licchavi wood carving or painting beyond documentary references that they existed. Wang Hsüan-t'sé, our faithful reporter on Licchavi Nepal, observed that the wooden houses were sculptured and painted, and one of the earliest Licchavi inscriptions refers to a Buddhist shrine decorated with paintings of Jātaka stories.¹⁵¹ The Licchavis were highly skilled in the metallurgical arts. They minted coins of "red copper" and fashioned their everyday utensils of it,¹⁵² were masters of the art of repoussé work, bronze casting, and gilding, and must have practiced the delicate art of the goldsmith in the making of jewelry and ritual objects in precious metals, crystal, and gems. The image of Changu Nārāyaṇa bears a gilt repoussé sheath given by Aṃśuvarman in A.D. 607, and there are a number of extant cast bronzes from the sixth and seventh centuries (Plate 448). Judging by Wang Hsüan-t'sé's admiration for the metal decoration employed in Narendradeva's palace and from other documentary evidence, the Licchavis also used metal as an important architectural adjunct.¹⁵³ If examples of Licchavi jewelry or

¹⁴⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 88 (368-369).

¹⁵⁰ Beal 1969:11, 81.

¹⁵¹ Lévi 1905:1, 164; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 1 (1-8).

¹⁵² Beal 1969:11, 80; Lévi 1905:1, 164.

¹⁵³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 76 (317-319); Slusser 1976.

ritual objects have survived, they have not been identified. But ritual vessels are frequently depicted in stone carvings (Plates 423, 454), and the diverse styles of jewelry that were worn in abundance by gods and kings is evident from existing sculptures in stone and bronze. Wang Hsüan-t'sê reports that Narendradeva ornamented himself with pearls, mother-of-pearl, rock crystal, coral, and amber, golden earrings, jade pendants, and a belt decorated with golden plaques ornamented with images of the Buddha.¹⁵⁴ Although the common people in Wang's time may have worn bits of bamboo and horn as ear ornaments, as he says, on occasion at least they wore more sophisticated jewelry. As a mark of royal satisfaction for special work some villagers had accomplished, Bhīmārjunadeva and Viṣṇugupta granted them permission to wear all kinds of ornaments, with the exception of a specified few.¹⁵⁵

To these diverse arts the Licchavis joined the mastery of stone carving. The earliest sculptures date

¹⁵⁴ Lévi 1905:1, 164.

¹⁵⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 117 (442-447).

from about the third or fourth century and are strongly influenced by early Gupta art, in which there lingers much of the Kuṣāṇa idiom (Plates 349, 350, 360, 380, 431, 545-549, 551). Later works have much in common with developed Gupta art, but are unmistakably the realization of Nepali hands in ateliers in Nepal Mandala (Plates 335, 338, 347, 371, 372, 376, 386, 387). The Licchavis created sculptures of their deities in the round and in high relief, and some of them are remarkable colossi that later hands were unable to emulate. Viṣṇugupta alone commissioned three immense images during the decade of his power, ca. A.D. 633 to 643 (Plates 65, 376).¹⁵⁶ Narrative reliefs were also popular, serving both decorative and didactic purposes (Plates 346, 347, 454). The delicately carved *caityas* further attest to the excellence of the lapidary arts in Licchavi Nepal. Fortunately, the heavy stone carvings have been largely spared the outward migration of the portable bronzes and remain as familiars in Nepal Mandala.

¹⁵⁶ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:84-124, 127-131; 1973a.



CHAPTER 3

THE TRANSITION: LICCHAVI DECLINE, A.D. 879-1200

THE SOURCES

FOLLOWING the inscriptions of Jayadeva II (A.D. 713-733), the last Licchavi ruler of political consequence, a hush falls upon the history of the Kathmandu Valley, which will not be fully lifted until the fourteenth century. Considering how much we know about the Licchavi years, it seems paradoxical that the next centuries should be so obscure. But it is not unlike European history, where a well-documented classical age is followed by the "Dark Ages." In both cases it is not that history stopped, but that the documents to reveal it are few. Between A.D. 879 and 1200, there are fewer than a dozen brief stone inscriptions, no coins, and no foreign accounts concerned with Nepal.¹ The history of this period is largely pieced together from manuscript colophons, later chronicles, and the surviving monuments.

There are thousands of manuscripts for the period, the majority of which are Buddhist texts from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Patiently copied in the Valley *vihāras*, they have been preserved there and in the monasteries of Tibet, in library

¹ According to the chronicles, King Śivadeva (ca. A.D. 1099-1126) had his own coinage, the *śivakāñka* of the VK, the *suki* of the later chronicles, but if so, no examples have been found; VK (5); Hasrat 1970:48; Wright 1966:

collections in Nepal and abroad, and in private hands. Most of them close with a colophon in which the scribe identifies where the manuscript was copied, under whose reign, the date of completion, and similar remarks. Brief though they are, colophons are the chief source for the names and dates of rulers. Polychrome miniatures that sometimes embellish the manuscripts are a further source of cultural information (Plates 244, 494, 594).

On the basis of the chronicles, it would be hazardous to attempt an ordered political history for the Transitional Period, A.D. 879-1200. The compilers are often uncertain of a ruler's chronology or the length of his reign. But they clearly remember his pious—and on occasion, impious—undertakings, and so help to dispel our ignorance of the period. For example, the date of King Bālārjuna-deva's succession may be omitted, but not an event of such importance as the presentation of his crown to the Valley's adored deity, Bugma-Lokeśvara.² Although the early chronicles disagree about the duration of Bhāskaradeva's reign, they are in perfect accord that he became blind because "he sold

109; S. Joshi 1960:61; Petech 1958:55, 177-178.

² *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 23a; the VK (1) writes *durgabhāṭṭārakā*.

his father's crown and destroyed the golden image of Māneśvarī."³ Such remembered events, moreover, deserve serious consideration since, as has been amply demonstrated, they often can be substantiated from other sources.⁴

THE POLITICAL MILIEU

Western-language sources usually refer to the first four and a half centuries following the Licchavis as the Ṭhakurī Period. The late chronicles use the term "Ṭhakurī" in relation to Aṃśuvarman, his supposed descendants to about A.D. 1043, and two other lineages who ruled between the last known Licchavi and the first king to adopt the title *malla*, A.D. 1200.⁵ Modern writers have employed the chronicles' designation, with the implication that the name has a dynastic or ethnic connotation. There is, however, no contemporary evidence for the application of this name to any of these kings. Nor is the term used with reference to them by the compilers of the early chronicles. The word *ṭhakurī* is erroneously employed in capitalized form as a name of a people or a family. Derived from Sanskrit *ṭhakṣura* (chief, man of rank), it is only a title to denote superior rank. For example, beginning with the fourteenth century, the kings of the Malla Period regularly attached the title *prabhū ṭhakṣura* (supreme lord) to their names as a supplementary honorific.⁶

It appears that the custom of calling earlier kings "Ṭhakurī" originated only in the late eighteenth century when the chroniclers, not having a more specific genealogy for these little-known kings, began in retrospect to apply this honorific to them. From then on it came to be understood as a dynastic or ethnic name. Scholars are aware of the anomaly of using a title in this way, but almost all continue to do so for convenience.⁷ An exception is the historians of the Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala, who have

³ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 23b; VK (3).

⁴ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973.

⁵ Petech 1958:25.

⁶ As "*ṭhakurini*," it was apparently first used with reference to Devaladevī, a Malla figure of considerable importance, in N.S. 457 Pausa-kṛṣṇa (A.D. 1336) (*Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 49b). Ṭhakur is also a name used in modern Nepal to designate either the ritually and socially

coined the term post-Licchavi (*Licchavi pachi*) to cover not only the kings usually labeled Ṭhakurī (Aṃśuvarman excepted), but also those of the Early Malla Period.⁸ I believe neither term is suitable. The continued use of the term Ṭhakurī perpetuates a false impression of the history of the period, implying dynastic change and a single line of rulers that can be identified by a family name. The term post-Licchavi obscures the probability that these kings are in part descended from the Licchavi dynasty. Until the period of the Licchavis' decline and demise is elucidated, we cannot say when the Licchavi Period ended. And since all Nepali history after Jayadeva II, the last certified Licchavi king, is in effect "post-Licchavi," the term is too broad and imprecise. As a label that seems best to define and characterize the obscure years between what I have defined as the Licchavi Period, ca. A.D. 300-879, and the Malla Period, beginning with the thirteenth century, I will use the term "Transitional Period."

In cultural terms it would be more correct to prolong the Transitional Period through the following century or more. For broadly speaking, whatever can be said about the life of Nepal Mandala in the period between the Licchavis and A.D. 1200 applies with equal validity to at least the first obscure century of the Malla Period. Indeed, it is only with the rise of Sthitimalla from A.D. 1367 that we begin to discern new cultural patterns. It is in consideration of this trend that Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala historians have selected A.D. 1380 as the terminal date for the post-Licchavi period. It corresponds approximately to Sthitimalla's accession to the throne. I have taken A.D. 1200 as the dividing line, because 1380 seems too late, and more especially because it is awkward to exclude two centuries of rulers whom historians usually name "Malla" from a historic period by their name.

The transitional nature of the period between Jayadeva and A.D. 1200 is made particularly clear by supreme class of Chetris (Kshatriyas) or to differentiate a distinct caste ranked between Brahman and Chetri. The Shah dynasty and many other noble families belong to the Ṭhakur caste/class. The Shahs did not employ the term *ṭhakurī* as an honorific, however.

⁷ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 105-106; 1969:162; Petech 1958:25.

⁸ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963:13.

the nature of the epigraphs. There is no appreciable rupture in number and kind between the few post-Jayadeva Licchavi Period documents and the few that initiate the Transitional Period. The former are written in late Licchavi script, employ the Mānadeva era, and are brief epigraphs mostly concerned with the consecration of fountains and images.⁹ Following the last of them, a palm-leaf manuscript tantra dated M.S. 301 Vaiśākha (A.D. 877),¹⁰ there are no written records for at least the next thirty years. When they resume it is in the form of another palm-leaf tantra, now dated in the year 28.¹¹ If, as it seems, the unspecified era is the Nepal Saṃvat, the manuscript (written in Kārtika) was completed in A.D. 907 and represents the first known document of the new era.¹² In keeping with Licchavi documents, the tantra is composed in Sanskrit and uses Licchavi numbers. But it employs a different style of writing, evolved from the previous script, which is designated by paleographers as Old Newari or Nepālakhala. The next document to use Old Newari script and the Nepal Saṃvat is a Buddhist text copied in N.S. 40 Bhādra (A.D. 920) in the reign of a King Śaṅkaradeva.¹³ After these two manuscripts, there is nothing for more than a half-century. Then there are three more terse records. Of the first, a damaged *śilāpatra* in a Patan fountain, almost nothing remains except the date. It is N.S. 100 Kārtika (A.D. 979), inscribed exactly a century after the beginning of the new era.¹⁴ The other two documents are from the reign of the first Guṇakāmadeva to rule in the Transitional Period, one a stone inscription dated N.S. 107 Māgha

(A.D. 987),¹⁵ the other a palm-leaf manuscript copied in N.S. 110 (A.D. 990).¹⁶ With these three documents begins a steady, if not copious, flow of contemporary records.

The first five records of the Transitional Period, together with those that follow to its close, differ from the dozen post-Jayadeva Licchavi Period inscriptions in the era designation and type of script. But both era and writing appear to evolve directly from their predecessors.¹⁷ There is no difference in language, content, or purpose of the inscriptions, and in neither category is there a royal issue. All documents are in Sanskrit and serve the same religious end in the dedication of the same kind of fountains, of images belonging to the same pantheon of deities, or as colophons of manuscripts that are similar in content and identical in appearance.

Although we know that the kings in whose reigns the fountains and images were dedicated and the manuscripts were written were not a new dynasty named Ṭhakurī, we do not know who they were or by what mandate they ruled over Nepal Mandala, or fragments of it. There is no hint whatsoever, not even legendary, of any foreign intrusion, nor until long afterward evidence for a new lineage of any kind. That some rulers were descendants of the Licchavi kings seems evident. Even the latter's names—Śaṅkaradeva, Mānadeva, Narendradeva, Udayadeva, Jayadeva, and others—are perpetuated. Some rulers must have issued from collateral lines, have been non-Licchavi nobles, *sāmantas*, or others who, like the Ābhīra Gup-

⁹ D. Vajracharya 1973 lists thirty-seven inscriptions after number 152, Jayadeva's last record. Many do not postdate it, but are simply out of chronological order (153, 155, 159, 165, 166, 169, 183). Others are gathered at the end of the text because damage or some other reason precludes exact chronological placement. Inscription 171 appears to bear a Nepal Saṃvat date. Setting these aside, there remain fewer than a dozen inscriptions that postdate Jayadeva.

¹⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 190 (599).

¹¹ N. Pant 1965:4 n. 1.

¹² By placing a question mark after the abbreviation "N.S.," N. Pant 1965:4 n. 1 apparently entertains some doubts about this ascription. On the method of era conversions, see Appendix I.

¹³ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963:15 n. 1.

¹⁴ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1961f.

¹⁵ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963c. The inscription is engraved on the pedestal of a relief image of Umā-Maheśvara in Patan, which was offered in the reign of a king Guṇakāmadeva. A careful reading of the damaged date, a chronogram, by the scholars of Samsodhana-maṇḍala and by Hem Raj Shakya, epigrapher of the Department of Archaeology, His Majesty's Government, establishes it to be almost certainly 107 rather than 307, as published by D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 19 (9), the date usually followed in other sources. Petech 1958:73-74 believed the inscription to be undated, but assigned it to the reign of Guṇakāmadeva II, which would accord with the Regmi dating.

¹⁶ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963:14.

¹⁷ See Appendices I, II.

tas, engaged in the struggle for political control of the state, or at least of their own holdings.

Significant political documentation is lacking for the Transitional Period. But such as it is—buttressed by the rather abundant cultural evidence—it invites us to speculate that these years mark a politically unstable period between the Licchavi state and the order that Sthitimalla would reestablish in the mid-fourteenth century. We can only surmise that after Jayadeva II, the central government, then most likely still at Kathmandu, endured for a time;¹⁸ but there were no strong successors, even though the throne was at least occupied by such kings as Mānadeva III and IV, Balirāja, and Baladeva. These kings left no records of their own; their names have only survived because some pious donor chanced to include them in his dedicatory inscription. Some of the early kings of the Transitional Period, like Rudradeva or Bālārjunadeva, remembered by the chroniclers, may have also seated themselves on the Licchavi throne. Gradually, however, under a succession of weak kings even the fiction of a central government must have collapsed, and the Licchavi state was carved into scores of petty kingdoms that subsequently characterize the political history of Nepal Mandala. By the twelfth century, at least, Kathmandu had even ceased to be the seat of royalty. Political power had shifted to Bhaktapur, at the eastern end of the Valley, and to Banepa just beyond, two cities that spawned various lines contending for the throne of Nepal Mandala. In A.D. 1147 it fell to Ānandadeva who, according to the chronicles, “obtained the supreme kingship.”¹⁹ He established himself in Tripura, a new palace he built at the western end of Bhaktapur. On his death twenty years later, other kings from other lines took his place in Tripura, and Bhaktapur remained the nation’s capital until the close of the fifteenth century.

The very number of rulers, frequently known by name alone, is itself an index to the turbulent and unstable political situation of the transitional years. Only rarely was an individual able to impose his rule over the entire Valley and its nearby extensions. The sources leave no doubt that there were

a number of separate petty kingdoms or city-states, miniature holdings that were at times fragmented by divided authority (*dvairājya*, *ardharājya*).²⁰ The situation was further aggravated by numerous hereditary lords and hilltop barons who held parcels of land in their own names. At times they contested the royal authority, and occasionally played the role of kingmaker. Some may have gone so far as to give their allegiance to foreign kings. With the exception of a century of relative stability, A.D. 1382 to 1482, this fragmentation of the Valley among legitimate kings and powerful lords would persist to the end of the Malla Period. The struggle for power between kings and nobles typified much of Licchavi political history; it colored a century and a half of the Shah Period, and was resolved only as recently as 1951.

The few brief stone inscriptions of the Transitional Period tell us nothing about these shadowy kings. The colophons do scarcely more, although occasionally the casual mention of some royal donation gives substance to what is otherwise just a name. We must turn to the chronicles for any intimacy with these kings, but even from this source we learn very little. There are only a few entries in the early chronicles that do more than relate the name of the king, the duration of his reign, and perhaps his ancestry. Moreover, while they tell us, for example, that Bhāskaradeva sold his father’s crown and destroyed the golden image of a goddess, we are left to wonder whether he was motivated by insanity, impiety, or greed. In other instances also, the information is scanty. We learn, for example, that Baladeva’s reign was one of peace and prosperity and that he founded Haripura (Hadigaon village), that Mānadeva relinquished his throne and retired to a *vihāra*, that Rudradeva was a Buddhist, and, in a tantalizing entry, that Pradyumnakāmadeva (Padmadeva) “reestablished the custom of wearing a crown.”²¹ But despite these entries, there is no king who emerges from the dynastic lists with any substance.

A possible exception is a king or kings named Guṇakāmadeva. Even in this instance we do not know whether we are glimpsing one man or a

¹⁸ On the capital cities, see Chapter 5.

¹⁹ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 24b, 25a; VK (6); Petech 1958:62-67.

²⁰ Petech 1958:32, 37, 38, 40; Lévi 1905:11, 187-188.

²¹ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 23b; VK (3-4); Wright 1966:109; VK (4).

composite of three widely separated rulers of the same name. One of these Guṇakāmadevas was apparently a Licchavi ruler, known to us only from the chronicles and from an undated coin issue, the *gunānka*. He left no documents of his own, nor can he be securely fixed in time. Another Guṇakāmadeva (the first of the Transitional Period) ruled in the tenth century. The early chronicles record his lavish donations to Paśupati;²² the late chronicles credit him (erroneously) with the founding of Kathmandu, and attribute to him numerous important shrines and temples and the institution of many famous festivals.²³ The third Guṇakāmadeva (Guṇakāmadeva II, the second of the Transitional Period) ruled in the twelfth century. One of these three kings, probably Guṇakāmadeva I, seems to have been an outstanding personality. This is suggested by the ubiquitous preservation of the name Guṇakāmadeva in folklore and legend. Typically, almost anything assigned to the remote past is said to have occurred in his reign. Our misfortune is that there are no documents of Guṇakāmadeva like those that give such amplitude to Aṃśuvarman. Paradoxically, the well-documented Aṃśuvarman has not survived at all in legend and folklore.

It is evident that a reliable chronology of rulers cannot be established for the Transitional Period. The heroic attempts to do so are of necessity delicately engineered reconstructions, both subjective and debatable.²⁴ Sources are insufficient and conflicting, and yet they provide too many names of persons who were referred to as kings. Institutions of divided rule aggravate the problem, since often it is not clear whether certain kings ruled at the same time or in sequence. Another complication is that apparently the throne did not pass from father to son, as in the Licchavi Period, but alternated between parallel royal families (a pattern that persisted into the early years of the Malla Period).²⁵ Nonetheless some effort must be made to marshal the bewildering number of people who were styled "kings." To that end I have prepared a chronological list of

those for whom incontestable contemporary records are available (Appendix III, Table 2). The names of a few kings for whom such documentation is lacking, but whose chronological position is relatively certain, are included but distinguished by brackets. For the later kings, where we are on firmer ground, the ascertained dates are expanded with the help of the chronicles to provide, for convenience, the years of their probable reigns. Otherwise, conflicting evidence is excluded; I have made no reconstruction of parallel kingdoms or periods of divided rule. For guesses in this domain, the sources that deal with dynastic history may be consulted.

FOREIGN RELATIONS: TIBET AND INDIA

The unstable political conditions of the Transitional Period must have made the Valley vulnerable to foreign incursions. But of this we know very little. The political role of Tibet vis-à-vis Nepal is by no means clear. If the Bhoṭa of the chronicles refers to Tibet and not the Banepa kingdom, as discussed in the preceding chapter, it suggests that even into the ninth century Tibet exercised some control over Nepal as the outcome of its assistance to Narendradeva. But whatever the Nepal-Tibet political relations were, there is no doubt that the traditional trade routes between the two countries continued to be heavily traveled. Musk, salt, wool, yak tails, and other Tibetan commodities almost certainly were exchanged against the produce from Valley farms and the output of the ateliers, as well as for trade goods gathered into this highland entrepôt from farther afield. That the turbulent political conditions of the Transitional Period at times hindered trade in any direction is suggested by the excuse of the eleventh-century Buddhist teacher, Atiśa, who blamed the blocked roads of feuding Nepal for his failure to leave Tibet and rejoin Vikramaśīla University at the promised time.²⁶

²² *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 23b.

²³ Wright 1955:103-105; Hasrat 1970:46-47; Lamshāl 1966:22-24.

²⁴ Among the most important are that of Lévi 1905:11, 172-209; Petech 1958:25-77, genealogical table A, facing

p. 224; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 51-199, particularly the table of comparative genealogies and ascertained dates, pp. 198-199.

²⁵ Petech 1958:25, 49, 54, and *passim*.

²⁶ Snellgrove 1957:196.

From the ninth century on, Buddhism suffered a period of neglect in Tibet (the reign of Ral-pa-can, A.D. 815-838, excepted) but began to recover toward the end of the tenth century. Turning from the traditional doctrinal source adjacent to Tibet's western borders, the Buddhists of central Tibet (the Lhasa region) began to look southward,²⁷ and until the twelfth century the Tibetans sought teachers, texts, and cult objects in this direction. Not only did the Tibetans study in the great monasteries of northern India, whence Indians went to teach in Tibet, but Tibetans also came to study in the monasteries of Nepal. If, as seems possible, the legend cycle of Khotan was transferred to Nepal, it was probably by the Tibetan intermediary during this time.²⁸ In any event, there was a period of some two centuries of intimate contact between Tibetans and Nepalese through a common interest in Buddhism.



It has been suggested that three Indian kingdoms played a role in the politics of Nepal Mandala during the years under discussion. One of these is the Pāla dynasty, which occupied what is now modern Bengal and part of Bihar from the mid-eighth into the early twelfth century. Lévi first speculated on some sort of Pāla hegemony.²⁹ More recently Petech has discussed the evidence for it, postulating two separate occasions of influence. According to Petech, one of these was about A.D. 800, the other in the eleventh century, when one of the hilltop lords whom he believed to dwell at Dhulikhel, east of the Kathmandu Valley, appears to have accepted, or placed himself voluntarily under the suzerainty of a Pāla king.³⁰ Regmi vigorously opposes this view.³¹ But in either case, the assumption of such influence rests on weak evidence upon which it would be daring to plead a case and against which it would be tedious and irrelevant to pursue the arguments.³² That there were inti-

mate cultural ties between the Pālas and Nepal is not in doubt. This is expressed chiefly in religious developments and practices. But, contrary to widely accepted opinion, Pāla influence on Nepalese art was minimal.

The second Indian kingdom that was, in theory, involved in Nepalese politics was that of the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇī in the Deccan, who frequently claimed Nepal among their vassal states from the eleventh to the early thirteenth century.³³ In Nepali documents there is no evidence for Cālukyan political domination. Significantly, the chronicles written soon after the period of claimed vassalage are silent about it. But the fact remains that there are certain ties with the Cālukyas that have yet to be explained. No matter how unlikely contact between the two geographically distant areas may seem, some familiarity with the Cālukyas was possible through the numerous mercenaries who for more than three centuries served the nearby Pāla rulers.³⁴ Moreover, it does not seem mere coincidence that exactly during the period of suzerainty claimed by the Cālukyas, when several of the Cālukyan kings were named Someśvara, suddenly, about A.D. 1178-1183, one of the Nepali kings should also have this exotic name.³⁵ The influence of South Indian Brahmans at Nepalese shrines may also have had its inception at this time.³⁶

A third Indian state, Mithilā (alternately known as Videha, Tirabhuktī, and Tirhut) on the nearby southern plains, unquestionably exercised a distinct political and cultural influence in the Nepal Valley. In A.D. 1097, Nānyadeva, a chief from the Karṇāṭka country (the western part of southern India), proclaimed himself king of Mithilā and established a new capital at Sīmarāmapura, referred to in Nepali sources as Simraongarh (Map 1).³⁷ He immediately raided the Valley and thereafter, until A.D. 1311, destructive Maithilī raids were frequent. But neither the initial raid of Nānyadeva nor more than two centuries of repeated attacks by his descendants led

²⁷ Snellgrove and Richardson 1968:94, 111-113.

²⁸ Brough 1948.

²⁹ Lévi 1905:11, 188-189.

³⁰ Petech 1958:30, 53-54. The identification of Dhavala-srota, the place named in the colophon, as Dhulikhel is now disputed (M. Pant and Sharma 1977:22-24).

³¹ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 144-149.

³² D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 87-105, 144-149.

³³ Lévi 1905:11, 203-205; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 189-191; Petech 1958:70.

³⁴ Sircar 1960:211-212.

³⁵ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 186-188; Petech 1958:51-52 and n. 1, 70-71.

³⁶ Petech 1958:70.

³⁷ Petech 1958:52. On the history of Mithilā, see below.

to the establishment of Maithilī rule in the Valley, as is commonly but incorrectly thought.³⁸ The Maithilī came as destructive and rapacious raiders who, despite their Hindu faith, did not spare even the temples from looting and burning. The winter raid of A.D. 1311, for example, included the destruction of temples in the palace square in the heart of Patan.³⁹

The raids of the Ḍoḃa, as the Tirhutīā or Maithilī are frequently called in the chronicles, are revealing about these politically unstable years. For so anarchic had conditions become that frequently the contentious Nepalese nobles themselves summoned the foreign raiders as partners against their fellow adversaries.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the Valley still preserved sufficient unity to contain the Maithilī to brief raids that did not lead to sustained rule. As I will discuss in the next chapter, the cultural influence of Mithilā, besides the negative one of destruction, came largely with the extinction of Nānyadeva's dynasty by the Muslims in A.D. 1324-1325.

THE CULTURAL MILIEU

In these obscure centuries, as the throne is divided and shuttles between legitimate claimants, as "little kings, from within and without, invade, pillage, and kill each other,"⁴¹ we seek to understand Nepal Mandala on other levels. How many of the formal patterns of Licchavi culture may have continued into the Transitional Period, and for exactly how long they survived, we are not able to say. That some endured even in the Malla Period and

beyond is certain. The Licchavi institution of the *goṣṭhī* is documented in the Transitional Period,⁴² and as the *gūṭhī* becomes a characteristic institution of the Malla Period and of modern Nepal. The existence of the Licchavi office and administrative division, the *pañcālī* or *pañcalikā*, in the Transitional Period can be surmised by its existence in the fourteenth century.⁴³ Further modified to *pañca*, *pañcasamuccaya*, and finally *pañcāyata*, the name and institution continue into modern times.⁴⁴ The continued use into the Transitional and Early Malla Period of a number of familiar Licchavi titles, offices, and administrative terms—*sāmanta*, *mahāsāmanta*, *pratihāra*, *mahāpratihāra*, *cāmaradhāra*, *vārta*, for example⁴⁵—provides evidence of the survival of at least some aspects of their administrative system. Enduring concepts of Licchavi land tenure may be surmised by the continued use of the Licchavi designation for landowner, *talasvāmī*, later modified to *talapati*.⁴⁶ Some survival of the Licchavi system of weights and measures is reflected in the continued use of the name of their grain measure, the *māni*, *mānikā*, which at length became the *māna* measure of modern Nepal.⁴⁷ That Licchavi coins continued to circulate, or that the name of their units persisted, also seems apparent. The name of the coin *śivakāñka*, said to have been issued by King Śivadeva in the twelfth century is paralleled in the names of Licchavi coins, the *mānāñka* and *gunāñka*, issued by Mānadeva and Guṇakāmadeva.⁴⁸ The Licchavi *kārsāpana*, or the name of its weight, *kārsa*, seems to have survived into the fourteenth century.⁴⁹ With the Licchavi decline many other cultural patterns, deprived of a strong central authority, doubtlessly became atten-

³⁸ R. Majumdar 1966:v (1971), 48; refuted by Petech 1958:51-53, 92, and others as discussed in Chapter 4.

³⁹ D. Vajracharya 1965:26.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Lévi 1905:11, 193.

⁴² D. Vajracharya 1967a:2.

⁴³ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 61a; D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 27 (18-19).

⁴⁴ D. Vajracharya 1967:12-16.

⁴⁵ Petech 1958:175; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 72 (301-308). Like the Licchavi term *goṣṭhī* and *pañcālī*, some of these words also became transformed as they drifted into corrupt Sanskrit and finally Newari. For example, in a passage of the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 37b, *pratihāra* be-

comes *patihara*, and *cāmaradhāra* becomes *cāmragāha*. The title *vārta* so familiar to Licchavi inscriptions (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 44, 50, 58, 60, 65, 67, 93, etc.) emerges four centuries later in a manuscript dated N.S. 40 (A.D. 920) (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963:15; Petech 1958:43).

⁴⁶ D. Vajracharya 1966a:11-13.

⁴⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 2, 11, 12, 39; *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963a; D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 3 (2-3).

⁴⁸ A king for whom no documents have been found, although he is known to the chronicles. He may have ruled between Mānadeva II and Śivadeva I (D. Regmi 1969: 154-155).

⁴⁹ Petech 1958:177-178.

uated and at last withered and ceased to function altogether. But the overall socio-religious and economic life of the fields, villages, and towns certainly must have continued in the same rhythms as before. Merely because institutions are not recorded does not mean they had vanished. The vigorous re-appearance of the *pañcālī* in Malla documents after centuries of silence is convincing evidence of the continued function of this institution throughout the meagerly documented centuries of the Transitional Period. This must have been equally true of less formal patterns. Support for this assumption is also afforded by documentary clues. For example, some of the same rites and holy days recorded in Licchavi Nepal appear in Malla records, or may be discerned in modern Nepal. The Licchavi king Narendradeva lists Haribodhinī-ekādaśī, a Viṣṇu celebration, as a day of special observance, and so it remains as one of the most important sacred days of modern Nepal.⁵⁰ Similarly, another of Narendradeva's inscriptions mentions a method of worship known as *varṣavardhana*, it occurs again in an inscription of the Malla king Raṇajit of Bhaktapur in N.S. 854 Jyeṣṭha (A.D. 1734), and endures in modern practice as the *busādhana pūjā*.⁵¹

The same sites, villages, towns, and special places within them continued to be occupied in the transitional years as before. Some old villages, deprived of state-supervised irrigation systems and other sustaining works, fell into decay, and certainly some new settlements developed. But more numerous were the places that, with but slight alteration, or none, in their names, continued to be inhabited as before. The same temples and monasteries continued in use, and the same gods venerated within them. Sparse though the records of the Transitional Period may be, there are numerous references to the well-known gods of Licchavi Nepal, the gifts made in their names, repairs to their sacred dwellings, and similar religious concerns. Occasionally, in company with the villages that had clustered around his shrine, a Licchavi deity fell into oblivion. But the fortunate were resurrected and reconsecrated by later hands. Such, for example, was the history of the Viṣṇu-Lying-on-the-Waters commissioned by Viṣṇugupta.⁵²

Although Vajrayāna Buddhism was known to

⁵⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 129 (485-489).

⁵¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 128 (481-484); *Abhilekha*.

Licchavi Nepal, its full flowering was in the Transitional Period. Conservative monastic life based on strict discipline and celibacy ceded to a quite different philosophy unbound by orthodox conventions. The hardwon mastery of occult tantras, yoga, and similar arts of mind and body, enabled skilled practitioners, the *yogins* and *siddhas*, to control their environment and with it the gods themselves. They discarded celibacy, in keeping with the burgeoning emphasis on the elemental force of the female principle. But even the Great Perfected Ones (*mahāsiddhas*) usually remained attached to a monastic center, foremost of which were Nālandā, Vikramaśīla, Bodhgayā, and Odantapurī in the Pāla domain. The practice of Vajrayāna was not confined to these famous centers, however, but flourished in a host of lesser establishments in India, Nepal Mandala, and from the end of the tenth century, in Tibet.

In the Kathmandu Valley, with the decline and dissolution of the Licchavi state, it is probable that the secular powers of the Buddhist *saṃghas* diminished. But the scores of existing *vihāras* continued to thrive, many more were added to them, and together they formed a strong cultural force. It is likely that Patan, perhaps in emulation of the great Indian centers, became a sort of Buddhist university town, host in its warren of *vihāras* to Nepali and Indian masters and their many disciples. The historical records are explicit about the busy traffic between the Indian and Nepalese *vihāras*, and at length with the *goṅpas* of Tibet. Nepalis were counted among the brilliant teachers of the Buddhist university centers of India, and Nepali princes and priests journeyed thither to learn. Tibetans came to Nepal to study Sanskrit and doctrine, to seek texts and cult objects, and, incidentally, to acclimatize themselves before descending to the torrid plains. Numerous also were the famous *yogins* and *siddhas* who traveled through or sojourned within the Valley. Among them were almost certainly Matsyendra and his disciple Gorakṣanātha, of whom we shall hear again. With the Muslim destruction of the Indian Buddhist centers at the close of the twelfth century, the Kathmandu Valley became one of the principal centers of refuge for the Buddhist survivors.

saṃgraha 1962h:34.

⁵² Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:87 n. 54.

Into the Nepalese *vihāras* and the domestic chapels of the laity were increasingly introduced new tantric divinities. Their manifold powers were outwardly expressed in a multiplicity of heads, limbs, and symbols, and their ardent embrace symbolically demonstrated abstract concepts of Vajrayāna Buddhism. In the *vihāras* the new gods did not displace the older Buddhas and Bodhisattvas from the principal sanctuaries, but were installed in nearby subsidiary chapels. The proliferation of new deities and new methods of worshiping them notwithstanding, the immensely popular cult of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara grew, as did the cult of the stupa. Svayambhū continued to be the paramount Buddhist shrine, as it would in all time. Like other stupas, it was successively enlarged and embellished, and to accord with changes in doctrine was architecturally modified from time to time.

The new religious currents as expressed in Vajrayāna were by no means confined to Buddhism. The transitional years also witnessed the emergence in India and Nepal of Hindu cults that were similar in content and practice to Vajrayāna. In Nepal the intense Buddhist activity during the Transitional Period, when there was even an occasional Buddhist king, caused the Tibetans to view it as a Buddhist country. But this belied the actual religious climate in which then, as in all times, the two faiths comfortably coexisted. That the Brahmanical gods had lost none of their luster is evident not only in the number of extant Brahmanical manuscripts and images of this time, but by the continuing cult offered such luminaries as Paśupati, Changu Nārāyaṇa, and the host of lesser Hindu divinities. It is almost certain that many Nepalis, Buddhist in name, trod without embarrassment the traditional paths to Paśupati's venerable sanctuary on the Bagmati, and to Viṣṇu's on Changu hill. Buddhist or Hindu, all almost certainly worshiped Bunga-dyo, the ancient and venerable rain god of Bungamati village. Identified by then as the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Lokeśvara), the composite deity could also be worshiped in the guise of the other Lokeśvara, Śiva, Lord of the World.

Even in the Kathmandu Valley, however, where the congenial relations among diverse divinities is

⁵³ Wright 1966:79-82; Hasrat 1970:38-40, 45, 47; Lamshal 1966:18.

legendary, it seems apparent that all was not harmonious among their adherents. The echo of Hindu reform preached by the renowned ninth-century Indian theologian, Śaṅkara, unquestionably reverberated in the Himalayas. Although it is doubtful that he actually came to Nepal, as legend affirms, Śaṅkara's name and the expanding circle of his ideas made a lasting impression there. As Śaṅkarācārya, the great reformer's name appears frequently in the chronicles, and he is a familiar figure in the Valley's legend and folklore.⁵³ His burning of Buddhist books and similar acts in the name of Śiva are frequently depicted in later paintings, and Śaṅkara's name attaches to many a Valley locale where he is claimed to have personally contested Buddhism. Legends imply that these were bloodless confrontations in which the principals, Brahman reformer and Buddhist Master of the Thunderbolt (*vajrācārya*), each pitted his magic powers against the other. That these differences of opinion between adherents may at times have taken the form of violent conflict is also suggested by legend and tradition. There are a number of places where champions of the opposing causes—by then in reality one by their common embrace of tantrism—are said to have perished by the scores. By the twelfth century the zealous Hindu orthodoxy of the Senas, inheritors of the Pāla domain and firmly opposed to Buddhism, may have been reflected in the religious climate of the Kathmandu Valley. It is approximately from this time that Buddhism began a decline that accelerated with each passing decade.

The thousands of manuscript copies of Buddhist religious texts that poured from the *vihāras*, and to a lesser extent from the Hindu *mathas* and private homes of the Brahmans, attest to the literary climate of the transitional years in Nepal Mandala. Most of the manuscripts appear to be texts redacted in India. No thorough study has yet been made of the Nepali contribution to religious literature, however, and there is some evidence of original work.⁵⁴ The manuscripts copied and preserved in Nepal are important keys to reconstructing texts that are lost in India, and immeasurably enrich Indological studies.

The manuscripts were composed of stacked strips of palm leaves or, less commonly, of thick home-

⁵⁴ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 25a.

made papers in the same format. Paper was often dyed blue-black for the receipt of texts written in gold and silver (Plates 60, 61). The composition of the dyes is said to make the paper resistant to termite attack, and may be a factor accounting for the preservation of many texts that would otherwise not have survived the ravages of time. The texts were written in a variety of ornate scripts that remained popular into the fourteenth century. They were developed by the copyists from the cursive script used by the later Licchavis. Sanskrit remained the literary and sacred language. Although the Nepalese were well qualified to teach the questing Tibetans, the luster of Licchavi Sanskrit had begun to dim. Toward the end of the period, in A.D. 1173, the indigenous language, Newari, first appeared in written form; but it was a language that would long be confined to epigraphic use. From the eleventh century on, many of the manuscripts were embellished with miniature paintings of deities and sacred places (Plates 244, 494, 594). These do not always illustrate the text, but wonderfully ornament it. Wooden manuscript covers, placed at the top and bottom of the stacked leaves, are also frequently painted inside and out, carved, or sheathed in gilt metal repoussé. Less well known than Buddhist manuscripts, the illuminated Brahmanical texts are very important, not only to the history of painting, but because they are the only surviving illustrated Brahmanical manuscripts from the Indian subcontinent.

The abrupt appearance of superb and sophisticated painted temple banners (*paṭas, paubhās*) in the fourteenth century suggest that they are the lineal descendants of others that have not survived. Stylistically, both the banners and the miniature manuscript paintings are rooted in the Gupta tradition, which Pāla painting also shared. The Nepali style appears to continue the Buddhist tradition, especially as manifested in the murals in the distant caves of Ajanta, India.

Despite the anarchic political milieu, the bronze casters and goldsmiths seem to have gone about their work in the foundries and shops. Many of them were Buddhist monks working in the *vihāras*. Their skill was no less than, and perhaps surpassed, their predecessors'. There is a treasure of surviving works from the Transitional Period, cast

⁵⁵ Foucher 1900:18; Petech 1958:36.

and repoussé, and some dated. To judge by their quantity, bronzes and ritual objects must have left the ateliers in a never-ending stream. The arrival of so many new deities of endless and complicated forms, together with the demand for them as cult objects, must have stimulated the metallurgist's skills and accelerated his production. In addition to the local market, from the tenth century on there was also an insatiable demand for cult objects in Tibet. How familiar the Nepalese artisans were with the ateliers of the Indian monastic centers we do not know. The portability of bronzes suggests that they were often included in the baskets and bundles carried both ways across the mountain paths, and that therefore artisans of neither region worked in isolation. In any event, they were rooted in the same Gupta tradition. But, as in the paintings, the styles of the two areas are distinct.

Inexplicably, considering the distinguished work in other arts, the stone sculptures of the Transitional Period evidence the beginning of decline of one of the outstanding arts of Licchavi Nepal. The traditional Gupta emphasis on volume begins to cede to a linear idiom, and the chisels are far less assured. But the carvings are clearly Nepalese, and have little discernible relation with the sculptures created for the Pālas and Senas to the south.

Hand in hand with painting and sculptures in bronze and stone went the companion art of architecture. Despite a continuing use and veneration of older buildings, the architectural crafts were by no means static. Even the most sacred shrines, such as Paśupati or Changu Nārāyaṇa, were regularly allowed to suffer decay, and as regularly had to be restored. They were also frequently destroyed by fire, earthquake, or foreign mercenary, and had to be erected anew. All through the transitional years the colophons and chronicles record the building of new palaces, monasteries, temples, and water sources. Some buildings were of such beauty as to elicit special praise from the normally terse scribes. One monk, for example, writing in A.D. 1015, described a certain Hlām-vihāra as "the greatest ornament of Nepal."⁵⁵ At least one of these new buildings still stands, the Wooden Pavilion, Kāṣṭha-maṇḍapa, once a free lodging for holy men in the old central square of Kathmandu (Plates 85, 204).⁵⁶

The art of wood carving, unquestionably rooted

⁵⁶ Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:180-212.

in the art of Licchavi Nepal, was an important corollary of architecture in the Transitional Period. The chroniclers of the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* particularly recalled that the great Yodyam temple built by King Someśvaradeva was "decorated most beautifully with wood."⁸⁷ Little of this art has been thought to have survived. But many of the superb

⁸⁷ Fol. 25b. This is an unpublished reading by G. Vajracharya. Petech 1958:71 reads the passage "a most beautiful

carvings on temple and *vihāra*, heretofore conceived as Malla works, may prove to be far more ancient survivals. The resplendent wood carvings that can be dated to the thirteenth century on documentary evidence, no less than other Nepalese arts, did not suddenly come into being, but originated in a long anterior tradition.

wooden structure on the great temple of Yogha."



CHAPTER 4

THE MALLAS AND SHAHS: FROM MULTISTATES TO HINDU KINGDOM, A.D. 1200 TO THE PRESENT

THE SOURCES

THE HISTORY of the Early Malla Period, A.D. 1200 to 1382, depends on records scarcely more abundant than those of the Transitional Period. Thereafter, the records become increasingly copious. From the closing years of the fourteenth century on, there are many inscriptions on stone, copper, gilt copper, and wood. Manuscripts are numerous, and the chronicles now keep pace with contemporary events. The palm-leaf land grant records (*tālapatra*), in use since at least the thirteenth century, become common enough to provide an important historical source from the sixteenth century on.¹ Coinage is also available from this period and afterwards.² In the seventeenth century, the daily journals (*thyāsaphu*) become a major historical source; at this time letters³ and other new archival materials become available.⁴ Foreign records are increasingly important for the whole period. So, too, is the staggering legacy of monuments for more than half a millennium.

¹ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. v, 130; Rajvamshi 1967.

² There was a single coin struck in the reign of Anantamalla, the late thirteenth to early fourteenth century (Petech 1958:103-104). See also S. Joshi 1960:62-65.

³ The letters written by Pratāpamalla to the Sena rulers

THE MALLA PERIOD, A.D. 1200 TO 1769

The Name "Malla"

The period of Nepalese history between A.D. 1200 and 1769 is usually referred to by the name Malla. This name has been widely understood to refer to a new dynasty, probably outsiders, who acceded to power in the Kathmandu Valley after the demise of the Ṭhakurī. But we cannot establish any probable external source for a people, or a dynasty, by this name. As applied in medieval Nepal, *malla*, like *ṭhakurī*, was a title of honor.

There was a confederation called Malla in northern India in the time of the Buddha. But in view of the antiquity of these Mallas, they can hardly be connected with the rulers of this period of Nepalese history. In the fifth century A.D., King Mānadeva I campaigned against Mallapurī, a place or people probably located in western Nepal beyond the Kali Gandaki River.⁵ The Mallapurī appear to have been

of western Nepal are the earliest so far known (Parajuli 1970; M. P. Khanal 1971:28-32).

⁴ D. Vajracharya and Nepal 1957; Tewari, et al. 1964.

⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:25-27. See Chapter 2.

feudatories who, profiting by King Dharmadeva's sudden death, attempted to break away from Licchavi rule. But the young Mānadeva reaffirmed Licchavi sovereignty by force of arms. Because of this struggle, Sylvain Lévi was led to speculate that it was these Mallas, after centuries of continuing dispute with the Licchavis, who had at last gained mastery of the Kathmandu Valley.⁶ Lévi and others after him assumed that, rather than an easily intimidated feudatory, these Mallas were a constant threat to the Licchavis, who consequently assessed a special tax, the *mallaḥara*, either as a tribute to them or for defense against them.⁷ This tax (*ḥara*), frequently mentioned in Licchavi inscriptions,⁸ has now been shown not to have been a special tax, but a routine farm levy, like that assessed against the production of pigs, chickens, and fish. The *mallaḥara* was almost certainly a tax on the most important domestic animal, the water buffalo. In some Newari dialects even today the water buffalo is known as *malleme*.⁹

"Malla" was also the title borne by the rulers of the small Khasa kingdom comprising parts of western Nepal and adjacent Tibet from the eleventh to the last half of the fourteenth century.¹⁰ Their relation to the Mallapurī is both unknown and doubtful. Between A.D. 1287 and 1328, the Khasa came infrequently to the Kathmandu Valley as raiders, and sometimes as pilgrims. But their visits began almost a century after the use of the title *malla* had become current in the Valley, and we cannot look to them as the source of a new dynasty named Malla.

There are no records of wars or conquest of Nepal Mandala by any people at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Nor is there any evident rupture in the cultural continuum such as would attend a permanent foreign intrusion. In January A.D. 1200 (N.S. 320 Māgha) we have the last document of the Transitional Period king, Vijayakāmadeva,

and in October of the same year (N.S. 321 Kārtika), the first of a new king, Arimalla.¹¹ Subsequently, until the ascendancy of Sthitimalla around A.D. 1382, there appear ten more kings, half of whom employ the suffix *-malla*, while half retain the characteristic earlier suffix *-deva*.¹² Thereafter, from the time of Sthitimalla to the Gorkhali conquest, *malla* forms a part of the kings' names as regularly as *deva* had before A.D. 1200. It seems evident that rather than foreign intervention or the installation of a new dynasty in the year 1200, the descendants of previous rulers simply chose to add the honorific suffix *-malla* to their names. This was also apparently the case with the Khasas of western Nepal, the "Western Mallas."

Like the title *śhakuri* or the suffix *-deva*, that of *-malla* by itself is normally not an ethnic or dynastic name.¹³ In Sanskrit the word *malla* means, among other things, "wrestler," "athlete," or "victor." It is not uncommon among Indian kings to have adopted the title to assert their physical prowess or to commemorate a victory. The first to use it seems to have been the Pallava king, Narasiṃha, in the seventh century A.D., who adopted the titles *mahāmalla* and *amitrāmalla*.¹⁴ Other Pallava kings followed suit. The Cālukyas of Bādami, their arch enemies, celebrated their victories over the Pallavas by appropriating their titles. In the eighth century, the custom of using the *malla* title was adopted by the Cālukyas of Gujarat.¹⁵ The later Cālukyas of Kalyāṇī revived the usage when Tailapa, the founder of the dynasty in A.D. 973, took the name Āhavamalla. His descendant, Someśvara III (who pretended to include Nepal among his vassal states in the twelfth century) assumed the name Bhūlokamalla. By this time the title *malla* had become commonplace. It is evident that the original users attached to it a precise value. Later kings must have been similarly influenced, adding the title in emulation of others, to emphasize a nobility with which

⁶ Lévi 1905:11, 211-212.

⁷ Lévi 1905:11, 212.

⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 54, 67, 83, 111, 115.

⁹ D. Vajracharya 1973:221-223; inscrs. 71, 83 (290-300, 351-353).

¹⁰ Tucci 1956:106, 108.

¹¹ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 195-196, 207.

¹² See Appendix III, Table 3.

¹³ Lévi 1905:11, 210-214; Petech 1958:79-82; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 202-204. How the word apparently became the proper name of the Malla confederation in ancient India is still to be explained.

¹⁴ Lévi 1905:11, 210-214.

¹⁵ The mode even passed into Ceylon, where in the twelfth century there were kings who bore the title (Lévi 1905:11, 214).

they had tenuous relationships, or a nobility to which they aspired. This seems to be what happened in Nepal. Even the chroniclers' account of the derivation of the name of Arimalla, the first king to adopt the title, testifies to this. The issue is merely clouded by their reference to the alternate meaning of *malla*, "wrestler," "athlete." According to the chronicle, Arimalla's father, the then king, was exercising when the news of his son's birth reached him. "Consequently he conferred the title *Malla* on the child, and thus was [the] family name changed from Deva to Malla."¹⁶

As will be seen in the following pages, the Nepalese kings who bore the *malla* title came from various families, and did not properly constitute a dynasty. But unlike the misleading designation *Ṭhākūrī*, applied centuries after the fact to a miscellany of kings, including Aṃśuvarman, the title *malla* was chosen and actually borne by the kings in question. We do not know their family names and, if we did, no line ruled long enough to provide a meaningful label for the period. The familiar name *Malla*—a label without ethnic or dynastic implications—therefore provides a convenient one with which to tag the succession of kings who ruled Nepal Mandala between A.D. 1200 and 1769.

The Mallas, A.D. 1200 to 1482

The complexity of Malla political history can be most easily comprehended by dividing it into three basic periods broadly corresponding to its development, apogee, and decline: 1) A.D. 1200 to 1382, representing a continuation of the Transitional Period, but in which the rulers began to assume the title *malla*; 2) A.D. 1382 to 1482, a century of relative political stability, in which the state began to achieve unity under strong rulers; and 3) A.D. 1482 to 1769, the breakup of the kingdom into several sovereign city-states and, at last, the extinction of Malla rule.

The early Malla years, A.D. 1200 to 1382, are the least well documented, and necessarily the most

¹⁶ Hasrat 1970:49.

¹⁷ See Appendix III, Table 3; and Petech 1958:82-131, and Genealogical Table B, facing p. 224.

¹⁸ Patan has been widely held to be the de jure capital of the Mallas, a misconception that will be dispelled in the following chapter. Bhaktapur was both the de jure and de facto capital of Nepal from at least A.D. 1147, when Ānan-

speculative part of the history of the Mallas. But they are critical. The period saw the continued attrition, final extinction, and replacement of many lingering Licchavi institutions. Some of the old Licchavi titles, which had survived perhaps only as empty traditional terms rather than real offices, begin to cede to new ones—*mahātha*, *jodhāpati*, *ḡvathanāyaka*, for example—in which are reflected new administrative concepts. The political pattern of the preceding years continued in the dispersal of power among kings, aspirant kings, and powerful nobles. The debilitating effect of internal anarchy was compounded by destructive raids of foreign adventurers. Insofar as the records attest, there were no outstanding kings and they are barely known beyond their names. That they did not represent a single dynasty is clear and, as in the Transitional Period, the throne seems to have alternated between two or more families.¹⁷

The seat of Malla power, and of the nobles who most vigorously contested it, was at the eastern end of the Valley and just beyond (Map 3). Since the mid-twelfth century, Bhaktapur (Bhatgaon) had been the capital city, de facto and de jure, and the kings who titled themselves *malla* continued to rule from it.¹⁸ A few miles eastward, just over the Valley rim, embracing the Banepa (Bhoṭa)-Panauti-Palanchok area, was the "Banepa Kingdom," the Bhoṭarājya. It was the fief of hereditary nobles who at this time seem to have been infinitely more powerful than those of Kathmandu, Patan, Pharping, and other city-states. They paid only nominal allegiance to the crown at Bhaktapur, and for all practical purposes were independent. The Banepa nobles also held influential posts at the Bhaktapur court, where they played key manipulative roles. Moreover, some of the Malla kings originated in Banepa.

The first king to style himself *malla*, Arimalla I, A.D. 1200-1216, was succeeded by a century of rulers whose little-known reigns need not detain us here.¹⁹ The last ruler of the thirteenth century dadeva I established his capital there and built his royal palace, Tripura. It may have begun to serve in this way a decade earlier if Petech 1958:61 is correct that Narendradeva II (documents A.D. 1134-1143) ruled there in some capacity.

¹⁹ A running account of the succession of early Malla kings, largely extracted from the chronicles, the primary

was Anantamalla, about A.D. 1274-1307. He is said to have distressed his subjects by his "deceitful conduct," and after bestowing his treasure on Paśu-patinātha, to have gone into retirement at Banepa, where he died the following year.²⁰ His successor, Ānandadeva II, a native of Banepa, probably began his reign in A.D. 1308, and continued to wear the crown until 1320. He was ineffectual as a ruler. By A.D. 1317 the real power was exercised by Rudramalla, one of the principal Bhaktapur nobles. Not a king but a kingmaker, Rudramalla's actions profoundly affected the subsequent history of the Mallas. Born in A.D. 1295 (N.S. 416 Mārga) of royal descent,²¹ Rudramalla emerged to a position of extraordinary influence as a mere youth, a position he maintained until his death in A.D. 1326 (N.S. 446 Āṣāḍha). The extent of his power is well illustrated by the fact that it was he, rather than the reigning monarch, who presided over the Matsyendranātha festival and repaired nationally important temples and images. But his outstanding political achievement was in crowning a new king of his choice, Arimalla II, in A.D. 1320 (N.S. 440 Caitra).²² This took place in Deopatan, while King Ānandadeva still lived, and the reign endured to A.D. 1344. But like his predecessors, Arimalla was essentially a puppet king, ruling in name only.

Even after Rudramalla's death, his ambitious spirit continued to hover about court politics. His only surviving child was a daughter, Nāyakadevī, who was declared his legal heir. She was raised by Rudramalla's astute mother, Padmulla- or Padu-

maladevī, assisted by one Devaladevī. For almost the next three decades Devaladevī appears to have played the same powerful and manipulative role in Nepalese politics as had Rudramalla.

Until recently historians have assumed that Devaladevī was the wife of Rudramalla. Recent research, however, has established that she was the wife of Hara- or Harasiṃha, the last king of Mithilā, or Tirhut, an Indian state formerly straddling the Bihar-Tarai border (Map 1).²³ Ousted from his kingdom by the Muslims, Harasiṃha with his family and court was seeking refuge in Nepal when he died en route in A.D. 1326 (N.S. 446 Māgha).²⁴ The widowed Devaladevī, with her son Jagatasīṃha, pressed on. They were given refuge in Rudramalla's palace, Yuthunihmam, at Bhaktapur just a few months before Rudramalla's death. Because of the marked similarity of their names, it is not impossible that Devaladevī was related to Padumaladevī, and for this reason was welcomed in her son's palace. This would also explain the fact that Devaladevī was permitted to assume such a prominent role in raising Nāyakadevī, Rudramalla's heir.

Nāyakadevī was first married to a prince of Benares, Hariścandra, but the marriage was expediently terminated by poisoning the prince, A.D. 1335 (N.S. 455 Jyeṣṭha).²⁵ She was then remarried to Jagatasīṃha, son of Devaladevī.²⁶ In A.D. 1347 (N.S. 467 Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa) a girl, named Rājalladevī, was born to them. Nāyakadevī died a few days later and, inexplicably, Jagatasīṃha was taken to prison and disappears from history.²⁷ Padumaladevī by

source for the period, may be found in Petech 1958:82-131 and D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 200-344.

²⁰ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 26a, b, 42a; D. Vajracharya 1965:27. Anantamalla did not rob the treasury as reported by D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 247.

²¹ Deviprasad Bhandari 1964; Petech 1958:107-108.

²² *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 27a, b; VK (11); Petech 1958:109.

²³ D. Vajracharya 1965c:14-20; T. Vaidya 1969.

²⁴ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 232-241. According to the chronicles, Harasiṃha was going to Dolakha, a principality east of the Kathmandu Valley, but died (from *awal?*) in a small village called Tinapāṭana before even reaching the foothills. D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 275 is mistaken that Harasiṃha's presence in Bhaktapur is confirmed by the account given in *Samskṛta-sandēśa*, 1:5, 41-43

which is actually a late sixteenth-century legendary version long after the fact. Although Harasiṃha did not even reach the Kathmandu Valley, as several scholars have demonstrated (D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 232-236; Petech 1958:92, 111-113; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 271-293), a most common misconception of Nepalese history, bequeathed by the late chroniclers, is that he conquered it. A similar misconception obtains with respect to the supposed conquest of Nepal by Harasiṃha's ancestor, Nānyadeva, more than two centuries earlier.

²⁵ D. Vajracharya 1965c:14-16.

²⁶ A relationship made explicit by the entries in the chronicles (*Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 28a, b; VK [13]), thus confirming Petech's astute guess (1958:115-116).

²⁷ D. Vajracharya 1965c:14-20.

this time was dead, so Devaladevī once more assumed the charge of rearing an orphaned princess, this time her granddaughter.

Devaladevī seems to have exercised tremendous power in Valley affairs. How, as a widowed foreign queen, a refugee domiciled with those who appear to have been her relatives, she came to control the Nepalese affairs of state we do not know. (It is also difficult to explain her own rise in light of the almost immediate liquidation of her son.) Her name figures with greater frequency in the chronicles than the crowned sovereigns, on occasions she seems to have been granted full royal titles, and it is to her name that the honorific title *thakurī* is first attached.²⁸ A measure of her authority, moreover, is indicated by the fact that she counted among her most ardent supporters the powerful feudal lord, Anekarāma varddhana. He was the master of neighboring Banepa, and served as prime minister (*mahātha*, literally, elder) to at least two Bhaktapur kings, Arimalla II and his successor, Rājadeva (ca. A.D. 1347-1361). Together with Devaladevī, he was the real power behind the throne. In A.D. 1354, shortly before Anekarāma's death,²⁹ and long before her own in A.D. 1366 (N.S. 486 Vaiśākha), Devaladevī had carefully selected a husband for her then eight-year-old granddaughter. The groom's name was Sthiti- or Sthitirājamalla.³⁰ He was soon to accede to the Malla throne and begin a new chapter of Nepalese history (see Chart).

While these events were taking place in A.D. 1200 to 1354, as weak kings wore the crown but the nobles ruled at the court and in their own fiefs, Nepal Mandala was almost continuously the scene of devastating foreign raids that the impotent and politically fragmented country was powerless to prevent. The raids of the Maithilī (Tirhutīā, Ḍoya) continued as in the Transitional Period. Five destructive attacks were made between A.D. 1244 and 1311.³¹ The raid of A.D. 1299 (N.S. 420 Pauṣa) reached the Tripura palace of Bhaktapur, and in

²⁸ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 309; *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 49b.

²⁹ In N.S. 476 Āṣāḍha (A.D. 1356); D. Vajracharya 1965c: 23. The earliest record of Anekarāma as *mahātha* is N.S. 452 Āśvina (A.D. 1332); D. Vajracharya 1965c:21 n. 2.

³⁰ Twenty-three out of twenty-six documents published by Petech 1958:131-137 refer to this person as Sthitirāja Malla but, inexplicably, historians use simply the awkward

the final raids of A.D. 1311 (N.S. 431 Māgha and 432 Kārtika), the temples in the heart of Patan were destroyed and Deopatan was sacked. The raids ceased only when the troublesome Kingdom of Mithilā was itself attacked, A.D. 1324-1325, by the Muslim Ghiyās-ud-dīn Tughluq, returning to Delhi after his invasion of Bengal.

Alternating almost monotonously with the raids of the Maithilī at the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century were those of the Khasa from western Nepal. The Khasa controlled the basin of the Karnali River and parts of western Tibet (Guge) from about the eleventh century A.D. until well past the middle of the fourteenth century. Their capital was variously north of Jumla at Semjā, or closer to the Tarai at Dullu. Their later kings assumed the same title, *malla*, as the Valley kings, but were not related. It is unlikely that they were descended from the Mallapurī, who apparently once dwelt in western Nepal under the Licchavis. Ruins of stone temples, images, fountains, and inscriptions are scattered throughout the old Khasa kingdom, but so far have only been superficially studied (Plate 209).³² Like the Maithilī, the Khasa made repeated raids into the Valley, and a half-dozen attacks are recorded between A.D. 1287 and 1334.³³ In contrast to the Maithilī, the Khasa plundered the people but spared their shrines and temples. At Deopatan, for example, they shot arrows at the populace but fell devotedly at Paśupati's feet. The shrines of Paśupatinātha, Svayambhūnātha, and Matsyendranātha were objects of special devotion. In fact, the Khasa ruler Ripumalla seems to have entered the Valley in A.D. 1313 (433 Phālguna), not as a raider but solely as a pilgrim intent on paying his respects to these famous holy places.³⁴

According to the late chronicles, the Valley suffered another raid, this one by King Mukundasena of Palpa, western Nepal (Plate 66). The date the chroniclers propose could hardly be correct, and name Sthiti or amplify it with the honorific prefix Jaya.

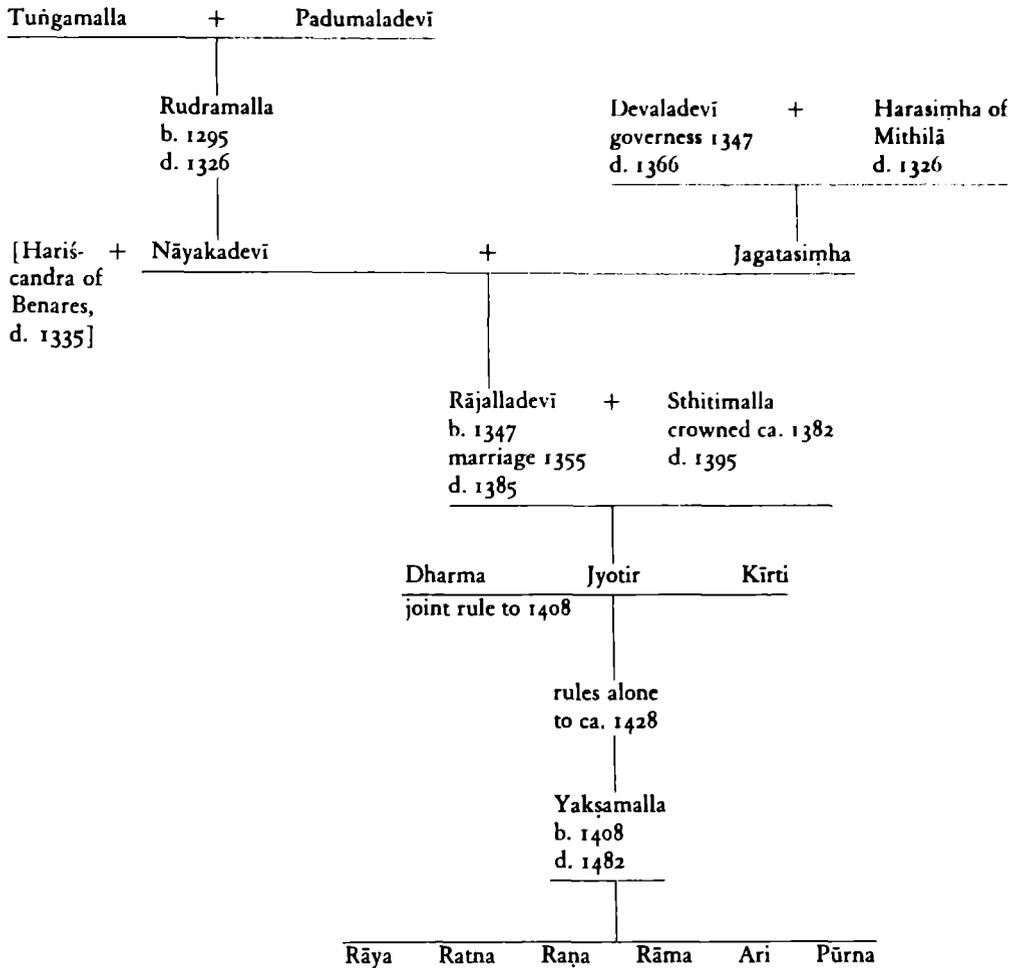
³¹ D. Vajracharya 1965.

³² Naraharinath 1956a; Tucci 1956; P. Sharma 1972; D. Vajracharya 1965b; 1972c; R. Pandey 1969; Devichandra and Shrestha 1972; S. Joshi 1971.

³³ D. Vajracharya 1965b.

³⁴ D. Vajracharya 1965b:24.

CHART. The Malla Succession ca. A.D. 1300 to 1482



the event difficult to authenticate.³⁵ But the king in question may be Maṇi Mukunda, an ancestor of the Khasa king, Jitārī Malla. The invasion would thus be dated to the mid-thirteenth century.³⁶

Muslims also, led by Sultan Shams ud-dīn Ilyās of Bengal, in A.D. 1349 made one devastating week-

long sweep across the Valley from east to west, pillaging and plundering as they could.³⁷ The inscriptions leave no doubt that they looted Paśupati-nātha and wilfully smashed the four-faced linga, one of the oldest and most venerated symbols in the Valley. They also severely damaged Svayam-

³⁵ Wright 1966:115-116; Hasrat 1970:51; D. Regmi 1965: part 1, 239-240, 261, 266-267.

³⁶ Petech 1958:193-194. That in fact the raid took place in the early sixteenth century has now been demonstrated

by D., M., and N. Pant (*Pūrnimā* 42 and 43, 11:2, 3 [V.S. 2036 Caitra and Pauṣa (1979-1980)], 67-102, 105-152).

³⁷ D. Vajracharya 1966. Petech 1958:119 is mistaken about a Muslim raid prior to that of A.D. 1349.

bhūnātha and a number of other sites.³⁸ But while they were iconoclasts and had no reason to spare the holy places, it must be remembered that theirs was a single seven-day orgy of a moving army bent on plunder. As such, their role in the destruction of the Nepalese monuments looms less large than is commonly supposed.³⁹ Eminently more destructive were the successive raids of the Maithilī and the constant natural calamities of earthquake and fire, the jeremiad of the chronicles.

By now, the middle of the fourteenth century, the once-strong state was long a thing of the past. Fragmented by internal strife and prey to foreign incursions, the kingdom's future seemed very bleak. The Valley's fortunes began to turn with the arrival of Sthitimalla (Sthitirāja, Jayasthiti), the husband Devaladevī had selected for her granddaughter.

Sthitimalla's origin, despite the passionate interest it holds for historians of Nepal, has never been ascertained. Like certain other princes before him, he was summoned from outside the Valley. But the early chronicles, written at his own court, only tell us that he "came from the south."⁴⁰ Other contemporaneous records are even less revealing, for they claim nothing more substantial than that he belonged to the solar dynasty.⁴¹ However, there is every reason to believe that Sthitimalla was a Maithilī whose family and personal promise Devaladevī knew well when she selected him to be husband of Rājalladevī, her granddaughter. Certainly such a marriage would have fortified the Maithilī influence at the Bhaktapur court, already strategically established by introducing Jagatasimha's blood into Rudramalla's lineage. It is doubtful that Sthitimalla also came from the royal family, since his bride descended from it, but came rather from a noble or well-endowed Maithilī family; in the Hindu milieu it would be unthinkable to have joined

³⁸ D. Vajracharya 1966:8-10.

³⁹ Petech 1958:119-120.

⁴⁰ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 33. He did not come by way of the "forests of Sankhu," a misreading of the pertinent passage of the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* (D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 323).

⁴¹ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 40-41.

⁴² Hindu kinship is governed by caste, *gotra*, and *thar*; endogamy is possible within a *thar* (loosely, "clan") if it does not belong to the same *gotra*. The latter is an exten-

together in marriage two persons of the same lineage.⁴²

Most of the late chronicles, despite profound confusion of detail, also understand Sthitimalla to be somehow connected to Mithilā. But they erroneously trace his descent from Harasimha in the female line.⁴³ Certainly by the seventeenth century, Sthitimalla's descendants set great store by their presumed ties with the rulers of Mithilā. But by then they had forgotten their actual descent through Jagatasimha and the daughter of a Bhaktapur noble, or chose to ignore it in favor of a spurious lineage proceeding from Nānyadeva, Harasimha's ancestor from South India and the founder of the dynasty in Mithilā.⁴⁴ Also suggestive of Sthitimalla's Maithilī origins is the fact that among the Malla Period kings it was he who, like his Vaiṣṇava contemporaries enthroned at Mithilā, first adopted the name Nārāyaṇa as part of his laudatory titles.⁴⁵

In any event, it is clear that Sthitimalla's right to rule in Nepal Mandala rested solely on the rights of his wife, the granddaughter of Rudramalla. This dependence was vividly perpetuated by designating Sthitimalla as "husband of Rājalladevī." Even his own sons referred to him in this way more than a half-century after the marriage,⁴⁶ which took place at Bhaktapur a few months after the betrothal, in A.D. 1355 (N.S. 475). Rājadeva, an obscure king originating at Palanchok, a part of the Bhoṭarājya, occupied the throne; but Devaladevī and Anekarāma, the prime minister, were the forces behind it. Within a few years, however, all three had been overtaken by death. Anekarāma died a year after the wedding and was succeeded in his influential post as *mahātha* by his son, Jayasimharāma. Soon thereafter, in A.D. 1361, King Rājadeva seems to have been accidentally burned to death in his sleep and was succeeded by his son, Arjunadeva.⁴⁷ He had no greater authority than his father, and Arjunadeva's

sive kin group that traces its line to one of the legendary Hindu patriarchs, the rishis (*ṛṣis*), who provide the eponym of the *gotra*.

⁴³ Wright 1966:118, 121-122; Hasrat 1970:53-55; Petech 1958:123.

⁴⁴ Lévi 1905:11, 200; Petech 1958:92, 191-196; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 223-225, 259-268, 273-275.

⁴⁵ Lévi 1905:11, 234-235.

⁴⁶ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 40-41.

⁴⁷ Petech 1958:124. Arjunadeva seems to have been

twenty-year incumbency was the scene of Sthitimalla's rise to power and, finally, kingship. By A.D. 1370, although Arjunadeva still wore the crown, he had been effectively eclipsed by his foreign rival. For example, that year the nobles of Patan received Sthitimalla with deference in their city and made no resistance when, in a show of power, Sthitimalla laid hands on some Patan thieves who had robbed the treasury of Paśupatinātha.⁴⁸ By A.D. 1372 (N.S. 492 Āśvina) Sthitimalla had become coruler with Arjunadeva, whom he soon banished, then imprisoned, and finally destroyed so that he might himself assume the crown. This apparently took place in A.D. 1382, after the demise of the king, and a few years before Rājalladevi's death.⁴⁹

Sthitimalla's triumphant accession to the Malla throne was bitterly opposed by various nobles. Among them the most obstinate was Jayasiṃha-rā-mavardhana, the prime minister at Bhaktapur and master of the Bhoṭarājya. It was a relentless contest of wills between two exceptional men, during which Jayasiṃha was twice imprisoned. It ended only with Sthitimalla's liquidation of Arjunadeva, also a native of the Bhoṭarājya, whom Jayasiṃha earlier had personally crowned. Reconciled at last to the inevitable, Jayasiṃha crowned Sthitimalla, and his role as kingmaker is the boast of his descendants.⁵⁰ He then enjoyed high office under Sthitimalla until the latter's death, A.D. 1395 (N.S. 515 Bhadra), and continued to serve his sons and successors in the same influential capacity until his own death, A.D. 1400 (N.S. 521 Kārtika).⁵¹

Sthitimalla is unquestionably one of the major figures of Nepalese history. Ruthless in his usurpation of the throne, he gave Nepal a stability it had not known for centuries. Although he was not able to extinguish the nobles, he curbed their powers, and

crowned in the preceding year, N.S. 480 Vaiśākha (*Gopā-larāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 54a), which suggests that Rājadeva, then only forty-four years old, was already disabled from active rule when he died. His mother was apparently a princess from the Karṇāṭa (D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 325).

⁴⁸ D. Vajracharya 1965c:25.

⁴⁹ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 94-95; Rajvamshi 1970:inscr. 52 (37-38); the exact date of Sthitimalla's coronation is unknown, but apparently took place soon after Arjunadeva's death, N.S. 502 Māgha (Petech 1958:130-131; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 345).

⁵⁰ Tewari, et al. 1967. Sthitimalla, it should be noted,

particularly their manipulation of the throne. Further, he gave to the country an internal strength that defied destructive raids from the outside, such as those that had debilitated it during the transitional and early Malla years. By A.D. 1372, for example, when Sthitimalla already ruled but did not yet have the crown, it was at last possible to restore the great stupa of Svayambhūnātha, twenty-three years after its devastation by the Muslims.⁵²

With Sthitimalla's reign, new concepts of administration, nascent in the early Malla years, became clearly established. The documents from his time and thereafter bristle with new names—*pradhāna*, *prāmana*, and many others—denoting new offices and titles that then achieved permanence. But he cannot be credited with introducing the caste system into Nepal, nor with singlehandedly infusing hierarchy into Nepalese society, two deeds on which his fame popularly rests.⁵³ The Indian caste system was in effect in the Nepal Valley from at least the beginning of the Licchavi Period, as inscriptions attest.⁵⁴ Similarly, the complex system of subcastes that ordain Valley social behavior must be viewed as the product of centuries of gradual accretion, not a sudden imposition by law. Significantly, Sthitimalla's own annals make no mention of these undertakings; nor do they refer to the panel of Brahman pandits who are supposed to have helped him. As with the spurious lineage of Maithilī kings, we owe the story, it seems, to a nineteenth-century fabrication, or at least embroidery. This was perhaps engendered by the name Sthiti, which means stability, rules, regulations, or customs. Nonetheless, Sthitimalla may well have codified the particular social patterns that had developed by his time, and thus given established local custom the force of law. Sthitimalla was a Hindu raised in the ortho-

was accorded the *paṭābhiseka*, a coronation ceremony distinguished from the *pusyā-* (or *puspa-*) *abhiseka* that Arjunadeva enjoyed (see M. Pant 1975a respecting these types of consecration).

⁵¹ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 38; 1965c:31-32; Tewari, et al. 1967:132.

⁵² D. Vajracharya 1966:11; 1962:main part, 94-95.

⁵³ Wright 1966:123-127; Lamshal 1966:37-39; Petech 1958:179-189. The error of this attribution is demonstrated by N. Pant 1964c and D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 366-367, 651-654.

⁵⁴ D. Vajracharya 1971; D. Vajracharya 1973:28-30.

dox milieu of Mithilā. Through codification, he may have sought to intensify the prior drift of the Newar Buddhist community into a pattern he deemed more compatible with the accepted mores of the Hindu tradition. The late Buddhist chronicles, at least, substantiate this surmise.⁶⁵

During Sthitimalla's rise and subsequent reign, the unity of the country was marred by the continuing virtual independence of such peripheral states as Nawakot, Pharping, and the Banepa "kingdom," the Bhoṭarājya.⁶⁶ Even in the heart of the Valley, the lords of Patan—seven particular families—while nominally accepting Sthitimalla as the country's king, continued to exercise the real authority in that traditionally turbulent city. Known as *pātra*, *mahāpātra* (vassal, chief vassal), a term reserved exclusively to designate the hereditary nobles of Patan and Kathmandu, the Patan *mahāpātras* are already heard of in the Transitional and Early Malla Period.⁶⁷ But it is only with the fourteenth century that we begin to see clearly the extent of their power; they were vassals in name only.

Without doubt, during the fourteenth century it was the nobles of Banepa region who posed the most serious threat to the unity of the country and the stability of the throne. The Rāma family's influence was not confined to their own territory and to the court of Bhaktapur, but was also felt in Kathmandu. Jayasiṃha-rāmavarddhana had curbed the power of the hereditary nobles there, only to replace it with Rāma control. And whatever his fortunes vis-à-vis the Bhaktapur government, as *mahātha* or as political prisoner, Jayasiṃha continued to exercise the traditional Rāma family authority over the Bhoṭarājya.⁶⁸ In this he was ably assisted by his younger brother, Madanasimha.

⁶⁵ Wright 1966:125-126.

⁶⁶ There is another small state, Dolakha (Dolakhā), well west of the Sunkosi River, which although outside our study should be mentioned here. Today a village by the same name, Dolakha was an important center of trade that facilitated Valley commerce with Limbuan and eastern Tibet. There are a number of documents from Dolakha of the Malla Period, ranging from A.D. 1370 to 1554 (N.S. 490 Phālguna to 674 Caitra) (M. P. Khanal 1971:3-16). At least one coin was struck there in the name of "Dolakhādhipati Śrī Śrī Jayendrasimhadeva" (B. Acharya 1969:part 2, preface p. 2). Kings and nobles are named in these inscriptions, but the history of Dolakha has yet to be ex-

Although in principle the Rāmas acknowledged the authority of the Malla king, they frequently dropped the pretense. In documents, both within and outside their own territory, Jayasiṃha is often frankly named king, and the Banepa territory is elevated to the status of a kingdom. For example, in the Bhoṭarājya, the death of Sthitimalla was the immediate occasion for conferring full, if imaginary, royal titles on their lord, Jayasiṃha-rāmavarddhana.⁶⁹

That the Rāmas behaved like kings of a bona fide kingdom is well illustrated by their relations with China. On the initiative of the early Ming emperors, diplomatic relations were again opened with Nepal. The fact that the Chinese came by way of the Kuti-Kodari pass, east of the Valley, meant that the envoys first traversed the Rāma domain. Negotiating directly with the Chinese, the Rāmas passed off the real rulers at Bhaktapur as their vassals, and arrogated to themselves the premier place. The deceived Chinese believed the Rāmas to be the kings of Nepal, and it was with them that they exchanged numerous ambassadorial missions between A.D. 1384 and 1427.⁶⁹

Like real kings, the Rāmas were munificent donors and patrons of art, not only within the Bhoṭarājya, but elsewhere in the Valley. They handsomely endowed the imposing Śaiva temple of Indreśvara Mahādeva at Panauti, and offered golden images to a Buddhist monastery in Kathmandu.⁷¹ Madanasimha contributed handsomely toward the restoration of Svayambhūnātha, and Jayasiṃha commissioned the copying of a remarkable palm-leaf edition of the *Mahābhārata*. It was also he, the *mahātha*, rather than the king proper, who donated a new linga to the temple of Paśupatinātha, eleven

plored, as does its position vis-à-vis the Valley kingdoms.

⁶⁷ The hereditary nobles of Pharping were called *rābutta*, a deformation of *rājaputra*, king's son. Feudatories at Nawakot were known as *sāmanta* or *mahāsāmanta*, titles familiar in Licchavi times. *Gopālarāja-vamśāvali*, fol. 25a; D. Regmi 1965: part 1, 175, 423-424; Petech 1958:109. The earliest known reference to the Patan *pātras* occurs in a land transfer dated N.S. 403 Āśvina (A.D. 1283) (D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. v, doc. 1 [130]).

⁶⁸ Petech 1958:145-154.

⁶⁹ D. Vajracharya 1965c:27-30.

⁷⁰ Petech 1958:201-211.

⁷¹ Tewari, et al. 1967; D. Vajracharya 1965c:32-36.

years after the Muslims had smashed the original.⁶²

The influence of the Rāmaraddhanas in the history of the Kathmandu Valley, and of the Mallas in particular, cannot be overestimated. For two centuries the names of the Banepa nobles are inextricably woven into Valley affairs. Already at the beginning of the fourteenth century it was Jyotirāma who held the influential post of *mahātha*, to which his son and grandson succeeded.⁶³ It is almost certain that, deprived of Anekarāma's support, the history of Rudramalla's descendants would have been very different. The star of Devaladevi, a foreign queen, could not have risen alone. And if it had not risen, Sthitimalla would not have appeared to guide the helm of the faltering Malla state, deeply torn by internal divisions, separated into petty states, and helplessly exposed to the attacks of all comers.

Sthitimalla's role in stabilizing the kingdom and the throne is attested by the succession after his death in A.D. 1395 (see Chart, p. 57). Rather than returning to a series of kings in name only, manipulated by the nobles, the throne was jointly inherited by Sthitimalla's three sons, Dharma, Jyotir, and Kīrti. They ruled collegially, harmoniously, and well for some years. The deaths of two of the brothers returned the throne to a single incumbent, Jyotirmalla. He was succeeded by his son, Yakṣamalla, who was crowned about A.D. 1428. Yakṣamalla enjoyed a long and successful reign until his death in A.D. 1482 (602 Māgha).⁶⁴ He maintained his grandfather's control over the state and presided over the liquidation of the Bhotarājya. According to the Chinese annals, the Rāmas' descendant, Madanasimpha's son Śaktisimpha, was still clinging to Palanchok in A.D. 1427—the last record of the Rāma family.⁶⁵ The first Malla document in the Banepa territory is dated in Yakṣamalla's reign.⁶⁶ The Patan *mahāpātras* and other traditionally semi-independent pockets successfully maintained their resistance to central rule. Nonetheless, the country

was sufficiently stable to permit Yakṣamalla, almost alone among the Malla kings, to embark on conquests outside the Valley, ephemeral though they were.⁶⁷ Yakṣamalla's documents are numerous and widely scattered throughout the Valley. He was a dedicated builder of temples and shrines, and of many utilitarian works, fountains, tanks, canals, and fortifications.

Like his grandfather before him, Yakṣamalla died leaving the kingdom to his surviving sons, who were to rule jointly. He did not divide the kingdom and assign its segments to them—an act of which he is consistently and unjustly accused.⁶⁸ In fact, Yakṣamalla had six sons, in order of seniority: Rāya, Ratna, Raṇa, Rāma, Ari, and Pūrna. They, together with Bhīma, their sister's son, at first ruled jointly, as they were expected to do. But almost immediately some grew restless and began to carve out from the single state morsels over which they might rule supreme. This turn of events had far-reaching repercussions and brings us to the last phase of Malla history.

The Three Kingdoms,
A.D. 1482 to 1769

The dissolution of the consolidated state that Sthitimalla had built hardly a century before began soon after Yakṣamalla's death. Nepal Mandala was started on the course that would soon reduce it to the multiple ministates and near anarchy that, except for the preceding century, had characterized it since the decline of the Licchavis. Ratnamalla, Yakṣa's second surviving son, was the first to show his discontent with joint rulership. Although at first he continued to rule in company with his brothers and their cousin, Ratnamalla was ambitious to govern a part of the joint inheritance, Kathmandu, in his own right. Assisted by some of his brothers, he easily thrust aside the Kathmandu nobles, reemergent after the relaxation of Rāma

⁶² D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 407 states it to be n.s. 582 (1462) but I have not been able to trace the document. Another inscription, from Sanga, the border town between Banepa and Bhaktapur, dated n.s. 573 Māgha (1453) might qualify as the first (D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 434).

⁶³ Petech 1958:166-167.

⁶⁴ Petech 1958:168; cf. D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 133-134 for counterevidence.

⁶² D. Vajracharya 1962: main part, 95-96.

⁶³ D. Vajracharya 1965c:13.

⁶⁴ Rajvamshi 1965a:38; D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 147.

⁶⁵ Śaktisimpha's last known inscription occurs at Palanchok, dated n.s. 525 Āśāḍha (A.D. 1405); the last Chinese mention of the Rāmas was in A.D. 1427 (D. Vajracharya 1965c:32; Petech 1958:208-210).

authority, who by hereditary right still claimed the local government. In A.D. 1484 (N.S. 604 Vaiśākha), not quite three years after his father's death, Ratnamalla seized the city, and Kathmandu became an independent state. Sharing its rule briefly with Arimalla, a younger brother, Ratnamalla soon ruled Kathmandu alone. It was his private kingdom until his death in A.D. 1520 (N.S. 640 Bhādra)⁶⁹

Rāyamalla, the eldest brother, held premier place in his family's ancestral capital, Bhaktapur. But together with his brothers, including the separatist Ratna, and the nephew Bhīma, he ruled collegially. At Rāyamalla's death, Bhaktapur continued to be ruled jointly at first, but the crown soon passed exclusively to his descendants.

Banepa, which after the long struggle with the Rāmas had so recently been incorporated into the Malla state, broke away again to become independent under Raṇamalla.⁷⁰ He was succeeded by other Malla rulers. One was Keśavamalla, perhaps Raṇamalla's son, for whom there is a Banepa inscription in A.D. 1530 (N.S. 650 Phālguna).⁷¹ No further records of rulers are found in Banepa until an inscription of the Bhaktapur king, Jagatprakāśa, in A.D. 1649 (N.S. 769 Phālguna). This provides a secure *terminus ad quem* for the reincorporation of Banepa into the Bhaktapur kingdom.

Ratnamalla also sought to impose his personal rule in Patan. But neither alone nor with the help of his brothers was he able to master the strongly entrenched hereditary nobles, the *mahāpātras*. They had begun to control Patan long before the time of Sthitimalla, and by the reign of his grandson, Yakṣamalla, had become supreme.⁷² By then mastery of Patan had become vested in three of the seven chief noble families, the *saptakūṭumbaja*. Contemporary inscriptions in the Patan territory reveal that these families nominally accepted the joint rule of Yakṣamalla's sons, but apparently not of their descendants.⁷³ In the quarter-century after

Ratna's death, the *mahāpātras'* pretense to Malla vassalage was blatantly cast aside. Among them a single family arrogated to itself sole rule of the Patan territory; this had been accomplished at least by A.D. 1546 (N.S. 666 Āṣāḍha), when a copperplate was affixed to a Patan *vihāra* "in the time of Śrījaya-Viṣṇusimha-ju."⁷⁴ By 1548 (668 Bhādra), as the head of a recognized, fully independent state, Viṣṇusimha was dealing on equal terms with the Malla kings of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, and the hereditary lords of Pharping. In the next years, while fondly clinging to the old title, *mahāpātra*, Viṣṇusimha ornamented his name with all of the typical honorific royal titles. He also coined a new one unique to Patan, *maṇiglādhīpati*, Lord of Maṇigal, that is, Patan.⁷⁵ This new title, of some significance in Patan's history, was ignored by Viṣṇusimha's sons, but adopted by most subsequent kings of Patan.

It was Ratnamalla's descendant, Śivasimha, king of Kathmandu, who under unknown circumstances in A.D. 1597 wrested Patan back from the upstart dynasty and restored it to Malla rule.⁷⁶ At first Patan was merely annexed to the Kathmandu kingdom, but at Śivasimha's death about A.D. 1619, Kathmandu was given to one grandson, Patan to another. Hence, it is only with the early seventeenth century that the fictional rule of the Mallas over Patan became a fact, and three separate Malla-ruled states emerged. There were occasions in the following years when Patan and Kathmandu, geographically separated only by the shallow course of the Bagmati, were again briefly under the rule of a single king. On one occasion, during the especially farcical political turmoil of eighteenth-century Patan, Bhaktapur briefly loaned the city its own king. But these were mere formalities to avoid a vacant throne, and in no way implied the unification of Patan with either of these states.

The period following Yakṣamalla's death in 1482

⁶⁹ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 133-134, 136-138, 140.

⁷⁰ Only two inscriptions of Raṇamalla have been found at Banepa (Rajvamshi 1963:inscrs. 19, 20 [9]).

⁷¹ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 4 (5). This belies the Buddhist chronicle's affirmation that Banepa had rejoined the Bhaktapur kingdom in the reign of Suvarṇa- (=Bhuvana-) malla (A.D. 1505-1519) (Wright 1966:129).

⁷² Samsodhana-maṇḍala 1967a:334-336.

⁷³ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 139; D. Regmi 1966:

part 3, app. A, inscr. 89 (102-103).

⁷⁴ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 11-12.

⁷⁵ Samsodhana-maṇḍala 1967a:336-338.

⁷⁶ Burleigh 1971:5; 1976:30 cites a *tūlapatra* in which as *maṇigalādhīpati* Śivasimha deeded land to a Patan resident in N.S. 718 Kārtika, the earliest record so far recovered for Śivasimha in his capacity as ruler of Patan. The last inscription of Purandarasiṃha, a son of Viṣṇusimha, is dated only six months before, in N.S. 717 Jyestha, hence the

to the final extinction of the Malla rule in 1769 is complicated politically, and it is easy to become hopelessly entangled in the details. In broad terms, the Malla "kingdoms" were actually minuscule city-states. Their principal holdings were squeezed into an area that may now be traversed on foot in a day. Each kingdom consisted of its capital city—Kathmandu, Patan, or Bhaktapur—together with the surrounding territory with its towns and villages. The exact limits of the kingdoms cannot be defined, for their borders were in constant flux as territory changed hands in the course of perpetual petty warfare.

In general, the Bhaktapur kingdom lay east of the Manohara River and embraced the old Bhoṭarājya, toward the Sunkosi. Bhaktapur also laid claim to Dolakha, east of the Sunkosi, and as far as the Dudhkosi, which flows south of the Everest region.⁷⁷ But, with the possible exception of Dolakha, the latter almost certainly represents an exaggerated claim to hill territory that was essentially in tribal hands. The Kathmandu kingdom lay north of the Bagmati, extending to and sometimes controlling Nawakot on the Trisuli Gandaki, the border with the hill state of Gorkha. Patan's territory lay south of the Bagmati, including at times Pharping, nearby Chitlang Valley, and abutting Makwanpur state in the hills to the south.

Each capital city was actually a walled fortress, pierced by gates that could be closed and defended from watchtowers above. Patan and Bhaktapur also had the protection of moats or partial moats. The still semi-independent states such as Pharping or Nawakot were also similarly fortified, as were the small towns and villages. There were, in addition, innumerable small forts on every ridge and hilltop, in the forests, and along the paths. These fortifications were not all a product of the period of the Three Kingdoms, but often merely perpetuated those established in the preceding turbulent centuries.

The Three Kingdoms were ruled by a bewildering number of kings (see Appendix III, Tables 4-6), for whom, despite the number of documents and their relatively recent date, exact reigns before the

change of dynasty must have occurred between about May and October of A.D. 1597.

⁷⁷ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 181.

eighteenth century are rarely fully established. Even then there are many uncertainties. But these are matters of limited importance; for among these many kings few, as far as the records attest, could qualify as men of stature. Those who do belong largely to the seventeenth century, and it is primarily they who will be encountered in the following chapters. Certainly the dominant figure among them all is Pratāpamalla, ruler of Kathmandu A.D. 1641-1674, a person of extraordinary interest who deserves his own biography (Plates 67, 575). The last three kings of Bhaktapur—Jitāmītra, Bhūpatīndra, and Raṇajit—have a certain importance to our study as donors and builders. In Patan it is only a father, son, and grandson—Siddhinarasiṃha, Śrīnivāsa, and Yoganarendra—who are outstanding kings (Plate 68). They presided over seventeenth-century Patan and are responsible for much of the remarkable beauty of that city.

Except for some of the last kings of Patan, the rulers of the Three Kingdoms had common descent from Sthitimalla, but their relations were essentially antagonistic and unpleasant. Motivated by greed, jealousy, and mutual suspicion, a major part of their energies was expended in intriguing against each other; intrigues were often inflamed by their influential ministers, the *cautārās*. Of the latter, some, such as Cikuṭi and Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa Joṣī of Kathmandu,⁷⁸ Bhagīratha Bhaiyā of Patan, and Bhāgīrāma of Bhaktapur (Plate 384)—all seventeenth-century contemporaries—were key figures in Malla affairs.

During the period of the Three Kingdoms, the order of the day consisted of insults, feuds, quarrels, and brief skirmishes of open warfare. The quarreling was accompanied by constant formulations of solemn treaties of eternal friendship, occasionally in concert but more frequently bilateral and prejudicial to a third. Treaties were fragile. They were broken at once when it was to the advantage of one of the signatories to do so. These jealous and touchy relatives were especially quick to profit from any momentary weakness of the others brought about, perhaps, by the death of a king, an unsuccessful battle, or devastation from natural

⁷⁸ Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa Joṣī is the subject of a modern play, *Cautārā Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa*, a careful historical study of the minister and of his times (Tivari 1968).

calamity. The state of affairs among these cousin kings is well revealed in the following entries in a seventeenth-century *thyāsaphu*:

Ṣaṃvat 818 Āṣāḍha . . . [Sunday, June 1698] this day Patan was isolated as Kathmandu and Bhatgaon signed an agreement of mutual friendship.

Ṣaṃvat 818 Bhādrapada . . . this day [the] three cities again became friends.

Ṣaṃvat 819 Kārtika . . . this day Patan and Bhatgaon became friends isolating Kathmandu.

Ṣaṃvat 819 Mārgasira . . . this day the three cities had united, but the Rājās of Kathmandu and Bhatgaon were not on speaking terms.

Ṣaṃvat 819 Māgha . . . this day Kathmandu attacked Thimi [a border village between Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, which frequently was a bone of contention], but the invaders were compelled to flee at night and Patan protected them.

Ṣaṃvat 819 Vaiśākha . . . this day Patan was isolated.

Ṣaṃvat 819 Bhādra . . . this day the three cities became friends, and one elephant Dalabhanjana by name was presented to Kathmandu. . . .

Ṣaṃvat 821 Vaiśākha . . . this day Bhatgaon was isolated.

Ṣaṃvat 821 Śrāvaṇa . . . this day Śrī Śrī Vīra Yoganarendramalla juju [king of Patan] was isolated.

Ṣaṃvat 822 Mārga . . . this day Bhatgaon and Patan combined, Kathmandu became alone. On Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa . . . the three cities were friends again.⁷⁹

Curiously, despite the squabbling that the *thyāsaphu* so eloquently reveals, there was also a very intimate relationship among the bickering kings. They put aside their quarrels to assist at the ceremonies attendant on the Hindu *samskāras* and all of each other's *rites de passage*—the birth and puberty rites of princes and princesses, marriages, coronations, and funerals. Frequently, in cases of disputed accession, the kings of one or two king-

doms had a hand in establishing a new incumbent on the throne of the third. This was particularly true during the political comedy of eighteenth-century Patan. It was also customarily one of the cousin kings who performed the special rites sanctifying the coronation. At times the royal families assisted at each other's court spectacles and attended each other's special religious ceremonies and festivals; they regularly worshiped at the shrines and temples located within each other's territory.

The fundamental inability of the Malla kings to get along with each other at length resulted in the ruin of their petty preserves, and brought their rule to an end. Their quarrels began to spread beyond family and Valley. The Malla kings became involved with the petty hill states, particularly those of the Caubīsī Rājya, the confederation of Twenty-four Kingdoms of the nearby central and western hills. Although they sometimes fought against the hill states, as did Pratāpamalla, for example, who boasts that he defeated the armies of Dambara Shah of Gorkha and seized his elephant,⁸⁰ they frequently took sides in outsiders' disputes, particularly those between nearby Makwanpur and Vijayapur. More often, however, just as the Maithilī (Tirhutiā, Ḍoya) had been summoned by the contentious nobles of the Transitional Period, the Malla kings called upon these outside forces to take sides in their own conflicts. At one point they even unsuccessfully solicited the British in India to intervene.⁸¹ But they turned most often to three of the western hill states, Lamjung, Tanahū, and particularly, Gorkha.⁸²

Gorkha was one of the most important of the Twenty-four Kingdoms whose capital lay three or four days march to the west of the Valley (Plates 72, 73). Founded by Dravya Shah in A.D. 1559, Gorkha almost at once entered into close relations with the Valley kingdoms. Rāma Shah, raja of Gorkha A.D. 1614 to ca. 1636, concluded a treaty of friendship with Siddhinarasimha of Patan and invited Newar traders to settle in Gorkha.⁸³ Pṛthvipati Shah was honorably received at the court of Kathmandu in A.D. 1678. In a ceremony attended by officials from Bhaktapur and Patan, he became the

⁷⁹ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 333-334.

⁸⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 50 (86-88).

⁸¹ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 202.

⁸² N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:749, 768-769, 776-778.

⁸³ Deviprasad Bhandari 1964a:50-53; D. Regmi 1961:18, 21-22.

avowed blood brother (*mita*, friend) with the Kathmandu king, Nṛpendra.⁸⁴ A few years later, A.D. 1686, Pṛthvīpati came again to Kathmandu to meet with Nṛpendra's successor, Parthivendra.⁸⁵ Pṛthvīpati's son, and later his grandson, were guests at the court of Bhaktapur, and Kathmandu and Gorkha kept permanent representatives at each other's courts in the eighteenth century.⁸⁶

The year A.D. 1685 marks the embarkation of the Gorkhalis on the long course dedicated to winning the Malla realms. That year, Gorkha made the first of many alliances with one or more of the Valley kingdoms against one or more of the others. In this first instance, Gorkha joined with Bhaktapur and Kathmandu in a treaty from which Patan was excluded.⁸⁷ A few years later, A.D. 1701 (N.S. 822 Mārga), Gorkha, Makwanpur, Tanahū, Patan, and Bhaktapur signed a treaty prejudicial to Kathmandu. And in A.D. 1731 (N.S. 851 Māgha), Raṇajit-malla rewarded the citizens of Bhaktapur, Thimi, and other villages in his realm for repulsing the combined attacks of Patan, Kathmandu, and Gorkha against one of his forts.⁸⁸ Soon the Gorkhalis, under their dynamic king, Prithvi Narayan Shah, were fully engaged in the conquest of the strategic Valley. Continuing to profit by whatever divisive alliances he could make within the Valley, the Shah king also undertook piecemeal conquest around the perimeter. This began in A.D. 1744, with the seizure of the strategic hilltop fortress town of Nawakot, commanding at once the trade route to Tibet and the northern approaches to the Valley (Plate 74). During the next twenty years the little Valley was completely encircled by Gorkhali holdings, and underwent a debilitating economic blockade. Seeking relief, the ever-turbulent leaders of Patan entreated the Shah king himself to take its throne. Instead, he sent his brother Dalmardana Shah, who became sovereign of Patan for a brief period in

⁸⁴ Banda 1962:61 n. 1; D. Regmi 1966 part 2, 455. This was by no means a unique occasion (N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:659). *Mita launu*, literally "to make friends with," is still a practice in Nepalese society, and is a ritual exchange between persons through which a sacred and immutable bond of brotherhood is established. Matrimonial alliances between hill and Valley royal families seems to have been eschewed, but Mahindra, king of Patan A.D. 1709-1714, was born at Tanahū, the son of Yoganarendra and a concubine from this hill state (G. Vajracharya 1968:374).

A.D. 1764-1765. When his presence did not alleviate Patan's sufferings, the throne was retrieved and bestowed on one more—and last—Malla king. Yet although the Malla kings appreciated the common danger intellectually, they were unable to overcome the stronger emotion of mutual antagonism that had so long governed their behavior. Just ten years before the debacle, Jayaprakāśa wrote Prithvi Narayan Shah to assure him that Kathmandu would not hinder Gorkha's conquest of Patan but, to the contrary, would assist in the undertaking.⁸⁹ Thus, to the very end, these foolish kings still turned to the enemy against their cousins. And finally, as it had to happen, in A.D. 1768 the king of Gorkha, Prithvi Narayan Shah, seized Kathmandu, then Patan, and after more than a year's grace, Bhaktapur in A.D. 1769. Thus ended the reign of the Mallas in the Valley of Kathmandu.

Foreign Relations and Acculturation

Maithili and Muslim

In keeping with the traditional Nepalese practice, the Mallas continued to maintain close cultural ties with their neighbors on the southern plains. Like the Licchavis, the Mallas often turned to India for suitable marriage partners. Some, such as Nāyaka-devī's ill-fated husband, Hariścandra (and a brother, Gopālacandra), came from Benares; others—two favorite wives of Pratāpamalla, for example—from Cooch Behar and the Karṇāta; while others, like Jagatasīṃha, Sthitimalla, and perhaps Padumaladevī, originated in Mithilā.

Mithilā was a nearby neighbor, straddling what is now the border between the Nepalese Tarai and Bihar state (Map 1). It has a long history and many names, among them Videha, Tirabhuktī, and Tirhut.⁹⁰ Its people are variously known as Maithili, Tirhutiā, and colloquially in Malla Nepal, Ḍoya.

⁸⁵ Banda 1962:61 n. 1.

⁸⁶ D. Regmi 1961:24; N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:973-974; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 490.

⁸⁷ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. III, fol. 58 (26).

⁸⁸ Tewari, et al., eds. 1964:40-44, 52-56.

⁸⁹ N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:752-753, 973-977.

⁹⁰ About the eighth or seventh century B.C. the state, bounded by the Kosi, Ganges, Gandaki, and Himalayan foothills, was known as Videha and its capital city Mithilā. The latter's location has not been identified, but may cor-

From at least A.D. 1097, when Nānyadeva came from the Karṇāta and established himself in a new capital, Sīmarāmapura, known to Nepalis as Simraongarh,⁹¹ Mithilā was very influential in Valley affairs. The relentless plundering of the Valley under Nānyadeva's dynasty made Mithilā's influence largely pernicious at first. But after its conquest by the Muslims in A.D. 1324/1325, Mithilā came to play a quite different role. At that time its king, Harasiṃha, and his family sought refuge in Nepal; in their wake came other Maithilī, among whom were many of the Brahman intelligentsia. Tradition assigns to Mithilā the origin of a number of Newar Hindu caste groups, and in contemporary Nepal there are others who claim this descent.⁹²

Politically a Muslim ward after A.D. 1325, Mithilā remained by and large outside the Muslim cultural orbit. In fact, after scarcely a quarter-century of Muslim governors, the territory was again entrusted to Brahman command.⁹³ The conservatism, orthodoxy, and learning of Maithilī Brahmins is legendary. Mithilā, for example, was the home of Kulīnism, an elaborate system of genealogical record keeping designed to avoid any possible misalliance through marriage that might sully Brahman purity. As might be expected, the influx into Nepal of Brahman pandits and other Hindus raised in this environment—strengthened by the general Indian revival of Hinduism at that time—had a profound cultural impact on the Kathmandu Valley. The Buddhist drift toward Hinduism, already apparent for some time, was accelerated, and in the Hindu camp there was an intensification of orthodox Brahmanical practice.⁹⁴ Brahman preceptors

respond to the Nepali town of Janakpur. About the time of the Buddha, Videha was conquered by Magadha, and subsequently the name of the destroyed capital, Mithilā, came to replace Videha as a territorial name. An alternate name, Tirabhuktī, from whence derives the modern territorial name, Tirhut. On Mithilā see: Thakur 1956; Sircar 1960. A number of supplementary references are cited by Petech 1958:52 n. 4.

⁹¹ It no longer exists except as a jungle-covered ruin, Rautahat District of the Tarai (Hodgson 1835; Ballinger 1973).

⁹² Wright 1966:119; Allen 1975:38-39, 42.

⁹³ Thakur 1956:290.

⁹⁴ There is nothing in the documents or monuments of the previous periods, however, that would seem to warrant

such as Śivadāsa and Dvijarāja Upadhyaīya, whom the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* frequently mentions, became particularly influential at the court.⁹⁵ Maithilī, and all Indian Brahmins had a reputation for learning that surpassed that of the local Brahmins. They were therefore often sought after, even into late Malla times. Yakṣamalla, for example, imported Brahmins from the Deccan to supervise the great national shrine of Paśupati. Śivasimha, a seventeenth-century Kathmandu king, is said to have suffered with a family priest (*purohit*) who was "very ignorant and unlearned and could not pronounce Sanskrit words correctly. Therefore the Rajah sent some presents to the Rajah of Tirhut with a request that he would furnish him with four Tirhutia Brahmins to supply the place of purohites. Accordingly the Rajah of Tirhut sent four Brahmins . . . who ever after settled in the country and received a grant of land for their maintenance."⁹⁶ Even now, some of the Deo-Brahmins of Patan, Newar Hindus, claim descent from Brahmins who were invited from Mithilā to serve the Malla kings.⁹⁷

Śiva Paśupati has probably always been foremost among the deities who crowd the Kathmandu Valley. With the attrition of Buddhism and the intensification of Brahmanical orthodoxy, however, Śiva in all his forms seems to have been accorded increased devotion. The colophon of a late text, despite its obvious exaggeration and error regarding Harasiṃha's role, is illustrative in this respect. It informs us that beginning with Harasiṃha's entry into Nepal, "the Nepalese became Shivaite (Śivamārgīya). There were many Brahmins from

the sweeping assessment that the position of the Nepalese kings from the beginning of their history was like "that of most of the hill Rajas of the same period: an easy-going sort of Hinduism, with a good deal of laxity in the observance of its social code" (Petech 1958:179). While the kings of the Transitional Period might conceivably be thus categorized, as Petech himself observes, we do not know. Certainly there is nothing in the Licchavi records to justify this opinion, and on the contrary, the ample documents give quite the contrary impression.

⁹⁵ Petech 1958:140.

⁹⁶ Hasrat 1970:64. By this time, of course, Mithilā was no longer a sovereign state with a "Rajah," but under Muslim overlordship.

⁹⁷ Allen 1975:42.

the Karnatak and from Mithilā and their Nepalese pupils by thousands; many *ṛṣātriya*, many *śudra*, worshippers of Durgā and worshippers of Śiva by the hundreds."⁹⁸ That there is some truth to the account is also suggested by an entry in the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, which states that in A.D. 1370 (N.S. 490 Vaiśākha), Sthitimalla received a warm welcome in Patan, the Buddhist stronghold, and "from that time on the religion of Udayeśvara Śiva prevailed again."⁹⁹

As a Vaiṣṇava center of some renown, Mithilā also influenced developments in Viṣṇu's cult in Nepal Mandala. For centuries Viṣṇu had been one of the most highly regarded deities in Nepal, as Licchavi records and monuments testify. But from Mithilā now emanated a new devotional cult known as *bhaktivada*. It was particularly evident in the worship of Kṛṣṇa, one of Viṣṇu's avatars. Devotion to one deity did not necessarily exclude another. Thus, while Sthitimalla may have been a stern protagonist of Śiva, he was at the same time an ardent devotee of Viṣṇu and of Rāma, another of the deity's incarnations.¹⁰⁰ In emulation of Maithilī practice, Sthitimalla was the first Nepali king to include the name Nārāyaṇa among his royal titles and epithets (*praśasti*) and the first to proclaim himself Viṣṇu incarnate.¹⁰¹ But in this he had been already audaciously anticipated by the Banepa noble, Jayasiṃha-rāmavarddhana.¹⁰² Sthitimalla also assiduously courted Matsyendranātha, the Valley patron, a god of indigenous origin who by then had become essentially a Buddhist deity. Simultaneously, he was deeply devoted to the goddess Taleju, a form of Durgā.

It is a common misconception that Harasiṃha of Mithilā introduced the goddess Taleju into Nepal.¹⁰³ But we know that he died without even reaching Nepal Mandala and, in any event, Taleju

was worshiped there before his time. The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* noted that the evil events of about A.D. 1316 were presaged by the sweating of "Talamoṇḍe," an alternate name for the goddess, and Rudramalla knew her.¹⁰⁴ As Māneśvarī, one of the strands woven into the complex personality of the Nepalese manifestation of the goddess, she was known in Licchavi times.¹⁰⁵ Nonetheless, Taleju was widely worshiped in Mithilā and in other parts of India,¹⁰⁶ and with the Maithilī influx into the Valley in the fourteenth century, Taleju's cult received new impetus. Her popular association with Mithilā is illustrated by one of her nicknames, Domāju, the Mother Goddess of the Doya (Maithilī). She was Sthitimalla's immutable lineage deity (*ḥuladevatā*), and he chose her as his personal deity (*iṣṭadevatā*), a practice emulated by many succeeding Malla kings.¹⁰⁷ Sthitimalla also inaugurated the use of Taleju's name in the Malla royal *praśastis*, a custom the Rāmavarddhanas followed.¹⁰⁸ Although outranked in official records by the venerable Paśupati, Taleju appears to have been first in the hearts of the Malla kings. By the time of the Three Kingdoms, she was invoked as the divine witness of royal edicts and inter-kingdom treaties, she was regularly accorded a rich treasury of offerings, and hers are among the most imposing temples in the Kathmandu Valley.

Contrary to popular belief, Sthitimalla played a limited role in organizing traditional society into a rigidly hierarchical caste system. But there seems no doubt that his regime is to be identified with a tightening of the social system, and with making Nepal more positively Hindu. Sthitimalla's reformist energies would have been particularly directed toward the then extensive Buddhist community, which had burgeoned and reached its apogee during the Transitional Period. The Buddhists' loosely

⁹⁸ Petech 1958:179-180.

⁹⁹ Fol. 56b. The significance of "Udayeśvara" Śiva is unknown.

¹⁰⁰ Petech 1958:139-140.

¹⁰¹ Viṣṇugupta implied this by having a self-portrait made in the guise of Viṣṇu, but left no documents in which he avowed himself the god incarnate.

¹⁰² D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscra. 30, 35 (24-27, 33-35).

¹⁰³ Wright 1966:118-119, 121; Hasrat 1970:53; Lamshal 1966:34; Petech 1958:112-113.

¹⁰⁴ Fols. 44a, b.

¹⁰⁵ On Taleju/Māneśvarī, see Chapter 11.

¹⁰⁶ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 593; Sircar 1948:14; Allen 1975:48-49, 63 n. 5.

¹⁰⁷ Lokaprakāśa, however, chose Kṛṣṇa as his *iṣṭadevatā* (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 128 [271-274]).

¹⁰⁸ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 368-369. Viṣṇumalla did not use it (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 140 [289-293]) and some of the Patan kings after Yoganarendra, who were not of Sthitimalla's lineage, do not claim her in their titles. D. Vajracharya 1965c:34.

structured society, in which caste distinctions traditionally had been minimized, and the Newars' relaxed attitude toward the remarriage of widows, together with their repudiation of sati, must have been particularly ungenial to an orthodox Hindu. Thus, although the steady drift of Newar Buddhists into the rigid, caste-structured social system imposed by Hinduism was quite apparent by the end of the Transitional Period,¹⁰⁹ Sthitimalla's orthodox origin and disposition must have helped to accelerate it. Moreover, as in modern Nepal, the Buddhist switch to Hinduism must have been worth the candle for the material benefits it conferred in an increasingly Hindu society.

The impact of Mithilā is not only registered in politics, in religion, and social organization, but also in language and writing. Maithilī is a rich, Sanskrit-derived language whose literary tradition dates from at least the fifteenth century A.D. It soon took its place beside Sanskrit as a prestigious language at the Malla courts, and was favored in the composition of poetry and dramas, often by the rulers themselves. From the early seventeenth century, works in Maithilī were particularly popular at the Malla courts.¹¹⁰ From the time of Sthitimalla, most of the fanciful Old Newari scripts developed in the Transitional Period dropped out of use, and Newari script became scarcely distinguishable from the script used in Mithilā.



Throughout most of the Malla years, Muslim rule was firmly imposed on the contiguous Indian plains. Muslim onslaughts on the Buddhist centers of the Pāla domain in the twelfth century, and Mithilā in the fourteenth, drove countless refugees from the broken communities into the Kathmandu Valley. But the Valley itself miraculously suffered only a single, though pitiless, raid in A.D. 1349, and remained free of Muslim rule. However, a coin struck in the time of Anantamalla, A.D. 1274-1307, bears on the obverse the legend "Alā ud-dīn Khalji" in Arabic, which suggests some sort of suzerainty by the Delhi dynasty, if only perhaps brief and nominal.¹¹¹ Further, Mahendramalla, ca. A.D. 1560-1574, is said to have gone to the Mughal court

at Delhi bearing gifts of swans and hawks, which so pleased the emperor that he accorded the Nepalese ruler permission to mint coins in his own name. There seems no reason that an independent sovereign should need this permission, and some doubt the event.¹¹² But there is no question that the coins struck by Mahendramalla are the first available after an almost total absence following the Licchavi coins. This might be interpreted as indicating some kind of dependency.

As close neighbors of long duration, the Muslims did have considerable influence on the culture of Malla Nepal. This was most pervasive at the court, where the Malla nobility, while resisting the taint of Islam, warmly embraced the secular aspects of Islamic culture. This was especially true in the later Malla period; it in part coincided with Mughal rule in India (A.D. 1526-1858), and with the time of the Mughal-influenced Hindu Rājputs domiciled in India and the Nepalese hill states. That there must have been some intercourse of the Malla aristocracy with the Mughal court itself is indicated by the degree to which they adopted Mughal and Rājput dress—even down to details of ornamentation and personal weaponry. The representations of Malla royalty in bronzes and paintings from the mid-seventeenth century on are indistinguishable from Mughal and Rājput models (Plates 67, 68, 70, 76, 239).

At the Malla courts albums of erotica, like those enjoyed at the Mughal court, were circulated; the *baiji*, or professional courtesan singer, was a popular institution; and harems were the fashion. With few exceptions, the exterior appearance of the Malla palaces remained faithful to local architectural traditions. The Mughal and Rājput palaces depicted in the late paintings did not, in fact, exist in the Kathmandu Valley. A rustic version of the domed mosque, however, began to serve the Mallas as Hindu temples from the seventeenth century (Plate 213). Details such as cusped arches and the so-called cypress columns that appear in late wood carving also seem to be inspired by Islamic art.¹¹³ Interior decorations and furnishings reflected Mughal tastes, at least in a provincial way. For example, the characteristic interior wall niches of the

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 10.

¹¹⁰ See Appendix II.

¹¹¹ Petech 1958:103-104; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 312-313.

¹¹² Wright 1966:140; S. Joshi 1960:69-72.

¹¹³ Deo 1969:22.

Mughal buildings are to be found in those of the Mallas, and the Mallas affected the same dais-like thrones and bulky supporting bolsters.

The influence of Persian and Arabic also began to be registered in the vocabulary of Newari. Coins were even occasionally minted with Arabic script.¹¹⁴ By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, moreover, the Malla court had adopted from the Mughals a host of new honorific titles and offices, such as *hākima*, *vaḥīla*, *umarāo*, and many more.

Muslim and Mughal influence in the Kathmandu Valley, while greatest at the court, was also felt at the popular level. *Madheses*, that is, southerners, the inhabitants of the Tarai and Indian plains who were acculturated to Islam if not actually Muslims, were recruited for the Malla armies.¹¹⁵ Direct contact with Indian Muslims was even possible in the Valley bazaars. For in the early eighteenth century the Kathmandu king, Mahindrasiṃha, invited Muslim merchants to settle in his capital to manufacture perfume and bangles, and to serve as court musicians.¹¹⁶ This forced proximity with Islam, and more particularly, competition in the market place, met with some resistance at first. But a reconciliation was soon effected, and the Muslim merchants worked side by side with the Newars. The popularity of the hookah, widely enjoyed throughout Nepal, no doubt dates from the time of increased contact with those already habituated to it. Many other aspects of Muslim and particularly Mughal material culture may be similarly traced in the Kathmandu Valley.

The Nepalese Hill States

The close relationship, both in friendship and enmity, of the Valley kingdoms and the Caubīsī

¹¹⁴ See Appendix II; S. Joshi 1960:80.

¹¹⁵ N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:828-829.

¹¹⁶ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 173-174.

¹¹⁷ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 180-187.

¹¹⁸ See Appendix II.

¹¹⁹ The employ of mercenaries is said to have been started by Ratnamalla in the sixteenth century (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 460). Their appearance at the Malla court probably long antedates this time; if we are to believe the chronicles, it was a disaffected Magar whose tales of the fabled wealth of his former masters incited the Palpa ruler, Mukundlasena, to attack the Valley about the middle of the thirteenth century (Wright 1966:115). Mercenaries in the

Rājya, the Twenty-four Kingdoms of the western hills, was not confined to kings and their courts. By the seventeenth century, the hill rajas' subjects—Brahman and Chetri caste groups (some of whom claimed Rājput descent), and indigenous ethnic groups, the Khasa (proto-Nepali) and Magars—had gained a foothold in the Valley. This was not only through uncontested infiltration, but through lands bestowed upon them by royal patronage.¹¹⁷ The immigrants were soon well entrenched. By the mid-seventeenth century their language, Nepali, had begun to assert itself as a common tongue of Nepal Mandala.¹¹⁸ Khasas and Magars were attached to the Malla courts in the capacity of courtiers, were often extremely influential, and were enrolled in the paid standing army.¹¹⁹ That they were also established as permanent farming communities is attested by eighteenth-century edicts that restrict them from cutting firewood in the forests of Sankhu and Changu Nārāyaṇa for sale in the Bhaktapur market.¹²⁰ The presence in the Kathmandu Valley of increasing numbers of these Hindu immigrants unquestionably accelerated the drift of Malla Nepal toward Hinduism, and helped to establish a receptive climate for Prithvi Narayan Shah's Hindu kingdom. The presence of these immigrants, many of whom professed Rājput descent, also served to intensify the trend toward Mughal culture apparent in the culture of the Valley at this time.

Tibet and China

If there is some suspicion that Tibet briefly exercised political control over Nepalese territory in the Licchavi and Transitional Periods, the reverse is true in the Malla Period. Traditionally, Yakṣamalla is credited with having extended his dominions on

service of the Three Kingdoms included not only Madheses, Khasas, and Magars, but Bhoṭes, or Bhotiyas, that is, Tamangs and similar hill peoples who professed Buddhism and were Tibetanized (D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 188, 191). At the fall of Bhaktapur, Ranajitmalla doubted Bhoṭe loyalty, it is said, and therefore had the mercenaries burned alive in their barracks (Wright 1966:173).

¹²⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 491; D. Regmi 1966:part 4, insers. 137, 138 (286-287); Tewari, et al., eds. 1964:65-66. This was not an economic measure but an effort to preserve the *vanadurgas*, the "forest fortresses," stands of virgin forest. The *vanadurga* not only served military ends in

the north "by a distance of seven days' march" to include, among other places, "Sikarjoong" (Sel-dkar-rdsoñ), a trading post on the way to Lhasa.¹²¹ Pratāpamalla boasts of seizing border territories up to Kuti, Khāsā, and Kyirong.¹²² That these kings actually did so seems probable, since the tradition of a more northerly Nepalese border was remembered by the Shah kings.¹²³ But like the Tibetan hold on Nepal, these Malla territorial gains at the expense of Tibet were ephemeral.

Of far greater consequence were the trade relations between Tibet and the Kathmandu Valley. Important in all times, trade seems to have been intensified in the late Malla Period, particularly in the reign of Pratāpamalla. Newar traders passed to and from Lhasa, as did Tibetans to the Kathmandu Valley. The latter were sufficiently numerous to warrant the assessment of a visitor's tax to swell the Nepalese royal treasuries.¹²⁴ Many Newar merchants and artisans, known as Urāy (Nepali, Udās), became permanently domiciled in Tibet. One such merchant, for example, was Narasiṃha Bhāro of Asan-tol, Kathmandu, who traded at Tashilunpo monastery, and another was Budhācārya Jñānārāja of Panauti, whose commission of a stupa in honor of the Buddha was completed while he was away in Lhasa.¹²⁵ Newar stanzaic poetry is filled with songs that treat of husbands gone to Tibet to trade.¹²⁶ A certain Bhīmamalla, *ḱāzi* (minister) first to Lakṣmīnarsiṃha and then to his son Pratāpamalla, is well known to Nepalese history for his successful role as a commercial envoy to Tibet. Bhīmamalla arranged a trade treaty advantageous to Nepal, is said to have established numerous commercial firms in Lhasa, and to have encouraged Nepalese traders to go to Tibet. The minister apparently not only sent back glowing tales of the fabulous gold and silver mines guarded by the barbarian "Gurukas," but sent such a quan-

time of war, but helped to protect the rich treasuries of the temples, which were located by preference within their fastnesses.

¹²¹ *Vr̥hatsūcīpatram* part 1, 110; Kirkpatrick 1969:266; Petech 1958:167.

¹²² D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 50 (86-88); Lamshal 1966:83.

¹²³ In a letter written to Rana Bir Khatri in v.s. 1846, Rana Bahadur Shah mentioned that the Nepalese boundary in Pratāpamalla's reign passed through Kuti.

tity of bullion as proof that a special treasury had to be constructed in Hanuman Dhoka palace to hold it. At least so the chronicles would have it.¹²⁷

In exchange for Tibetan gold bullion, in an arrangement extremely advantageous to Nepal, the Nepalese *mahendramalli* was circulated in Tibet as the coin of the realm. Its debasement by the last Malla kings was a bone of contention between the two countries (as the question of Nepalese coinage supplied to Tibet against gold would remain under the Shahs).¹²⁸ The Tibet trade was of such importance to the Malla kings that it was the subject of treaties with Gorkha. One between Jayaprakāśamalla of Kathmandu and Prithvi Narayan Shah stipulated, among other things, that Kathmandu would not encourage the Tibetans to pillage Gorkha.¹²⁹

In the early and middle years of the Malla Period, approximately up to the time of the Three Kingdoms, the cultural influences largely flowed from Nepal to Tibet. But by the sixteenth century the tide had turned, and the cultural influences flowed the other way. Even by the close of the Transitional Period, when Nepal was still the acculturator, Tibetans had ceased to look southward to India (where Buddhism had been crushed) or to Nepal for Buddhist doctrine and texts. By then the labor of centuries had gathered and rendered into Tibetan most of the texts, freeing Tibetans from dependence on Sanskrit. Indeed, the Tibetans had now come to regard Buddhism as their own.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, in the early years of the Malla Period Tibetan students and monks still trickled southward into the Kathmandu Valley to study and to visit the famous Buddhist shrines such as Svayambhūnātha and Bodhnātha. The long residence of the Tibetan Dharmasvāmin in the Valley from about A.D. 1226 to 1234, for example, is well known, as are this erudite monk's commentaries on Nepal.¹³¹ More-

¹²⁴ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 527.

¹²⁵ Hriday 1971:112; Rajvamshi 1963:inscr. 220 (85).

¹²⁶ Lienhard 1974:nos. 62, 63, 87, 183-184, 212, among others; see Appendix I on stanzaic poetry.

¹²⁷ Lamshal 1966:83-85; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 60-64, 492-493.

¹²⁸ Kirkpatrick 1969:339-340.

¹²⁹ N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:127-128.

¹³⁰ Snellgrove and Richardson 1968:146-147.

¹³¹ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 559-560.

over, at this time the Tibetans still turned to Nepal as a primary source of Buddhist cult objects. For example, when the great Nor monastery (Ngor Evan Chos-Idan) was built at the beginning of the fifteenth century in Tibet, all the contributing artists were summoned from Nepal.¹³² There is also the well-known example of Aniko/Arniko (Aneka ?), who at the instance of Kubilai Khan was brought to Tibet with a retinue of craftsmen to construct a golden stupa.¹³³ But on a more commonplace level, Nepalese artists at work in the Kathmandu Valley or in Tibetan towns and monasteries produced for their Buddhist brethren the varied images in bronze and in paint on cloth, together with many of the ritual vessels and objects the cult required. The Nepalese aesthetic tradition, with that of China and Central Asia, became a principal source for Tibetan art.

Beginning in the sixteenth century, and fully articulated in the seventeenth century, there was a reversal of roles between acculturator and acculturated. By this time the monastic system in the Kathmandu Valley was defunct, Buddhism was moribund, and Tibet had become the Buddhist holy land. There are many accounts of Nepalese sojourning in Tibetan monasteries, especially at Tashilunpo in Shigatse. A "monk" returned from Tashilunpo, for example, one Padmadhvaja by name, established in Bhaktapur A.D. 1667 (N.S. 787 Vaiśākha) "with the approval of his wife, daughter and son" a *vihāra*, together with an image of Dīpaṅkara Buddha and an endowment of *gūṭhī* lands. Frequently manuscripts were copied in Tibet by domiciled *bhikṣus*, such as a former resident of Paśupati-vihāra in Bhaktapur, who in the reign of Jagatprakāśa completed a text in Lhasa.¹³⁴ Tibetan Buddhism gradually came to be favored by the Nepalese merchants and artisans domiciled in Tibet because it allowed them far greater freedom

than the closed system that had by this time fully evolved in Nepal. It was even possible for people such as they to be ordained as monks, which was impossible in Nepal, where Buddhist religious offices now belonged to hereditary castes.

By the period of the Three Kingdoms, it was the Tibetans who undertook the care and rehabilitation of the prestigious, but decaying, Buddhist shrines in the Valley. In A.D. 1751, for example, Tibetan lamas came to repair the deteriorated stupa of Svayambhūnātha.¹³⁵ Indeed, they introduced a Tibetan style with their many donations, such as the encircling prayer wheels and the purely Tibetan *gonpas* established within the great stupa's precincts. It was probably in the late Malla Period that the stupa of Bodhnātha was totally rebuilt to Tibetan taste, perhaps in conformity with the celebrated Tibetan stupa at Gyantse. Namobuddhā, another famous Buddhist *tīrtha* in Nepal, located in the hills not far from Palanchok, also probably acquired its Tibetan appearance at about this time (Plate 504). The Tibetan concern with the Nepalese Buddhist monuments continued into the nineteenth century. Hodgson remarked that although Bodhnātha and Svayambhūnātha were in Nepal, they were "almost exclusively in the keeping of the Tibetans, and Lamas are the permanent ministering functionaries."¹³⁶

By the period of the Three Kingdoms, the Tibetans had become self-sufficient in cult objects. In fact, they now frequently made for the Nepalese merchants in Tibet bronzes, paintings, and ritual objects. Such paintings (*pata*, *paubhā* in Nepal, *thanḡa* in Tibet) are purely Tibetan except for a stock dedicatory inscription in the Newari language and script. The paintings seem to date only from the very late seventeenth century, and many were painted at Tashilunpo monastery. At this time Tibetan artistic influence—and Chinese motifs

¹³² Tucci 1949:1, 277; 1967:100.

¹³³ Petech 1958:99-101. Petech (99) believes that Anantamalla's documents reflect a particularly close relationship with Tibet when the Sa-skya abbot petitioned Nepal for these artisans.

¹³⁴ Shakya and Vaidya 1970:inscr. 33 (130-134); colophon 18 (39-40). Note that this *vihāra* was named after a Brahmanical divinity.

¹³⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscra. 150, 151 (307-319); Lévi 1905:11, 5-6.

¹³⁶ Hodgson 1971:21 note. Oliphant 1852:80-81 observed that at the time of his visit to Kathmandu, "the temple of Bhood [Bodhnātha] . . . had just been refurbished up and whitewashed by a great man from H'Lassa, an emissary of the Grand Lama's." In 1862 Jang Bahadur Rana interviewed "three Chinese architects who had been invited to execute repairs of the temple of Shambhunath and other Buddhist pagodas in the kingdom" (Pudma Rana 1974: 259).

by way of Tibet—also became evident in the arts produced by the Nepalese. Motifs exotic to the Nepalese tradition became increasingly popular, such as the dragon, typical Chinese-style clouds, and the omnipresent cloud vehicle (*tai*) of Chinese inspiration (Plate 408). These Tibeto-Chinese elements are most apparent in paintings. In some instances northern influence is so strong that the plain blue cotton borders of Nepalese paintings have been discarded in favor of painted borders imitating the dragon brocades of Tibetan *than-ka*s.¹³⁷ The new motifs also occur in late wood and stone carvings (Plates 228, 315) and are evident in the metallurgical arts.

There is some evidence that by the mid-eighteenth century Tibetan Buddhists again became interested in the Sanskrit sources of their faith. One such was the lama Si-tu Pan Chen. He came more than once to Nepal in the reigns of the last Malla kings, who, according to the lama's memoirs, gave him a warm welcome.¹³⁸ The renewed interest in the Sanskrit tradition may have been engendered in part by Tibetan familiarity with the domiciled Nepalese in Tibet, the Urāy. These Nepalese were honored not only for their craftsmanship and wealth, but as repositories and exemplars of traditional Indic Buddhism.

There was no direct contact between China and Nepal in the Early Malla Period. Indeed, after the long break in relations with Nepal, the Chinese seem to have been quite misinformed about the country. This is evident from the Ming effort to establish contact with Nepal in the late fourteenth century. It misfired when they made their ambassadorial exchanges with the Rāmavarddhanas instead of the Malla kings.

The Nepalese attempted to establish ties with China in the mid-eighteenth century. To protect their own autonomy after Tibet had come under Chinese control, in A.D. 1732 the three Malla kings sent a joint petition "written on golden sheets" to the emperor of China offering tribute.¹³⁹ This was a matter of marginal interest to the emperor, who referred the offer back to local officials in Tibet.

¹³⁷ Such a painting may be seen, for example, in the collections of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, accession number M71.91.1.

¹³⁸ Lokesh Chandra 1969.

After receiving a "letter of nomination" admitting them as tributary nations, the three kings sent off their promised tribute in 1734. It included, among other things, fabric, coral, amber, rhinoceros horn, incense, and herbs, and from the Patan king an image of a Bodhisattva.¹⁴⁰ There is no record of any further tribute to China by the Malla kings.

The cultural influence of China was limited to the transmission of a few art motifs by way of Tibet. Political contacts were not reestablished until the late eighteenth century, when the Sino-Nepalese war of A.D. 1792 erupted, and the Chinese armies descended almost to the Valley's northern rim.

The Cultural Milieu

It is difficult, if not impossible, to characterize briefly five-and-a-half centuries of Malla culture. The early years were most akin to the Transitional Period, itself rooted in the Licchavi past, the middle years were marked by Mithilā, and the final ones both by the Maithilī legacy and Mughal influence. The Malla Period is unified, however, by dependence on aspects of Licchavi culture as its primary cultural determinant. These, to recall only a few, are surviving institutions such as the *goṣṭhī* and *pañcālī*, enduring titles and offices, vestigial aspects of weights, measures, and coinage, and the continuing worship of the same gods, often with the same rites, by the same names, in the same temples and *vihāras*, in the same towns and villages.

The Malla years, particularly from the time of Sthitimalla, mark the increasing Hinduization of the Kathmandu Valley and concomitant decline of Buddhism. While this had profound repercussions on Valley society, it seems to have little affected the deities themselves. None was dismissed, although some were outdistanced in popularity. At ancient Guṃ-vihāra, for example, the magnificent bronze Buddha image installed about the eleventh century (Plate 458) gradually ceded its premier place to the tantric Vajrayoginī.¹⁴¹ By the late Malla

¹³⁹ Lévi 1905:1, 172 gives the date as 1731; Boulnois and Chen 1972:131 place the event in 1732.

¹⁴⁰ Boulnois and Chen 1972:131-140, 151-154.

¹⁴¹ The Mother Goddess image is believed to have been

Period, although still worshiped, this Buddha had become a minor accessory godling, inexplicably known today as the "Blacksmith's Queen." Other deities took on new attributes or names that made them more acceptable to the Śivamārgīs (adherents of the "way of Śiva," that is, Hindus). The celebrated deity of Bungamati, which in the Malla Period merged with the yogin Matsyendranātha, is a case in point.

Śivamārgī or Buddhamārgī in name, the people of Malla Nepal were now united by the all-pervasive bond of tantrism. In this milieu the gods were not only worshiped but manipulated. Images of the deities were thought animate. They made known their views and desires when they bled, perspired, suddenly sprouted an unwonted fang, or spoke from within their shuttered shrines. Even normal accidents or natural events—the collapse of Matsyendranātha's chariot, the sudden arc of a comet—were signs of the immortals' intervention in man's affairs. And to the gods were joined auxiliary demigods—ghosts and goblins, witches and haunts of every kind. Together they surely exceeded the number of earthly subjects within the Malla realm. The influence of tantrism is clear from the entries that thread the chronicles, *thyā-saphus*, and inscriptions, and is perpetuated today in legend, folklore, and practice.

It is not surprising that Malla Nepal was so totally concerned with the gods, given the social milieu. For to judge by the records, the country was subject to a century of constant harassment by foreign pillagers whom the Malla kings were too inept to defy. Worse, the Nepalese people were further subject to the personal vagaries of rule and misrule of these same kings. The subjects of Anantamalla, for example, in the chroniclers' words, "were oppressed by his deceitful conduct," but

introduced from the Dacca region of Bengal about A.D. 1350, when the Muslims overran East Bengal (B. Bhattacharyya 1968:248-249).

¹⁴² *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 26a, b.

¹⁴³ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 25b, 38a, 39b; VK (9); D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 211-212; Petech 1958:90.

¹⁴⁴ N.S. 352 Caitra (*Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 39b).

¹⁴⁵ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 37a, b.

¹⁴⁶ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 212.

¹⁴⁷ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 38a.

¹⁴⁸ Because the great east-west trade routes of Asia ran

those fortunate ones under Jayasihamalla were not oppressed, and "the land was happy."¹⁴² Yet both kings were equally pious, the one donating a flag-staff to Paśupati, the other golden ornaments and a jeweled chariot. Further, the Kathmandu Valley seems to have been constantly ravaged by earthquakes, fire, drought, famine, and pestilence, the repeated visitations of which thread the chronicles in a plaintive leitmotif. The reign of Abhayamalla was particularly filled with disasters, but was not atypical.¹⁴³ In A.D. 1232 a famine decimated the population by "one-third to one-sixth," and rice, oil, and salt sold at astronomical prices.¹⁴⁴ But despite daily royal propitiation of Paśupati with special costly sacrifices, there was again famine and epidemic that destroyed the people and their livestock.¹⁴⁵ Interwoven with these catastrophes were several disastrous earthquakes. In A.D. 1242 (N.S. 362) there was a severe shock that buried many people and their livestock alive in their houses. When the bodies of the dead were extricated "the crows flew over them to eat the carcass[es], and even on the living they made an attack."¹⁴⁶ A few years later another devastating earthquake occurred, leveling temples and houses. Again "one-third to one-sixth" of the population perished, among them King Abhayamalla.¹⁴⁷ In later years, although the people were at last spared the harassment of foreign invaders, famine and epidemics were their constant companions. And the terrible goddess of smallpox, Śitalā, was often abroad.¹⁴⁸

The Malla rulers without exception professed Hinduism; with rare exceptions they worshiped Śiva Paśupati as the paramount deity. Jyotirmalla (A.D. 1408-1428), was the first Malla king to emulate the Licchavis in adopting a formula to this effect in his *praśasti*,¹⁴⁹ but we encounter the germ of the practice with the first Malla king, Arimal-

well north of the Himalayas, the Nepalis were spared the Black Death, which ravaged the Middle East and Europe at this time. Originating in Mongolia about A.D. 1331, the plague kept to these main arteries, inching progressively toward Europe and also to Peking (Dols 1977:42-44, 49-50). One can but wonder how Nepalese history might have been affected had the pestilence struck Nepal and the Bhaktapur families in the critical period corresponding to Sthitimalla's career.

¹⁴⁹ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 47 (47-50).

la.¹⁵⁰ The majority of their successors followed suit, as is made clear by a perusal of Malla documents.¹⁵¹ Nonetheless, the Malla kings also held Viṣṇu and Taleju in similarly high regard and, no less than their subjects, embraced all the gods without distinction. Śrīnivāsa of Patan, for example, one of the most pious of Hindu kings, passed over Paśupati in his *praśasti* to declare himself the devotee of Matsyendranātha, a deity who, despite his syncretic nature, is essentially Buddhist.¹⁵²

The Malla kings' impartiality is demonstrated by the eighteenth-century restoration of Svayambhūnātha. Undertaken on the Tibetan lamas' initiative, the restoration was funded by the Hindu king of Kathmandu, Jayaprakāśa, and assisted by the Hindu king of Gorkha, Prithvi Narayan Shah, who supplied the immense replacement beam for the rotted central mast. Moreover, the Malla rulers had no prejudice against Christ or his apostles. They granted freehold lands to the exotic teachers of the new creed, the Capuchins who in the eighteenth century came to establish missions in the Malla realms. The Malla kings included in their palace staff both Brahman and Buddhist preceptors. The famous Lambakārṇa Bhaṭṭa and Jamana Guvāju, two famous tantric priests—one Brahman, the other Buddhist—served brilliantly in Pratāpamalla's entourage.¹⁵³

Like the Licchavi kings, all of the Malla kings and many of their ministers and nobles built temples and *vihāras*, commissioned diverse images, Buddhist and Hindu, and in accordance with dharma donated water tanks, fountains, and rest houses, together with lavish endowments for their maintenance. The rulers also offered costly sacrifices such as the *koṭihoma* (*koṭyāhuti*), a burnt offering that continued for days or weeks, and was accompanied by munificent gifts to the Brahmans, *bhikṣus*, and the needy. Less frequently the kings performed *tulādāna*, a sacrifice of gold and jewels equal to the weight of the monarch. The immense

¹⁵⁰ Petech 1958:colophon 11 (84).

¹⁵¹ There are countless examples, a few of which are *Vrhatsūcipatram* part 3, 38, 44; Petech 1958: 132 (colophon 6), 166 (colophon 2); D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscrs. 31, 57, 58, 69; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 374, 437, 469, 470.

¹⁵² D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 78 (168-170).

¹⁵³ At least according to universally accepted legend. A

cost of such a sacrifice made it the prerogative of kings alone. Or of de facto kings like Jayasimhārāma, whose munificence in this respect was legendary. The Malla kings also frequently initiated, elaborated, or resuscitated great festivals dedicated to the gods. One such, for example, was Matsyendranātha's chariot procession, previously regulated by the Licchavi king, Narendradeva, which Śrīnivāsa further elaborated and codified.

The Malla Period was the scene of intense literary activity. In the early years, as in the immediately preceding period, there was intensive copying, and occasional composing, of religious texts, preponderantly Buddhist and tantric. These were supplemented over the years with a vast output of manuscripts on astrology and astronomy, language and literature, dramas, mythology, history, and medicine.¹⁵⁴ All of the Malla rulers were dedicated patrons of the arts, and the courts of their time saw an impressive output of literature in Sanskrit, Maithili, and Newari. Newari continued to be the common language of the Kathmandu Valley, and its ascendancy over Sanskrit as a written language began with the time of Sthitimalla. Written records became increasingly, and finally almost wholly, Newari, which in the composition of poetry and plays at the court, finally claimed a status beside the more prestigious languages, Sanskrit and Maithili. Nepali appeared in the Valley as a spoken, and by the mid-seventeenth century, a written language.

Dramas, dance dramas, poetry, and music were composed by the learned pandits and the nobility at the courts. This was true even in the troubled times of the Three Kingdoms. The rulers seem to have divided their time in a balanced way among fighting each other, pious undertakings, and intellectual dilettantism at their courts. Yoganarendra of Patan gained contemporary fame as a musician and Pratāpamalla as a poet. Pratāpamalla particularly boasted of his intellectualism, and adopted the recently discovered palm-leaf document, a mystical diagram known as the *Saptasati Yantra*, dated v.s. 1762 (A.D. 1702) and signed by Lambakārṇa Bhaṭṭa, suggests that he in fact postdated Pratāpamalla by many years (*The Rising Nepal*, 14 April 1974).

¹⁵⁴ Cf. the National Archives list of texts, the *Nepālārājākīya-Vira-pustakālayastha-pustakānā-vrhatsūcipatram*; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 634-639.

title *ḥavindra* (king of poets). Reminiscent of Śrīka-lahābhīmānī of Licchavi times, he sometimes used it to the exclusion of his own name and all other titles. Many other Malla kings after his time also affected titles of this nature.¹⁵⁵

The art of metallurgy continued to flourish in the Malla Period, achieving its apogee during the stable years of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Its fame is attested not only by the demand for Nepalese cult objects in Tibet, but by the particular example of Aniko and his companions, who were called thither to erect a golden stupa at the instance of Kubilai Khan. The traditional techniques of casting and repoussé work were passed on without apparent change by families who continued to work from generation to generation in their small foundries and ateliers at home. Not only did the vast output of images for home consumption and the Tibet market persist but, under the continuing demand for tantric images, they proliferated. To judge by the extant palaces and temples, gilt metal repoussé as an adjunct to architecture was in increasing demand, especially during the period of the Three Kingdoms, as each king rivaled the others in the splendor of his capital city. Similarly, the goldsmiths continued to confect jewelry and ritual objects for the consumption of gods and men, producing objects in gold and silver inlaid with precious and semiprecious stones that are often masterpieces.

The excellence of Nepalese bronze casting was maintained almost to the end of the Malla Period. Only with the seventeenth century do the works reflect a diminution of quality. In quantity, production was unabated, and large numbers of images were produced even into the succeeding Shah Period. Of the later images, most must fairly be called mediocre, although even into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries some outstanding images were created (Plates 243, 364).

There was a prolific output of tantric stone images during the Malla Period. As in the allied arts, the art of the stone carver continued to be rooted in the Gupta aesthetic tradition. Only rarely did it draw directly on the parallel Pāla branch of

that tradition. In marked contrast to the bronzes, the creative spirit in stone was spent much earlier, and few works after the fifteenth century are of more than iconographic interest.

Under the Mallas, the art of painting continued to flourish. Although the basic tradition did not change, there are changes in styles coinciding with the beginning of the Malla Period that reflect stronger regional characteristics. By the following century, when the kingdom begins to crystallize, there had evolved from these innovations a distinctively Nepalese style. In the early seventeenth century, during the period of the Three Kingdoms, a dramatic change took place with the appearance of the Rājasthāni and Pahāri styles, concomitant with Mughal influence (Plates 66-68, 70, 374, 375, 402, 403, 408). Although generally considered to have been an Indian import, the exact source of these styles is an art-historical problem that is by no means settled.¹⁵⁶ It is possible that the Kathmandu Valley itself was also an important contributor in the evolution of this distinctive style. Although the earlier traditions survived to some extent until the end of the Malla Period, this new style became the popular standard for manuscript illuminations, and paintings on cloth and on multi-layered paper. The Rājasthāni style was particularly popular for wall paintings inside the late Malla (and Shah) palaces, and even occasionally on and inside temples. The theme of the god-hero Kṛṣṇa and his heroic deeds and amorous adventures outshines all others in popularity. This reflects the widespread influence of *bhaktivada* and of the Kṛṣṇa cult, which had swept northeastern India and penetrated the Valley in the Malla period. In late Malla times, Tibetan influence in Nepalese painting is also clearly discernible (Plate 583).

An outstanding Malla legacy is the architecture and associated decorative work in carved wood and metal repoussé. Much of the extant traditional architecture in the Kathmandu Valley dates from Malla times, particularly the period of the Three Kingdoms. But although it has always been assumed that few pre-Malla structures survived the destructive raids and natural calamities of the Mal-

part 2, 188), and occasionally illustrated manuscripts from centers such as Kangra and related Indian hill states are encountered even now in the Kathmandu Valley.

¹⁵⁵ B. Paudel 1964:25; Tewari 1964a:46.

¹⁵⁶ Jayaprakāśa, for example, is known to have enrolled mercenaries from Kangra in his army (D. Regmi 1966:

la Period, there is evidence that there may be a far greater number of older survivals, particularly the *vihāras*, than has heretofore been recognized.¹⁵⁷

The number of opulent seventeenth- and eighteenth-century temples in part reflects intense rivalry, which did not stop at politics among the courts of the Three Kingdoms. Each Malla ruler strove to outdo the others in the beauty and magnificence of his own capital. Each, through the sensitive hands of his subjects, succeeded in creating a remarkable Darbar Square (*darbār*, Persian; *lāyḳū*, Newari), an architectural complex unique to the three capital cities (Plates 29-31). In it the palace of the king, who believed himself divine, was a close neighbor of fellow deities, preponderantly Hindu, whose temples, shrines, and images jostled each other. Royal temples to Taleju, in her role as lineage and personal deity of the kings, were erected in the Darbar Squares, and in front of them were installed the great bells and drums consecrated to her worship. In each square a Malla king in devotional attitude, richly garbed as a Rājput noble, gazed down from a tall pillar on the beauty he and his people were capable of creating when not at odds with cousin kingdoms. The balance, unfortunately, was weighted on the latter side, and spelled the Mallas' end as another dynasty, lusting for the rich Valley, pressed its claims.

THE SHAH PERIOD, A.D. 1769 TO THE PRESENT

Returning from his wedding at Makwanpur, Prithvi Narayan Shah, the youthful prince of Gorkha, stood on the Valley rim and for the first time gazed out across the Malla domain. "Which is Nepal?" he asked of his companions. "They showed me, saying 'That is Bhadgaon, that is Patan, and there lies Kathmandu.' The thought

¹⁵⁷ See Chapter 7.

¹⁵⁸ N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:376; Stiller 1968:25-26. Although it is generally agreed that Prithvi Narayan spent some time in his youth as a guest at the court of Ranajit-malla in Bhaktapur, it must have postdated the year A.D. 1736 or 1737 and his marriage at Makwanpur; Prithvi Narayan himself in his final counsel, the *divya-upadeśa*, delivered not long before his death, says this. The

came to my heart that if I might be king of these three cities, why, let it be so."¹⁵⁸

Some thirty years later, in A.D. 1768, as the mature and brilliant King of Gorkha, Prithvi Narayan had encircled the Nepal Valley with his conquests and had seized most of the smaller towns within. But of the three coveted cities he was still not master, for within the walls of each still sat enthroned a Malla king. Strategically choosing the occasion of the absorbing Indra-jātrā (the joint annual celebration of the city's ancient patron, Indra, and the divine virgin, the Kumārī), the Gorkhalis at last attacked Kathmandu. Breaching the carelessly tended city gates at several points, they swarmed toward the palace square, where the festivities were at their height. The ritual dispensation of beer flowed from the mouths of the Bhairavas and the bemused and celebrating crowd was unable to resist the sudden attack. Neither could Hanuman Dhoka palace be defended by its guards or by its guardian deities, Hanūmān outside the gate and the fierce Narasiṃha just within (Plates 394, 399). Jayaprakāśa, the last Malla king of Kathmandu, fled the palace. At "eleven *ghaḍī* past night," the evening of 25 September 1768, Prithvi Narayan took his place within as the new master of Kathmandu (Plates 71, 75).¹⁵⁹

By decree of Jayaprakāśa, the Indra-jātrā was the occasion in which the Kumārī annually reaffirmed the Kathmandu king's mandate to rule the kingdom. It is said that Prithvi Narayan had a throne brought into the public square and arrogated to himself, the first Shah king, the Kumārī's consecration. The mountain king later condemned the "three-citied Nepal [as] a cold stone" and dreamed of building a new capital on a hill far from the intrigue of those "who drink water from wells."¹⁶⁰ But until his death in A.D. 1775, Hanuman Dhoka would remain his palace and Kathmandu his capital.

classic source on this famous discourse is Naraharinath 1959, but the definitive study is N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968. An excellent English-language study is Stiller 1968.

¹⁵⁹ A *ghaḍī* equals twenty-four minutes. In late September in Kathmandu dark falls around six o'clock; thus the capture of the darbar took place around 10:30 P.M.

¹⁶⁰ N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:323; Stiller 1968:43.

Meanwhile, on the evening of the conquest, Jayaprakāśa took refuge with the Patan king, Tejnarasimha, and a few days later they together abandoned Patan for Bhaktapur. Soon after, in early October, with no greater defense than the closed city gates, Patan also fell to Gorkha. For more than a year Prithvi Narayan suffered Rañajit, his one-time host, to keep his capital city. There the three Malla kings, united at last, huddled together. Finally, the Gorkhalis attacked the last Malla capital, and after a bitter fight on the night of 13 November 1769 invaded the palace itself. Prithvi Narayan was king of the three cities. His youthful dream was fulfilled. The Malla rule, and misrule, had ended, and Nepal, the nation, was born.¹⁶¹

As for the three deposed kings, their ends were various. Jayaprakāśa, wounded in battle, was allowed to die at the sacred ghats of Paśupatinātha. Rañajit was exiled to Benares; pausing en route at the Valley's southern rim, he gazed over his former domain and "bade farewell to Tulja (Turja or Taleju), Pashupati, and Guhjeswari."¹⁶² The Patan king, Tejnarasimha, was imprisoned, but how or when he died is not known.¹⁶³

The conquest of Nepal Valley removed the chief obstacle to further territorial expansion of the Gorkhalis. With the Valley, they possessed new wealth and mastery of the trade routes between India and Tibet. Now Gorkhali energies, more than three-quarters of a century of which had been dissipated in the Valley conquest, could be diverted elsewhere. Under Prithvi Narayan's successors the Twenty-four Kingdoms, and at length the Twenty-two Kingdoms—a confederation of hill states in far western Nepal—were joined to the expanding kingdom. Continuing expansion brought the new Nepal into conflict with Tibet and a protective China on the north, and at length with the British

¹⁶¹ Or reborn, if the view is accepted that Licchavi Nepal closely corresponded in extent with the nation's present boundaries.

¹⁶² Wright 1966:174.

¹⁶³ Giuseppe 1801:322 reports that he was "confined in irons till his death" and Kirkpatrick 1969:270 affirms that "having rendered himself personally obnoxious during the war to Purthi Nerain, [Tejnarasimha] was treated with extreme rigour, if not actually put to death by order of the conqueror."

¹⁶⁴ According to Bólnois and Chen 1972:151-154,

East India Company on the south. Defeated by the former at Nawakot in A.D. 1792, Nepal was forced to send periodic tribute to the Chinese court.¹⁶⁴ Finally, in A.D. 1814-1816, having overreached its ambitions on its southern front, Nepal lost a border war to Britain. At the treaty settlement, a crescent of its newly won lands was forfeited. With subsequent minor modifications, the boundaries established then are those of modern Nepal. Further, as stipulated by the treaty, a British resident observer was imposed at the court of Kathmandu. This was no small exaction; foreigners had been unwelcome since Prithvi Narayan's expulsion of the domiciled Capuchin missionaries, whom he distrusted as foreign spies. Worse, the Nepali conflict with China and India sundered forever Nepal's mastery of the trans-Himalayan trade. Following the war with China, the nationals of Tibet and Nepal were forbidden to enter each others' country. Later, when the British sought to establish a trade route between India and China, they were rebuffed in Nepal, and they pressured instead neighboring Sikkim. By the end of the nineteenth century they had obtained from it a new route through the Chumbi Valley.¹⁶⁵

By the early nineteenth century, the Kingdom of Nepal had been formed through the welding of hill states, tribal groups, and the Malla domain. But in a familiar pattern, the new nation was wracked with debilitating power struggles among the nobles. Each of two powerful families, the Thapas and the Pandeys, sought to seize for itself the influential post of prime minister. For a time the Thapas were victorious and their most able, if at times ruthless representative, Bhimsen Thapa, held office from A.D. 1806 to 1837. Characteristically in those troubled times, when in the fastness of the mountain kingdom an enemy could be flayed alive,

the Gorkhalis had sent tribute to China as early as A.D. 1788, and it continued until A.D. 1908. On the Shah relations with Tibet and China, see Lévi 1905:1, 174-192; D. Vajracharya and Nepal 1957:letter 13 (56-74); Campbells' account in Hasrat 1970:175-176; Landon 1928:11, apps. xxi, xxii, 272-288; Kirkpatrick 1969:apps. 1, 11, 339-366; Cammann 1951:121-143; B. Acharya 1954; Stiller 1973:190-215; Pudma Rana 1974:172-191. See also the amusingly biased version of the Nepal-China war in the Nepalese chronicle edited by Wright 1966:177.

¹⁶⁵ Cammann 1951:131-132, 149-150.

impaled, maimed, or blinded, Bhimsen met a violent end.¹⁶⁶ There followed a chaotic decade that culminated in a bloody massacre of the nobles in military headquarters, the Kot (fortress) of Kathmandu, on 14 September 1846. After this terrible event, the coveted office of the prime minister was vested in the hands of Jang Bahadur Kunwar of the Thapa faction (Plate 77). Jang Bahadur assumed the honorific title *rānā* and ushered in more than a century of hereditary autocratic rule by his descendants (Plates 78-80). Once again, the shadow of the Ābhīra Guptas' seizure of constituted Licchavi authority hung heavy over the land.

It was the misfortune of the Shah dynasty that from Prithvi Narayan's grandson to the twentieth century, the Shah kings acceded to the throne as minors or as inexperienced youths. Of necessity they were placed under the tutelage of regents and ministers who manipulated them as symbolic figureheads. Absolute power was vested within the Rana oligarchy, and Nepal was administered as their private estate. Sealed off from the outside world by Rana command to protect Rana interests, Nepal was bypassed by modernizing currents.¹⁶⁷ It was only in A.D. 1951 that Prithvi Narayan's descendant, Tribhuvan Vikram Shah, courageously freed the throne of Rana control and initiated a new era in Nepal.¹⁶⁸

Gorkhali enthusiasm, like that of the Rājputs they emulated, traditionally turned more toward war and politics than to art. Their principal concern was to maintain and increase their state, not to beautify it. They merely moved into the Malla house, taking over their cities, palaces, and temples and creating no new forms. Prithvi Narayan, the Spartan warrior, longed to escape this oppressive "pomp and splendor" in the capital city of his dreams.

The new masters of the Kathmandu Valley were, however, conscientious patrons of the Newar artists and artisans. Prithvi Narayan Shah's distrust of the

¹⁶⁶ Lévi 1905:11, 294.

¹⁶⁷ Nepal fought tenaciously to defend itself from British colonization, and even to thwart the imposition of a single British resident observer in the Valley. But paradoxically, recently a Nepali observer blamed the British for Nepal's lack of development, which he notes that very colonization conferred on India (Malla 1973:268-269).

¹⁶⁸ On the history of Nepal after A.D. 1769, see D. Regmi

political intentions of Mughal India led him to exclude from his newly independent state "their hooligans and prostitutes who in rooms lined with paintings cause the Nepalese to forget themselves in melodies woven on the drum and *sitar*. . . . For your entertainment," he counseled his subjects, "attend the Newar dancers of the three cities of Nepal which are in accordance with the *śāstras*. In giving to [the Newar dancers] the wealth of your country remains at home."¹⁶⁹

In urging his own people to patronize the Newars, the Shah king guaranteed their continued functioning in the familiar way. Indeed, it is to Prithvi Narayan's interest in native culture that we owe much of its survival into modern times. He personally visited the *vihāras* and temples, attended the religious festivals, and patronized such groups as the Harasiddhi dancers.¹⁷⁰ Most of the buildings of the Shah Period vividly reflect this dependence on the Newars, and temples and fountains of traditional design built even into the late nineteenth century cannot be distinguished from those of the Mallas.

The new-style domed temple, a rustic and even pathetic imitation of Mughal architecture that had appeared in the Valley in the Late Malla Period, achieved its greatest popularity in the nineteenth century, and most of the domed temples date from that time (Plate 214). It was during the Shah Period that the Dharahārā, a tower imitating the Mughal minarets, was erected just outside the Kathmandu city walls, where its fanciful form still dominates the city skyline.

With the nineteenth century, the Valley also witnessed new forms of art that did not have a traditional Asian inspiration. The Ranas traveled abroad and returned to erect scores of incongruous European-style mansions, each a miniature Buckingham Palace set within its own walled estate (Plate 81). Window glass and similar architectural exotica from Europe reached the remote Valley over 1950, 1961, 1975; Joshi and Rose 1966; Rose and Fisher 1970; Kumar 1967; Lévi 1905:11, 261-305; Landon 1928:1, 59-170; 11, 54-210; Pudma Rana 1974. Nepali-language sources are too numerous to list, but an outstanding contribution is N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968.

¹⁶⁹ N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:331.

¹⁷⁰ Banda 1962:38-39.

cupitous mountain trails on the backs of men. In this way, also, came the Victorian bric-a-brac the Ranas had admired abroad—crystal chandeliers, grandfather clocks, bronze nymphs, marble tables, and brocaded chairs that jostled massed trophies of the hunt, oddly juxtaposed in incongruous palace settings.¹⁷¹

Under the new dynasty, Newar architecture and the familiar Newar arts and crafts in stone, metal, crystal, clay, and paint continued. Yet although the same families wielded the chisel and mallet, and carried out the same complex steps in the home foundries, the creative genius had been spent. Without exception, in the Shah Period all these arts declined. In painting, the Pahāri style remained popular through the nineteenth century, and wall paintings differing little from those found in Malla palaces continued to be enjoyed even in the Europeanizing Rana milieu. A few are still extant in their derelict mansions (Plate 512). In the nineteenth century, however, the emphasis turned to portraiture in European fashion, most often executed by European hands. Contemporary artists such as Lain Singh Bangdel or Laxman Shrestha, trained at home and abroad, largely paint in the international abstract styles that are seen in the West. Stone sculpture from the eighteenth century on is grotesque; it is a rare metal image that recalls the one-time mastery of the Nepalese metalworker. Indeed, the most outstanding bronzes of the period are the imposing equestrian statues of the Rana prime ministers that now dot the Kathmandu pa-

¹⁷¹ The Ranas emulated the British in material things, but were very concerned about maintaining Hindu purity and upholding Rajput ideals. For example, in the late nineteenth century they sent an embassy to Udaipur in Rajasthan to “inquire into the customs and manners of the ladies and gentlemen of the palace of Mewar, and from this time began the visits to Mewar of these peoples” (Riccardi 1975a:200).

¹⁷² In 1851 Jang Bahadur Rana brought back, among

rade ground, the Tundikhel. These were cast in European foundries and joined the other European imports in the painful traverse of the narrow mountain trails.

The most significant artistic contribution of the Shah Period is in literature, encouraged by the printing press, which began to replace manuscript only after the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁷² Sanskrit continued as the prestigious literary language, but those who employed it failed to produce works of significance.¹⁷³ Written Newari, which had just come into its own, suffered an eclipse under the Ranas, but is now making a comeback. The major literary contribution has been in Nepali, the national language. The works of writers and poets such as Bhanubhakta, Motiram Bhatta, Lekhnath, and others of more recent date, while unknown outside Nepal, nonetheless represent significant contributions to world literature and, in fact, deserve a wider audience.

With this understanding of the political and cultural history of Nepal Mandala, we may now turn to the monuments themselves. As the setting for the palaces and shrines, and for the men and gods who live or lived within, we shall first consider the cities, medieval monuments in their own right. Their history is long, complicated, and like the political history of which they are a part, confused. But only by establishing order in this sphere can we properly place the monuments the cities contain, and so come still closer to understanding the cultural history of Nepal.

other curiosities from his London visit, the first hand-operated printing press known to Nepal. By 1870 there were two, and the first public printing house was established in 1893, from which time a trickle of printed newspapers and books began. After 1912 the output was accelerated by the introduction of an electrically operated press (Malla 1973:270-271). See also Malla 1973a:111-115.

¹⁷³ On Nepalese literature, see the informative essay by Y. N. Khanal 1973.

PART II

**SETTLEMENT AND
STRUCTURES**



CHAPTER 5

CITIES AND CAPITALS: GENESIS AND GROWTH

DESPITE its pastoral charm, the Kathmandu Valley supports a dense population gathered into an impressive number of settlements (Map 3). The most populous are the former capitals of the Three Kingdoms: Kathmandu, now the national capital, with some hundred fifty thousand inhabitants; Patan, with sixty thousand; and Bhaktapur, with forty thousand.¹ There are about thirty-five fair-sized towns and villages, some just over the Valley rim, each with from one to ten thousand inhabitants. These are augmented by scores of hamlets with populations of a few dozen to a few hundred people.

The hamlets are for the most part Parvatiyā settlements, usually Chetri or Tamang. They often bear such names as Bistachap or Basnyetgaon, after the families of Bistas or Basnyets who inhabit them. As the most recently founded, the Parvatiyā hamlets tend to occupy the agriculturally least desirable upland plateaus (*tars*) and the steep slopes of the Valley rim (Plates 7, 8). These hamlets have no town center, and few have streets, shops, large temples, or community buildings. They are simply agglomerations of families whose individual houses, linked by pathways, are dispersed among their terraced fields. Typically, these upland houses are two-storied, thatch-roofed, have an ample ve-

randa, and are decorated with a wide swath of whitewash, contrasted with one or more of ochre (Plate 82). They are very different from the Newar house, described in the next chapter (Plates 111-123).

The cities, larger towns, and villages are old Newar settlements, many of which were familiar to the Licchavis, and some of which antedated their coming. Typically, they bear modified indigenous (Kirāta) names such as "Bhelbu" or "Kisipidi," or Sanskritized ones such as "Kirtipur" or "Gokarna." Tight clusters of densely packed multi-story houses, the Newar settlements have an urban character that persists even in the smallest villages (Plates 8-10, 34-38, 41, 94). For even villages have streets of some sort, squares, shops, temples, and community buildings. Surrounded by their diked and terraced fields, the Newar towns and villages are generally oriented toward the rivers and streams that course through the more level Valley floor. But once in a while they, too, occupy upland sites. Macchegaon, for example, lies well up the western rim of the Valley, and Pharping, once a city-state under the *rābuttas*, is perched high, for defense, on the southern rim. Similarly, an occasional Parvatiyā village occupies bottomland—Motitar near Patan, for example—a coveted location

¹ The 1971 census figures for the populations of the three town *panchayats* are Kathmandu, 150,402; Patan, 59,049; and Bhaktapur, 40,112. Gutschow and Kölver

1975:13 counted 5,216 households in Bhaktapur and estimated the total number of inhabitants at 36,000.

often representing a special land grant from the state.²

As a slightly off-center nucleus of the Valley, at the confluence of its two largest rivers, the Bagmati and Vishnumati, lies a sprawling urban complex. It embraces two of the capitals of the Three Kingdoms, Kathmandu and Patan, and numerous Newar villages. The Malla Kathmandu, "Old Kathmandu," now exists only as a core within the modern Greater Kathmandu complex (Map 4; Plates 84, 85). Nearby villages have been absorbed as Kathmandu city quarters or suburbs, to survive, if at all, only in name or as derivatives of names. Exceptions are Patan, still a distinct city coterminous with the old capital, and Hadi- or Harigaon. Considered a Kathmandu suburb, Hadigaon nonetheless retains both its name and physical definition (Map 5). In fact, Greater Kathmandu extends far beyond these administrative limits, on the north to the suburbs of Maharajganj and Bansbari, on the east through Deopatan (Map 6) almost to the Manohara River (the former boundary with the Bhaktapur kingdom), west across the Vishnumati to include right-bank suburbs such as Kalimati or Tahachal, and south across the Bagmati. In this direction Kathmandu embraces the expanding suburbs northwest of Patan, which are oriented toward the capital city rather than toward Patan.

The consolidation of Old Kathmandu and the surrounding villages into the dense population complex of Greater Kathmandu is a phenomenon of recent times. It was achieved in two stages. In the early Shah Period, with the choice of Kathmandu as the national capital came the gradual expansion of Old Kathmandu beyond the walled confines of the Malla city. This process was accelerated under the Ranas, 1846-1951. Their great mansions, the many *darbars* and *bhawans*, were flung up in separate fiefs of surrounding farmland or in usurped village emplacements around Kathmandu and across the Bagmati north and west of Patan (Plate 81).³

² On the various kinds of Nepalese land tenure, see M. Regmi 1976.

³ It is said that much of this land was confiscated from Patan *viharas*, which had already lost acreage in support of military operations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries against the Tibetans and British, further reducing endowed (*guthi*) lands that they had held for cen-

The second stage began with the economic development and social change of the post-Rana period. The Rana estates, no longer practical, gradually began to break up; the mansions frequently served as government offices, and the lands were subdivided into building lots. These have rapidly filled with single-family dwellings, mostly undistinguished concrete bungalows that represent a sharp break with the architectural and social traditions of the Kathmandu Valley. They accommodate nuclear families that have dissolved their economic and residence ties with the once characteristic extended, or joint, family. Patrilineal and patrilocal, the extended family shared a common treasury, and authority was vested in the senior members. Scattered broadcast over the rapidly diminishing open lands, these pedestrian little houses intensify the feeling of population pressure, and severely compromise the natural beauty of the Kathmandu Valley. The Newar tradition of compact settlements, skillfully articulated with the land, preserved uncluttered expanses of fields and leafy groves. This minimized the visual impact of human crowding which, in fact, existed. The low buildings with their pitched roofs and earth tones of brick, tile, and wood blended with the landscape and complemented the natural beauty that is the Valley's rich endowment (Plates 5, 8-10, 84, 92, 94, 99, 100). But it seems quite probable that in a decade or two the Valley as the Mallas knew it, which had miraculously lingered into the twentieth century, will be but a memory.

EARLY SETTLEMENT

Settlements were numerous and widespread in the Licchavi Period. Licchavi remains—chiefly inscriptions, stone sculptures, and architectural fragments—attest to a total occupancy of the Kathmandu Valley, probably of the small neighboring valleys on the east and west, and to a lesser degree over turies (Allen 1973:9). The traditional respect accorded irrevocable *guthi* land tenure (M. Regmi 1976:46-70 and especially 53-54) suggests, however, that this question needs further study. The history of forty of the most important of the Rana mansions, accompanied by excellent photographs, may be found in *Kathmandu Valley* 1975:11, 112-125.

a widening circle much farther afield. Eastward to the Sun Kosi, Licchavi settlements included, among others, the villages known today as Sanga, Banepa, Nala, Panauti, Khopasi, Palanchok, and Dumja, and beyond the river, probably Dolakha (Maps 2, 3). On the south, Licchavi settlements spilled over the Valley rim in communities such as the present Lele village; on the west into the Chitlang Valley and nearby Tistung; and northwest to places like Kebalpur and Gorkha. There may have been settlements even farther away, as suggested by inscribed votive *caityas* recovered from Jumla.⁴ Inside the Valley proper, the principal Licchavi settlements were at the junction of the Bagmati and Vishnumati, at Deopatan around Paśupatinātha, at Hadigaon on the Dhobi Khola, north around Budhanilkantha, and at the western end of the Valley around Thankot.⁵

It is evident from the abundance of non-Sanskrit names that the Licchavis perpetuated as the names of towns, rivers, and other features, that the Valley was previously occupied and dotted with permanent settlements called *prñ*. But we know nothing of their size or number, and can only deduce that physically they compared broadly to the descendant Newar villages. In any event, whatever their number and kind, it is clear that the Licchavis imposed upon them much the same administrative structure as they had known in India.⁶

The smallest and most characteristic unit of Licchavi settlement was known as a *grāma*, a term used in India.⁷ In English, the word *grāma* is usually translated as village, a place normally regarded as a cluster of dwellings numerically midway between a hamlet and a town. In ancient India *grāmas* were very numerous, and there does not seem to have been any particular limitation on size or density that made them uniformly "villages."⁸ The Mauryan *grāma* as defined by Kauṭilya could number between one hundred and five hundred houses spread over an area of two to four miles.⁹ But since

we derive the names of so many *grāmas* from Licchavi inscriptions it would be difficult to imagine that their numbers were proportionately large, considering the size of the Valley, or that they could have been as big as those that existed in contemporary India. Given the compact nature of the descendant Newar villages, most Licchavi *grāmas* must have been very much smaller, and the terms were merely fitted to the existing local settlements. This seems evident in the frequent survival of the indigenous suffix *prñ*, to which the redundant *grāma* was appended. Thus we commonly encounter such names as Kicaprñgrāma or Khoprñgrāma, pleonasm like the English Bagmati River. In any event, as in India, these *grāmas* enjoyed a certain measure of autonomy. There is no evidence that they were walled; their boundaries were merely defined by tradition and by individual land holdings, buildings, or physiographic features such as those frequently referred to as boundary markers in Licchavi inscriptions.

A few villages composed a *tala*.¹⁰ When the size of contiguous *grāmas* or their density warranted, they were federated and administered as a *draṅga*. This seems to have been a small urban complex that, as seems probable in Gupta India, may have facilitated administration and specifically the collection of taxes.¹¹ There were also settlements known as *koṭṭas* (forts), which were defended but unfortified. This seems to have been a privilege, but the exact nature of the *koṭṭa* in Nepal has not been determined.¹²

Larger administrative units were the *viśaya*, *bhukṭi*, and *maṅḍala*, names also familiar in ancient India.¹³ In India these terms cannot be satisfactorily defined. They were often used loosely and interchangeably to signify district, province, and even country, as in Tirabhukti, an alternate name of Mithilā. In Indian inscriptions a *viśaya* is sometimes larger, sometimes smaller, than a *maṅḍala*, or the two terms are undifferentiated. But in Nepal, *viśaya*

⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 189 (598).

⁵ D. Vajracharya 1968b.

⁶ But the Licchavis also adopted a number of local customs and offices such as *mapcoḷa*, *lingval*, and others unknown to Indian administration. On Licchavi administration see D. Vajracharya 1966a, 1966b, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1969a, 1969b, 1970, 1972a.

⁷ Sircar 1966:119-120; D. Vajracharya 1968b:97-98.

⁸ Sircar 1971:256-263; Ray 1964:22-35.

⁹ D. Vajracharya 1968b:98.

¹⁰ D. Vajracharya 1966a:11-13.

¹¹ Sircar 1966:100-101.

¹² Sircar 1966:161; D. Vajracharya 1968b:99.

¹³ Sircar 1966:57, 194-195, 377-378.

seems to have been more uniformly the smallest unit, signifying district; *bhukti* signified province, and *mandala*, country, as in Nepālamaṇḍala.

Among the numerous *grāmas* known to the Licchavis, many are no longer identifiable, surviving only through inscriptional reference. Others have endured into modern times as Newar villages, sometimes with new or much modified names, but just as often with the original ones virtually unchanged. The Licchavi Śaṅgāgrāma, for example, is now modern Sanga village. Kurppāsī became modern Khopasi, Bugāyūmī is Bungamati, and Teṣṭuṅga, Tistung. Still other Licchavi *grāmas* have been absorbed as *tol*s (neighborhoods) and suburbs by the expanding cities. For example, the Licchavi village of Jamayambī—Jamala village in the nineteenth century—is now Jamala-tol, a neighborhood in Greater Kathmandu, while Gullataṅga apparently became Patan's Guita-tol. In some instances the location of a Licchavi village is known, although the name has been eclipsed. An example is Joṅjondīgrāma, now known as Naksal, a suburb of Kathmandu.

Some *grāmas* have not only survived intact with their ancient names still attached, but seem to have retained their ancient associations, as well. The village of Kisipidi, for example, was the Licchavi Kicapṅgrāma, or Elephant-village Village (in modern Newari, *ḥisi* means "elephant"), and in the Transitional Period for literary purposes it was called Hastinapura, Elephant City. That the name actually reflects a special role this village once occupied with respect to elephants is suggested by a Rana practice. Apparently in conformity with long-established custom, the Ranas designated Kisipidi, inconveniently distant at the westernmost end of the Valley, to supply grass for their elephant stables located in Kathmandu.¹⁴

The Licchavi *draṅgas*, federations of *grāmas*, have suffered the same uneven histories as the com-

¹⁴ B. Acharya 1963:6.

¹⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 77, 129 (320-335, 485-489).

¹⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 109 (414-418).

¹⁷ D. Vajracharya 1968:89. Because the site of Śītā-tikādraṅga, with many surface remains, is largely rural and unencumbered with the cities or temples that make archaeological investigations impossible in so much of the Valley, it would be an ideal place to dig. Perhaps more rewarding,

ponent villages. Hamsagrhadraṅga, for example, once a thriving Licchavi community and seat of one of the most important Viṣṇu temples, has left scarcely a visible trace beyond its name in inscriptions.¹⁵ Nūppunadraṅga, some sixteen miles west of the Valley, has a similar history.¹⁶ Lembaṭṭdraṅga is today the obscure hamlet of Lele, and Śītā-tikādraṅga, once a populous community in the Thankot-Balambu area, is represented only by a few villages, the remainder of them being ruins in and under the cultivated fields.¹⁷ Three other important *draṅgas*, Yūpagrāma, Dakṣiṇakolī and Khopṅṅ, continued to develop all through the Transitional Period to become at length the Malla Period cities (*deśa*, *sahara*) Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhaktapur, and finally the capitals of the Three Kingdoms. Similarly, Gvala, an ancient settlement around Paśupatinātha, emerged as Deopatan; while a no less important settlement, Vṛjji-karathyā, engendered Hadigaon.

LIFE HISTORIES OF FIVE COMMUNITIES

The study of Nepalese history, political and cultural, has been severely hampered by lack of sound information about the history of the Kathmandu Valley settlements. This applies particularly to the five last-named communities, Kathmandu, Patan, Bhaktapur, Deopatan, and Hadigaon. Even the existence of one of them, Deopatan, has been virtually ignored despite the crucial role it has played in the nation's past. The accepted dates and circumstances of the foundation of the three largest—Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhaktapur—which have been repeated heedlessly and ad infinitum in both popular and scholarly writings, are for the most part at variance with the actual archaeological and historical evidence. The evolution of the cities has and even less encumbered, is the site of Hamsagrhadraṅga. It is on the south side of the Valley in the vicinity of Anantalīṅgeśvara, a temple site where Narendradeva's inscription addressed to the Hamsagrha inhabitants still stands (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 129). Profoundly interesting would be recovery of the remains of the famous Hamsagrha Nārāyaṇa temple, one of the four allegedly founded by Haridattavarman in about the fourth century A.D. (see Chapter 9).

been accompanied by a kaleidoscope of changing names which, despite their importance as historical indices and keystones to other research, have been equally confused. A reliable history of all these places is necessary as a framework within which other studies can be securely conducted.¹⁸ The following is an attempt, within the limits of presently available research, to provide such a history, tracing these five important places from their genesis as indigenous hamlets (*prñ*), through their growth into Licchavi *grāmas* and *draṅgas*, Malla *deśas*, and modern Shah cities.¹⁹

The last half of this chapter is addressed to the problem of identifying the various early capitals of Nepal Mandala. With respect to the Licchavi seats, it is a curious fact that despite the number of places, and even palaces, the Licchavis write of, they never specify the name of the city, or cities, they ruled from. As the most tantalizing unresolved problem of Nepalese history, the identity of the Licchavi capital has been sought for more than a century. Perhaps it eludes us still. However, there are two strong candidates, Hadigaon as the capital of the early Licchavis, and Kathmandu as the capital of Aṃśuvarman, the Ābhīra Guptas and the later Licchavis.

Commanding far less attention than the search for the Licchavi capital, but fraught with the same misconceptions, is the identification of the capital cities of the Transitional and Early Malla Periods. Given the troubled times of the former, it is doubtful that there was a single capital, although there are reasons to believe that Kathmandu, which

seems to be the last seat of the Licchavis, was still viewed as the traditional seat. From the late twelfth century to the period of the Three Kingdoms, the capital of Nepal Mandala was Bhaktapur. It seems almost certain that Patan, the almost universally accepted site of both the capital of the Licchavis and their successors, did not enjoy this prestige. If before the seventeenth century it was a capital city at all, it may have so served the Kirāta, whose associations with that city are particularly evident.

Kathmandu

The *Svayambhū-purāna*, a medieval Buddhist *māhātmya*, affirms that Kathmandu was the miraculous creation of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.²⁰ Having cut through the southern rim of the Valley with his divine sword Chandrahas, Destroyer of Evil, and drained away the primordial Kālīhrad to make Svayambhū-in-the-Form-of-Light accessible, he needed devotees to worship the sacred symbol. Mañjuśrī, assisted by the heavenly architect Viśvakarman, therefore created a populous city, Mañjupattana, on the opposite bank of the Vishnumati, patterning it after the blade of Chandrahas. Indeed, Mañjuśrīnaka-vihāra, the monastery where Buddhists even now affirm that Mañjuśrī sojourned for a time, still stands in Old Kathmandu, while just north of the town is Vikramaśīla-vihāra (Tham-bahil), which they claim as the Bodhisattva's miraculous creation (Map 7: 1, 55).

The late chronicles are more conservative respecting the antiquity of the city. They assign its

¹⁸ Those that come first to mind are the brilliant investigations of Niels Gutschow and his colleagues on the organization of space (Gutschow 1976; Gutschow and Kölver 1975; Gutschow and Shrestha 1975; Gutschow and Bajracharya 1977; Auer and Gutschow 1974). Fundamentally sound and exciting as the research embodied in these various studies is, many conclusions reached there, as Gutschow and I have frankly discussed, are unavoidably vitiated because of the unavailability of the knowledge embraced in this chapter.

¹⁹ In addition to the acknowledgments made in my prefatory remarks, I wish to underscore my thanks to the three Nepali scholars who have most facilitated the writing of this chapter—Dhanavajra Vajracharya, Gautamvajra Vajracharya, and Mahesh Raj Pant. Without D. Vajracharya's translation into Nepali of the full corpus of

Licchavi inscriptions (unfortunately available only long after I had left Nepal), Licchavi documents spoke to me only through the voices of my valued assistants, M. Pant and G. Vajracharya, both accomplished Sanskritists. The Nepali translations, therefore, together with the invaluable commentary accompanying them, opened for me personally the doors that led deep into the corridors of the Licchavi past. But before that, without the interest, dedication, and support of my young assistants, both in the field and in the labyrinths of Nepali-language source material, the insights expressed in this chapter could never have been achieved. They are, however, my own and I take full responsibility for any errors of interpretation.

²⁰ On *Svayambhū-purāna*, see H. Shastri 1894; Mitra 1971: 245-255; Lévi 1905:1, 207-213, 330-333; Chapter 10; Appendix V.

foundation to a King Guṇakāmadeva in the year 3824 of the mythical Kālī Samvat, a date corresponding to A.D. 724.²¹ We know, however, that although there were three kings named Guṇakāmadeva, none of them ruled at that time; rather, Jayadeva II was then firmly seated on the Licchavi throne. This Guṇakāmadeva allegedly also chose the shape of a sword for his city plan: the sword of Durgā, the formidable Hindu goddess, or, alternately, of Lakṣmī, the goddess of prosperity.

Colorful as the legends respecting the city's foundation are, Kathmandu was not founded as a city in accordance with a formal plan. It represents a haphazard accretion of hamlets, villages, and towns over untold centuries. Indeed, this process is still at work. Such old settlements as Joṅjondīgrāma (modern Naksal), Vṛjīkarathyā (Hadigaon), and Yūpagrāma (Patan) are even now in different stages of absorption into the expanding capital city.

The choice site on which Old Kathmandu lies—whether selected by a Bodhisattva or a mythified king—marks it as among the earliest of Kathmandu settlements. There, at the confluence of the two principal rivers, the Bagmati and Vishnumati, on the bluff they had carved in the fertile bottomland, lay not only a measure of defense but rich soils and an assured water supply.²² Although one or more hamlets must have occupied this bluff long before the Licchavi irruption, the first historical record of settlement relates to the Licchavi *grāmas*.

We do not know how many *grāmas* crowded this small area of less than two square miles, but to judge by the present city-wide distribution of Licchavi remains, the bluff was extensively settled. But the names of only three of these *grāmas* have been recovered: Kolī, Dakṣiṇakolī, and Vaidya.

²¹ Wright 1966:103; Hasrat 1970:46 and Lamshal 1966: 22-24 cite the date as Kālī Samvat 3825; the Buddhist chronicle gives 3824.

²² The popular belief that the river confluence once lay further north at the Indrachok crossroads is belied by geological evidence, since no riverine features are discernible there. Indrachok lies almost at the center of the featureless knoll over which the city eventually spread (Map 7: h-9). The steep bank of the river-cut bluff lies much farther south, corresponding to the southern limits of Old Kathmandu. The bluff toward the Vishnumati has been extended through the accumulation of centuries of refuse. This makes a somewhat unstable foundation for

The name Kolīgrāma has not been found in Licchavi inscriptions, but both name and location are preserved in manuscript colophons of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These were written "in Kolīgrāma" in Itum- and Jana-bahal, existing *vihāras* of the northern half of the city, although the name Kolīgrāma has not survived there as a *tol* designation (Map 7).²³ The name suggests that it was a settlement of the Koliyas, who in the time of the Buddha dwelt east of Kapilavāstu, the capital of the Śākya, and, like them and the Vṛjīs, had gained a foothold in the Kathmandu Valley.²⁴ If, as the colophons attest, Kolīgrāma embraced what is now Kel-tol on the arterial highway through Kathmandu, the town was strategically located on what appears always to have been the main west-east trade route through the Valley (Plate 85). As such, Kolīgrāma probably was a small trading post.

The second of the three known Licchavi *grāmas*, Dakṣiṇakolīgrāma, Southern Koli Village, was apparently more important and more populous than its northern namesake. Its citizens are addressed in four Licchavi inscriptions, all of which are still in situ in the southern half of Kathmandu, three in a crumbling fountain known as Yangal-hiti, and one at Bhairava Dhoka, the former emplacement of a Malla city gate (Map 7: m-8, o-5).²⁵ In the two latest inscriptions, dated respectively A.D. 640 and 643, Dakṣiṇakolī is referred to as a *draṅga*, signifying its increased importance as a federation of villages. Some of these were apparently quite distant, as suggested by the latest inscription, which places a particular temple in the *draṅga's* charge. It was in Māneśvara, a village that most likely lay in the general region of suburban Naksal (Map

multistory houses, as attested by the collapse of many of them in the 1975 rainy season. Unpleasant though it might be, excavations in this ancient but still active midden could be exceptionally rewarding in unraveling the city's past. One can only imagine the broken pots, limbless images, and other discards concentrated there.

²³ D. Vajracharya 1968b:93; G. Vajracharya 1974:90.

²⁴ D. Vajracharya 1968b:101; G. Vajracharya 1965; Kaisher Bahadur 1969; D. Vajracharya 1973:172-173.

²⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 107, 111, 117, 124. The Bhīmārjunadeva-Viṣṇugupta inscription (no. 111) was no longer in the fountain at the time of my research.

4).²⁰ Shorn of its suffixes, the name Dakṣiṇakolī may have survived the Licchavis into the twelfth century as a neighborhood name, Dakṣiṇa-tol,²⁷ but even this probable vestige apparently soon disappeared.

Vaidyagrāma, the third Licchavi village on the Kathmandu bluff to be identified by name, is known from a single *śilāpatra*. This is an edict of Śivadeva II, dated A.D. 695, in which he requisitioned from Vaidyagrāma or its environs five porters for the annual trip to Tibet.²⁸ Originally, when a rubbing was taken, the stele stood in Lagan-tol, in the southeastern part of the city (Map 7: n-8/9), but it subsequently disappeared.

The indigenous names for the two villages that the Licchavis baptized Kolī and Dakṣiṇakolī, were almost certainly Yaṃbu and Yaṅgala. These earlier names must always have endured in the common tongue, although it is only with the abundance of manuscripts in the Transitional Period that they begin to be known in written form. Both are encountered for the first time in eleventh-century manuscripts, Yaṃbu in A.D. 1054, and Yaṅgala in 1069.²⁹ Thereafter they are two of the most ubiquitous place names for manuscripts copied in the *vihāras* in the Kathmandu locale, and are encountered in inscriptions to the mid-seventeenth century (Yaṅgala) and late eighteenth century (Yaṃbu). It has been universally assumed that the two names are synonymous and interchangeable with reference to Kathmandu. In fact, they originally referred to two quite separate entities, in essence Koligrāma and Dakṣiṇakoligrāma, a duality to be examined below.

By the early twelfth century, Dakṣiṇakolī/Yaṅgala, or at least the northernmost part of this sector, began to be known by a new Sanskrit name, Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, the Wooden Pavilion. This rather

²⁰ D. Vajracharya 1968b:94-95. It is probably the existing community known as Māgal, south of Hadigaon, as I will discuss below.

²⁷ Shakya and Vaidya 1970:colophon 8 (xi-xii, 15-16); D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 10 (6).

²⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 139 (514-518).

²⁹ Shakya and Vaidya 1970:colophon 2 (3-4); Petech 1958:45, colophon 1.

³⁰ Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:180-212.

³¹ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 110.

³² Shakya and Vaidya 1970:colophon 8 (15-16); D.

curious name derived from an exceptionally large and imposing public rest house (*sattal*, *dharma-śālā*) that stood beside the west-east trade route, as it still does, not far south of what was Koligrāma/Yaṃbu (Map 7: j-6; Plates 85, 204).³⁰ The first record of Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa as a place name is encountered in a colophon dated A.D. 1143 (N.S. 263 Āśvina).³¹ Although it seems doubtful that this impressive Sanskrit name achieved any immediate currency in the bazaar, it does appear occasionally in documents of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries,³² and with increasing frequency thereafter.³³ By the fourteenth century the new name must have begun to signify the whole city, rather than just the area around the *dharmaśālā*, since at this time city-denoting suffixes such as *-pura*, *-puri*, *-nagara*, and *-mahānagara* began to amplify the already lengthy name. By the seventeenth century, it was by a modified version, Kāṭhmādaū (Kathmandu), that the Gorkhalis knew the city, and which, as its new masters, they perpetuated.

The Gorkhalis also called the city Kāntipura (Kantipur), an alternate name still used. The name Kāntipura seems to have made an appearance in Mahendramalla's time (A.D. 1560-1574)³⁴ and was particularly popular at the court of Pratāpamalla. But in situ inscriptions indicate that under the Mallas the name Kāntipura only applied to the northern half of the city, Koligrāma/Yaṃbu, in contradistinction to Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, the name applied to the southern half, Dakṣiṇakolī/Yaṅgala. After the Gorkhali conquest, however, both names came to be used interchangeably to designate the entire urban complex.

There were also other less well-known names for the city or its parts. "Gaṅgula-paṭṭana," for example, achieved a certain popularity in the late Malla Period as an alternate name for Yaṃbu;³⁵ so did, Vajracharya 1962:main part, 110-111.

³³ B. Acharya 1953:26-27; Naraharinath 1953; D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 110-115; Thapa 1968:37-38.

³⁴ The first known occurrence is in an inscription dated N.S. 684 Māgha (A.D. 1564) (D. Regmi 1966: part 4, inscr. 17 [20-21]).

³⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscra. 17, 39, 45 (20-21, 61-64, 79-80), and in a number of unpublished *tālapatras* in the National Archives. On Gaṅgula-paṭṭana see also Shrestha 1963, who mistakenly correlates it with Deopatan.

as a literary name, at least, "Suvarṇa-praṇālī-nagara," the City of the Golden Fountain. This impressive name was derived from the miraculous gold-dispensing fountain, also known as Ṭhā-hiṭī (Upper Fountain), which was covered over with a stupa in A.D. 1432 (Map 7: d-10).³⁶

These Sanskritized literary names notwithstanding, the Newars themselves always clung doggedly to Yaṃbu and, less determinedly, to Yaṅgala, almost certainly the original names of what became the two sectors of the city. But today Yaṃbu (and Yaṃ in colloquial usage) no longer signifies only the northern sector. It is applied to the entire city of Kathmandu, all of whose denizens are known to Newars as Yaṃi. Hill people who speak related languages also call Kathmandu Yaṃbu, while the Tibetans employ a similar version, Jangbu or Jaṃbe. Since these hill people are for the most part Buddhists, they confound the ancient name Yaṃbu with Siṃbhū, the familiar designation for Svayambhū. To them, the great stupa on the city's western outskirts has become synonymous with the city itself.

It would be tempting to follow the hill people's lead and assume that the name Yaṃbu is derived from its prestigious neighbor, Svayambhū. But not only does the settlement almost unquestionably predate the stupa, but the etymology of Yaṃbu is in fact far more commonplace. According to the Sanskrit-Newar version of the lexicon, *Amarakośa*, *yam* or *yā* in Old Newari means north; *bu* means field, and is the component of many Newar place names—Bhelbu and Balambu now, for example, or Thambū and Salambū in Licchavi inscriptions.³⁷ Thus the name may merely mean Northern Field.

Although the name Yaṅgala endured to at least the mid-seventeenth century,³⁸ it is now eclipsed. In modern usage it survives only as a local name applied to a Licchavi fountain and its environs, Yangal-hiti and Yangal-hiti-tol, which lie well

within the former confines of Dakṣiṇakolī/Yaṅgala (Map 7: m-8). The etymology of the name Yaṅgala is unknown.³⁹

There is no question that the names Yaṃbu and Yaṅgala once designated quite separate, and apparently at times rival, entities that only became united as one town in fairly recent history. This is evident from documents and custom. The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* refers to Yaṃbu and Yaṅgala as two places when, for example, they list a series of fourteenth-century forts.⁴⁰ The *Blue Annals*, a fifteenth-century Tibetan chronicle, also speaks of Yaṅgala and Yaṃbu as separate places.⁴¹ That the distinction between them prevailed into the late sixteenth century is demonstrated by a banner painting, dated A.D. 1565 Āṣāḍha (N.S. 685) (Plate 495). Concerned with the restoration of Svayambhūnātha, the painting includes a schematic map of the Valley in which both places are named, Yaṅgala symbolized by Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, and Yaṃbu by the White Matsyendranātha of Jana-bahal (Plates 86, 87). Indeed, the duality endured even into the seventeenth century through the use of two names, Kāntipura for Yaṃbu/Kolīgrāma, and Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa for Yaṅgala/Dakṣiṇakolī.

The oldest copperplate inscription affixed to Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, dated A.D. 1333 (N.S. 454 Mārga), refers to it as the "building of the three royal families" (*tribhaya chem*).⁴² This seems to support the tradition that in Kathmandu of the Transitional and Early Malla Periods there were *three* distinct political segments known as the *svamdeśa*,⁴³ the three cities. Each was perhaps a fief of the *pātras*, or as the chronicles prefer, the Vaisya Ṭhakurīs. Two of the *deśas* must correspond to Yaṃbu and Yaṅgala, but the third segment has not been identified. Most likely it occupied the very limited area of the central part of what is now the Darbar Square, sandwiched between Yaṃbu and Yaṅgala. This area was referred to as *vādeśa* in the seven-

³⁶ The unpublished inscription states that the stupa was built in N.S. 552 Vaiśākha (A.D. 1432) in the time of the *pātra* Mahendrarāja, and renovated in N.S. 644 (A.D. 1524), in the time of Sūryamalla, the latter date of which Snellgrove 1961:99 mistakenly took for the foundation of the stupa.

³⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 105, 143 (402, 532).

³⁸ G. Vajracharya 1974:93.

³⁹ B. Acharya 1963:26-29 unconvincingly theorizes a derivation from Indragrha, the name of an imaginary palace to which even legend does not refer.

⁴⁰ Fol. 40b.

⁴¹ Roerich 1949-1953:1, 392; II, 850-851.

⁴² D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 27 (18-19).

⁴³ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 61a.

teenth century.⁴⁴ The third "city" probably has nothing to do with Vaidya, the third known Licchavi *grāma* of Kathmandu, which was apparently coterminous with the southern limit of Yaṅgala.

The exact boundaries of the other two sections of the *svamdeśa*, Yaṃbu and Yaṅgala, have not been determined, but they can be roughly delimited by the distribution of inscriptions.⁴⁵ Yaṃbu lay northeast of what is now the Darbar Square, and extended north at least to Tha-hiti; Yaṅgala lay southwest, extending south at least as far as Lagan-tol (Map 7: d-10, n-8).⁴⁶ The dividing line was in the environs of Makhan-tol, the northern end of the Darbar Square, which lay within Yaṃbu. A twelfth-century manuscript written in "śrī-Yambu-kramāyām Makhanaṭollakā" provides this clue,⁴⁷ and it is probable that the pair of stone lions found in Makhan-tol during recent road repairs once flanked the Yaṃbu city gate. The rest of the Darbar Square, or at least Maru-tol, the seat of Kāṣṭha-maṇḍapa at its southern terminus, belonged to Yaṅgala. This is evident from inscriptions⁴⁸ and from the fact that in the Svayambhū painting the city is symbolized by the *dharmaśālā* (Plates 86, 495). From Makhan-tol the dividing line between the two cities ran northwest to the Vishnumati, terminating somewhere north of Kaṅkeśvarī temple (in Yaṅgala), and southeast to the neighborhood of Te-bahal (in Yaṃbu) (Map 7: g-3, k-11).

Despite the survival into recent times of the names and concept of two cities, Yaṅgala/Dakṣiṇakolī/Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa and Yaṃbu/Koligrāma/Kāntipura, one must suppose that at least from the time that Ratnamalla made Kathmandu his kingdom, A.D. 1484, the duality (or perhaps trinity) was more tradition than fact. But the memory of the dichotomy lingered in custom, the most vivid of which is known as Siṭhī-nakha or Siṭhī-khaṣṭī, colloquialisms for the festival Kumāra Ṣaṣṭhī, in which it occurs. Annually celebrated on Jyeṣṭha-śukla-ṣaṣṭhī, the sixth day of the bright half of Jyeṣṭha, Kumāra Ṣaṣṭhī is an important festival with many

ramifications in Nepalese culture. The aspect that concerns us here is a battle that until the mid-nineteenth century took place annually between the northern and southern halves of the city, and which had once terminated with the sacrifice of prisoners.⁴⁹ The role of this battle in territorial rivalry was remembered even in the early nineteenth century, when Hamilton heard that "Kathmandu was [once] subject to two Rajas, and that the skirmishings first arose among their respective followers."⁵⁰ The bloody rite was prohibited in the mid-eighteenth century by Jayaprakāśa, the last Malla king of Kathmandu, but later, fearing that he had offended the gods, the monarch prudently decided to respect the tradition.⁵¹ The battle survived in less violent form, to be abolished at last by Jang Bahadur Rana in A.D. 1846.⁵²

There are other customs that in their exclusive concern to one or the other half of the city still perpetuate the Yaṃbu-Yaṅgala duality. *Gūṣhī* membership in the *vihāras*, for example, is strictly regional. Duality is also apparent in the celebration of *pāñcadāna*, when the particular Buddhist ecclesiastics (*phubare*, *ṛhyabare*) who are entitled to the final donations of the day confine their collections to that part of the city in which they dwell, *ṭhāne* (the upper half) or *ḥvane* (the lower). Or again, the festival of Pacali Bhairava, which is enthusiastically celebrated by the residents of the southern *ṭols* but largely ignored by those living in the northern ones. By the same token, the festival of Chakan-dyo (Dīpaṅkara Buddha) concerns only the northern *ṭols*. In all instances, Hanuman Dhoka palace at the center of the Darbar Square is the limit to which the festivities of each sector extend.

Despite this evident duality, by A.D. 1484, when Ratnamalla made Kathmandu the capital of his kingdom, centuries of growth and amalgamation of *prās*, *grāmas*, *draṅgas* and the fiefs of the *pātras* must already have created one city approximately coterminous with the Old Kathmandu we know

⁴⁴ In an entry dated N.S. 741 (A.D. 1621) in an unpublished *ṭhyāsaphu*.

⁴⁵ G. Vajracharya 1974.

⁴⁶ G. Vajracharya 1974:94; Rajvamshi 1970:inscr. 86 (63).

⁴⁷ Petech 1958:74, colophon 2.

⁴⁸ *Samskṛta-sandēśa*, 1:6 (v.s. 2010 Āśvina), 7; D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 17 (20-21).

⁴⁹ See Chapter 11.

⁵⁰ Hamilton 1971:44.

⁵¹ Lévi 1905:11, 36.

⁵² Wright 1966:105 n. 167; Hamilton 1971:43-44.

today. It must have been far less congested, however, for even in the late eighteenth century, when Kathmandu had become the national capital, Father Giuseppe estimated that it contained only eighteen thousand houses.⁵³

Although progress is rapidly effacing the old city as a distinct entity, it is still possible to arrive at a very close reconstruction of its extent as the Malla capital. The bluff above the rivers—which, except toward the northeast, drops away quite steeply to the surrounding fields and riverbeds—naturally tended to restrict the developing city. It is to this knoll that the densely packed city was clearly confined. From the nucleus of the Darbar Square, and coinciding with the natural bluff, a rough oval may be inscribed that includes an impressive concentration of historic monuments. Here are to be counted almost a hundred *vihāras*, several monumental stupas, hundreds of temples, shrines, and fountains, together with innumerable *caityas*, stone sculptures, and inscribed stelae (Map 7). Beyond this core, historic monuments are scattered, and many are characteristically located at the outlying cremation grounds (Map 4).

The locus of traditional festivals is another index to the bounds of the Malla capital. For it is within this same oval, delimited by terrain and the density of monuments, that the Kathmandu community festivals take place. Beginning or ending at the Darbar Square, where some part of the principal action unfolds, festival processions pass from one ancient *tol* to another, always within the defined area, or one of its halves, and often in a definitely prescribed pattern of precedence.

The limits of Old Kathmandu were once defined by a protective wall pierced with numerous gates. But from the time of Prithvi Narayan Shah, who considered the Kathmandu Valley itself a fort within the ramparts of the surrounding hills, the walls around all the Valley cities became superfluous and were allowed to decay.⁵⁴ Such remnants of

the Kathmandu walls as had survived were purposely destroyed in the nineteenth century. By the time of my research in Nepal, Kathmandu's encircling walls had long been forgotten, but it seemed to me that it must be possible to identify their former emplacement and to thus establish the exact limits of the old Malla city. This challenge was taken up on several levels, chiefly the amplification of historical records through linguistic, archaeological, and anthropological evidence recovered in the field. In the end, the various clues made it possible to recover the line of the old walls, together with more than half of the gateways that pierced them. The reconstruction is shown on Map 7.

The Malla records provided an important insight respecting the city walls, and nineteenth-century foreign accounts are quite lavish with pertinent notes.⁵⁵ Linguistic evidence was also revealing, for although the walls may be long gone, Newar residents still distinguish between that which they consider to lie "inside the gates" (*dhvāka dune*) and that which lies outside (*dhvāka pine*).⁵⁶ Place names like Kva-bahal (Fortress Vihāra), Dhokatol (Gateway Neighborhood), Ikha-pukhu (Boundary Pond), or Bhosiko-tol (Lower Border), also substantiate the emplacement of the walls. In some places local names, like Bhairava Dhoka, commemorate a former gateway, although no physical trace can now be found.

Archaeology also provides tangible clues to old gate emplacements. For example, one that was at Khica Pokhari still effectively constricts the street, and Gana-bahal gateway still stands (Map 7:1-10, m-9). Even a number of gate thresholds, consisting of long narrow slabs of fine-grained black stone bored for the tenons of a swinging gate, are to be found (Plate 88). One such threshold is at Nyetapacho (High Ground), site of one of the gates that we know was breached by the forces of Prithvi Narayan Shah during the city's conquest in 1768 (Map 7: f-5).

built by nature" (Malla and Rana 1973:15).

⁵³ Giuseppe 1801:308. While this ratio seems correct in relation to the 12,000 families he estimated for Bhaktapur, it is difficult to correlate it with Patan's estimated 24,000 houses, since after the Gorkhali conquest, as discussed below, Patan began to decline.

⁵⁴ N. Pant, et al., eds. 1968:322-323. Prithvi Narayan likened the whole of his mountainous kingdom to a "fort

⁵⁵ D. Vajracharya 1964a; Wright 1966:8; Oldfield 1880:1, 95-96, 102-103, 111; Oliphant 1852:81, 133. A nineteenth-century map sketches a Kathmandu encircled by walls (Boulnois and Chen 1972:145).

⁵⁶ Another word for gate is *lakhu*, but this is the common locution.

The most explicit revelation of the emplacement of the city walls, however, was provided by anthropology. An important clue was offered by the location of communities of the once untouchable Poḍe and Cyāme sweepers, and the low-caste Kasāin butchers. Formerly strictly forbidden to live within the city walls, they clustered on the outside as closely as possible.⁵⁷ Today, although no longer constrained by such laws, most continue to dwell in their accustomed quarters, and thus indicate roughly the wall's perimeter. But the actual revelation of the line of the city wall resulted from observing a Newar religious rite known as *upāko vanegu*, "walking around the town." To the Gorkhalis, many of whom have adopted the rite, it is the *deśa gumne*. The Kathmandu *upāko vanegu* or *deśa gumne* is one of the many special rituals of the Indra festival. Toward the end of August (the evening of Bhadra-śukla-dvādaśī), members of families who have been bereaved during the past year pass clockwise in procession around the old core city along an ordained route. Where necessary, arrangements are made to permit passage through private property, and the route is defined with hundreds of miniature oil lamps, duplicating those borne by the processionists. According to participants, the sacred way once paralleled the city wall, but when the latter ceased to exist, tradition maintained the old route as closely as possible. This route I have shown as a separate line paralleling what appears to have been the actual line of the city wall (Map 7). There are a few places where the two lines do not coincide. Some of these deviations are caused by the interruption of Rana mansions or other latter-day constructions, some by the inclusion of shrines that once lay beyond the walls, and some I cannot explain.

Oldfield specified that the Kathmandu city wall was pierced by thirty-two gateways.⁵⁸ Through one form of evidence or another, I have been able to identify nineteen of them (Map 7), and can surmise the location of many more for which I could find no substantiating evidence.

It is not clear to most of the modern procession-

alists why they perform the *upāko vanegu* or follow the route they do. Originally, the rite was perhaps designed to conduct the souls of the departed outside the habitat of the living, and to demonstrate the boundary between the two separate worlds. It seems likely that the ultimate origin is to be found in the Vedic ritual circumambulation of the town that took place along a processional road (*pradaḥṣinā patha*) laid out along the interior of the city wall for this purpose.⁵⁹ At a brisk pace, the entire route of the *upāko vanegu* takes less than two hours to complete. As thus defined, the area of Old Kathmandu, the capital of the Kathmandu kingdom, is scarcely a mile and a half from north to south and less than a half-mile from east to west. From the Darbar Square, its farthest boundary can be reached on foot within ten minutes.

The existence of a sacred *pradaḥṣinā patha* continuous with the line of the city wall introduces another dimension of the history of Old Kathmandu—and to anticipate, of all the cities—that of conscious city planning. It is well known that in ancient India (theoretically, at least), towns were planned in accordance with strict principles stipulated in the *vāstū-śāstras*, the numerous architectural treatises.⁶⁰ Although many Indian villages, particularly those of Bengal, show little evidence of conscious planning, others accord quite clearly with the dictums of the *śāstras*. Even small towns were supposed to be laid out as mystic diagrams, often designed with considerable fantasy, in which the deities, the various castes, the markets, shops, water sources, cremation grounds, and everything pertaining to the community had its assigned place, in harmony with the universe. Capital cities, as the dwelling place of the head of state, were particularly well planned, optimally in a grid of eighty-one squares (*padās*) in which the royal palace, council house, and other places pertaining to the crown were positioned in the most auspicious central *padās*, according to well-defined rules.⁶¹ Among the various types of communities known to ancient India, the capitals were most likely to be actually, rather than theoretically, planned. This accorded

⁵⁷ Oldfield 1880:1, 95; Lévi 1905:1, 56.

⁵⁸ Oldfield 1880:1, 95-96.

⁵⁹ Volwahn 1969:46; Dutt 1925:32, 33, 124.

⁶⁰ Dutt 1925; Shukla 1960:227-300; T. Bhattacharyya

1963:85, 222-223, and *passim*; Volwahn 1969:43-50.

⁶¹ Dutt 1925:44-66, 146, 195-246; Shukla 1960:195-196, 579.

with the dictum that each new dynasty should lay out its own capital. It was thought particularly dangerous to take over another king's capital, for as the *śāstras* enjoin, "a king residing in a city founded by his enemy or even by another king will meet death in no time."⁰²

Despite Nepali legend that asserts that Kathmandu was laid out in the form of a sword, and other cities in even more fanciful patterns, there is little evidence for this kind of formal planning in any of the Valley towns. (An exception may be Hadigaon.) The ground plans generally reflect haphazard growth, as indigenous hamlets and *grāmas* fused into towns and cities. Although, as in India, it is possible to alter an existing town in conformance with the *vāstū-śāstras*, there seems little evidence that the physical layout of the Nepalese towns was so affected.⁰³ It is possible that local modifications followed the frequently chronicled devastations by fire and earthquake. We know of one such modification in the recent past, when Juddha Shumshere Rana pushed the wide New Road through the rubble of the 1934 earthquake. Certainly Nepali architects were fully conversant with *vāstūvidyā* (architectural science), including town planning, as the numerous Nepali architectural manuals attest (Plates 89, 108-110). Thus formal town planning in accordance with the *vāstū-śāstras* was quite possible, and some of the component villages may, in fact, have been planned. But the splendor of the Newar town design seems to emanate more from an innate sense of aesthetics, a natural rhythmic articulation achieved over a long time span rather than a conscious organization of space according to dictate.

The informal physical plan of the Valley towns notwithstanding, at some time there does seem to have been a conscious attempt to bring into conformance with the *vāstū-śāstras* the social and re-

⁰² Dutt 1925:38-40.

⁰³ Dutt 1925:165-194. Gutschow and Bajracharya 1977:1 postulate that a grid pattern was superimposed on Kathmandu. Perhaps so. But the dominant pattern relates to the main highways that threaded its many settlements, that is, the diagonal trade route leading east from the Vishnumati, a straight road leading north from the Bagmati and the southern *ṛols* (Dakṣinakoli), and the streets radiating from busy Asan-tol, repeated in more distant Chetrapati, outside Old Kathmandu (Map 7;

ligious structure of the towns, particularly the capitals. Perhaps this began in Licchavi times, and it was surely accelerated under the orthodoxy of Sthitimalla and his successors. Given the nature of the existing Newar communities—their compact settlements and closely knit society, once predominantly Buddhist—this socio-religious structuring could at best be only an approximation. But, even so, the palace occupied a large central area, as ordained in the *vāstū-śāstras*; or, as in Bhaktapur, in a central, if shifting, place along the winding main road. High castes tended to cluster around this exalted nucleus, the lower castes lived progressively further away, and, outside the wall, were the out-castes. Finally, well beyond the city wall lay the realm of the dead, the *śmaśāna* (Nepali, *masān*), the various cremation grounds and ghats. Superimposed on such human ordering were various other orderings related to the divinities. These were in the nature of mystic diagrams, mandalas in which particular sets of deities were linked in concentric rings of protection inside and outside the city. These divine mandalas will be considered in later chapters.

The part of modern Kathmandu that is essentially coterminous with the old walled city is fundamentally an antique lightly veneered with modernity. It is the most densely settled part of Greater Kathmandu, an area of roughly two square miles that embraces more than half of Kathmandu's total population (Plate 85).⁰⁴ Some of the residents, in various stages of change and whose numbers I would not dare to estimate, are part of the modern veneer.⁰⁵ It is they who frequent the cafes, restaurants, and Western-style stores of New Road, gravitate to the proliferating luxury hotels, rub elbows with foreigners, travel abroad, and choose when possible nuclear family residence in concrete dwellings. They speak Nepali (plus Newari, if Newars) (Plate 85). In any event, it is an aspect of Valley city history that needs further research.

⁰⁴ *Kathmandu Valley* 1969:72 estimated that there were more than 45,000 persons per square kilometer in the old city.

⁰⁵ Malla 1973; Malla and Rana 1973:18-23. The lines that follow should not be construed as the anthropology or sociology of Kathmandu. Rather, they are broad generalizations meant to convey an impression, a sense of the twentieth-century city.

and often English, tend to wear Western clothes at least on occasion, and maneuver Hondas and Datsuns over an increasing number of macadamized streets punctuated by automatic signals. They are high school and often university graduates, work for the government or clerk in stores, and are increasingly involved in the burgeoning tourist trade. They represent the upper and median castes, and a great majority, Newar or Gorkhali, claim Hinduism as their faith. In short, they are drawing closer culturally to the foreign readers of this book.

Physically close, but culturally light years distant, is the bulk of Kathmandu denizens. Many live in extended families in the same type of houses, and often even in the same houses, as their ancestors did. They wear only somewhat modified versions of traditional dress, and rarely are conversant with any other language than the national one and, if Newars, their own. With little significant variation they conform to the ancestral life style. Along the diagonal street that bisects the town—the millennial trade route from India to Tibet—and along the lesser arteries, Newar merchants do business in open-front stalls, as they must have always done. Dominating the trade, they are joined there by a few “Madheses” from India and the Tarai, and a few Muslims, many of whom are descendants of eighteenth-century settlers (Plate 22). Seated shoeless and cross-legged on straw-matted floors, the merchants buy and sell, drink sweet milky tea, chew betel, indulge in the hookah, or converse over a game of chance with customers or fellow merchants (Plate 90). One senses that the scene has not changed much since the Malla Period or, for that matter, from the time when Wang Hsüan-t'sê observed the abundance of valley merchants, fixed and itinerant.

Back from these main arteries, threaded by crooked pedestrian ways, dwell the Jyapu farmers in physical and cultural surroundings little different from contemporary Newar villages, and surely not significantly different from those of the Kathmandu past. This is particularly true in the southern *tois* (Yaṅgala/Dakṣiṇakoliḡrāma), where there is almost no other ethnic or caste intrusion. There the women, and often the men, do not even

speak Nepali, and are unlettered in any language. Remote from the events on nearby New Road, from birth to death the Jyapu pursue the rhythm of community life ordained by their tradition.

But the old city, crowded as it is, has room for others. For Kathmandu is also the domain of the gods. Once a predominantly Buddhist town, Kathmandu's religious past is still evident in some hundred structures called monasteries, although for centuries this has been true only in name (Map 7). These monasteries (*vihāras* and colloquially *bahā/bahāl, bahi-bahil*), scattered among the houses, and themselves now serving as secular dwellings, still contain functioning Buddhist shrines. Although often in poor condition, the buildings and their contents are still among the great artistic treasures of the Kathmandu Valley, as a perusal of the plates attests. Interspersed with the *vihāras*, crowding the neighborhood squares, and especially clustered in the Darbar Square, are the temples and shrines that house the Hindu gods, now numerically and culturally more important than their Buddhist counterparts (Map 7; Figure 1). And everywhere, in the quiet courtyards and busy streets, at the public fountains, the crossroads, and the squares, the sacred images and objects are familiar adjuncts of daily life. Some are masterpieces left from the Licchavi occupation, some by the Mallas, and a few by the Shahs. Others, to the secular eye at least, are mere curiosities, but they are sacred to someone nonetheless. Even the carved fish at the bustling crossroads of Asan-tol, walked on and driven over by the unheeding, daily receives the offerings of the many faithful who know that it is divine.⁶⁶ The texture of Old Kathmandu may be changing, but it still offers much beauty, a profound interest, and many visible links with its long past.

Patan

Like Kathmandu, Patan has a legendary origin and allegedly a formal plan, in this instance Buddha's Wheel of the Law.⁶⁷ But, like the capital, Patan was not founded as a planned city, but

1880:1, 117.

⁶⁶ Slusser 1972a:9-12.

⁶⁷ Wright 1966:10, 90-91; Hasrat 1970:43-44; Oldfield

slowly evolved as diverse settlements coalesced (Plates 92-94).

Occupying high ground in the midst of well-watered bottomland, the site of Patan must have been among the earliest settled in the Kathmandu Valley (Map 3). Snellgrove suggested that it may have originated well before the beginning of the Christian era as a Buddhist community, and compared it with such centers as Śrāvastī or Vaiśālī, north Indian towns familiar to the wandering feet of Gautama Buddha (Map 1).⁶⁸ Legend and custom support this conjecture, at least respecting Patan's antiquity. Patan, alone among the Valley towns, is persistently associated with the tradition of the Kirāta, the people who appear to have been the Valley indigenes. A mound, and probable stupa ruin, at the city center is traditionally held to have been the palace of Patuka, a Kirāta king who, it is said, abandoned his palace in Gokarna to rebuild in Patan (Map 8: e-7).⁶⁹ The mound is known simply as Kirāncheṃ, the Kirāta Palace (literally, House), or as Patukadoṃ, Patuka's Hill-lock. The Newar name for Patan, Yala, is generally believed to perpetuate the name of another Kirāta king, Yellung or Yalambara, the alleged founder of the dynasty and of the city.⁷⁰ Other Patan locales are similarly associated with the Kirātas. The name Chyasal-tol, for example, the Neighborhood of the Eight Hundred, is popularly held to commemorate eight hundred fallen Kirātas, slain there in battle with the Licchavis (Map 8: e-10).

Even more intriguing than the legendary association of the Kirāta with Patan is modern custom that provides a link with the Kiranti of eastern Nepal, a people who are perhaps Kirāta descendants (Plate 17). There are two sites in Patan where the Kiranti maintain traditional ties. One of these, the Siddhilakṣmī temple near Tyagal-tol, attracts certain Kiranti families for the annual worship of their clan god, the *kuḷadevatā* (*degu*,

devāli) (Map 8: i-11). At another site, Tikhel, southwest of the old city proper, Kirantis recently restored a shrine in deference to their tradition that a Kirāta temple once stood there.⁷¹ The image within the shrine could hardly predate the seventeenth century, and the most ancient visible remain, until its recent removal to the Archaeological Garden of Patan, was a Licchavi *śilāpatra*.⁷² Neither of these associations of the Kiranti with Patan can be satisfactorily explained. What, if not some ancient association, should bring modern Kirantis of distant and inaccessible eastern Nepal to a particular temple site in Patan, or induce them to foregather about their clan god at a secluded spot in the interior of the city?

Further suggestive of Patan's antiquity are the four large tumuli, popularly known as Ashok stupas, which lie on the city outskirts (Map 8; Figure 26; Plates 220, 221).⁷³ As the name Ashok implies, the mounds—to which sometimes is added the centrally located Kirāncheṃ midden—are traditionally believed to date to the time of the Mauryan Emperor Aśoka, who reigned over much of northern India in the third century B.C. Although it is unlikely that Aśoka was personally associated with the mounds, they closely compare to Mauryan stupas in size and shape, and could be coeval. It is not impossible that they are even older, and originated as pre-Buddhist funerary mounds which, as in India, were converted into Buddhist monuments.⁷⁴ While the precise history of the mounds must await archaeological investigation, these primitive-looking structures, taken together with the city's association with the Kirāta in legend and custom, do suggest that Patan embraces a very ancient settlement.

The apparent antiquity of Patan notwithstanding, we cannot speak authoritatively of its history before the written records of the Licchavis. It was clearly one of their principal settlements, as the number of inscriptions, sculptures, and fragmen-

lished provenience is given "from a field on the way to Pharping Dakṣiṇakālī templē." Actually the stele came from Tikhel (Gomkhyā), which is much closer to Patan than to Pharping.

⁷³ On the mounds, see Chapter 6.

⁷⁴ Irwin 1973:714-720.

⁶⁸ Snellgrove 1957:93-94.

⁶⁹ Wright 1966:75.

⁷⁰ D. Regmi 1969:56; Kirkpatrick 1969:257.

⁷¹ I am indebted to Hem Raj Shakya, Department of Archaeology, His Majesty's Government, for having brought these associations to my attention.

⁷² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 88 (368-369). The pub-

tary architectural remains scattered throughout the city attest. On the basis of the comparative quantity of archaeological remains, the Patan communities were more important than those across the Bagmati—Koli- and Dakṣiṇakoli-grāma, the later Kathmandu. Indeed, in the concentration of visible Licchavi remains, Deopatan is Patan's only competitor (Map 6).

Licchavi occupation was concentrated at what is now called Mangal Bazaar, the Patan Darbar Square, together with lands lying north and east. This area corresponds in part to the high ground above the Bagmati and Lukhusi, rivers toward which the land slopes quite steeply (Map 8). In this confined area there were a number of *grāmas*, the names and approximate locations of several of which have been recovered from in situ inscriptions. Probably just west of the Darbar Square lay the three villages Gānsul, Mūlavāṭikā, and Thambū, the latter surviving as a *ṭol* name in western Patan at least into the seventeenth century.⁷⁵ Another village, Māṅgrāma, was at Sundhara-tol, a short distance east of the Darbar Square, and still another, Gullataṅgrāma, apparently embraced much of the eastern quarter of the present city, from Yangu-bahal-tol through Guita-tol (Map 8: g-10, g-12).⁷⁶ The latter, Gullataṅgrāma, seems to have endured as a somewhat distinct physical entity even to the present day, as an examination of the Patan map reveals. Very likely the name Guita-tol, popularly held to derive from the emplacement of a legendary temple of nine stories (Newari, *gui*, nine, *tala*) (Plate 186), may be, rather, a corruption of the older name. Another Licchavi town, not yet identified by name, almost certainly lay at Chyasaḷ-tol, clearly one of the oldest quarters of the city. It is perhaps significant that Guita- and Chyasaḷ-tol are almost exclusively

⁷⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 105 (401-404). Another Thambū, corresponding to modern Thaiba village, lay still further away.

⁷⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 79, 133 (339-341, 496-498).

⁷⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 52, 123, 146 (208-210, 458-462, 543-546); D. Vajracharya 1968b:91-92; Shakyā 1969a:inscr. 3 (5-6).

⁷⁸ D. Vajracharya 1968b:93.

⁷⁹ One is tempted to see in the ancient Patan tumuli and the names Yala and Yūpagrāma, an analogy with pre-

inhabited by the Jyapu farming community, suggesting again that among the Jyapu are to be sought the closest ties with ancient Nepal.

The most important of the Licchavi settlements in the Patan area was Yūpagrāma, which occupied what is now the Darbar Square south toward Tamgah-bahal (Minanātha) (Map 8: f-7/8).⁷⁷ This Sanskrit name, Yūpagrāma, is a rather unusual one. The word *yūpa* refers to the post to which sacrificial animals were fastened in Vedic ritual (Plate 434), and does not seem ever to have served as a village name in India. Given the general sequence of town names in the Kathmandu Valley, it is unlikely that the Sanskrit name antedated Yala, the indigenous one for this crossroads village, and later all Patan. The Newari word *yala* means the same as *yūpa*, and, more broadly, signifies any sacrificial post, pillar, or standard.⁷⁸ The tall poles raised for Bisket- and Indra-jātrā, and on many other ritual occasions, are known to Newars even now as *yalaṣin* (wooden poles). Perhaps both names, Yala and Yūpagrāma, were determined by the existence of a small community associated with Vedic sacrifice at this crossroads. But, if Patan legend remotely reflects its history, the indigenous name may in fact originate in the name of a Kirāta chief, Yellung or Yalambara, as tradition affirms. If so, the Licchavi translation as "Yūpagrāma" was mistakenly imposed.⁷⁹

In any event, Yala/Yūpagrāma in time achieved the status of a *draṅga*, absorbing many *grāmas* that can no longer be identified.⁸⁰ While the name Yūpagrāma did not survive the Licchavi period, the settlement continued to be known by what is almost certainly its older name, Yala. By the tenth century, Yala had spread further westward and, at least for literary purposes, had acquired a new Sanskrit name, or perhaps revived an older one,

Buddhist pillars and tumuli of northern India. Objects of worship, the pillars and tumuli dotted the Uttarāpatha, the great northern trade route, and clustered around the trading centers (Irwin 1973:714-720). Patan, almost certainly a stopover on the trans-Himalayan trade route, whose southern terminus intersected the east-west Uttarāpatha (Map 1), may mark the northernmost extension of this practice.

⁸⁰ D. Vajracharya 1968b:91.

Lalita.⁸¹ In time, this designation was further elaborated with city-denoting suffixes, first *-kramā* and *-brumā*, then *-pura*, *-nagara*, and *-pattana/paṭtana*.⁸² In Sanskrit documents the name Lalita continued in popularity, both under the *pātras* and as one of the capitals of the Three Kingdoms. As Lalitpur (and Lalitapura when written), the name thrives among Nepali speakers today as an alternate name for Patan. The more familiar name, Pāṭan, is the Nepali simplification of Lalitapaṭtana, and its use dates only from the seventeenth century. By that time it was even employed by the Malla kings when they corresponded in Nepali with Gorkha.⁸³

At about the same time that the Sanskrit name Lalita began to achieve literary currency, another name for Patan also emerged. This was Māṇigvala, as it is spelled in its first recorded usage,⁸⁴ although subsequent spelling variations are many. As a literary name, Māṇigvala long equaled and perhaps surpassed Lalitapura in popularity. It has now completely disappeared except in the corrupt form, Mangal Bazaar, the name applied to the Darbar Square shopping area.

The indigenous name Yala, despite the more sonorous literary choices, apparently always maintained its popularity as the common name of the city. Modern Newari speakers use only this name with reference to Patan, and hill peoples who speak related languages speak of Yelān, or related variants. The common appellation Yala (spelled

⁸¹ The name "Lalita" for Patan may be much older than heretofore imagined, as indicated by a newly discovered inscription on a bronze Buddha image in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Slusser 1976). It was cast in "Laḍitagrāma" in Samvat 513 (A.D. 691), but the name is not encountered again until in a manuscript colophon dated N.S. 40 (A.D. 920) (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963:15). Laḍita may not be the same as Lalita, since it is an epithet of Śiva. But in later times the use of both expressions to signify Patan is fairly common.

⁸² *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963:15. Przuluski 1928:170 argues that in pre-Mauryan India the suffix *-pattana/paṭtana* meant a royal city, a prestigious connotation it retained even when later it had come to mean any city. But certainly by the time *-pattana/paṭtana* was employed in the Kathmandu Valley, it had the same significance as *-nagara* and *-pura*, and was used interchangeably with them to denote "city" and to add prestige to any community, often those of very modest size and importance. B.

Yāla, Yahraṃ, Nāla) appears regularly in written Newari, particularly in the early chronicles and the later *thyāsaphus*; however, its use is infrequent in inscriptions.⁸⁵ It was apparently the familiar Yala, rather than the elegant alternates, Lalitapura or Māṇigvala, that the Ming ambassadors to Nepal heard, and which they transcribed as Yeh-lan or Ya-êrh-la.⁸⁶ The Tibetans, familiar with the Newar traders' name for the city, rendered it in Tibetan as Ye-rang. Despite its obvious derivation from Yala, Ye-rang may be translated as Eternity Itself.⁸⁷ Given what appears to be Patan's considerable antiquity, the translation, though wrong, is not altogether inappropriate.

Unlike Old Kathmandu, fast dissolving into the Greater Kathmandu urban complex, Patan has yet to be absorbed. A softly colored huddle of rose bricks, ochre tile, and weathered wood, it remains a distinct town, in part still surrounded by rice paddies (Plate 94). It did not develop beyond its Malla perimeter after the Gorkhali conquest, as did Kathmandu. The Gorkhali military and court officials naturally gravitated to the crown at Kathmandu; Newars who had served the Patan crown may have followed suit; and incoming Parvatiyā farmers established their own separate farming communities. Perhaps Patan's strong Buddhist character inhibited Hindu intrusion. But, whatever the reason, Patan declined. Oldfield, writing toward the end of the nineteenth century, noted that "ruined buildings and deserted shrines, Acharya 1963:10, 19 writes that the written *pattana* of the Transitional and Malla Periods often became *paṭtana* in the Kathmandu Valley, both because *paṭtana* reflected Newari pronunciation, and because it emulated Maithili fashion. It was thus the retroflex *t* form that influenced the Gorkhals and engendered the modern spelling of Pāṭan.

⁸³ B. Acharya 1963:19.

⁸⁴ N.S. 107 (A.D. 987); *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963c:24.

⁸⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. III, 17, 38, 50; D. Vajracharya 1965c:24-25; *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963g, 1963h.

⁸⁶ Petech 1958:207-208. It may be noted that Petech 1958:45, 67, 76 is mistaken that Yaṅgala applied to Patan; the name exclusively signified southern Kathmandu. There was, however, at one time a Yambu-tol in Patan (D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 13; Petech 1958:121, colophon 4).

⁸⁷ Snellgrove 1957:94.

broken archways and mutilated sculptures, meet the eye at every turn . . . the city looks much too large for its inhabitants."⁸⁸ Two other nineteenth-century observers, Egerton and Oliphant, also described the generally deserted and dilapidated appearance of Patan, which gave the impression, in Oliphant's words, that "everything seemed to have been blighted by time."⁸⁹ Although it later prospered a little, Patan never attracted the Ranas; they built their mansions at some distance from it. Even as recently as 1965, very few nontraditional buildings had been erected within the confines of the old city. Since then, unfortunately, the same prosaic structures that have already so compromised the charm of Kathmandu are beginning to take a similar toll in Patan. Families often remodel the handsome old houses as soon as funds permit, preferring concrete boxes with window glass to mellow brick and carved wood.

At least by the time of Sthitimalla, who had to knock at Patan's gate for admittance, the city was walled.⁹⁰ As the royal seat of one of the constantly sparring Three Kingdoms, the walls were carefully maintained, presumably to the end of Malla rule. An edict of King Śrinivāsamalla, issued in A.D. 1673, details the citizens' responsibility for their upkeep, and the penalties to be exacted for default.⁹¹ From the same king's court poet, Kunu Sharma, we have an idealized description of the walls, watch towers, and gates, and from him learn that Patan was also girdled by a moat, "tree-shaded and dark as the underworld."⁹² Of this no positive trace can be seen today, although one can surmise where certain stretches must have lain. Since city walls were no longer needed after the Gorkhali conquest, those of Patan, like others in the Valley, were allowed to decay.

⁸⁸ Oldfield 1880:1, 116-117.

⁸⁹ Oliphant 1852:131-133; Egerton 1852:1, 202.

⁹⁰ And surely before then, since a half-century previously the Khasa had unsuccessfully laid siege to Patan for twenty-two days (*Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 46a).

⁹¹ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963f; D. Vajracharya 1964a:31-32.

⁹² D. Vajracharya 1964a:26-28; Naraharinath 1961:2, 40.

⁹³ Oldfield 1880:1, 95. Field research indicates that these former outcaste communities, no longer forced to live where they do except by custom and economics, feel some

There is no "walking around the town" (*upāko vanegu*) in Patan to help determine where the walls were, but the emplacement can be reconstructed through other indices (Map 8). Residents have a very clear conception of what is *dune*, inside of them, and what is *pine*, outside. The recurrent use of the word *ikhā* (boundary) in place names, for example Ikhakhū-tol (Boundary Gate Neighborhood) or Ikhache-tol (Boundary House Neighborhood) is also helpful. Although the stricture against outcastes living within the city was less rigorous than under the Gorkhals in Kathmandu, in Patan they also tended to dwell beyond the walls.⁹³ Thus the current location of outcaste communities also corresponds to the former city boundary. Christian missionaries likewise had to live outside the walls. We know from Father Giuseppe that the Matsyendranātha temple was adjacent to his habitation, a significant fact for the verification of the line of the city wall in that quarter. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century European accounts also have left valuable notes concerning the walls which, although in ruins, were still standing.⁹⁴

A long stretch of the wall itself, disintegrated and scarcely recognizable as such, still hems much of the northern and northeastern perimeter of Patan (Plate 95). For the rest, however, there are only a few remnants, largely confined to the southwestern quarter. To judge by these abraded remains, the walls were at least ten feet thick and thirty feet high. They were composed of rubble of broken brick, tile, pottery, stones, and quantities of refuse from the numerous foundries of the bronze casters. Whether the walls were brick-faced is not clear, although certain vestiges suggest that they were. One cannot judge whether or not they were cren-

stigma about residing "outside the walls." Their members frequently claimed with some vehemence that their community was *dune* (inside) even when all other evidence was against this testimony. More exact information was obtainable from higher-caste citizens who were not so emotionally involved.

⁹⁴ Giuseppe 1801:310, 319; Landon 1928:11, 230; Oliphant 1852:132; Oldfield 1880: 1, 82, 95, 117, 124-125. Oldfield is particularly helpful and, lacking other clues, his comments alone would permit a rough reconstruction of the wall's former course.

elated. In their current ruined condition the walls give the impression of very crude ramparts. Even in their heyday, they were probably considerably more modest than the hyperbole of the seventeenth-century court poet would have it: "The walls are exceedingly high, a thing of wonder. They stop speeding arrows in midflight, and against them what recourse has the enemy? Their watchtowers are so tall that the colliding clouds, deceived that they have reached the pole, weep under pretense of rain."⁹⁵

Only two among an unknown original number of Patan's gateways are still standing, but according to residents many were still in place up to the 1934 earthquake. One of the extant gates is the well-known Patan Dhoka which, curiously, was the only one to be repaired after the quake. The other is near Alko-hiti (Map 8: b-8). It is a simple brick gateway, seemingly more appropriate to a private compound than to a city wall, and it looks totally ineffective as a serious deterrent to aggression (Plate 96). One panel of the swinging wooden gate is still in place, and like the common house (Plate 118), closes from the inside with a wooden bar bolt. Besides these two gates, the emplacement of another fifteen can be verified through physical remains, the survival of their names, or because people remember where they stood. Patan, as defined by these walls, was smaller than Old Kathmandu.⁹⁶ It covered a total of about three-quarters of a square mile. Its longest axis may easily be crossed on foot in twenty minutes.

Like every village and town in the Kathmandu Valley, modern Patan has a considerable number of Hindu temples, shrines, and images (Map 8). But even in rapidly Hinduizing Nepal, Patan remains essentially what it seems long to have been, a Buddhist town (Plates 97, 98). In its confined area there are even now more than 150 buildings known as *vihāras*, each with a functioning shrine. Within and around the *vihāras* are legions of related Buddhist monuments—stupas, *caityas*, and images. All are objects of continuing worship by the almost wholly Newar and largely Buddhist community. Festivals of Hindu gods such as Kṛṣṇa

⁹⁵ Naraharinath 1961:3.

⁹⁶ This fact makes it particularly difficult to reconcile the late eighteenth-century estimate of 24,000 houses in

or Bhīmasena, celebrated with particular verve in Patan, attract its residents, but the most widespread enthusiasm is for the scores of Buddhist festivals that succeed each other through the year.

The same modernizing currents that course through Kathmandu, a scant two miles distant, are also affecting Patan, particularly the newer, western *ṭols*. But just as in the Jyapu-occupied *ṭols* of southern Kathmandu, these currents have scarcely touched the older quarters, north and east of the Darbar Square. One wanders through their congested ways, listening to the cadence of spoken Newari and observing a friendly and gay people busy in the streets and courtyards with their farm and household tasks. In such a milieu, hemmed in by the tall houses of brick and carved wood, the omnipresent temples, *vihāras*, and images, one can easily drift back centuries, even millennia, in time. One pauses to admire an ancient relief of the Buddha, which worn and broken though it may well be remains a continuing and beloved object of reverence (Plate 450). Licchavi, and even Malla, inscriptions that stand in so many public places are now mute to all save antiquarian specialists. But a wanderer in these old *ṭols*, bemused by the ambient past, would not be unduly surprised to see an excited crowd discovering in them what a seventh-century Aṃśuvarman or a seventeenth-century Śrīnivāsa has most lately published as his royal will.

Bhaktapur

Bhaktapur, the third largest city of the Kathmandu Valley, lies about seven miles east of Kathmandu and Patan (Maps 3, 9; Plates 99, 100). Like those cities, nothing is known with certainty about its history before the Licchavi Period. That it was an indigenous settlement, however, is suggested by two factors. The first is its superb location on a ridge between two streams in the midst of the best farmland in the Kathmandu Valley. The second is the indigenous character of its primary name, Khopṛṇ which, with variations, is as it appears in Licchavi inscriptions,⁹⁷ or Khvapa (pro-Patan as against 18,000 in Kathmandu (Giuseppe 1801: 308).

⁹⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:251, inscra. 10, 57, 61, 62.

nounced Khopah), as it continues to be known in Newari.

The native town Khoṣṛṅ must have occupied the eastern part of what is now Bhaktapur, the location of the known Licchavi inscriptions. The Licchavis amplified the old village name with the customary, if redundant, *grāma* suffix, thus Khoṣṛṅgrāma, Kho-village Village. In time Khoṣṛṅgrāma achieved the status of a *draṅga*, but unlike most other federations, this *draṅga* seems to have had limited importance. Despite the recovery of some magnificent Licchavi Period architectural remains in Bhaktapur (Plates 241, 242, 310), only four Licchavi inscriptions have been found there, and stone sculptures of the period are likewise few.

Besides Khoṣṛṅ, in Bhaktapur the name of no other early town is known. Tradition claims a settlement east of the old city (Map 9: c/d-12) and farmers in this area report finding massive brick walls that they dismantle for reuse. According to them, there once existed a *rājākula*, a royal palace; its courtyard encompassed the Garuḍa-daha, an extant fountain that has all the earmarks of considerable antiquity. But until controlled excavations are carried out, there is no positive evidence for such a settlement or its date. Possibly the remains represent the eastern extension of Khoṣṛṅgrāma.

The exact extent of "Kho" as *prṅ*, *grāma*, or *draṅga* is not known. But it was apparently focused at the eastern end of the present town along the winding trade route to Tibet, a route still serving as Bhaktapur's principal artery. Very likely Tachapal, the easternmost of Bhaktapur's three chief squares, corresponds to the center of the old settlement (Map 9: d-10). As a *draṅga* it must have spread further afield, and perhaps embraced much of what is now known as the Upper Town (*thāne*), the northeastern cultural division of present Bhaktapur.

As the old city grew, it spread especially westward along the trade route. Perhaps it absorbed other villages and hamlets whose names and loca-

tions have not been identified. This westward growth may have been largely a phenomenon of the Transitional Period, accelerated in the twelfth century. Then Ānandadeva I (A.D. 1147-1166) adopted Bhaktapur as his capital, and built his historic palace Tripura on the site of the present Darbar Square at the western end of the city (Map 9: d/e-5/6). Although in a setting of no specific time, Bhaktapur legend also recalls the city's westward growth in this way. An ambitious king, so goes the tale, wished to increase his realms. He therefore sought the advice of Cumā Gaṇeśa, the deity one consults before new undertakings, who then humbly resided in a hollow tree (Map 9: c-7). Gaṇeśa, in turn, advised the king to appeal to a withered hag hunched by the roadside. So doing, the suppliant king addressed none other than Bhadrakālī, the divine patroness of Bhaktapur in disguise. Flattered by what she assumed was the monarch's recognition, the goddess invested him with her own sword. With it the now invincible monarch claimed as his own the lands beyond Gaṇeśa's shrine, and expanded his kingdom westward.

Be that as it may, by the early eleventh century this western sector of Bhaktapur, roughly corresponding to the present Lower Town (*khvane*), must have been considered a part of Khvapa. This is affirmed by an inscription found at Taumadhi, the central one of the three chief squares of Bhaktapur (Map 9: e-6); it is dated at Khvapa A.D. 1005 (N.S. 125 Caitra).⁹⁸ Customs associated with the Navadurgā dancers, who do not perform in the westernmost *toles*, suggest that there was a continuing westward expansion even after this time, probably before or perhaps during the Malla Period.⁹⁹

In the Transitional and Early Malla Periods the enlarged town continued to be known as Khvapa, and even by the apparent archaism *Khṣṣṣm-brumā*.¹⁰⁰ It was certainly by the old familiar name Khvapa that the Ming ambassadors knew the town, and which they transcribed as K'o-pan.¹⁰¹

chow and Kölver 1975:16-18, in researching the spatial organization of Bhaktapur, also concluded that the western part of the city represented later growth.

¹⁰⁰ In a manuscript colophon dated N.S. 159 Vaiśākha (A.D. 1059) (Petech 1958:39).

¹⁰¹ Petech 1958:208. Actually, they reversed the name of

⁹⁸ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1961g. The inscription is on the pedestal of a now lost image, used as a stepping stone for a well. It is possible, therefore, that it was carried from another part of town, but this seems unlikely considering its present simple utilitarian use.

⁹⁹ See Chapter 11. Auer and Gutschow 1974:98-99; Guts-

But like so many other towns at this time, Khvapa acquired, or perhaps revived, supplementary Sanskrit names. One of them was Tripura, after the name of the Tripura palace and the dynasty that ruled from it. Another was Bhaktagrāma, as it is first encountered in a twelfth-century manuscript. The suffix *grāma* was soon replaced with a number of interchangeable city-denoting ones such as *-pura*, *-pattana*, *-paṭṭana*, and others.¹⁰² In Newari *khvapa* literally means “good cooking,” and may allude to Khopṛṇ’s fame in this respect (even now Bhaktapur is famous for its yogurt). Thus it is generally assumed that the Sanskrit *bhākta*, some of whose cognate meanings are “food, meal, cooked rice,” represents a Sanskritization of the indigenous name. While this may be so, *bhākta* also means devotion, which would seem more probable as the intended meaning. It is possible, however, that the choice was a play on words to perpetuate the older name and to signify Bhaktapur as the City of Devotion. If so, the inherent meaning would be Hindu devotion, emphasizing the orthodoxy of what had become a predominantly Hindu town, and distinguishing it from Buddhist Kathmandu or profoundly Buddhist Patan.

Gorkha and other hill states thought of the city as Bhaktapur, a name that they modified to Bhād- or Bhātgaon. The Malla kings favored this form when corresponding with Gorkha,¹⁰³ and it endures as a popular and even preferred alternate today.

By the time Bhaktapur emerged as the capital of one of the Three Kingdoms, it must have roughly corresponded territorially to the city as we know it today. Its massive walls, as described in the fifteenth century by King Yakṣamalla, were defended by watchtowers and surrounded by a moat.¹⁰⁴ But both wall and moat have disappeared with scarcely a trace. A few vestiges may be discerned along the western perimeter of the city in the form of earthworks, a fragment of the moat, and several stone thresholds that mark former gateways (Map 9).

the city and that of its rulers, thus mistakenly applying the name K'o-pan to the Bhaktapur “prince” (see below and Chapter 4).

¹⁰² B. Acharya 1963:15.

¹⁰³ B. Acharya 1963:14, 19.

¹⁰⁴ D. Vajracharya 1964a:22-26; D. Regmi 1966:part 3,

The emplacement of a number of other city gates can be found at various points around the city, either in the form of thresholds or as remembered names. The location of outcaste settlements suggests where others were, and broadly defines the general line of the walls. A single city gate still stands, the Barbacho Dhoka at the western end of the city on the main trade route leading through Taumadhi-tol (Map 9: e-6; Plate 100). The restored gate at the entrance to the Darbar Square was not a city gate, but the western gate to the palace compound, whence the adjacent *tol* name, Laskhu Dhoka (*lakhu*, gate, or perhaps ultimately from *lāykhū*, palace). The eastern palace gate is preserved only in the neighborhood name, Sukul Dhoka, Straw Mat Gate.

I was not able to collect sufficient data to hazard a reconstruction of the emplacement of the Bhaktapur city wall. Furthermore, there is a total lack of agreement between what could be reconstructed of the wall’s emplacement—guaranteed by the location of the gateways—and the present *pradaḥṣinā patha*.¹⁰⁵ In Kathmandu there is no doubt that the *pradaḥṣinā patha* followed the city wall (Map 7). But in Bhaktapur it circumscribes a much smaller, irregular area of the city, well within what must have been the area enclosed by the walls, and without any visible relation to them. Although the difference between the two cities in this respect has yet to be explained, perhaps it relates in some way to the superimposed concentric mandalas of divine protection that are even now so evident in Bhaktapur.¹⁰⁶ It may also conform to some earlier stage in the city’s growth.¹⁰⁷

Two other anomalies respecting the Bhaktapur *pradaḥṣinā patha* call for investigation. Its course seems quite unrelated to some of the most sacred monuments of the city, excluding as it does such temples as Vākupati Nārāyaṇa and Tilamādhava Viṣṇu, both venerable shrines (Map 9: d-11, f-6). Perhaps more astonishing is the exclusion of the Taumadhi-tol Bhairava, but the inclusion of his

app. A, inscr. 64 (73-76).

¹⁰⁵ I did not find time to trace out in exact detail the Bhaktapur *pradaḥṣinā patha*, and for this information have relied on Auer and Gutschow 1974:23.

¹⁰⁶ See Chapter 11.

¹⁰⁷ Gutschow and Kölver 1975:21.

divine companion housed in the nearby Nyātapola temple. The other anomaly concerns the annual procession of Dīpaṅkara Buddhas (Plates 500, 501), described in Chapter 10. They pursue the *pradaḥṣinā patha* in a "left-handed" counterclockwise pattern.¹⁰⁸

There is a further problem respecting Bhaktapur's history that remains to be clarified. Like Kathmandu, but with no identified historical base to explain it, the city has two theoretical divisions, the Upper and Lower Towns (*thāne* and *ḥvane*), the one with Tachapal as its main square, the other, Taumadhi. We do not know how the division came about or upon what it is predicated. But it clearly represents a territorial rivalry similar to that which obtained between Yaṅgala and Yaṃ. It survives even now in an annual, and at times bitter, contest between the two sectors of the city, when each tries to gain possession of Bhairava's chariot at Bisket-jātrā.¹⁰⁹

Despite the physical similarities among Bhaktapur, Patan, and Kathmandu, there is a fundamental difference that becomes apparent by comparing Maps 7, 8, and 9. This concerns the cities' religious orientation. As the map symbols reveal, Patan is a Buddhist town, Kathmandu mixed, and Bhaktapur Hindu. In Bhaktapur, Hindu temples, shrines, and *maṭhas*, one-time Hindu monasteries, far outnumber Buddhist remains. One cannot identify more than a score of sites associated with *vihāras*, and there are scarcely a half-dozen intact *vihāra* buildings left. The extant monuments suggest, however, that Khopṛṇ and Khopṛṇgrāma may have been Buddhist like Patan and, probably, like Kathmandu. This is argued by the character of in situ Licchavi stone sculptures that I was able to find. Of the relatively few of that period, almost all relate to the Buddha (Plates 451, 457). None, however, is now worshiped in his name; they have been metamorphosed into various godlings who, like so many others in the Kathmandu Valley, demand and receive blood sacrifice.

There would seem, then, to have been a conscious Hinduization of Bhaktapur at some time, probably initiated during the Transitional Period,

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 44 n. 1.

¹⁰⁹ Anderson 1971:44. I suspect this mystery could be cleared up by a thorough investigation of the in situ in-

when its particular coloration was emphasized by the name Bhaktapur, City of Devotion. This process must have been accelerated when it served as Sthitimalla's capital, and continued under accompanying Maithili orthodoxy. In the late Malla Period the Capuchin missionaries observed the distinction between Buddhist Patan and Hindu Bhaktapur.¹¹⁰ Nonetheless, even today there are still a few Buddhist communities and functional *vihāra* shrines. And while primary city-wide enthusiasm is accorded Bhairava and the Navadurgā the annual procession of Dīpaṅkara Buddhas is very well attended.

Abreast of the Siddha Pokhari, on the western outskirts of Bhaktapur, the vehicular way into the city takes leave of the old trade route to parallel it for a short distance on the north and rejoin it east of Taumadhi. Thus travelers coming from Kathmandu by car soon enter the Bhaktapur Darbar Square (Figure 3; Plate 33). Despite the ensemble of temples and images clustered around the much reduced palace at the northern side of it, this square, except for tourists and their taxis, seems almost eerily empty. There is none of the commercial bustle that characterizes the Kathmandu and Patan Darbar Squares, or Taumadhi and Tachapal further east in Bhaktapur, and the square is quite open and unencumbered with buildings. This was not always the case. Sketches made prior to the devastating 1934 earthquake reveal it to have been as crowded with structures as the other squares, perhaps even surpassing them in visual harmony (Plate 31).

It seems doubtful, however, that the quiet square ever resounded to the hum of common life so evident in Taumadhi and Tachapal. Many aspects, both physical and ritual, suggest that this palace area was tacked on, as it were, to the older city, and that despite its hierarchical preeminence as a royal domain, it in fact lay beyond the city's real orbit. Even now the Darbar Square is excluded from the city by the *pradaḥṣinā patha* and by other ritual functions. Broadly, the situation must compare to one in Kathmandu. There, in the nineteenth century a new palace, Narayan Hiti, was established

scriptions, amplified by documents and customs.

¹¹⁰ Lévi 1905:1, 320.

outside the city, in whose ritual integration it plays no part (Map 4). Although the Bhaktapur Darbar Square surely must relate to Ānandadeva's intrusion from Banepa, exactly what it signifies historically is one of the many aspects of the city's past that await investigation.

The three squares of Bhaktapur and their monuments, the parts of the city fleetingly viewed by tourists, compose only a small part of the ancient town. Beyond them Bhaktapur is a warren of ancient *ṭols*, traditional Newar communities organized by caste, each with its own local deities, and each with its particular "way of the dead," the prescribed route along which its defunct residents must be borne in their passage to the cremation ghats.¹¹¹ In all these *ṭols*, as in much of Patan and parts of Kathmandu, life throbs to rhythms very different from those heard today on New Road in the capital city.

Bhaktapur, lying seven dusty and foot-weary miles distant from Kathmandu, as it long did, has been even less affected by the changes coursing through that city than tradition-oriented Patan. Bhaktapur is almost exclusively Newar¹¹² and the language is distinct from the Patan-Kathmandu dialect. But a decade and more of cars, buses, and now a Chinese-built electric trolley has brought Bhaktapur a comfortable half-hour distant from New Road. What this augurs for the city's future, one can only guess. For the moment, at least, Bhaktapur remains one of the remarkable treasures of the Kathmandu Valley—indeed, of the globe.

Deopatan

There is a fourth settlement in the Kathmandu Valley that must have long vied in importance with the towns I have just described. This is Deopatan, "City of the Gods" (Map 6; Plates 101, 102). Huddled around the shrine of Śiva Paśupati and straggling westward to the Dhobi Khola, the once extensive town is an all but forgotten place, its former

grandeur long past, its name signifying little more than a Kathmandu suburb, and Nepali and foreigner alike scarcely aware of its one-time separate existence. Indeed, were it not for Paśupatinātha, the premier divinity of Nepal, Deopatan would likely have sunk into an oblivion as complete as the once thriving communities of Lembaṭī- or Hamsagrhadraṅga, now known only from inscriptions.¹¹³

Like all the towns and villages of Nepal Mandala, the beginnings of Deopatan can only be imagined. Legend claims it as a Buddhist community founded jointly by a Nepalese prince and a daughter of the Indian Emperor Aśoka, a mythical beginning that cannot be substantiated. However, in view of certain unexplainable aspects of legend and contemporary practice related to Paśupati, it is not improbable that the legend glosses some early Buddhist association with the site. But for Deopatan's history we reach firm ground only with the Licchavi Period. Then it assumed great importance; it contains the greatest concentration of Licchavi monuments in all Nepal. These are most numerous around Paśupatinātha, but are scattered throughout the area. Everywhere in Deopatan one stumbles on Licchavi inscriptions, stone sculptures, stupas, votive *caityas*, and architectural fragments; almost forty of those illustrated in the accompanying plates were photographed in Deopatan. Even the old paving blocks may harken back to Licchavi times (Plate 101).

The importance of Deopatan continued in the Transitional and Early Malla Periods. On two occasions kings were crowned there,¹¹⁴ and only five other towns—Bhaktapur, Banepa, Patan, Nawakot, and Pharping—are mentioned in the early chronicles with the same frequency. What caused the decline of Deopatan, or when it began, we do not know. Most likely it relates to the emergence of Bhaktapur as the Nepali capital in the late twelfth century. By the seventeenth century the original community must have dwindled away to the existing clusters of Newar households, permit-

are Jyapu.

¹¹³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 70, 129 (282-289, 485-489).

¹¹⁴ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 37b, 44a.

¹¹¹ Gutschow and Kölver 1975:14, 26-27, 34-42, 49-51, 55-58.

¹¹² Gutschow and Kölver 1975:14, 40 write that there are only fifty residents of Bhaktapur who are non-Newar, and that of the Newar majority, more than sixty percent

ting the rather extensive Parvatiyā settlement that characterizes much of the environs.

The Licchavis knew the town as Devagrāma, Navagrha, or simply Paśupati, the latter a name signifying then as today the deity, his shrine, and the community in its environs.¹¹⁵ The name Devagrāma in time became Devapura and Devapaṭṭana/paṭṭana, from whence the Gorkhali Devapaṭṭana and the current name, Dev-, Deu-, or Deopatan.¹¹⁶ The third name, Navagrha, survived into the nineteenth century in modified forms such as Navahara and Navagraha.¹¹⁷ As Navali-tol, the westernmost extension of the town, it endures still (Map 6; Plate 102). The Newar name that is roughly equivalent in meaning to Deopatan is Gvala (pronounced Gola), Place of Deity, or specifically, of Śiva. In written form the name Gvala is unknown before the Malla Period,¹¹⁸ but, like Yaṃ and Yaṅgala, Yala and Khvapa, Gvala is doubtlessly the town's indigenous name, and relates to the important Śiva shrine in its midst. It is still preferred to "Deopatan" by Newars.

We do not know the size and extent of Gvala/Deopatan at any time in its history. Its limits may be defined for us by the existing *pradaḥṣiṇā patha*, the Newar *upāḥo vanegu* annually performed on Bhadra-śukla-dvādaśī, during Indra-jātrā. Embracing an extensive area in the Paśupatinātha-Chabahil area, the Deopatan *upāḥo vanegu* includes settlements and shrines west of the Dhobi Khola, to almost intersect with the Hadigaon *upāḥo vanegu* (Map 6). We know that in the Early Malla Period, at least, Deopatan was walled.¹¹⁹ As in Kathmandu, it is therefore possible that the processional way is coterminous with the line of these walls. But the very size of the Deopatan circuit, which requires three hours of dedicated walking, makes one suspect that it is not. This is further suggested by the emplacement of a city gate, the only one I

was able to recover, at the western end of the clustered houses. It is well east of the Dhobi Khola, and bears no relation to the sacred way. This gate emplacement is still considered the western terminus of Deopatan.

In any event, at its apogee Deopatan seems to have lain largely on the right bank of the Bagmati around the shrine of Paśupatinātha, extended westward along the Dakṣiṇakolī road, and northward to embrace the community now known as Chabahil. The latter name began to be applied to this part of Deopatan when the *vihāra* known as Cābahil became an important stopover in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Tibet trade. But that it was part of Deopatan is evident in the names Devapura and Devapaṭṭana that continued to be attached to it at least into the eighteenth century.¹²⁰ Chabahil, however, is now thought of as a distinct settlement, quite apart from Deopatan. Currently, Deopatan signifies only the clustered households from Paśupati westward, together with the modern bungalows and Parvatiyā farmsteads south between the Bagmati, Dhobi Khola, and Dilli Bazaar on the road to the airport (Map 6). As an alternate place name for Deopatan, Paśupati refers only to the settlement in the immediate vicinity of the shrine.

Hadigaon

Lying on the edge of a high bluff above the rich Dhobi Khola bottomlands that its inhabitants farm, Hadigaon, despite inevitable absorption into Greater Kathmandu, as yet remains a distinct Newar village (Maps 4, 5). This is particularly evident when viewed from the heights of the Valley rim, where the monochromatic huddle of Hadigaon is deeply etched against a variegated scatter of Rana palaces and suburban bungalows. Hadi-

¹¹⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 39, 126 (175-176, 474-478); B. Acharya 1963:11-12. In inscription 39 the name is spelled Dovagrāma, but it is clear that Devagrāma is meant, since in a most unusual occurrence in Licchavi inscriptions, this particular one not only evidences bad Sanskrit but bad calligraphy (D. Vajracharya 1973:176).

¹¹⁶ B. Acharya 1963:10; D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 125 (266-268).

¹¹⁷ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 63a; G. Vajracharya 1965:

13; the name Navagraha occurs in an unpublished inscription dated n.s. 982 (A.D. 1862) standing in the courtyard of the Jayavāgīśvarī temple.

¹¹⁸ B. Acharya 1963:10.

¹¹⁹ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 40a, 46a; D. Regmi 1965: part 1, 242; Petech' 1958:102; B. Acharya 1963:7.

¹²⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 125 (266-268); B. Acharya 1963:10.

gaon's principal street, unsurfaced and a rutted quagmire in the rainy season, parallels the edge of the river bluff (Map 5; Plates 103, 104). From it depends at right angles two or three short vehicular streets intersected with various pedestrian ways. Like any Newar village, tall houses of brick and wood parallel these streets and lanes, and among them are interspersed the familiar shelters (*pāṭis*), fountains, shrines, temples, and images of the gods. Of these gods the most important is Satya Nārāyaṇa, whose temple compound is reached midway down the long stairway and continuing path that descends to the river (Map 5: 24; Plates 240, 381).

But like modern Deopatan, the humble little community of Hadigaon does not reflect its former grandeur. For this we must depend on the archaeological record, which clearly reveals it to have been a place of some eminence in Licchavi times. Whether the settlement predated the Licchavis, as did so many Valley communities, is not clear. The Newar name for Hadigaon is Nara, which does not sound like the name of an indigenous *prñ*. It is very likely derived from Nārāyaṇa, the most famous deity of the locale (Plate 381).

By the time the settlement is recorded in Licchavi inscriptions, Hadigaon, or a part of it, was Vṛjīkarathyā, the Vṛjī Highway Settlement.¹²¹ Like Kolī- and Dakṣiṇakolīgrāma, the town apparently derived its name from immigrant north Indian traders; the Vṛjīs were a confederation of peoples to which the Licchavis also belonged. Just as the Koliya apparently established a small trading post where the trans-Himalayan trade route crossed the Vishnumati, the Vṛjīs may have done likewise further east at this strategic place, next to a bridge or ford over the nearby river.

The name Vṛjīkarathyā, corrupted as Vijayathapāṭha, lingered into the fifteenth century and, deformed still further as Vijarathapātane, into the sixteenth century.¹²² Like so many other settlements in the Kathmandu Valley, this one also acquired a supplementary Sanskrit name in the Transitional Period. This was Haripura, the City

of Hari, that is, Viṣṇu/Nārāyaṇa, the same prestigious deity that most likely accounts for the Newar name, Nara. Haripura, as an alternate appellation, probably dates from the eleventh century when, according to the early chronicles, King Baladeva (ca. A.D. 1048-1060) "built Haripura [in] Vajarattha."¹²³ But the Newars even then must have called the town more or less as they do today. For the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* refers to it as Nandala, a name we also encounter in a Hadigaon inscription dated A.D. 1589.¹²⁴ But Haripura survived as an alternate name, downgraded in time, it seems, to Harigrāma, then Harigaon, and finally corrupted to Hādigaon, literally Clay-pot Village. This peculiar name derives from a special clay extracted here, formerly much prized for the making of glazed (*telīā*) bricks.¹²⁵

That Vṛjīkarathyā became a settlement of some importance is evident. As its name, Vṛjī Highway, and the existing road patterns attest, it lay on one of the principal routes proceeding northeast from Dakṣiṇakolī to Devagrāma/Gvala and, ultimately, Tibet (Maps 4, 5). The town proper and its environs yield rich remains pointing to extensive Licchavi occupation. These consist of inscriptions, architectural fragments, sculptures, and middens filled with bricks, terra cottas, coins, and other wondrous things that such rubbish heaps often hold (Plates 50, 240, 381, 385, 392, 418, 419, 441, 561).¹²⁶

The extent of Hadigaon as Vṛjīkarathyā, Haripura, or Harigrāma is unknown. But like the two settlements it lies between, Kathmandu and Deopatan, Hadigaon has a sacred way that may reveal the line of a wall that girdled it at its apogee (Map 5). The Hadigaon *upāko vanegu*, the "walking around the town," like the corresponding rite in Kathmandu, takes place annually at Indra-jātrā. The extensive course, often dislocated by intruding Rana compounds, requires two and a half hours to complete, and far exceeds the present village limits. It barely misses overlapping the western course of the Deopatan *upāko vanegu*. At Hadi-

¹²¹ G. Vajracharya 1965. The author has since reconsidered the location of Vṛjīkarathyā, and it is on his unpublished research that its identity as Hadigaon is posited.

¹²² D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 48 (50-51); Rajvamshi 1970:inscr. 64 (47-48).

¹²³ VK (3-4).

¹²⁴ Fol. 21b; Rajvamshi 1970:inscr. 78 (57).

¹²⁵ B. Acharya 1970:6; see Chapter 6.

¹²⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 9, 35, 41, 72, 77, 116, 178; Deo 1968.

gaon tradition affirms that the sacred way conforms to the emplacement of former walls. Given the size of the circuit, this hardly seems possible. Nonetheless, the Newar farmer who was my guide when retracing the processional way made careful note when we passed "through Singha Dhoka," the Lion Gate of the city, which has survived at least in Newar memory (Map 5).

THE CAPITAL CITIES OF NEPAL MANDALA

The Licchavi Period Capitals

The later chroniclers of the history of Nepal Mandala are prodigal with the names of the various capital cities from which former kings are said to have ruled.¹²⁷ They bravely dip into the remote past, telling us the exact places from which the semilegendarial dynasties, the Gopāla and Mahiṣapāla, ruled, and the subsequent moves made by the Kirāta kings. The history of the Licchavi capitals is equally fulsome. For example, one Bhumivarman, they say, established the Licchavi capital in Baneshwar, a Kathmandu suburb, where it remained until Śivadeva I (ca. A.D. 590-604) moved it to Deopatan. His successor, Aṃśuvarman, again shifted the royal seat, this time to an unidentified "place named Madhyalakhu." Finally, following the reign of Narendradeva (ca. A.D. 643-679), one Varadeva, finding the earlier palace uncongenial, moved his capital to the then newly founded city of Patan.

These accounts reveal that the chroniclers did, in fact, know something of the history of Aṃśuvarman's move, which is well documented by Lic-

¹²⁷ Wright 1966:54, 61, 65, 72, 75-76, 83, 93, and *passim*; Hasrat 1970:35-36; N. Paudel 1963:53-54. The chronicles' history respecting the capital cities is best approached through the summary provided by Lévi 1905:11, 69-73, 83, 95.

¹²⁸ Lévi 1905:1, 157-158. In this connection it seems worth reporting, despite its doubtful significance, that apparently there is a local tradition that identifies a ruin at Dahachok, a Parvatiyā village on the western slope of the Valley, as the palace Mānagrha (D. Regmi 1969:238). West of Dahachok, now the closest existing settlement, lies a pond of considerable cultural importance, known to the

chavi sources. Thus perhaps their stories respecting a prior shift of capital by Śivadeva, a subsequent one by a Varadeva, and the several other palaces and capitals they list have similarly sound historical bases. But the names, places, and chronologies are so inexact that as history they can only be approached with circumspection. If nothing more, the accounts suggest a tradition of shifting capitals that cautions against seeking one, or even two, immutable Licchavi capital cities. But to locate any of them, it appears we must begin again with such evidence as we now have.

Despite the rather extensive written records of the Licchavis, studded with the names of places and royal palaces, none identify the city, or cities, from which they and the Ābhīra Guptas reigned. Wang Hsüan-t'sê, the Chinese envoy who thrice visited the court of Narendradeva between about A.D. 643 and 657, very likely tells us the name of the then capital, but we cannot correlate it with a particular place. The fragmentary Chinese account of the missions states that "they went to Ni-po-lo, toward the southwest. Having arrived at P'ouo-lo-tou, they went to the east of the village [to visit a flaming pond]." Further on the annals specify that this pond was "southeast of the capital a short distance."¹²⁸ Thus P'ouo-lo-tou seems to be the Chinese transcription of the name of the capital, but it might be merely the name of the village nearest the celebrated pond. But in either case, it cannot be identified.¹²⁹

From the Licchavis themselves we know only the names of a number of royal palaces, to some of which considerable attention has been directed in past efforts to identify the capital city in which they stood. Although modern writers have usually referred to these "palaces" as if they were the name

Nepalis as Indra-daha and to the Newars as Yanki-daha (*Kathmandu Valley* 1975:1, 255). Against the tradition of the Licchavi palace site, near which lies Yanki-daha, one must juxtapose Wang Hsüan-t'sê's famous commentary: "southeast of the capital a short distance there is a lake of water and fire. On going one 'li' eastward, one finds the fountain A-ki-po-li [or alternately, A-ki-po-mi]."

¹²⁹ D. Regmi 1969:240 attempted to correlate it with "Patan," palpably impossible considering the time difference involved in the use of these names. On two possible identifications, see below.

of an entire complex, it now seems that some of the names may only signify a particular building, the chancery, or the official secretariat within. Royal edicts and charters were issued from three different headquarters: Mānagr̥ha (House of Māna[deva?]), Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana (Mt. Kailāsummit Mansion), and Bhadradhivāsa-bhavana (Auspicious Place Mansion). Mānagr̥ha is the oldest of the three. Our first acquaintance with it occurs the year after the death of Mānadeva I, in A.D. 506 (s.s. 428 Mārga), when the new king Vasantadeva issued his first edict from it.¹³⁰ From then until A.D. 641 (M.S. 65 Phālguna), the last record of Bhīmarjunadeva (who was then ruling as the puppet of Viṣṇugupta),¹³¹ all edicts issued in the Licchavi name emanated from Mānagr̥ha. As suggested by the name Mānagr̥ha and the immediate occupancy of it by Mānadeva's successor, the palace was probably built by King Mānadeva I sometime during his long reign between A.D. 464 and 505. But since Mānadeva issued no edicts or charters, or at least none is preserved, we lack this evidence. It seems probable, however, that given the name Mānagr̥ha, the palace was closely associated with the king, either as the builder or a long-time occupant. The palace name accords fully with similar

¹³⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 22 (91-109). As architectural monuments, the palaces are discussed in the following chapter.

¹³¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 118 (448-451). In the earlier compendium (Gnoli 1956:inscr. 12 [18]) the name Mānagr̥ha is bracketed because at the time of Gnoli's study it had been effaced from the stele. Fortunately, the name is clear in an early rubbing preserved in the National Archives.

¹³² D. Vajracharya 1973:95-96.

¹³³ s.s. 520 Caitra (A.D. 598); D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 68 (274-278); B. Acharya 1970:15.

¹³⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:276-278 argues vigorously that these two *jātrās* had nothing to do with the palace, but most likely were connected with Paśupatinātha. Scrupulously leaving blank what seems to be almost surely the effaced syllable *ḥūta*, restored by Gnoli, inscr. 31, Vajracharya argues that the Khopasi inscription antedates by too long (seven years) the first edict from Kailāsakūṭa (A.D. 605, inscr. 71) to have had any connection with the palace. To him, Aṃśuvarman's wonder at Kailāsakūṭa, "the auspicious beauty spot on the earth's face," in A.D. 608 (inscr. 78) shows it to have been recently built. But this ignores the fact that some forty years later his suc-

incorporation of the vocable *māna* in the king's name, in his coinage, the *mānāṅka*, the linga Māneśvara, what was probably his tutelary Māneśvarī, and the royal *vihāra* he founded, śrī-Māna-vihāra.¹³²

It seems certain that Aṃśuvarman (ca. A.D. 605-621) built the second palace, or more likely a chancery, Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana. He may have selected the name to underscore his public support of Śiva, whose own palace was called Kailāsa. Construction may have taken place during the lifetime of Aṃśuvarman's predecessor, Śivadeva I, at the end of the sixth century. This is suggested by an edict to the citizens of Kurppāsī (modern Khopasi, Map 3) in which they were instructed to furnish fifty varieties of *śuklamṛttikā* (white earth, clay, loam) for the "door opening festival and the Kailāsa[kūṭa?] festival."¹³³ The reference, however, may be to some ceremony connected with Paśupatinātha rather than with the palace.¹³⁴ In any event, a few years later, A.D. 605 (M.S. 29 Jyēṣṭha), it is from Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana that Aṃśuvarman's first edict was promulgated,¹³⁵ as were all subsequent edicts of this monarch.

We have a single inscription of Aṃśuvarman's successor, the Licchavi king Udayadeva, but un-

cessor Narendradeva was still marveling at it (inscrs. 123, 129). That the clay was to be delivered annually also suggests to Vajracharya that it concerned a recurrent religious obligation, rather than the consecration of a palace, and that in exchange for certain privileges it was designed to bring the distant villagers into Paśupati's orbit. This may be so, but palaces were also sacred in their way, and there is reason to believe, as will become evident in this chapter, that they too had their recurrent festivals. Further, as I will show in Chapter 7, Indian palaces were described as "white like a cloud," and perhaps the clay was destined for an annual whitewash, an honor such as that still annually conferred on many Nepalese *caityas*. However, in support of Vajracharya's position, we do know that rulers did involve the villagers in national affairs: Śivadeva II the Balambu villagers with Paśupati (inscr. 143), for example; Narendradeva the people of Hamsagr̥ha with a festival of Vārahā (inscr. 129); or Jīnugupta the people of Thankot with bull-fighting in Dakṣiṇakoligr̥ama (inscr. 115). Further, many sacred ceremonies—coronations, for example, or the annual rites of Matsyendranātha—do require the use of several varieties of soils or clays.

¹³⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 71 (290-300).

fortunately the portion in which the palace name would appear is effaced.¹³⁶ Thus we do not know from which palace he issued it. Almost certainly it was Mānagrha, since immediately afterward, during the period of increased Ābhīra Gupta power, this was the seat of the Licchavi puppets Dhruvadeva and Bhīmārjunadeva, and the Gupta seat was Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana.

After the Gupta liquidation and the return of de facto rule to the Licchavis in the person of Narendradeva, about A.D. 643-679, the newer, more opulent palace that Aṃśuvarman had built and the Guptas had subsequently occupied became the seat of the Licchavi rulers. Most of Narendradeva's edicts and all those of his son, Śivadeva II, were issued from Kailāsakūṭa. Jayadeva II lived there as crown prince, and as king issued his commands from it.¹³⁷ After the close of his reign, about A.D. 733, we no longer encounter the name Kailāsakūṭa in Licchavi inscriptions.

The palace name Bhadradhivāsa-bhavana appears only in three inscriptions, all of them issues of King Narendradeva and the last of his reign, one in A.D. 671, the others in 679.¹³⁸ There is no mention of such a palace before or after these three instances, and there is nothing to explain a shift in residence. There are, it seems, three possible explanations: 1) Bhadradhivāsa served for a while as an interim headquarters while Kailāsakūṭa was being repaired after some calamity such as severe earthquake damage, 2) it was an auxiliary palace such as those later enjoyed by the Malla kings, or 3) it was simply another name for Kailāsakūṭa itself.

The meaning of Bhadradhivāsa is "auspicious place, seat, residence," and the name may well have been a creation of Narendradeva's fantasy, perhaps

¹³⁶ Ibid., inscr. 104 (398-400).

¹³⁷ Ibid., inscs. 139, 140, 143, 150, 151 (514-522, 530-536, 573-579).

¹³⁸ Ibid., inscs. 132-134 (494-506).

¹³⁹ The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 23a, credits him with thirty-five.

¹⁴⁰ Hasrat 1970:45; Wright 1966:93. According to legend, the old king was summoned from the *vihāra* to assist in the quest for Matsyendranātha (see Chapter 12).

¹⁴¹ Wright 1966:93; Lamshal 1966:1-2. Hasrat 1970:45 lists Varadeva in the same succession, but does not mention a shift of the capital.

a product of his dotage since it seems probable that he lived to a ripe old age. Following a long sojourn in Tibet he reigned thirty-six years, according to the span of his documents.¹³⁹ The later chronicles write that he lived to be ninety-eight, and that "having lost his love of the cares of state and worldly riches" he retired to a *vihāra* where he lived alone.¹⁴⁰ Thus it seems likely that Bhadradhivāsa is not a separate palace, but is Kailāsakūṭa.

Four Claimants as Licchavi Capitals

In the course of more than a century of trying to identify the cities where these palaces stood, scholars have proposed three candidates, Patan, Deopatan, and Hadigaon, to which recently has been added a fourth, Kathmandu.

Patan

Patan is the most widely accepted candidate for the Licchavi capital, although it appears to be the least worthy. Its identification as a capital rests primarily on three factors: 1) the late chronicles' assertion that one Varadeva, an undocumented successor to Narendradeva, moved the capital there,¹⁴¹ 2) that the name Patan, since it is derived from *pattana* or *paṭṭana*, likely signifies a royal city,¹⁴² and 3) that Mānigvala, one of Patan's alternate names, derives from the presence of Mānagrha in that city.¹⁴³

With respect to the shift of capital, the last known document of Narendradeva employs Śivadeva II as *dūtaka*, but the first reference to the latter as king is not encountered for another fifteen years.¹⁴⁴ Thus it is not impossible that there was an as yet undocumented interim ruler called Vara-

¹⁴² Snellgrove 1957:94.

¹⁴³ The elucidation of this argument may be found in Petech 1958:199, but it is one widely held by Nepalese and particularly by all who would popularize Nepalese history. Even serious scholars have sometimes espoused this idea, if later rejecting it (Pandey and Pant 1947:13; N. Pant 1970a). Petech 1958:199-200, apparently alone among scholars, has also argued for Patan as the seat of Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana (see below).

¹⁴⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscs. 134, 138 (499-506, 512-513).

deva. But with the exception of the three edicts issued from Bhadradhivāsa, a place most likely synonymous with Kailāsakūṭa, Narendradeva and Śivadeva II both issued their edicts from Kailāsakūṭa. Therefore they must have ruled in the same place, and a shift of capital by an interim ruler is unlikely. It would seem, therefore, considering the tenuousness of the evidence, that the first reason for naming Patan as the capital is insubstantial.

So also is the second reason, which sees in the name "Pātan" evidence that it had been a royal city.¹⁴⁵ Except perhaps in most ancient India, as Przuluski writes, the terms *pattana*, *paṭṭana* did not signify a royal city so much as an important one, especially a mercantile center.¹⁴⁶ Thus it was widely employed as a suffix attached to any large or important place. In the Kathmandu Valley, the use of this and other city-denoting suffixes did not become popular until the Transitional Period. Then *pattana/paṭṭana* embellished not only the name of the little town of Lalita, but of many other towns, notably Bhakta- and Deopattana/paṭṭana. In wishful aggrandizement it was even widely attached to much smaller places, such as Sankhu (Śaṅkarapaṭṭana), Thecho (Dundupaṭṭana), and many more. Thus it seems pure chance that of the many Valley towns that bore this literary suffix, the immigrant Gorkhalis simplified one of them, Lalitapaṭṭana, to Pātan.

The third and principal argument for considering Patan to have been the capital rests on the presumption that Mānigvala, a name for Patan emergent in the tenth century, derives from Mānagrha,

¹⁴⁵ Snellgrove 1957:94 seems to have been much swayed by Przuluski 1928:169-177.

¹⁴⁶ Przuluski 1928:170. In addition, the word *pattana* also meant duties levied on merchants in the ports, and *pattana* in its broadest meanings also denoted a township, town, city, or people (Sircar 1966:246; Monier-Williams 1899: s.v.; P. Acharya 1927: 331-333; 1928:40; Shukla 1960:254 (Shukla, p. 252 also defines *pattana* as "the second residence of the king"). Whatever lexical differences between the two forms, in the Kathmandu Valley *pattana*, *paṭṭana* have been used interchangeably to signify "city."

¹⁴⁷ Petech 1958:46, 50, 121, 125, 126. Petech's observation (1958:199) that the *a* is always long is inadmissible.

¹⁴⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 1, 2, 11, 12, 39.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., inscrs. 39, 53, 58.

¹⁵⁰ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvali*, fols. 21a, 23b; B. Paudel 1965b: 45, 48 notes.

and therefore reveals the presence of that palace in Patan, specifically at the site of the present Darbar Square. In spite of its allure, this argument, too, is extremely weak. Given its important bearing on Nepalese studies, it nonetheless requires critical examination, and we must rather closely look at the name Mānigvala.

The spelling of Mānigvala is variable, both in its initial and final component. Māni is spelled with short or long *a* and *i*, and with dental or retroflex *n*: *māni*, *māni*, *māni*, *maṇi*, or *manā*.¹⁴⁷ With the same variability of spelling, and doubtlessly of origin and meaning, this component was common in Licchavi times in many proper names besides Mānadeva and Mānagrha: *māni*, *māniḥa*,¹⁴⁸ or Maṇimati,¹⁴⁹ for example. The popularity of the *māni* component, variable in spelling and meaning, continued in later years in combinations such as Māneśvarī,¹⁵⁰ Manohara,¹⁵¹ Manamatī,¹⁵² and Maṇikeśvara.¹⁵³

The second component of Mānigvala occurs in four forms: *gvala*, *gala*, *gla*, and *gara*. In Old Newari the form *gala*, like *grha*, meant house; in modified form it survives even now in locutions like *haigā* or *ḥhāgā*, poultry house.¹⁵⁴ But the root word in Mānigvala is not *gala* but *gvala*, of which the other forms are variant spellings, or misspellings.¹⁵⁵ It is as *gvala* that the word first occurs as a component of the Patan place name, Mānigvala,¹⁵⁶ and later as Manāgvala and Mānigvala.¹⁵⁷ *Gvala* (and variants) was a common place name in Licchavi Nepal, for example in villages like Māgval, Gīgval, Tegval, and Yūgval.¹⁵⁸ It survived as the

¹⁵¹ Petech 1958:96-97, colophon 10.

¹⁵² D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 70 (140-143).

¹⁵³ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963d.

¹⁵⁴ I am dependent for the analysis of Mānigvala on G. Vajracharya, whose competence in the languages in question has been amply demonstrated in his publications.

¹⁵⁵ B. Acharya 1963:26-28 in theorizing that the name Yaṅgala is derived from a mythical palace, Indragrha, also equates *gala* with *grha*. The observation of D. Regmi 1969: 237 that *gala* means "pit" is in error, since that word is *galā*.

¹⁵⁶ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963c.

¹⁵⁷ Petech 1958:50, colophon 3; 57, colophons 2, 3; 163, colophon 16. Subsequently there are almost endless variations (cf. N. Pant 1970a:303-304).

¹⁵⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 106, 146 (405-406, 543-546).

Newari name for Deopatan, Gvala, and in the name for southern Kathmandu, Yaṅgala. It lingers in the modern village name Satungal, and in many *ṭol* names, such as Tyāgal, Taṅgāl, and Kilāgal.

Thus, rather than as *gala*, related to *grha*, the ubiquitous suffix *gvala* should be understood as "place." Like the no less ubiquitous suffix in current use, *ṭol*, *gvala* signified neighborhood or locale. Its fundamental meaning appears to be "place of deity" from Old Newari *gva*, deity, and *la*, place. The word *gva* has been largely supplanted by Sanskrit and Nepali alternates, and its original meaning all but forgotten. But, pronounced "go," there are sufficient survivals to recover its local definition as "deity."¹⁵⁰ The goddess Pārvatī, for example, is known to Newars as Gva-maiju or Gva-mā (literally, Mother Deity).¹⁶⁰ *Gva* with the meaning of "deity" also survives as a component of Śiva's sacred lake, the Gvala-ḥiṭḍaha or, as it is now usually called, Gosainkund.¹⁶¹ In modern Newari the name for the sacrificial rice cakes offered to the deities is *gvalajā* (pronounced *gojā*).

From the wide range of spellings and meanings of the *māni* component of the city name, Mānigvala, and the evident meaning of *gvala* as place rather than house or palace, it is risky to associate the name with Mānagrha, and to assume therefore that Patan was the Licchavi capital.¹⁶² Equally hazardous is the assumption that the name Mānigvala is "presumably connected with the goddess Māneśvarī" or, as the late chroniclers aver, with Maṇiyoginī.¹⁶³ But because of its bearing on Patan history, it will be of interest to pursue the name

Mānigvala further, to clarify not only its real meaning but how it came to signify the city.

That Mānigvala was a special name that applied to the city center is clear. It is only at the city center, the Darbar Square, that the name has survived, now corrupted to Mangal Bazaar and formerly as Maṅgal-ṭol.¹⁶⁴ There are also special places within the central square that are known by some combination of the name, for example, Maṅgal-ḥiṭī, the deep fountain at the northern end of the palace, the Maṇimaṅḍapa pavilion beside it, and Maṇikeśvara, a neglected linga in the Bhandarkhal (*bhandārahāla*) behind the Malla palace.¹⁶⁵ In late Malla and early Shah times the court of law in the Darbar Square was known as Maṅgal-bhaṭṭa.¹⁶⁶ This name signified the whole square in the nineteenth century, and survived in colloquial usage into the early twentieth century.¹⁶⁷ Inscriptions and colophons situate both Kumbheśvara temple and Svata-ṭol "north of Mānigal," as they are with respect to Mangal Bazaar (Map 8: e-8, c-8).¹⁶⁸ The first recorded occurrence of the name Mānigvala is on the pedestal of a stone sculpture enshrined a short distance north of the Darbar Square (Map 8: d/e-8/9).¹⁶⁹ A twelfth-century manuscript refers to Mānigvala as the *madhyama-ṭol*, that is, the central neighborhood.¹⁷⁰

The *māni* component of the name, it becomes evident, does not derive from Mānagrha palace, but from an Old Newari directional term, *māni*, meaning center. The term survives in Newari even now to denote the central peg of the household grinding stone (*māni*) and in words such as *mātā*, the middle floor of the house, or *ghamā*, the

¹⁵⁰ The fact that it is pronounced *go*, a Sanskrit word meaning "cow," also accounts for some of the dilution in the meaning of *gva*.

¹⁶⁰ For example in the *Svasthāni-vrata-kathā*, a popular Śaiva text, and at the joint temple of Pārvatī and Gaṇeśa in Naksal, where the Gaṇeśa is in fact known as the Gvamā (pronounced Gomā) Gaṇeśa.

¹⁶¹ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 70 (140-143).

¹⁶² D. Regmi 1969:236-237 repudiates the view that Mānagrha was in Patan, and on similar but less convincing grounds attempts to demonstrate the fallacy of the derivation of Mānigvala from the palace name. For other unconvincing reasons he concludes, nonetheless, that Patan was the Licchavi capital (1969:239-240).

¹⁶³ Petech 1958:199; Wright 1966:90-91.

¹⁶⁴ B. Acharya 1963:20.

¹⁶⁵ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963d.

¹⁶⁶ So named in an undated and unpublished inscription of the Shah period over the door of the northernmost palace quadrangle. With respect to the continuum of culture in the Kathmandu Valley, it is of interest that there is an inscription of Narendradeva standing in the courtyard of old Maṅgal-bhaṭṭa that refers to the office of *bhaṭṭa*; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 123 (458-462).

¹⁶⁷ Wright 1966:93; B. Acharya 1963:20.

¹⁶⁸ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscs. 35, 46 (33-35, 47); Petech 1958:126-127, colophons 6, 9.

¹⁶⁹ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963c.

¹⁷⁰ Petech 1959:57, colophon 2.

middle part of a cart, that is, the shaft. It becomes abundantly clear that Mānigvala simply means “central place,” the main square, and that the places within this square (Maṅgal-bhaṭṭa, Maṅgal-hiṭī, Maṅkīśvara) take their names from it. Moreover, the term was not used exclusively for the Patan main square, but could denote any main square. Thus we find a manuscript written in northern Kathmandu in A.D. 1039 at “śrī-Yambu-kramā śrī-Mānigvala.”¹⁷¹

By the fourteenth century, at least, Mānigvala had become synonymous with Patan city in general, and the constituted authority there in particular. The frequent references to Patan in the early chronicles, for example, are largely in terms of such entries as “the gates of Mānigvala were opened,” or “Mānigvala combined with Tripura [Bhaktapur] against Gvala [Deopatan].” The most influential of the *mahāpātras* resided in the central *tol*. In the fifteenth century, Yeṃkulivarman, the illustrious predecessor of Viṣṇusiṃha, lived there in his palace of Vamthunihmaṃ, “where dwelt also [the linga] Maṅkīśvara-bhaṭṭāraka.”¹⁷² It was perhaps Viṣṇusiṃha’s domination of this central part of Patan that led him to be the first to adopt the title *maṅiglādhipati*, Lord of the Central Square, and by extension, Lord of Patan. The Maṅgal-rājya, or territory of Patan, also embraced a number of dependent villages.¹⁷³ After the *mahāpātras*’ traditional grip on Patan was at last broken, the Malla rulers built their own palaces in the same prestigious central square, and adopted the same resounding title. Thus it is clear from the linguistic evidence that the town name Mānigvala is in no way derivative from Mānagrha, and does not reveal the presence of that palace in Patan.

As final evidence that Mānagrha palace was not in Patan, and that Patan, however rich and important it may have been, was not therefore the Licchavi capital, we may turn to the Licchavi inscriptions. It was the custom in Licchavi Nepal to cite various things as boundary markers when de-

limiting lands for endowments or any other purposes—a particular *vihāra*, a main road, a bridge, some person’s property, a memorial pillar, or other similar landmark. Yet in not one of the many Patan inscriptions is Mānagrha, or any other palace, cited as a point of reference. It seems inconceivable that such a prestigious landmark in an area so small as Patan would have been omitted, had it actually existed. We must therefore conclude, until more substantial evidence to the contrary is forthcoming, that Patan did not serve as a capital city in the Licchavi Period.

Deopatan

Another reasonable candidate proposed as a Licchavi capital is Deopatan. This choice rests primarily on two factors: 1) the correspondence of the name Kailāsakūṭa with Kailāsa, the name of the bluff adjacent to Paśupatiṅgā (Map 6: 23),¹⁷⁴ and 2) the affirmation of the late chronicles that there was a Licchavi palace in this city.¹⁷⁵ Another factor that may bear on this question is the choice of Deopatan as an Early Malla coronation venue.

With respect to the corresponding names Kailāsa and Kailāsakūṭa, ideally all Nepali temples dedicated to Śiva include within their compound a raised area called Kailāsa. The name derives from Śiva’s own palace, and the mound symbolizes the pasture of the god’s mount, Nandi the bull.¹⁷⁶ Thus it would not be surprising that a natural bluff adjacent to Śiva’s temple would be so designated. Its presence may even have influenced the choice of the site. More importantly, it would be unthinkable for Aṃśuvarman, the apparent builder of Kailāsakūṭa, to situate his own dwelling higher than that of the deity, by the dust of whose feet he claimed to be favored. As one who chose Śiva as his paramount deity, however, it would be natural to share the name of his palace. It seems, therefore, that the names of both the Deopatan mound and the royal palace have a common source. Beyond that there is no apparent reason to connect the two.

¹⁷¹ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 118-119.

¹⁷² *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963d.

¹⁷³ *Gopālarāja-vamśūvali*, fol. 51b.

¹⁷⁴ Snellgrove 1961:6. It is a widely accepted popular view, engendered perhaps by Lévi’s observation that the name “Kailāsa-kūṭa still remains attached to a hillock sit-

uated to the north and just above the temple of Paśupati” (1905:11, 138). Unless the bluff was so called in his time, the addition of the suffix *kūṭa* seems to have been gratuitous.

¹⁷⁵ Wright 1966:83-87, 89-90; Hasrat 1970:40, 43.

¹⁷⁶ Bernier 1970:108.

The Kailāsa bluff, like Paśupatinātha and all of Deopatan, does reveal a heavy concentration of Licchavi remains. Many are architectural fragments, columns, thresholds, door jambs, and related units derived from opulent buildings long in ruins (Plates 289, 298, 316, 317). But such fragments are scattered throughout Deopatan and, like them, the Kailāsa pieces probably signify little with respect to Kailāsakūṭa. They most likely originate in a number of different structures that once beautified the old city.

The late chronicles, which despite their deficiencies are often quite correct, affirm the existence of a Licchavi royal palace in Deopatan. According to the Buddhist rescension, Śivadeva I (ca. A.D. 590-604) abandoned a palace in Baneshwar (a Kathmandu suburb south of Deopatan) to build anew in Deopatan.¹⁷⁷ Having done so, he created "nine new tols," "founded and peopled Navatol," or, alternately, built a city at the crossroads named Naubali.¹⁷⁸ These must be allusions to Navali-tol, the local name for western Deopatan, which is almost certainly derived from Navagrha, one of the Licchavi names for the city. Śivadeva, we are informed, also built a nine-story palace and established or revived the worship of a number of deities, many of whom are familiar to this particular area.

Continuing their story, the chroniclers affirm that Aṃśuvarman, the documented successor of Śivadeva, "left the Durbar at Deva Patan, and removed to one which he had built, with many beautiful courtyards, in a place named Madhyalakhu. He also caused his Kajis and ministers to be accommodated with houses in the same place." Narendradeva, Aṃśuvarman's successor several kings removed, also "settled down at Madhyalakhu."¹⁷⁹ Here it should be emphasized that the chronicles say nothing at all about this court being near Deopatan, although Wright footnoted Madhyalakhu as "some ruins on the road south of Dev Patan." These could not be located by Lévi some quarter of a century later.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ Wright 1966:83-84. The Brahmanical version (Hasrat 1970:40) says he left "his old Darbar of Vāgeśvarī" for that purpose, a confusing reference since Jayavāgīśvarī, a Licchavi image (Plate 537) is enshrined at the very crossroads at which tradition affirms the new palace was built.

¹⁷⁸ Wright 1966:83-84; Hasrat 1970:40.

Inasmuch as the shift of palace, or chancery, from Mānagrha to Kailāsakūṭa actually took place during this royal succession, the location of Madhyalakhu assumes an extraordinary importance. If it did lie south of Deopatan, as Wright affirmed, it may perhaps be identified with Māni- or Manilakhu, farmland known to the Newars of the area by that name (Map 6). Since it is now surrounded by Chetri settlers who are strangers to the regional traditions, it was necessary to find Deopatan Newars who could guide me to the site. Although not identical, both Madhyalakhu and Manilakhu have essentially the same meaning. The Sanskrit *madhya* and Newari *māni* both mean "middle," while *lakhu* is the Newari word for "gate." Thus both names mean Central Gate, perhaps defining a second gate in Deopatan's wall or a main gate of a palace compound. The word *lakhu* is in fact very close to *lāykhū*, the Newari term for palace, and thus conceivably the names actually once meant "Central Palace."

In any event, within the general area that Newars know today as Manilakhu there is a rather extensive, high, and grass-covered midden that reveals substantial brick deposits from a former occupation. The nature and possible identification of this mound must await archaeological excavation. Given the marvelous surprises the Kathmandu Valley so frequently offers the inquisitive, it may one day reveal some of the "many beautiful courtyards" of Aṃśuvarman's palace. Whatever the midden represents, it is surely significant that the Deopatan sacred processional way, the Newar *upāko vanegu*, makes a very precise detour for the sole unexplained purpose of circumambulating the hillock of Manilakhu (Map 6).

Another factor that might suggest Deopatan to have been a Licchavi capital is related to events of the Malla Period. With two exceptions prior to the period of the Three Kingdoms, we do not know where any king of Nepal was crowned. The exceptions are the coronations of Jayadeva in A.D.

¹⁷⁹ Wright 1966:89, 93; Hasrat 1970:43.

¹⁸⁰ Wright 1966:89 n. 127. In an author's commentary Hasrat 1970:43 n. 1, locates it "near Devapatan to the west of it" and somewhat gratuitously adds, "except for ruins, there is no trace of the place at present." Lévi 1905:11, 138.

1256 and of Arimalla II in A.D. 1320.¹⁸¹ Each a king from the rival dynasties established in the then capital of Bhaktapur, their coronations took place in Deopatan. These coronations suggest that Deopatan had been a capital which, although abandoned in favor of Bhaktapur, retained its ancient mystique. We may cite a comparison from our time. The coronation of the reigning king of Nepal, rather than being performed in the new Narayan Hiti palace, took place in Hanuman Dhoka. Abandoned as a royal residence more than three-quarters of a century ago, Hanuman Dhoka was chosen because of its traditional associations as the more fitting venue for the coronation. But it must be remembered that Paśupati-nātha, the foremost national shrine of Nepal Mandala, is in Deopatan, and perhaps the Early Malla coronations were held in the vicinity of the temple for some other reason.

Finally, though doubtful, there is the chance that Wang Hsüan-t'sê's P'ouo-lo-tou transcribes Paśupati (or Paśupatau, the locative case), one of the Licchavi names for Deopatan; this would identify the seventh-century capital.

Taken together, the sum of the evidence that can be assembled in support of Deopatan as a Licchavi capital city is inconclusive. The fact that there is stronger evidence for other places—Hadigaon and Kathmandu—suggest that Deopatan did not play this role.

Hadigaon

With the discovery in Hadigaon of the then earliest known inscription of Aṃśuvarman by Sylvain Lévi at the turn of the century, speculation followed that this might be the site of one if not both palaces, Mānagrha and Kailāsakūṭa, and that Hadigaon was therefore the capital of the Licchavis. The inscription, paired with a later issue, was fixed in a low platform where the main street widens to form a small plaza at the head of the stairway to Satya Nārāyaṇa, the location where both inscriptions still remain (Map 5: 19; Plates

¹⁸¹ In N.S. 377 Mārga and 440 Caitra (*Gopālarājāvamśāvalī*, fols. 37b, 44a).

¹⁸² Lévi 1908:III, inscr. 13 (82-90); D. Vajracharya 1973: inscrs. 72, 77 (301-308, 320-335).

¹⁸³ Lévi 1908:III, 83-85.

¹⁸⁴ Lévi 1905:II, 138.

¹⁸⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 71 (290-300). Previous

50, 103).¹⁸² Dated M.S. 30 Jyeṣṭha (A.D. 606) and issued from Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana, the earlier inscription is concerned with stipulated allotments to the occupants, sacred and secular, of a palace, together with references to a coronation horse and elephant. As the assumed first issue of Aṃśuvarman, this was believed by Lévi to concern Aṃśuvarman's coronation and the organization of his new palace, Kailāsakūṭa.¹⁸³ Because the inscription also mentioned "Mānagrha gate" as a royal beneficiary, Lévi concluded that it referred to a gate of the new palace, so named because it faced the old palace, and that they therefore lay near each other. In this he may have been influenced by what appears to be Wright's gratuitous footnote that Madhyalakhu, the site of Aṃśuvarman's palace, lay south of Deopatan, the traditional seat of his predecessor's palace. But it was difficult to reconcile this information with the fact that an inscription apparently referring to both palaces lay some distance away in Hadigaon. "In any case," said Lévi, "the new royal residence, be it north, south, or west, was in the immediate vicinity of Deopatan . . . and of the Licchavi palace Mānagrha."¹⁸⁴

Meanwhile, the inscription of Aṃśuvarman at Bungamati has been shown to antedate the Hadigaon inscription by a year,¹⁸⁵ thus weakening the assumption that the latter concerned his coronation and installation in Kailāsakūṭa. Enthusiasm for Hadigaon as a palace site has also waned following limited excavations at what seemed the most promising site (Map 5: 12). These, though yielding Licchavi remains, revealed nothing that seemed to be a palace.¹⁸⁶ These problems notwithstanding, one can marshal a substantial body of evidence that Hadigaon was the seat of Mānagrha. But its successor, Kailāsakūṭa, almost certainly lay elsewhere.

The most compelling evidence that Mānagrha, the earlier palace, lay in Hadigaon is provided by two inscriptions. One is that which aroused speculations in the first place; the other is an edict of readings deciphered the date as 34 (Bhagvanlal and Bühler 1880:inscr. 6; Gnoli 1956:inscr. 39), but N. Pant 1965:4-5 has shown it to be 29.

¹⁸⁶ Deo 1968:3-46. D. Vajracharya 1973:95-96 in introducing this celebrated palace avoids speculating about its location, stating only that it is unknown.

Jayadeva II (ca. A.D. 713-733). The latter, badly damaged and its date illegible, stands at a locality known as Narayan Chaur, a grassy elevated plot in Naksal, a short distance almost due west of Hadigaon (Maps 4, 5).¹⁸⁷ It is a lengthy edict concerned with judicial affairs and the delimitation of the terrains they concern. In keeping with Licchavi custom, the boundaries of these terrains are carefully defined by means of the names of villages, roads, paths, temples, *vihāras*, *dharmasālās*, and other familiar objects and places. Indeed, the Jayadeva inscription provides a veritable map of the Narayan Chaur neighborhood in his time. Unfortunately, most of the places mentioned have disappeared or can no longer be identified with any certainty. An exception is the Māneśvara-rājaṅgaṇali, the Māneśvara royal palace, which almost certainly corresponds to Mānagrha.

From the inscription it is clear that the Māneśvara palace lay on the western bank of a river named Japtikhu. This could be the indigenous name for the Dhobi Khola, the Washerman's River, a recent Nepali appellation. The river's name seems to have been inconstant, having been once known as the Rudramati and now, for Nepali speakers, the Dhobi Khola, but to Newars the Hijā-khusi. It is the Newars' word for stream, *khusi*, that accounts for the final syllable of Japtikhu. If it is indeed the Dhobi Khola, then Māneśvara palace lay on its western bank, not far from Narayan Chaur, a site corresponding to the location of Hadigaon.¹⁸⁸

The part of Jayadeva's inscription in which the name Māneśvara-rājaṅgaṇali appears is concerned with delimiting the territory over which the *dauvārika*, an officer of the crown, shall have jurisdiction. Since it embraced only half of the existing palace compound, the portion in the *dauvārika*'s charge is specifically delimited with such locutions as "after entering the eastern gate," "passing through the front of the king's palace," and "exiting from the western gate." Also named as a fur-

ther specific in separating the jurisdictions is "the distinguished Māneśvara."

This famous Śivaliṅga, which tradition assigns to Mānadeva I, still exists in Hadigaon (Map 5: 13). As an almost forgotten accessory to the worship of the goddess Māneśvarī, into whose temple it is somewhat casually incorporated, the grey stone linga is impressively large and bears the glistening polish one associates with Licchavi craftsmanship in stone. The associated goddess, Māneśvarī, has long been synonymous with Taleju, the Malla kings' tutelary. But given the name, incorporating that highly interesting vocable, *māna*, it seems possible that she once had a distinct personality and was, as Lévi speculated, the Licchavi tutelary.¹⁸⁹ Although today the shrine is primarily devoted to the worship of the goddess as Taleju, the souvenir of the two divinities within endures in the otherwise unexplainable reduplication "Mānamāneśvarī," as the temple is known. Thus either the two divinities, Māneśvara and Māneśvarī, as Śiva and Śakti have been known in the locale since Licchavi times, or the preexisting deity Māneśvara, prompted the Mallas to install the goddess of like name in the same place. That the existing temple elevation dates from the Malla Period signifies nothing, of course, since any number of successive temples may have risen over the same foundation.

We know that after Kailāsakūṭa became the seat of the de facto rulers, beginning with Aṃśuvarman and continuing with the Ābhīra Guptas, Mānagrha continued as the Licchavi seat. Even after the restoration of their dynasty to the throne in the person of Narendradeva, who opted to rule from the newer palace, the old palace would have continued to house Licchavi kin. This may be compared to the situation in contemporary Nepal, where the king and his closest relatives reside at Narayan Hiti, the new palace, but distant ones, "poor cousins," so to speak, still have the right to parts of old Hanuman Dhoka. By the time Jayadeva referred to the old palace by the name of the

¹⁸⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 149 (563-572). I believe Narayan Chaur would be another rewarding site for archaeological investigations, since it is relatively unencumbered and was an area of concentrated settlement, as the inscription shows.

¹⁸⁸ It seems somewhat surprising that the foremost schol-

ar of Licchavi Nepal does not relate this palace to Mānagrha but speculates that it lay in Lajimpat, a Kathmandu suburb, because the name Lajimpat is derived from Rājapattana, signifying a royal city (D. Vajracharya 1973:324).

¹⁸⁹ Lévi 1905:11, 105-106.

prestigious *linga* attached to it, Mānagrha seems to have been jointly held by *dauvāriḱas* and *pañcālis*, royal and local administrators, a right perhaps dependent on their Licchavi descent. Since by this time no king had reigned from Mānagrha for almost a century, it is likely that physical deterioration was already well under way. In the years of Licchavi decline that followed Jayadeva's reign, it must have continued to decay. Mānagrha's history may well parallel that of a better known palace, probably antedating it by not too many years, erected by the Roman emperor Diocletian (A.D. 284-305) on what is now the Yugoslav Dalmatian coast. Accompanying the decline of the empire, the palace fell into decay and was slowly invested by squatters, centuries of whose successive dwellings, tacked between elegant columns and formal porticoes, eventually all but obliterated it. The memory of the palace, its compound now become a small town, endured, however, in the Italian name Spalatum, now become the Yugoslav town of Split. But in Nepal, where traditional architecture of wood and brick is less enduring, the invasion and decay were more complete. Perhaps assisted by earthquakes, the palace in time became totally effaced except for the sturdy Māneśvara *linga* that stood nearby.

With this background, it would now be well to reexamine Aṃśuvarman's Hadigaon inscription. Symmetrically paired with the later issue, which postdates it by two years, it may or may not stand in its original place. But this location, in the main street by the stairway to the celebrated Nārāyaṇa temple and the continuing path to Deopatan and Paśupati, the crossroads would certainly have been an ideal place to publicize announcements like these two. The later one stipulates the exact sums to be dispensed in favor of certain principal deities and shrines of Nepal Mandala; the earlier one, payments to be made to occupants of a palace.

Observing that he is acting "in accordance with

¹⁹⁰ Lévi 1908:III, 87. That it was not Paśupati to which the entry referred is made doubly certain by the inclusion of the word "each" (*pratyekam*). Further, all the deities listed are intimates of the palace, and if Paśupati had been named among them, it is almost certain that he would be first, not last. Allotted "*pu 6, pa 2*," double the sum stipulated for the palace deities. Paśupati heads the list of divine

the custom of former kings," Aṃśuvarman details more than two dozen of these palace occupants as beneficiaries of state largesse, each one followed by the stipulated sum of *pu* and *pa* (*purāṇas* and *ḱārśāpanas*) the individual is to receive. Beginning with several palace deities, each to have "*pu 3, pa 1*," the list continues with a few dignitaries, each to receive "*pu 25*." Then follow the sacred coronation elephant and horse (each "*pu 3, pa 1*") and many others in the service of the crown: the standard-bearer, fly whisk holder, supervisor of the throne, of the water supply, of processions, various gates (that is, attached offices), down even to the palace charwoman. But what concerns us is the entry immediately following the palace deities, namely that "each illustrious lord" (*śrībhattāraḱa-pādānām pratyekam*) shall receive twenty-five *pu-rāṇas*, the largest designated stipend, and enjoyed by only a few beneficiaries. Lévi wrongly identified *śrībhattāraḱa* as Paśupati. In fact, it is a direct and exclusive reference to members of the Licchavi dynasty.¹⁹⁰ Paśupati is regularly called *bhattāraḱa*, but the name is never prefixed with *śrī*, nor is the locution ever applied to Aṃśuvarman or the Ābhīra Guptas, as a perusal of the corpus of inscriptions shows. The Licchavi kings are consistently identified with the honorific formula "great king, illustrious Lord So-and-so." From the time of Śivadeva I (ca. A.D. 590-604), the honorific was further amplified with the specific "belonging to the Licchavi dynasty." Even puppet Licchavis, like Dhruvadeva and Bhīmārjunadeva, were so labeled. As a random example one may regard an inscription in which "śrī-Jiṣṇugupta" unquestionably wields the power, but his Licchavi counterpart enjoys the resounding title *Licchavi-ḱulāḱetu-bhattāraḱa-mahārāja-śrī-Dhruvadeva*.¹⁹¹ Thus, there is no doubt that the sum set aside for "each *śrī-bhattāraḱapāda*" of the palace referred to the Licchavi kings and crown princes. As such, it unequivocally identifies the palace referred to as the Licchavi seat,

beneficiaries in the companion inscription (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 77 [320-335]). This inscription, too, it may be noted, accords another stipend, "*pu 6, pa 2*," to *śrī-bhattāraḱapāda* and "*pu 3, pa 1*" to Māneśvara. We do not know why the "dhārā-Māneśvara," literally, the Māneśvara fountain, was accorded a similar sum.

¹⁹¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 109 (414-418).

Mānagrha.¹⁰² Since the inscription referred to the Licchavi palace and the gods, royalty, and functionaries within, it seems logical that Aṃśuvarman would have placed his announcement near the things and people with which it was wholly concerned. If in the course of time the edict has been displaced, which seems unlikely, given its particular location and symmetrical arrangement with the twin stele, it would still not have been far away. The edict, Mānagrha, and its occupants—the Licchavi kings, their tutelaries, their throne, their coronation elephant and horse, and even the lady who swept up for them—were in Hadigaon.

If one needs further persuasion that the palace Aṃśuvarman referred to was Mānagrha, not Kailāsakūṭa, the inscription perhaps contains another bit of evidence in its particular date. This is Śamvat 30 Jyeṣṭha-śukla-ṣaṣṭhī, the bright half of the month of Jyeṣṭha, A.D. 606. Known as Kumāra-ṣaṣṭhī (Kumāra's, or Kārttikeya's, Sixth) and colloquially as Sīthī-nakha, Sīthī-khaṣṭhī, or simply Ṣaṣṭhī or Sīthī, Jyeṣṭha-śukla-ṣaṣṭhī has long been an important ceremonial date in Nepal. We have already encountered it as the one on which, for unknown reasons, the traditional battle between Yaṃ and Yaṅgala, the rival sectors of Kathmandu, took place. It is the traditional day toward the end of May or early June, just previous to the onset of the monsoon rains, for concluding the worship of lineage deities (*kuḷadevatā*, *degu*, *devāli*), for cleaning wells (since the holy serpents are away worshipping their own clan gods), and for repairing buildings. The choice of Jyeṣṭha-śukla-ṣaṣṭhī as the date for this edict, a date on which buildings are repaired, suggests it to have been particularly appropriate respecting a venerable structure like Mānagrha, but one with no particular application

¹⁰² D. Vajracharya 1973:304 also defined "*śrī-bhaṭṭāraka-pāda*" as former kings and crown princes honored by this allotment. But he did not spell out that these were Licchavis, or take it as evidence that the palace concerned was Mānagrha. Elsewhere he appears to argue for Hadigaon as the site of Kailāsakūṭa (1973:308).

¹⁰³ *Kathmandu Valley* 1975:11, 88, 103; Gutschow 1977: 90-91; but published as Kārttikeya by Slusser 1972:94, Pl. XLIXa.

¹⁰⁴ Rao 1968:11, part 2, 428-429.

¹⁰⁵ Dutt 1925:97.

¹⁰⁶ The ninth-century date proposed for the image on

to the new and opulent Kailāsakūṭa. Given the continuum of culture that so characterizes Nepal Mandala, there can be little reasonable doubt that the date had much the same significance in A.D. 606 as it did in Malla times and in modern Nepal.

The evidence provided by these inscriptions—one of Aṃśuvarman, the other of Jayadeva—that Mānagrha lay in Hadigaon is bolstered by still other evidence. Just northwest of Mān[eśvara]-Māneśvarī temple, is a superb image of Kārttikeya, (Kumāra, the martial son of Śiva), which has been erroneously identified by devotee and scholar alike as "Bhagavatī" or, at best, Viṣṇu or "Mahaviṣṇu" (Plates 418, 419).¹⁰³ With six heads and twelve arms, seated on Viṣṇu's mount, and arrayed for battle against Tarakāsura, Kārttikeya is enshrined at the western edge of the compact part of the Hadigaon settlement (Map 5:16). This image, correctly identified, becomes significant to the history of Hadigaon when we consider the deity's role in the traditional Indian city. The *āgamas* prescribe the appropriate types of Kārttikeya images for different kinds of towns. The one that "must grace a temple constructed for this deity in the *rājadhāni* (the capital city) of a reigning sovereign is to be one with six faces, six arms, twelve eyes and twelve or six ears."¹⁰⁴ When we add this prescription to the fact that the western gate of a city traditionally was called Saināpatya, from Senāpati, that is, Kārttikeya, Commander-in-Chief of the gods,¹⁰⁵ can we doubt that this particular image, established at the western edge of the town, corroborates the mounting evidence that Hadigaon was the Licchavi capital?¹⁰⁶ Even the markedly regular plan of Hadigaon suggests to me that it may have been formally laid out as a capital in the prescribed *padas*, beside or englobing the little trading post of Vṛjīkarathyā,

stylistic considerations by Pal 1974:139-140, fig. 249, if correct, need not disturb us. The image may well have replaced an earlier one, a not uncommon practice in Nepal. Well-known examples are the Palanchok Bhagavatī, discussed in Chapter 11, or the seventeenth-century Deopatan Śāṅkara-Nārāyaṇa supported on a pedestal belonging to a sixth-century predecessor (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 50 [198-203]; Pal 1970:128-133, fig. 103; 1974: 35, fig. 52). The probable relation of the Hadigaon Kārttikeya to the temple of Ṣaṣṭhī, one of the divine designates of Aṃśuvarman's largesse toward Mānagrha and its dynasty, will be discussed in relation to these same divinities in Kath-

which had long lain at this strategic site at the river crossing. This may also explain why there seems to be no previous indigenous name for Hadigaon.

Finally, as further illumination of Hadigaon's history, there is the Newar name for the nearby community of Māgal. As a study of the Hadigaon plan shows (Map 5), there are two clusters of settlement known to Newars by this name, which I have distinguished as Magal (or Maligaon) A and B. Magal B is Māligaon, literally Gardeners' Village, as it is known in Nepali, which straggles along what was the main Dakṣiṇakolī-Devagrāma road. Magal A, separated from B by fields, lies a short distance north, just south of Mānamāneśvarī temple and, significantly, inside the limits of the Hadigaon *upāko vanegu*. Given the considerable weight of the foregoing arguments respecting Hadigaon as a capital city, I believe that Magal A, both in name and place, is related to Mānagr̥ha, the linga Māneśvara, and to the village Māneśvara, so known to the Licchavis for the prestigious linga and palace it lay beside.¹⁹⁷ Quite simply, by clinging to the name Māgal, the Newars have placed at this spot a sign writ large: "the place of Mā," be it Mānadeva, Mānagr̥ha, Māneśvara, or Māneśvarī. It is somewhat the same sign one reads on the Dalmatian coast, but there spelled "Split." And in Dalmatia, were it not for extant ruins, amply documented, it would also take exceptionally effective sleuthing to recover the palace of Diocletian from such a place name.

The attentive reader may fairly ask why, if Mānagr̥ha stood near Māneśvara-Māneśvarī in Hadigaon, were its ruins not recovered during the archaeological excavations carried out at that very place? These explorations were "tappings, essentially small-scale and with limited objectives."¹⁹⁸ The entire Hadigaon exploration, together with that of another site, was completed in a month. Since it yielded not only Licchavi coins but remains of Licchavi structures and bricked terraces

mandu. Another divine recipient, the Devī who heads the list, I believe to be the Licchavi tutelary, Māneśvarī, as I will discuss in Chapter 11.

¹⁹⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:572, in discussing what is surely this Māneśvaragrāma, suggests the parallel with Paśupati, another celebrated linga whose name also signified the surrounding village, as it does to our day. Manandhar

and courtyards, it would seem that the excavations were neither thorough enough or extensive enough. As Mānagr̥ha may have consisted of ephemeral quadrangles of wood and brick,¹⁹⁹ perhaps the recovered terraces and courtyards, deemed unworthy of such a celebrated palace, in fact pertained to that very place. Thus it seems the only way to settle properly the question of Mānagr̥ha's emplacement is to dig again. Were it my spade, I would dig it deep in various directions from "the distinguished Māneśvara," and would not omit a scratch or two at Magal A.

As for Kailāsakūṭa, there are compelling reasons to believe that it lay in Dakṣiṇakoligrāma, but there are nevertheless two factors that support its location in Hadigaon. Both of the Hadigaon inscriptions were issued as direct orders of Aṃśuvarman himself, rather than through the usual delegate (*dūtaka*). This omission suggests that the edicts were issued not far from where the king himself was, namely, his headquarters, Kailāsakūṭa. The recovery of bricks stamped with Aṃśuvarman's name from the environs of Hadigaon raises the possibility that they might have originated in his palace.²⁰⁰ But, even so, considering what we know of this great personage, the "scholar king," grammarian, innovator, and builder, it would not be surprising to find remnants of other buildings he had raised, not only in a place as important as Hadigaon, but most likely in many other places as well. Aside from these factors—which are of considerable weight—there seems no other reason to believe that Kailāsakūṭa should be sought in Hadigaon. Certainly the troublesome "Mānagr̥ha gate" of the inscription, upon which Lévi and others leaned so heavily in arguing the palaces' proximity, is a very insubstantial one, leading only to error. One has but to reflect on Indian cities to grasp the weakness of this argument. There is a Lahore Gate in Delhi, named because it leads to Lahore, not because Lahore stands by the gate.

1977:86 also speculates that the name Māgal relates to Mānagr̥ha and corresponds to the location of the palace.

¹⁹⁸ Deo 1968:1.

¹⁹⁹ A question explored in Chapter 7.

²⁰⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:294-295, 308; Manandhar 1977: 86-87.

Likewise, the “Bhairava Dhoka” of Kathmandu was not named for a deity by the gate but for Pacali Bhairava, to whose somewhat distant shrine that gate led. In locating Kailāsakūṭa, therefore, it will be well to look elsewhere.

Kathmandu

Until recently, evidently misled by the presumed credentials of other cities as Licchavi capitals, scholars have failed to examine Kathmandu as a contender for the site of the Licchavi capital. But it has even more impressive credentials than they. It seems almost certain that it was the seat of Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana.²⁰¹

The most important prima facie evidence regarding the location of Kailāsakūṭa in Kathmandu is provided by two fourteenth-century colophons first published by Petech. Both name a certain nobleman, the *mahāpātra* śrī-Udayasiṃha, as “descended from the dynasty [*vaja*, that is, *vamśaja*] of Kailāsakūṭa in Yaṅgaladeśa.”²⁰² Petech mistakenly equated Yaṅgala (southern Kathmandu) with Yala (Patan) and inferred from the colophons that Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana was in Patan. Subsequently, in pointing out the egregious error of place identification, scholars have not attached much importance to the entries themselves, and have dismissed the colophons altogether.²⁰³ In short, the baby has been thrown out with the bath. There is no doubt from the colophons that the Kailāsakūṭa dynasty belonged to Yaṅgala. Since no one denies that Yaṅgala denotes Kathmandu, it follows that if the “dynasty of śrī-Kailāsakūṭa [was] of Yaṅgaladeśa,” it was of that city. And since we have now established the limits of Yaṅgala, then Udayasiṃha’s

²⁰¹ Schooled in the anthropological concept of field work, this was my research approach respecting the location of the Licchavi capitals, and a methodology I was committed to teach my Nepali assistants under the terms of the JDR3rd Fund grant that made my work possible. Working closely with me through 1970-1971, G. Vajracharya continued these techniques in assisting me from afar on my return to Washington. At that time, and during a period of independent work otherwise funded, it became increasingly apparent to Vajracharya that Kailāsakūṭa should be sought in Kathmandu. For the writing of this chapter, documented results of Vajracharya’s research, prepared in Nepali, were not available. Only a brief allusion to this startling proposition had appeared in English

family lived somewhere in Kathmandu south of Maru-tol/Kaṣṭhamaṇḍapa.

Continuously throughout the history of Nepal Mandala, the names of dynasties and of the palaces they traditionally occupied are correlated. The Licchavis’ traditional identification was long with Mānagrha, and the non-Licchavi de facto rulers such as Aṃśuvarman and the Ābhīra Guptas with a rival chancery, Kailāsakūṭa. Only with the Licchavi restoration, when luxury or some other factor outweighed tradition, did the king move to Kailāsakūṭa and leave Mānagrha to the royal poor cousins. In the Malla Period the same word, *rāja-ḥkula*, literally royal lineage, applied with equal validity to the dynasty and to the seat they occupied; dynastic and palace name were synonymous and interchangeable.²⁰⁴ Thus the name Tripura referred not only to the Bhaktapur royal palace, but equally to the town in which it stood, and to the lineage of the Tripura-rājas who dwelt in both Tripuras—palace and town. It seems that the word *vaja* of the two colophons, a deformation of *vamśaja* (lineage or dynasty) must be understood in the same double sense as the Malla equivalent, *ḥkula*. The expression, therefore, means “the dynasty by name śrī-Kailāsakūṭā” and/or “of the seat by name śrī-Kailāsakūṭa.” As far as we know, in Licchavi Nepal the name “Kailāsakūṭa” did not have a dynastic connotation, since it became the chancery of persons of various lines: Aṃśuvarman, the Ābhīra Guptas, and the later Licchavis. But later on, the palace name Kailāsakūṭa, like Tripura, must have come to signify both meanings of *rāja-ḥkula*, the building and the lineage who had the right to dwell in it. Thus it seems clear that in tell-

(P. Sharma 1975:12). The following discussion, therefore, is based on our joint field work and subsequent communication by letter and in person. But the in-depth story of Kailāsakūṭa is G. Vajracharya’s, and must be sought in his publication, now available as *Hanūmāṇḍhokā rājadara-bāra* (1976).

²⁰² Petech 1958:200.

²⁰³ D. Regmi 1969:238; Snellgrove 1961:6 n. 1; B. Acharya 1963:30.

²⁰⁴ D. Vajracharya 1971a writes that this is a local application, and that in Indian usage *rājāḥkula* connoted only “royal dynasty.” But Monier-Williams 1899:872 also gives the second meaning as familiar to Sanskrit literature, viz. “a royal palace or court (where also law is administered).”

ing us that Udayasiṃha was a descendant of the Kailāsakūṭa family of southern Kathmandu, the colophons also tell us where to seek the location of their traditional seat, namely Kailāsakūṭa.

From many documentary references relating to Kathmandu, we know that at least from the mid-twelfth century until the late fourteenth century, there existed a place in Yaṅgala known as Kelācheṃ, literally, the Kelā House (building, palace, mansion). The name is first encountered in a manuscript colophon dated A.D. 1143 (N.S. 263), with reference to a scribe who lived at “Kelācheṃ in Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa.”²⁰⁵ Other references follow. In A.D. 1372, for example, an inscription at Svayambhūnātha defines someone as a member of the family of “Kelācheṃ Ḍhokā,” and a few years later, about 1385, Sthitimalla is known to have sent a gift to “Yaṅgala Kelācheṃ.”²⁰⁰

To my knowledge, prior to G. Vajracharya’s interest, no particular attention had been accorded Kelācheṃ, nor was it identified or located. But as we realized the significance of Kelācheṃ in our search for the site of Kailāsakūṭa, its location assumed considerable importance. Following the exact determination of the limits of Yaṅgala, the sector of Kathmandu in which it lay, it was clear that Kelācheṃ should be sought from Maru-tol south. It seems almost certain that the site is in Yaṅgala near Jaisideval, the Jaisi or Jośi temple (Map 7: m-6), so named from the donor, Lakṣmī Narāyāṇa Jośi.

The first clue to this exciting discovery was hap-
penstance, a chance find related to other research. The verification of the dubious published version of an inscription on the pedestal of an image of Mañjunātha enshrined at Mañjuśrī-tol (Map 7: m-6; Plate 474), revealed that in A.D. 920 the donor dwelt in a *nani* (court) named Kelagargya.²⁰⁷ Investigation in the neighborhood led to nearby Kelāy-chok, a small domestic courtyard surrounded by ordinary houses. Next to the court is a minor shrine dedicated to Siṭhī-dyo, as Newars call both

Kārttikeya (Kumāra), the martial son of Śiva, and Ṣaṣṭhī, a mother goddess intimately associated with his legends. Among other things, Ṣaṣṭhī is the personification of the sixth day after the birth of a child, and it is she who is courted for her powers to bestow progeny.

In modern Nepal the popularity of both these deities has declined. Indeed, although Ṣaṣṭhī worship lingers in neighboring Bengal,²⁰⁸ where religious practices are similar, in the Kathmandu Valley it may fairly be considered defunct. Numerous Kārttikeya images scattered around the Valley attest to a one-time cult of Ṣaṣṭhī’s companion (Plates 416-419). But as Brother Gaṇeśa’s star ascended, Kārttikeya’s declined, and for some centuries he has been of little significance in the Kathmandu Valley.²⁰⁹ It is a rare citizen today who can even identify his old images. In Hadigaon, at what is undoubtedly his most wondrous manifestation in all Nepal, he is worshiped as the goddess Bhagavatī; elsewhere occasionally as Viṣṇu Garuḍāsana (although Kumāra’s vehicle is the peacock); and most commonly as “Bell Ears” (Ghaṇṭakārṇa) because of his particular ear ornaments. Given this milieu, it seems all the more remarkable that the Siṭhī-dyo of Kelāy-chok is properly identified, has a functioning shrine, however humble or rare the worshiper, his own attendant (who, contrary to normal expectations, is a priestess), and, finally, an annual if little-noted three-day festival. It culminates on that by-now familiar date, Jyeṣṭha-śukla-ṣaṣṭhī, Kumāra’s Sixth, and Aṃśuvarman’s choice for dating the Hadigaon edict. The officiants for Siṭhī-dyo’s affair come from two distant villages, Thasi (Sanagaon) south of Kathmandu and Balambu on the east (Map 3). The rationale, say these villagers, is that the Kelāy-chok Siṭhī-dyo was stolen from Balambu—leaving Thasi participation unaccounted for—and although unable to secure the god’s return, as former custodians they won the right to administer his annual festival.

Putting all these fragments of history and an-

the inscription, in the course of which he not only established a secure date for the image (see Chapter 10) but found a clue to the probable recovery of the site of Kailāsakūṭa.

²⁰⁸ Banerjea 1956:384 n. 1.

²⁰⁹ See Chapter 9.

²⁰⁵ D. Vajracharya 1962:110.

²⁰⁶ N.S. 492 Āśvina (D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 29 [21-24]); *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 63a.

²⁰⁷ The published inscription (D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 2 [2]) was guess-dated. Given the importance of the image, I requested G. Vajracharya to examine

thropology together, it may well be that the almost forgotten Kelāy-chok Siṭhī-dyo has led us to the places where Aṃśuvarman walked more than a millennium past. There is good reason to believe that the humble shrine of Siṭhī-dyo is all that remains of the Śaṣṭhīdevakula, the temple to Śaṣṭhī, that must have stood near Kailāsakūṭa, Aṃśuvarman's royal seat—just as surely as one did in Mānagrha and in Indian royal palaces of the same time. This is made clear by the Hadigaon inscription, which allots an equal sum of *purānas* and *ḥarsāpanas* to four deities connected with Mānagrha and the Licchavi dynasty who dwelt within: to Devī (probably to be identified as the Licchavi royal intimate, the *iṣṭadevatā* Māneśvarī);²¹⁰ to Agni, the Vedic god of fire; to the Licchavi lineage deity (*ḥuladevatā*); and to the temple of Śaṣṭhī, the Śaṣṭhīdevakula. That these four were indeed the palace and dynastic deities is made explicit by the poet-playwright Bāṇa, who has left such vivid descriptions of the court of Harṣavardhana, a contemporary of Narendradeva who ruled at Kanauj from A.D. 606-647 (Map 1).²¹¹ In his plays Bāṇa clearly portrays what must have been the practices of Mānadeva and his successors vis-à-vis these four. In *Kādambarī*, the Indian king, after a purificatory bath, first worshiped at the temple of what was apparently his personal deity, then he proceeded to the Agniśālā to perform *homa* (where then as now in the Valley, an eternal fire presumably burned). His son, returning to the palace, at once resorted to the dynastic *ḥuladevatā*, and, finally, at the news of a prince's birth, there followed the worship of Śaṣṭhī. And, what is most intriguing, the Śaṣṭhī of Harṣa's palace, no less than our Siṭhī-dyo of Kelāy-chok, was also in the charge of a priestess.

Given all these factors, the little bands of Thasi and Balambu villagers who yearly filter into Kathmandu, ignored by the polished folk of New Road, take on new significance. While perhaps we can never know the underlying reason of their annual pilgrimage, to me it suggests that in the little Siṭhī-dyo at Kelāy-chok we are not dealing with a local

godling, a *grāmadevatā* as it were, of Jaisideval-tol, but a deity whose one-time significance to a royal dynasty ordained some obligation on the part of these outlying settlements. Perhaps like the people of Kurppāsigrāma (today's Khopasi), who were to deliver annually fifty kinds of clay for the "door opening-jātrā and the Kailāsa-jātrā," whatever they may mean, the Thasi-Balambu people had their own particular assignments, which even now they continue faithfully to discharge.

The Siṭhī-dyo now worshiped in Kelāy-chok appears to be a Malla Period image of polychrome painted wood (Plate 421). But like the Śānkara-Nārāyaṇa of Gancha-nani in Deopatan, the Palanchok Bhagavatī,²¹² and a host of similar images, it is most likely the lineal descendant of an earlier deity, lost to fire, earthquake, or some other calamity. Of Kārttikeya's companion Śaṣṭhī no image of any kind has survived. But can it be mere coincidence that compels women of all walks who desire children to seek divine intervention at a hypaethral shrine mere steps away?

With respect to these two divinities, so closely associated in legend and practice, and in contemporary Nepal known by the same name Siṭhī (Sixth), one must wonder whether Aṃśuvarman's choice of Kumāra's Sixth to date the Hadigaon inscription had a wider application than as the traditional day for the repair of old buildings. Given Śaṣṭhī's presence in the palace *devaḥkula*, and perhaps an even more resplendent Kārttikeya nearby, one questions whether this special day may also have been related to them.

Important as it seems, we are by no means dependent on the Siṭhī-dyo of Kelāy-chok to establish the probability that Kailāsakūṭa is to be sought in Kathmandu, and specifically Dakṣiṇakoligrāma. We know from the Licchavis themselves that there was a Palace of the South, Dakṣiṇarājakula. It is mentioned in more than one inscription; in fact, in a *śilāpatra* standing opposite the Jaisi temple, Aṃśuvarman refers to Dakṣiṇarājakula as a point toward the northeast.²¹³ It seems possible that this was the name of the entire palace compound of

²¹⁰ See Chapter 11.

²¹¹ I am indebted to D. Vajracharya 1973:303-314 for pointing out the parallels with Indian practice.

²¹² Pal 1970:128-133, fig. 103; Pal 1974:35, fig. 52; see

Chapter 11.

²¹³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 58, 80, 150 (233-239, 342-344, 573-577). It is inscription 80 that stands at the Jaisi temple.

Dakṣiṇakolīgrāma, and that Kailāsakūṭa was one of the buildings that lay within. Contemporary references to Kailāsakūṭa, examined in Chapter 7, can only be construed to refer to a tall building, not a spread-out compound. Wang Hsüan-t'sê, for example, specifically referred to a marvelous "seven story tower" in the "middle of the palace," and Narendradeva, whom the envoy visited, likened Kailāsakūṭa to Mt. Kailāsa and the moonlit Himalaya.²¹¹ That some palace lay in the Kelāy-chok/Jaisi temple area is evident from Malla records. A sixteenth-century Kathmandu land transfer in this locale uses a "palace ruin" as one of the property boundary markers,²¹⁵ and until sometime in the seventeenth century, when the infamous *cautārā* Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Jośi erected his imposing temple facing Kelāy-chok—from whence the *tol* name Jaisideval (Jośi temple)—the neighborhood was known as Lamjugvala. Derived from a former Newar designation for king, Lamjugvala literally means King's Place. Perhaps it survives in Hlugaldevī, the name of a Mother Goddess who dwells there just beside the Jaisi temple (Plate 536).

Documents from the Licchavi Period provide one, and perhaps two, more clues that point to Dakṣiṇakolīgrāma as the later capital. An edict issued jointly by Jiṣṇugupta and Bhīmārjunadeva to villagers near Thankot favors them with a reduction in the taxes they had been obliged to remit in support of bullfights held in Dakṣiṇakolīgrāma.²¹⁶ Why, one must ask, should a village be compelled to contribute to such an affair in a distant town if it were not the capital city where their de facto ruler lived? Nor can one help but speculate that when a certain relative writes that Jiṣṇugupta, the king, lived in Yāprṇgrāma, in referring to the ancient *prṇ* of Yā, she also referred to the capital city Yaṅgala.²¹⁷

Without spadework over a large area of Yaṅgala/Dakṣiṇakolī, or even concentrated in Jaisideval-tol, we have no way of knowing beyond the evidence I have presented that this was indeed the site of the later Licchavi palace. Moreover, the matter is further complicated by the recent discovery

²¹⁴ Lévi 1905:1, 165; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 123, 129 (458-462, 485-489).

²¹⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. v, 133.

²¹⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 115 (433-437).

at Hanuman Dhoka of an inscription which, though severely damaged, refers to "old Licchavi palaces" that Aṃśuvarman had apparently restored (Plate 53).²¹⁸ Since the inscription is carved on an immense block, now part of the Degutale temple platform, it seems likely that it has always been in pretty much the same place. But one can hardly conceive of a palace, or series of palaces, however extensive, spread over an area as large as Hanuman Dhoka, to Jaisideval-tol. This is a riddle awaiting solution, but it certainly suggests that Ratnamalla's fifteenth-century palace was by no means the first to be erected at this strategic place.

If Dakṣiṇarājakula and its wondrous building Kailāsakūṭa did lie in Dakṣiṇakolī/Yaṅgala, one can imagine that its later history closely paralleled that of the older palace in Hadigaon. Deprived of a strong central government in charge of its upkeep, the palace, like others before it at Hanuman Dhoka, must have slowly decayed. At some time the villagers of Khopasi, if that was their purpose, ceased to deliver their loads of clay for the annual whitewashing of Kailāsakūṭa. More faithful, or merely closer perhaps, those of Thasi and Balambu continued to maintain their ordained relationship with the palace Ṣaṣṭhīdevakula, an obligation they honor yet. Humbled by time and natural calamities, Kailāsakūṭa must have endured in some form as the traditional residence of former kings. But during the Transitional Period, just as a certain Rājapattana (Royal City) became Lajimpat, so did the Kathmandu ruins, both architectural and dynastic, become known as Kelāchem. That they long commanded a special prestige is illuminated by the gift Sthitimalla sent them from Bhaktapur around A.D. 1385. For the gift he sent to Yaṅgala Kelāchem, whatever its content or purpose, was apparently sent for no other reason than that it was "ordained."²¹⁹ To me, at least, this speaks clearly about the past of Kelāchem and the little court of Kelāy near where I believe it and its celebrated predecessor, Kailāsakūṭa, lay.

The mysteries of Nepal Mandala have only begun to be explored by means of a hitherto neglected

²¹⁷ Ibid., inscr. 114 (431-432).

²¹⁸ Ibid., inscr. 91 (374-376).

²¹⁹ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 63a.

but major source, the oral traditions and customs of the Newars themselves. Tradition and custom are of immense help when, as in Hadigaon, they point to Mānagrha, or in Yaṅgala to Kailāsakūṭa and the Ṣaṣṭhīdevakula. But history, I think, will have to explain why Aṃśuvarman's twin inscriptions in Hadigaon are direct issues, while those in or near Kathmandu are through a delegate (*dū-taḥa*).²²⁰ It is an important reason for thinking, as does D. Vajracharya, that the king's chancery is to be sought in Hadigaon. Thus we must be cautious in assigning Kathmandu the role of the later capital city. But as of now, the two most probable ancient capital cities, one early, one late, were Hadigaon and southern Kathmandu. The shift from one to the other may have been guided by the *śāstras'* dictum that each new dynasty should lay out its own capital, for a king residing in another's "will meet death in no time." Given Aṃśuvarman's apparently tenuous right to rule, such a move might have seemed particularly prudent.

The Later Capitals

It seems probable that following the reign of Jayadeva II (ca. A.D. 713-733), Kailāsakūṭa, wherever it lay, continued to be occupied by ineffective successors like Mānadeva III or Balirāja, who presided over the Licchavi decline. Given the scant information about the political status of Nepal Mandala during these years that slipped imperceptibly into the Transitional Period, it seems fruitless to speculate about the location of a capital city at that time. As the nation fell apart, to be reconstituted in innumerable independent city-states and fiefdoms, each with a "king," it is unlikely that there was a capital in the true sense. But tradition may have looked to the seat of the last reigning Licchavis. If we must speculate, this was most probably Kathmandu, since that is where Sthitimala sent the gift ordained by custom.

As for the capital city of the early Mallas, it has been almost universally regarded as Patan, as if it

were an established fact.²²¹ Little is said about any other candidate except Bhaktapur, a city characterized as an occasional capital, and "seat of the rulers opposing the legitimate kings of Patan."²²² Even during the reign of Sthitimala and his successors, when Bhaktapur was clearly the capital, it is pictured as having usurped this role from the legal capital city, Patan.

The choice of Patan as the early Malla capital rests on a very insubstantial foundation. The "general contents" of the early chronicles, specifically V³, rather than pointing to Patan direct us to Bhaktapur. The number of manuscripts emanating from Patan has no bearing on its political role.²²³ These manuscripts were not political documents, but largely Buddhist texts that were naturally numerous in Buddhist Patan. The belief that Patan was the later capital rests essentially on the assumption that it was the Licchavi capital. This assumption, as I have established, is unfounded. So also is Patan's role as the royal capital of the Early Malla Period.

The late chronicles tell us that Narendradeva's successor, an undocumented Varadeva, "removed his court" to Patan.²²⁴ But we know that Narendradeva's documented successors, Śivadeva II and Jayadeva II, ruled from Kailāsakūṭa, the same place as their immediate predecessors. Unless Bhadradhivāsa, "auspicious seat," as the aged Narendradeva was pleased to call his chancery, was actually a different palace in a different place, which seems unlikely, then all ruled from Kailāsakūṭa. And the one candidate with no claim whatsoever to Kailāsakūṭa is Patan. In this instance the chronicles appear to have wandered from the path of history. There is no other evidence to support Patan as a royal capital at any time before the seventeenth century and the period of the Three Kingdoms. A colophon that has been construed to mean that Jyotirmalla (A.D. 1408-1428) ruled from Patan, thus revealing it to be the royal capital, is inadmissible.²²⁵ Jyotirmalla ruled from Bhaktapur, as his many documents testify, and the colophon

²²⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 83, 84 (351-356).

²²¹ Petech 1958:47, 58, 62, 171; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 508-509; D. Regmi 1969:240.

²²² Petech 1958:172.

²²³ Petech 1958:171, n. 1.

²²⁴ Wright 1966:93.

²²⁵ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 508-509.

in question does not name Patan as the king's capital, but that of the *mahāpātras*.²²⁶ These noblemen, particularly the seven powerful families known as the *saptakuṭumbaja*, were clearly already in control of Patan by the eleventh century. That is when the *mahāpātra* Varapāla is credited with the power to "enthroned and dethrone both royal families."²²⁷ Meghapāla's inscription of A.D. 1357 is not just a personal inscription of a court official seeking heavenly merit by restoring Pim-bahal, devastated by Muslims; it is an inscription of a powerful *mahāpātra* who boasts of his traditional authority in that office, and neglects even to mention the name of the ruling monarch.²²⁸ Later, the noble Yemkulivarman maintained his palace in the very center of the city, and his descendants, Viṣṇusiṃha and his sons, emerged as the undisputed masters of Patan, who treated with the Malla kings on equal terms. It is above all the presence of these powerful, semi-independent feudal lords throughout this long period of Patan history that more than any other factor belies its role as a capital city.

To say that Patan was not a royal capital is not to deny its importance. It was a cultural center and a politically turbulent city of some influence. But this influence proceeded not from the king, but from *pātras* and *mahāpātras* nominally submissive to him. Like Patan (and perhaps also Deopatan), Kathmandu had its *pātras* and *mahāpātras*, Pharping *rābuttas*, and Nawakot *sāmantas*. Alone among these semi-independent fiefdoms, Bhaktapur had no lords, governors, or vassals to rule it other than the king himself.

²²⁶ The colophon reads: "In N.S. 545 Phālguna-kṛṣṇa . . . in the reign of Jayajyotirmalla and in the time when the order of Mahāpātra Rājasimhadeva and Mahāmatya Nāthasiṃha is obeyed, the copying [of this manuscript] is completed.

"In Nepal there is a place known as Lalitāpurī which is accepted as a capital [*rājadhāni*]. All *pātras* live here like the gods in heaven. . . . May the three *pātras* belonging to the seven families be happy" (Shastri 1905:1916:11, 50-51).

²²⁷ An entry dated N.S. 219 Māgha (A.D. 1099) in the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 31a.

²²⁸ Petech 1958:118; D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 28 (19-21).

²²⁹ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 25a. The VK (4-5) af-

Bhaktapur moved to the fore as the political capital of Nepal at the end of the Transitional Period, when Ānandadeva I (A.D. 1147—ca. 1166) selected it for this purpose.²²⁹ He was apparently a native of nearby Banepa, a connection made evident in the name *bhuvanta*, a person from Bhoṭa (Banepa), consistently applied to his descendants.²³⁰ Not only did Ānandadeva's dynasty live in Bhaktapur, but that city hosted another royal family. The two became known as the *ubhaya-rājākula*, a term denoting not only the two dynasties but the two royal palaces from which they wielded authority.²³¹ These palaces were named Tripura and Yuthuniṃhaṃ, and although they remind us of the dual palaces maintained by the Licchavis and the de facto rulers, they cannot in any way be connected with Mānagrha and Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana.²³²

Little is known about Yuthuniṃhaṃ or where it lay in Bhaktapur, but its existence is made evident by the early chronicles.²³³ It was the seat of the royal line from which descended Rudramalla, the powerful noble of early fourteenth-century Bhaktapur.²³⁴ Rudramalla himself lived there, and into it he received Harasiṃha's widowed queen, Devaladevī, a welcome whose far-reaching repercussions were examined in the previous chapter. In Yuthuniṃhaṃ she raised her orphaned granddaughter, Rājalladevī, and to Yuthuniṃhaṃ came the orphan's groom, Sthitirājamalla, who also lived there for a time.

The Tripura palace, rival of Yuthuniṃhaṃ, was built by Ānandadeva when he chose Bhaktapur as his capital in A.D. 1147. The golden fountain, which

firms that Śivadeva (ca. A.D. 1099-1126) built a palace at Kīrti-Bhagatagrāma. Petech 1958:55 identifies the city as Kirtipur, but it may well have been Bhaktapur instead, a more likely choice since Kirtipur was traditionally part of the Maṅgal-rājya, in the grip of the Patan *mahāpātras*.

²³⁰ Jayadeva, Bhimadeva, Arjunadeva, and Jayaśakti are specifically referred to in this way (*Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 37a, b, 40b).

²³¹ See above or D. Vajracharya 1971a on the two meanings of *rājākula*.

²³² Petech 1958:120 n. 2 theorizes that they may be.

²³³ Its recognition by historians was long in coming, however, and for this credit goes to D. Vajracharya 1965c: 14 n. 2.

²³⁴ Petech 1958:groups C and D, chart facing p. 224.

so puzzled Petech, stood there—not in a palace in Patan.²³⁵ The name Tripura may be translated as “three buildings,” perhaps a reference to its style of architecture, or as “three cities.” Widely employed in Indian mythology, the word Tripura signifies many things, any one of which may have influenced Ānandadeva’s choice of the name. It is the name of a palace made of gold, iron, and silver whose demon occupants Śiva destroyed; it signifies the city in which dwelt the Brahmanical triad, Brahmā, Śiva, and Viṣṇu; and as Tripura-sundarī, the Fair Goddess of Tripura, it is a name applied to Dūrḡa.²³⁶ The name Tripura may have been chosen with an eye to all these Brahmanical associations, just as was probably the name Bhaktapur, City of Devotion, in which it stood.

Tripura lay in part at the site of the present Bhaktapur palace, and probably over part of what is now the rubble tract on its east, a legacy of the 1934 earthquake (Map 9: d/e-6). Ānandadeva’s immediate successors, Rudradeva and Amṛtadeva, each made substantial additions to it, the one adding a wing on the southern side, the other to the northern, and it continued to be occupied by their descendants.²³⁷ Sthitimalla, on ridding himself of the Tripura-rāja Arjunadeva,²³⁸ at once moved into the dead man’s palace. This was apparently a symbolic act that established his unquestioned authority as the ruler of Nepal Mandala.²³⁹ That his grandson Yakṣamalla also lived in Tripura is certain. He used one of its walls to publish an edict respecting the upkeep of the city walls.²⁴⁰ Likewise, his sons and nephews are known to have lived in “Tripura-rājakula.”²⁴¹ The last known mention of Tripura as a royal residence is with reference to Praṇamalla in A.D. 1548 (N.S. 668 Bhadra).²⁴² After that the name disappeared, and

we do not know what the palace was called during the incumbency of the later kings, whose court we will investigate in Chapter 8. The Bhaktapur palace is now usually known as the “Fifty-five Window Darbar” after one of its quadrangles (Plates 31-33). But nearby, in the rubble midden eastward, the old name Tripura seems to linger on at the forlorn little shrine of Tripura-sundarī, the Fair Goddess of Tripura. As one of the Navadurgā we will meet her again in Chapter 11.

The Tripura dynasty also at one time maintained a royal residence, not a palace, in Patan at an unidentified site called Tibhae.²⁴³ Although the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* leaves no doubt that this *rājavasa* (kings’ seat) belonged to Tripura, paradoxically and inexplicably it was built by Rudramalla of the rival Yuthunihmaṃ line. Constructed in A.D. 1319, it was soon destroyed in a Khasa raid on Patan.²⁴⁴ Several times referred to in the chronicle as a fort (*kvatha*), this *rājavasa* (and perhaps others before and after) was presumably used by the Tripura kings when they came to Patan to conduct affairs with the *pātras*. Their relations seem to have fluctuated between enmity and amity. At one time, for example, we find Ānandadeva looting Mānigvala²⁴⁵ and, at another, concluding a marriage alliance with the *pātra* Rajendrapāla.²⁴⁶ This was apparently considered advantageous to Tripura, inasmuch as the chroniclers are at pains to mention the relationship.

The name Tripura (Tripula, Tipura) studs the pages of the early chronicles, where it is synonymous with Bhaktapur and the royal authority emanating from that city.²⁴⁷ One must suppose that it is in fact to the Tripura lineage that the Ming records refer in the hitherto unexplained

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 66.

²³⁶ Rao 1968:11, 164-165; Tripurā is the name of a modern state in eastern India, as well as that of an ancient kingdom (Sircar 1971:93).

²³⁷ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 25a; Group B lineage, and probably A (Petech 1958:chart facing p. 224).

²³⁸ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 60b.

²³⁹ But contrasts with Amśuvarman’s behavior in similar circumstances.

²⁴⁰ D. Vajracharya 1964a:22-26; D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 64 (73-76).

²⁴¹ B. Paudel 1965:19-20; D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscs. 77, 79 (88-89, 90-92).

²⁴² D. Regmi 1966: part 3, app. A, inscr. 97 (108-111).

²⁴³ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 44a. The reading “*rājagrāma*” of the published transliteration is defective (D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. B, 137).

²⁴⁴ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 44a, 55b.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., fol. 45b.

²⁴⁶ VK (13-14).

²⁴⁷ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 33b, 39b, 42b, 45b, and *passim*.

name Ti-yung-t'a.²⁴⁸ The Chinese seem to have transposed the dynastic name, Tripura, and the indigenous town name, Khvapa. Thus Khvapa became K'o-pan, the name of the Bhaktapur "prince"—since they supposed the Rāmavarddhanas to be the "kings"—and Tripura, as Ti-yung-t'a, the name of the Valley kingdom.

Although it seems certain that the Tripura line, these *bhvanta*, originated in Banepa, why and how they came to take over Bhaktapur is unknown.²⁴⁹ But that Bhaktapur was their capital and that of Nepal Mandala from the mid-twelfth century until its division into Three Kingdoms at the close of the fifteenth century, cannot be questioned.

I am under no illusions that the last word has been said about the history of the cities and towns of Nepal Mandala and, particularly, where its various capitals lay. But insofar as one may now perceive, a sound working hypothesis emerges: the Kirāta seat was at Patan, the early Licchavis were installed at Hadigaon, and Aṃśuvarman shifted to Kathmandu, where the Ābhira Guptas and later

²⁴⁸ Petech 1958:201-202, 205-206, 208.

²⁴⁹ The question might possibly be illuminated by field research directed in the Tachapal and Golmadhi *tois* of

Licchavis subsequently ruled. After a long break, with no united kingdom, a capital was reestablished at Bhaktapur, and there it remained until the period of the Three Kingdoms, each with a separate capital. Finally, with the Shahs, came the return of the royal seat to Kathmandu alone, the inner mansion of the *mandala* that is the Kathmandu Valley.

Having investigated all these key cities of Nepal Mandala, we may now turn to the architectural monuments within them. For reasons that will become apparent in the next two chapters, I will begin with the existing structures, largely a legacy of the Malla Period. On this solid foundation we are then able to reconstruct something of the Licchavi architectural past, including the palaces whose locations have given us such concern. Finally, before broaching the world of the immortals, the subject of the final section, we shall investigate the physical remains of the palaces of the Three Kingdoms. And in so doing, we shall briefly regard some of the mortals who dwelt therein.

Bhaktapur, where it appears most of the Banepali now have their houses (Gutschow and Kölver 1975:38). Corresponding field work is indicated for Banepa.



CHAPTER 6

ARCHITECTURE: DESIGN FOR GOD AND MAN

THE SEIZURE of the Kathmandu Valley by Gorkha put an end to the Malla kings, but not to their palaces, temples, and shrines, or to the towns and villages over which they had ruled. The modest upland farmhouse excepted (Plate 82), the Gorkhalis introduced no competing styles of architecture, for as exponents of "military culture,"¹ they had none to introduce. Even at Gorkha and at Nawakot they had turned to the Newars for the construction of temples, palaces, and citadels, and such urban architecture as existed in these modest centers was chiefly Newar (Plates 72-74). After the conquest, Prithvi Narayan Shah and his court moved into the palaces and town houses vacated by the vanquished Mallas. As a practical matter—which conformed to the Shah king's admonition to patronize Newars—subsequent building also fell to the conquered people. Coupled with Prithvi Narayan's distrust of foreigners and their virtual exclusion from Nepal until 1950, this meant that there was little change in the traditional architecture. With the exception of the Rana mansions, the majority of which were built from the 1890s on,² architecturally the Kathmandu Valley continued until recent times to look much as it must have under the Malla kings. Undisturbed by the Shahs, even now

the Mallas' lofty portraits and the temples in which they worshiped dominate the palace squares (Plates 30-33, 239).

The Valley into which the Gorkhalis moved in the last half of the eighteenth century, and whose ambience they so little altered, was filled with Newar towns and villages whose origins may be traced to ancient *prñs* and *grāmas*, indigenous hamlets and Licchavi villages. So too, the structures that filled them have venerable antecedents. A number of monumental stupas, thousands of small counterparts, many fountains, and a few shrines and pillars are extant Licchavi works, and the foundations of many temples and some monasteries can be attributed to them. Until now thought to be irrecoverable without archaeological investigation, Licchavi architecture can be deduced from other indices, the subject of the following chapter. We know, therefore, that in architecture, as in so many other aspects of Valley culture, there was an unbroken continuum. The Valley of Prithvi Narayan Shah and of the rulers of the Three Kingdoms from whom he wrested it was in the main not unlike that of Sthitimalla, of Aṃśuvarman, or even Mānadeva I, kings who ruled Nepal Mandala in the fourteenth, the seventh, and the fifth centuries.

¹ The term is used by B. Acharya 1963a in contradistinction to Newar "artisan culture" (Malla and Rana

1973:11-12).

² *Kathmandu Valley* 1975:11, 112-125.

But to appreciate this, we should first examine traditional Nepali architecture as it can now be observed in the Kathmandu Valley.

Traditional Valley architecture encompasses temples and shrines, monasteries and stupas, the residences of kings and their subjects, community buildings, fountains, votive pillars, and a number of other minor features. None can be rigorously categorized as sacred or secular, for all serve both gods and men. The common houses and royal palaces alike have private chapels, shrines, and special places for worship. Community buildings provide amenities for man, but also incorporate shrines and images of the gods. Even the fountains, ponds, and wells are not merely utilitarian. They are usually created as acts of piety, are surrounded with sacred images and symbols, and water itself is divine. By the same token, buildings that are devoted to the gods are shared by men. The temples' colonnaded porches serve as places to rest and gossip, to buy and sell, to dry a bit of laundry, have a haircut, cook a meal, or to shelter overnight. Their tiered plinths provide bleachers for viewing spectacles in the squares, and are sometimes stages for them. Even the inner sanctum of some temples, normally reserved to the deity's image and its attendants, is invaded for secular purposes, serving on occasion as storeroom, workshop, or indigent's shelter. The one-time monastery buildings are also the common property of God and man in which, in a modern reversal of roles, man now enjoys the lion's share.

In the Kathmandu Valley, divinity is omnipresent, investing not only sophisticated images in bronze and stone, but a variety of symbols and objects, including trees, bodies of water, and especially natural stones. Gods and goddesses, godlings and powers for good and evil may be worshiped (and propitiated) in various places—in the home, the village, and the town, at the crossroads, by the wayside, at the riverbank or pondside, in a secluded forest, an open field, a cave, or on a hill. In all these places there may be no permanent dwelling for the gods, simply an unprotected image or symbol, a mandala for temporary invocation, or a hypaethral shrine (Plates 34, 178, 179, 533). But in these same places, the gods may also have enclosed dwellings. Like those of the mortals who build

³ No stupa would be consecrated to a Hindu divinity, but the nonsectarian ambience does not preclude the wor-

them, they may be modest in size and appointments, or richly endowed mansions. Although temple types are few, their modifications in terms of size, opulence, style, iconography, and other variables seem infinite.

Characteristically, the sophisticated deities of the Hindu pantheon such as Śiva or Viṣṇu, are worshiped in temples that are free-standing and therefore visible and accessible from all directions (Plates 185, 187-189, 208, 209, 213, 214). Conversely, the preferred place for the worship of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas is in sequestered temples enclosed in the quadrangles called *vihāras* (Plates 145, 147, 149-161). Typically, the *vihāra* temple is integrated into one wing of a quadrangle enclosing a small open court that provides the temple's only approach. But Buddhists also worship their deities in free-standing stupas (Plates 215-225), or build, on occasion, free-standing temples quite outside the *vihāras*, or standing alone within the courtyard (Plates 146, 210). But excepting the stupa, which is a purely sectarian shrine exclusive to Buddhism,³ Buddhist temples can be distinguished only iconographically from the temples that house the Hindu gods. Moreover, while the enclosed courtyard temple is typically Buddhist, it is not exclusively so. Durgā, the foremost Hindu goddess, is worshiped in courtyard shrines that, except in iconography, are indistinguishable from *vihāra* shrines (Plate 129). In short, just as in one way or another all Nepali buildings serve gods and men, all kinds of temples serve all kinds of gods.

The dwellings of the gods of Nepal are quite unlike those in many other parts of the world that are designed to house both the divinity and a congregation assembled to worship. Despite many collective sacred rituals, Nepali worship is fundamentally an individual matter. The temple, therefore, needs to make no provision for a congregation. With notable exceptions, the worshiper ordinarily does not penetrate the temple at all. He tenders his offerings through a priestly intermediary from whom, in return, he receives the physical sign of the god's blessings (*prasāda*). Further, not only is the god within the temple an object of worship, but so is the temple itself. Where possible, both are revered by respectful circumambulation of Hindu deities who may be associated with the stupa (see Chapter 10).

tion, a clockwise passage known as *pradakṣiṇā*—literally, “moving to the right,” that is, turning the right side of the body toward that which is respected.

Many of the architectural features in the Kathmandu Valley—their construction and preservation—are the result of the Hindu-Buddhist quest for religious merit. It can be earned not only by the building, maintenance, or improvement of a temple, but in the construction and upkeep of amenities for man. Thus the building or subsequent care of a good road, a public shelter, or a water source, is undertaken by commoner or king not only because it may be needed, but for the religious return it ensures. By this means the gods are pleased and merit accrues not only to the donor but to all his kindred, past, present, and future. Collectively, such meritorious deeds are known as “glory” (*ḱīrti*, *ḱīrtana*).⁴ Architecture, it may be readily understood, is therefore by no means a secular matter in the Kathmandu Valley. Even in such seemingly secular matters as raising a farmhouse or digging a well, construction is hemmed with the same sanctions and rituals that accompany the building of a temple. The differences are essentially of degree, not kind. In all instances the builder must call in his family priest to determine that the proposed site is auspicious, acceptable to the gods, and that it is not already occupied by serpents, the sacred overlords of the Valley soil. Each subsequent stage of construction—even the preparation of the bricks and timbers—is accompanied by specific ritual and prescribed worship of numerous deities. Nepali documents are studded with references to temple building, and they often include the precisely determined, auspicious moment a given temple’s foundation was laid, its doors fitted, the structure completed, and the deity installed and consecrated (Plates 106, 107).⁵ The lunar mansion (*nakṣatra*) Punarvasu is particularly favored as an auspicious time for building, and many Valley monuments have been constructed under its benevolent sign.



Excepting certain temples—specifically the *śi-*

⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:180-181, 209.

⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 118; part 4, inscr. 27 (37-44).

⁶ P. Sharma 1968:91; Snellgrove 1961:102; Bernier 1970:vi, viii.

ḱhara, *ratna deul* (“jewel temple,” a modest variant), the Mughal-derived domed temple, and the stupa (Plates 59, 208-214, 215-225)—the vast majority of traditional Nepali buildings follow a common architectural style. Whether farmhouse, palace, or lofty temple, construction is post-and-lintel (trabeate), and the primary building materials are wood and earth (brick, tile, clay mortar, sparsely supplemented with stone), combined in a specific and distinctive way. A practical label for this Nepali canon has not been found. The well-entrenched name, “pagoda style,” does not distinguish it from the Asian tiered-roof temple distributed from China to Bali, and falsely implies a morphological relation with them, when often their only common denominator is in the multiplication of roofs. “Pagoda style” and substitute terms such as “storied,” “tiered-roofed,” or “multi-stage,” exclude the one-story, single-roofed buildings that are more numerous than multi-roofed ones, and stylistically no different. Local Newari or Nepali terms for temples, for example, “*mandir*,” “*dega*,” “*deval*,” are too broad, since they refer with equal propriety to temples of other styles. Other local terms are noninclusive, referring only to the form or function of each particular building. I have therefore chosen the term “Newar style” as a specific label for Nepali trabeated buildings of brick and wood, which characterize the architecture of the Kathmandu Valley.⁷

The term “Newar style,” however, is only a label, and should not be construed as a denial of external relationships. It is quite evident that the architects of the Kathmandu Valley did not work in isolation from India. They shared a repertory of structures that includes, among other things, the stupa, the *śikhara*, domed and “jewel” temples, certain kinds of community buildings, tanks, fountains, and votive pillars. The names applied to these structures, the various elements of which they are composed, and the motifs that decorate them are often shared. The Nepali builders’ intimate knowledge of the Indian science of architecture (*vāstu-vidyā*) is further attested by the existence in Nepal of classical Indian architectural manuals

⁷ This term has been previously introduced by Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:170. Bernier 1970:vii prefers the more general term, “Nepalese style.”

known as *vāstu-śāstras*,⁸ together with documentary evidence that they were actually used by Nepali builders. For example, a *śilāpatra* beside the entrance to Pimche-bahal, a *vihāra* quadrangle built in Kathmandu in the sixteenth century, specifies that it was built in accordance with the *Kriyā-samgraha-pañjikā*, a celebrated text in use in India since around the eleventh century.⁹ Manuscript copies of this text also exist in Nepal.¹⁰ The Nepalis' own manuals are modeled after the Sanskrit classics, and in many ways adhere both to the practical and ritual aspects of building defined in them (Plates 89, 108-110). Numerous Nepali architectural manuals are in library collections in Kathmandu¹¹ and abroad, others are in the care of temple priests, and many are still in use by the traditional carpenter subcaste. The name "Sthapit," which many Nepali artisans bear, derives from the Sanskrit *sthapati*, builder, and ultimately from Sthapati, the designer-painter-carpenter son of Viśvakarman, one of the four heavenly architects.¹² Tradition affirms that each issued from one of Brahmā's faces, and, in time, they confided their knowledge of architecture to Mānasarā and other medieval sages; this knowledge became canonized as the *vāstu-śāstras*. Thus it must not be thought that Nepali architecture, any more than painting, carv-

⁸ More than fifty pages are required to list the best-known works (P. Acharya 1927:app. 1, 749-804).

⁹ The inscription records the founding of Pimche- (or Otu-)bahal in A.D. 1593 (N.S. 713 Vaiśākha) (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 27 [37-44]), and provides a fascinating glimpse of the *śāstra*-ordained ritual that accomplished its construction. First a priest inspected and pronounced fit the proposed site, which was then measured with ropes, and the boundary verified. Then came the worship of Agni, Kumārī, and an additional eighty-one divinities. The planting of barley sprouts followed, together with other rituals. Among them was the worship of the auspicious water vessel (*pūrṇa kālāśa*). After this and much more, construction began with the making of the wooden pegs for joining the timbers. Then came the brick laying, an interim feast, the framing of doors and windows, the construction of the roof, and at last the installation of the finial. The inscription is of further interest in documenting traditional Nepali nonsectarianism. Although the *vihāra* is a Buddhist establishment, the deities mentioned by name are largely Hindu.

¹⁰ One such is described and summarized by Mitra 1971:103-107.

ing, bronze casting, or related arts, was self-generated or developed in isolation.

THE NEWAR STYLE OF BUILDING

House and Palace

In its simplest, most elemental form, the traditional building style of the Kathmandu Valley, the Newar style, is to be found in the Newar farmhouse. This is, of course, also a "town house," since Newar farmers are town dwellers. A farmhouse, moreover, is no different from the houses of neighboring artisans (who may also farm). Houses of wealthy merchants or, formerly, the nobility, and palace and monastery quadrangles are only more elaborate versions of the farmhouse. Community buildings and temples also share its basic structure, and even some aspects of design and decoration. But the Newar house is architecturally important in its own right. It is the basic unit of the traditional village and town, and fundamental to their harmony. Some houses, by virtue of a two-century antiquity (and more), are also "historic monuments"; and some, no less than the neighboring houses of the gods, are masterpieces of the builders'

¹¹ Among those in the National Archives (formerly Bir Library) there are, for example, the *Mayasamgraha*, *Variśāstra*, *Vāstusāstra*, *Vāstupūjavidhi*, *Tulajā-devatā-jirṇoddhāra-kālāśadhvaja-rohanavidhi*, and the *Tadāga-dīni-nirmānavidhi*, the latter devoted to the construction of fountains, wells, and ponds. Additional manuals are housed in the Kaisher Library, including the *Tinatala devala va nāramdevalaḥo namunā* (no. 379), the *Ghāra banāune nakṣā* (no. 534), and the *Śāstriya mandira* (no. 345). Unfortunately, the present study coincided with the reorganization and microfilming of the rich collections of the archives, and it was not possible to make use of these manuscripts. Investigation of them and of other Nepalese manuscripts will certainly illuminate many critical aspects concerning the origin and practice of Nepalese architecture. That it will most likely be possible to compare certain texts with the corresponding monuments is clear from Auer and Gutschow 1974:111, who illustrate a page from a Bhaktapur painter's manual. It depicts an octagonal pavilion that is almost certainly the one that stood in the Bhaktapur Darbar Square until 1934 (Plate 31).

¹² P. Acharya 1928:165.

art. For these reasons it seems appropriate to begin the survey of traditional Valley architecture with the ubiquitous Newar house. If it is the progenitor of the more elaborate Newar style buildings, rather than deriving from them, this would be another reason. Since the houses, like the temples and other buildings, are not only monuments but institutions and going concerns, we will want to regard not only their form but their function.

The basic unit of the Newar house is a narrow, brick-walled rectangle, usually about eighteen or twenty feet wide, of variable length, and longitudinally divided by a bearing wall (Figures 5, 6; Plates 111, 112, 123). Typically, there are three stories, plus an attic half-story, crowned with a tiled, double-pitched (saddle) roof. Windows, doors, and almost all other structural elements are of wood. In most communities, the houses are joined end-to-end, paralleling the streets, and frequently adjoining houses share a single end wall (*kilāsa*). Variation in height, length, and treatment of façade avoids the monotony of row houses, and contributes to the pleasing design of village and town (Plates 41, 94).

As wealth permits or increased family requires, additional rectangles may be joined to the original, until four make a quadrangle around a central sunken courtyard, the "chok" (*coḥa*, Nepali; *cuḥa*, Newari), itself an important element of the house (Figure 6; Plates 117, 142). Such a quadrangle is usually not architecturally integrated; the rectangles composing it are pushed together somewhat like dominoes. Often the additions are "half-units," composed of two parallel walls instead of the standard three, and correspondingly narrower.

There are also quadrangles in which the four wings are built at the same time (Figure 7; Plates 113, 114). These "unitary quadrangles" are architecturally superior to the accretive ones, and typify houses of the well-to-do, the palace compound, and the monastery (Plates 73, 149).

The roofs have a wide overhang, and although they are double-pitched, the addition of a short pented collar to the gable ends of free-standing houses makes them seem hipped. The roofs usually consist of a framework of wooden beams, rafters,

trusses, and posts pegged together, covered with lathes and a thick layer of clay into which small interlocking tiles are pressed (Plate 116). Less frequently, thatch is used.¹³ Larger tiles protect joints, and the corner tiles (*kumpā*) are often aviform, giving the otherwise straight roof profile the characteristic upswept "pagoda" look (Plates 111, 114-116). There are usually one or two openings for light and ventilation, known as "cat windows" (*bhauvājhyā*). They are dormers or merely holes protected with specially shaped tiles (Plates 41, 112, 115).

Such a roof, with its burden of wood, clay, and tile and its wide projecting eaves, is very heavy. Wooden brackets known as *tunālas* therefore assist the brick walls in supporting it (Plates 111-115). They are set at a forty-five-degree angle, and are braced between the roof beams and a brick cornice, or individually against slightly projected beam ends. In quadrangles, corner brackets longer and larger than the others support the most extensive overhangs of the roofs.

The artistic genius of the Newars does not manifest itself in their masonry work. Foundations consist of a shallow *jag* of crushed rock or river stones. What appears to be a foundation platform of brick and dressed stone is, in effect, only an accessory "collar" that surrounds the building below and above ground level, but contributes nothing to its support (Plates 112-115). Its chief role is as a stepping stone and a pleasing frame for the building. Walls rise directly from the *jag*, and are rather crudely constructed of homemade brick—kiln-dried for exterior walls, sun-dried for interior ones—mortared with clay. When facing brick is used it is not well bonded, and brick is not tied in at the corners. At the lower levels, particularly, bricks tend to erode and fall out, vertical cracks develop between them, whole walls bow, and the structure is ready to collapse under the stress of heavy monsoon rains or earth tremors (Plates 38, 46, 83, 96).

A slightly protruding course of brick sometimes demarcates stories (Plates 36, 122), the top row of which may serve as a bracing cornice for the *tunālas*. Outside walls are decorated chiefly by the symmetry of placement and the carving of wooden

have tiled roofs (Wright 1966:124).

¹³ The latter is typical of the poor; it was apparently once imposed on the lower castes by forbidding them to

door frames and windows. Less frequently, there are plaster medallions or a framing band around the doorway, painted with auspicious symbols or representations of the gods (Plates 46, 142). Interior walls may or may not be plastered and white-washed.

The poorly bonded walls of these tall, heavily roofed houses must be very thick, at least fifteen inches, and in the larger houses, twenty to twenty-four. Frequently, some part of the ground floor (*celli*) facing the street, courtyard, or both, is an open porch; the masonry wall is replaced with wooden columns set above stone piers and surmounted with "crutch" capitals (Plates 112-114). Otherwise, openings in the walls are kept to a minimum on the lower levels, both for privacy and to maximize the bearing function of the walls. Doorways are very small—normally less than five feet high and correspondingly narrow—but there may be two, three, or, exceptionally, as many as five in a very long house (Plate 111). The entryway is enlarged by a corbeled lintel and divergent walls, and closed by double-leaved swing doors, bolted by a wooden bar from within and padlocked on the outside (Plate 118).

The few windows that are set into the ground floor are blind or correspond to the *tikijhyā* (lattice window) characteristic of the second floor, known as the *mātā* ("middle layer") (Plates 111-115). The *tikijhyā* consists of a stationary wooden frame—square, rectangular, and less frequently of other shapes—latticed in ways that are often complicated, and with intricate designs (Plates 46, 111-115, 119). The frame is set flush with the exterior; on the interior, corbeled beams provide both support for the thick wall above and a wider spread of light (Plate 119). Such windows on the lower floors maintain privacy and minimize interruptions in the bearing walls. They also check the winter cold and summer sun and are important design elements of the façade.

Only the top floor (traditionally the third, but sometimes the fourth or fifth) has large windows,

sājhyā ("window to be opened") (Plates 111-115, 120).¹⁴ These are large, with movable lattices that are usually swung overhead to canopy a wide interior window seat (Plate 121). The *sājhyās* are normally lavishly carved and are the primary design element of the façades, both those facing the street and those on the interior court, if there is one. It may have a single opening, but typically has three or even five or more sections, and in some quadrangles develops into a continuous gallery of windows. The common house usually has only one large *sājhyā* in the center of the façade, but in the longer houses it may be flanked with smaller windows. It is set flush with the outside wall, projects a little beyond it, or, supported on short brackets, leans forward as an angular bay window. It is then known as a deep (*gā-*), roofed (*pākḥā-*), or bent window (*kochojhyā*). There are also special corner windows (*ḥūjhyā*) (Plates 37, 122) and a number of other types, each with its own name.

Doors and windows are anchored to the brick wall by wooden members attached to horizontally extended lintels and sills. In the common house, these long lintels and sills are essentially functional, but in the unitary quadrangle of the well-to-do, they are elaborated as important fields for decorative carving (Plates 111, 113).

The interior of the Newar house is divided lengthwise through the two lower floors by a thick bearing wall (Plate 123). Each lower floor is thus divided into two narrow rectangles, which may be subdivided by masonry walls or wooden partitions into variously sized rooms. These are small, and with their little *tikijhyā* are dark and close. On the third or top floor, a row of wooden columns usually replaces the central brick wall. The top floor is not further partitioned, and with its columns and airy *sājhyā* is a relatively large, light room. All rooms, however, are low-ceilinged, measuring scarcely six feet high.

Each successive floor is supported on thick, closely spaced wooden beams whose ends are exposed outside the house—just below each project-

¹⁴ I do not have a satisfactory translation of the word *sājhyā*. It has been variously defined for me as "window to be opened," "window of heaven," and in other fanciful ways. Since the usual number of openings is three it probably simply means "tripartite" and derives from *sva*,

the Newari word for three. That windows with five openings are distinguished specifically as "fivers" (*nyapā*) also suggests this derivation. For simplification, however, I employ the one term *sājhyā* generically for this type of window, regardless of the number of openings.

ing brick course, when it is present (Plates 111-115, 122). In the common house these beams are usually cut flush with the wall and are undecorated. The flooring is of lathes, over which is spread a thick layer of clay, kept hard-packed and smooth by daily rubbing with a mixture of water, fine clay, and cowdung. Occasionally floors are tiled with small unglazed squares, but these are usually confined to passageways. Steep, ladder-like stairways, closed with a double-leaved trapdoor and secured like the entrance doors, give access to the upper floors (Plate 123).

The standard number of stories is three plus an attic, but there are two-storied houses as well as four- and sometimes five-storied ones. More than five floors is apparently precluded by such things as the compression strength of brick and a generally inadequate masonry technique, and by custom, which once restricted the height of the common house.

Each story and the attic has particular functions. The way the ground floor (*celli*) is used depends on the occupation of the owner. Farmers use it as a barn, stable, and tool shed; craftsmen as a workshop (Plate 45); and merchants as a store. The columned porches are particularly handy as shops, and they and the courtyard bays also serve as a sheltered place to work or rest. In the quadrangular houses of the well-to-do, a segment of the ground floor is used as a porter's guardroom and reception hall (*phalacā*). The low benches at either side may relate to the *vedikā* (raised seat) that the *vāstu-śāstras* instruct the builder to install at either side of the house door.¹⁵

The middle floor (*mātā*), partitioned into several small cubicles, is for sleeping. Clothes are stored in chests or on wall hooks, and straw mats and cotton-filled pads, rolled up during the day, serve as beds.

The "top layer" (*cota*) (and usually the "fourth" and "fifth," as they are called, of taller houses) is an all-purpose place devoted to work, recreation, and storage. It is furnished with straw mats—the customary place to sit—and with household gear. Entertaining may be done here, and it is the place for spinning, weaving, sewing, and food storage (Plate 121). At peak harvest time the farmhouse

cota is spread with drying produce, and all year, large straw-mat granaries huddle in the corners or encircle the columns. Braids and baskets of onions, garlic, peppers, and other foods hang from the rafters, and continue outside the house under the eaves as visible signs of wealth (Plates 35, 36, 83). The wide window seat of the *sājhyā* serves for taking the air and keeping in touch with the activities in the street or court. Some houses have a narrow balcony attached to the *cota*, or a small open terrace (*kausi*), usually fitted into the angles between wings (Plate 41), but these may be non-traditional.

The attic (*baiga*), the terminal half-story of the Newar house and the farthest removed from the public, has three functions. It contains the kitchen-dining area, the family chapel, and the storeroom for precious things. The cooking and eating area may be partitioned off, or just fill a particular corner. In either case it is furnished simply, with a low clay stove fueled with wood or dried cowdung, some water jars, a few pots, baskets, plates, cooking utensils, and straw mats. Its out-of-the-way place facilitates family privacy and the observance of strict caste-determined sanctions respecting kitchen use, interdining, and the giving and taking of drinking water.

The household chapel (*āgama*) is also a family preserve, usually a separate attic room kept closed and locked. It may contain an image or symbol of the lineage deity (*degu, devāli*), various other images, paintings, perhaps a manuscript or two, and various sacred things used in domestic worship. At times, if a family is particularly wealthy, rather than using an attic chapel they build an *āgamachem*, a full-scale temple in the courtyard (Plate 124). It is consecrated to the worship of the lineage deity, and is the joint property and responsibility of a number of related families.

The religious aspects of the Newar house are by no means confined to the attic chapel or the *āgamachem*, however. Elaborate rituals such as those laid down in the Indian *grhasūtras* (rules for domestic conduct) precede the building of a house. The family priest is called in to approve the site, and once construction begins worship accompanies each successive building stage from the lay-

¹⁵ Dutt 1925:254.

ing of the foundations through the placing of the last roof-tile.¹⁶ Each part of the finished house is associated with a divine being: for example, the foundation with the primordial cosmic support, the serpent Ananta/Śeṣa; the columns with Śiva; their capitals with Pārvaṭī; and the rafters with the Sixty-four Yoginīs.¹⁷ Even the threshold is conceived as a "goblin" (*vetāla*),¹⁸ and upon it and the symbolic diagram (mandala) embedded in the street outside, rites are performed to keep unkind spirits at bay. Images of the gods are set in niches beside the doorways and at other strategic places throughout the house, and may be painted on the façades together with auspicious symbols. The inner courtyard also has one or more shrines, often a central *caitya* for a Buddhist family (Plate 142) or a Śivaliṅga for a Hindu one. And always sequestered under a rubbish heap in the corner is Luku-Mahādeva, the Hidden Śiva.¹⁹

The traditional Newar house is, of course, unheated and without running water or sanitary facilities. In the cold season people may huddle around a little clay bowl of glowing charcoal, and they transfer as many of their daytime activities as possible into the streets and squares, drenched by the warm mountain sunshine. Traditionally, illumination is with oil lamps, bathing is done at the fountains and tanks, and the toilet is the fields, riverbanks, and narrow alleys scavenged by dogs and pigs.



The residential quarters of the late Malla and Shah palaces are fundamentally Newar-style houses, differing little in form and function from the unitary quadrangle of the well-to-do commoner (Figures 8, 9; Plates 73, 125-141). This is evident in comparing the elevation and section of Sundari-chok, a quadrangle of the Patan palace built in A.D. 1647,²⁰ with that of a nearby century-old private dwelling (Figures 7, 8). They are three-story

quadrangles of corresponding design, although this particular palace quadrangle uses half-unit construction, making its rooms especially cramped and corridor-like.

But a king's residence departs from those of his subjects in the functional modification and decoration of the quadrangle, the multiplication of quadrangles to form large aggregates, and in the development of a compound embracing within it diverse features not associated with the ordinary house.

In kind and degree, the decoration of the palace residential units has more affinity with the dwellings of the gods than with those of merchants and cultivators. Wood is used in the palace for the same functions as in the farmhouse, but its treatment far transcends the demands of function; it is richly carved and often polychrome painted. Roof brackets are sculptured in the round and with diverse themes (Plates 128-130), columns are often paired and exuberantly carved (Plates 125, 130, 132, 325), and the simple brick courses and flush beam ends of the house façade become decorative features. The ends of the floor beams are allowed to project, and are carved as grotesques or into bird, beast, or human heads. Such carvings are often incorporated into elaborate courses of decorative tile and carved wood, which on one or more levels encircle both court and street façades (Plates 127-130, 133, 140). Where such moldings and cornices turn outer faces of corners, they are accentuated with complicated crossings of wood and tile (Plate 129). This seems to be nonfunctional, a distinctive feature typically associated with the more flamboyant decorative style of the dwellings of the gods (Plates 201, 202, 206). But even in domestic architecture similar features occasionally occur, as on the columned porch of the Pharping house (Plate 114).

In form, design, and disposition, palace windows are like house windows, but even more di-

¹⁶ Nepali 1965:60-62. According to Wright 1966:125, in the time of Sthitimalla these rites were to be performed by Brahmans or Kshatriyas for homeowners of these same castes, but by "Daivagyas" (?) for the lower castes. Now such rituals are supervised by whatever priest, Buddhist or Hindu, the family normally employs for domestic rituals.

¹⁷ For particulars, see Appendix v on the *Sthirobhava-vākya* (Prayers Read at the Consecration of a House).

¹⁸ As Riccardi 1971:13-14 points out, there is no English equivalent for *vetāla*. This goblin-like creature is discussed in Chapter 12.

¹⁹ See Chapter 9.

²⁰ On the history of the palaces, see Chapter 8.

verse, and decorative concerns far outstrip functional demands (Plates 33, 130, 133-135). Occasionally *sājhya*, the upper floor windows, are expanded to a continuous gallery and the "roofed" and "bent" windows (*pākḥā*, *ḥochujhyā*) are projected on short brackets to make a latticed promenade (Figure 8; Plates 130, 135). Such promenades, repeated on several stories, are the outstanding feature of the Vasantapura pavilion of the Hanuman Dhoka compound (Figure 9; Plates 125, 135).

Starting with the functional sills and lintels of the house doorway, the palace architect enlarges these features, and between their attenuated ends often fits a vertical nonfunctional panel, one on either side of the door, lavishly carving the whole ensemble (Plate 136). Even the swing doors are sometimes carved (Plate 139). Over the doorways and windows a free-standing, canted tympanum (*torāṇa*) of carved wood or gilt copper repoussé is frequently installed (Plates 33, 128, 140).²¹ Gilt metal is occasionally used to sheath roofs—as in an eighteenth-century rooftop pavilion in Hanuman Dhoka (Plate 125)—or windows and doors (Plates 140, 141). In the use of both the *torāṇa* and gilt metal, the palace draws closer to the temple than the house. Tableaux such as those installed over the Sundari-chok entry or the Hanuman Gate (Plate 141) seem to be unique to palace architecture. But the palace shares with the houses of common men the practice of placing sculptured or painted sacred images and symbols near the entryway, and with those of the gods in the use of guardian lions (Plates 127, 140, 141).

The brickwork of palace walls seems generally no more refined than that of the house. But the palace uses for exterior wall facing a deep red, lustrous brick (*telīā*, Nepali; *cikā appā*, Newari).²² Tiles are also used as a protective cornice and decorative transition between carved windows and

doorways and the plain walling (Plate 133). Interior walls are frequently plastered, and they and the wooden room partitions are painted with geometric patterns, images, or the legends of the gods (Plate 403). Floors are of packed clay or, occasionally, tile.

With modifications, the functions of the various stories of the palace quadrangle compare with those of the house—the top floor was an all-purpose space, the middle one was for sleeping, and the ground floor was used according to the occupation of the householder. The palace *cellī* thus incorporated a *phalacā*, a guard/reception room like a wealthy merchant's home, but the remainder was for ceremony and functions of royal office. There was no chapel, storeroom, or, apparently, kitchen-dining area in the quadrangle. The royal chapel was a separate *āgamachem*, and there were various other royal temples scattered throughout the compound; the treasury was located in the attached gardens, known as the Bhandarkhal (*bhāṇḍārā-ḥhāla*). There are no ventilating "cat windows" in the palace roofs, suggesting that cooking and eating was done someplace else in the compound.

Like the farmhouse, the expansion of the palace dwellings was by lateral juxtaposition of new units, but these were unitary quadrangles rather than simple rectangular wings. The needs of kings exceeded those of the ordinary family, and the constant addition of new quadrangles resulted in great rambling complexes (Figures 1-3). According to tradition, the Bhaktapur palace once boasted ninety-nine separate quadrangles, and Kathmandu fifty-five. The Patan palace, more modest, had fewer than a dozen. Unfortunately, it was also a common practice to replace old quadrangles with new ones, or at least to renovate them extensively. This, together with the toll of recurrent fires and earthquakes, has left almost nothing

²¹ In India such tympanums are known as *candraśālā* (moon room, moonlight), and *torāṇa* refers to a gateway, such as those at Sāñchi.

²² Because of the name *telīā* (oiled), their sheen was long thought to derive from oil added to the clay during the manufacturing process. But recent research shows that the lustrous, "oily" finish actually derives from a glaze (Sanday 1974:7-10). This is made from a special clay found at Hadigaon (Clay-pot Village) that is tempered

and colored by a microscopic red fungus produced by moist rice straw in the monsoon season. The process of making *telīā* brick has long been abandoned and almost forgotten. Rediscovered, new *telīā* are being produced for use in restoring the temples and palaces in which the glazed bricks were originally employed. The use of such bricks seems to show that, traditionally the outside walls were not plastered or painted, although this was sometimes done in the Shah Period.

of the early structures, and each of the palaces now has only a few seventeenth- and eighteenth-century quadrangles. The Bhaktapur palace may be an exception, since its principal court, the Mulchok, appears to be much earlier.²³

In the Malla Period, the common man, it is said, feared only thieves and kings. But kings had the same fears, compounded by fractious nobles and disaffected subjects. Hence, the palace was not only a dwelling, but a fort. We know this from documentary evidence, rather than from the much diminished and modified palaces themselves. We do not know exactly how the palaces were defended, and, in fact, they seem to have been quite approachable. We are told, for example, that to redress a wrong the subjects of Jitāmitramalla forcibly dragged him from the Bhaktapur palace; and those of Viśvajit of Patan stoned him as he sat in the palace window.²⁴ Nonetheless, the palaces were called "forts" (*kvāchem*) and were able to serve as defenses. Tripura, the early Bhaktapur palace, was known alternately simply as Kvāchem, and the palace of the Patan kingdom as Caukoṭa, the Four-cornered Fort, after a fortified building that stood at its northern end.²⁵ We know that Tripura was walled, since Rudramalla had it repaired with bricks "from afar,"²⁶ and the emplacement of two of the compound gates, Laskhu and Sukul Dhoka, are known. The compound may still have been defended by walls in the time of Raṇajit, the last Bhaktapur king, since the forces of Prithvi Narayan Shah, though immediately able to breach the city walls, needed two full days to invest the palace.²⁷

In addition to the residential quadrangles and associated royal temples, the palace compound incorporated pleasure pavilions, ponds, ornate fountains, baths, and gardens. Of the pavilions, only that of the Kathmandu palace, the towering Nautale (Nine-story) or, alternately, Vasantapura, still stands (Figure 9; Plate 125).²⁸ It largely dates from

²³ See Chapter 8.

²⁴ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 225, 362.

²⁵ D. Vajracharya 1964b:48.

²⁶ *Gopīlarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 45b-46a.

²⁷ D. Vajracharya 1964b:50-51.

²⁸ The Bhaktapur palace, for example, also had a pleasure pavilion known as Vasantapura (Mansion of Spring), but this was razed with many companion buildings in the

the Shah Period, but is a traditional, if exaggerated, Newar-style building; the use of rooftop pavilions on the adjacent quadrangle, however, is an exotic.²⁹

Vihāra and Maṭha

Architecturally closely related to the house and palace are the quadrangles that were once monasteries, the Buddhist *viḥāras* and the Hindu *maṭhas* (Figures 10, 11; Plates 142-184). As institutions, both kinds of monasteries are essentially defunct.³⁰ Their buildings still stand, however, most of them serving in part as social and religious centers, and in part as common dwellings. *Viḥāras* are particularly numerous in Patan and Kathmandu, where they may be counted in hundreds, and they are scattered in the towns and villages; of *maṭhas* there are fewer than two score, most of them in Bhaktapur.

The Sanskrit word *viḥāra*, and the colloquial derivatives, Nepali *bahāl/bahil*, and Newari *bahā/bahī*, need to be defined. The word *viḥāra* is rooted in the concept of "walking for pleasure," and with reference to Buddhism was applied to the halls where the monks met and "walked about."³¹ Thus in pre-twelfth-century India and Nepal, the term could be properly translated "monastery." *Viḥāras* were physically extinguished in India by the Muslim incursions, but in Nepal as the institutions gradually faded away, the buildings were left intact, as was the name *viḥāra* attached to them, however inappropriate it had become. *Viḥāra* is now only a convenient label for Buddhist buildings, which now have nothing whatsoever to do with monasticism. Further, in contemporary Nepal the word *viḥāra* (and *mahāvihāra*, chief or great monastery) is stretched even further, and is also applied to Buddhist shrines that are totally unrelated to monastic architecture, and certainly to monasticism. But because they have Buddhist

devastating 1934 earthquake.

²⁹ On the dating of the pavilion, see Chapter 8.

³⁰ A few small celibate Buddhist communities have recently been established, and one or two *maṭhas* harbor celibate Hindu ascetics known as Nāthas, most of whom originate in India or the Tarai.

³¹ Monier-Williams 1899:s.v.

institutional connections they are also called *vihāras*. One such is the family shrine established in domestic courtyards (Plates 142, 143).³² Usually attached to the house wall, the shrine contains a Buddhist image, which is the object of daily family worship. The court may also contain a *caitya*,³³ and some part surrounding both it and the shrine may be especially tiled to demarcate the sacred precinct. To distinguish this type of *vihāra* from others, I have labeled it "family *vihāra*."

Another *vihāra* that has nothing to do now or ever with monastic architecture or monasticism is the "residential courtyard *vihāra*," as Joseph has rather aptly named it (Plates 144-146).³⁴ This type of *vihāra* is a Buddhist temple surrounded by numerous dwellings occupied, for the most part, by Buddhists of diverse castes. Thus, it is not unlike a "family *vihāra*," except that the shrine is a major building and those who worship at it far more numerous. The residential courtyard *vihāra* usually consists of an extensive court, tiled or grass-grown, dotted with *caityas*, images, shrines, a fountain or a well or two, and often a large central stupa (Plate 144). On all sides houses face the court (often referred to as a *nani*), which is a common work and play area, and sandwiched between them is the god's house (Plate 145). Among dozens of such establishments, there are five in which the shrine is not placed at the side in this way, but occupies the center of the court as a free-standing temple. Four of them are Newar-style temples dedicated to the worship of Avalokiteśvara (Plate 146),³⁵ the fifth a *śikhara* consecrated to Buddha Śākyamuni (Plate 210). Usually such a compound is entered through a narrow portal guarded by paired lions, surmounted by a *torana* carved with Buddhist themes, above which may rise a tiered-roof cupola (Plate 147).

³² Not all courtyards with a Buddhist shrine are *vihāras*, however.

³³ On the use of the terms *caitya* and stupa, see below.

³⁴ A very complete description of this kind of *vihāra* is provided by Joseph 1971:1-2, 12, 16-17, figs. 5, 25, 36.

³⁵ Three are in Patan, the Dharmakīrti-mahāvihāra (Tah-bahal), which together with the Bungamati temple is the chief shrine of Rato Matsyendranātha (Plate 146); Jyēsthavarṇa-mahāvihāra (Tamgah-bahal), consecrated to the related Mīnanātha; and the modest little Twaya-bahal. The fourth is in Kathmandu, the Kanakacaitya-mahā-

More numerous than these family and residential courtyard *vihāras* are the quadrangles that either once did house Buddhist celibate communities of monks or nuns (*samghas*), or are built in a corresponding style (Figures 10, 11; Plates 148-179). For the most part, their elevations date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although a few are later, and a number belong to the Early Malla Period. The foundations of these *vihāras*, however, are frequently far more ancient.³⁶

The monastery quadrangle is morphologically akin to the houses of commoner and king. As an examination of the accompanying figures and plates reveals, it shares with them the same general layout of rectangular wings around a central court, two or three stories,³⁷ and the use of brick, tile, and wood combined in a specific way that I have defined as Newar style. But just as the palace differs from the house in particular ways, so the monastery quadrangle differs in its particular ways from them. Some differences are determined by the *vihāra*'s function as the residence of a *samgha*, others by its role as the house of God.³⁸ It, together with the free-standing temple, represents the extreme limit in stylistic elaboration of the basic farmhouse. The link between them is the palace quadrangle.

The monastery quadrangles vary in details of plan and elevation, the allocation of space, and degree of opulence. Two institutionally determined architectural types may be perceived. Nepalis distinguish them as *bahāl* and *bahil* (or, in Newari, *bahā*, *bahī*), terms it will be practical to keep. But there is also a third type, which although referred to as a *bahāl*, in fact shares features of both. To distinguish it, the coined term *bahā-bahī* seems useful. Except where it is necessary to distinguish

vihāra (Jana-bahal), the shrine of Sveta Matsyendranātha. There is a sixth *vihāra*, Bhimche-bahal, Patan, which is somewhat anomalous in having a free-standing temple at the side of the residence-surrounded court.

³⁶ See Chapters 7, 10.

³⁷ The old *vihāras* are more uniformly two stories, which is apparently the "classic" elevation, but there are also many *vihāras* with three stories.

³⁸ In primitive Buddhism there was no deity, of course, but the Nepali *vihāras* all relate to later Buddhism—maters discussed in Chapter 10.

among them, however, I will use the inclusive term *vihāra* or “monastery quadrangle.”

Although a few monastery quadrangles are very rich, and the gilded and tiered roofs of their shrines beckon above the surrounding houses (Plate 148), for the most part they are very unobtrusive buildings. Hemmed in by adjoining houses and other *vihāras*, it is a rare building that can be observed in its entirety from the outside (Plate 149). At best, one usually sees the principal façade (Plate 150), or occasionally it and one adjoining wing. As befits a monastery, the *vihāra* presents a bleak and shuttered exterior to the secular world, which in crowded Valley cities so closely encompasses it. The ground-floor outside walls are windowless, fitted with a few blind windows, or closely latticed *tiḱijhyā*, like those between the roof brackets in the shadows of the overhanging eaves. The interior can only be reached through a low, narrow doorway, usually single, pierced in the main façade, and typically guarded by fierce lions (Plates 149-151). In crowded quarters, where the *vihāra* is surrounded by residential quarters, companion *vihāras*, or various enclosed courts, entry may be through a side door with a companion exit on the opposite side (Plate 152). One can often—in Patan particularly—pass rabbit-like through an extensive warren of *vihāras* and adjacent courtyards of Buddhist families without having to go into the public way.

Stepping through the doorway, one enters a vestibule (*phalacā*) (Plate 153) such as a merchant or king also incorporates in his house. At either side, there are the same low benches or platforms. In the *vihāra*, this vestibule and its benches not only serve for resting, but it is one of the preferred places—now, at least, and perhaps traditionally—for men to assemble for the performance of devotional music (*bhajana*) (Plate 497). Enshrined above these platforms are images of the ubiquitous guardians, Gaṇeśa, left, and Mahākāla, right.³⁹ From the *phalacā* one looks across the sunken

court, dotted with myriad cult objects, to the *vihāra* shrine that takes up most of the opposite wing (Plates 154, 155). Although the rest of the *vihāra* is now secularized, and serves as lodgings and workshops for Buddhist families, the shrine is intact, and is in effect a Buddhist temple. It incorporates two superimposed sanctums, the principal and public one on the ground floor, and an *āgama* of restricted access above it. The former contains images of Mahāyāna deities—Buddha Śākyamuni, the Five Tathāgatas, or Avalokiteśvara, for example—the latter, Vajrayāna (tantric) divinities such as Heruka or Vajrayoginī. To demarcate the sacred space, the shrine is always taller than the rest of the building, height being achieved in one of several ways. The simplest is the use of a finial, a member known as a *gajura*; it surmounts the roof of almost all Nepali shrines and announces the presence of divinity (Plates 109, 143). The common form is a squat, gilded spire (sometimes even of tile) but the *gajura* can also be the gilded model of a stupa or a *śikhara*, or consist of a complicated multi-part crest (Plate 172).⁴⁰ Other ways to achieve shrine elevation is by raising the roof itself, superimposing a second roof,⁴¹ or adding a small, square belvedere (Plate 155). In all cases a *gajura* surmounts the highest elevation.

The sectors of the two wings adjoining the *phalacā* and the shrine, together with the side wings, are divided by masonry walls into variously sized rooms accommodating a stairway at each corner of the building, and providing space for storage and quarters for the resident monks or nuns (Figure 10). In each of the side wings, there is also a large colonnaded bay corresponding to those in the *celli* of house or palace. The upper stories are similarly divided and used, except that the columned bays are absent and the space immediately over the *phalacā* serves as a common room. All these rooms are lighted and ventilated by *tiḱijhyā* except the latter, which has a splendid *sājhyā*, or the re-

³⁹ Although we are now concerned primarily with architectural matters, it may be noted that Gaṇeśa belongs to the Hindu pantheon and in the Valley *vihāras* has ousted Hārīti, a Buddhist goddess, from her traditional place as a *vihāra* protector (Slusser 1972:104, fig. LVb).

⁴⁰ On the symbolism of the *gajura* see (in Newari) Shakya 1969:30-33.

⁴¹ Snellgrove 1961:104 commented that “most of the main *vihāras* seem to have three-tiered temples . . . with just the two upper roofs towering higher than the other roofs in the courtyard.” An examination of all the *vihāras*, however, shows that the triple-roof shrine is in fact very infrequent.

lated "roofed," "deep," or "bent" window, overlooking the court (Plate 153). Thus this room broadly compares to the third-floor all-purpose room of the house or palace, which is lighted and ventilated in the same way.

At first glance, the monastery quadrangles look very much alike and the foregoing description roughly applies to them all. But analysis shows that the *bahil*, which the Nepalis distinguish for institutional reasons, may also be distinguished architecturally (Figure 11). In contrast to the *bahāl*, the *bahil* is elevated in some way, usually on a stepped plinth (Plates 156, 157). To enter a *bahil*, therefore, one must climb a stairway, often a considerable one, as at Patan's Pulchok- or Kvanti-bahil, both of which are situated on knolls. As another distinguishing feature, the elevated doorway is surmounted by a balcony, often a very imposing one, and thus has no *torana* such as normally garnishes the *bahāl* entry (Plates 149, 156, 157). The *bahil* doorway is less frequently guarded by lions. The *bahil* is further distinguished by interior features, such as a different kind of ground-floor shrine, different floor plans, and a different kind of stairway. The *bahil* shrine is smaller, square, or almost square, and surrounded on three sides by a narrow enclosed circumambulatory lighted by a very small *tikijhyā* pierced in the outer wall (Figure 11; Plate 158). Typically, the roof above a *bahil* shrine is surmounted by a belvedere (Plate 158), although this feature is also often found in a *bahāl*. In *bahil* architecture, with the exception of its outer walls and enclosed shrine (above which is the usual *āgama*), the use of masonry walling is very limited. The *phalacā* is separated from the adjoining space by solid wooden partitions, and much of the rest of the standard two stories is open colonnade. Often this is complete, but other times only the front half of the wings adjacent to the court are open (Plate 158). Floor space is increased on the upper story by extending the floor beams to support a projecting balcony that encircles the quadrangle, passing even in front of the *āgama*, and the whole may be

screened with lattices. As opposed to the *bahāl*, which has several wooden stairways like those of house and palace, the *bahil* has a single flight of broad masonry stairs, usually installed in the corner at the left of the *phalacā*.

The third, and somewhat uncommon, architectural type of *vihāra*, the *bahā-bahī*, shares features of both the other kinds (Figure 11; Plates 159, 160). Typically, such a *vihāra* is three-storied. It is a two-story *bahāl* upon which is superimposed a colonnaded story comparable to that of the *bahil* or the *cota* of the house. On this story each wing may be furnished with a *sājhyā*, or the related projecting or outward-leaning window, or have a continuous latticed balcony.

As we have seen, in fundamentals the monastery quadrangle is closely related to both house and palace. Differences are essentially superficial ones imposed by function. And because it is a house not only for monks but for God, it often surpasses even the palace quadrangle in decorative splendor. There are, of course, modestly endowed *vihāras* whose buildings are correspondingly modest; in others, decay, dissolution, and renovation have taken their toll (Plates 176, 510). Even a number that appear to be munificently endowed and have endured well are compromised in other ways. As the objects of too much love, they have been all but obliterated by a shower of nontraditional offerings (Plate 161). But—if in bits and pieces—one can even now recover the obvious former architectural splendor.

In the monastery quadrangle, decoration is largely achieved by the carving of functional wooden elements, fanciful molding of tile, and lavish application of metal. In this, the *vihāra* especially compares with the palace quadrangle. Roof brackets are carved in the round with a galaxy of divinities drawn from the complex Vajrayāna pantheon,⁴² and in the oldest *vihāras* with exquisite *yaḥśīs* (Plate 162). Rarely do these brackets employ erotic themes, common to both palace and Hindu temple, but there are exceptions (Plate 163).⁴³ Carved brackets typically embellish the in-

⁴² An idea of the variety may be had from the exhaustive iconographic analysis of Chusya-bahal, Kathmandu by Van Kooij 1977.

⁴³ Of a total of thirty-five interior brackets at Pimche-

bahal, Kathmandu, eight represent the Eight Mothers, deities by right belonging to the Hindu pantheon, and only these include panels of erotica. Stylistically, the eight brackets seem to postdate the *vihāra*'s foundation in A.D.

terior court, and frequently adorn the otherwise bleak exterior (Plate 172). Vying with the brackets, and often serving to brace them, are the complex cornices and moldings of brick or tile and wood that the *vihāra* shares with the palace (Plate 164).

The wooden doorways, doors, and windows are special fields of embellishment. Except in the *bahil*, both entryway and shrine doorway are surmounted by a *torana*, intricately carved in relief with themes related to the principal enshrined image (Plates 165, 482, 483). Lintels also bear a small carved emblem related to the deity. The vertical wings often added to palace doorways (Plate 136) are not popular in *vihāras*, although they are used as small-scale window adjuncts. Greater emphasis is placed on pilasters, which are multiplied and carved in infinite variety (Plates 166, 167). Although the *vihāra* entry door is like an ordinary house door, the leaves of the shrine door are latticed. In the older *vihāras*, the complexity of construction and variety of design defy description (Plates 166, 168).

If the windows carved for mortals are magnificent, they are no less so for the gods. But in the *vihāra*, as befits a cloister, there is a greater use of blind windows. They are of modest size, and usually flank doorways and functional windows—especially on the shrine façade—as important contributions to the symmetry of design (Plate 159). Such windows provide fields for exuberant carving, and frequently are *chefs d'oeuvre* in their own right. Frames are carved with endless variety, lintels are surmounted by *torana*-like members, and sills are expanded with decorative aprons (Plates 169, 312). The “window” itself may be fitted with latticing or, more frequently, a solid panel of relief carving. Sometimes this panel is in the form of a heavenly face peering, as it were, from the sanctum, and is distinguished as *āṅkhihyā*, literally, “evil-eye window” (Plate 197). More commonly, the panel depicts a deity or other divine being. Measuring no more than a few inches, and all but lost among the wealth of *vihāra* decoration, such relief insets are often superb works of art, and some clearly date at the latest to the Early Malla Period (Plates 170, 467, 468). Even the sometimes ruthless hand of renovators seems to recognize this

fact, and while failing to salvage much else, will incorporate such reliefs at random in the reconstructed walls.

A second kind of window typical of *vihāra* architecture consists of a very narrow horizontal frame pierced with five, or less often three, small openings that are separated by elegantly carved pilasters and other elements (Plate 171). This window is used somewhat like an ordinary *tiḱijhyā* where a little light is needed, but privacy is to be maintained. Thus it is the standard window for the shuttered *āgama*, but may be used elsewhere in the *vihāra*. It also sometimes occurs in domestic architecture.

Vihāra architecture incorporates extensive wood carvings, which are related to functional elements only in the broadest sense, if at all. The most notable is the *torana* (Plates 165, 482, 483). But some carvings hang as pennants from the eaves (Plate 153), others as bands of facing on balconies and under eaves (Plates 153, 157, 319, 320), and elsewhere are panel alternates to turned balusters (Plate 157). Filled with luxuriant vegetation, birds, animals, and an extensive repertoire of varied motifs, such carvings are generally unobtrusive, but encompass some of the most consummate artistry in the *vihāra* precinct.

In the monastery quadrangle, the use of gilt metal far exceeds the somewhat modest use of metal in the palace quadrangle. It is particularly applied to one or more roofs of the shrine and to its façade. Roofs may be entirely sheathed in copper—usually then gilded—and garnished with a fanciful *gajura*, rows of animal or human faces, birds, pennants, streamers, bells, lace-like valances, and a multitude of related elements (Plates 146, 172). The shrine door, doorway, and *torana* above it are also sometimes of gilt copper, often concealing earlier wood carving underneath. Frequently such doorways are splendid monuments to the Nepali art of metallurgy and, like the wood carvings, often contain miniatures of great artistic and iconographic importance (Plates 173, 174).

The most outstanding example of the use of metal as a decorative adjunct in the *vihāra* is Patan's so-called Golden Temple, the popular and well-endowed *vihāra* known to Nepalis as Kva—the erotica on these brackets is almost unique to *vihāra* architecture.

1593 (n.s. 713 Vaiśākha) (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 27 [37-44]) and probably were a later offering. In any event,

bahal. The glittering roofs of its imposing multi-tiered main shrine and subsidiary cupolas dominate its neighborhood (Plate 148), and the amount of silver and gilded copper lavished on its shrine façade is legendary. Much of it, however, is of recent times and of dubious artistic merit. A smaller *vihāra* shrine exhibiting a prodigious use of gilt metal is that of Mīnanātha, Patan, a free-standing temple of a residential courtyard *vihāra*.

As in the use of wood carving and metallurgy, painting is also used on the *vihāra* for embellishment and for didactic purposes. For the most part, extant paintings are of limited quantity and quality, and like those on private houses, confined to a few scattered medallions, an isolated panel or two, or a band of polychrome painting emphasizing a doorway (Plates 166, 175, 507). There is much to suggest, however, that mural painting was once a major part of *vihāra* decoration (Plates 176, 177). It probably compared favorably with the well-known Nepali paintings on cloth and in manuscripts, major artistic achievements. But less resistant to the vicissitudes of time, extensive mural painting of any kind has scarcely survived, and doubtless there will soon be none.

Finally, in the art of *vihāra* architecture we must reckon with the sunken courtyard that the quadrangle surrounds. It is a hallowed precinct, and the site of a wealth of sacred and artistic objects in stone and metal. Foremost are the votive *caityas*, of various kinds and ages, that march along the central axis facing the shrine (Plates 155, 159, 176). To these may be added, among other things, images of the gods and of donors in devotional attitudes, assorted pillars, bells, inscriptions, and mandalas. Mandalas are of many kinds, and their preferred location is before the shrine door. One is the sunken fire pit (*yajña-kuṇḍa* or *yajña-maṇḍala*) used for burnt sacrifice; others are simple inserts in the paving; and many are elaborate creations of engraved brass (Plates 154, 178, 179). Such mandalas become a *vajra-dhathu-maṇḍala* when raised upon a pedestal and combined with a *vajra*, symbolic thunderbolt and preeminent Buddhist emblem (Plates 161, 223).



The Hindu counterpart of the *vihāra* is the *maṭha*, and although institutionally defunct, the

buildings still stand (Plates 180-184). They do not have a well-defined plan and elevation like the *vihāra* quadrangle, but are essentially houses that provided quarters for a community of male Hindu ascetics gathered around a religious leader (*mahanta*). As a community prospered, it expanded into contiguous houses or, alternately, established separate branches. Thus *maṭhas* such as the celebrated Pujari-*maṭha* in Bhaktapur are large rambling affairs composed of several domestic quadrangles of variable size, condition, and age (Plate 180). The *maṭha*, therefore, inside and out is neither more nor less than a house, or cluster of houses, although it is usually distinguished by exceptionally extravagant wood carving (Plates 39, 181, 183). As with domestic architecture, metal work and painting are virtually absent. The *maṭha* incorporates a modest Śiva shrine of no fixed form or location except, as in the house, it is usually in the inner court, the *choḳ* (Plate 184).

There are about thirty-five extant buildings in the Kathmandu Valley that once served as *maṭhas*. Bhaktapur has thirteen, most of which cluster around Tachapal, the eastern square; Patan has six (Maps 8, 9). The remainder are scattered by ones and twos in various other communities. With the exception of the newly renovated Pujari-*maṭha*, most are decayed, some uninhabitable or barely livable, the rest serving as ordinary dwellings. Unlike the *vihāras*, that is now their exclusive function. The Valley *maṭhas* have venerable antecedents, architecturally and institutionally, that will be explored in subsequent chapters.

The Temple

The temples, fleetingly glimpsed in the context of the domestic and monastery quadrangles, belong to the same architectural canon as the houses of the artisans who made them, the differences between them being largely stylistic. The temples themselves are various. From one to another they differ in plan, elevation, and section, the number and kind of roofs, size and overall opulence, and many other aspects (Figures 12a-j, 13, 14; Plates 185-199, 201, 202).

The Newar-style temple is most vividly distinguished by its frequent use of tiered hipped roofs, a strikingly effective feature that has earned it the

misnomer "pagoda" (Plate 185). Many temples have only one roof, however, and others have at most a simple crowning belvedere (Plates 105, 243, 555). But the majority have two or three roofs, two temples have four (at Nala and Harasiddhi), two have five (Plates 100, 185), and legend affirms the existence of a nine-roofed temple (Plate 186). Most roofs are square or rectangular, corresponding to the plan of the temple they crown, but on occasion round or octagonal roofs rise over square sanctums (Plates 126, 128). Until 1934 an exotic temple with one rectangular roof, one octagonal, and one round stood in a corner of the Patan Mul-chok,⁴⁴ and there was a two-roofed competitor in the Bhaktapur Darbar Square (Plate 31).

The most common temple plan is square, a perfect Absolute, the familiar mandala of Hindu-Buddhist thought, fraught with cosmic symbolism. Almost as common is the rectangle, the typical plan for incorporated *bahāl* and *bahā-bahī* temples and for many free-standing ones. Very infrequently the octagon and circle serve as temple plans, but they are exotics; there are not a half-dozen of the former, and only two of the latter. Of these two, probably only the Koṭiṅga, a small Śiva temple enclosed in the Paśupati compound, is a true *chattraḥa* (parasol-shaped temple in honor of Śiva), while the other, incorporated in the corner of a palace quadrangle, apparently has only a round superstructure over a square basement (Plate 126). Although, broadly, all temples serve all gods, certain shapes are more typically assigned to some than to others, and for some they are ordained and immutable. For example, when alone, Mother Goddesses can occupy either square or rectangular temples, but as ensembles only a rectangular one, the fixed form of their close associate, Bhairava. The rectangular temple is also proper for Bhīmasena (Plate 243). No deity but Kṛṣṇa is worshiped in an octagonal temple, although Kṛṣṇa can occupy those of other shapes. Typically, Śiva, Viṣṇu, and Gaṇeśa, three of the most popular deities of the Hindu pantheon, are worshiped in square temples; Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are at home in temples of either shape.

The basic geometry of the temple plan—square, rectangular, or octagonal—is further diversified

(Figures 12a-j, 13, 14). One variable, from which many others follow, is the kind of sanctum exacted by the deity. The majority are housed on the ground floor—the cella, sanctum, or *garbha gṛha* ("womb house"). Especially proper for Gaṇeśa and Mother Goddesses are sanctums that are exposed (Plates 34, 187). Though such sanctums may be amplified with a complex superstructure, they are closely related to the hypaethral shrines that preceded them, and are still particularly popular for Mother Goddess worship. Elsewhere, the sanctum is simply a room entered by a single door facing the image (Figure 12a). Such a sanctum is proper for a wide variety of deities whose images, usually stone relief sculptures, are set toward the rear wall. Or again, the square temple is a mandala in which the deity, the "Sovereign of the Mandala," occupies the inner mansion (*kūṭagāra*), the center of the sanctum, and is approached from a door pierced in each façade (Figures 12c, 13; Plates 185, 188, 190). Sanctums such as these are appropriate for the worship of a Śivaliṅga, a Caturvyūha Viṣṇu, or the four-faced Brahmā, symbols and images that are meant to be viewed from all sides. Other manifestations of these same deities would be worshiped in a different type of sanctum, however.

Some deities, or specific manifestations, require housing on the second story. Bhīmasena is one such, so are the *āgama* gods of the *vihāras*, and some Bhairavas and some Mother Goddesses prefer this location. In free-standing temples, these upstairs sanctums tend to be little more than a partitioned-off section partly surrounded by hall-like space that is used primarily by the guthiars for their conduct of the god's affairs (Figure 14D). Such sanctum/halls seem particularly popular in the villages—Lubhu, Khokana, Sunaguthi, for example. Many have as their chief deity (*grāmadevatā*) a Mother Goddess whose second-story shrine also serves communal purposes.

The plan of free-standing temples is further altered by enclosing the entire sanctum with a second wall (Figure 14B4), which in effect provides an enclosed ambulatory reminiscent of the *bahīl* temple. It is particularly common in the square mandala-type sanctum; the outer wall is then also

⁴⁴ Landon 1928:1, 213.

pierced with four equidistant doorways (Plate 185). Except in a few temples—Yakṣeśvara in Bhaktapur and Cāra Nāraṇya in Patan come first to mind—the use of this passage is forbidden to anyone except the temple priests. If it ever was an ambulatory, it is no longer. The devotee who wishes to perform *pradaṣinā* circumambulates the entire temple, not just the inner sanctum. As a variation, the enclosing wall is replaced by columns (Figures 12c, j; 13; 14B1-3; Plate 188). The resulting portico is public, and can be used as an ambulatory, a shelter, or for other secular purposes.

Typically, multi-roof temples rise in diminishing stages above the sanctum, the first stage supported either by the cella walls or, alternately, by an enclosing wall or colonnade. These stages are not “stories” (except in the case of second-floor sanctums), but merely brick-walled chambers whose primary function is to provide a tower to which the tier of roofs can be attached. This is clarified by comparing the drawing of a temple section with a temple ruin (Figure 13; Plate 190). The latter is a simple cella whose single ground-floor wall supports the first superior stage, a function performed by columns in Figure 13. In both cases, this wall is the partial support of the lowest roof. In the temple ruin, the next stage is supported on the cella’s roof beams and projects through the first stage. In this way a double wall is created, corresponding to the double-walled ground-floor sanctums of certain temples. It suggests that the latter, and the columned portico that proceeds from it, is an architectural happenstance, rather than a planned ambulatory.

Many temples appear to be standing on a low platform that barely exceeds the width of the temple (Plates 105, 187, 189, 190). These are, of course, the nonsupporting masonry “collars” common to the canon. But many temples, including the *bahil*, are elevated on a stepped plinth, the number of steps commonly corresponding to the number of roofs. In extreme cases, such as Kathmandu’s two strikingly tall Śiva temples, Jaisi- and Māju-deval (Plate 188), the number of steps far exceeds the

number of roofs.⁴⁵ Uniquely, the chief Taleju temple of Hanuman Dhoka is elevated to its commanding position by placing both temple and stepped plinth atop a truncated pyramid.⁴⁶ Still other temples achieve prominence by virtue of their position on top of storied buildings, a practice typically associated with temples for Taleju (Plate 128).

Finally, there are the “ambulatory temples” whose only foundations are a wagon bed or the shoulders of men. Chariot temples (*rathas*), pulled by worshipers, serve a number of deities as a temporary dwelling during their annual procession (Plate 191). In many ways a bona fide Newar-style temple, decorated with carved wood and metal repoussé, the *ratha* is demountable for storage between festivals. To anticipate, there is also a *śikhara* counterpart, particular to Avalokiteśvara in his manifestations as the White and Red Matsyendranātha (Plate 597). For these, the ordinary *ratha*’s tiered roofs are replaced with a spire of interlaced bamboo and greenery that is discarded after the festival, although the remainder is dismantled and stored. In the case of the *ratha* of the Patan-Bungamati god, Rāto Matsyendranātha, every twelfth year even the sanctum and chariot are discarded. Only the metal parts are reused (Plate 363), and the *ghamā*, the enormous wooden shaft, is scavenged by devotees to use as an auspicious bench in some neighborhood square in Patan (Figure 23).

A counterpart of the *ratha* is the *khata*, a small palanquin-like temple borne aloft on the shoulders of men (Plate 114). Like the *ratha*, it serves as a temporary sanctum in the various comings and goings of the gods. In traditional practice, the *khata* sometimes even serves man. When Newar men and women reach seventy-seven years, seven months, and seven days they are entitled to the *bhīmaratha* ceremony, in which they are borne in a *khata* by their families in procession.

Temples vary in size and opulence. Some are so small that their sanctum scarcely exceeds the height of a man (Plate 196), and others are towering structures like Nyātapola or Māju-deval, which

lover (see Chapter 8).

⁴⁶ On the date and symbolism of the temple see Chapter 8.

⁴⁵ It is likely that the one influenced the other. Jaisi-deval was built in A.D. 1688 (N.S. 808) by Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa Joṣi, Māju-deval in 1692 (N.S. 812) by Rddhilakṣmīmalla, the widowed queen he served as minister and, apparently,

make of man a dwarf (Plate 188). In plan the two largest are Indreśvara Mahādeva of Panauti and Changu Nārāyaṇa, respectively thirty and thirty-two feet square (Figures 15, 16; Plate 410). (Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, more than twice as large as the Changu temple, is a *dharmaśālā* [Figure 22, Plate 204].) To some extent, opulence is correlated with size, and both are often dependent on the original funding. But there are many exceptions. The Anapūrṇa temple in Asan-tol, Kathmandu, for example, is of very modest size but exceptionally rich with decoration, while the towering Mājudeval (Plate 188) is quite sober. The opulence of a temple often depends in large measure on its popularity and the donations it subsequently attracts. Frequently, however, rather than embellish the temple, such offerings compromise it aesthetically (Plate 161). Even gilt metal repoussé, which as a later offering often covers original wood carvings, is frequently inferior to them.

It will not be necessary to tarry over the decoration of the temples, since in this aspect those outside the *vihāra* differ little from those within. But if not in kind, there are a few differences of degree between the *vihāra* temples and their free-standing counterparts, the greater number of which are consecrated to Hindu deities. One of these concerns the *tunālas*, the slanting braces between wall and roof. In both kinds of temples, these brackets are normally carved in the round with representations of the immortals and their attendants. Although exceedingly rare in *vihāras*, the brackets of free-standing temples consecrated to Hindu gods are frequently emblazoned with a panel of mortal erotica, often very explicit (Plate 193). The practice does not seem to relate to any particular deity, and occurs on temples to Śiva, Viṣṇu, Gaṇeśa, Durgā, and others. Such erotica also sometimes amplify the *tunālas* of palace buildings that are more secular than sacred, notably Vasantapura, the eighteenth-century pleasure pavilion of Hanuman Dhoka.⁴⁷ The use of such explicit panels probably does not predate the mid-seventeenth century,

for although they may be found on temples constructed prior to that time, they are carved on brackets that typify the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and must be replacements. With their stereotyped and pieced-together tantricized deities, often painted in garish polychrome, these brackets are individually of limited artistic appeal, depending for their aesthetic impact wholly on the ensemble. There are earlier brackets, such as the thirteenth-century splendors of Indreśvara Mahādeva, that also include erotica, which must be the forerunners of these later panels (Plate 194). But they are very restrained—and also very beautiful.

The representation of erotica on temples is a pan-Indian feature whose vogue spanned the period between about A.D. 900 and 1400.⁴⁸ The practice may have evolved as a substitute for outmoded fertility rites; the themes may also have been meant to separate graphically the mortal domain from the spiritual one within the temple—although the behavior of the Brahmanical pantheon in this respect seems quite mundane. It is sometimes said that tantrism is irrelevant to the development of temple erotica,⁴⁹ but in Nepal, considering its obviously late vogue, coinciding with the ever-burgeoning cult of the Mother Goddesses, it seems likely that such iconography is in fact tantra-influenced.⁵⁰ The Nepalis themselves have other explanations. The most common are that the erotica protect the temple by repelling the virgin goddess of lightning; or, alternately, that it excites worshipers to procreate and thus maintain the national population. One thing is certain, however: it is a very potent tourist attraction.

Corner brackets of the temples incorporated in quadrangles and those that are free-standing also differ in degree. The often immense overhang at the corner of the hipped roof exacts especially long, strong brackets, and thus they tend to receive more attention than those that support double-pitched roofs. In both cases, however, corner brackets are characteristically carved in the form of chimeras, griffon- or lion-like, which not only support the

⁴⁷ Tucci 1969:145-156 provides a comprehensive coverage of Vasantapura erotica as well as of selected temples.

⁴⁸ Desai 1975:1, 3.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁵⁰ Tucci 1969 subtitles his book on Nepali temple

erotica "an interpretation of the tantric imagery of the temples of Nepal," and identifies tantra, and particularly Vajrayāna Buddhism, as its primary inspiration. If so, one must wonder why the *vihāras*, the Vajrayāna seats, almost completely ignored this practice.

roof but are temple guardians (Plate 195). They may be male or female, and often the two, lion and griffon, are used alternately, either on opposing corners, or each kind supporting a different roof.

A minor distinction between a typical incorporated temple and a free-standing one concerns the treatment of doorways. Exactly like the incorporated temple doorway in almost every other respect, the free-standing temple doorway, like the palace door, makes greater use of the vertical wing fitted between lintel and sill, thus increasing the amount of carving or metal repoussé that can be applied to the façade (Plates 185, 190, 196). Unlike the *vihāra* quadrangle, the free-standing temple also frequently increases the design field by the use of a triple doorway, the flanking ones usually false (Plates 185, 410). Both types of temple make extensive use of blind windows, and in the free-standing temple they are an especially important design element of the uninhabited superstructure (Plates 188, 190, 197). As in the *vihāra*, such temples also frequently use gilt metal repoussé with abandon (Plates 198, 199, 243) and once in a while, mural painting (Plate 368).

There can be little doubt that the Newar-style temple, in some of its variations, at least, is a three-dimensional mandala.⁵¹ There is, first, the testimony of specific plans. Certainly, square temples with four equidistant doorways and a centrally placed image can only be interpreted this way (Figure 13; Plates 179, 200). Second, there is the testimony of Nepali records, which frequently specify that a temple was constructed as a mandala. Two such, for example, are dedicated to Taleju, one in the Patan palace (Plate 128), the other in Hanuman Dhoka.⁵² Finally, decorative aspects of the temple suggest this correspondence.

The most obvious decorative comparison is provided by the nonfunctional tympanum that surmounts the temple's doorways. Like the symbolic gateway of the linear mandala, it is called *torana* (gateway) and corresponds to the decorative tympanum linearly projected above the mandala gateway. Even the paired jewel-emitting *maḥaras* are common to both styles of *torana* (Plates 165, 179, 199, 200, 482, 483). It also seems probable that the

distinctive cornices that encircle the temple are not only decorative and functional, but symbolic; they appear to correspond to the various "walls" (*prākāra*) and "circles of protection" (*raḥsacakra*) that in linear mandalas surround the enshrined deity, the "Sovereign of the Mandala." These cornices, it will be recalled, are seen in their most elemental form as moldings on the house façade, where a projected row of bricks sometimes parallels the row of flush-cut floor beams and accentuates the division into stories (Figure 5; Plates 36, 37, 122). In all other related buildings of the canon, this simple feature is developed into an outstanding decorative feature. The beam ends are projected and carved into heads as a row of distinctive salients incorporated into a wide band of carved wood, canopied with projected brick or ornamental tile (Plates 129, 161, 185, 205, 206). In the structures most closely related to the house with its several plain moldings, that is, the palace and *vihāra* quadrangles, there may be more than one of these decorative moldings or, alternately, a single median string course or a cornice against which the roof brackets are braced (Plates 125, 129, 130, 145, 155); on free-standing temples the molding is used only as a cornice, although multiroofed temples may have several cornices (Plate 185).

The carved ornament of these moldings varies, but typically consists of four bands, the most distinctive of which is the row of beam ends carved into diverse heads (Plates 201, 206). These heads alternate with low relief ornament, which often repeats the eight auspicious symbols (*aṣṭamaṅgala*). Above the heads is a row of plain, dentil-like ornament, and beneath it a row of variously decorated chevrons, a band of scalloping, and finally, a fringe of bead and tassel or other ornament. Although certainly it is not possible to show a one-to-one relationship between this ornament and the *prākāra* and *raḥsacakra* of linear mandalas, they are undeniably similar. For example, the symbolic temple wall of the Mandala of Amoghapāśa (Plate 200) is defined by exactly the same type of bead and tassel one finds in the temple carving, while the first large "circle of protection," like the temple ornament, is scalloped. Similarly, the inner square of the brass Itum-bahal mandala evokes the dentil-

⁵¹ Snellgrove 1961:107-109; Bernier 1971:298-310.

⁵² Hasrat 1970:69; Wright 1966:140.

like ornament of the temple cornice, while the outer one again repeats the bead and tassel (Plate 179). In other mandalas one also encounters repeated sets of *aṣṭamaṅgala* in the *prākāra* and *raṅgaśaṅkṛa*.⁵³

The crossings that accentuate the exterior angles where such moldings and cornices meet (Plates 202, 206) seem to have no parallel in the linear mandala, but they are of interest from another point of view. On the corner of a free-standing temple these salients are decoratively sound, but on the barely projected façades of temples incorporated in quadrangles they are not (Plates 129, 164, 177). In the latter context they look like compliance with tradition, and can barely be squeezed into the available space. It suggests, therefore, that the incorporated temple of the *vihāra* is modeled after the free-standing temple, and represents an exotic to the quadrangle plan. This would, of course, be in keeping with doctrinal history, in which the primitive *vihāra* did not have a temple because there was no image to house.

When one compares a quadrangle-incorporated temple with a free-standing one, one has the impression that the latter and its surrounding court have literally been turned inside out to achieve the former. For virtually all the things one finds enclosed in the quadrangle court one finds surrounding the temple (Figures 15, 16; Plates 47, 185, 187)—shrines and images, mandalas, pillars, inscriptions, and a host of assorted cult bric-a-brac. Between the two styles of temple such accessories vary only in certain components and in iconography, and the free-standing temple has a slight edge in variety. The free-standing temple, it may be noted, is itself not universally "free." Reminiscent of some of the residential courtyard *vihāras*, the temple, together with its surroundings, is sometimes enclosed by a masonry wall, a quadrangle of *dharmasālās*, houses, or a mix of all these (Figures 15, 16). Occasionally a large temple is even partly engaged to other buildings—the Mahālakṣmī of Lubbhu, for example, or the celebrated Harasiddhi temple.

⁵³ Despite these apparent similarities, it remains to be confirmed, however, whether the mandala is the inspiration of all Newar-style temples, as scholars have sometimes proposed (Snellgrove 1961:107-109, 112; Bernier 1970:14ff.,

The Dharmasālā

Finally, among the buildings that compose the Newar-style canon, there is the ubiquitous public shelter (Figures 17-23; Plates 203-207). Constructed and maintained as a means of earning merit by anyone who can afford to do so, shelters may be conveniently designated by the Sanskrit term *dharmasālā*, literally "charitable asylum." More numerous even than temples and monasteries, if normally less imposing, *dharmasālās* are an important architectural and institutional feature of town and country. Their principal function is shelter, a place for people to rest, work, and socialize, and for the wayfarer—hillman, distant townsman, or wandering holy man—to pass the night. Except for the customary pairing with a water source, the *dharmasālā*'s only amenity is basic shelter. In the towns, however, there are also slightly more elaborate *dharmasālās* that serve the surrounding community in supplementary ways; some of these are also quasi temples.

The most rudimentary and omnipresent shelter is the *pāti* (Nepali) or *phalacā*, *phale* (Newari) (Figure 17; Plates 18, 34, 41, 103, 104, 203, 227). It is little more than a roofed rectangular platform, usually a lean-to in the towns, but free-standing along the trails. Closely related to it is the *mandapa* (*maḍu*, Newari), a square (or slightly rectangular) platform protected by a roof supported on sixteen columns (Figure 18). An invariable feature, the columns bestow upon the *mandapa* the colloquial name *sohra kuttā*, the "sixteen legged." Exclusively a town feature, the *mandapa* provides common shelter and more. It is the town meeting hall and, formerly, was the public weigh station and a center for market price exchange. Some *mandapas*, like Maṇimaṇḍapa of the Patan Darbar Square, were royal council houses and coronation sites.⁵⁴

A third type of shelter is the *sattal*, a name derived from Sanskrit *sattra*, almshouse (Figures 19-21; Plates 204-206). It is simply a multistoried *pāti* or *mandapa* (Figures 19, 20), but differs from them

1971:307-310), or for that matter, which in fact inspired the other (Mallmann 1975:41).

⁵⁴ On the *pāti* and *mandapa* see Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:171-175.

in having some enclosed space suitable for the more permanent occupation of wandering ascetics, and in incorporating a shrine. Thus the *sattal* is half shelter, half temple. The outstanding example is the celebrated Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, a *sattal* built prior to the mid-twelfth century at the juncture of trade routes in what was then Yaṅgala (Figure 21; Plates 85, 86, 204). Dominating Kathmandu's Maru-tol (from *maḍu*, *maṇḍapa*), the *sattal* engenders the name of both the city and the neighborhood. As traditional Nepali buildings go, this *sattal* is enormous, measuring sixty-six feet across; the ground plan is twice the size of the largest temple (Figure 22). Essentially a three-storied columned *maṇḍapa*, Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa is distinguished by the use of many columns, masonry piers, pilasters, corner pavilions, and other features not found in the more modest shelters. In keeping with *sattal* architecture, it incorporates a shrine. This is simply a railed and canopied enclosure of the deity's image (Goraḅṣanātha) in the middle of the ground floor; the semiwalled and colonnaded space around it serves in all the ways of an ordinary *maṇḍapa*. The upper stories, reached by steep stairways, are partly walled and partly enclosed by latticing to provide semiprotected quarters. As such, they are quite unlike the empty masonry chambers of the temple superstructure.⁵⁵

More typical of the *sattals* one encounters in the towns and villages is the Sundhara-sattal, in effect a two-story *pāṭi* (Figure 20; Plates 205, 206).⁵⁶ On both stories the enclosed back portion contains a shrine; the front part is the public shelter: the upper floor closed by lattices, the lower, an open portico. Like many other *sattals*, Sundhara-sattal is extravagantly decorated, and in keeping with its role as a temple incorporates features typifying the dwellings of the gods (Plate 206). In contrast, *maṇḍapas* and *pāṭis* are usually quite soberly decorated, but occasionally they incorporate superb carvings (Plates 207, 391).

In addition to these public shelters, there is a fourth type of community building known as *capāṭa* (*capāḍa*, *capāra*, *capāla*), a term often also used alternatively for *dharmaśālās*. Although the

capāṭa partly serves in the ways *dharmaśālās* do, it is more particularly the community hall of a *gūṭhi* association. Typically, it is a long, rectangular, two-story building (Figure 23), superficially somewhat like the *ḍigi*, the *vihāra* council hall (Plate 146). The rear two-thirds of the *capāṭa*'s ground floor is divided by masonry walls into storerooms for the guthiars' affairs (musical instruments, cooking cauldrons, firewood, and so on), while the columned front sector is simply a *pāṭi*. The upper floor, walled on three sides, is a colonnaded hall used for the guthiars' feasts and other communal activities. At one end there is a shrine for Nāsadyo, the god of dance (now equated with Śiva Naṭarāja) and, traditionally, the adjacent hall was the place for instruction in sacred songs, dance, and drama.

The *dharmaśālā* is related to the other buildings of the canon in terms of construction, materials, and decoration, and in ground plan it specifically corresponds to certain temples. But which is the model of the other has to be determined. For example, the ground-floor shrine of a temple like Mahālakṣmī of Thankot (Plate 187) is simply a *pāṭi*, and the temple compares broadly with the Sundhara-sattal (Plate 205). Similarly, the *maṇḍapa* may be distinguished as the plan of other temples, such as the Brāhmaṇi temple of Panauti (Plate 189). The temple is built on a square plan, and its single wall is pierced by four doorways, opening to a central sanctum demarcated by a square of four columns. In miniature it repeats the same pattern as the Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa shrine (Figure 21b, c). In both cases, the four columns are fundamental to the support of the next stage. In the Brāhmaṇi temple, moreover, the four interior columns, together with the pilasters beside each doorway and at the corners of the building, make of it, in effect, a *sohra kuṭṭa*, a sixteen-legged *maṇḍapa*.

ŚIKHARA AND DOMED TEMPLES

The *śikhara* (literally, "mountain peak") is a towered temple of brick or stone believed to have been

⁵⁵ On this singular building and Dattātreyā, a smaller *sattal* in Bhaktapur, see Slusser and Vajracharya 1974: 180-216.

⁵⁶ Built in n.s. 820 Āṣāḍha (A.D. 1700), Shakyā and Vaidya 1970:inscr. 53 (189-192).

developed in Gupta India about the sixth century A.D.⁵⁷ Previously assumed to have entered the Valley around the seventeenth century,⁵⁸ the *śikhara* is in fact of considerably greater antiquity in Nepal. This is attested by archaeological evidence, discussed in the next chapter, and by a half-ruined *śikhara* still in use in the Paśupati-nātha compound. On stylistic evidence, the latter can only belong to the Late Licchavi or Early Transitional Period. There are other *śikharas* that can be securely dated by inscriptions to at least the beginning of the fifteenth century. One of these, for example, stands in Bhaktapur: a squat little neighborhood temple which, according to an in situ inscription, was erected in the reign of Yakṣamalla (A.D. 1428-1482) (Plate 59). The *śikhara* was also familiar to the Mallas of the old Khas kingdom in western Nepal, as the ruins dotting the Karnali zone attest (Plate 209).⁵⁹ It is a popular style in the Valley, and serves without distinction all deities of the Hindu-Buddhist pantheon.

Typically, the Nepali *śikhara* is built of dressed stone, but it is sometimes of brick. Its elemental form is a small square cella surmounted by a tapering tower, together symbolizing cave and mountain (Figure 12-1; Plate 208). The temple is usually elevated on a stepped plinth, followed by a number of molded courses, the cella, and the tower. The latter is supported on corbels and tapers to a constricted apex. It usually terminates in a flattened ribbed disc known as an *āmalaka* after the fruit it resembles in form (Plates 208, 209). The *āmalaka* may, in turn, be surmounted by a *gajura*, the finial typical of the Newar-style temple.

Entrance to the cella is by means of a single portico, or four equidistant ones, three of which may lead to blind doors (Figure 12-1; Plates 208, 210). The number of porticoes, together with the number of *rathas*—normally three, five, or seven vertical salients that break the tower into planes—determines the ground plan.⁶⁰ A maverick is the octagonal eighteenth-century Cyāsing-devala of

the Patan Darbar Square (Figure 12k). Like the octagonal Newar-style temple from which it perhaps borrows the plan, it is consecrated to Kṛṣṇa. Most *śikharas* have only the single ground-floor sanctum, but the Cyāsing-devala and the neighboring Kṛṣṇa temple with square cella are exceptions, as is the Mahābauddha temple, which incorporates subsidiary shrines in the tower (Plate 210).

A characteristic feature of the *śikhara* is the turret, sometimes free-standing, sometimes engaged. There are often four; together with the central tower, these in effect make of the *śikhara* a *pañcāyatana*. The latter is a shrine of quincuncial plan preferred for domed temples, and occasionally used even for Newar-style temples and, to anticipate, the stupa. The Jagannātha temple of the Kathmandu Darbar Square is a Newar-style example (Figure 1).

The turret is also a basic feature of the "jewel temple" (*ratna deul*), a variation of the *śikhara* that developed in Bengal about the seventeenth century.⁶¹ It came to Nepal about the same time, and remained popular through the next century. The *ratna deul* is of brick, and is surmounted with several turrets, the *ratnas*, or "jewels." The central tower around which they cluster is often truncated, and is sometimes replaced by a true dome.

The decoration of the *śikhara* temple, despite obvious differences, shares many elements with the Newar-style temple, although it is rendered in carved stone and molded brick rather than wood. The most ornate is the square Kṛṣṇa temple of the Patan Darbar Square, whose lintels are carved with scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* (Plate 212). The Mahābauddha temple of Patan, covered with hundreds of molded terra-cotta Buddhas, is unique (Plate 210). According to the chronicles, it was modeled after the celebrated temple of Bodhgaya by a returned sixteenth-century Patan pilgrim, who carried with him a model for this purpose.⁶²

Exotic to the Valley are the domed temples,

the *ratha*.

⁵⁷ Pal 1959.

⁶¹ Wright 1966:138-139, 141. The temple is only vaguely reminiscent of Bodhgaya, itself renovated, and must have been much modified after the 1934 earthquake. At that time the whole tower collapsed (B. Rana 1936:plate

⁵⁷ On the North Indian *śikhara*, see Kramrisch 1946; Agrawala 1968; Wu 1968:21-22; and Volwahren 1969.

⁵⁸ Snellgrove 1961:110.

⁵⁹ Tucci 1956:figs. 18, 40, 42, 49; P. Sharma 1972; Pandey 1969:pls. 1-4.

⁶⁰ See Volwahren 1969:52 for a graphic presentation of

structures of limited artistic merit that are rustic interpretations of Mughal buildings (Figure 12m; Plates 213, 214). Often supposed to have been a Rana import, the form was actually introduced into Nepal in the Malla Period (Plate 213). Its vogue, however, corresponds to the Rana Period. Domed temples were favored by the Shah rulers and their prime ministers, who erected them particularly in and around Kathmandu, the seat of their power. The Jagannātha beside the Kathmandu city jail was donated by Rana Bahadur Shah in A.D. 1797, and there are several domed temples in the old compound of Bhimsen Thapa (prime minister 1806-1837). In 1851, Jang Bahadur Rana replaced a ruined Newar-style temple in the middle of the Rani Pokhari with a domed temple, and in 1874 he constructed the Kālamocana, a Viṣṇu temple, on the Bagmati (Figure 12m; Plate 214).

Among the many built before and after it, Kālamocana is the largest, but it is otherwise quite typical of the domed temples. It is constructed in the center of a large quadrangle partially enclosed by *dharmasālās*. Elevated on three steps, the temple rises in three stages: a large cube (the main shrine), a transitional smaller cube, and finally the onion dome topped by a glittering finial. Large gilt chimeras (salvaged from an earlier temple) rear at the roof corners of the lower story, displacing to intermediary positions the subsidiary turrets usually placed there. Small octagonal turrets finish the corners of the second story. Four ornate domed chapels, octagonal and bearing Mughal decorative motifs, stand on low platforms in the paved courtyard near the corners of the temple. These, like the turrets of the temple itself, make with the main building the typical *pañcāyatana* pattern favored for the domed temple. These ancillary chapels are also placed at the corners of the Rani Pokhari temple—which has a columned ambulatory, in contrast to the Kālamocana—and they are repeated in larger scale at the distant corners of the pond.

Unfortunately, the dome was considered an ap-

facing p. 115). A fair-sized shrine in the courtyard is said to have been built with the materials left over after the reconstruction.

⁶³ Stupa history is considered in Chapter 10.

⁶⁴ Volwahn 1969:17-21, 90-96 gives the diameter of the

appropriate way in which to reconstruct damaged Newar-style temples, and following the earthquake of 1934 many such ill-advised architectural marriages were made.

THE STUPA

Whereas the temples indiscriminately serve Buddhist, Hindu, or folk gods in Nepal Mandala, the stupa belongs exclusively to Buddhism (Figures 24-28; Plates 215-225). It has been a familiar feature of the Kathmandu Valley since at least the time of the early Licchavis and, in fact, probably long antedates their coming.⁶³ Although the building of monumental stupas did not survive the Malla Period, stupas of modest size are constructed even now. There are fewer than a dozen very large monuments extant, among which Bodhnātha is supreme; it dwarfs the two- and three-story houses encircling it, and the diameter of its total ground plan exceeds three hundred feet (Figures 24, 25; Plates 215, 216). The celebrated Great Stupa of Sāñchī is about half its size.⁶⁴ Considerably smaller, but still very imposing, monuments are Svayambhūnātha, the most venerated; the four "Aśokan" stupas of Patan; Dharmadeva (Chabahil); the stupa in south Kirtipur; and a few others, such as those at Yatkha- and Sighah-bahal, and Mahābauddha-vihāra, Kathmandu (Figure 24; Plates 217, 218, 220, 221). These are supplemented by scores of stupas of more modest size—typified by those at Tukan- and Te-bahal, Kathmandu, or Guita-tol, Patan (Figure 24; Plate 219)—and by thousands more ranging in height from about six feet to less than two (Plates 142, 146, 153, 155, 159, 164, 225, 310-336).

The Nepali stupas are typically found in the towns, like the *vihāra* quadrangles to which they are often attached. Most of the largest monuments are in a *vihāra* setting. Their small counterparts cluster around the larger stupas, are set in *vihāra* and domestic courtyards, and are erected in the

Great Stupa as 36.6 meters. Zimmer 1968:1, 237-238 assigns the dome a diameter of 105 feet plus a 5.5-foot-wide raised circumambulatory, while Brown 1965:14 writes that the diameter of the dome alone is 120 feet.

city squares and streets, and at the fountains. Three of the Patan stupas are not in the usual urban setting; they are peripheral to the town and may once have been associated with *vihāras*. The North Stupa is adjacent to three *vihāras*, and is well inside the line of the city walls (Map 8). Bodhnātha gives the impression of having been constructed as an isolated monument beside the trade route to Tibet, in time attracting to it the picturesque settlement that now encircles it (Figure 25; Plate 216). However, it is almost certainly a Licchavi foundation, and may actually have been constructed in a town that eventually fell into ruin, much like nearby Deopatan. Another exception to the stupa's normal urban location is Namara/Namobuddhā, a Tibetan-style bell-shaped *chörten* constructed on a high hill southeast of Panauti (Map 3; Plate 504). It is a Buddhist *īrtha* celebrated by Nepali Buddhists as the scene of the Vyāghri-jātaka (Plate 503).

In the Kathmandu Valley there are no cave monasteries with enclosed stupas, such as typify the early Buddhist rock temples of India.⁶⁵ The closest parallel is a medium-sized stupa at Gumvihāra, Sankhu—a site now better known as Vajrayoginī—which is completely enclosed in a Newar-style temple. The stupa can most likely be dated to the Licchavi Period, but the temple, dedicated to the Buddhist spell goddess Mahāmāyūrī, does not appear to antedate the seventeenth century. An enclosure of a stupa of this size makes it unique in Nepal. Small stupas—specifically, those of the Licchavi Period—are often enshrined, however (Plate 288).

All of the Nepali stupas, large and small, ancient and modern, owe their origin to the Asian earth mounds (Sanskrit, *stūpa*)⁶⁶ used in antiquity for the burial of important persons. Such funerary mounds were a familiar feature of the Gangetic basin the wandering Buddha knew, and were worshiped as folk ("pagan") cult objects.⁶⁷ At the Buddha's death, in keeping with his request, the funerary mound was chosen as his sepulcher. In

fact, according to tradition, his remains were divided among eight stupas, each erected by a devoted prince of the region; the remains were apparently further divided at the Emperor Aśoka's command. At length, however, rather than the relic within, it was the enclosing mound itself that was worshiped as symbolizing the Buddha. As the chief symbol of early Buddhism, the stupa proliferated as the doctrine spread.⁶⁸

Although the terms stupa and *caitya* are now used interchangeably to designate the symbolic monument sacred to Buddhism, they once had different meanings. In early Indian usage, stupa applied specifically to the mound-like monument; *caitya* had a far broader meaning as a generic term for any sacred place, shrine, symbol, or object. Thus a stupa was also a *caitya*. The transference of the general term to the specific apparently came about when the stupa was enshrined in a building, or more usually a cave. The complex was known as a *caitya grha*, broadly, a "house of worship" and, narrowly, a "place where the stupa is worshiped." In Valley usage, however, there seems to be some ill-defined distinction in the application of the two words to Buddhist mounds. Monumental stupas like Svayambhūnātha or Bodhnātha are referred to either way, *caitya* or stupa, but stupa alone seems to be preferred with reference to the four distinctive Patan mounds, the so-called Ashok stupas. Further, there seems to be some preference for the word *caitya* to designate the smallest category of stupa. The Newari word *cibā*, apparently derived from *caitya*, is applied to all stupas/*caityas* whatever their relative size, and the name for many large stupas, Cilandya, probably has the same source. Since the Nepalis themselves do seem to favor a slight distinction between the Sanskrit terms as applied to large and small monuments, it will be useful in the following discussion—while keeping in mind their essential interchangeability—to use stupa and *caitya* as size indicators, the one referring to the large monuments, the other for the reduced counterpart. The latter, however, can

⁶⁵ Dehejia 1972.

⁶⁶ So defined by Bénisti 1960:42-47. Coomaraswamy 1931:193 proposes a different origin.

⁶⁷ Irwin 1973:717-720.

⁶⁸ On the Indian stupa see Combaz:1933-1936; Bénisti

1960; and Bareaux 1962; also Zimmer 1968:1, 232-234; Brown 1965:13; Volwahsen 1969:89-90; Rowland 1967:48-51; Snellgrove 1957:37-40; and Dallapiccola and Zingel-Avé Lallemand, eds., 1980.

scarcely qualify as architecture. Indeed, the ornamented stone *caityas* of the Licchavi Period, rarely exceeding three feet high, come closer to sculpture. For this reason, and because they provide very important indices in unraveling the Valley's architectural history, I will delay discussing them until the following chapter. The *caityas* of later date are for the most part only of religious significance and iconographic interest.

In Nepal today, as in early Buddhism, the stupa itself is worshiped as the symbol of the Buddha in general, and at the same time often of particular Buddhas. Svayambhū, for example, is conceived as the primordial Ādibuddha. But in addition to being in effect an image, the stupa is also a temple of the Vajrayāna pentad and their consorts, and always the multiarmed goddess Uṣṇīṣavijayā is believed to dwell within the dome. The stupa is also viewed as a sacred reliquary, enclosing perpetual flame (the Svayambhū tradition), jewels of great worth (the four Patan stupas), or the corporeal relics of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and saints.⁶⁹ Bodhnātha, for example, is held to be the reliquary of the mortal remains of Kāśyapa Buddha, the predecessor of the historic Buddha Śākyamunī. The smaller stupas, as of old, are also reliquaries for mortal ash, are ex-votos, or commemorate something or someone. Like temples, stupas can be raised by anyone, and religious merit is earned by so doing. Tradition, amplified by legend, claims that by preference stupas are erected above a water source, usually described as a miraculous spring, fountain, or pond.

The fundamental element of the Nepali stupa/*caitya* is the mound from which it originated, the "egg" (*aṇḍa*), "womb" (*garbha*), or "pot" (*kuṁbha*). It is supported on a drum pedestal (*medhi*), and surmounted by a multistage finial. This primary trio—drum, mound, and finial—is essential to every stupa/*caitya*, whatever stylistic elaboration

⁶⁹ According to a Buddhist monk I once talked with at Svayambhū, they also contain *rinčils*, a divine substance which in the form of firm, white variously sized beads mysteriously spews out of stupas on occasions. They are exceedingly precious and, wrapped in brocade and silk, as I was shown, are conserved in phials as reliquaries. Nepali Buddhists distinguish the various stupas according to what they believe they contain: 1) "dhathu stupa,"

may embellish it. Differences of style can be only very broadly charted chronologically by their relation to the evolution of the Buddhist doctrine. Aside from these iconographic aspects, it is doubtful that a meaningful picture of the architectural evolution of the Nepali stupa could be obtained without sectioning the monuments themselves. Stupas are not only repaired and renovated, they are often periodically enlarged; they are onions, so to speak, of which only the core is original (Plate 452). Thus, if there were evolutionary changes in the character of the drum, dome, or finial, the newly renovated stupa was very likely made to conform to the existing vogue. In architectural terms, then, the fact that the foundation of Svayambhū, Bodhnātha, and the Dharmadeva stupa can be traced to Licchavi kings signifies little. Even the four Patan mounds, which very likely antedate the Licchavi Period by centuries, must today only broadly correspond to the originals. Among the remaining stupas, inscriptions concerning their foundation is a rarity; the northern Guita-tol stupa, Patan (Plate 219), has been "confidently" dated on the circumstantial evidence of a dated, but movable, sculpture enshrined in one of its niches.⁷⁰ The only safe course seems to be to treat the Nepali stupas as an ensemble without regard to differences of date. The latter will be relevant when we return to them as historical, rather than architectural, monuments.

In form, the pedestal (*medhi*) of the stupa is undistinguished, consisting simply of a drum or disc of varying height, and exceeding by only a few feet the diameter of the mound it supports (Figures 24-26; Plates 218-221). Often this is the only substructure; or, at most, the *medhi* rises from a modest circular platform. But stupas are also frequently raised on distinctive plinths, in this way comparing with the replica *caitya* in which the plinth is often the dominant feature (Plates

mortal remains of the Buddha, 2) "paribhog stupa," things belonging to him (garments, bowl), 3) "dharma stupa," texts of his teachings (*sūtras*), and 4) "udeshya chaitya," the small counterpart containing amulets, mantras, jewels, or texts (*Kathmandu Valley* 1975:1, 33).

⁷⁰ Snellgrove 1961:93-94; the inscription is dated N.S. 368 Māgha (A.D. 1268) (D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 22 [12]).

159, 225, 254-257). At the simplest, the stupa plinth is a low square platform, each corner provided with an ancillary chapel, as exemplified by the eastern Guita-tol stupa. But plinths may also consist of a number of superimposed terraces, each with a number of evenly spaced chapels and *caityas* placed upon it, which raise the stupa proper to considerable height. The Pim-bahal stupa is elevated this way (Plate 222); so is the Kirtipur stupa, and Bodhnātha is another (Figure 25). Bodhnātha's great plinth consists of three broad terraces of intersected squares and rectangles, the salient angles of the lower terraces are provided with *caityas*, and on each side a broad staircase ascends to the stupa proper. It is thought to emulate the plinth of the Gyantse stupa in western Tibet, but might simply repeat the form of the plinth common to *caityas* (Plates 225, 256, 257). It is known as *vimśatikona*, a platform of twenty angles, one of the forms prescribed in the *Kriyā-samgraha*.⁷¹

Despite the simplicity inherent in the dome (*anda*, *garbha*, *kumbha*), there is some variation of shape. Those of the four Patan stupas—which are likely to be the oldest, and three of which may not have been fundamentally altered—are somewhat flattened hemispheres, simple mounds that must be similar to the progenitive funerary mound (Figure 26; Plates 220, 221). The domes of the two Guita-tol stupas are quite different, very flat with almost vertical sides sharply flared to join the *medhī* (Figure 24; Plate 219). The Guita-tol domes may reflect a style popular in the Transitional and Early Malla Periods, if no renovation postdates early sculptures associated with them. One of the chapels of the eastern stupa contains a relief that may be dated stylistically to the eighth or ninth century (Plate 466), and another, the previously mentioned one dated A.D. 1268, is enshrined in a niche in the northern stupa. The domes of most of the rest of the stupas, however, are much the same: oblate hemispheres, attenuated in varying degree,

⁷¹ Bénisti 1960:95, fig. 6.

⁷² Oldfield 1880:11, 210-212.

⁷³ Nepali tradition affirms that the dome was made by clustering small *caityas* around a core *caitya* and then covering the whole with earth (*Kathmandu Valley* 1975:1, 33).

until some are almost as tall as they are broad (Figure 24; Plates 215-218). Among this type, Bodhnātha comes closest to being a hemisphere.

Most of what we know about the construction of the stupa dome comes from Oldfield, who either watched the construction of one or carefully informed himself.⁷² According to him, a masonry chamber was constructed at the center of the *medhī* and divided into nine equal compartments. In eight of them "certain precious and particular kinds of wood and of grain" were deposited, together with various images and "pictures of various scenes in Buddhist history," and, if the stupa was for memorial or funerary purposes, human relics. The central ninth compartment served as the mortise for the *yaṣṭi*. This is the great central timber mast, both functional and symbolic, which pierces all stupas and to which the finial attaches (Plate 222). After the construction ceremonies, the chamber was sealed.⁷³ Over it and around the projecting *yaṣṭi*, a mound was built of "brick, earth, and clay, and its outer rounded surface was faced with brick and covered with plaster." Now, at least, three of the Patan stupas have no other facing than the grass that almost conceals their bricks, and nineteenth- and early twentieth-century reproductions reveal the grass-grown bricking of Svayambhūnātha.⁷⁴ But in the latter case it appears that plaster facings have partly fallen away. All of the extant Nepali stupas, except the three Patan mounds, are plastered and whitewashed.

An outstanding feature of the stupa dome is the engaged chapels. There are usually four, facing the cardinal directions; but Svayambhūnātha has five (two facing east), Namara has a single outside chapel, and Bodhnātha none. Some chapels are quite modest and little affect the dome (Plates 220, 221), while others, quite commanding, are largely engaged to it (Plate 218). The chapels are an innovation of later Buddhism related to the concept of the Five Tathāgatas, or Jinas, that they enshrine.⁷⁵ Architecturally, the chapels are reminis-

⁷⁴ Oldfield 1880:11, facing 219.

⁷⁵ These have come to be widely known as "Dhyāni Buddhas" since the mid-nineteenth century, when Brian Hodgson introduced the purely local term coined by his assisting pandits. It does not occur in earlier Buddhist texts, and the correct term for the set of five Buddhas who

cent of the ceremonial gateways (*torana*), one or more of which gave access to the ambulatory path around Indian stupas, and they may be a compressed expression of them.

Like the domes, the finials vary somewhat. Typically, however, they are attached to the timber mast (*yaṣṭi*), and are composed of three principal parts: a corniced cube, a tapered mid-section, and a crowning parasol (Plates 215-219). There are also many secondary features. The cube is derived from the pavilion (*harmikā*) that surmounted early Indian stupas; the mid-section, tapered in thirteen stages, symbolizes the thirteen stages of perfection (*bhūmis*); and the parasol is the emblem of royalty. The latter relates to the Buddha's position as a Cakravartin, Universal Monarch. Two of the Patan mounds barely conform to the accepted finial formula, while the third bears a modest-sized stupa (Figure 26; Plates 220, 221). The most vivid element of the finial of the Nepali stupa is the pair of eyes that appear to gaze out from each side of the *harmikā* (Plates 215, 217, 218). They cannot be satisfactorily explained. They are generally interpreted as representing either Ādibuddha, the all-seeing primordial Buddha, or Prajāpati or Puruṣa, the Universal Man.⁷⁶ According to the *Kriyāsamgraha*, however, the *harmikā* was the dwelling place of the Lokapālas, the four guardians of Buddhism and of the four quarters of the universe.⁷⁷ Thus it seems quite possible that the eyes are, in fact, those of the Lokapālas, each of whom surveys the quarter of the universe for which he is responsible.⁷⁸ In any event, that the eyes should be painted there is compatible with the conception of the stupa as a cosmos analogical to man, and more specifically to the Buddha himself, in which the *harmikā* represents the head.⁷⁹

preside over the directions is Tathāgata or Jina. I use the former to avoid confusion with the Jinas of the Jain religion, which has only a token representation in modern Nepal.

⁷⁶ Rowland 1967:158.

⁷⁷ Bénisti 1960:91, 100-101. I am indebted to Prata-ditya Pal for calling this to my attention.

⁷⁸ Three early *caityas* may have some bearing on this interpretation: a reliquary from Ceylon, a monolithic *caitya* from Ajanta Cave 19, and another from Gandharā. The first two have divinities placed at the cardinal points above the *harmikā*; and the third, adorsed heraldic birds

The decoration of the stupa varies widely from those like the sober pair at Guita-tol, with virtually none, to Svayambhū, a dazzling repository of gilt metal repoussé. At Svayambhū and elsewhere, the finial is the most often used field for embellishment. Even plain stupas usually have at least a gilt umbrella. The most extravagant finial, at Svayambhū, is entirely gilt, and even the more typical masonry steps are there transformed into a cone of gilt rings (Plate 217). These are, in turn, surmounted by an elaborate parasol, and draped with gilt metal streamers. On each side of the cornice there are pentad-shaped *toranas* emblazoned with relief images of the Tathāgatas, and the cornice itself is encircled with a lacy gilt metal valance. For stupas like Svayambhū or Bodhnātha—which also uses an impressive amount of gilt on the finial—only the dome is kept whitewashed; others are often coated from top to bottom, not only to beautify the stupa but to honor it, and by so doing earn religious merit. The whitening is normally renewed annually, since each summer much of it washes away under the hard rains (Plate 218). In this way smaller stupas (*caityas*), often less exposed, may build up a thick enveloping cloak through which peer the enshrined images at the sides. The great dome of Bodhnātha like no other stupa, is as an additional honor occasionally painted with ochre garlands of saffron water (Plate 215).

Like all temples, the chapels of the Tathāgatas at each side of the stupa attract a host of pious offerings, in some instances ones that are costly and permanent. By the constant donations of gilt roofs, *toranas*, flags, protective netting, and similar gifts, the chapels of Svayambhū, for example, have been turned into rich golden temples (Plate 223). At the other extreme, the Guita-tol chapels are very

in the same position (Bénisti 1960:101; Lyons and Ingholt 1957:pl. 496).

⁷⁹ Bénisti 1960:51; Volwahren 1969:90. Although the practice of painting eyes on the stupas is so typically Nepali it is often thought to be a Nepali innovation, its roots are apparently very ancient. For example, one of the stupas represented among the decoration at Sāñchī bears a pair of superimposed ovals on the *anda* that are generally interpreted as eyes. Combaz 1933-1936, vol. 4, fig. 7, illustrates a *caitya* from Bihar, of far more recent times, with the characteristic "Nepali" eye pattern on the *harmikā*.

sober. Some otherwise plain chapels, like those of the Dharmadeva stupa, have removable gilt ornaments that are only affixed to them on festival days. The ornaments used in stupa decoration correspond to those of the temple, although on the stupa they are virtually never expressed in carved wood.

Carved stone reliefs are an important part of stupa decoration, and a favored place for their installation is at the base of the dome. Svayambhū has a number affixed to it; they ring the Dharmadeva stupa; and at Bodhnātha, enshrined in 108 niches at the base of the dome, they are an especially distinctive feature (Plates 215, 218). More rarely, relief carvings are applied to the drum (Plates 218, 224, 453, 454). Only Dharmadeva stupa and Kathmandu's Tukan-bahal stupa have these now, but they are reminiscent of the decorative plaques applied to Indian stupas (*āyāgapāṭa*, *āryavuti*), and may have once been more common. Occasionally one comes across plaques carved with Buddhist themes, which though now put to other uses, most likely originated as stupa decoration (Plate 454).

Like the courts of the *vihāra* quadrangles and the temple compounds, the environs of prestigious stupas attract a host of sacred accessories. Foremost is the miniature replica stupa (*caitya*). Around a stupa as venerated as Svayambhū, for example, they cluster in hundreds (Plate 225), elsewhere by dozens. Sometimes drawing as close as possible to the sacred aura of the larger stupa, they stand on its very plinth. A popular stupa also attracts to it a host of shrines and images devoted to diverse gods of the Hindu-Buddhist pantheon. Scattered among them are the usual donor images, pillars, bells, flags, mandalas, inscriptions, and other sacred bric-a-brac, which together represent an accumulation of centuries of pious donations (Plates 222, 223). At Bodhnātha and Svayambhūnātha (and a few *vihāra* temples) the Tibetans have added a special cachet in recent years by the donation of prayer wheels and, impermanent though they may be, their streamers of prayer flags often gaily flutter above the accumulated artifacts (Plates 215-217).

⁸⁰ Occasionally, when the lack of water has been particularly severe—a perennial problem for Patan—old fountains are remembered, cleared, and rehabilitated. In

THE WATER SOURCES

Structures related to the storage, distribution and access to water—the riverside ghats, the reservoirs, wells, and fountains—are ubiquitous elements of the cultural landscape of the Kathmandu Valley (Plates 41, 226-238, 343, 568). Often the result of considerable architectural and engineering achievement, water-related constructions, despite their obvious utility, are almost never utilitarian alone. Function is combined with form in ways that both create individually attractive monuments and embellish urban design. As social centers and, in effect, hypaethral shrines, the water sources serve human needs far beyond the mere provision of water. Water itself is sacred, as is everything that relates to it—the vessel, the well, or pond that contains it, the fountain from which it issues, or the stream in which it flows. Providing access to water is thought to be especially meritorious, a significant *kīrti* whose value to society is matched by the religious merit accruing to the donor. Thus century after century of construction by king and commoner, each according to his means, has left no corner of the Valley without a liberal number of water sources. Many that were built in past ages have fallen into ruin, but as many more continue faithfully to serve the community, often as its chief or only water supply.⁸⁰

Access to the rivers, whose waters are sought not only for domestic but for religious purposes, is by means of ghats. Constructed of dressed stone and brick, the ghats transform the river bank into a broad flight of stairs that provide safe and easy access to the water's edge (Plates 343, 568). Ghats facilitate both mundane use of the river water and ritual bathing, an important prelude to most religious observances. The preferred rendezvous with Death is at the riverside, bathed in its waters if possible, and afterward, as ash, reintegrated through it with the cosmic stream. Thus, at regular intervals the steps are interrupted with large masonry platforms, usually circular, known as *masān* (Sanskrit, *śmaśāna*) for the purpose of cremating the dead.

the dry winter of 1971, for example, a buried fountain near Uku-bahal was excavated by the neighborhood people and found to be still functioning.

Water for domestic use is obtained from reservoirs and wells, or from running fountains. Large reservoirs, usually known as *poḅhari*, *da-ha*, or in Newari, *puḅhū*, are brick-lined tanks surrounded by continuous ghat-like steps for safe access, and sometimes protected by a low wall or balustrade. They are conveniently located here and there in the towns or on their outskirts (Maps 4, 7-9; Figure 4; Plates 41, 112). A number of the largest reservoirs, situated on the city periphery, were the donations of kings, and are in effect small brick-lined lakes, costly engineering achievements measuring several hundreds of square feet. The Rani Pokhari, for example, consecrated at Kathmandu in A.D. 1670, took several years to complete.⁸¹ Correspondingly large royal ponds lie at the western edge of Bhaktapur. One of them, the ruined Tawa-pokhari, was the donation of Jagajjyotirmalla (A.D. 1614-1637).⁸² The nearby Siddhapokhari, apparently also the gift of a Bhaktapur king, was twice restored in the Shah Period, once by the order of Bhimsen Thapa, and again by Jang Bahadur Rana. Reservoirs are also typical accessories of the palace compounds, some quite large, like that of the Patan Bhandarkhal, others scarcely more than a glorified bathtub (Plates 6, 226). Typically, these royal baths are associated with a nearby fountain of running water.

Formerly, as a meritorious act, drinking water was often made available by means of small covered reservoirs known as "spigot fountains," *tute-dhārā* in Nepali or *jahrū* in Newari (from Sanskrit *jaladronī*) (Plates 227-230, 233, 234). They consist of a stone trough, elevated on a masonry support or built into a wall or the side of a fountain. Usually holding a few gallons and replenished by means of a funnel arrangement in the rear, the *tute-dhārā* is furnished with one or more stoppered spigots. In keeping with the traditional way of drinking from a spouted vessel held overhead, one could

⁸¹ Clark 1957; Slusser 1972a:36-47.

⁸² B. Paudel 1964a:11-12. It was maliciously destroyed by Pratāpamalla of Kathmandu, but rebuilt by Jitāmitra, a later king of Bhaktapur.

⁸³ One of the most famous is the elegant Tuṣaḅiṭi (unfortunately, only the edge is barely visible in Plate 130); exceptionally, very large fountains have complex forms, such as the immense Sundhārā adjacent to "Bhimsen's" tower and, like it, wrongly ascribed to the minister. The

unstopper the spigot at will and drink directly beneath it. In use from the time of the Licchavis until very recently, the *tute-dhārās* were established at temples and *tirthas*, in the streets and squares, and often near a well or fountain to facilitate refilling them. Usually a *gūthi* endowment was established for this purpose. No longer, or rarely, used, most are in ruins, and their troughs abandoned or adapted to other uses (Plate 230).

Deep, brick-lined circular wells (*ināra*, *sunā*) with high stone copings are also characteristic water sources of the Kathmandu Valley (Plates 117, 231). Water is drawn up by hand; the grappling hook for retrieving things dropped into its depths is a typical household tool.

The most distinctive water source is the "deep fountain," the Nepali *gairīdhārā* or Newari *gāhiṭi*, a terraced pit into which one descends to the source (Plates 232, 233). Mirror image of the stepped plinths and tiered roofs of the nearby temples, the fountain is terraced in diminishing stages, each bricked and paved, and traversed by one or more stairways. Fed by gravity flow through underground clay pipes, one or more spouts emerge from the lowermost retaining wall, and drains are provided to carry away the overflow. In size and depth the *gairīdhārā* vary greatly. At some places water is near the surface, and only a shallow pit with one or two terraces is needed. Others must be dug very deep, and they are therefore at the surface very wide, with a correspondingly large number of terraces. Most *gairīdhārā* are rectilinear—square or cruciform—but smaller fountains are often oval, rectangular with apsidal ends, or fashioned in other aesthetically pleasing and symbolic shapes.⁸³ They are, in fact, conceived as cosmic diagrams, the ubiquitous mandala, and even the underground clay pipes may be arranged accordingly.⁸⁴

Where hydrological conditions permit, fountains fountain was built by the queen he served, Lalita-tripurā-sundarī, in v.s. 1885 Phālguna (A.D. 1828) (Naraharinatha 1955:1, 86). This and the Tuṣaḅiṭi are illustrated in photographs and architectural renderings by Nicholas 1971, 1974.

⁸⁴ Auer and Gutschow 1974:39. A Bhaktapur acquaintance once affirmed that he had witnessed repairs to a fountain whose only underground source was a manuscript tantra.

are constructed at ground level, or only a step or two below. They are a rarity in the Valley floor communities; the many-fountained Patan has only one, the popular Sundhārā, east of the Darbar Square. Such fountains are usually nearer the sloping periphery of the Valley, where springs feed both them and natural pools (*kuṇḍa*). Together they are important *tīrthas* that attract large number of Nepalis for ritual bathing. To accommodate crowds, the fountains usually have numerous spouts, such as the nine at Godavari or the twenty-two at Balaju. Muktinātha, a *tīrtha* high in the Annapurna range, has 108 spouts. The natural pools are also contained in tank-like structures, with steps provided for safe entry. Some of the most famous complexes are Godavari, Balaju, and Mata-tīrtha, but there are many others on the higher slopes, such as Sarasvatī Kund (Lele), Mahādeva Pokhari, and Manicutan. The most distant and most celebrated natural pool is Gosainkund, in the Himalaya proper, the source of the Trisuli River (Map 3).

Just as the water sources themselves are not merely utilitarian, so also the spouts from which the water issues. Of stone (Nepali, *dhūṅgedhārā*; Newari, *lōhitī*) or, more rarely, of metal (*sundhārā*, *lumhiṭī*), they are carved and cast in forms of symbolic creatures (Plates 233-237). The most common shape is the *maḥara*, a mythical water dragon much employed in Nepali art, and especially ubiquitous in pairs on the *toranas* (Plates 165, 482, 483). The *maḥara*'s body is an open channel with removable cover, the water flowing from its open mouth beneath an upheld elephantine snout. Frequently the *maḥara* holds in its mouth a telescoping series of one or more animals—ram, goat, bull, or chimera—from which the water at last issues (Plates 234, 235). Both channel cover and sides are often embellished with opulent carvings or metal repoussé of a variety of creatures or things associated with water (Plate 237). In older fountains, many of which date from Licchavi times, the heavy spouts are symbolically supported by paired atlantes (Plate 306). In the Malla Period, it was more common to set beneath them a relief carving of Bhagīratha, a sage whose pen-

ance induced the descent of the Ganges to earth. Set into a frieze of *maḥaras*, Bhagīratha may be seen on the Bhaktapur *tuṭedhārā*, conch in hand, safely leading the water to the fountain (Plate 228).

There are literally thousands upon thousands of carved stone *maḥara* spouts in the Kathmandu Valley, not only those in the fountains, but those put to other uses outside, such as stair steps, building blocks, pillars and posts, temple courtyard accessories, or simply lying about abandoned. The brass and copper spouts are more typically a feature of palace fountains, where gilding earned them the name "golden" (*sundhārā*, *lumhiṭī*). Now without gilding, a number of metal spouts also embellish the public fountains (Plates 234, 235).

In addition to their utilitarian use and architectural interest, the water sources are culturally important in many other ways. Because they have always served as social centers where people gather not only for water but for social interaction, they were a logical place to publish proclamations that concerned the community. This is attested by the many inscriptions preserved within them (Plate 51). Typically constructed as a meritorious act, the reservoirs, the fountains, and their individual spouts—and even the coping stones of wells—often bear dated dedicatory inscriptions that are also important historical sources (Plate 57). One of the earliest known inscriptions in the Newari language, for example, dated N.S. 353 Kārtika (A.D. 1232) is preserved as a dedicatory inscription on a *tuṭedhārā*.⁸⁵ Other water sources have Licchavi inscriptions associated with them.⁸⁶

Because of the sanctity of water itself, the water sources were also fitting places for the installation of sacred images. Many sources are outdoor museums that provide rich materials for art-historical studies. There is scarcely a fountain or tank, for example, that does not have at least one or more Śivaliṅga or *caitya* associated with it, and most have many, together with numerous sacred images (Plates 232, 236). A *gaihrīdhārā* adjacent to Kumbheśvara temple, for example, contains a half-dozen major and several minor stone sculptures,

⁸⁵ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1961d.

⁸⁶ A few are, for example, D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs.

28, 41, 52, 84, 93, 100, 120, 122, 127, 138, 147, 169, 175, 177, 179, 181, 184.

while others conserve some of the most significant art monuments of Nepal (Plates 273, 275, 281, 286, 306, 318, 353, 382, 404, 472). And with their fine carving and superb metalcraft, the spouts themselves are often important art objects (Plate 237).

The water sources are also significant for their place in Valley folklore, cultural focal points that often illuminate political, art, and religious history. The Rani Pokhari alone is the center of a mine of legend that helps us better to understand the seventeenth-century Nepal in which it was built.⁸⁷ There is scarcely a source that does not have some tale to tell. The unusual snouts of the stone *ma-ḥaras* at Narayan Hiti turn back in disgust from a royal parricide (Plate 235);⁸⁸ a well at Rājārā-jeśvarī-ghat had to be sealed because it too faithfully mirrored the future; and the most famous well of all, the Bāhira-barse Ināra, the Twelve-year Well, took as many years to dig, and even now leads to the underworld.⁸⁹

PILLARS AND PLATFORMS

Among the most arresting features of the Darbar Squares are the tall stone pillars crowned by the gilt images of some of the late Malla kings who helped to build them (Plates 30-33, 239). Each, in devotional attitude, faces the temple of the Malla tutelary, Taleju (Durgā), to whom the pillar and the royal portrait (sometimes joined with family members) is dedicated. The earliest, A.D. 1670, was raised by Pratāpamalla, the innovative king whose genius most marked the architecture of the Kath-

⁸⁷ Slusser 1972a:36-47.

⁸⁸ They were thought to be the only ones in the Kathmandu Valley, but G. Vajracharya and I also stumbled on one used as a paving stone in the Jayavāgīśvarī temple courtyard, Deopatan.

⁸⁹ See Chapter 12.

⁹⁰ Subedi et al. 1954. In addition to the king there are seven family members, two favorite queens, the queen mother, sons, and a grandson. All are identified by name in the bilingual text on the pillar.

⁹¹ N.S. 813 Māgha (A.D. 1693) (*Rājabhogamālā* 1970: part 4, 7).

⁹² The image is of King Bhūpatīndramalla (A.D. 1666-1721), but it may actually have been raised by his successor, Rañajit (Lamshal 1966:54; B. Sharma 1968a:15).

mandu palace square.⁹⁰ A quarter-century later Patan followed suit, when Yoganarendra raised a corresponding pillar to Taleju;⁹¹ and finally in Bhaktapur came the portrait of Bhūpatīndramalla.⁹²

These familiar pillar images, however, represent no more than three particular points in a long tradition that, rooted in antiquity, continues in recent and modern Nepal (Plates 71, 214). The source of the tradition itself appears to be the sacred pillars widely worshiped as the *axis mundi* in Neolithic times, but which at length, as in Mauryan India, gradually metamorphosed into emblematic standards and ex votos.⁹³ It was this later tradition that the Licchavis apparently brought to Nepal, for they, too, dedicated pillars to certain deities and placed them before their shrines (Plates 47, 240-242).

Pillars not only support human portraits; they are the preferred seat for the *vāhanas* of many gods, typically of the birds or, more rarely, the beasts that serve them in their comings and goings. Half divine themselves, the vehicles face the temple doors of the deities they serve. Far and away the most familiar of such emblematic standards is that of Garuḍa, the sunbird and inseparable companion of Viṣṇu. In Nepal Mandala one can trace an unbroken lineage of dated Garuḍa standards (Garuḍadhvaja) from the fifth to the late nineteenth century. They begin with the Changu Nārāyaṇa and Hadigaon Garuḍas, respectively of the fifth and sixth century;⁹⁴ we meet them again on twelfth- and fifteenth-century pillars in Bhaktapur,⁹⁵ in the seventeenth century at the Patan Dar-

⁹³ It has generally been thought that all Indian pillars with animal capitals were raised by the Emperor Aśoka, but a number apparently long predate him, and were more closely related to the earlier cult and symbolism (Irwin 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976).

⁹⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 2, 35 (9-30, 158-164). There is, of course, some doubt about the Changu Garuḍa, since neither it nor the pillar it most likely crowned is now in situ.

⁹⁵ At the temple of Tilamādhava, dated N.S. 283 Jyēṣṭha (A.D. 1163) and Vākupatī Nārāyaṇa, N.S. 528 Māgha (A.D. 1408) (*Abhilekha-saṃgraha* 1961c [the numbers are incorrectly transcribed as "238" in Rajvamshi 1963:5]; Petech 1958:144, document 15).

bar Square,⁹⁶ and in the mid-nineteenth century again in Bhaktapur (Plate 243).⁹⁷ In addition to these works, there are scores of other Garuḍa standards at Viṣṇu's shrines, some dated; some are on pillars, others on low pedestals.

In Nepal Mandala the bird Garuḍa is often anthropomorphic, in effect a human wearing a cape of bird wings. The highly individualized moustached faces of some of them, notably the fallen Changu Garuḍa, the Hadigaon example (Plates 64, 240), and a Licchavi work at Makhan-tol, Kathmandu,⁹⁸ suggest that they are portraits of the donors in *vāhana* guise. In contemporary India, only symbolic animals are known to have served as pillar emblems. Thus, if the Nepali pillar Garuḍas are portrait images, the Licchavis may have originated the custom. The practice of making portrait images as offerings to the gods was certainly known to them. There is the portrait of Viṣṇugupta, depicted in the very guise of Viṣṇu himself (Plate 65), and in A.D. 505 one Nirapekṣa recorded the consecration of portrait images of his parents.⁹⁹ It seems likely that the twelfth- and fifteenth-century standards of the Bhaktapur temples, each bearing anthropomorphized Garuḍas with highly individualized faces, continue the tradition. By the seventeenth century, these pillar portraits became frankly human in the realistic portraits of the Malla kings. Given what we know of Pratāpamalla, who raised the first of those known, it seems likely that he started the practice.¹⁰⁰

Other familiar Nepali pillar standards are the peacock, Kaumārī's vehicle, and the lion. The latter, usually in heraldic pose with one raised paw, has a wider symbolism and application than as the *vāhana* of a specific deity, however. The lion belongs to Durgā but, inexplicably, is rarely raised as a standard before her temples. An exception is the imposing *simhadhvaja* facing the chief Taleju

⁹⁶ Raised at the square Kṛṣṇa temple at the time of its consecration, N.S. 757 Phālguna (A.D. 1637) (Parajuli et al. 1954).

⁹⁷ At Dattātreyā *sattal*-temple, Tachapal-tol, the pillar inscribed with an unpublished dedication dated v.s. 1908 Vaiśākha (A.D. 1851).

⁹⁸ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:fig. 28.

⁹⁹ S.S. 427 Kārtika (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 19 [79-81]).

¹⁰⁰ A.D. 1663 (N.S. 784 Pausa-kṛṣṇa) may mark the first,

temple in Hanuman Dhoka.¹⁰¹ In Nepal, the lion is also assigned to Bhīmasena, and such standards are typically associated with him (Plate 243). The lion standard is also encountered in the *vihāra* courts, and facing stupas (Plate 222). The minister Bhimsen Thapa (A.D. 1806-1837) even raised a lion standard to memorialize his civic gift of the first vehicular bridge from the capital to Patan. It stands on the riverbank still. There are also many other, less common, emblems—*vāhanas* of other deities, their cognizances, such as Viṣṇu's conch or *caḅra* (Plate 47), or the image of some particular deity. There is also the emblematic *nāgaḅāṣṭha*, a somewhat related form (Plate 226).

Emblematic pillars are known to Nepalis by many names, the most common being *stambha*, *śilāstambha* (pillar, stone pillar), *dhvaja* (standard, flag), or *dhvajastambha*, words often modified with the name of the specific emblem, as in "Garuḍadhvaja" or *simhadhvaja*. The pillars themselves are always of stone, square, or ascending in stages from square through octagonal to round. Some, like the *axis mundi* of old, rise directly from the ground, but others are mortised into a low pedestal, in the Malla Period frequently in the form of a tortoise. This choice relates, no doubt, to the tortoise that supported Mt. Meru in the legendary Churning of the Ocean; very likely it is meant to imbue the pillar with symbolic stability. Pillars are also often wreathed at base or summit with a carved serpent guardian. The capital, usually cushioned by an *āmalaka*, is typically a full-blown lotus whose broad surface provides ample space for the crowning emblem (Plates 240, 241). The capital of Pratāpamalla's pillar, as might be expected from such a king, is very individualized (Plate 239).

In the Malla Period, the royal portrait emblems are almost always of gilt copper. The twelfth-century Garuḍa capital of the Tilamādhava pillar is

the date when Pratāpamalla erected a gilt portrait image of himself and two sons facing the chief Taleju temple (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 64 [129-131]).

¹⁰¹ Established in N.S. 762 Jyestha (A.D. 1642) as a gift of Pratāpamalla; it stands behind the 1663 portrait pillar of the king and his sons, and beside one of Parthivendramalla and a queen, probably Rddhilakṣmī, established in N.S. 802 Māgha (A.D. 1682) (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscns. 44, 88 [73-78, 188-193]).

stone, as are the two extant Licchavi emblems. If metal emblems were also used in the Licchavi and Transitional Periods, as they were sometimes in ancient India,¹⁰² they have not endured.

The pillars of Nepal Mandala are arresting architectural monuments to which we owe the safe preservation aloft of a number of important stone and metal sculptures, although some emblems, lost to quake or rapacity, have been less fortunate (Plate 130). Like the fountains, the pillars also provide valuable indices to the history of art and architecture, religion, and politics—visual information amplified by the inscriptions they frequently bear. Concerning the pillars, there are also legends that help us to appreciate better the time in which they were raised. One of them even opens a window on a far more distant past. History affirms that Yoganarendramalla died by enemy poison at Changu Nārāyaṇa, and was cremated at Patan with numerous satis.¹⁰³ Tradition affirms, however, that he lives and will one day reascend his throne: his death will be confirmed only when the gilded bird perched above his pillar portrait takes wing.¹⁰⁴ Heard in the twentieth-century bazaar, how close the story takes us to a tale the pilgrim Fâ-hien heard in fourth-century India. There had been contention between Buddhists and “heretics” over rights to a particular pillar. To establish the Buddhist claim, some supernatural sign was needed. This was supplied when the lion capital “gave a great roar” and caused the abashed heretics to withdraw.¹⁰⁵

Architecturally insignificant but of considerable institutional importance are the masonry platforms known in Nepali as *ḍabali* (Newari, *ḍabu*, *phalacā*, *phale*) and in inscriptions as *maṇḍapa*, *vedikā*, or *vedī*. Rectilinear in form, they vary in height and width, but typically are two or three feet high and twelve or fourteen feet wide. They are made of brick and dressed stone, one or both of which may be decorated. Usually donated in pursuit of merit, *ḍabalis* are established next to temples, in the public squares, and in the royal

compounds, where they serve as open-air stages for sacred purposes (Plate 125). Kings are crowned on a *ḍabali*; images of the gods are displayed there (Plate 442); it was the traditional place for the performance of sacred dance dramas; and some *ḍabalis* have special names and designated uses. One adjacent to the Hanuman Dhoka chief Taleju temple, for example, is named Triśūli-ḍabali, while in the court of the Bhaktapur Taleju there is the Sneha-maṇḍapa. The latter was a gift of King Jagatprakāśa for the annual exposition of his gilt portrait image and the display of lamps on designated festival days.¹⁰⁶ Another in Patan was consecrated exclusively to the use of the Navadurgā dancers from Harasiddhi, a famous troupe that still performs on occasion in Patan and other Valley communities. *Ḍabalis* used to be imbued with a sanctity that forbade all but the ritually privileged to touch them. An unpublished inscription adjacent to a *ḍabali* in western Patan, for example, warns even the sacred cows to keep off. With the passage of time, however, although the *ḍabalis* may at times serve in the traditional ways, they have also entered the secular domain. Today they more often serve the community at large as handy seats, and the merchants as display space for their wares.

Another architecturally modest but ritually important structure may also be defined here. It is the “burnt offering pond” or “diagram,” the *yajña-kuṇḍa* or *yajña-maṇḍala*, a small sanctified place proper for conducting the *yajña* or *homa*, the presentation of burnt offerings to the gods (Plates 492, 493). Typically, the *yajña-kuṇḍa* or *maṇḍala* is a shallow pit, hardly exceeding a square foot, simply sunk into the temple courtyard or elaborated with a raised metal frame (Plates 159, 161).¹⁰⁷ Some, however, are simple surface arrangements, several feet square, demarcated by a particular pattern of bricks, as in Nasal-chok, Hanuman Dhoka, or by special paving surrounded with a balustrade, as at the square Kṛṣṇa temple in the Patan Darbar Square. When in use, such *yajña-*

¹⁰² Irwin 1973:716.

¹⁰³ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 128 (271-274); Rajvamshi 1965:38-40.

¹⁰⁴ There are many versions of this tale, one of which is recorded by Wright 1966:169.

¹⁰⁵ Irwin 1973:715; Legge 1965:50-51.

¹⁰⁶ B. Paudel 1965b.

¹⁰⁷ Note that the Uku-bahal *yajña-maṇḍala* is carefully provided with the four equidistant doorways the mandala exacts.

mandala may be converted into a firepit by stacking bricks around the periphery. They are also likely to be protected with a baldaquin.

With this survey of the extant architecture of the Kathmandu Valley, we are now in a position

to consider what may have preceded it. As examined in the next chapter, the structures that we know are apparently descended directly from those we do not. Architecture, like other aspects of the culture of Nepal Mandala, is a continuum.



CHAPTER 7

ARCHITECTURE: A BACKWARD GLANCE

THE TRADITIONAL architecture with which we are familiar in the Kathmandu Valley could not have evolved without antecedents. But since it is generally assumed that such antecedents have almost wholly disappeared or are underground, the study of early architecture has been either ignored or put off, awaiting systematic archaeological investigations. Clearly the final assessment will rest with the spade, but in the Valley, where almost every place is sanctified by the presence of God, it may be long in coming. Meanwhile, we need not remain totally ignorant of the buildings constructed in the course of more than a millennium of human activity. There are other indices to show us that the architecture we now know—the palaces, temples, monasteries, fountains, pillars, and even the modest ceremonial platforms—are but end products, and often duplicates, of a continuum whose source is far removed both from the Malla Period and the Kathmandu Valley.

One index to the kind of structures familiar in ancient Nepal is provided by the records of those who used them. Inscriptions of the Licchavi Period are studded with references to palaces and *dharmaśālās*, monasteries and temples (even chariot and palanquin temples), to stupas, fountains, reservoirs, pillars, and platforms. Similar references continue in the stone inscriptions and manuscripts of the Transitional and Early Malla Periods, although, like the records of those periods them-

selves, they are less complete. But while the documents provide an inventory of the kinds of structures familiar in ancient Nepal, only rarely do they tell us what they looked like.

For this evidence, however, we have other sources. One source is the monuments that have survived. For the Licchavi Period we have pillars, deep fountains and inscribed spouts within, spigot fountains, *caityas* (and, of course, the unseen cores of stupas), and quite unexpectedly, even some standing shrines. Certified to the Transitional Period is a dated series of votive pillars and the largest traditional building in Nepal, the celebrated *Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa*.

The second source of evidence respecting the appearance of these early buildings is the ruins still above ground. There are extant foundations and abundant bits and pieces in the form of stone columns, lintels, sills, door jambs, and decorative fragments. Scattered about in abandon or reused as convenient building blocks, these fragments have not previously been tapped as a source for the history of Nepali architecture. But they provide an opportunity for conducting “surface archaeology” in lieu of the more traditional subsurface method. Together, the ruins, the surviving monuments, and the documentary references provide a certain understanding of early Nepali architecture making it possible to compare it not only with the known successors of the Malla Period, but with

contemporary architecture of ancient India. By means of these comparisons, some of the origins of Nepali architecture become far less mysterious.

THE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

House and Palace

It is to Wang Hsüan-t'sê, the Chinese envoy who thrice came to Nepal Mandala in the mid-seventh century A.D., that we very likely owe our only pre-eighteenth-century document respecting the common house.¹ That the seventh-century Nepali house was no hovel is evident from the envoy's observation that "their houses are built of wood. The walls are sculptured and painted."² For the residences of Nepali kings, we have the more voluminous descriptions of the Chinese annals, based on the same envoy's observations, together with a number of references provided by the Licchavis themselves. From Jayadeva's Narayan Chaur proclamation we know that Mānagrha, the earliest known Nepali palace, was an extensive walled compound, pierced with several gateways, and that it contained a "*prekṣanamandapī*," a viewing platform. From Aṃśuvarman we learn that Mānagrha housed not only the royal family, but the chief officers of the crown and many other functionaries.³ Among them were the treasurer (*bhāṇḍanāyaka*), the superintendent of waterworks (*pāniyakamārintaka*), and a host of retainers such as the standard bearer, fly-whisk holder, and supervisor of the throne. From the same edict we also know that the Mānagrha compound included a number of shrines and temples, as well as the stables for the coronation horse and elephant.

It is almost certainly to Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana, the chancery that Aṃśuvarman built around A.D. 600, that two separate notices in the Chinese annals refer. Both no doubt derive from the commentaries of Wang Hsüan-t'sê, whose several audiences with Narendradeva must have taken place in the chancery from which the king then issued

his edicts. It is probable that the diplomat's memoirs, surviving in the scattered words of others, are much altered, and in any case reflect a certain measure of hyperbole. But in general, the two notices must in fact reflect something of what he saw. He is said to have written:

In the capital of Nepal there is a storied structure more than 200 *tch'eu* high and 80 *pou* (400 feet) in circumference. It can accommodate ten thousand men. It is divided into three terraces, each divided into seven stories. In the four pavilions there are sculptures to make one marvel. Gems and pearls decorate them.

The later rescension has:

In the middle of the palace there is a tower of seven stories roofed with copper tiles. Its balustrades, grilles, columns, beams, and everything therein are set with gems and semiprecious stones. At each of the four corners of the tower there descends a copper waterpipe, at the base of which the water is spouted forth by golden dragons. From the summit of the tower water is poured into troughs [which issuing at length] from the mouths of the dragons, gushes forth like a fountain.⁴

A further impression of the palace is obtained from the envoy's description of the king and the throne room. He observed that the bejeweled king "sits on a lion throne in a room spread with flowers and perfumes. The nobles, officers, and the entire court are seated to the right and left on the ground, and beside him are ranged hundreds of armed soldiers."⁵

On three separate occasions, the Nepalese themselves singled out Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana for special praise. Aṃśuvarman likened it to an "auspicious beauty spot (*tilāka*) on the earth's face at which the curious multitudes gaze unblinkingly." Narendradeva writes in one inscription that Kailāsakūṭa "has the splendor of Mt. Kailāsa, is beautiful, world famous, and a feast for the eyes," and in another that it is a "luminary of the universe, like

¹ Although the envoy's original memoirs no longer exist, they are apparently the principal source for the scattered notices on Nepal in the T'ang Annals and subsequent rescensions (Lévi 1905:1, 157, 163).

² Lévi 1905:1, 164.

³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 72, 149 (301-308, 563-572).

⁴ Lévi 1905:1, 159, 165.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 164-165.

unto moonbeams gleaming on the Himalaya's very peaks."⁶ In later years he may have referred to it as his "auspicious residence" (*bhadradhivāsa*).

It is evident from these early references that the palaces of the Licchavi Period were walled compounds large enough to accommodate a variety of structures. These included the king's quarters and symbol of authority, from which he issued his proclamations; residential quarters appropriate for high officers, general retainers, and a work force; a treasury,⁷ temples and shrines, ceremonial platforms, stables, and various water sources. Given the complexity of the water system described for Kailāsakūṭa, including rooftop storage, copper piping, and spouting fountains, it is little wonder that the superintendent of waterworks also dwelt within the palace compound.

Kailāsakūṭa, as we have seen, seems to have been incorporated into the Dakṣiṇarājakula compound in Dakṣiṇakoligrāma (southern Kathmandu). That it was an impressive building there is no doubt. It was apparently roofed with metal, decorated with sculptures and perhaps precious inlay, and equipped with an elaborate and sophisticated water system. Narendradeva's comparison of it to snowcapped mountains, together with the probability that the Kurppāsi white clays were destined for the palace,⁸ suggest that it was whitewashed. Such, at least, was true of important buildings in contemporary India and Ceylon, where texts frequently allude to great edifices "gleaming white like a cloud."⁹ To read of Kailāsakūṭa one might be inclined to think, as did the pilgrim Fā-hien of the splendid Mauryan palace of Pāṭaliputra, that it was "made by spirits [who] . . . piled up the stones, reared the walls and gates, and executed the elegant carving and inlaid sculpture-work—in a way which no human hands of this world could accomplish."¹⁰

It seems unlikely, however marvelous it was, that the "storied structure" of the Chinese annals could actually accommodate "ten thousand men"

or that the throne room could contain even a fraction of the persons said to surround the king. But this may be a clue that the Licchavi palace buildings, like those of the Mallas, were also quadrangles composed of four wings around an open court. If Narendradeva's lion throne was installed in one of these wings facing a large court—like the Mohan-chok audience hall facing Nasal-chok in Hanuman Dhoka—the Licchavi king might well have found space for an extensive court and the Chinese ambassadorial entourage. One must also wonder whether the envoy's reference to "four pavilions" refers to the four wings surrounding such a court. In any case, even the most cautious observer can scarcely fail to make a comparison between the metal-roofed, multistoried Kailāsakūṭa and the Newar-style temple, palace pavilions, and *sattals* of later times. The inventory of structures in the Licchavi compound—the royal temples, treasury, stables, ceremonial platforms, and fountains with golden *maṅkara* spouts—is also familiar in the Malla Period palaces. And like the Mallas and Shahs, the Licchavis also sat upon a lion throne (*siṃhāsana*).

We may never know much about the architecture of the Licchavi palaces beyond what the documents reveal. For despite the apparently lavish use of metal and carved stone, wood was probably a primary building material, as it was in contemporary Indian palaces.¹¹ That brick was also used in Nepali buildings of the time we know from the Hadigaon excavations, from existing bricks stamped with Aṃśuvarman's name, and from an inscription that refers to a structure of brick and wood.¹² Thus it seems likely that even if further excavations should be carried out in Hadigaon, or initiated in Kathmandu—the two most promising sites for the location of Licchavi Period palaces—the yield would prove meager.

There are a number of documentary references to the *lāyḱū* or *rājakula*, the palaces of the Transitional and Early Malla Periods. Śivadeva, a king

⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 78, 123, 129 (336-338, 458-462, 485-489).

⁷ A treasury (*bhāṇḍagāra*) is not named, but the fact that the treasurer (*bhāṇḍanāyaka*) lived in the compound leaves little doubt—as does common sense—that that is where the treasury was.

⁸ Discussed in Chapter 5.

⁹ Brown 1965:6.

¹⁰ Legge 1965:77.

¹¹ Coomaraswamy 1931:199.

¹² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 79 (339-341).

who ruled about A.D. 1099-1126, is said to have built a palace in a place called Kīrtibhaktagrāma,¹³ and there were others, such as Vamthunihmaṃ in Mānigvala (Patan) and Yuthunihmaṃ and Tripura in Bhaktapur. But, with the exception of a few comments on Tripura, none is described.

We know that Tripura was erected by Ānanda-deva I when he made Bhaktapur his capital about A.D. 1147. It then included "tripura [three puras], seven ganthakūta, and a golden fountain." Ānandadeva's successor, Rudradeva, added five more puras (pancapura) on the southern side, a khandacoḥa, and another golden fountain; the next king, Amṛtadeva, added another pancapura on the northern side.¹⁴ But this is not much help, because we do not know what these puras, khandacoḥas, and ganthakūtas were. In Old Newari pura signified both "mansion" and "temple." As used in the chronicle, one suspects the term pura may also have designated Newar-style quadrangles by means of which the palace was enlarged as needed, as were later palace compounds. Ganthakūta must refer to some kind of shrine or temple. A similar word, gandhakūti, is well known in India, where it meant "fragrant cell," a place where Gautama Buddha (and later his image) was housed. On the Bharhut stupa reliefs, the word is inscribed directly on a typical barrel vault building with a clerestory window.¹⁵ Slightly varied in spelling (gandhakūti), the term was applied to a Buddhist shrine of unknown appearance erected in Patan in Aṃśuvarman's time.¹⁶ But in Nepal, since the sixteenth century, at least, the term has apparently been used with exclusive reference to śikhara temples. Purandarasiṃha applied the term, spelled ganthakūta, to a śikhara he consecrated in the Patan Darbar Square in A.D. 1589,¹⁷ and an unpublished eighteenth-century thiyāsaphu refers to the gilt śikhara used as the finial of a Patan temple as a granthakūta. This term is still used with reference to certain śikharas.¹⁸ If the term was also used in this way in the fourteenth century when the

Gopālarāja-vamśāvali was compiled, it would identify Tripura's "seven ganthakūta" as śikhara temples incorporated into the palace compound.

That Tripura was fortified is evident from its alternate name, Kvāchem (fort). Perhaps this simply referred to its encircling walls, a feature whose existence is confirmed by Rudramalla's documented repair of them in A.D. 1324.¹⁹

Despite the number of puras, khandacoḥas, ganthakūtas, and sundhārās described for Tripura, we can surmise that the splendor of palace buildings like Kailāsakūta had long been a thing of the past. Tripura and contemporary palaces and mansions of kings and nobles must have been much more modest, in keeping with the limited holdings of each. Some, in all likelihood, were but a cut above the wealthy commoner's house. If, as it seems, these later palaces were ephemeral structures of brick and wood, we will probably never know much more about them.

Temples

Licchavi inscriptions frequently include the names of deities with references to their temples (devakūla).²⁰ But among the many references, there is only one that provides clues to the appearance of the temples. In A.D. 610 (M.S. 34 Prathama-pauṣa) Aṃśuvarman donated funds for the restoration of a temple in Matīngrāma (Sundhara-tol, Patan).²¹ This was because "the bricks had been disturbed and holes formed so that the mongoose chased the mice . . . and [because] the doors and windows were broken and the timbers employed in making them had become old." The mention of disturbed bricks and broken timber windows and doors raises the suspicion that the decaying temple was in the traditional brick and wood Newar style. This supposition is also supported by Wang Hsüan-t'sē's description of "multi-story temples [so tall] one would take them for a crown of clouds."²²

¹³ Gopālarāja-vamśāvali, fol. 24a.

¹⁴ Ibid., fols. 25a, b.

¹⁵ Zimmer 1968:1, 335; II, pl. 31c.

¹⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 95 (382-383).

¹⁷ N.S. 710 Kārtika (Abhilekha-samgraha 1962f).

¹⁸ Kathmandu Valley 1975:1, 34-35.

¹⁹ Gopālarāja-vamśāvali, fols. 45b-46a.

²⁰ For example, D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 5, 6, 72, 77, 108, 124, 139, 140, 145, 149.

²¹ Ibid., inscr. 79 (339-441).

²² Lévi 1905:1, 158-159. This entry continues, "under the pines and bamboos the fish and dragons follow man,

Both kinds of ambulatory temples, the wheeled chariot and the palanquin (*ratha* and *khata*), were familiar to the Licchavi scene. Jayadeva stipulated a sum of money to be given a certain officer "at the time of the ceremony of lifting the *khata*" that was to be used in a *khata jātrā*, and other sums for the upkeep and embellishment of a palace chariot (*ratha*).²³ The *ratha* may have been for royal rather than divine use, but the description of its care would be equally fitting for the preparation of the chariot temple used today. These references, together with the fact that Narendradeva is credited with regulating Matsyendranātha's festival,²⁴ in which the *ratha jātrā* is a salient feature, makes it reasonable to infer the presence of the chariot temple in seventh-century Nepal. This seems all the more probable when we consider that the Chinese pilgrim, Fā-hien, traveling in the Gupta realm in the fourth century A.D., described a procession in which "there may be twenty cars, all grand and imposing." The pilgrim also recorded seeing a similar chariot procession in Khotan, and in each instance, both in the description of the chariots and the pattern of the processions, they closely resemble the *ratha jātrās* performed in Nepal today.²⁵

The documents of the Transitional and Early Malla Periods also provide many references to temples. From the early chronicles we learn, for example, that in the eleventh century Śaṅkaradeva II built a temple, in the twelfth century Śivadeva donated a golden roof to Paśupati, Ānandadeva I established two deities in a temple in Bhaktapur, Someśvaradeva "built the great Yodyam temple which was decorated with wood," and in A.D. 1294 the widow of the Bhaktapur crown prince built the "temple of Indrakūṭa."²⁶ The "golden roof" donated to Paśupati and the Yodyam temple "dec-

tame and confident. They approach man in order to be fed. Who does them violence brings ruin to himself and family." Hyperbole or no, one cannot help but draw a parallel with the tamed fishes at Balaju—the spring-fed pools where Viṣṇugupta's syncretic Nārāyaṇa image is installed—which "tame and confident . . . approach man in order to be fed." It would also be extremely unlucky, and therefore unthinkable, to harm these "fish and dragons." There are similar fish in the sacred pools at Śekh-Nārāyaṇa near Pharping, which approach man in order to be fed.

²³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 149 (563-572).

orated with wood" suggest the existence of the Newar-style temple in the twelfth century, and Indrakūṭa, built in the thirteenth, must confirm it. The latter has recently been identified as the imposing temple of Indreśvara Mahādeva in Panauti village; it is the earliest known extant Newar-style temple, a typical three-roof structure of brick and wood remarkable for the virtuosity and sublimity of its wood carving.²⁷

Banner paintings and illuminated manuscripts of the Transitional and Early Malla Periods often contain representations of shrines and temples, but on the whole they are of such conventional nature that they convey little information about the appearance of the buildings themselves.

Both kinds of ambulatory temples, *ratha* and *khata* are recorded in Early Malla documents. The Bhaktapur noble, Rudramalla, presided over Matsyendranātha's *ratha jātrā* in A.D. 1383 (N.S. 503 Caitra), and one Miyāgī Gaṇu offered a golden-roofed *khata* to a deity known as Kocche-bhaṭṭārika.²⁸

Vihāras and Maṭhas

Licchavi inscriptions are studded with the names of *vihāras*, and a number of inscriptions originated in the *vihāras* themselves.²⁹ That there were large numbers of them is evident from the frequency with which they are cited as points of reference when delimiting terrains.³⁰ Aṃśuvarman stipulates donations to a number of *vihāras*, both ordinary ones (*sāmānyavihārāṇam*) and five specified by name—Guṇ-vihāra, śrī-Mānavihāra, śrī-Rājavihāra, Khajurika-vihāra, and Madhyama-vihāra. Narendradeva also lists a number of *vihāras* by name.³¹

²⁴ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 23a.

²⁵ Legge 1965:18-19, 79. The comparison is also made in the foreword to Banda 1962:82-83.

²⁶ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 24a, 25a, b, 26b, 27a; the VK (10-11) also confirms the Indrakūṭa ascription.

²⁷ Slusser 1979a.

²⁸ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 29b.

²⁹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 1, 88, 95 (1-8, 363-369, 382-383).

³⁰ Lévi 1905:11, 169 also made this point.

³¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 77, 133 (320-335, 496-498); the commentary follows inscr. 134.

The prefix *śrī* attached to some of the *vihāra* names, two in Aṃśuvarman's list and one in Narendradeva's, indicates that they were royal foundations.³² The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* also records several foundations of Licchavi kings, which in some instances correspond to those known from the latter's inscriptions. According to the chronicle, the Buddhist king Vṛsadeva founded *Sīngu-vihāra-caitya-bhaṭṭāriḱa*, King Dharmadeva founded a Rājavihāra, his son Mānadeva the Māna-vihāra, Aṃśuvarman another Rājavihāra, and Śivadeva II still another.³³

The locations of some of these Licchavi Period *vihāras* can still be identified. Vṛsadeva's Sīngu-vihāra was associated with Svayambhū stupa, Dharmadeva's Rājavihāra with the stupa he founded at Deopatan (Chabahil), and Mānadeva's *vihāra* is generally thought to be Patan's now modest Cukabahal (Cakravarna- or Mānadeva-saṃskārita-cakravarna-mahāvihāra).³⁴ The *vihāra* founded by Śivadeva II is traditionally identified as Uku-bahal, Patan, a *vihāra* restored in the twelfth century by Rudravarṇa (Rudradeva II).³⁵ The only other Licchavi Period *vihāra* whose site can be identified is Guṃ-vihāra, one of those designated as a royal beneficiary by Aṃśuvarman. It was located on the ridge east of Sankhu, a site now largely occupied by the goddess Vajrayoginī; as suggested by the *vihāra's* non-Sanskrit name Guṃ, its foundation may antedate the Licchavis.³⁶

The majority of the written documents of the Transitional Period are Buddhist manuscripts copied in the *vihāras*; hence there are countless references to the monasteries, although there is the

usual paucity of description. An exception is provided by śrī-Hlām-vihāra, a monastery that cannot be located, but that seems to have existed in the Kathmandu Valley at least by A.D. 1008.³⁷ In a most unusual, but nonetheless not very helpful, commentary, dated A.D. 1015, we are told that the *vihāra* was "founded by the royal families as the greatest ornament of Nepal [and that one] celebrates [its] great glory . . . which shines like the eye of Nepal."³⁸ But the same Hlām-vihāra manuscript contains two miniature paintings of *vihāras*, apparently both viewed from the interior of their courtyard. One of them, identified only by the name of the *caitya* enclosed in the courtyard, is one-storied with a flat roof, latticed windows, and is faced by a Garuḍadhvaja, or similar bird standard. The other *vihāra* is labeled the "Vulbhukavī-tarāgakṛta Candranavīhāraḥ" of an unidentified place known as "Supācanagara" (Plate 244). The *vihāra* is two-storied, and has a flat roof and covered gallery such as the pilgrim I-tsing described for Nalanda.³⁹ Despite the anomalous roof, the building and court otherwise cannot fail to evoke the familiar Newar-style monastery quadrangle.⁴⁰ The second-floor gallery is reminiscent of the *bahil*; and the decorative molding and cornice, the *ti-kiḱhyā*, *caitya*, and votive pillar are all familiar features of the buildings that now exist. Neither of the two representations is identifiable as a Nepali *vihāra*, and like some of the companion miniatures, may illustrate famous sites elsewhere. But the illuminators were Nepalis who may never have gone outside the Valley. Thus, however conventional the paintings may be, the artists probably took as

³² D. Vajracharya 1967c:107-108.

³³ Fols. 20b, 21a, b, 22b.

³⁴ More will be said about the history of these sites in Chapter 10; Mānadeva's *vihāra* is likely to be the "*śrīman Mānadevasya-vihāre*" in which a manuscript was copied in A.D. 1063 (Petech 1958:44, colophon 1).

³⁵ Shakya 1970; Lévi 1905:11, 208. Pal 1974a:6 errs in assigning Patan's Kva-bahal to Śivadeva and Rudravarṇa, for there is no known connection of these kings with that *vihāra*.

³⁶ Lévi 1908:111, 92; G. Vajracharya 1966a:8-9; D. Vajracharya 1972b.

³⁷ Petech 1958:35, colophon 1. However, there is some question respecting the reading of the name.

³⁸ Foucher 1900:18; Petech 1958:36, colophon 3. D. Pant

1974:118-119, 125 reads "gladly founded by the previous kings to decorate Nepal, śrī-Hlām-vihāra is liked by all. There Buddhist texts are recited repeatedly."

³⁹ Foucher 1900:pls. 1, 5 and 1, 6; p. 49.

⁴⁰ According to Foucher 1900:26, the illuminations were not all completed at the same date as the writing of the text, but they were finished soon afterward, and in any case before the end of the century. Irrespective of the date of execution, the paintings represent a tradition even older; thus the miniature reproduction could actually provide a backward glance at Nepali monastic architecture considerably anterior to the date of the actual painting or of the date of completion of the manuscript. Pal 1974a:7, figs. 5, 6 has also compared the manuscript illumination with a contemporary Nepali monastery ruin.

models *vihāras* such as they themselves most likely lived and worked in.

There are scant references to the Hindu monastery, the *matha*. But it was a common institution of the Licchavi Period when the community and the buildings that housed it were both known as *mandalī*. One, for example, existed near Paśupati-nātha, where the “*dhārmika gaṇa*” (followers of the law) practiced yoga and cared for a linga known as Vajreśvara.⁴¹

Stupas and Caityas

Paradoxically, considering the copious references to *vihāras* in Licchavi inscriptions, there are almost none to stupas or *caityas*.⁴² But the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* informs us that Vṛsadeva established the Sīngu-caitya (Svayambhū), that King Dharmadeva established “Dhamode *caitya*,” that Mānadeva did penance at Guṃ-vihāra under the influence of which “a large *caitya* rose up and remained,” and that Śivadeva I “established the big Khāsau *caitya* [Bodhnātha].”⁴³ All of these early stupas exist now as the hidden cores of enlarged structures.

Documents of the Transitional and Early Malla Periods are more generous with references to stupas. One is the previously noted illuminated manuscript copied at Hlām-vihāra in A.D. 1015, another is a companion manuscript dated A.D. 1071; together they illustrate eighteen large stupas and numerous minor ones (*caityas*). Most of the identifiable monuments are foreign to the Kathmandu Valley, but one depicts “Nepāle Svayambhū-caitraḥ” (Plate 494).⁴⁴ It appears to be a purely conventional representation, however, that tells us little about what Svayambhū really looked like in the eleventh century. The other miniatures depict highly ornamented stupas that are equally nondescript. They do have tall pointed finials, but of an inconstant number of stages—five, nine, and occa-

sionally thirteen. It seems likely that thirteen stages became the standard number for the Nepali stupas after the eleventh century, following the appearance of the *Kriyāsamgraha-pañjikā*. But the practice of painting eyes on the *harmikā* may not have begun until about the fifteenth century. This is suggested by evidence derived from two banner paintings on cloth, one dated A.D. 1367, the other 1515.⁴⁵ Stupas shown in the earlier painting are without eyes, those in the later one, with.

Dharmaśālās

That the practice of erecting *dharmaśālās* was well established in Licchavi times is made clear by inscriptional entries such as “a building and a field connected with a fountain,” “near the little Pondi-maṇḍapa,” “the Brahmans who live in Sīmha-maṇḍapa,” or “the water source east of the place where the people rest their burdens.”⁴⁶

The documents of the Transitional and Early Malla Periods continue with many references to *dharmaśālās*. We learn, for example, that in A.D. 1171 “the wise man Jayacandra commissioned a spout of pure water together with the nearby *pat-tikā*, granted a field as a trust for keeping the road clean, and gave four coins to roof the *pāṭi*.” King Someśvaradeva (ca. A.D. 1178-1183) built a *sattal*, and about A.D. 1328 an unidentified donor offered in Bhaktapur a *maṇḍapa* together with a *dhārā*.⁴⁷

Of paramount importance to the study of early Nepali architecture, and to that of the *dharmaśālā* in particular, are the inscriptions beginning in A.D. 1143 that refer to Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa. But in this instance we know what the *sattal* looked like, since it still stands (Plate 204). In its unity with the more modest *maṇḍapas* and *sattals* we know from later times, Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa provides a significant clue to that which preceded it. It is the key link in what appears to have been a continuous chain.⁴⁸

⁴¹ D. Vajracharya 1967c:109-116; 1973:inscr. 128 (481-484); see also Chapter 9.

⁴² I know of a single reference, an inscription of Amśvarman in which Svayambhū-caitya appears to be named (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 89 [370-371]).

⁴³ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 20b, 21a, b.

⁴⁴ Foucher 1900:45, 214, Calcutta ms. A15, miniature no. 37.

⁴⁵ Both paintings are Vasudhara *maṇḍalas*, the earlier one illustrated in *Thangka Art* (Catalog of Doris Wiener Gallery, 1974, pl. T), the later one in the collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, acc. no. 69.24.185.

⁴⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 58, 70, 118, 149.

⁴⁷ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1961e; *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 25b, 27b.

⁴⁸ Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:180-212, 216-218.

Water Sources

Deep fountains (*pranālis*) are frequently mentioned in Licchavi inscriptions. The earliest reference is A.D. 550, when one Bhāravi, a grandson of King Mānadeva I, established a fountain in Hadi-gaon.⁴⁹ Twenty years later he gave Mañdhārā to Yūpagrāma (Patan) and established a *gūthī* for its care.⁵⁰ Another deep fountain was built by the residents of Joñjondīgrāma, an achievement earning for them a special dispensation from the king, Aṃśuvarman (Plate 51). The king himself is thanked by monks for donating a fountain to their *vihāra*. His sister-in-law consecrated and endowed a fountain near Bode village, the water of a fountain donated by Jiṣṇugupta is pronounced “tasty, clean, and cold”; and Narendradeva proclaimed on a *śilāpatra* established within the precincts of his donation the rules and regulations governing its use.⁵¹ To these and many other Licchavi references may be added the Chinese memoir respecting the golden *maḥara* fountains that the entourage saw in the palace compound.

It was also a Licchavi practice to establish “spigot fountains,” reservoirs of drinking water then known as *jaladronī*, or sometimes *śilādronī*. There are many references to these fountains, a number of which are inscribed on the now-abandoned troughs themselves.⁵² Large reservoirs (*khātaka*) were also familiar to Licchavi Nepal. Mānagupta Gomī, an ancestor of the Ābhīra Gupta kings, donated one near Thankot, and his descendant, Jiṣṇugupta, mentioned four *khātaka* as points of reference in delimiting certain terrains.⁵³ That four reservoirs should lie so near each other suggests that they were as common then as now. The Licchavis also built canals for irrigation purposes, referring to them as *tilamaḥa*.⁵⁴

As we should now expect, the documentary evidence for these architectural features associated

⁴⁹ In s.s. 472 Phālguna (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 41 [179-181]).

⁵⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 52 (208-210); Shakya 1969a:inscr. 3 (5-6).

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, inscrs. 84, 88, 110, 114, 134, (354-356, 368-369, 419-422, 431-432, 499-506). Other references to fountains may be found, for example, in inscriptions 93, 106, 133, 139.

⁵² *Ibid.*, inscrs. 120, 138, 147, 169, 175, 179, 181. In 1884-

with the provision of water continues uninterruptedly into the records of the Transitional and Early Malla Periods. When listing the activities of successive kings, the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* frequently recalls their pious donations of fountains and tanks. King Śivadeva (ca. A.D. 1099-1126) not only erected various images, repaired temples, donated a silver lotus to Paśupati and a golden roof for his temple, but he “built many fountains, wells, and ponds.” Prince Mahendradeva “excavated the large pond [Mahendrasaras/Madanarasas] of Yodyam,” and on its completion in N.S. 239 (A.D. 1119), “gave a half *dramma* to each worker.” The golden spouts given by the twelfth-century kings Ānandadeva and Rudradeva are also meticulously noted, as is also the spout offered by Jayaśaktideva to Indreśvara Mahādeva, the commemorative linga and temple his mother established in A.D. 1294. The chronicle also mentions a *p[r]anāli* constructed at Tilamādhavasthāna in Bhaktapur about A.D. 1328. It is probably the existing fountain adjacent to Tilamādhava Viṣṇu temple, the style of whose anthropomorphic nine planets (Navagraha) accords perfectly with this date (Plate 233).⁵⁵

Pillars and Platforms

There are several references to votive pillars in Licchavi inscriptions. Mānadeva I inscribed on his own donation at Changu Nārāyaṇa (Plate 47), “my father ornamented the opulent earth with handsome pillars”; a queen during the same king’s reign appointed a person named Kedumbātā to erect a *śilāstambha*; and Jayadeva mentions a pillar as a point of reference in delimiting terrains.⁵⁶ We learn from the same inscription that the Licchavis also used ceremonial platforms, then known as “viewing platforms” (*prekṣaṇamaṇḍapī*).

Our only documentary evidence for votive pil-

1885, when Bendall 1974:80 recorded one of these inscriptions, he was not able to identify precisely what was meant by *jaladronī*, nor was Dr. Bühler.

⁵³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 115 (433-437).

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, inscrs. 105, 107, 133, 139, 140.

⁵⁵ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 24a, b, 25a, 27a, b.

⁵⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 2, 8, 149 (9-30, 44-47, 563-572).

lars during the Transitional Period is provided by the Hlām-vihāra manuscript miniatures. They are prominent features of both of the *vihāra* courtyards I have mentioned, one pillar apparently a typical Garuḍadhvaja, the other surmounted by an elephant capital (Plate 244).

Rich and provocative as the documentary evidence is respecting the early architecture of the Kathmandu Valley, it provides limited clues to its appearance. For amplification we must turn to the physical evidence.

THE PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Extant Architecture

There are several standing shrines that, although hitherto unrecognized, can be dated to the Licchavi Period (Plates 245-249). At its simplest, such a shrine is merely a monolithic roof supported on four short columns above a Śivaliṅga. An almost intact one, still in use, stands in the shadow of Paśupatinātha (Plate 245), and an abandoned cluster is at Sarasvatī Kund near Lele village, once the thriving *draṅga* of Lembaṭī (Plate 246). As ruins, the massive roofs and individual columns of these shrines are found in many places (Plates 247-249). In their present stage, the Śivaliṅga shrines are not very different from some of the primitive shrines depicted in early Indian reliefs—the well-known *nāga* shrine on the Great Stupa at Sāñchī, for example⁵⁷—and at best provide the meagerest of shelter for the Śivaliṅga. The spaces between the columns may originally have been enclosed with stone slabs, plain or decorated with relief carvings. This is suggested by a crude slab set between one pair of columns of the Paśupati shrine, and by fragments scattered around the Sarasvatī Kund shrines.

The columns of these simple shrines are engaged directly in the ground, and project above it less than three feet; they are almost triangular in cross section, flat on the two exterior faces but concave on the inner one (Plates 245, 246). They are embellished on the upper portion with moldings,

above which are decorative emblems reminiscent of, and probably derived from, the *caitya* window or “ox-eye” (*gavākṣa*) motif encountered in more developed form on other Licchavi remains (Plates 263, 269, 271). There are often low relief festoons beneath the moldings, and still farther down the shaft, the image of a guardian (*dvārapālu*, *pratihāra*) carved in high relief (Plates 247, 248). When present, these figures are carved on all the columns of a given shrine, on one or both exterior face. The *pratihāras* are usually in the guise of Śiva, in keeping with the tradition of representing the attendants or acolytes of a deity in a form duplicating the deity’s own.

The roofs of the Śivaliṅga shrines invariably consist of a massive monolithic slab, four to eight inches thick, flat on top but with four sloping sides reminiscent of a hipped roof. None of the slabs is quite square, but measure roughly three, and even four, feet across. The periphery of the underside is thinned by chiseling, but the columns make direct contact with the thicker section. Although the Paśupatinātha shrine and some of those at Sarasvatī Kund have flat roofs now, this was not always the case. As has been shown by Viennot, probably no early temples in the Indian tradition had flat roofs,⁵⁸ and these simple Nepali shrines are no exception. This is evident from a number of Sarasvatī Kund shrines that have retained all or part of their finials, mostly in the form of separately carved, stubby *āmalakās* (Plate 246).

There is no doubt that these shrines were constructed in the Licchavi Period. The remains of two of them bear inscriptions—a fact that led to their identification as Licchavi. Such shrines were established as memorials, *ex votos*, or simply as *ḷīrti* for public welfare. Sometimes the donors inscribed their gifts. One such dedication is engraved on the edge of a typical but previously unidentified roof, now broken and used to cover a spring in Bankali, near Paśupatinātha. The donor was a queen of Aṃśuvarman, who established an unnamed image for the salvation of the deceased king, referred to only by his scholarly title, “Śrī-kalahābhīmānī.”⁵⁹ The image can now be safely

failure to identify the inscribed fragment as part of one of these shrines caused him to falter about the meaning of the inscription, since no image was specified. The fact that

⁵⁷ Brown 1965:pl. 18, fig. 5.

⁵⁸ Viennot 1968:24.

⁵⁹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 87 (366-367). Vajracharya’s

identified as a Śivaliṅga, and the shrine that sheltered it may be dated to around A.D. 621, the date of Aṃśuvarman's last known inscription and the first of his successor. The second inscription, undated but in Licchavi script, occurs on an abandoned column imbedded in the ground near Bhuvaneśvara temple, near Paśupati-nātha (Plates 248, 249). The brief inscription says "this is the *kīrti* [meritorious work] of Pradyumnaprāṇa." Such shrines are almost certainly the Śivaliṅga shrines referred to as "*āvaraṇa*" (cover) in Licchavi inscriptions.⁶⁰

In the same way as *cāityas* proliferate in the vicinity of an especially venerated stupa (Plate 225), so do lingas cluster around important Śiva temples. Aṃśuvarman's widow was not alone in choosing the environs of Paśupati as a fitting place for her memorial. Linga shrines of recent date are massed in serried rows opposite the temple⁶¹ and the first known reference to Paśupati-nātha, A.D. 533, is provided by a Śivaliṅga established in its shadow (Plate 49).⁶² Still earlier, in A.D. 505, Mānadeva's daughter Vijayavatī consecrated a linga in the name of her illustrious father, whom she likened to the "full moon in the firmament of the Licchavi clan" (Plate 332).⁶³ Her donation now lies abandoned on the slopes of the deep gorge of the Bagmati, at Sūryaghat, the stillness broken only by monkeys at play in the sacred stream. Nearby cluster companion lingas, long exposed to sun, rain, and the grey growth of lichens, but once sheltered, we may guess, in shrines perhaps as simple as the one on nearby Rājarājeśvarī-ghat. Together they probably resembled the constellation that still manages to just stand at Sarasvatī Kund. And near the latter is the grass-grown ruin of a temple that was once undoubtedly a Śiva center of renown in Lembaṭṭidraṅga.

There is a considerably more sophisticated version of the simple *āvaraṇa*, an example of which exists in a temple courtyard in Banepa (Plates 250-253). Although the Banepa shrine has the same

kind of roof and columns as the *āvaraṇa*, it is somewhat larger and of more elaborate construction. It is raised on a socle of molded courses, the linga is elevated on a platform, and there is an attempt to engage the columns into the hollowed-out lintels that, together with beams, separate the columns and roof (Plate 252). The roof is crowned with a large finial composed of diminishing square and octagonal slabs, an *āmalakā*, and finally a bulbous terminus. Like the Paśupati *āvaraṇa*, one side of the Banepa shrine is closed, but at Banepa the wall is a relief carving set between decorative pilasters (Plates 251, 253). The subject is Umā-Maheśvara, the familiar and familial scene representing Śiva, Pārvatī, their son Kārttikeya, and attendants in Kailāsa palace. If the relief is coeval with the temple, as seems certain, its style would place the temple in the Late Licchavi or Early Transitional Period, probably somewhere between the ninth and eleventh centuries.

There is one other extant temple that almost certainly belongs to the latest to the Early Transitional Period. It stands inside the Paśupati compound, which is reserved to Hindus (and by extension, Buddhists) of accepted caste, and where neither photography nor sketching is permitted. But the temple has been described to me by two Indian scholars, Dr. N. R. Banerjee, then advisor to the Department of Archaeology, His Majesty's Government, and Dr. Pratapaditya Pal of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The temple in question is a small stone *śikhara*, now a truncated semi-ruin, still in use. It bears on its outer walls several high relief sculptures, such as a dancing Śiva and others common to medieval Indian Śaiva temples. These provide rather secure dating for the temple, and leave no doubt that it long predates the Malla Period.



There is another type of extant shrine that belongs to the Licchavi Period, the small stone

it is on the roof of a typical Śivaliṅga shrine leaves no doubt concerning the deity's identification. Gnoli 1956: inscr. 46 (6r), wondered if the slab might not be the pedestal for the image that the dedication concerned.

⁶⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 113, 182 (429-430, 596); Shakya 1969a:inscr. 8 (15-16).

⁶¹ Illustrated by Singh 1968:178-179.

⁶² s.s. 455 Caitra (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 34 [155-157]).

⁶³ s.s. 427 Āśāḍha (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 20 [82-87]).

caityas that Buddhists raised in somewhat the same way as their Hindu contemporaries did the Śivaliṅga, and with even greater frequency (Plates 254-263, 265, 266, 268-271, 273-279, 281-288).⁶⁴ Most are inconspicuous monuments, some scarcely two feet high, and none surpassing four feet. But minor as they are in terms of "architecture," they are monuments of great significance to the study of Nepali architecture. It will therefore be necessary to examine them closely.

All of the existing Licchavi *caityas* are of stone, some monolithic and others composed of several separate sections. Some are severely plain, others flamboyant vehicles for the exercise of the stone-cutter's art. But they are all composed of the three principal parts of the stupa—the drum, dome, and finial—and almost all are raised on a plinth. For the most part, they are simply miniature stupas in which the symbolic dome takes precedence, or is at least visually as important as the plinth that supports it (Plates 254, 255, 265, 279, 287). But it is the plinth, together with the adjacent drum (*medhī*), that is the most variable part of the *caitya*, and that makes it such an important object of study.

Occasionally the plinth is only a simple platform—such as supports the eastern Guita-tol stupa, for example—and is followed by a few molded courses of the *medhī*, then the dome, and finial (Plate 279). But for the most part, the plinth is an elaborate substructure visually as important as the *caitya* itself, and sometimes more so. On occasion it is virtually a temple, itself standing on a stepped plinth and crowned with a stupa dome (Plates 256, 257). As such, it is comparable to a type of square temple with exterior niches facing the cardinal directions, known in India as the *sarvatobhadra* (all-around auspicious). Another distinctive type of plinth consists of four addorsed standing images of the Buddha, or of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, above which, almost as an accessory, is placed the stupa dome

(Plates 273-277). Sometimes the dome may be so vestigial that the monument really ceases to be a *caitya* at all (Plate 275). Such plinths are rare, however, numbering only a half-dozen examples.⁶⁵ Typologically they may be compared with *caturmukha/caumukha* (four-faced) shrines popular with the Jains in India, and in Nepal with the *caturmukhalīṅga* icons (Plates 337-341), with representations of Viṣṇu in which four emanatory forms (*caturvūha*) are combined (Plates 386-388), or with syncretic icons in which four different deities are joined (Plates 360, 431). The well-known Dhvaka-bahal *caitya* combines both *caturmukha* and *sarvatobhadra*, the standing images relating it to the former, and the elaborate recessed shrines to the latter (Plates 276, 277).⁶⁶

Typically, the plinth of the Licchavi *caitya* is composed of diminishing stages of the same, or of variable, plan (Plates 254-257, 262, 265, 269, 273, 276, 278, 279, 282, 286, 287). These may be square, round, octagonal, cruciform, or of intersected squares and rectangles, like the *triratha* plan of *śikhara* temples. They then correspond to the *vimśatikona*, the platform of twenty angles, one type prescribed by the *Kriyāsamgraha*⁶⁷ and employed so vividly at Bodhnātha (Figure 25).

One or more of these stages accommodates niches, usually one to each side, but frequently more (Plates 254, 255). Popular combinations are eight niches of equal importance, or four major niches separated by four or more minor ones (Plates 254, 257, 269, 286). The eight-niche combination may refer to the Eightfold Path or to the eight principal events of Śākyamuni Buddha's life. Most niches are empty, but a few contain images carved as one with the monument (Plates 281-283, 286). As a unique example, the entire plinth of one *caitya* is carved as a stylized mountain with rocky caves, formed by the niches, each of which contains a figurative *caitya* (Plate 287). But for the

⁶⁴ Licchavi *caityas* remain to be counted. Hem Raj Shakyā, the person probably most familiar with the Nepali *caityas*, verbally estimated some 150 in Patan and 130 in Kathmandu. I believe this to be a gross underestimate, and that a count of all of them—there are some even in Gorkha—would come to well over a thousand.

⁶⁵ In addition to the four illustrated here, there are two others, one at Tham-bahil, Kathmandu, the other in the

courtyard of Cārumatī-vihāra, Chabahil. Both are illustrated by Pal 1974a:figs. 33-35, and in pp. 8-20 the iconography and dating of five of the six known shrines is discussed.

⁶⁶ This *caitya* was first discussed by Kramrisch 1964:27-29, and has recently been exhaustively analyzed by Pal 1974a:8-10.

⁶⁷ Bénisti 1960:95, fig. 6.

most part the images now in the niches long post-date the monuments (Plates 257, 258, 260, 278, 285). Often they seem to have been introduced one by one as it suited the fancy of a donor. For example, set into one niche of a *caitya* at Kvenani, Chapattol, Patan, is a Buddha image inscribed and dated N.S. 582 (A.D. 1462); stylistically the three companion images are of still later date. The rough back walls of the empty niches (Plates 266, 268), inconsistent with the lapidary perfection typifying the Licchavi *caitya*, suggest either that the images were later removed or that they once held removable images of metal or stone. Perhaps such images were only installed on occasion, as in the modern practice of temporarily adorning stupas on Buddhist festival days with precious gilt metal images and ornaments. (For one interpretation of the empty niches, see Wiesner 1980.)

The ornament of the plinth, and sometimes of the adjoining *medhī* as well, displays a dazzling repertory of motifs of human, animal, vegetal, geometric, and architectural origin, all of which unquestionably have their roots in the classical tradition of Indian art (Plates 254-288). Ornament includes the face of glory (*ḥīrtimukha*), the goose (*ḥalahamsa*), the semidivine half-man, half-bird (*ḥinnara*), the inmate of the celestial paradise (*gandharva-mukha*), the vase of abundance (*pūrṇa ḥalaśa*, *pūrṇa ghaṭa*), foliated scroll (*patralatā*), the mythical dolphin-elephant (*maḥara*), gnomes (*gana*), the chimera, the figurative *caitya*, the deer worshipping the Wheel of the Law, and a host of associated motifs.

An idea of the wealth of ornament on the Licchavi *caityas* may be gained from an examination of a handsome example, number eight of eleven grouped around Dharmadeva stupa, Chabahil (Figure 29; Plates 265, 266). On each face of the lowermost decorated stage of the plinth, the vacant niche is framed by short pilasters consisting of a rosette motif and an *āmalaka*, each crowned with a *maḥara* that spews symbolic jewels (frequently pearl-like, here a plain band) toward an *āmalaka*-crowned *ḥīrtimukha* at the apex of the niche. Flanking the niche, as corner guardians of the *caitya*, are couchant lions in high relief, which share a common head and forequarters. A niche on each face of the next stage, partially engaged to

the drum, is surmounted with an *āmalaka*, probably a shorthand rendering of the *āmalaka*-crowned *ḥīrtimukha* below, and is framed by the magnificent foliated scroll tails of *ḥinnaras* perched at either side (Plate 266). Beneath the niche is a squatting *gana* holding in each hand a foliated scroll. The corner elements are *hamsa* with foliated scroll tails engraved within a framing border. A related *caitya*, number four in the Dharmadeva compound, depends for its decoration on variations of a number of these same motifs, but to frame the upper niches it includes, in addition, remarkably beautiful geese with foliated tails (Plate 268).

Another illustration of the brilliant ornamentation of the Licchavi *caityas*, but with a simpler inventory of motifs, is in the courtyard of Om-bahal, Patan (Plates 282-284). The lowermost section of the plinth rests directly on the courtyard tiling, inset with lotus mandalas. Each face displays a major niche surrounded by a wide band of foliated scrolls, and flanked by minor niches. Carved in the principal niches are the directional Buddhas, one in each: Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi, and Akṣobhya—four of the Five Tathāgatas who comprise the Vajrayāna pentad. Above each, in the four niches of the next stage, is an image of Vairocana, the fifth Tathāgata (Plate 283). The upper niches are surmounted with the *āmalaka*-crowned *ḥīrtimukha* (attached to the *medhī*), and are framed by the foliated tails of magnificent corner guardian lions. Typically, the latter share a common head and forequarters (Plate 284). Above them, framed by the elaborate tails, is a series of recessed moldings. They correspond to moldings above the lions on the Dhvaka-bahal *caitya*, with which the Om-bahal *caitya* is generally closely related (Plates 276, 277). Among the molded courses of the Om-bahal *caitya* drum is a row of dentils, seriate blocks of architectural derivation, also employed at Dhvaka-bahal, but more aggressively. Since the images on both these and other Licchavi *caityas* (Plates 273-275, 281, 286) are concerned with the doctrinal history of Buddhism, rather than with architectural history, I shall postpone further examination of them until Chapter 10.

A *caitya* now elevated on a high platform opposite the Mahākāla temple in Kathmandu will serve as a last example of the extraordinary range of

ornament on the Licchavi *caityas* (Plates 269-271). The massive square basal section of the plinth is rather simply adorned with four slightly ornamented niches and a series of recessed moldings at the corners similar to those on the Dhvaka- and Om-bahal *caityas*. The round midsection, encircled by a row of dentils, bears eight niches of uniform size, each surmounted by a *ḥirtimukha*. The niches are framed by the foliated tails of *ḥinnaras* which, each on a lotus pedestal, adore an empty, or emptied central lotus pedestal (Plate 270). The drum is carved together with the dome, and like the preceding stage is encircled with dentils. It is further ornamented with eight *caitya* windows (*gavāḥṣa*) alternating with a lotus-supported stupa decorated with flying banderoles (Plate 271). Two *caityas* in the Dharmadeva compound, numbers six and ten, and one at Lainchaur, Kathmandu, are rather similarly ornamented (Plate 286).

The numerous architectural motifs incorporated into the plinths and drums of these *caityas* are significant to the history of Nepali architecture. One such is the niche. Normally it is in the shape of an inverted *U* but with the apical arch characteristically inset from the vertical jambs (Plates 266, 268, 277, 283). It is often surmounted with a *torana*—usually some variation of the *ḥirtimukha* and *maḥaras* theme (Plates 258, 259, 265, 270, 277, 283)—and is framed with pilasters. These are often carved in minute detail (Plates 254-263, 265, 276, 277, 281). At times the pilasters are used as if they were the supports of the next higher stage of the plinth, and then are combined with bracket-capitals in the typical combination employed in post-and-lintel construction (Plates 254, 255, 260, 263, 277). In keeping with the Licchavi sculptors' flair for converting almost anything into a scroll, some of the bracket-capitals look like meaningless ornament, but actually are of architectural origin (Plates 254, 260). Other typical architecturally derived motifs found on the plinths and drums are dentils, festoons, *āmalakas*, and *caitya* windows. The *caitya* window or, alternately, *gavāḥṣa* (ox-eye) is quite complex (Plate 271). It is comparable to the doorways and clerestory windows that pierce the façades of rock-cut temples (*caitya grhas*) of

northern and western India, from which it derives one of its names.⁶⁸ On the Nepalese *caityas*, the window motif may be with or without *gandharvamukhas*, who symbolize the celestial beings dwelling within the shrine, and who also often peer out of niches in the same way (Plates 261, 262). To all these motifs of plinth and drum I shall return shortly.

In stark contrast to the abundantly decorated plinth and drum, the dome of the Licchavi *caitya* is a plain, polished hemisphere with slight variations in form and size that do not seem to be significant. A number of the domes are now sheathed, or partially sheathed, in elaborately ornamented repoussé gilt metal (Plates 161, 288). But these embellishments are later offerings (some are dated), which may be compared to the sheathing of pre-existing images or the wood carvings of temple doorways.

The original finials of the Licchavi *caityas* were very different from those that now surmount most of them. Typically, they consisted of a plain cube, the *harmikā*, expanded by successive stepped moldings to a broad cornice, above which was a squat pyramid of three or four steps (Plates 278, 279). Hardly a dozen of the original finials are intact, and for the most part they crown the plainest *caityas*. The finials of figurative *caityas*, such as those carved on some of the *caityas* themselves (Plates 271, 287), seem to lie midway between the squat ones and the thirteen-stage spires that now characterize Nepali stupas. Since tradition holds that valuable relics are placed inside the dome just under the finial—and some finials, to judge by a broken one I have seen, must be hollow—some of the old finials may have been despoiled by treasure seekers. Most likely they were removed and replaced in response to doctrinal considerations. Perhaps the change reflects the popularity of the *Kriyāsamgraha-pañjikā*, a text in vogue with Nepali builders at least throughout the Malla Period, in which the thirteen-step finial is recommended. But whatever the reason, it seems that the old finials must have been purposely removed. But when this transpired, and when they were replaced, we do not know. In any event, the new finials are

representations of palaces.

⁶⁸ Ghosh 1960. As Coomaraswamy 1931:195-196 points out, the term is a misnomer, since it also occurs in the

grossly disproportionate, are of different materials and workmanship, and are usually crudely cemented into place.

While there can be no doubt that the inspiration of these *caityas* is Licchavi (or more properly Indian, as we shall see), the actual dating of them poses a problem. Some of the *caturmukha* or *sarvatobhadra* type of shrines can be fairly well dated by the style of the images on them, which range from the seventh to about the ninth century.⁶⁹ But even so, some escape dating altogether, such as the Svayambhū *caitya* (Plate 274), which seems almost certainly to be very early, but which, as Pal discusses, may in fact be late. Of the many hundreds of *caityas* I have examined, only five bear inscriptions, and only one (Plate 256) has a legible date, M.S. 182 Āśādhā (A.D. 758).⁷⁰ Three of the five inscriptions may be dated on paleographic evidence to the preceding century: one, at Tyagal-tol, Patan, uses a script current in Aṃśuvarman's time; the other two, one also at Tyagal-tol and the other the Dhvaka-bahal *caitya*, are of Narendradeva's time.⁷¹ The fifth inscription, unpublished, is on the separate square platform that supports number eleven of the Dharmadeva stupa group. It is in Bhujimol script of about the time of Sthitimalla, hence fourteenth century, and records the commission of a *dharmadhatu caitya* by one Rāma.⁷² This inscription, in keeping with so many images, could conceivably have been added at a later date, perhaps following a restoration, but this seems unlikely.

That most of the stone *caityas* may be assigned to the Licchavi Period seems evident, on the basis of both ornament and the impeccable, gem-like stone carving that marks Licchavi sculpture. The unadorned examples, some with their original squat finials, may be among the earliest surviving architectural works in the Valley, to be dated at the very latest to the fifth century A.D. The decorated *caityas*, on stylistic comparison with Indian art, could not predate the fifth century, and most were probably created in the seventh century, culturally a particularly fertile epoch in Nepal Mandala.

⁶⁹ Pal 1974a:8-20.

⁷⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 174 (592); G. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 8 (129).

⁷¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 98, 165, 167 (387-388,

Some of the *caityas*, although faithfully emulating Licchavi models, may have been made in the Transitional Period—and if we are to accept the inscriptional evidence of the Chabahil *caitya* number eleven, even into the Early Malla Period. That this would not be impossible will be demonstrated further along.



As I have mentioned previously, and will document in Chapter 10, there are at least four extant monumental stupas that can be identified as the donations of Licchavi kings. The oldest, Svayambhū, is almost certainly a foundation of the Buddhist king, Vṛsadeva, the great-grandfather of Mānadeva I, who ruled about the beginning of the fifth century. The stupa of Chabahil can be credited to Dharmadeva, Mānadeva's father; and Bodhnātha to King Mānadeva himself, or perhaps a successor, Śivadeva I (ca. A.D. 590-604). Probably to Mānadeva may also be assigned the large stupa that fills the temple of Mahāmāyūrī at the site of Guṃ-vihāra near Sankhu.

In the course of their long histories, these four stupas—and almost certainly others—have been repaired and renovated, some have been enlarged, and some completely transformed. Nepalese records abound with references to repairs and renovations of stupas. It was the custom in Nepal, as in India, to enlarge existing stupas, while carefully preserving the original sacred structure within. One is frequently startled to encounter sacred images that belong to earlier structures peering out through chinks in the stupa's outermost casing. A superb Buddha attached to one of the inner cores of a small stupa in the North Stupa compound of Patan is a case in point (Plate 452), but there are many other, if less dramatic, examples.

Of the four royal donations, Dharmadeva stupa (Plate 218) and the enclosed Mahāmāyūrī stupa probably most nearly approximate their original size and appearance. Both domes—particularly that of the Mahāmāyūrī enclosure—retain the low, hemispherical profile comparable both to the

587-588).

⁷² Orally so identified by G. Vajracharya. Pal 1974a:7 mentions a Licchavi inscription on one of the Chabahil *caityas*, but I was not able to find it.

domes of the Licchavi *caityas* and to the Mauryan stupas of Sāñchī. But like the *caityas*, both stupas have been overpowered with latter-day finials. Given the early foundation date of Dharmadeva stupa, about A.D. 450, it is quite possible that it did not originally have the four projected chapels. If not, these features, in accordance with doctrinal evolution, would have been added to accommodate the Tathāgatas. Dharmadeva stupa bears decorative plaques which are almost certainly later donations, since stylistically they postdate the stupa's foundation by two centuries (Plate 453).⁷³ However, they are conceptually related to the *āyāgapaṭa* (relief plaques) that adorned stupas long anterior to it, for example at Amarāvati or Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. Whether, like early Indian stupas, Licchavi stupas were also railed, we do not know. Some of the stupas illustrated in eleventh-century manuscripts were.⁷⁴ And there is evidence respecting a lost railing fragment of Patan's South Stupa, discussed in Chapter 10.

The two largest and most prestigious stupas in the Kathmandu Valley, Svayambhūnātha and Bodhnātha, have both been utterly transformed by centuries of adoration into something very different from the modest mounds the Licchavi kings almost certainly consecrated. As the premier Buddhist site, Svayambhū has attracted gift after transforming gift, and has a long documented history of restorations that seem to recur at least once in every century. Bodhnātha is less well documented, but at some point in its history—perhaps because of its prominent location on the main trade artery through the Valley—the Tibetans gravitated to it and made it their own. At length it became essentially a Tibetan preserve, and it was transformed into the mandala form it now has, perhaps in imitation of the stupa of Gyantse in western Tibet. But there is little doubt that concealed within the immense dome is a primitive Licchavi core.



We are particularly well provided with examples

⁷³ Pal 1974:pls. 158-161.

⁷⁴ Foucher 1900:54, 60, pl. 1, figs. 1, 5.

⁷⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 170 (589-590); *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962g.

⁷⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 162 (586); G. Vajracharya

of extant Licchavi architecture in the structures concerned with the storage and distribution of water. A number of deep fountains (*gaihriḍhārā*) are certified as Licchavi works by inscriptions still in place within them; others may be almost as securely dated on the circumstantial evidence of the Licchavi Period *caityas* and sculptures found within them. Many of the characteristic stone *maḥara* spouts may also be firmly established as the work of Licchavi hands. There are not only those circumstantially dated by the fountains in which they are incorporated, but an occasional spout itself bears a Licchavi inscription.⁷⁵ Terra cottas gathered from a Licchavi midden at Dhumvarahi also included miniature replicas of *maḥara* spouts. Also recovered at the same site were a number of clay tiles that once channeled underground water from the source to the fountain spout. The characteristic paired caryatids often found beneath the spouts of ancient fountains (Plate 306) can also be dated to the Licchavis, not only stylistically, but on the basis of inscriptions sometimes engraved on them.⁷⁶

There are also the remains of many Licchavi reservoir fountains, then known as *jaladronī* or *silādronī*. Like successor fountains of the same type, the *tutedhārā* or *jahrū*, none now functions. But the characteristic stone troughs, drilled for one or more spouts, have often survived, and a number are inscribed and dated by the donor.⁷⁷ Usually the troughs are plain, but a decorated one has been found that on the basis of style can also be dated to the Late Licchavi or Transitional Periods (Plate 230). The face of the trough is decorated with confronted *ḥinnaras*, each possessing an enormous, space-filling foliated scroll tail. Each bears a sacred water vessel that it seems to empty toward the former emplacement of the spigot. This unique *jaladronī* is now employed upside down as a stair step behind the Bhairava temple of Taumadhi-tol, Bhaktapur.

No existing tank has been identified as a Licchavi work, but given the number of inscriptional references to *ḥhātaka*, it would not be surprising if

1973:inscr. 7 (128), fig. 7. According to a communication from G. Vajracharya, there is also another inscribed caryatid pair set into a Patan wall.

⁷⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 93, 120, 122, 127, 138, 147, 169, 175, 177, 179, 181, 184.

some of the Valley reservoirs were theirs. None of the irrigation canals—known to both Licchavis and their successors as *tilamaḥa* (and to the latter, sometimes *rājakuḷo* [royal canal])—has survived from any period.⁷⁸ But at two places in the Valley I have seen remnants of immense, monolithic U-shaped troughs that almost certainly were sections of the old systems. One of them lies beside a modern canal that parallels the Chapagaon road, the other beside a *gaihri dhārā* in Panauti.



The most famous extant Licchavi pillar is that at Changu Nārāyaṇa, the standard upon which in A.D. 464 Mānadeva inscribed his exploits, and in so doing ushered the Valley into history (Plates 47, 48).⁷⁹ The pillar originally faced the temple door, but was felled under unknown circumstances and at an unknown time, to be reerected at the north-west corner of the temple. But the original stub, with some of the inscription, is still in place. It has no pedestal, and like ancient Indian pillars rises directly from the earth itself. The lower two-thirds of the displaced part of the pillar is square, as is the stub, and in cross section both measure approximately fifteen inches. By means of a transitional section of facets, first eight, then sixteen—each outlined with an engraved line—the pillar terminates in full round. It is crowned with an *āmalaka* and a lotus that now bears a glittering *caḥra*. A primary cognizance of Viṣṇu, the *caḥra* is companion to a Malla or Shah Period gilt conch standard paired with it at the opposite corner of the main façade. According to Bhagvanlal Indraji, who first studied the pillar, the *caḥra* was the gift of a royal physi-

⁷⁸ An extensive irrigation system was constructed by the late Malla kings of Bhaktapur (B. Paudel 1964a:13-15), and a "*tilamvaḥa*" is cited as a boundary marker in an inscription of Bhāskaramalla in N.S. 835 Phālguna (A.D. 1715) (M. P. Khanal 1969:50-51).

⁷⁹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 2 (9-30) (published as two separate inscriptions by Gnoli 1956:inscrs. 1, 2). Bhagvanlal and Bühler 1880:163-166 and Lévi 1908:III, 1-18 partially translate the inscription and discuss the pillar at some length.

⁸⁰ Bhagvanlal and Bühler 1880:163.

⁸¹ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:130 n. 138 overlooked the observation of Bhagvanlal and Bühler 1880:163 that "the weight of the Garuḍa seems to have been the cause

of the pillar's fall." Unfortunately, we do not know whether this is only the scholar's conjecture or whether it in fact records a tradition passed on to them by temple personnel who had heard about the fall of the pillar and its heavy capital. If the latter, the observation corroborates the writer's opinion that the Garuḍa represents the original emblem, and is therefore a dated work of the fifth century A.D. For another view, see Pal 1974:72, fig. 98. That the pillar fell before A.D. 1694 can be deduced from the position of the portraits of Rddhilakṣmī and her son, since it is unlikely that they would have been installed directly behind the pillar.

cian around A.D. 1860; the physician was also apparently responsible for reerecting the pillar.⁸⁰ In 1880, when Bhagvanlal visited Changu Nārāyaṇa, "fragments of [the pillar's] capital and of the Garuḍa [were] also lying about." A quarter century later Lévi wrote that the "debris of the ancient capital and of the Garuḍa which crowned it are preserved in a kind of latticed cage in the middle of the court." Since Lévi was not permitted beyond the courtyard doorway, he must have been misinformed, or else he misunderstood his informants. The cage has contained the gilt images of Rddhilakṣmī and her son Bhūpalendra since they were donated in A.D. 1694 (Plate 69). Seated beside it, however, offside and at ground level near the broken stub of the pillar, is the Garuḍa that almost certainly was originally seated aloft (Plate 64).⁸¹ It seems likely that it was to the Garuḍa, rather than to the cage, that Lévi's informants pointed.

A second Licchavi Period Garuḍadhvaja faces the temple of Satya Nārāyaṇa below the Hadigaon bluff (Plate 240). Like the Changu standard, the pillar changes from square to round through a faceted midsection, but at Hadigaon, where the pillar is much shorter, the sections are correspondingly compressed. The pillar is surmounted by a full-blown lotus upon which half kneels the original and hauntingly beautiful anthropomorphized Garuḍa image.⁸² The pillar is inscribed with a long undated panegyric composed by someone named Anuparama.⁸³ Perhaps it is the same Anuparama who was the father of Bhaumagupta, an important figure in the history of the Ābhīra Guptas. Anuparama died just prior to A.D. 540, as attested

⁸² As on the Changu pillar, there is no visible pedestal.

⁸³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 35 (158-164).

by his widow's inscription.⁸⁴ If the author of the panegyric is the same Anuparama, then A.D. 540 would provide a secure *terminus ad quem* for the pillar. This date is in perfect correspondence with the paleography of the inscription.⁸⁵

The third, and certainly the most beautiful, extant Licchavi pillar stands isolated in the center of a neighborhood square near the Bhīmasena temple in eastern Bhaktapur (Plates 241, 242). Crudely sunk by later hands into a concrete foundation, the ornate and variform pillar rises from a lotus-filled sacred vessel supported by four squatting caryatids, now half engulfed in cement (Plate 242). The rustic, top-heavy lion capital does not seem to belong with the pillar it crowns. Since the pillar is not directly associated with a temple, and does not seem to be even in its original place, it is quite possible that, rather than a votive standard, it was once a structural column in some Licchavi building. Very likely, by the addition of the crude lion the column was converted in recent times to a *simhadhvaja*, the typical standard offered to Bhīmasena, whose temple stands nearby.

Fragmentary Surface Remains

The third source of evidence for the reconstruction of the architectural past of the Kathmandu Valley is provided by the remains of earlier buildings that still lie about above ground in bits and pieces. Though less abundant than what is to be seen in Rome or Constantinople, the architectural debris of the Kathmandu Valley speaks no less eloquently of the past. Some of these fragments are still part of foundations upon which now stand elevations only a few centuries old. Others have been scattered and exist only as isolated pieces, abandoned or, more often, reused. Among them are stone columns, door jambs, sills, lintels, foundation courses, steps, roof elements, pedestals, *toranas*, decorative fragments, and many unidentified pieces.

One of the areas in which archaeological surface debris is particularly abundant is Gvala, the ancient settlement surrounding Paśupatinātha, divided today into the two separate communities, Deopatan and Chabahil (Map 6; Plate 101). The

Licchavi past of Gvala-Deopatan-Chabahil is evident not only in the venerable Paśupati, a rich epigraphy, sculptures, fountains, stupas, *caityas*, Śivaliṅgas and their shelters, but by the fragments of earlier structures that also once adorned it. On Rājārājeśvari-ghat and scattered along the street leading from the river to the main road are the remains of numerous *āvaraṇas*, the distinctive Śivaliṅga shelters; the roofs now serve as random paving blocks, and the columns are abandoned or incorporated into later shrines (Plate 247). At the Paśupati end of the same ghat, near the footbridge spanning the Bagmati, are other kinds of archaeological fragments. One of them is a large slab of polished blue stone, decorated with stepped moldings and a serpent king exquisitely carved in high relief (Plates 316, 317). Employed now as a common foundation stone, the slab once stood upright as part of a door jamb. On it the noble Nāgarāja, in his characteristic role as *dvārapāla*, tended comings and goings through the doorway it flanked. Not far from the jamb, among assorted archaeological debris assembled in front of the Vatsaladevī temple, are sumptuously carved fragmentary columns. On Kailāsa, the hill above Paśupati, parts of companion columns stand here and there (Plate 298), and the stairway leading to them is almost wholly constructed of fallen columns, sills, and lintels (Plate 289). Returning along the main street, west of Paśupatinātha and paralleling the Bagmati, one encounters another fragmentary column standing casually by the wayside (Plate 300). Less exuberantly carved than the columns on Kailāsa and at Vatsaladevī, the roadside column's crisply faceted shaft rises from a sober and masterfully carved pot overhung with lush foliage. Distant a few feet, embedded in the soil at the threshold of Bhuvaneśvara temple compound, is the fallen column of the modest linga shrine that Pradyumnaprāna once established as his *ķirti* (Plates 248, 249). Within the compound itself are many decorative architectural fragments (Plate 313), and another handsome column fragment serves as a building block (Plate 299). Near Paśupatinātha, in fact, there is scarcely a fountain or shrine that does not incorporate some remnant of the architectural past (Plates 311, 322).

⁸⁴ s.s. 462 Jyēṣṭha (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 38 [170-174]).

⁸⁵ D. Vajracharya 1973:158.

Wandering westward through Gvala, one continues to stumble upon many other architectural remains, some of which I mentioned in discussing the history of Deopatan. By the roadside, for example, one spies superbly carved *ganās*; originally the caryatids of some Licchavi structure, today they are casual inclusions in a minor temple platform. At the Chabahil crossroad stands the shrine of Jayavāgīśvarī, apparently an ordinary Malla Period Newar-style temple, notable only for its unusual cruciform plan and for the colorful mural that fills one exterior wall. But a closer look reveals antique foundations incorporating thresholds decorated with lions peering out from rocky caves. The worn doorstep is the halved plinth of a Licchavi *caitya*, magnificently carved with beribboned deer adorning a flaming wheel, and protected by conjoint lions with flamboyantly foliated tails (Plate 324). Peering through the latticed doorway into the dim cella, one can discern the cult image itself, worshiped there since the late fifth or early sixth century, when it was "commissioned by Guhasoma" (Plate 537).⁸⁶ Annexed to the principal shrine is an ancillary one devoted to still older Mother Goddesses, the shrine replete with broken columns, a free-standing *ḥirtimukha toraṇa*, and the remarkable images of the goddesses themselves (Plates 548, 549). One of the paving blocks of the temple courtyard is a *maḥara* spout with recurved snout, like the celebrated pair at Nārāyaṇa Hiti (Plate 235). It very likely originated in the Sundhārā across the way, a Licchavi foundation.⁸⁷ The existing spouts are supported by typical Licchavi *gana* caryatids (Plate 306), and the terraces abound with decorative fragments, *caitya* domes, and sections of their decorated plinths. The fountain was also the provenience of the well-known relief of the Nativity of the Buddha, probably a Late Licchavi or

⁸⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 156 (583). The inscription is undated, but on the basis of paleography, D. Vajracharya assigns it to the time of Aṃśuvarman (ca. A.D. 605-621). For the same reason, G. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 3 (124) gives it a still earlier date, between ca. A.D. 450 and 550. The image is so richly adorned that it is impossible to determine its age on stylistic grounds; many of the ornaments themselves originate as the last offerings of sats, who until not many decades ago passed this way en route to the burning ghats of Paśupatinātha.

Transitional Period work, now transferred to the National Museum.⁸⁸

Continuing westward from the Sundhārā, one comes upon a foundation of brick and dressed stone, its superstructure long crumbled away (Plate 307). But beneath the empty mortises, the Licchavi caryatids who once supported it still faithfully crouch in their rocky caves. Scattered along the same street and its intersecting lanes are other sills and foundations, columns, decorative fragments, and the abandoned domes and platforms of the ubiquitous Licchavi *caityas* (Plate 102). Passing at last through Gvala's western gateway, one comes to the ruins of Kutu-bahal (Map 6: 5). Licchavi *caityas* adorn its courtyard, and Licchavi sculptures are within the shrine. To reach them one must cross a massive stone threshold. Its mortises are emptied of tenons, but it is sumptuously decorated with lions smiling from within their rocky caves, guarding between them a gnome from whose hands spring floral sprays (Plate 314). Finally, continuing on to Chabahil, one comes to Dharmadeva's stupa, the old *vihāras*, sculptures, *caityas*, and inscriptions that are concentrated in this part of old Gvala (Plates 218, 265, 266, 268, 453).

Such surface debris is by no means restricted to Gvala. It is encountered wherever one turns in the Kathmandu Valley. For example, minor ghats on the Tukucha Khola below the temple of Sarasvatī, north of Old Kathmandu (Map 4: 10), are constructed almost entirely of such fragments. They originate at nearby Sākhonā, an abandoned Licchavi settlement, and include sculptures, columns, *āmalakas*, and sections of pedestals and plinths (Plates 261, 350). At Bhaktapur, in Taumadhi-tol, magnificently decorated stone columns have been used as fill (Plate 310), and a column like those

⁸⁷ The eminent historian Baburam Acharya knew of a Licchavi inscription that once stood in the fountain, but which has now disappeared without a trace. Remaining inscriptions record a restoration by Sthitimalla (D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 354, document 12), and most recently by the Rana prime minister, Chandra Shumshere.

⁸⁸ Illustrated by Kramrisch 1964:pl. 11, and as the cover illustration of Pal 1974a, who discusses (22, 33) the problem of dating the work.

incorporated into the steps at Kailāsa is employed as a *ḍabali* foundation stone. An identical column underlies the wooden threshold of a gateway into the Kumbheśvara temple compound in Patan (Plate 290).

In Patan, also, haphazardly set into the wall of the Sundhārā, is a fragment of what was probably a long decorative frieze around a building or above a doorway. It consists of alternating *pūrṇa khalāśa* and *gavākṣa* motifs, above which is a row of alternating plain and stepped pendants, severely sober and perhaps unfinished (Plate 305). Nearby, incorporated into a temple foundation, are four exquisite, highly polished stone columns, a companion to which has been set up at the shrine door of Dhathu-bahil at relatively distant Guita-tol. All five columns—and none is identical—are richly carved with pot and foliage, floral sprays, *ḥīrti-mukha*, leaf-like fringes, *āmalākas*, and varied moldings (Plates 302, 303). On one column, miniature pilasters frame a wildly dancing Bhṛṅgi, Śiva's too-faithful devotee reduced to a skeleton by the jealous Pārvatī (Plate 303).

In Banepa, to continue our sampling of above-ground archaeological wealth, one finds two large relief panels of *gandharva-mukha* set at random into an alley wall (Plate 323). They are most likely from a building of the Transitional Period. Nearby is a stairway flanked by a pair of majestic but now headless reclining deer of polished stone. They were once almost certainly part of an imposing approach to a Licchavi *vihāra* or stupa, remnants of both of which are nearby (Plates 455, 456). At Panauti village an abandoned *tilamaḥa* section lies unnoticed. Nearby, half-buried by the wayside, stands a column decorated with moldings, a foliate-tail *ḥinnara*, and a relief *pratihāra* in the guise of Śiva. The numerous shrines at the extensive Panauti bathing and burning ghats reveal an almost endless variety of architectural fragments reemployed in the foundations of later shrines. In Sunaguthi village, some of the immense monolithic polished foundation courses of the ancient Brṅgāreśvara temple still remain, and at Sarasvatī Kund are the ruins of a Śiva temple surrounded by linga shrines (Plate 246). Finally, in Old Kathmandu are a number of pictorial reliefs that were once clearly architectural embellishments (Plates 346,

347), and everywhere the fields abound with middens that yield fragments mixed with bricks, coins, and terra cottas (Plate 441).

By themselves, these fragments tell us little more than that the Licchavis possessed a sophisticated architecture that paralleled their achievements in the other arts. But used as a supplementary source of comparison with the architecture of their Malla successors and Gupta contemporaries, these fragments are very revealing.

ARCHITECTURAL RELATIONSHIPS: LICCHAVI AND MALLA

The fragmentary surface remains are reflected in the *caitya* decoration. The temple-like plinths must duplicate not only these fragments, but the larger buildings of which they were a part. Some of the plinths are virtually models of storied temples of mandala plan (Plates 256, 257), reminiscent of those we know today in the Newar-style canon (Plates 185, 190). Despite functional and other obvious divergences, both miniature and full-scale temples have a stepped plinth, four equidistant, *torana*-surmounted doorways framed with pilasters and other carved ornament, median cornices elaborated with decorative bands, and overhanging hipped roofs with upswept corners. Other *caitya* plinths are perfect *maṇḍapas* (Plate 255). One has only to imagine four interior columns, and they become the typical *sohra kuṭṭa*, the "sixteen-legged" *maṇḍapa* used in the Newar-style canon for temples and *dharmasālās* (Figures 18, 19; Plate 189). The colonnaded temple of octagonal plan may also be foreshadowed in the *caitya* plinth (Figure 12j, k; Plate 254). It seems apparent, then, from the miniature temples preserved as *caitya* platforms, from fragmentary surface remains, and from extant Licchavi structures that Licchavi architecture in many ways prefigured the architecture of the Mallas.

It is no less apparent that Nepali architecture, Licchavi and Malla, is often in turn prefigured by Indian architecture. Almost every architectural element and decorative motif that is preserved either as a fragment from some ruined building or in the decoration of the *caitya* may be traced in two di-

rections. In one, they find a parallel in Indian architecture, particularly the tradition that prevailed in much of north and central India during the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.; in the other, they continue essentially unchanged into late Malla architecture. In support of this thesis, let us first examine the internal evidence, both in terms of shared architectural element and ornament, and in the inventory of structures employed by each.

Element and Ornament

Stone columns are among the most abundant kinds of architectural remains found above ground in the Kathmandu Valley (Plates 289, 290, 298-300, 302, 303). One type is especially common, and must have been very popular with Licchavi builders. Several of these are seen in the Kailāsa stairway, one is in Patan (Plates 289, 290), and they are encountered in many other places. Typically, the square and undecorated lower part of the column gives way to a transitional midsection. This is announced by an incised crescent, an inverted *U*, on each face, immediately above which the beam is chamfered into an octagonal form, each individual facet of which is outlined by a similar inverted *U*. Above, there is further faceting until the column becomes full round. The column terminates in a number of seriate blocks, octagonal or square, between which is sandwiched an *āmalaka* or a fluted, derivative form, finished with paired rows of incising.

As abbreviated miniature pilasters, such columns often occur in the decoration of Licchavi *caityas* (Plates 255, 256, 260, 261). They are usually employed as if they supported the roofs of the temple-like plinths: for example, the Su-bahal-hiti *caitya* dated A.D. 758 (Plate 256). Despite their small size, in almost all instances *caitya* pilasters of this type bear the distinctive incised crescent that, in the extant columns, announces the transition from the plain lower end to the decorated upper end. Like them, the pilasters also include an *āmalaka*, even if sometimes rudimentary. This and other types of pilasters encompassed in *caitya* decoration are often combined with bracket-capitals such as typify

post-and-lintel construction (Plates 254, 255, 260, 261, 263, 277).

There can be little doubt that the *caitya* pilasters faithfully mirror the distinctive stone columns and brackets that the Licchavis actually employed in large buildings. The columns and their miniature replicas also closely compare to the Garuḍadhvajās at Changu Nārāyaṇa and Hadigaon, although the two standards' special role as a vehicle for an inscription caused modifications in the shaft (Plates 47, 240). Nonetheless, the Changu pillar employs the same transitional faceting outlined by incising, and has the *āmalaka* cushion; the Hadigaon pillar has the faceting in compressed form and the modified *āmalaka* of the structural columns, making it particularly like the Kumbheśvara column (Plate 290). The latter and its fallen companions could antedate the fifth- and sixth-century Garuḍadhvajās, or postdate the eighth-century Su-bahal-hiti *caitya*, to both of which they compare. Once evolved, the style was never abandoned, and continued virtually unchanged in the pilasters and columns in stone and wood of later buildings, both Newar-style and other types, and in miniature replicas of them (Plate 315). In wood, such columns are found in some of the oldest structures, like Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa and Itum-bahal, Kathmandu; Uku-bahal and Dhathu-bahil in Patan; and many others. They are also found in various buildings of later date (Plates 291-294). Not only the column type, but also the form of the accompanying bracket-capitals has persisted virtually unchanged through the centuries. Although none has been detected among the surface fragments, bracket-capitals are preserved for us in the *caitya* decorations. The distinctive convoluted brackets on the seventh-century Dhvaka-bahal plinth, for example (Plate 277), are faithfully reproduced in wood at least six centuries later at Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, and in various later buildings of undetermined date (Plates 293, 294).⁸⁹ The fundamental form persists, even when cloaked with ornament (Plate 295).

The vase of abundance (*pūrṇa kṛalāśa*, *pūrṇa ghaṭa*) is a recurrent theme of fragmentary stone columns and reliefs. It occurs at the base of the Bhaktapur *simhadhvaja* (Plates 241, 242), on sev-

⁸⁹ Other examples may be seen in Slusser and Vajra-

charya 1974:figs. 18, 28.

eral of the columns in Deopatan (Plates 298-300), on the columns and the relief fragment near the Patan Sundhārā (Plates 303, 305), in pictorial reliefs such as those on the Chabahil and Tukanbahal stupas (Plate 224), and as frequent decoration on the top of Licchavi stone inscriptions (Plate 50).⁹⁰ Like the faceted column and convoluted bracket, this motif also persists in the art and architecture of late Malla times, where it is particularly well rendered in various wooden columns (Plates 301, 304). In stone we encounter it carved on the mid-nineteenth-century Garuḍadhvaja offered to Dattātreya (Plate 243).

Leaf-shaped ornaments, pendant or upturned, are also common to the art of all periods, both in form and use. They are seen below the octagonal member of one of the Patan Sundhārā columns (Plate 302), on the Banepa shrine (Plate 253), in miniature on the *caitya* pilasters (Plates 257, 258, 276, 277), and on wooden columns incorporated into later buildings (Plate 292). Pendants of the same type also serve as free-hanging ornaments on metal votive lamps and other ritual objects widely in use today. The festoon often found on the columns of the linga shrines (Plate 249) also appears on the *caityas* (Plates 258, 259), and is repeated on buildings of the Malla Period (Plates 197, 201, 312). One of the latter examples, from the Bhuvaneśvara temple cornice, is a millennium distant but mere steps away from Pradyumnaprāṇa's festooned column (Plates 201, 249).

Another recurrent motif in early architecture is the rotund gnome (*gana*) employed as a caryatid. It was particularly favored by Licchavi artists as a psychological, if not functional, support for stone water spouts, pillars, and—carved on foundation courses and sills—whole buildings (Plates 242, 298, 306, 307). In Malla buildings also we find the caryatid supporting pilasters, pillars, and foundations (Plate 309), and it is the preferred support of the *tunāla* images found on some of the earliest known Malla buildings (Plates 162, 207, 308). Still another of the many motifs that Licchavi and Malla architecture share is the flying, garland-

bearing attendant, the *vidyādhara*. It is employed, for example, on the stone column used for fill in Bhaktapur, and in a relief plaque, now a random inclusion in a Deopatan shrine (Plates 310, 311). In almost identical form, including the background of rolling cloud, we also encounter the *vidyādhara* in wood carvings of Malla buildings: for example, the striking parallel provided by a carving beneath a blind window at Itum-bahal (Plate 312). A very late example, in which a marriage has been made with Chinese ideas, may be seen on a *tūṣedhārā* in Bhaktapur (Plate 229). These recent *vidyādhara* bear auspicious vessels of water toward the fountain spigot, just as do the *kinaras* on the Licchavi *jaladronī* serving as a stair step a few feet away (Plate 230).

The stylized cubist configuration meant to represent rocks, rocky caves, and mountains is so common to the art of both periods that attention scarcely needs to be drawn to it. The Licchavis used it on *caityas* and as the background for relief images (Plates 273, 287, 306, 307, 314, 347). In the Malla Period it was used in the same way, and particularly at the base of roof brackets (Plates 192, 308). One Malla Period work in which it appears, the Yatkha-bahal *torana* (Plate 165), is uncannily similar to the well-known seventh-century relief of the Nāgarāja and worshipers that is attached to the Dharmadeva stupa.⁹¹

The foliated scroll motif (*patralatā*) was used by the Licchavis to frame or fill space, alone or in combination with other motifs, in very characteristic ways. It springs from a pot (Plate 242), a conch shell,⁹² or general ornament. It is held in the hands of persons (Plates 266, 313, 314), and is used with abandon to elaborate the tails of birds and animals (Plates 266, 268, 284, 285, 324), and of *maḡaras* and *kinaras* (Plates 230, 258, 259, 265, 270, 318). It is also used to complete the body of the Paśupati Nāgarāja (Plate 317). The foliated scroll was equally popular with Malla craftsmen, who interpreted it in wood in the same ways: it occurs alone, exudes from vases and pots, is held by persons, and forms the tails of birds, animals,

from which emerges vegetation, was also favored as an ornament for the upper parts of Licchavi stone inscriptions (Gnoli 1956:part 2, plates 35, 37, 51, 55, 57, 60, 65, 66, 72).

⁹⁰ Gnoli 1956:part 2, pls. 31, 36, 37, 75.

⁹¹ Pal 1974:fig. 252.

⁹² A foliated conch shell that rises from vegetation, or

and mythical creatures (Plates 304, 315, 319, 320). Another floral motif favored by Licchavi sculptures is a nucleated, four-petal rosette used, for example, to outline the niche framing the Dhvakabahal Padmapāñī or to decorate one of the stone inscriptions of Śivadeva I (ca. A.D. 590-604).⁹³ This distinctive pattern also survives in Malla border designs; a few repeats of it are seen, for example, on the weathered door sill of the Jayavāgīśvarī temple (Plate 324) and in ornament at Ukubahal (Plates 319, 320).

As the guardians of the four corners of shrines and temples, the Licchavis frequently used lions, often with one head for two bodies (Plates 265, 277, 284). They also used a horned chimera in the same way, or some other mythical creature in the round (Plates 285, 322). These animals prefigure the lion- and griffon-like chimeras that guard later temples either as corner brackets, or posing rampant on the temple roof (Plates 195, 214). Even the distinctive conjoint lions are preserved in wood where, as on the *caityas*, they flank image-filled niches (Plate 325).

The comparisons between the many architectural elements and motifs shared by Licchavi and Malla builders could be virtually endless, but to list one last example, there is the *gandharva-mukha*. It occurs on the Licchavi *caityas* (Plates 261, 262, 459) and on large fragments from buildings of the Transitional Period (Plate 323). As we should now expect, it continues in Malla temples as the *āṅkhihyā*, where the celestial inmates peer out of modest windows of stone or are framed by the sumptuous wood carvings of the Malla craftsmen (Plates 197, 213, 295).

Structures

Correspondence between seventh- and seventeenth-century architecture of the Kathmandu Valley does not, of course, rest merely on striking parallels between structural elements and decorative motifs. It also rests on similarities between the monuments to which these were applied. We have already seen by means of the documentary evidence how closely the inventory of structures in the two ages correspond to one another. This is not only in expected

forms, such as temples and monasteries, palaces and *dharmasālās*, but also in minor aspects, such as votive pillar, *ratha*, *khata*, *ḍabali*, and drinking-water reservoir. Further, although in the absence of systematic excavations many links are missing between the structures of one age and those of another, in some instances the actual monuments reveal an unbroken continuum of type. For example, it is evident that Aṃśuvarman's subjects would have felt no less at home bathing under the *maḥkara* spouts of "Bhimsen Thapa's" Sundhārā constructed in A.D. 1828 than in the Niliśālā fountain built in the reign of their own king. Similarly, the subjects of Pratāpamalla would have found the Licchavi *jaladronī* a no less familiar place to quench their thirst than the Malla *tutedhārā* (nor surprised that a *gūthī* should be charged with keeping it filled).

A number of Malla Period monuments, while less exact mirrors of Licchavi prototypes than the fountains, evidence a close relationship with earlier structures. The inscribed portrait pillar of Pratāpamalla is not greatly removed in essential elements and in form, function, and positioning from the Changu Nārāyaṇa pillar of Mānadeva. The cluster of Licchavi linga shrines that must once have stood on Rājarājeśvarī-ghat were merely reinterpreted in the latter-day assembly of enclosed shrines on the opposite bank of the river. In form and decoration, the *caityas* and stupas changed as the Buddhist doctrine changed, but the roots of the Malla structures are clearly to be found in Licchavi examples. How closely the palaces of the two periods compare we have no idea beyond the meager indices already examined. For the *dharmasālā*, we must rely on the evidence of Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, a Transitional Period building—obviously no different than structures built in later centuries, and that might just as well mirror those built centuries before.⁹⁴

More elusive and intriguing are the architectural relationships between Licchavi temples and *vihāras*, and the corresponding structures of the Mallas. That such a building as the Newar-style temple existed in Licchavi times can be deduced only on three pieces of internal evidence. One of these is the evocative Chinese reference to storied palaces and temples. Another is the Matingrāma inscrip-

⁹³ Kramrisch 1964:pl. 5; Gnoli 1956:part 2, pl. 36.

⁹⁴ Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:175-206.

tion, which clearly refers to a brick temple with wooden windows and doors; and the third is the Indreśvara Mahādeva temple of Panauti. The earliest known Newar-style temple, erected in A.D. 1294, the Panauti temple represents a fully developed style, unchanging in later centuries, that must have been based on centuries of antecedents.⁹⁵ That these were, indeed, Licchavi will perhaps best be brought out in the external evidence examined below. A provocative internal comparison, however, is provided by two temples that stand side by side in a temple compound in Sankhu (Plate 330). The elevation of the Newar-style temple appears to belong to the Late Malla Period. There is nothing by which the stone temple may be dated, although the slab construction of walls seems unconventional for Malla architecture. If, like the linga shrine previously discussed, it is in fact an unidentified Licchavi work, the comparison between the tiered roofs of the two different temples is exciting, indeed. But unlike the linga shrine, the stone temple and others like it have not been certified by associated Licchavi inscriptions. Until such certification, there is nothing to indicate that it is not a copy of the adjacent temple, rather than a model.

Even if the Malla *vihāra* is also rooted in Licchavi architecture, the doctrinal changes reflected in the styles of later stupas and *caityas* must have been similarly reflected in the *vihāras*. The early Buddhist monasteries in India were, of course, constructed to house the community (*samgha*) in cells around an open courtyard, wherein stood the symbolic stupa. There were no images, and therefore no temples. If such a *vihāra* type existed in Licchavi Nepal (or pre-Licchavi Nepal, if Guṃ-vihāra antedates the Licchavis), it is indicated by the frequent presence of ancient stupas in the center of the courtyard of extant *vihāras*. The large stupas of Yatkha, Sighah, Tukan, and other *vihāras* provide examples, as do the enshrined Licchavi *caityas* in the center of venerable monastery courtyards such as Kva-bahal, Patan, or Itum-bahal, Kathmandu.

In Indian rock-cut *vihāras*, the temple was added to the rear around A.D. 450.⁹⁶ But we do not know

when the temple structure was placed at the side of the Nepali *vihāra* courtyard. The eventual excavation of a *vihāra* ruin in the Valley of the Tiger (Taslung), near Budhanilkantha, may perhaps be helpful. The weathered Buddha image (now worshiped as a goddess) that stands within the ruins closely compares stylistically to the sixth-century Buddha of Chabahil, and may indicate the date of the Taslung ruin.⁹⁷ If the excavated ground plan should conform to that of the extant *vihāras*, we would have at least a rough *terminus a quo* for the fundamental form that typifies the Kathmandu Valley *vihāras*.

That the architecture of the Licchavi *vihāras* may be reflected in the *vihāras* we know today may be conjectured on the basis of documentary and archaeological evidence. The well-known Patan *vihāra*, Uku-bahal (Omkuli-Rudravarṇa-mahāvihāra), a particularly well-endowed but otherwise typical Valley *vihāra*, is traditionally held to be a royal foundation. If, as it seems, it was a donation of the Licchavi king Śivadeva II, restored in the twelfth century by Rudradeva II (Rudravarṇa), it seems probable that a continuity of structure is preserved, at least in the ground plan if not the total elevation. That this is so is suggested by the presence in the courtyard of a highly venerated Licchavi *caitya* that very likely dates from the time of the *vihāra*'s foundation. It is further suggested by the *vihāra*'s repertory of structural and decorative elements—its bracketed columns, *vidyādhara*s, foliated scrolls, *gandharva-mukhas*, and a seemingly endless repertory of motifs that at many points translate into wood what we now know well to be of more ancient inspiration. There is also the evidence provided by the illuminated Hlām-vihāra manuscript (Plate 244). Just as the Transitional Period *dharmaśālā* Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa and the Early Malla Period temple Indreśvara Mahādeva seem to reflect midpoints in a continuing style of *dharmaśālā* and temple, so does the miniature for the *vihāra*.

A further consideration in comparing the architecture of the Kathmandu Valley *vihāra* is the close physical correspondence of the extant exam-

in the environs and placed in its present location in recent times. Both images are illustrated by Pal 1974:figs. 166, 168.

⁹⁵ Slusser 1979a.

⁹⁶ Dehejia 1972:9, 93-94.

⁹⁷ Villagers claim that the image was found elsewhere

ples to the palaces and common house. Whether Newar domestic architecture is modeled after the *vihāra*, or vice versa, is a question yet to be answered, and one of great importance in determining the ultimate source of the Newar-style canon. That the domestic quadrangle was also a feature of the Licchavi milieu is suggested by the frequent presence within existing courts of centrally located and long-established *caityas* of Licchavi date. Relevant, perhaps, is Fâ-hien's observation that each Khotanese family had "a small tope [stupa] reared in front of its door."⁹⁸

On the basis of the research summarized here, it may be necessary to revise drastically our estimates of the ages of some of the buildings standing in the Kathmandu Valley. Perhaps not so many of them are late Malla structures as has been generally believed. If buildings such as Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, long considered a late sixteenth-century structure, may be traced to the late eleventh or early twelfth century, there seems no reason to doubt that other buildings similarly survived the calamitous effects of war, fire, and quake, and are equally old. Buildings such as Uku-bahal, Itum-bahal, Cārumatī-vihāra, Dhathu-bahil, and a host of others—all with in situ Licchavi *caityas*, and many containing Licchavi Period sculptures—may well, like the modest linga shrine, in fact be Licchavi structures. Altered and renovated they must certainly be. But there is no question that the tiled courtyard, foundation, and much of their elevation, including wooden columns and other structural and decorative elements, could survive into modern times. This is attested by the parallel example of the wooden temples of Chamba in the Panjab Himalaya. For there, in valleys no more geographically secluded than the Valley of Kathmandu, and certainly politically less so, surviving wooden temples are thought to go back to the seventh and eighth centuries.⁹⁹ Thus, while caution is certainly enjoined, many of the undated Nepali buildings should be carefully reexamined in the light of this hypothesis to determine if some may not be similarly venerable structures.

⁹⁸ Legge 1965:17.

⁹⁹ Goetz 1955.

¹⁰⁰ To save the reader the task of consulting other works for comparative materials, I have included a few selected illustrations, mostly from the Dasavatāra temple at Deo-

Summing up the internal evidence, it is clear from the material presented here that despite incomplete comparative material, differences dictated by changes in religious doctrine and social institutions, and differences ordained by the passage of time, the architecture of the Kathmandu Valley appears to represent a unified tradition from the Licchavis through the Mallas. Given the demonstrable continuum of culture evident in other spheres, and, until the eighteenth century, the generally unbroken political continuum, this should not be surprising.

EXTERNAL ARCHITECTURAL RELATIONSHIPS: NEPALI AND INDIAN

The close examination of Licchavi architectural remains will have made it apparent that, in detail at least, Licchavi architecture had much in common with Indian architecture of the Gupta period, about A.D. 300-600. As demonstrated by study of the structures by which Gupta art is known—Deogarh or Bhumara, Sārnāth or Mathurā, Nalanda, Sāñchī, Ajanta, Ellora, Badami, Aihole, and a host of other sites in northern and central India—the parallels in decorative motifs are constant and ubiquitous. One finds in great profusion on the Indian structures the characteristic ornaments—indeed, the complete repertory and more—that the Licchavi builders enjoyed: the *pūrṇa kṛlāṣa*, *vidyādhara*, *hamsa*, *maḡara*, *ḡinnara*, *ḡirtimukḡha*, *gavākḡsa*, *gandharva-mukḡha*, caryatid gnomes, offset niches, conjoint animal corners, and the foliated scroll in its same exuberant application to birds, animals, persons, and mythical creatures (Plates 264, 267, 272, 321, 326-329).¹⁰⁰ Within the limited area of decoration in a single example drawn from seventh-century Nalanda may be seen more than a half-dozen typical ornaments used by the Licchavis (Plate 272). The niches not only conform to the standard pattern of those of the Licchavi votive *caityas*, but like some of the latter, notably at Dhvaka-bahal (Plate 277), they are bordered with

garb, which cannot be dated later than the seventh century and is generally regarded as a sixth-century structure. Reference to the usual source books on Indian art and architecture will underscore these many parallels.

contrasting ornaments. Of these, one is the nucleated, four-petal rosette common to Licchavi and Malla architectural decoration. In the Nalanda example may be seen also the *gavākṣa*, the *hamsa* with foliated scroll tail, a *vidyādhara*, the ubiquitous pearl band of Licchavi inscription and mandorla decoration, and the *pūrṇa kālāśa*. Moreover, peeping from the foliage that issues from the upper left-hand pot is a seed pod duplicated in the foliage of one of the Patan Sundhārā columns (Plate 303), and again on the Bhaktapur pillar (Plate 242).

Even the column so typical of Licchavi and successor architecture (Plates 289-294) is clearly Gupta, an order seen not only at Sāñchī (Plates 296, 297) but at Eran, Tigawa, and elsewhere.¹⁰¹ Moreover, in incipient form the column may be observed in miniature on Kuṣāṇa remains¹⁰² Apparently, by this time the distinctive inscribed crescent had developed that persisted in Gupta columns, and in Nepal from Licchavi to late Malla times. Even at the remote Kuṣāṇa period, corresponding to the first three centuries of the Christian era, the column is combined with a somewhat convoluted bracket that seems to foreshadow the bracket type of Dhvaka-bahal and its Malla duplicate in wood.

Except in the instance of the linga shrines and the fountains, it is not possible for us to reconstruct from internal evidence alone the actual Licchavi structures of which the surface fragments form a part. But the pervasive presence not only of symbolic and decorative motifs, but of structural elements like the column, strongly suggests that the Licchavi builders were consciously influenced by the Indian tradition. If so, then the Gupta temple, particularly the façade as it is so perfectly exemplified at Deogarh, could well have provided the inspiration for Licchavi buildings, whether in stone or in brick and wood. As a parallel instance, one could cite the Chamba temples, where the same phenomenon took place.¹⁰³ That this sort of recessed and elaborate door frame existed in Licchavi Nepal can be construed from remains such as the massive recessed jamb lying at Paśupatiñātha (Plate 316). But lacking sufficient comparative materials of Licchavi date, it is the successor structures

that in this instance are most instructive. The façades of the Malla buildings—many of whose elements may be clearly paralleled in Licchavi remains—are themselves very reminiscent of the Gupta temple façades (Plates 196, 321, 326). They are similar not only in the overall impression of the decorative doorway contrasted with expanses of sober walls, but in the specific correspondence of elements, such as the extended lintel centered by the emblem of the enshrined deity (*lalatabimbha*), rows of animal-head beam ends, dentils, and similar essentially nonfunctional treatments. On some Gupta temple façades one even sees the decorative wings of doorways that are used on certain Newar-style buildings, filled, moreover—as so often in Nepal—with a *yakṣi* and *maḥara vāhana* bracket motif.¹⁰⁴

That the Licchavi builders were copying Gupta models also seems evident in parallels between Licchavi and Indian *caityas*. The simplest, and probably earliest, Licchavi *caitya* type, with squat and often terraced finial, mirrors figurative representations at Ellora, Sāñchī, Ajanta (Plate 280), and elsewhere.¹⁰⁵ So does the evolved *sarvatobhadra*, such as the Dhvaka-bahal *caitya*, reflect Gupta figurative representations. There are several *sarvatobhadra* shrines depicted among the relief decorations on the Daśavatāra temple of Deogarh, for example Plate 328, whose relationship with the Dhvaka-bahal monument is evident. In the Nepali monument the superstructure of *gavākṣa* and *āmalaka* of the Deogarh shrine has been replaced with the stupa, making it somewhat reminiscent of the elaborate shrine depicted on the façade of Cave 26, Ajanta (Plate 329). In other instances, also, there are parallels between the Licchavi miniature shrines and Gupta structures. The superior niches of the Na-bahil *caitya*, for example, with their bracketed columns, dentils, roof, and crowning *gavākṣa*—so clearly temples in miniature (Plates 262, 263)—may be compared to the decorative shrines on the façades at Ajanta (Plate 264) or the carved cornice decoration at Deogarh (Plate 326).

Respecting his studies at Chamba, Goetz remarked on the "amazing affinity" between the art of the Brahmor kingdom and Nepal, and deduced

¹⁰¹ Agrawala 1968:fig. 74.

¹⁰² Rosenfield 1967:pls. 28, 29, 33, 34, 38, 40b.

¹⁰³ Goetz 1955.

¹⁰⁴ Agrawala 1968:pl. 12c.

¹⁰⁵ Bénisti 1960:60.

that the similarity was due to their common dependence on the Gupta style.¹⁰⁶ I had not read the Goetz study until long after leaving Nepal, and I had quite independently drawn the conclusion that Nepali architecture is a living remnant of the Gupta tradition, in effect, corroborating Goetz' deduction. That Nepali painting and sculpture has its roots in the same tradition lends further support to our deductions. Deo was also aware that the wood carvings on the late Malla structures reflected certain aspects of Indian architecture.¹⁰⁷ He believed them to be Cālukyan, however, tracing the parallels not to a common Gupta source, but through tenuous political relations based on well-established, but nonetheless erroneous, assumptions about Nepali history.

Obviously, on the basis of the limited Licchavi remains now at our disposal, we cannot know whether temples like those of Gupta India ever actually stood in the Kathmandu Valley. However, that whole Gupta-style columns, door jambs, *āmalakās*, and large-scale *caitya* window devices have been recovered merely by observing the surface debris seems to anticipate what the archaeologist's spade may eventually reveal.

It is evident, in conclusion, that the Licchavi architectural repertoire, in modified expression, continued into Malla architecture. It is therefore probable that the post-and-lintel style of architecture, consisting principally of brick and wood, the basic ingredients of Malla architecture, is also derived from the Licchavis. If so, in Licchavi Nepal, as we have amply demonstrated for the Malla Period, the style was in all probability used for royal buildings, temples, *vihāras*, *dharmaśālās*, and common houses alike. The existing evidence for Licchavi stone architecture, perhaps of the kind that prevailed in contemporary northern India, is extremely fragmentary. But in association with the standing Late Licchavi or Transitional Period

śikhara temple in Paśupati compound, and the ubiquitousness of *śikharas* in Malla architecture from at least the fifteenth century, it does lead us to believe that stone and brick *śikhara*-style temples were also known in Licchavi Nepal. Significant is the discovery of the linga shrines that seem to have been quite common in the Licchavi Period. Possibly they were once equally familiar in India, but there—in perhaps a not inappropriate analogy with the brick and wood “pagoda”—the *āvaraṇa* has not been preserved.¹⁰⁸ We have a rather clear idea of the form of the Licchavi stupa, simply because the wealth of evidence offered by the *caityas* affords comparison with the basic form common to India and the Buddhist world in general. And finally, one of the most distinctive features of Licchavi architecture, and one that, like the votive pillars, has a demonstrable continuing history, is the water-related architecture. Here again, through the deep fountains and *jaladronīs*, there may have been parallels with ancient India, although no examples are known to have survived there or in Further India for comparison. In Further India, however, the omnipresence of ponds and tanks—as, for example, at Anuradhapura and Polunarawa, Ceylon, or Angkor in Cambodia—suggest that the Nepali parallels were similarly Indian-derived. Further, in the water pot and gourd dipper that every Cambodian villager provides for the passer-by, it would be difficult to avoid comparison with the Nepali *jaladronī* and *juṭedhārā*, or not to wonder if they have a common source.

Despite the obvious comparisons of the Nepali architectural spectrum, in form and ornament, with India, I have no intention of coming to grips here with the thorny problem of the origin of the Newar-style architectural canon. This is a question that has intrigued generations of observers, but has engendered no satisfactory answer.¹⁰⁹ Suffice it to say that I believe Nepali architecture to be firmly

¹⁰⁶ Goetz 1955:104-105.

¹⁰⁷ Deo 1969:44-45.

¹⁰⁸ In this connection, it may be pointed out that Indian architectural styles that have almost completely disappeared in India have been preserved in pictorial form in the frescoes of western Tibet (Snellgrove and Richardson 1968:140).

¹⁰⁹ An assessment now tempered by the study of Ulrich

Wiesner (1978), published after this study had gone to press, in which the Indian source, Kuṣāṇa and Gupta, of the Newar-style temple is convincingly demonstrated, amply corroborating the conclusions reached in this chapter. Bernier 1971 attempted to show the origin of the Newar-style temple in his well-documented doctoral dissertation but while fully cognizant of India's contribution, concluded that essentially the Newar-style temple was a

rooted in India, particularly the Gupta, and even Kuṣāṇa, tradition. That the Nepali product may represent a marriage of Indian tradition with a local one is not impossible. It may be elucidated if we can determine which structure was, in fact, the progenitor—common house or *vihāra* quadrangle. Artistic ingenuity and inventiveness are clearly apparent in all other aspects of Nepali art, particularly sculpture and painting, and it is logical that these qualities would operate in the architectural realm, as well.

local invention. Perhaps this was because Dr. Bernier restricted his study almost entirely to one time and one style of building, the Malla "pagoda," rather than to a



Having regarded the buildings of Nepal Mandala purely in architectural and art-historical terms, it will be of interest to turn now to the specific histories of some of them and of those who have used them. Since in this section we are still concerned with mortals, the following chapter will be limited to palaces and princes. Subsequently, we will look into some of the temples and shrines, such as Paśupatinātha and Changu Nārāyaṇa, and contemplate the immortals who dwell within.

broader base, historically and typologically, that would surely have tempered his conclusions.



CHAPTER 8

OF PRINCES AND PALACES: THE COURTS OF THE THREE KINGDOMS

OUR FINAL CONCERN with the mortals of Nepal Mandala will be to consider the palaces of those who ruled over the Three Kingdoms. We shall look at them as historical, rather than architectural, monuments, and in so doing will glance briefly at the lives of some of the persons who lived in them. The palaces were called *lāyḱū* (Newari), in literary context *rājakūla prāsāda* (Sanskrit), and at length, emulating Mughal practice, by the Persian name *darbār*. As we have seen in previous chapters, the later palaces are the descendants and occupy the sites of earlier ones, either of Licchavi kings (Kathmandu), of twelfth-century rulers (Bhaktapur), or the *mahāpātras* (Patan). As the residence of Viṣṇu incarnate in the king, each palace compound was more sacred than secular. It incorporated shrines and temples, and was in close contact with the surrounding temple-filled square. This was the public part of the *lāyḱū*, or to perpetuate the anomalous Anglo-Persian name, the Darbar Square. Palace and square occupied the city center (Patan and Kathmandu), or were at least near the main road (Bhaktapur). In the case of the Patan and Kathmandu palaces, the Darbar Square doubled as the marketplace, was the stage for numerous festivals and ceremonies, and was the

scene of some of the most intense activity of the realm.

Within the three compounds there passed a succession of Malla—and in Kathmandu, Shah—kings, their queens, concubines, children, priests, magicians, retainers, regents, and *cautārās*, the prime ministers who played such prominent roles in Nepali history. The rooms and courts of the three palaces witnessed the reigns of wise kings and foolish ones, of boy kings and mad kings, of those who governed well and those who were governed by others. Here kings murdered and were murdered, here met the frequent councils that led to war, and here were signed treaties governing subsequent uneasy peace. Here also transpired the royal births and deaths, coronations and sometimes cremations, and the numerous rites that marked from birth to death each kingly passage.

The activity within these palaces was by no means confined to war and palace intrigue. Within them moved a royal society given to the performance, and often the composition, of sacred dance dramas; of poetry in Newari, Sanskrit, and Maithilī; and of music, sacred and secular. Petty and quarrelsome these kings may have been, but the titles they preferred were *sumati* (wise), *ḱavīn-*

dra (king of poets), or *rājaṛṣi* (sage among kings).¹ The palace temples and courtyards were also the scenes of costly sacrifices designed to please the gods, foremost of whom was the Malla tutelary deity, Taleju (Durgā). Within the palace confines were conceived and commissioned countless royal donations to the realm—temples and shrines, images, fountains, ponds, and *dharmaśālās*—each gift both a pleasure to the gods and an embellishment of the state. Rivalry among the kingdoms lay not only in the political but also in the artistic domain. Nowhere was it more intense than in each king's beautification of his palace, the splendors of which were financed by the seemingly inexhaustible treasury that lay within.

Of the three palaces and their contiguous squares, Patan's has best preserved the history of its individual components, and most faithfully reproduces the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century milieu of the Malla kings. The history of the existing components of the Bhaktapur palace is difficult to reconstruct, and in the post-Malla years the palace has suffered reduction in size and extensive alterations. The original character of the surrounding square has also been altered by the loss in recent times of many of its most picturesque structures. The Kathmandu palace, as the national seat for well over a century, has undergone even greater change; although in company with the Darbar Square it has retained much of its charm and originality. Together, the three palaces contain the best of the arts of the Late Malla Period.

HANUMAN DHOKA PALACE, KATHMANDU

The late Malla and Shah palace of Kathmandu,

¹ Cf. D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 404-407.

² Erected by Pratāpamalla in n.s. 792 Vaiśākha, together with a second Hanūmān image nearby (*Abhilakṣha-saṅgraha* 1961h). As previously noted, I was not able to procure a copy of G. Vajracharya's study of Hanuman Dhoka until long after this part of my study was completed, hence references to it are rare. But many of the documents cited here will also be found in the later work (G. Vajracharya 1976). Some published there for the first

surrounded by the temples of the Darbar Square, lies at the center of the city on the southern side of the traditional trans-Himalayan trade route (Map 7; Figure 1; Plates 29, 85, 125, 126, 141). The current name of the palace, Hanūmān Dhokā (Hanūmān Gate), is derived from the popular image of Hanūmān, the deified monkey servitor of Rāma, who since A.D. 1672 has guarded the main entryway (Plate 399).² Beyond variable and indefinite references to the palace in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century *ṭhyāsaphus* by such names as Gutha, Gunapo, or Gupo,³ the previous name of the palace is unknown.

The site of Hanuman Dhoka corresponds in part, at least, to the emplacement of Licchavi palaces.⁴ It is probable that some of the buildings survived here in some form or another during the period of Licchavi decline, as did the apparent remnant of Kailāsakūṭa, as Kelāchem, further south at Jaisideval-tol. Given the traditional association of Kathmandu with a king Guṇakāmadeva (probably the tenth-century ruler), one is tempted to see in the otherwise unexplained names such as Gunapo and Gupo a reflection of his name. This suggests that kings of the Transitional Period also occupied the palace site. In any event, Ratnamalla must have conceived this as the proper place to enthrone himself when he seized the city. According to a *ṭhyāsaphu*, he settled in Hiti-chok, a quadrangle that once lay on the north side of the road near the Kot (*koṭa*), the military headquarters (Figure 1). Ratnamalla's successors must have continued to occupy the traditional mid-city location, although we have no documentation before A.D. 1563.⁵ After the Gorkhali conquest, the Kathmandu palace became the national seat, a role it played until the end of the nineteenth century. Abandoned as the royal residence in A.D. 1896 in favor of a

time, for example document 7, were discovered in the course of our joint research.

³ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 141; part 3, app. III, p. 5; G. Vajracharya 1967:34.

⁴ See Chapter 5.

⁵ An inscription on the cult image of the Jagannātha temple, a Caturmūrti Viṣṇu, donated by Mahendramalla in n.s. 683 Māgha (G. Vajracharya 1976:document 7 [197]).

European-style mansion “based upon Government House in Calcutta,” which lay outside the old city, Hanuman Dhoka was shorn of its political role.⁶ As the traditional royal seat, however, it is imbued with a mystique absent from the new Narayan Hiti palace and continues to play an important role in national affairs. The royal temples are maintained, and many religious rituals of national and local significance take place within and nearby the old palace precincts. A number of royal rites are also conducted in Hanuman Dhoka, among which the most important in recent times was the coronation of His Majesty Birendra Bir Bikram Shah in 1975.

The Hanuman Dhoka compound was once much more extensive than it is today. In A.D. 1819 Francis Hamilton remarked on its “astonishing magnitude,” and in 1880 Henry Oldfield reported that it had “forty to fifty different courts of various sizes, each having a separate name.”⁷ References to many of the earlier quadrangles are encountered in the *thyāsaphus*, but few can now be identified. An exception is the Hātī-chok, the elephant stables, that stood in the open Vasantapur Square near the Kumārī Ghar (Figure 1). But this and other parts of the palace were cleared away when the wide New Road was thrust through the rubble of the devastating earthquake of 1934. Other palace sections were demolished as recently as 1967 (Figure 1:18). Now only a few sections of old glazed brick are scattered among newer buildings southeast of the palace compound as a reminder of some of these ancient palace quadrangles.

Today there are fewer than a dozen quadrangles in Hanuman Dhoka, of which only seven are related to the residential quarters, and few of which preserve their traditional Newar style. The temples are essentially royal preserves, and the domestic buildings are largely deserted except for special lodgings, the seats of minor government offices, and the Numismatic Museum. Only a small part of the compound is open to the general public; the two Taleju temple compounds are opened to those

of Hindu and Buddhist faith once a year, on *ma-hānavamī*, the ninth day of the Dasain festival.

Hanuman Dhoka palace, despite attrition, is still a sprawling architectural complex spread over some five acres, more than half of the total space of the Darbar Square. It consists of a three-century accretion of interconnected palace buildings for the domestic and official use of royalty, together with private royal temples and shrines, sacred ponds and fountains, votive pillars, inscriptions, statues in stone and metal, wood carvings, repoussé metalwork, and paintings. It is still as Oldfield viewed it a century ago, a “mass of small quadrangles, detached buildings, temples, etc. . . . [which] appear to be a confused labyrinth of courts, passages, and doorways.”⁸ It is the product of a succession of rulers, the Malla kings of the Kingdom of Kathmandu and the Shah kings and Rana prime ministers of the larger Nepal.

We know very little about the building activities of the rulers of the Kathmandu kingdom in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The first king, Ratnamalla, is known to have established a small Taleju temple “near Tana-devata” in A.D. 1501.⁹ Tāna-devatā can be identified as a Mother Goddess whose temple stands at the northern end of the palace compound (Figure 1:53), a foundation that tradition assigns to Śaṅkaradeva (ca. A.D. 1069-1083).¹⁰ If it still exists, Ratnamalla’s foundation may be the Mul-chok Taleju temple (Figure 1:24). Like *vihāra* temples, it is incorporated into one side of the quadrangle, and serves as Taleju’s temporary shrine during a part of Dasain. But for the certified history of the Mul-chok quadrangle, we only know that it predates Pratāpamalla (A.D. 1641-1674), in whose reign it was restored.¹¹

The oldest identifiable buildings of the palace and surrounding square were constructed in the reign of Mahendramalla (ca. A.D. 1560-1574). They are the temples known as Jagannātha, Koṭilingeśvara Mahādeva, Mahendreśvara, and the chief Taleju temple (Figure 1:39, 49, 52, 56). Facing the

⁶ Landon 1928:11, 79, and illustration 1, 185. The new mansion was the residence of Prime Minister Rana Uddip Singh, who was assassinated there in A.D. 1885. It is the nucleus of the present-day royal palace, Narayan Hiti, whose principal building is a modern structure completed in very recent times.

⁷ Hamilton 1971:210; Oldfield 1880:1, 97.

⁸ Oldfield 1880:1, 97.

⁹ N.S. 621 Māgha (Wright 1966:137).

¹⁰ Lévi 1905:11, 196.

¹¹ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 909.

palace is also an image donated by one of Mahendramalla's queens (Plate 355).¹² Of the king's donations, the most important is the Taleju temple, erected in A.D. 1564 (N.S. 684 Māgha).¹³ It is a typical Newar-style temple of square plan, elevated on a stepped plinth and crowned with three roofs. It is unique, however, in being raised on a truncated terraced pyramid, which supports the temple and numerous ancillary chapels grouped around it. According to the chronicles, the unusual design was of tantric inspiration. Mahendramalla had once lived at the court of Bhaktapur, where he assiduously worshiped that kingdom's celebrated Taleju. "At last she was pleased, and directed him to build a high temple in his Durbar in the form of a yantra [*yantra*, a magic diagram]. He then returned to Kantipur and told the architects to build the temple on the plan he proposed, but they were at a loss how to build it. At last they were enlightened by a Sannyasi, and built it . . . and Turja Bhawani entered it in the form of a bee."¹⁴ Soon thereafter the king "offered a flag to the deity and performed *koṭyāhuti yajña*. The *Rāmāyaṇa* drama was presented and a large image of Bhīma[sena] was exhibited."¹⁵

Mahendramalla's successor, Sadāśiva (ca. A.D. 1575-1581), seems to have been more concerned with satisfying his physical appetites—which at length cost him his throne—than with improving the palace.¹⁶ Of the next incumbent, Śivasimha, who ruled until 1619, we know only that he constructed another temple to Taleju, the Degutale, which was apparently rebuilt by Pratāpamalla.¹⁷ The reign of the next king, Lakṣmīnaraśimha, who relinquished the throne insane, also seems to have witnessed little building in the royal palace. It is under his son and successor, Pratāpamalla, the incumbent from A.D. 1641 to 1674, that Hanuman

Dhoka and the surrounding Darbar Square seem to have become the scene of feverish activity that created the seventeenth-century *lāyḱū* as we know it today (Plates 29, 125, 126, 141).

Pratāpamalla was one of the outstanding kings of Nepal (Plates 67, 239, 575). His character, like that of his illustrious predecessor Aṃśuvarman, emerges largely from his own prolific inscriptions and the deeds they record. His self-assessment may have been justified when, with unabashed egotism, he proclaimed "there is no one like me, the pearl in the diadem of kings, neither in heaven nor on the earth nor anywhere in the ten directions, nor in the hills and forests."¹⁸ Licentious and boastful, quarrelsome with neighboring states, Valley and hill, he was at the same time a man with an avid interest in the arts, with profound intellectual curiosity, and genuine devotion to the gods. Ardent patron of poetry and dance, he was also a poet and playwright, and claimed as his favorite title *ḱavīndra*, "king of poets." In contrast to other kings who occasionally affected the same title, he often employed it to the exclusion of all others. In this he compares to "Śrīkalahābhīmānī," the scholarly Aṃśuvarman. The Malla king considered himself proficient in all branches of learning, natural and esoteric, and surrounded himself with scholars, priests, and tantric preceptors from the Valley, the Deccan, Tirhut, and Tibet. He was a connoisseur of art who commissioned countless images of stone and metal, and whose unerring judgment introduced into his palace some of the finest Licchavi stone sculptures known (Plates 404, 405). He was also a builder who renovated old and commissioned new temples, shrines, *vihāras*, and stupas throughout the realm. An extensive renovation and enlargement of the royal palace soon followed his accession to the throne.

¹² G. Vajracharya 1967:31.

¹² According to an inscription on the pedestal dated N.S. 699 Āṣādhā-śukla-pratipada (A.D. 1579) (G. Vajracharya 1976: document 7 [197]). Vajracharya 1976:19, 197 identifies the donor, Jayantikā, as the mother of Mahendramalla; M. Pant 1977:85-88 establishes that she was his wife and the mother of Sadāśivamalla.

¹³ Lamshal 1966:58; G. Vajracharya 1967:30-31; D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 17 (20-21).

¹⁴ Wright 1966:140-141; Hasrat 1970:63-64. Both chronicles cite an erroneous date, N.S. 669 (A.D. 1549) for the construction of the temple.

¹⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 44-46. The overlapping date of his reign and that of his successor, Śivasimha, ca. 1578-1619, apparently reflects a period in which Sadāśiva still ruled a part of Kathmandu (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 49-50).

¹⁶ Lamshal 1966:59.

¹⁷ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 60 (114-120). Scores of similar inscriptions, together with the chronicles, *ṭhyāsa-phus*, and a large body of legend and folk memory, define the king's character. See D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 64-106; and Lévi 1905:11, 250-256 for a review of his reign.

One of his tasks was to refurbish the main entryway (Plate 141). Although he endowed it with a low, narrow portal no larger than that of a Newar farmhouse, the door leaves (now removed to Mohan-chok) were elaborately carved and painted with auspicious symbols and protective deities. The king had guardian images of stone, wood, and polychrome painting placed outside the gateway, and later improved the security by setting up the Hanūmān image (Plate 399). "In frightful wars [he] brings destruction on the enemy and victory to us and defends the home," he stated in the dedicatory inscription on the pedestal. He modestly identified himself thus: "in the handling of weapons, the reading of *śāstras*, the singing of songs, and in all fields competent, King of Kings, chief of Nepal, extremely clever, chief of all kings, twice illustrious great king, poet laureate, the enthroned lord Jaya Pratāpamalla Deva."¹⁹

The refurbished entrance led to the heart of the palace, the Nasal-chok, a spacious, rectangular court surrounded by residential quadrangles, temples, and shrines (Figure 1). Named for Nāsadyo (Śiva Naṭarāja), the God of Dance—an image installed by Pratāpamalla in an undistinguished shrine on the eastern wall—the Nasal-chok was the center of court ceremony. Within a *yajña-maṇḍala*, a special square of patterned brick at the southern end, frequent costly oblations were committed to the flames for the delectation of the gods. The *ḍabali*, a raised central platform, restored by Rajendra Bir Bikram Shah,²⁰ served as the coronation dais and the stage for a host of rites and performances. The most frequent at Pratāpa's court seem to have been the sacred masked dance dramas, among which the most honored were those staged by the dancers of Harasiddhi village.

It is to Pratāpamalla's predilection for the dance that we owe one of the few fine stone carvings of the time, an image of Viṣṇu as Narasiṃha enshrined in the Nasal-chok (Plate 394). According to the king's own words inscribed on the pedestal, he himself had impersonated Viṣṇu in a dance-drama in the Nasal-chok. Long after the dance the god remained, investing the king's body. To rid him of this troubling host, Pratāpa's tantric

preceptors advised the creation of an image into which the god's spirit might be transferred. Accordingly, the king assembled his best craftsmen, commissioned the image, and with its consecration in n.s. 793 Āṣāḍha (1673), regained his spiritual peace.²¹

The commanding image of polished black stone, ornamented with gold and silver appliqué, represents the man-lion incarnation of Viṣṇu. Terrible to behold, Narasiṃha is engaged in the destruction by trickery of the invincible demon, Hiranyakaśipu. The latter could not be destroyed by man, beast, or weapon; nor on land, in the water, or in the air. Thus Narasiṃha, the man-beast, clutches the limp demon in his own neutral lap, and with his bejeweled but weaponless hands eviscerates the hapless demon, and once again restores order to a troubled world.

The Karnel- (Karna, Kundel, Masān)chok is probably the oldest residential unit of the palace (Figure 1:26), but whether Pratāpamalla restored it is unknown. Today only a single wing survives, the western one paralleling the main axial route through the city, and overlooking the Darbar Square. A relatively modest structure, the Karnel-chok wing closely compares to the residence of a wealthy merchant, only the gilding of its corner window now distinguishing it as a royal abode. The Bhagavatī temple, whose gilt roofs rise above the quadrangle roof, represents a much later addition, and dates from the time of Jagajjayamalla (1722-1734), who consecrated there an image of Nārāyaṇa in the name of Mahīpatīndramalla.²² The Nārāyaṇa image was later stolen, so Prithvi Narayan Shah availed himself of the empty shrine to house a favorite image of Bhagavatī that he brought from Nawakot.

Within a few years after his succession, Pratāpamalla constructed two new residential quadrangles giving on to Nasal-chok (Figure 1:25, 42). Having "amassed four crores of rupees [through the Tibet trade], which he buried in a place according to Bastu-Chakra [*vāstu cakṛa*, a foundation-laying ceremony] and having placed four flags, he built the Mohan-chok over it." This was in n.s. 770 (1650), and for long Mohan-chok remained the

¹⁹ *Abhilekha-saṃgraha* 1961h; N. Pant 1964:26.

²⁰ Banda 1962:308.

²¹ *Samskṛta-sandēśa*, 1:4 (v.s. 2010), 6.

²² G. Vajracharya 1976:57.

principal residential quadrangle of the palace.²³ Popular belief still holds to the existence of vast treasure under the building. The key to its recovery is thought to lie in the mysterious polyglot verses inscribed on the outer wall (Plate 57). The other residential quadrangle, the Sundari-chok, was probably built in imitation of the Sundari-chok of the Patan palace, which had been completed shortly before. Both of the Kathmandu quadrangles were remodeled in the nineteenth century and, in their publicly visible aspects, at least, no longer reflect the buildings that the Kavindra frequented.

Pratāpamalla's building activities within the palace compound were by no means confined to his own personal comfort, but were devoted also to the gods. In one corner of the Mohan-chok the king erected an imposing three-roofed *āgamachem*, and in another, an unusual temple with five superimposed roofs (Plate 126). It was dedicated to the Five-faced (*pañcamukhi*) Hanūmān. He also completely restored the Mul-chok, and offered Taleju a gilt *torana* for the temple incorporated in its southern wing. He gave lavishly to Taleju's principal temple, donating at one time, for example, the gilt repoussé doors;²⁴ in A.D. 1642, a lion pillar; and in 1663, a second pillar bearing the golden devotional effigies of himself and his two favorite sons.²⁵ A few years later, in 1670, on the advice of the priest Lambakārṇa Bhaṭṭa, he built, or perhaps only improved, another temple for Taleju, the rooftop Degutale facing the Darbar Square (Figure 1:35). In front of it he consecrated to the goddess still a third pillar, this time bearing a gilt image of himself, two of his favorite queens, and a number of sons (Plate 239).²⁶

Nor did Pratāpamalla neglect to establish temples and *dharmaśālās* within the public square. Immediately adjacent to the palace is the Vaṃśā-gopāla, a charming temple of octagonal plan dedicated to Kṛṣṇa in N.S. 769 Phālguna (1649).²⁷ This

was in sacred memory of two beloved Indian queens, Rūpamatī from Cooch Behar, and Rājamatī from the Karṇāṭa, both of whom had died that year. But Pratāpamalla took the occasion in the dedicatory inscription to boast, "I defeated the army of Dambar Shah and took his elephant."

Also near the palace Pratāpamalla established a modest Śiva temple known as Indrapura (Plate 29).²⁸ It may have served as a substitute for the prestigious but distant *tīrtha* of Indreśvara Mahādeva in Panauti village. The temple is adjacent to the site of the Indradhvaja raised annually in celebration of Indra-jātrā. At that time, Indra's image apparently was exposed in the second-story pavilion (more open now than in the nineteenth-century reproduction). In N.S. 774 Māgha (1654), the king had inscribed on the plinths of the adjacent Jagannātha temple a lengthy hymn to Taleju as Kālikā (dear little Kālī) in her hideous aspect as the ministrant of death. At the same time, facing the temple, he had companion verses carved on a *tuṭedhārā* set into the outer wall of the Mohan-chok (Plate 57). These are the famous polyglot, multi-script verses in which the ruler boasted to have mastered fifteen languages together with their scripts. Those who can understand the verses, writes the king, are great pandits, but those who can only decipher the scripts are worthless.²⁹ Tradition holds that "great pandits" received milk, rather than water, from the *tuṭedhārā*, but to observe, among scraps of Arabic, Devanāgarī, and Bhujiṇmol, isolated exotics such as "winter," "l'hi-vert," and "automne," one suspects that great pandits were few and that little milk ever coursed through the waiting spigot.

Just opposite Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa *sattal*, in Maru-tol, the southern end of the Darbar Square and the principal city crossroads, Pratāpamalla erected another large *sattal* that he named Kavīndrapura, "Mansion of Kavīndra" (Figure 1:3). In the new *sattal* the king consecrated a dancing Śiva, Nā-

²³ Wright 1966:145; Lamshal 1966:83-85; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 79.

²⁴ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 908-909.

²⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscs. 44, 64, dated, respectively, N.S. 762 Jyeṣṭha and N.S. 784 Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa.

²⁶ *Samskṛta-sandēśa*, 2:4-6 (v.s. 2011), 26-28; Clark 1957:179.

²⁷ D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 50 (86-88).

²⁸ Wright 1966:145.

²⁹ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 71; part 4, inscr. 52 (90-91); Lévi 1905:11, 393-394; Banda 1962:214; Giuseppe 1801: 313-314. In the Sanskrit version on the temple steps there are only fourteen scripts, and those who cannot read the verses are proclaimed thieves, not merely worthless.

sadyo.³⁰ The minor image, now headless, receives the special homage of dancers who pass this way at festival times.

In his efforts to beautify the palace, the surrounding square, and his realm beyond, Pratāpamalla built fountains and ponds, and took care to adorn and sanctify them with images of the gods. In the newly created Sundari-chok, for example, he established a sunken bath together with a golden spout, and surrounded it with a host of sacred images.³¹ He built a small tank, the Nāga Pokharī, in the palace, and to adorn it plundered the *nāga-ḥaṣṭha*, a guardian serpent of wood and gilt, from a royal pond in Bhaktapur.³² Erected in the center of the Kathmandu pond, the glittering serpent still rises from its mysterious, tree-shaded depths.

One of Pratāpamalla's outstanding contributions to the palace compound is the Licchavi stone sculptures he introduced into it. One is the monumental Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa, located in the Bhandarkhal, the garden-treasury area east of the quadrangles (Figure 1:21).³³ Having constructed a new tank, fed by waters channeled from the distant pool of the Budhanilkantha Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa, the king wished to sanctify it with a similar image. On consulting with the Budhanilkantha Nārāyaṇa, he was told not to make such an image. Accordingly, the king brought an old one that was lying in a nearby pond and installed it in the Bhandarkhal pool. He must have also brought the attending Garuḍa, a superb Licchavi sculpture that, like the master image it still adores, may be dated around the seventh century A.D.³⁴

Pratāpamalla salvaged from a Licchavi ruin north of the capital city two other magnificent stone sculptures with which to embellish a fountain in Kalindi-chok, adjacent to Mohan-chok. One

of these, a Garuḍa, he later banished on the advice of his preceptors, because it gave "much annoyance."³⁵ The other is the Kāliyadamana, in which the child god Kṛṣṇa overpowers the maleficent serpent Kāliya (Plates 404-405). This image also probably dates from about the seventh century and is perhaps the most perfect Nepali stone masterpiece of all time.³⁶ Regrettably, it is not on public view.

The immense and menacing Kāla (Black) Bhairava in the Darbar Square, erroneously considered to be a commission of Pratāpamalla, is another salvaged image. It was recovered from near the place where the Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa had been found (Plate 367).³⁷ Known also as the Adālat, or Court, Bhairava, Kālabhairava for long played an important social, as well as religious, role in the affairs of Nepal.³⁸

Given Pratāpamalla's dedication to the arts, we may be almost certain that the rooms of his palace were decorated with mural paintings such as we know for the Bhaktapur palace. But no paintings of his time have been identified, and the few extant paintings in the Mohan-chok, unavailable to Western study, were commissioned by a nineteenth-century successor (Plate 520).³⁹

With the death of Pratāpamalla in A.D. 1674 (N.S. 794 Caitra), the intensive activity that characterized that remarkable king's incumbency of Hanuman Dhoka came to a halt. He was succeeded by minor sons and grandsons who were governed by regents, and a series of powerful prime ministers (*cautārās*) whose minds turned more toward political intrigue and violence than to improving the palace. Pious deeds there were, of course—pilgrimages to distant Gosainthān, gifts to Changu Nārāyaṇa, repairs to Paśupati-nātha, and in the palace the inevitable courting of Taleju. Parthivendra-

³⁰ Wright 1966:145; *Saṃskṛta-sandeha*, 1:4 (v.s. 2010), 1-6.

³¹ The fountain is not open to the public, but a photograph published by Landon 1928:1, 130 shows it to be similar to the Tuṣaḥiṭī in the Patan palace Sundari-chok, a fountain created just before that of the Kathmandu palace.

³² D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 75-76.

³³ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:125-126, fig. 17.

³⁴ Vajracharya and Slusser 1974.

³⁵ Wright 1966:146; it was relocated at a Viṣṇu temple

near Narayan Hiti; Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:135-137, fig. 24.

³⁶ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:135; Pal 1974:66-67, figs. 90, 91. It is barely possible that the image is of much later date, a matter to be discussed elsewhere, but if so, this in no way diminishes the quality of the sculpture.

³⁷ Wright 1966:146; Hasrat 1970:75; Lamshal 1966:87; Sijapati 1969:1-3.

³⁸ See Chapter 9.

³⁹ They have recently been briefly reported by Shimkhada 1974:40-42, figs. 5, 6.

malla, for example, one of Pratāpamalla's sons and successors, emulated his father by offering to Taleju a pillar crowned with gilt images of himself and his family, and a new finial was later given to the royal temple in the name of the boy king, Bhāskaramalla.⁴⁰ But apparently, in the turbulent quarter-century and more following Pratāpamalla's death, no new temples or residential courts were built in the palace compound. Indeed, the only significant works in the *lāykhū* were the establishment of an image of Garuḍa, and three temples, all in the Darbar Square.

One of the royal temples, Trailokya Mohan (now known as Daśāvātāra) was consecrated to Viṣṇu in A.D. 1679 (N.S. 800 Kārtika) by Parthivendramalla. But the monumental Garuḍa that faces it was not established until a decade later, N.S. 810 Kārtika (A.D. 1689).⁴¹ Closely modeled after the ancient Garuḍa that Pratāpamalla had installed in the nearby Bhandarkhal, the new one was a joint gift of the boy king Bhūpāendra, the regent queen mother, Ṛddhilakṣmī, and the *cautārā* Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Joṣī—three names that evoke a tumultuous period of Nepali history.⁴² Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa was a ruthless regicide who, after poisoning King Parthivendra, had had the blameless *cautārā* Cikūṭi murdered for the crime.⁴³ Apparently seducing the widowed queen Ṛddhilakṣmī, he enthroned her youthful son, Bhūpāendra, and assumed the vacated ministerial post. To secure his position, he had Mahīpatindra, the last surviving son of Pratāpamalla, hunted down and hacked to pieces. A few months after the Garuḍa donation, he himself was cut down by the knives of his enemies in the Square nearby. For awhile power lay in the hands of Ṛddhilakṣmī alone (Plate 69). During this time, in N.S. 812 (1692), she erected one of the tallest buildings in the Darbar Square, a Śiva temple

known as Māju-deval, which towers on a nine-step plinth just opposite the Garuḍa donation (Figure 1:29; Plate 188).⁴⁴ At length her son Bhūpāendra asserted his royal prerogative, and exiled his mother to the hills and oblivion.⁴⁵ But under the same unlucky stars as his murdered father and uncles—the nine⁴⁶ ill-fated sons of Pratāpamalla—Bhūpāendra himself died soon thereafter at the age of twenty-one. Some years later his widowed queen, Bhuvanalakṣmī, consecrated one of the last temples of note in the Darbar Square.⁴⁷ Long known as Bhuvanalakṣmeśvara, after the donor, it is now referred to as Kāg- or Kākeśvara Mahādeva, a distant hillside *tirtha* for which it has become a convenient substitute on the Valley floor. Originally a Newar-style temple, Kāgeśvara was restored with a dome after the 1934 earthquake, a very unfortunate architectural marriage.

The reign of the last Malla king from Hanuman Dhoka, the tyrannical Jayaprakāśa (A.D. 1735-1768) (Plate 70), was marked by a succession of intrigues and violence, events that the "Gorkhali Raja was very glad to hear of."⁴⁸ Beset by internal revolt, a pathological distrust of his associates, struggles with the Gorkhals and with his cousin kings, Jayaprakāśa also suffered the personal tragedy of losing his only son. This was when "Sitala, the goddess of smallpox, to bring ruin in Nepal, entered Mohan-chok, and Jyoti-prakasa, the son of the Raja, died of that disease. The Raja took the dead body with great pomp to the Raj-ghat at Pashupati and burned it."⁴⁹ With the corpse went the customary *satis*.⁵⁰ Desperate for funds to finance his defence against the constant Gorkhali menace, Jayaprakāśa "took away the treasure of Pashupatinatha and also that of Jayabageswari. He even took away the *gajuras* of the temples to support the *sepoys* [Khasas, Magars, and Madheses], vowing at

⁴⁰ N.S. 802 Māgha (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 88 [188-193]); D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 161.

⁴¹ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 141; part 3, app. III, 10; Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:fig. 26.

⁴² D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 273-284.

⁴³ R. Tewari 1964.

⁴⁴ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 151.

⁴⁵ D. Vajracharya 1962:81-86; R. Tewari 1964a; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 126-150.

⁴⁶ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 261-262.

⁴⁷ This was probably in A.D. 1711, since G. Vajracharya 1976:81 gives the date as v.s. 1768, although he supplies no source. P. Sharma 1975:55, in summarizing Vajracharya's study, must err in giving the date as A.D. 1681, a time when Bhūpāendra was still a baby, and long preceding his marriage to Bhuvanalakṣmī.

⁴⁸ Wright 1966:153; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 182-203.

⁴⁹ Wright 1966:155.

⁵⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 197.

the same time that he would repay double of what he took, if he were successful against his enemy."⁵¹ Nonetheless, the beleaguered king found time and money to repair "the foundation of Taleju, and the ceremony of consecration was performed with great pomp and rejoicing. Images of Bhimasena and others were placed in the temple amidst grand musical performances and dances."⁵²

Jayaprakāśa also instituted a chariot festival in honor of Durgā in her virgin (*ḥumārī*) aspect, and in A.D. 1757 built a temple in the Darbar Square, the Kumārī Ghar, for her worship.⁵³ Known also as the Kumārī-bahal (Rājālakṣmīkula-vihāra), the building has the form and in part the function of a typical Nepali *vihāra*. Its primary role is domicile and temple for the state Kumārī, successive immature virgin girls who play for a time the role of a living goddess.⁵⁴ Only the courtyard of the temple is open to the public (in which may be studied some splendid molded terra-cotta tiles of light-hearted secular scenes), but in the private quarters are superb paintings of the Mother Goddesses, together with a life-size portrait of the building's donor, Jayaprakāśa, the last Malla king of Kathmandu (Plate 70).

Under the Shah kings and Rana prime ministers Hanuman Dhoka palace and the Darbar Square witnessed continued building activity. Indeed, the most unusual building of the palace—and of the Kathmandu Valley—dates from this time. This is the Vasantapura Darbar at one end of Nasal-chok, a dual structure, each part originally with a separate name (Figure 1:17,19; Plate 125). One of them, the Vasantapura proper, is a tall, four-roofed pavilion of nine stories, from whence its alternate name, Nautale. The other part of the building, annexed to the tower's eastern side, is a four-story quadrangle crowned with three variform pavilions. Originally named Vilāsamandira, but long called Lohom-(Stone)chok, the quadrangle is known today simply as Basantapur or Tejarat-chok, for the government loan office (*tejarata*) once installed there.

⁵¹ Wright 1966:155; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 198. Father Giuseppe 1801:311-312 also writes of Jayaprakāśa's attempts to take the treasure of Paśupatinātha from "Tolu" (Gvala). See Chapter 9.

⁵² Wright 1966:155.

⁵³ According to a *thyāsaphu*, the *vihāra* was begun in

Inscriptions, later records, and oral tradition all credit the two buildings to Prithvi Narayan Shah. An inscription over the entry door of each names him as the builder, and dates the completion of the structure to the spring of A.D. 1770 (Śaka Saṃvat 1691 Caitra).⁵⁵ The *Triratna-saundarya-gātha*, an important later source, also specifically states that Prithvi Narayan Shah had the building site selected and the proper ground-breaking rituals performed.⁵⁶ Oral tradition adds that the nine-storied pavilion was patterned after the Shah king's multi-story headquarters at Nawakot (Plate 74), although the only similarity between the buildings is their common Newar-style ancestry.

The two palace buildings themselves tell a different tale. They suggest that both were standing as smaller buildings, and were only vertically enlarged after the palace was occupied by Prithvi Narayan. Detailed substantiation of this postulate is precluded here, but several building stages seem to be discernible. This is evidenced in many anomalies, such as the otherwise unexplainable entombment of roof brackets, windows, and sections of exterior façade, accompanied by many structural discrepancies in the interior.

But whatever the exact architectural history of the two buildings, they represent superficially Mughalized Newar-style buildings constructed or enlarged by Newar hands working in the same traditional way as those that had built for the Malla kings. Prithvi Narayan believed in patronizing the Newar artisans, and Sundarananda Banda specifically states that for the undertaking the king gathered together "artists from the various castes [together with] clever artisans and masons."⁵⁷ The lower three stories of the Tejarat-chok conform perfectly to the residence of a wealthy Newar merchant, and are notable for extensive wood carvings of traditional style; the exotic roof-top pavilions are imitative of the roof-top pavilions popular with Mughal builders, although only one represents any real departure from the Newar style of building. Its vaulted "elephant ear"

n.s. 877 Phālguna (G. Vajracharya 1976:42).

⁵⁴ On this institution, see Chapter 11.

⁵⁵ N. Pant et al. 1968:427-435.

⁵⁶ Banda 1962:137.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

roof was certainly copied from structures such as those in the forts of Delhi and Agra. The pavilions, commanding a remarkable view over the city, the Valley, and the shimmering mountains beyond, each had its own special name—Lakṣmīvilāsa, the pavilion of octagonal plan, Vilāsamandira, square, and Bangala (bungalow), rectangular.⁵⁸ Curiously, but altogether in keeping with popular misconceptions about Valley history, there is an almost universal belief that these pavilions were for the use of the three Malla kings. Yet these kings and their kingdoms were extinct by A.D. 1770, when the pavilions were conceived and erected by Prithvi Narayan Shah.

The towering Vasantapura, the Mansion of Spring, according to Prithvi Narayan's inscription, was created as a pleasure pavilion.⁵⁹ Its lower three stories essentially conform to the Newar farmhouse, while the fourth has a screened promenade on the projected beams and decked-over roof brackets (Plate 135). The fifth and eighth stories are merely transitional, one a latticed promenade, the others open, columned rooms reminiscent of the screened pavilions of the Mughal palaces. Prithvi Narayan Shah was, of course, well acquainted with what he considered the pernicious rooms of "Mughlāna [where] one abandons oneself to the music of drum and sitar."⁶⁰ Considering the Malla capital cities great only in intrigue, and places for pomp and pleasure—of which Vasantapura pavilion held its share—the ruler's desire was to build a new palace on the open hillsides, a dream thwarted by his untimely death.

With the exception of the neoclassical Gaddi Darbar erected in A.D. 1908, no other new residential unit was added to the palace. All of the earlier buildings were remodeled time and again to conform to nineteenth-century taste. In one of these, adjacent to Vasantapura, are Rājasthāni-style murals, but they are not on public view, nor is the date of their execution known.⁶¹

⁵⁸ So named by Sundarananda Banda 1962:136.

⁵⁹ For that reason it was consecrated at the Phagu (Holi) celebration, a riotous spring rite of Hindu culture related to the earth's fecundity. Its function also probably accounts for the extraordinary development of the erotica on the roof brackets, probably the most explicit and bizarre in all Nepal. According to the inscription, the consecra-

A palace wing detached from Hanuman Dhoka by the construction of New Road stood until 1967 at the corner of the marketplace (Figure 1:18). It was a handsome three-story Newar-style building of unknown ancestry, faced with glazed *telīā* brick, complemented with superb wood carvings. At some time a fourth floor had been awkwardly tacked on, and was occupied in 1967 as a private dwelling; except for continued use of the stairways, the original structure was an abandoned shambles. It was also an unparalleled document of Nepali palace architecture. All of the interior woodwork, notably door and window frames, were elegantly carved, and every room was adorned with Rājasthāni-style polychrome painting, in which brilliant reds predominated. The plastered walls were covered with murals, wooden room-divider screens were painted with diverse bands of floral motifs, and even the ceiling beams and window frames were painted with floral and geometric designs and images of the gods (Plate 138). The murals, by then defaced with graffiti, and many partially covered over with the traditional clay and cowdung mixture used to smooth and purify floors and walls, were varied. One, for example, recorded a scene of worship in which life-size royal personages tendered homage to an enthroned, snake-canopied Viṣṇu, correspondingly large. In contrast, the opposite wall was entirely covered with miniatures, scenes arranged in successive registers of narrative comparable to paintings on cloth scrolls (Plate 508). Identified with captions in archaic Nepali inscribed in gilt, scene after scene unfolded the popular Kṛṣṇa legend as it is told in Book Ten of the *Bhagavata Purāna*. There were hundreds of miniature figures of Nepalis in eighteenth-century dress; together with their beloved gods, they moved through an exuberant landscape whose horizons were the snow-capped Himalayas so appreciated by Nepali painters of the time (Plate 403). Regrettably, this priceless

tion ceremony of Vasantapura cost more than the ten-day celebration of Dasain.

⁶⁰ N. Pant et al. 1968:331.

⁶¹ Like the paintings in the Mohan-chok, these paintings are unavailable to the scrutiny of Western scholars. Shimkhada 1974:42-43, fig. 7 illustrates a fragment that seems to be quite correctly dated to the late nineteenth century.

document of the royal past, the splendid building and the stunning paintings it contained, was replaced with a concrete building, and is no more.

A similarly irreplaceable heritage was lost to Nepal more than a century before, when the Prime Minister Bhimsen Thapa had Pratāpamalla's constricted palace portal enlarged (Plate 141). Although the original carved doors were saved by moving them to Mohan-chok, the price of the large gilt replacements was exceptionally high. According to an inscription above them, the costs were met by selling off the palace archives of copperplate inscriptions to the foundries in the bazaar.

Among the Shah kings, the one to leave the greatest imprint on the Darbar Square was Rana Bahadur, whose turbulent reign, A.D. 1777-1799, closed the eighteenth century. Ascending the throne as a two-year-old, the king's acts were long governed alternately by the queen mother and an uncle, Bahadur Shah, two antagonists who waged a bitter struggle for supremacy as regent. After many reverses, Bahadur Shah secured the post, and for a decade, 1785-1794, was an instrumental figure in the royal donations. It was at this time—taking Hanuman Dhoka as the pivotal point of the nation—that measured markers were set at two-mile intervals (*kos*) in all directions from the capital. Many still stand along the foot trails threading the encompassing hills. A more pious undertaking was the erection of the Śiva-Pārvatī temple, an architectural gem in the Darbar Square, perfectly compatible with the nearby Malla structures.⁶² Since the Navadurgā, a group of Mother Goddesses, is enshrined on the ground floor, the temple is a single-roofed rectangular building, in keeping with the form required for all Nepali temples devoted to the worship of Mother Goddesses in groups (Figure 1:32). The temple takes its name from the charming wooden manikins of Śiva and Pārvatī who lean from an upper window, like a king and queen, observing the constant activity in the square below.

⁶² Banda 1962:146-147.

⁶³ In v.s. 1852 Bhādra; Banda 1962:148.

⁶⁴ In Śaka Saṃvat 1719 Āṣāḍha (A.D. 1797) according to an inscription on the bell (Naraharinath 1955:64-67). According to Banda 1962:146-147 and to N. Pant in a foreword to the work (p. 39), both the Śiva-Pārvatī temple and the Taleju bell were erected by Bahadur Shah "on

A second donation in the reign of Rana Bahadur Shah is the impressive gilt head of Seto (*sveta*, white) Bhairava installed beside the Degutale temple (Plate 364). Offered on the occasion of Indra-jātrā in 1795,⁶³ the image still plays an important role in the annual Indra festival when, from a concealed reservoir behind his mouth, the god dispenses ritual beer to the clamoring crowd. No less fearsome than Pratāpamalla's salvaged Black Bhairava nearby, the immense White Bhairava with glaring eyes, exposed fangs, and dreadful ornaments, is one of the most awe-inspiring of Nepali images. Superbly wrought, it is witness to the continuing skill of the Nepali metalcrafter even into the late eighteenth century.

To these same artisans Rana Bahadur turned again soon after when, in the following year, he commissioned the colossal bronze bell suspended nearby as an offering to Taleju.⁶⁴ The bell, together with the adjacent drums (*nāgarā*), a donation of his son Girvan Yuddha,⁶⁵ was to be used in the daily worship of the goddess, but the custom is now in abeyance. Formerly, both bell and drums also doubled as an alarm signal, and were considered efficacious agents in putting to flight ghosts and other haunts who might find their way into the Darbar Square.

Rana Bahadur's gift of the bell to Taleju was one of the last constructive and devotional acts of an ill-starred king. Although in principle at last free of his uncle's tutelage, in A.D. 1799 Rana Bahadur abdicated in favor of his infant son, Girvan Yuddha (Plate 76), to lead the life of a religious mendicant (*sannyasin*). A few months later, however, his beloved third queen, Kāntimatī Devī, a Brahman widow whom the king had married despite intense orthodox opposition, died of smallpox. Maddened with grief, the king ordered the heedless gods dragged from their temples and their images smashed. Foremost among them was his *iṣṭadevatā*, Taleju, and Śītalā, the goddess of smallpox. Finally, under the alternate names of Svāmī

the command" of the king. But if so, the bell, at least, whose date is fixed by its inscription, postdates Bahadur Shah's regency.

⁶⁵ In v.s. 1864 Śrāvaṇa (A.D. 1807), according to a copperplate in possession of descendants of the maker of the drums.

Mahānirvānanda or Paramanirgunānanda, Rana Bahadur led the life of an ascetic in Benares before returning to Nepal and eventual assassination in A.D. 1806. For the salvation of his soul, one of his surviving queens erected the imposing temple of Tripureśvara on the banks of the sacred Bagmati, just outside the old capital city.⁶⁶

Only a few more Nepali kings were destined to dwell in Hanuman Dhoka, and none apparently made any donations of note to it or the surrounding square. They seemed at last to tire of it altogether, and before the end of the nineteenth century the royal residence was abandoned.

CAUKOṬ DARBAR: THE PATAN PALACE

Like Hanuman Dhoka, the Patan palace lies in the center of the city, and adjacent to a temple-filled square (Map 8; Figure 2). It incorporates a similar inventory of quadrangles, temples, pillars, ponds, fountains, and sacred images, but is much smaller. There are only four quadrangles, annexed in a precise row at one side of the Darbar Square, and there is no evidence to suggest that it was ever larger. The Patan palace has been spared extensive remodeling in the post-Malla period, and thus preserves much of the atmosphere of the seventeenth-century Malla court. Although the temples are private, the quadrangles all serve modern utilitarian purposes—police station, museum, school, and minor government offices—and in part, at least, are freely accessible to public inspection. The Bhandarkhal, the garden area behind the palace, is an open-air museum of stone sculptures and inscriptions, the Patan Archaeological Garden.

The site of the Patan Darbar has a venerable his-

⁶⁶ Sources for these events are Banda 1962:39-46, 154-155, 189-190, 218-219; G. Vajracharya 1961; D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 210-213. According to Banda 1962:156, Kantimatī Devī actually died of tuberculosis, but the folk tradition firmly holds that it was smallpox. Apparently Rana Bahadur believed so also, as witnessed by his excesses against the smallpox goddess's chief shrine at Svayambhūnātha. After his return from Benares, at the time of a smallpox epidemic he ordered the unprecedented expulsion of all children from the Kathmandu Valley in an effort to contain the disease, and specifically

tory. It lies at what we must assume was a very ancient crossroads, around which clustered an indigenous community. There is ample evidence for subsequent Licchavi occupation,⁶⁷ although the Licchavi palaces lay elsewhere. In the Transitional Period, the crossroads became the site of the mansions of the principal nobles, the *pradhāna mahāpātras*. One of the mansions, Vamthunihmaṃ, apparently lay behind the present palace. A number of in situ inscriptions from the fourteenth through the sixteenth century attest to the *mahāpātras'* close association with the site.⁶⁸ Purandarasiṃha, who controlled Patan for much of the late sixteenth century, established two temples here, both facing the present palace. One, the Newar-style Cāra Nārāyaṇa, dedicated to Caturvyūha Viṣṇu, was erected in A.D. 1566; the other, a *śikhara*, in 1589 (Figure 2:15, 17).⁶⁹ The latter was dedicated to Viṣṇu in his Narasiṃha *avatāra*, in memory of the donor's brother, who bore the same name. The *mahāpātras* also had apparently established a Taleju temple here, which they refurbished in honor of Sthitimalla's visit to Patan.⁷⁰

At the annexation of unruly Patan by the Kathmandu king, Śivasimhamalla, in A.D. 1597, the traditional locale from which it had been governed by the *mahāpātras* continued as the Malla seat. The chronicles affirm that Śivasimha built a temple to Degutale here.⁷¹ That he constructed other buildings, or adopted those of the *mahāpātras*, is clear from the chronicles' observations that the works of successor kings were "better than before." One of the buildings known to have predated the seventeenth century was a fortified palace building known as Caukoṭ or Caukvatha, the Four-Cornered Fort.⁷² It stood at the northern end of the present compound, next to Maṇidhārā, and gave the palace its once familiar name, Caukoṭ Darbar.

to protect his son, Girvan Yuddha. The latter incident is recorded in a touching Newar song respecting the forced exodus (Lienhard 1974:232-234).

⁶⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 52, 99, 123, 170, 183, 184.

⁶⁸ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962i, 1963d, 1963j; D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 18 (21-23).

⁶⁹ N.S. 686 Māgha (*Samskṛta-sandēśa*, 1:8 [v.s. 2010], 1-8) and N.S. 710 Kārtika (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962f).

⁷⁰ *Gopālarāja-vamsāvalī*, fol. 56b.

⁷¹ Lamshal 1966:59.

⁷² D. Vajracharya 1964b:48.

The name has been obsolete since the mid-nineteenth century, and the palace is now known simply as *lāyḱū* or the Patan Darbar.

However venerable its foundations may be, the existing palace is essentially the work of two Malla kings, Siddhinarasiṃha and Śrīnivāsa (Plate 68), father and son, whose successive reigns spanned most of the seventeenth century (A.D. 1619-1684). Siddhinarasiṃha came to the throne as a youth, and must at first have accepted the palace as it was, for not until twenty years after his coronation do we learn of any new building activity in the palace. From that time, there was intense activity. The king's first involvement with the palace structure, in A.D. 1641, was to build the Degutale temple "better than before."⁷³ Referred to in the dedicatory inscription as *nyātapola*, the temple had five roofs. Six years after rebuilding the Degutale, Siddhinarasiṃha gilded one of the temple roofs as a further offering to the goddess. On this occasion, "he feasted a number of Brahmans, and gave each a mohar [coin]."⁷⁴ The temple was completely destroyed by a disastrous fire in the reign of Śrīnivāsa.

The year N.S. 767 (A.D. 1646/1647) was particularly eventful in the history of the palace, for it was then that the remarkable quadrangle and its sunken bath, the Sundari-chok, was created, as well as the adjacent tank and fountain in the Bhandarkhal (Figure 2:3, 4; Plates 130, 132-134, 137). It was also the year of the birth of Śrīnivāsa (N.S. 747 Kārtika), in whose reign the palace would be entirely renovated.⁷⁵ The Sundari-chok represented a totally new construction, and expanded the palace southward over land previously occupied by a *vihāra*. The latter, familiarly known as Hātko-bahal, a donation of King Lakṣmīkāmadeva in the late twelfth century, was dismantled and relocated west of the square, the present Haka-bahal (Ratnakāra-mahāvihāra).⁷⁶ It seems probable that Hātko-vihāra itself had been built over or near a ruin associated in some way with a stone of particular

importance. This corner is known in various documents by names such as *hatapatra* and *hatapātala*, which may be loosely translated as "marketplace ruin." The seventeenth-century court poet, Kunu Sharma, mentions a large stone here, and an alternate name for Sundari-chok was Stone- (*dhunḱe, lohom*)chok. One suspects that both stone and ruin were artifacts, now dispersed, that were once associated with this crossroads site.⁷⁷

The Sundari-chok is an especially well-proportioned three-story quadrangle, an outstanding example of seventeenth-century Nepali architecture. Structurally in keeping with the *vihāra* and common house, the Sundari-chok reflects its role as a royal residence in its rich ornamentation. Its principal entryway, facing the Darbar Square, was originally provided with a golden door surmounted by a golden window. The latter is intact, but the doors have disappeared, to be replaced with brick fill. The original guardian images placed in front of the quadrangle by Siddhinarasiṃha—Hanūmān, Narasiṃha, and a Five-faced Gaṇeśa, all pedestrian stone sculptures such as one associates with the Late Malla Period—are still in place by the blocked-up doorway. The interior of the quadrangle is particularly attractive, with columned bays, ornamental windows and doors, and on the top floor a screened gallery that overlooks the Tuṣa-ḥiṭī, the royal bath. The latter, built to the "accompaniment of *tantra-śāstras*," is a striking example of a royal fountain, and it is no wonder that Pratāpamalla wished to have it duplicated in his own palace.⁷⁸ Sunken and of oval plan, the fountain is furnished with a gilt spout supporting repoussé images of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa on Garuda. Its retaining walls are divided into two registers of niches, each of which is fitted with a miniature image of a tantric divinity (Plate 562). Most of the images are stone, but there is an occasional one of gilt metal. Still other images and shrines surround the fountain, and a protective serpent encircles the brink.

⁷⁷ Given the traditional attitude in Hindu culture toward the inauspiciousness of crossroads, it seems surprising that such a site would have been conceived proper for the palace. Hanuman Dhoka, likewise, is also very close to the principal crossroads of Kathmandu.

⁷⁸ Lamshal 1966:62.

⁷³ N.S. 761 Phālguna (*Abhileḱha-samgraha* 1962j; Lamshal 1966:62).

⁷⁴ An unpublished *ṭhyāsaphu*, the *Bhāṣāvamśāvalī* (Lamshal 1966:62), and Wright 1966:162 all date this event to N.S. 767 Jyestha (A.D. 1647).

⁷⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 274.

⁷⁶ Wright 1966:159; Lévi 1905:11, 192-193.

Like other Malla kings, Siddhinarasiṃha took pains to please his tutelary, Taleju. For that reason, while building for himself the Sundari-chok in 1647, he created in her honor gardens and a large fountain and tank complex in the adjacent Bhandarkhal (Plate 6).⁷⁹ In the center of the tank he placed a golden lotus, and at the side constructed a charming stone pavilion. It is skillfully decorated with stone relief carvings of sacred subjects and—a most unusual feature—with a number of light-hearted genre scenes (Plate 238). As his daily offering to Taleju, the king was accustomed to gather lotuses from this pond; his unparalleled piety, it is said, permitted him to walk on the pond's surface to do so. Years later, in A.D. 1675 (N.S. 796 Kārtika), when Siddhinarasiṃha had effectively abandoned the throne, with his son for a witness he set up a lengthy tablet in this same fountain-tank detailing the rules and regulations governing its use.⁸⁰

Siddhinarasiṃha's building activity was oriented to spiritual ends. Known as the *rājaṛṣi* (sage among kings), he was an abstemious and meditative man devoted more to the gods than to the enjoyment of kingly splendors.⁸¹ Before embarking on the palace buildings, he had already adorned the adjacent Darbar Square with two of its finest buildings. One is Viśveśvara (or, alternately, Viśvānātha), a Śiva temple in Newar style built in A.D. 1627; the other is the superb stone *śikhara* temple consecrated to Kṛṣṇa, erected together with the Garuḍadhvaja a decade later (Figure 2:19).⁸² The completion of the Viśveśvara temple was celebrated with the *koṭyāhuti* (*koṭihoma*) sacrifice, in which costly goods were consigned to the flames. An even more elaborate *koṭihoma* was performed on the completion of the Kṛṣṇa temple. Before commencing the latter, the king had to rout his enemies, who "on the auspicious day of consecration invaded Patan and occupied the fort."⁸³ The *koṭihoma* went on for twenty-four days on the *yajñamandala* in front of the temple, and gifts of gold,

jewels, clothing, foodstuffs, slaves, horses, and elephants were distributed to the Brahmans, *bhikṣus*, and the poor. Sacred dances were also performed, and a *gūṭhi* established for the upkeep of the temple.

Finally, having long groomed his son to take over his kingly duties, Siddhinarasiṃha relinquished the throne in A.D. 1652 in favor of an extended holy pilgrimage to Benares.⁸⁴ Although he eventually returned to Patan, he did not resume the throne, but loosely governed in some joint capacity with his son. According to an unpublished *ṭhyāsaphu*, proven completely accurate in other details, he lived to be 104 years old, dying in N.S. 830 Jyestha (1710). Legend attests that he lives still. The stone guardian elephants of his temple Viśveśvara will signal that death has at last come when they descend to drink in the Maṇidhārā.

When Śrīnivāsa finally became sole ruler in A.D. 1661, he renovated the palace from "Hatapatra to Caukoṭ," that is, from one end to the other.⁸⁵ One of his first tasks was to rebuild the Degutale temple, which was destroyed by fire in the second year of his reign.⁸⁶ He did not replace the five roofs, settling for a more conventional three-roofed structure, as it exists today (Figure 2:13). It was elevated on a three-story building, a style that Pratāpamalla copied a few years later for his own Degutale. The first Patan Degutale temple must have been elevated on the same building, since the dedicatory inscription for the earlier temple is affixed to the building's rear wall facing the Nasal-chok. The temple proper was completely razed in the 1934 earthquake, and the present one is a reconstruction.⁸⁷ It was also extensively restored in 1969.

Śrīnivāsa totally restored "larger than before" the Mul-chok, the main palace courtyard lying between the Degutale temple and Sundari-chok (Figure 2:6; Plates 127-129). This was in A.D. 1666 (N.S. 786 Āśvina).⁸⁸ At that time, he introduced the practice of celebrating the Dasain sacrifices in this

⁷⁹ N.S. 767 Vaiśākha (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 49a [85]); Wright 1966:162.

⁸⁰ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962k.

⁸¹ Cf. D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 268-282 for a thumbnail sketch of this most interesting Malla king.

⁸² N.S. 747 Māgha (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962a) and 757 Phālguna (1637); Parajuli et al. 1954.

⁸³ From the dedicatory inscription (Parajuli et al. 1954).

⁸⁴ N.S. 772 Māgha (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 275).

⁸⁵ Lamshal 1966:71.

⁸⁶ N.S. 783 Kārtika (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 285). An unpublished *ṭhyāsaphu* records that the *gajura* was placed on the temple in N.S. 743 Vaiśākha (1663), which may therefore be taken as the date of the temple's foundation.

⁸⁷ B. Rana 1936:115 and facing plate.

⁸⁸ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962m; Lamshal 1966:66.

quadrangle, which formerly had been conducted in the "stone *pāṭi* of Thamthyāka (*thamthyāka lohocāpāra*)."⁸⁰ For this purpose he built the rather awkwardly roofed Taleju temple into the south wing. The large gilt copper repoussé images of Gaṅgā and Yamunā, deifications of the two most sacred rivers of Hinduism, which flank the temple doorway, may date from the previous reign (Plate 129).⁸⁰ Similar pairs of river goddesses of corresponding date guard the companion Mul-chok temples of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur. The stunning golden doorway and *torana* (regrettably vandalized in 1970) were donated by Ṛddhinarasimhāmalla in A.D. 1716.⁸¹

The existing chief Taleju temple apparently replaced a previous one. It was constructed in A.D. 1671 (N.S. 791 Vaiśākha), when Śrīnivāsa erected it as a rooftop temple at the northeast corner of the Mul-chok (Plate 128). It has three superimposed roofs of octagonal shape, crowned with a gilt *gajura* in the form of a miniature *śikhara* temple. The smaller companion Taleju temple is finished with a *gajura* of similar design. Śrīnivāsa also established two other Taleju-related shrines in the palace grounds, one to Domāju (presumably "Mother Goddess of the Ḍoya," that is, Taleju) in the Bhandarkhal in A.D. 1670,⁸² the other to Yaṅṭāju in the Mul-chok, at the time of its construction, A.D. 1666.⁸³ The former has not been located, but the latter is the now decrepit little shrine at the center of the Mul-chok courtyard (Plate 128). Abandoned, the identity of its deity quite forgotten by the public, the shrine was of profound significance in its time. Yaṅṭāju was an important *iṣṭadevatā* (personal deity) of the Malla rulers, a goddess who with her companion Taleju presided for five centuries over their affairs.

In A.D. 1679 (N.S. 799 Vaiśākha), Śrīnivāsa built a new *āgamachem* in the northwest corner of the Mul-chok, transferring to it the *āgama* deities that

until then had been housed in the neighboring court.⁸⁴ The temple was razed in the 1934 earthquake, and only a few inscribed, dated roof brackets remain, now unceremoniously stacked in the adjacent court. We know from photographs that it was an unusual temple, with three differently shaped roofs: one rectangular, one octagonal, and one round. It may have been inspired by a pavilion that formerly stood in the Bhaktapur Darbar Square (Plate 31). Śrīnivāsa undoubtedly saw it a few years earlier, when he spent a fortnight at Jitāmītra's court. This was on the occasion of the marriage of the latter's brother, Ugramalla, when the Patan king "watched the dances and gave ten rupees."⁸⁵

The quadrangle corresponding to the old Caukoṭ marks the northern extension of the palace proper (Figure 2:18). Although a *thyāsaphu* specifically states that the "foundations were laid" by Śrīnivāsa,⁸⁶ he must only have restored or enlarged the preexisting quadrangle. The consecration ceremony (*pratiṣṭhā*) of the rebuilt quadrangle, then alternately called Mānigalbhaṭṭa (Central Square Law Court), took place in A.D. 1680.⁸⁷ A few years later, in A.D. 1693, "the southern part of Caukoṭ fell down"⁸⁸ and scarcely a half-century after its consecration, the building was razed by Viṣṇumalla, who "built it anew."⁸⁹ Today known as Mānikeśava, after a small Keśava Viṣṇu temple in the courtyard, or more commonly, Lumjhyā, for its golden window, the quadrangle has suffered extensive nineteenth-century renovations both inside and out. The awkward fourth-floor corner pavilions date from this time, as does the golden door (Plate 140). Like Bhimsen Thapa's costly Hanuman Dhoka gateway, the cost of the Mānigalbhaṭṭa doors was also exceedingly high. They were financed by selling the gilt antiquities from the palace treasury.¹⁰⁰

Like his father, Śrīnivāsa also established tem-

⁸⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. III, 77.

⁸¹ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 914 attributes them to Siddhinarasimha without documentation, but if so they must have been moved from an earlier temple doorway by Śrīnivāsa.

⁸² N.S. 836 Āśvina (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 122 [263]).

⁸³ N.S. 790 Jyēṣṭha (unpublished *thyāsaphu*). On the identification of Domāju see also Chapter II.

⁸⁴ N.S. 786 Āśvina (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962m).

⁸⁵ Lamshal 1966:71, and unpublished *thyāsaphu*.

⁸⁶ Landon 1928:1, 213; B. Paudel 1964:21.

⁸⁷ G. Vajracharya 1967a:18.

⁸⁸ N.S. 800 Jyēṣṭha (unpublished *thyāsaphu*).

⁸⁹ N.S. 813 Caitra (unpublished *thyāsaphu*).

⁹⁰ N.S. 854 Māgha (A.D. 1734) (Lamshal 1966:76).

¹⁰⁰ According to an inscription above the door.

ples in the adjacent square. One of these is the Bhīmasena temple (Figure 2:26). The temple, together with a large sunken *yajña-kunḍa* in front of it, was constructed in A.D. 1680 (N.S. 801 Mārga), "at a time when the three towns were in harmony as one."¹⁰¹ The lion-crowned pillar facing the temple was offered to Bhīmasena several years later by a *gūthī* association.¹⁰² Another of Śrīnivāsa's Darbar Square temples is an undistinguished Nārāyaṇa temple built in memory of his deceased brother in A.D. 1652 (N.S. 772 Āśvina) (Figure 2:16).¹⁰³ Perhaps by coincidence, it stands just beside a similar memorial to a brother, the temple that Purandarasiṃha, the Patan *mahāpātra*, had erected more than a half-century before (Figure 2:15).

To Śrīnivāsa's able minister, the *cautārā* Bhagīratha Bhaīyā, may also be attributed a temple on the square, a second Viśvanātha, popularly known after the donor as Bhāideval. It was conceived as a substitute for the Viśvanātha temple in Benares, which, long a beacon to Nepali pilgrims, had been destroyed by the zealous Aurangzeb.¹⁰⁴ Dismayed when it was not rebuilt, the minister, with his king's blessing, built the substitute temple in the Patan Darbar Square in A.D. 1678.¹⁰⁵ This was in keeping with the general Nepali custom, practiced even in Licchavi times, of establishing conveniently located substitute *tīrthas* (pilgrim sites).¹⁰⁶ Following the ravages of the 1934 earthquake, the Bhāideval was restored with a dome. But as certified by the dedicatory inscription and the chronicles, it was originally a three-roof Newar-style temple.¹⁰⁷

In essence, the Patan Darbar and its adjacent square physically perpetuate the seventeenth-century world of Patan's two most outstanding kings, Siddhinarasiṃha and Śrīnivāsa. The most notable additions to the darbar by their successors are all

outside the palace proper, in the adjacent square. These are principally Yoganarendra's pillar, his royal council hall (the Maṇimaṇḍapa built in A.D. 1701 to replace an earlier hall),¹⁰⁸ the Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa temple built by his sister Rudramatī about A.D. 1706,¹⁰⁹ the Cyāsing-devāla, an octagonal *śikhara* erected by a daughter in A.D. 1723,¹¹⁰ and the ponderous bronze bell offered to Taleju by Viṣṇumalla and his queen in A.D. 1737.¹¹¹ According to Wright, the bell was established by the king "in order to terrify his enemies."¹¹² It replaced a smaller bell previously offered by Yoganarendra, which was transferred to the nearby Macchendra-nātha-bahal.¹¹³

It is evident that through the years the Patan rulers built and rebuilt the palace quadrangles to suit their temporal and secular needs. But the greatest enthusiasm of kings and their queens, of princes and princesses, of *mahāpātras* and *cautārās* alike, was clearly directed toward pleasing the gods. Temple after temple gradually filled the palace and adjoining square, and each temple, and the god it housed, was a magnet for continuing gifts. Sometimes a gift took the form of a costly sacrifice performed on the mandalas before the temple; on other occasions the gift might be a new image in stone or bronze, a painting, some ornament for the deity, or—perhaps most often—some opulent embellishment of the god's house itself. Century after century of royal commissions kept a host of able artists and artisans working for the beautification of the court and the satisfaction of the gods. Each donor may have been primarily concerned with the heavenly glory he believed that he and his whole line, past, present, and future, reaped by such gifts. But together, the donors and the artisans who so skillfully carried out their commands, created in the Patan Darbar Square complex one of the outstanding monuments of Nepal.

¹⁰¹ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962n.

¹⁰² N.S. 827 Bhādra (1707) (in situ inscription).

¹⁰³ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 275.

¹⁰⁴ In A.D. 1669 (Kane 1968:1 [2nd ed. 1975], 908).

¹⁰⁵ N.S. 798 Māgha (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962-o; D. Vajracharya 1965a:26-28).

¹⁰⁶ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:121-122.

¹⁰⁷ Wright 1966:167.

¹⁰⁸ N.S. 821 Caitra (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962b); Slusser

and Vajracharya 1974:174-175.

¹⁰⁹ Wright 1966:169; D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 269-271.

¹¹⁰ N.S. 843 Māgha (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 128 [271-274]).

¹¹¹ N.S. 857 Māgha (D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 195-196).

¹¹² Wright 1966:170.

¹¹³ Shakyā and Vaidya 1970:inscr. 56 (xxiii, 198-199).

"As an ensemble," as Landon remarked, "the Darbar Square in Patan probably remains the most picturesque collection of buildings that has ever been set up in so small a space by the piety and the pride of Oriental man."¹¹⁴ The seventeenth-century Patan panegyrist, Kunu Sharma, was of the same opinion. But he phrased it more succinctly in his oft-repeated rhetorical question, "Isn't it like a piece of heaven?"¹¹⁵

TRIPURA LĀYKŪ, BHAKTAPUR

In contrast to Kathmandu and Patan, the Bhaktapur palace and adjoining temple-filled square lie at the edge of the city, out of the mainstream (Map 9; Figure 3). Palace history begins with the mid-twelfth century, when Ānandadeva established Tripura at the site, a name the palace conserved until at least the late sixteenth century.¹¹⁶ At one time it was the largest of the Malla royal compounds, spreading from the western gateway (now the portal to the Darbar Square) eastward to Sukul Dhoka, a gateway preserved only as a *ṭol* name (Map 9: e-7). Tradition affirms that the palace contained ninety-nine courtyards. Even in Oldfield's time, when the national capital was in Kathmandu, he reported the Bhaktapur palace to be the "largest and most costly of any in Nipal."¹¹⁷ But time has taken its toll, and the modest palace we see today reflects little of its former grandeur. Only the memory of the fort, or fortified part of the palace, which lay at the western end of the compound, survives in the neighborhood name, Kvāchem-ṭol.¹¹⁸ Nothing remains east of the palace proper except temple ruins in the immediate vicinity and, farther east, a rubble waste, legacy of the 1934 earthquake. As it now exists, the palace has shrunk to a cluster of fewer than a half-dozen quadrangles huddled around the main quadrangle, the Mul-chok (Figure 3). The elevations of

most of the buildings accessible to the general public date from the seventeenth century, and have suffered extensive nineteenth-century renovation.

The main quadrangle, the palace Mul-chok, is entirely devoted to the worship of Taleju and is, in effect, her temple (Figure 3:11). The divinity's chief shrine occupies the southern wing, and her temporary one, used at Dasain, is in the western wing. The court they face, filled with sacred paraphernalia, is open only to Hindus and Buddhists, but can be glimpsed by others through the doorway facing a public court.¹¹⁹ It seems likely that the Taleju complex is the oldest existing part of the palace; it is not improbable that it is one of the original three *purās* that composed Tripura. This is all the more probable when we consider that there are other existing buildings of comparable date, Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa and the temple of Indreśvara Mahādeva, for example, documented to A.D. 1143 (at the latest) and 1294, respectively. The cult of Taleju had been known in Nepal for at least a century before the founding of Tripura, and there is mention of her celebrated Bhaktapur manifestation as early as A.D. 1316.¹²⁰ But as is true of much of the rest of the palace, there is no inscriptional documentation for the Mul-chok prior to the seventeenth century.¹²¹ Indeed, the only structure of the Darbar Square that can be certified before that time is Yakṣeśvara, an imposing temple that Yakṣamalla is believed to have established as a replica and substitute for Paśupatinātha (Figure 3:19).¹²²

Beginning in A.D. 1614, the incumbents of the Bhaktapur palace left an almost continuous record of their constructions, repairs, and donations. Of these, the works of the last three kings of Bhaktapur, Jitāmitramalla, his son Bhūpatindra, and grandson Raṇajit, are the most significant. It is to Jitāmitra particularly, who occupied the palace for almost a quarter of a century, A.D. 1673 to 1696, that we owe much of its present character. Ascending the throne as a child at the untimely death of

¹¹⁴ Landon 1928:1, 208.

¹¹⁵ "Swargako tukra ho ki?" used often between verses in his description of Patan, the "Banner of Glory," written in A.D. 1652 (Naraharinath 1961).

¹¹⁶ See Chapter 5.

¹¹⁷ Oldfield 1880:1, 97.

¹¹⁸ D. Vajracharya 1964b:51.

¹¹⁹ The main temple façade is illustrated in color by Singh 1968:196-197.

¹²⁰ N.S. 436 Āṣāḍha (*Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 44a).

¹²¹ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962d, 1962e; B. Paudel 1964a:19; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 218, 220.

¹²² B. Paudel 1965.

his father Jagatprakāśa, with whom "nine women went sati," Jitāmitra was aided in his royal tasks by an able prime minister, Bhāgirāma Pradhānānga. Little given to the affairs of state, the king's personal interests turned more to intellectual pursuits, drama, poetry, and art. This he proclaimed in his self-chosen title *sumati*, The Wise. His artistic and intellectual interests were matched only by his desire to satisfy Taleju, the Malla tutelary whom he had also selected as his personal guide (*iṣṭadevatā*).¹²³ As a mere youth he began to make these interests apparent in the embellishment of his immediate surroundings. In A.D. 1677, in company with his minister Bhāgirāma, he undertook extensive renovation of Eta- (now Kumārī-)chok, a quadrangle adjacent to Mul-chok and possibly equally old (Figure 3:9).¹²⁴ Among the decorative wood carvings, he installed a "window that is not to be opened as it is only for beauty." He had the walls embellished with paintings of the *yoginīs* and the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Possibly they covered earlier murals, as similar paintings did in the adjacent Mul-chok.¹²⁵

Jitāmitra was deeply devoted to Taleju, and year after year "to please my *iṣṭadevatā*" he made lavish offerings in her name—to the goddess herself, to her dwellings, or to her immediate surroundings.¹²⁶ For this purpose, in the year immediately following the Eta-chok restoration, and "in the time of the Prime Minister Bhāgirāma Pradhānānga," Jitāmitra built a new palace wing, the Thanthu Darbar, northeast of the Mul-chok (Figure 3:13).¹²⁷ The undertaking also included a garden, pavilion, fountain, and tank (Plate 226). A decade later, the king consecrated "ten good *ropanis* of land" to defray the fountain's upkeep, and installed a new metal spout (Plate 237).¹²⁸ Of gilt copper repoussé, charged with water-symbolizing imagery, the spout is an outstanding work that testifies to the continuing vitality of metalcraft in the Late Malla Period. The gilt metal serpent coiled above the spout may have been installed then, or

¹²³ B. Paudel 1964; 1964a:11. The dual role of Taleju as *kuladevatā* and *iṣṭadevatā* is examined in Chapter 11.

¹²⁴ N.S. 797 Bhādra (B. Paudel 1964a:15-16).

¹²⁵ Singh 1968:26, 214-215.

¹²⁶ B. Paudel 1964a:16-18.

¹²⁷ In N.S. 798 Āṣāḍha (B. Paudel 1964a:12-13).

¹²⁸ N.S. 808 Śrāvana (1688) (B. Paudel 1964a:14-15).

may date from the original consecration (Plate 579). Regrettably, despite the king's express injunction that his successors maintain all these constructions, the palace wing is a ruin, and the superb fountain neglected.¹²⁹

The king's devotion to Taleju also occasioned the commission of a painting on cloth of considerable iconographic and historical interest (Plates 383, 384). It is a Viṣṇu-maṇḍala painted in A.D. 1681 to commemorate a particular celebration of the sacred *ananta vrata* rite for the purpose of pleasing Taleju. The officiant was Candra Śekhara-siṃha, minister to Jitāmitra's father, Jagatprakāśa. Candra Śekhara had been much loved by Jagatprakāśa who, once merging their names as "Jagacandra," avowed that "though two creatures they are one."¹³⁰ Candra Śekhara is depicted in the bottom register of the painting performing the *homa* sacrifice; facing him, on the right, is the Crown Prince Bhūpatindra, the enthroned Jitāmitra, his brother Ugramalla, and the minister Bhāgirāma (Plate 384).

On another occasion, in A.D. 1690, Jitāmitra expressed his devotion to Taleju by offering her a pair of immense copper drums (*nāgarā*) to be used in her daily worship.¹³¹ They rest in the columned porch of Lal Baithak, a much renovated quadrangle of which little from Malla times is visible except the columns and splendid doorway (Plate 136). These same drums, according to an unpublished inscription on them, were rededicated to Taleju many years later by Jitāmitra's grandson, Raṇajit.

Jitāmitra, like his cousin kings in Kathmandu and Patan, did not confine his building works to the palace proper, but extended them into the Darbar Square and, of course, into his realm beyond. One of his donations, in the final year of his reign, A.D. 1696, was the rather ill-proportioned *śikhara* dedicated to Vatsaladevī as Siddhilakṣmī (Figure 3:23).¹³² The paired guardians, animal and human, ranged at successive levels on either side of

¹²⁹ A wing of the darbar was still standing and repairable in 1966, but the condition was worsening each year, and it must by now have fallen to the ground.

¹³⁰ B. Paudel 1966.

¹³¹ N.S. 811 Kārtika (B. Paudel 1964a:17).

¹³² N.S. 816 Māgha (B. Paudel 1965b:49-50). There are three temples dedicated to Vatsaladevī in the Darbar

the steps, is characteristic of several other temples in Bhaktapur, the most notable of which is Nyāta-pola; guardian pairs are also placed on the western terraces of the Kathmandu Taleju, traditionally a Bhaktapur inspiration. Such figures are exotic to traditional Nepali architecture, and probably reflect the Tibeto-Chinese influence registered in other forms of art at this time (Plates 229, 315). They may be compared to similar concourses of protective beings at the Ming tombs. The Ming guardians were also copied in another palace compound affected by Chinese cultural influences, the Annamite capital of Hué (Vietnam).

Jitāmītra's influence on the physical appearance of the Bhaktapur palace persisted even after his death. For almost twenty years thereafter, his devoted queen, Lālamatī, continued to make offerings to the king's beloved goddess in the name—and on two occasions in the form—of her deceased lord.¹³³ The minister Bhāgīrāma remained in the service of the throne, and his name is recorded in a number of inscriptions postdating Jitāmītra's reign.

Jitāmītra's son, Bhūpatīndramalla, continued to repair and renovate the palace, to add new segments of his own, and to leave his personal imprint on the Darbar Square and nearby Taumadhi-tol.¹³⁴ To him may be attributed the reconstruction of the Malati- or Jiswa-chok (Figure 3:10).¹³⁵ Rebuilt again in the nineteenth century, the Malati-chok preserves little of the seventeenth-century structure except its charming courtyard fountain and the Lion Gateway facing the square. Flanked by immense stone lions and the protective images of Hanūmān and Narasiṃha—both inscribed and dated n.s. 818 Phālguna (1698)¹³⁶—the entry is closed by wooden doors, beautifully carved in a chiaroscuro of geometric pattern (Plate 139).

Square, one of which is an architectural gem and outstanding monument of the square. The donor has not been identified.

¹³³ B. Paudel 1964a:18-20.

¹³⁴ For his political deeds, see B. Paudel 1966a.

¹³⁵ B. Paudel 1966b:24-26; Wright 1966:131-132. It had existed at least in the reign of his grandfather, Jagatprakāśa, two of whose inscriptions are within it (B. Paudel 1966:23-24).

¹³⁶ B. Paudel 1966b:25.

¹³⁷ Wright 1966:131.

The well-known Fifty-five Window quadrangle, named for the continuous gallery of projected windows on its upper floor, also traditionally dates from the time of Bhūpatīndra (Plates 31-33).¹³⁷ The whole palace complex is now often known by its name. Although the gallery, razed in the 1934 earthquake, is a reconstruction, the lower floors were spared, and with them important wall paintings. In Rājasthāni style, the paintings depict the exploits of Kṛṣṇa, arranged in horizontal registers imitative of scrolls. They are similar to the destroyed Kathmandu palace paintings, but the gilt captions are in Newari, rather than archaic Nepali, as in Kathmandu. Although damaged by time and weather when the building stood roofless, the paintings have been restored, and are open to the public. From Bhūpatīndra's reign are also paintings in the Bhairava- (Sadāśiva-)chok, one of which is a life-size portrait image of the worshiping ruler.¹³⁸

Bhūpatīndra restored or rebuilt the Vasantapura Darbar, a pleasure pavilion King Jagajjyotīr (ca. A.D. 1614-1637) had built for his queens west of the Bhandarkhal.¹³⁹ Nothing of the pavilion remains except the seated guardian lions at the gateway, flanking images of Ugracaṇḍādevī (Durgā) and Bhairava, each inscribed and dated n.s. 827 Vaiśākha (1707).¹⁴⁰ Pedestrian stone carvings typical of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they are largely interesting because of a legend concerning them. Apocryphal though it is, it illustrates the rivalry among the late Malla kings in the beautification of their respective realms. Bhūpatīndra, it is said, was so struck with the excellence of the Durgā image that he ordered the right hand of the sculptor to be cut off to prevent his carving anything for a rival king. The sculptor's skill was so great, however, that he carved the Bhairava

¹³⁸ Singh 1968:color plate p. 205. This chok also dates from at least the sixteenth century, for the name Sadāśiva is derived from the licentious and tyrannical Kathmandu king (A.D. 1575-1581) who, after his ouster by rebellious subjects, sought asylum in the Bhaktapur palace (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 44). His residence there is confirmed by an in situ inscription in which Jagatprakāśa refers to Sadāśiva's occupancy (B. Paudel 1966:24; D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 71b [152]).

¹³⁹ Wright 1966:130.

¹⁴⁰ B. Paudel 1966b:29.

with his left hand. Enraged, the king demanded that he forfeit that also. Still undaunted, the artist carved with his feet a third image of the same quality, "now lost," it is said.

The most outstanding contribution that Bhūpatindra made to the Darbar Square complex consists of the two celebrated temples of the Taumadhi-tol extension. One is Nyātapola, consecrated in A.D. 1702.¹⁴¹ One of two extant temples with five roofs, it is raised on a corresponding number of terraces to dominate the Bhaktapur skyline (Plates 99, 100). The other Taumadhi-tol work is a restoration and enlargement of the Bhairava temple, carried out in A.D. 1717.¹⁴² Superbly proportioned, the temple is especially notable for the lavish use of gilt metal on the façade (Plate 366). In the Darbar Square proper, Bhūpatindra's only certified works are the restoration of a temple and the construction of three very modest shrines (Figure 3:2-5). Together they comprise the Char Dhām (*cāra dhāman*), Four Abodes, and were conceived as substitutes for four famous Indian *tirthas*, to which the king's subjects could more easily repair in their own city square. The temple representing Badrinātha, one of the four *tirthas*, was previously known as Gopinātha-deva, and had been in existence since at least A.D. 1667 (N.S. 787 Āśvina).¹⁴³ The Garuḍadhvaja facing the door postdates Bhūpatindra's restoration, having been offered in A.D. 1756 (N.S. 877).

It is probable that Bhūpatindra raised the nearby votive pillar to Taleju, which bears his gilt portrait image. But it is undocumented, and tradition often assigns it to Raṇajit, his son. There is a story about the pillar which, like the one respecting the Durgā and Bhairava images, also bears repeating for the light it sheds on the rivalry among the Three Kingdoms. Legend affirms that Bhūpatindra sought to equal or surpass the column of Kathmandu, but had to seek the latter's help for the undertaking. Pretending graciously to supply the needed artisans, the Kathmandu king secretly instructed them to break the pillar. This they did in obedience to their own lord, but at once, respond-

ing to the rival king's distress, they skillfully repaired the shattered pillar like new. In so doing they are alleged to have earned a noble recompense from both.¹⁴⁴ The legend is of further cultural interest because the workers were not stone masons but oil pressers (*telekāra, tailakāra*), a craft prerogative of the Mānandhar subcaste. That it was they who erected the stone pillars seems to be related to a similar role the Manandhars (now rarely pressers of oil) play in contemporary society. The traditional way of extracting oil is to press seeds between huge beams, such as are used in the pressers' houses in Khokana village, where it is a specialty. Since a superior quality of wood is needed for these beams, the Manandhars are thought to be especially skillful in judging the quality of the growing tree. Thus, it is their task to procure and raise the lofty poles that play an important symbolic role in Indra-jātrā, Bisket-jātrā, and a number of lesser festivals. That the Manandhars were employed to erect the Malla kings' stone pillars may also relate to the former custom of oiling them. An afterthought engraved on Pratāpamalla's Degutale pillar, for example, recommends the annual oiling of it on Mahāṣṭamī (the eighth day of Dasain), but the *gūṭhī* established for the purpose must now be defunct, and the pillar is left unattended.

With the death of Bhūpatindra in A.D. 1722, there was little further activity directed toward the upkeep and embellishment of the palace. Perhaps it reflects the increasingly unsettled political situation and his successor's preoccupation in this regard. In A.D. 1737, however, Raṇajit replaced the small bell that his father had offered Taleju with a far larger one of his own.¹⁴⁵ At the same time, he rededicated his grandfather's copper drums, which, together with the bell, were sounded daily in honor of the goddess. Raṇajit's most magnificent offering to Taleju came a few years later, when in A.D. 1753 he consecrated to her the Golden Gate, the monumental brick and gilt portal leading to her temple compound (Plate 33).¹⁴⁶ Gilt, used with spectacular abandon, covers the copper roof, its elaborate ga-

¹⁴¹ N.S. 822 Āśāḍha (B. Paudel 1966b:28).

¹⁴² N.S. 837 Vaiśākha (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inser. 123 [263-264]).

¹⁴³ An in situ *tāmrapatra*.

¹⁴⁴ Lamshal 1966:54; B. Sharma 1968a:7.

¹⁴⁵ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 195.

¹⁴⁶ N.S. 874 Pauṣa (A. Sharma 1954).

jura, the image of the goddess on the lofty *torana* (Plate 524), and all but pours down the jambs and the studded doors swung between them. Artistically largely successful as an ensemble, the portal's chief interest nevertheless lies in other spheres. It is an arresting example of the Malla kings' efforts to please the gods with costly offerings, the lion's share of which they directed to Taleju. But more particularly, the Golden Gate is a symbol of the astounding wealth these minor kings were able to amass in their strategic position athwart the north-south trade route—the wealth that beckoned the covetous hillmen from Gorkha and brought these three artistically splendid courts to their end.

EPILOGUE: SHAH PERIOD MANSIONS

The new kings from the hills did nothing very serious about palace building until the nineteenth century, simply because, as Hamilton observed, "the Parbatiyas do not, like the Newars, delight in towns and villages."¹⁴⁷ By the mid-nineteenth century the Rana prime ministers had learned to share the Newar delight, and busily vied with each other in erecting sumptuous mansions imitative of Buckingham Palace (Plate 81).¹⁴⁸ One of the earliest was Narayan Hiti Darbar, built in A.D. 1847 by Jang Bahadur Rana for his brother Rana Uddip Singh, and destined to become at length the royal palace. Another was Thāpāthali, a rambling mansion near the Bagmati at Kathmandu, apparently erected about the same time by Jang Bahadur for himself (Map 4).¹⁴⁹ Parts of the mansion are still

¹⁴⁷ Hamilton 1971:210.

¹⁴⁸ Illustrations and histories of a number of them will be found in *Kathmandu Valley* 1975:11, 112-125.

¹⁴⁹ While it is often said that Jang Bahadur built Thāpāthali after his return from England, 6 February 1851, it must have been built and occupied at least by the seventeenth of January 1849 when, after a hunting party, "the Minister reached Thapathali" (Pudma Rana 1974: 103). Jang's own diary records that it was to Thāpāthali he returned after his overseas voyage (Pudma Rana 1974: 152), and ten days later, on the sixteenth of February 1851, his brother Bam visited him there (Oldfield 1880:1, 388 and illustration of the mansion on the facing page).

standing, used as a boarding school. Despite the European bric-a-brac it is known to have contained, the mansion also had rooms skillfully decorated with Rājasthāni-style murals of religious themes. A number may be seen even now among the cot beds and desks of the present incumbents (Plate 512).

A later palace, built in A.D. 1901 by Prime Minister Chandra Shumshere Rana, is Singha Darbar. Until almost destroyed by a recent disastrous fire, the building housed in its thousand-odd rooms most of the offices of His Majesty's Government. It was a stately mansion of European style, set amidst a vast park with formal gardens, pavilions, a theater, reflecting pools, and fountains. Its rooms, like those of other Rana mansions, were once filled with a "most curious medley of useful and ornamental articles of English and French furniture. Steel fire-places, with marble mantelpieces; sofas, couches, easy chairs, billiard tables, and four-posted beds; candelabras, pianos, organs, glassware, vases, etc., are crowded together in the most curious confusion"¹⁵⁰ (Plates 78-80). Some of these furnishings may still be seen in halls spared by the fire. Singha Darbar also was once the subject of a long panegyric not unlike that which Siddhinarasimha's court poet had composed long before, respecting Patan and its royal palace.¹⁵¹

Of special note among the latter-day palaces is Kaisher Mahal, once the home of Field Marshal Kaisher Shumshere Rana, which still houses his invaluable collection of books and manuscripts, the well-known Kaisher Library.¹⁵² The Ranas, like so many other Nepali rulers before them, may have struggled remorselessly for temporal power,

In any event, at the time of the Kot massacre, September A.D. 1846, and for some months thereafter, Jang Bahadur resided in Laghan-tol, Kathmandu (Landon 1928:1, 127; Pudma Rana 1974:86).

¹⁵⁰ Oldfield 1880:1, 107. Landon 1928:1, 186, 189 illustrates the façade of Singha Darbar and the interior of the Darbar Hall.

¹⁵¹ N. Pant 1963a:3-12.

¹⁵² The mansion was constructed in A.D. 1895, but later acquired by Chandra Shumshere, who deeded it to his son, Kaisher Shumshere. At his death, and at his wish, his widow gave his library to the nation.

but at the same time they courted the gods, and often had a sincere and lively interest in intellectual and artistic pursuits.¹⁶⁹ With the mansion's opulence, its superb and eclectic library, its stuffed tiger in the foyer, its life-size Rana portraits painted by royal Academicians, its formal gardens, fountains, fluting Pans, and tamed deer grazing the tree-shaded lawns, it would certainly be appropriate to preserve Kaisher Mahal in full. It is the perfect souvenir of a rather bizarre chapter in the history of Nepal Mandala, a chapter not without residual values nor altogether without charm, as Kaisher Mahal attests.

¹⁶⁹ Kaisher Shumshere's sincerity is amply demonstrated by the voluminous, wise, and fascinating personal mar-



With this view of the palaces, palace squares, and some of those who built and occupied them, we may now turn from the affairs of mortals and consider those of the gods. In Nepal Mandala, however, the stories of men are intertwined with the affairs of the gods. Thus, although the following pages belong to Śiva and Viṣṇu, Durgā, Buddha Śākyamuni, and their immortal companions, we shall often hear again of the kings and queens, princes and nobles that we have come to know through the preceding chapters. But they now play only supporting roles. The chief actors are divine.

ginalia one so frequently comes upon in his well-thumbed books.

PART III

**DRAMATIS PERSONAE:
THE IMMORTALS**



CHAPTER 9

THE BRAHMANICAL GODS: SOURCE AND TRANSFORMATION

NEPAL is the only geographic area of the world where Buddhism and Brahmanism (Hinduism)¹ have continuously coexisted into modern times. In India, Buddhism ceased to be a living religion in the twelfth century, and in much of Further India (Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam) it is only Buddhism that has survived; in Ceylon, where both faiths exist, it is difficult to demonstrate an unbroken continuity, and the two faiths are essentially practiced apart. But in Nepal, without interruption, Buddhism and Brahmanism have developed and are practiced side by side. Today, as in the past, Nepali life continues to be dominated by the two systems: Śivaism, which refers to the

¹ Hinduism is not a religion but a complex medley of faiths, with hundreds of sects and sub-sects, together with a body of traditional social observances of "Hindus," the majority of the people of India. With reference to a religion practiced in Nepal, the term "Hinduism" is especially awkward. A better blanket term to cover the orthodox sects such as Śivaism and Viṣṇuism, to which the majority of Nepalese "Hindus" subscribe, is Brahmanism, the doctrine that emerged with the rise of the Brahman priests, which posits an absolute Brahman (Supreme Spirit) and stresses ritualism and caste.

² Fewer than 5 percent would claim to be Muslim, Jain, or of other faiths, and those in the non-Newar sector (Gorkhali) would universally name themselves Śivamārgī.

³ Brahman (Brāhmana) is the name of the highest of the four Hindu castes, of the priests who compose it, and of the one Self-existent impersonal essence (*brahman*)

Brahmanical, or Hindu, faith as a whole; and Buddhism in its Mahāyāna or, more exactly, its Vajrayāna, aspect. To these are joined a third element, the indigenous folk beliefs and practices.

When pressed to identify their faith, the Nepalese claim to be either Buddhamārgī or Śivamārgī, that is, engaged in the way or path of the Buddha or of Śiva.² Such a distinction has little to do with differences in beliefs and practices, or in the divinities they worship. In large measure the response only indicates whether the family priest is a "*bahun*" or a "*guwaju*," that is, a Brahman or a *vajrācārya*, the Buddhist "master of the thunderbolt" or of "absolute power."³ And even so, there is the occa-

from which, according to Hindu belief, all things are created. In contemporary Nepal relatively few Brahmans (or Brahmins) are practicing priests, but depend for their livelihood on the professions and government service, and many are farmers. There are also class gradations within the Brahman caste. Upadhyaya (the higher class) and Joshi (or Jaisi, the lower) are considered "proper Nepali" Brahmans; Kumai (from Kumaon district, India) Brahmans are of high status, but are considered outsiders; Jha Brahmans originated in Mithilā, but are traditionally so closely associated with Newars that they are considered Newar Brahmans. But whatever class, origin, or economic condition, all Brahmans are ritually at the pinnacle of Nepalese society. The term *vajrācārya*, Anglicized to Vajracharya, is a caste and a family name borne by persons who are entitled to perform priestly functions in the Buddhist context, but who more often than not do not do so.

sional family that invites both priests, jointly or separately, to supervise its domestic rites.⁴ Although individuals may have a particular bias as a Śivaite (Hindu) or a Buddhist, in practice the Nepalese are essentially nonsectarian, and all are touched in greater or lesser degree by local religious practices that qualify as neither Buddhist nor Brahmanical.

Particularly as practiced in the Kathmandu Valley, Buddhism and Brahmanism are not two distinct religious systems. Such differences in philosophical premises and doctrines as exist are modified by the faiths' common origin in ancient Indian civilization, by the numerous features they share, and by more than two millennia of close proximity in the small Valley in which they have evolved together. Both Buddhism and Brahmanism, for example, hold that the soul is successively reborn in an earthly form whose condition is determined by one's actions (*karma*) in the previous life. Both seek release from the endless chain of reincarnations in final extinction, called nirvana by one, *mokṣa* by the other. Both believe that there are many paths (*mārgas*) to this salvation, but that the principal one is faith or devotion (*bhakti*). Despite the Buddha's original teachings to the contrary, Nepalese Buddhamārgī are firmly committed to the Brahmanical caste system, a hereditary priesthood, and belief in a Divine Being. Buddhamārgī and Śivamārgī largely share a pantheon whose numerous gods and goddesses have the same conceptual basis, are given forms that are iconographically similar, employ a uniform canon of aesthetics, and are worshiped and invoked in much the same fashion. Both faiths emphasize ritual, and enjoin sacrifice as a feature of private and public worship. Both also are guided by spiritual preceptors (*gurus*) who are often exalted to a semidivine status, and both revere holy men of all kinds (*sadhus*, *yogis*, *mendicants*, *ascetics*). In personal and social practices also, Buddhamārgī and Śivamārgī have similar attitudes. Both are increasingly tolerant toward intercaste unions (while

observing rules respecting ritual pollution and interdining) and toward divorce, separation, and the remarriage of widows. Theoretically, they both abstain from alcohol, from eating beef, and from killing cows, which are revered as sacred. Both also participate in the *śrāddha* ceremonies in honor of the family dead, and both mark the various stages of their life with the observance of a similar set of special sacraments (*samskāras*).

Over the centuries, diverse gods and different—even opposed—aspects of Buddhist and Brahmanical ideologies have been influenced by mystical ideas and ritualistic practices that have come to be known as tantrism.⁵ Unlike Śivaism, Viṣṇuism, or Buddhism, the word tantrism does not designate a particular religious system or sect. It is a Western derivation from "tantra," the name of a vast body of literature, including a mixture of religious speculation, psychic exercises, mysticism, and more; it influences both the Brahmanical and Buddhist systems.⁶

Tantrism introduced no fundamental philosophical principles to Buddhism and Hinduism, but it radically altered the rituals, and offered a shortcut to redemption. Devotional practices ceded to the ritual of *sādhanā*, psychosomatic exertions that, if exactly performed, would force the gods to yield—rather than confer—their attributes to the devotee's welfare, spiritual and mundane. Instruction was imparted orally to the would-be adept by a preceptor skilled in the tantric mode of worship. This featured the use of symbolic gestures (*mudrās*), prescribed yogic postures (*āsanas*), controlled breathing, the repetition of magic formulae (*mantras*), and the use of mystic diagrams (*maṇḍala*, *yantra*). Typical also was the use of "intentional language" (*sandhābhāṣā*), that is, terms with double meanings.⁷ Tantric worship often involved "left-handed" practices (*vāmācāra* tantra) in which aphrodisiacs, real and ascriptive (hemp, meat, fish, parched kidney beans, and wine), and sexual intercourse played an important role. Hemp excluded,

In this text, the term *vajrācārya* is used with reference to priests, the spelling *Vajracharya* with reference to caste and family.

⁴ Rosser 1966:79-80.

⁵ Bharati 1965, a basic text for approaching the com-

plexities of tantrism, proposes the substitute term "psycho-experimental-speculation" (15). See also Rawson 1972:5-10 for a simplified exposition of tantrism.

⁶ Rawson 1972:7.

⁷ Bharati 1965:164-180.

these are the celebrated "five m's" (*pañcamakāra*), so named because in Sanskrit the five aspects begin with the letter *m*.

The various schools of Buddhism that incorporated tantric ideas and practices are known collectively by the term Vajrayāna. The word *vajra* means both "thunderbolt" and "diamond" (and in *sandhābhāṣā* has still other meanings), thus Vajrayāna is known as the Adamantine Way or the Way of the Thunderbolt. As the thunderbolt, the *vajra* symbolizes the flash of intuitive light of perfection (*siddhi*); as a diamond it symbolizes the indestructible quality of the doctrine. The *vajra* is also the most common attribute held in the hands of Vajrayāna deities (Plates 465, 477) and of the Vedic rain god, Indra, from whom it was borrowed. In either case, the *vajra* is often anthropomorphized as Vajrapuruṣa, accompanying the deity or as an independent force (Plates 469, 470). The *vajra* is endlessly painted, engraved, and carved, and is an essential element of Vajrayāna ritual (Plates 155, 161, 169, 179, 223, 224, 493). Tantric Buddhism is also known by other names, such as Sahajayāna, Tantrayāna, and Mantrayāna, terms sometimes used as synonyms, or to imply specific sects that emphasize particular ways of attaining salvation.

Many of the tantric practices and ideas that involved occult, mystical, magic, psychic, and psychedelic practices had, in fact, been known in India for a long time. They began to crystallize into forms that came to be codified and labeled as "tantra" about A.D. 300. But for obvious reasons, the acceptance of tantra by orthodox religious establishments was slow. In popularization a leading role was played by a class of religious teachers known as Mahāsiddhas, Great Perfected Ones, who were instrumental in bringing tantra into the open around the late sixth or early seventh century.

Central to the tantric mode of worship is the emphasis placed upon the supremacy of the female principle. This, in fact, is but a reassertion of much older cults of the Mother Goddess that prevailed all over India, and almost certainly in Nepal, from at least neolithic times. The Hindu tantras declare that this female principle is the manifestation of cosmic energy (*śakti*) that activates all matter. The male is the passive agent who can be ener-

gized only by the female. Śiva without Śakti, claim Hindu tantrists, is a corpse. The Buddhists also believe that the universe is composed of an active and a passive agent, the union of which achieves absolute oneness and quiescence, but they assign the active role to the male symbol, the Means or Method (Upāya), and the passive one, the female symbol, Wisdom (Prajñā). In both systems the metaphysical notion of the merging of the principles as a means of stabilizing the universe is concretized as a divine couple erotically entwined (Plates 477, 478, 512, 564). Such representations are called *guhya*, that is, "secret," and originally were not to be revealed to those who were incapable of understanding the underlying meaning. Today, however, the images are familiar to all, and the differences between Buddhist and Hindu tantric ideas and terminology have become largely obliterated. Thus the devotees and priests of either system indiscriminately apply the term *śakti* to all goddesses, Buddhist and Hindu, and to all the images in which the divinities are shown in sexual union.

Tantric deities of either system have both fierce and pacific manifestations. Characteristically, they are also multiheaded and multilimbed, evidence of their omnipresence and varied functions or attributes. Tantric divinities are also very numerous and are, in effect, anthropomorphic realizations of complex metaphysical ideas.

Nepalese nonsectarianism is clearly registered in the deities worshiped and in the way they are worshiped. For example, all Nepalese worship Śiva Paśupati and his consort Bhagavatī (Durgā), the two paramount gods of Nepal. Similarly, the Buddhist deity Rāto (Red) Matsyendranātha is the Valley's universally adored patron. Everyone solicits the good will of Gaṇeśa, Śiva's elephant-headed son; of Hanūmān, the monkey god and protector; of Indra, the Vedic rain god; and of numerous other divinities, some Buddhist, some Brahmanical, some Vedic, and some folk. Still other deities are the objects of universal worship, even though their worshipers conceive them as different deities. The popular Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa, the "Sleeping Viṣṇu," at Budhanilkantha, for example (Plate 376), is worshiped by Śivamārgis as Viṣṇu but by many Buddhists as a form of Buddha. An eminent tantric goddess who dwells near Paśupati is wor-

shipped by Śaivas as Guhyeśvarī (Guhyakālī), a form of Durgā, while Buddhists believe her to be variously Prajñāpāramitā, Agni-yoginī, or Nairāt-mā. The tantric Buddhist deity Mahākāla is thought by many to be a form of Śiva, and few Nepalis, whatever faith they avow, would pass his chief shrine in Kathmandu without saluting him (Plate 480). Even motorists who ply the adjacent busy road release the wheel long enough to press their hands together in a reverent *namaste*. The images of many other deities are misidentified by their devotees, and are therefore worshiped in various guises. For example, most multiarmed deities, male or female, are trustingly accepted as Bhagavatī because they broadly resemble the popular multiarmed goddess. A superb Kārttikeya enshrined in Hadigaon is a case in point (Plates 418, 419), but there are countless others. Various images, male and female, are worshiped as Śītālā, the dread goddess of smallpox (Plates 382, 528), although the Buddhists may name the same images Hārītī, essentially an equivalent.

The Mother Goddesses (*Mātrkas*) are also objects of universal adoration. Many bear the names of well-known sets of Brahmanical divinities, the Navadurgā (Nine Durgās) and the Aṣṭamātrkas (Eight Mothers); they are at once forms of Durgā and the *śaktis*, energetic emanations, of Brahmanical and Vedic gods such as Śiva, Viṣṇu, Indra, and their companions. Others are Buddhist in origin—Vajrayoginī or Vidyāśvarī, for example—and still others are local divinities, the mothers (*māi*) and grandmothers (*ajimā*), originating in the Newar community. But to all of them the Nepalese genuflect with equal reverence, be it the Brahman civil servant hurrying to Singha Darbar secretariat, or the produce-laden Buddhist Jyapu trotting to the morning bazaar.

All Nepalese also rely in greater or lesser degree on gods and godlings that are neither Buddhist nor Brahmanical, but indigenous folk manifestations. Essentially nature gods, such deities invest trees and stones, birds, serpents, and various animals, mountains and fire, and especially water. Often merged with the more sophisticated cults, the an-

cient and animistic practices continue in the unabashed worship of snakes, frogs, or crows; even the cur dog has his day. Demonolatry is perpetuated in the masked *lakhe* dancers (Plate 587), and through the faithful propitiation of ogres such as Gurumāpā (Plates 585, 586) and Ghaṅṭakārṇa.⁶ Despite TABC inoculations and expanding hospital and clinical services, there is an undiminished traffic to the shrines of the “curing gods” by persons in search of relief from earache, vertigo, paralysis, poxes, or other ills (Plate 553). There are, of course, certain significant differences between animistic practices of Newars and Gorkhalis (who, for example, do not worship frogs but celebrate the crow, snake, and dog), between different economic and social sectors of the society, between rural and urban populations, and between the tradition-oriented aged and the Westernizing young. But with few exceptions, even among the most educated and sophisticated the folk gods have a place. Few are the Nepalis who are not fully aware of, and take pains to circumvent, the malevolent ghosts, goblins, and witches (*bhūtas*, *pretas*, *boḳsis*, *piśācas*) who lurk as an invisible but omnipresent host in the Kathmandu Valley.

Every traditional Nepali house is filled with deities who inhabit the courtyard, doorsills, rafters, beams, and almost every part and object within and without. As may be seen by the deities named in the Buddhist prayers read at the consecration of a house (Appendix V), these include gods and goddesses of every kind, Buddhist, Brahmanical, Vedic, and folk. Each household also has its chapel, the *pūjā koṭha*, *āgama*, or *āgamachem*—a room, some area, or occasionally a full-scale temple (Plate 124)—set aside for the household gods and for the performance of domestic worship. The household gods are worshiped daily, and in traditional homes by the elders in rites beginning long before dawn and lasting hours on end. After the domestic ceremonies are concluded, visits are made to public shrines, first to the neighborhood Gaṇeśa, then to other temples or street-side images and, if one is Buddhamārgī, to one’s *vihāra* (Plates 27, 43, 145, 369, 399). On a less regular basis, visits are made

⁶ The Nepali Ghaṅṭakārṇa (Bell Ears) is a demon who, except in name, seems to have little relationship to the

Śaiva Ghaṅṭakārṇa of the texts (see Chapter 12).

to the national or more distant shrines such as Paśupati, Changu Nārāyaṇa, Dakṣiṇakālī, and similarly important places (Plates 20, 44).

The mode of worship varies with the deity being worshiped. At home, the daily domestic rites are largely in the hands of the elders, but for special occasions the family priest (*purohita*) is called in, either a Brahman or a *vajrācārya*. The relationship of the priest with a particular family (known as his *jājman* [*jājamana*]), is usually of long standing, and often generations of priest and client families are linked in this way. At the temples and shrines worship is normally conducted by a priest, known as *pūjāri*, and less commonly a priestess, although these officiants are frequently absent from the less popular shrines. Depending on the deity, the officiant would typically be a Brahman, a *vajrācārya*, or a *ṣarmācārya*. The latter, also known as *ācājū*, are Newar Hindus usually associated with the worship of tantric divinities. Most temples also have guardian-servants attached to them, frequently low-caste Poḍe or Cyāme. The most common method of worship, private and public, is the *pūjā* (honor, adoration, homage), an ancient mode of Indian worship in which the images of the gods are treated as if they were animate beings (Plates 65, 376, 388, 399). The divine force within them may be invoked with bell and conch, and welcomed; at times the image is undressed, bathed, oiled, dressed, and ornamented; then circumambulated, presented with offerings, supplicated (*prārthanā*), and finally bade farewell or put to bed. Deities in their passive, nonmilitant forms are offered foods (fruits, grains, spices, milk, honey, oil), vermilion powder, betel, flowers, and lighted lamps. But deities in their frightful forms (*ghora*, *bhairava*, *ugra*), prefer blood and alcohol, the *validāna*.⁹ In Newari, the gods who accept this

⁹ In Nepal the term *validāna* (*bali*, *balidan*) usually signifies animal sacrifice; the term *mahāvāli*, great sacrifice, refers to five different types of ritually acceptable animals.

¹⁰ There are a few exceptions in which, for a special reason, usually explained by a legend, the sacrificial animal is presented to the deity alive but actually slaughtered elsewhere. Sacrifices to Sankhu Vajrayoginī, for example, take place in front of Gaṇeśa, halfway down the mountain side, while at the shrine of Pacali Bhairava blood sacrifice is received by a *vetāla*, a goblin-like creature whose

type of sacrifice are classified *hitvādya*. Such sacrifice is very common in Nepal, although in India it has now greatly declined in fashion. Thus, as the terrible Bhairava, Śiva demands blood and alcohol, but shuns such offerings in his passive forms. His consort requires different offerings in accordance with her manifestations as Durgā or as Pārvatī, the one fearful, the other benign. The Buddha and benign Bodhisattvas reject blood and alcohol, but tantric Buddhist deities, such as Heruka or Vajrayoginī, expect it. So also does Gaṇeśa in all his forms. The sacrificial animal may be a ritually selected cock, a goat, on occasion a buffalo, or, as at the annual Dasain festival to Durgā, thousands of various acceptable animals. In most instances, the sacrificial animal is killed before the deity, whose image is sprayed with the warm blood.¹⁰ The flesh can be consumed by the donor if his caste or class does not proscribe the eating of meat or this kind of meat. Human sacrifice, a feature of blood sacrifice up to the very recent past, is almost certainly no longer practiced in Nepal.

Another familiar type of sacrifice is the burnt offering (*yajña*, *homa*), a Vedic legacy. The oblations to be consumed, usually grains, ghee, and yogurt, are placed in a sacrificial ladle and burned over a fire contained in a sanctified space, the *yajña-kuṇḍa* or *yajña-maṇḍala*, previously described (Plates 383, 492, 493). Such a place is conceived as the mouth of Agni, the fire god, who carries the sacrifice heavenward to the designated deities. The *yajña* is in the hands of priests, and is no longer on the grand scale of the past, when the *ṣoṭi-homa*, *ṣoṭyāhuti* (ten million burnt oblations) was a regular practice of nobility. The *tulādāna* sacrifice ("scale gift"), popular even into Malla times, in which the donor offered his own weight in gold and gems to the deity, is no longer performed.¹¹

image is placed just outside the shrine (Plate 369). At other shrines where the deities do not accept direct blood sacrifice, it is offered to *nyaphadyo*, an intermediary usually in the form of a natural boulder.

¹¹ A type of *tulādāna* was practiced even into the nineteenth century, when Jang Bahadur Rana on at least two occasions had himself weighed against grains that were then distributed to the Brahmans and the poor (Pudma Rana 1974:238, 253).

The inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley, whether they are Newar or Gorkhali, Śivamārgī or Buddhamārgī, rural or urban, high or low caste, rich or poor, sophisticated or illiterate, or whatever other way they may differ, find a common meeting ground not only in their gods but in their social behavior, attitudes, and customs. Like the religions to which these aspects are so intimately bound—for none is wholly secular—they are rooted in ancient Indian tradition. (The Newar community, in addition, observes many practices that are apparently indigenous, distinctively theirs, and only a few of which are emulated by the Gorkhali sector.)

One of the attitudes held in common by all Nepalese, for example, is veneration for one's ancestors. No life is complete without issue, preferably including at least one male, who can supervise the disposal of deceased parents and care for their eternal spiritual welfare thereafter. The *śrāddha*, a ceremony performed by all adult males (except ascetic mendicants [*sannyasins*]) in honor of and for the benefit of deceased ancestors, is universally observed, and no Nepali would wittingly break a chain that without beginning or end links each individual to the remote past and the infinite future. By specific funeral practices, by simple daily offerings and more complex annual commemorative ceremonies, the living specifically unite themselves to several sets of forbears.¹² Ancestors are also venerated in the *ḥuladevatā*, a lineage or family (*ḥula*) deity, with which an extensive patrilineal kin group (loosely, "clan") has special ties. Acquired at birth and immutable, the *ḥuladevatā* bears the name of a deity in the Hindu-Buddhist pantheon.¹³ (Both ethnic groups, Newar and Gorkhali, also share the concept of a personal god [*iṣṭadevatā*] with whom the individual maintains intimate personal ties. Unlike the *ḥuladevatā*, the *iṣṭadevatā* is self-chosen and can be rejected or

changed at will.) Nepalese ancestor worship is concretized with no formal name and few art-historical monuments, save those temples and sculptures dedicated in the memory of the deceased that they may reach, not extinction as theory exacts, but heaven.¹⁴ Nonetheless, ancestor worship is a necessary part of Nepalese social and religious life, and a primary, integral institution of Valley-wide culture.

Another universal feature of Valley life is the observance of the *samskāras* (sacraments), the *rites de passage*, or threshold crossings, that mark the stages of the individual's life from conception to death, and hem it with rites and sanctions that are essentially religious, even when sometimes ostensibly secular. In contemporary Nepal, ten principal sacraments are prescribed and although, again, there are differences in interpretation and performance in both ethnic and religious terms, in essence they are similar for all Nepalese. One of the *samskāras*, for example, is rice-feeding, the Nepali *anna-prāsana*, Newari *maca junḥo*, an important family ceremony in which the newborn baby receives its first solid food. Others are ear-piercing, tonsure, rites associated with education, the attainment of puberty, investiture of the sacred thread (limited to Śivamārgī of proper caste), rites concerning betrothal, marriage, and old age, funeral obsequies, and, finally, the *śrāddha* (Plates 23, 412, 487-489, 492).

Although most pervasive among the Newars, the *gūṭhī*, a common interest group with collective responsibilities and privileges, is another universal feature of the Kathmandu Valley. If one marvels at the apparently unbroken continuity of various cults and practices, it can be in part explained by this ancient and characteristic institution that has its roots in the *goṣṭhī* of ancient India and Licchavi Nepal. By means of the *goṣṭhī/gūṭhī*, in conformance with dharma, kings and the affluent have

¹² On the Newar *śrāddha* see Nepali 1965:141-143.

¹³ The Newars worship a kin-group deity known as *degu* (*deguli*, *deghuri*, *digu*, *devāli*). It is a very important god, and there is no religious or social function concerning the family, or its individual members, in which the *degu* would not be propitiated and its benevolence sought. It is not clear whether the Newar *degu* and *ḥuladevatā* are actually synonymous, but with slight differences, they seem to be (Slusser and Vajracharya 1973a).

¹⁴ The only permanent monuments specifically related to ancestor worship are the upright stone slabs scattered in various places, usually in groups, each slab of which is summarily decorated with a *torana* and pierced with a triangular opening. Such slabs symbolize the *ḥuladevatā*, and it is in front of them that the Newars perform their *degupūjā*, an annual event of great importance when all *degus* are worshiped.

donated lands in the name of a particular temple, to a particular deity, or for the perpetuation of a particular type of worship. From the proceeds derived from the produce of the designated lands, it was possible to keep the temples in repair, to restore an icon, or to perform a given ritual. As long as these donations were not revoked by a later hand (as they were occasionally), or the endowment did not fall into disuse for some other reason, the landed income functioned in perpetuity to maintain the continuity of temple, image, and worship.

Although the Newars are far and away the most enthusiastic in celebrating sacred occasions by festive observances, festivals are a prominent aspect of Valley life, in which all the inhabitants share. There are hundreds of such occasions, and it is probable that not a day passes without a public celebration *somewhere* of a sacred event. Many festivals, especially among the farming communities, are concerned with the agricultural calendar—preparing the fields, ensuring their fertility, sowing, and reaping. Other festivals concern the phases of the moon, eclipses, the changing seasons, mythological events; and the births, deeds, and bestowal of honor on the gods, godlings, and holy men. Still others celebrate parents and ancestors, the cow, dog, crow, frog, and snake. The observance of these occasions varies from fasting, penance, and vigils to great joyous fairs (*mela*) crowded with merrymakers. Festivals may be accompanied by sacrifices to the gods and offerings to the needy, the lighting of lamps, reading and listening to sacred texts, the taking of vows (*vrata*), ritual bathing, the erection of symbolic poles (*dhvaja*) and swings, chariot processions, the wearing of costumes, masked dance performances, gambling, and the public display of special images and sacred objects.

Nepalese catholicity of worship and tolerance for diverse faiths, practices, and deities is founded on antecedents that, respecting royalty, at least, may be traced to the beginning of written history in the Kathmandu Valley. Specific declaration of sect af-

filiation was apparently no concern of any king before Aṃśuvarman (seventh century A.D.). Mānadeva I (ca. A.D. 464-505) claimed no specific cult, but was perhaps Vaiṣṇava or perhaps, as his grandfather Vṛsadeva is known to have been, a Buddhist. He selected the Buddhist Guṃ-vihāra as a fitting site for penance, and made numerous important Buddhist donations. Yet he saw no conflict in consecrating images of Viṣṇu or in raising a victory pillar to him (Plates 47, 395). Similarly, his daughter Vijayavatī found it fitting to erect a Śivaliṅga in the memory of her father (Plate 332). Even Aṃśuvarman, although avowing his primary devotion to Śiva, extended his patronage to Viṣṇu, other Brahmanical and Vedic divinities, and to the Buddhist deities and *vihāras*, one of which he founded. Similarly, Jayadeva II (ca. A.D. 713-733), in offering a silver lotus to Paśupati, at the same time found it proper to salute the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara. It is probable, because of the tenaciousness of what must be in part indigenous folk beliefs, that the Licchavi kings also embraced local cults with the same expansive catholicism they evinced toward the formal Indian systems.

Without distinction, as the documents again and again attest, Nepalese rulers in all times have offered their patronage in equal measure to all the gods.¹⁵ For example, in the fifteenth century Jyotirmalla, one of Yakṣa's sons, saw fit to proclaim at Paśupatinātha his restoration of Svayambhūnātha; and later, at Svayambhū, the Śaiva kings Raṇajit of Bhaktapur and Prithvi Narayan of Gorkha jointly offered repairs. Worthy seventeenth-century kings such as Siddhinarasiṃha or Pratāpamalla not only ardently courted Taleju and Paśupati, but, without discrimination, built Brahmanical shrines and Buddhist *vihāras*, consecrated images for both, extended a matching bounty of gifts and endowments, and with equal devotion assisted at the rites and celebrations of all the gods, formal and folk. Even the representatives of Christ received hospitable welcome in the Valley, although their brief stay, cut short by Prithvi Narayan's distrust of foreigners—not their faith—pre-

¹⁵ The Rana prime ministers were an exception in that they actively opposed, and at times persecuted, Buddhists, at least the casteless Tibetan ones who posed a threat to the imposition on Nepalese society of the Ranas' extreme

notions respecting caste. See Rosser 1966:80-81, and especially the account of a Buddhist monk who was subject to this persecution (Dharmaloka 1950).

cluded the possibility of His absorption into the all-embracing pantheon.

This is not to say that the Kathmandu Valley has never been scarred with religious discord. Buddhist theologians have often registered their scorn for Brahmanical gods by having them depicted in sculptures and paintings trampled underfoot by the gods of their own choice. And there is the well-known example of the Hadigaon pillar inscription from the sixth century A.D. in which the Vaiṣṇava Anuparama expresses unbridled scorn for the Buddhists. Legend and the later chronicles also echo sectarian dissension when they speak of the Buddhist tribulations purportedly engendered by Śaṅkarācārya, the zealous ninth-century Indian Śaiva reformer, and of the Buddhāmārgī's merciless revenge.¹⁶ This state of affairs, for example, is commemorated by the Char Dhunge site at a crossroads in Naksal, Kathmandu (Map 4:15). A rectangular pit bounded by four stones (the *cāra dhunge*) is claimed to have been filled to overflowing with the Brahmanical *janais* (*yajñopavita*, sacred thread) torn by the Buddhists from the bodies of the offending Śivāmārgīs. Other accounts attest the rivalry between the *vajrācārya* and Brahman *ācārya* for supremacy in magic power; the one, for example, immobilizing Śaṅkarācārya from mounting the steps of Vajrayoginī's shrine at Sankhu, the other overturning a large stupa still seen in this undignified position at the top of the stairs.

But all this seems to have been largely confined to the realm of the theologians, who registered it in the chronicles and local Puranas, Buddhist or Brahmanical. It must have little affected the everyday behavior of the people (or even the priests themselves) upon whom today, certainly, these theological distinctions simply do not register. When, for example, almost any multiarmed deity, male or female, is worshiped by both Buddhāmārgī and Śivāmārgī, priests and people, as the adored Bhagavatī, how much more sophistication is demanded to differentiate between such sectarian images as Hari-

Hari-Harivāhanodbhava-Lokeśvara and Garuḍāsana Viṣṇu, the one a Buddhist icon in which Lokeśvara triumphantly rides Viṣṇu, the other Vaiṣṇava, in which Viṣṇu rides his mount Garuda? In the Kathmandu Valley, even gods whom the texts would have as antagonists stand harmoniously together receiving the same due in the same shrine. Over and over it is the same theme, the *linga* beside the stupa, Śambhu (Śiva) in harmony with Svayambhū (Plates 331, 354, 506). To the Nepali it is quite in order that a Buddhist monastery should be called Paśupati-vihāra, that a *linga* should be worshiped in a *vihāra* courtyard or placed within a Buddhist shrine, and that even Lord Paśupati should annually wear a Buddhist crown and be worshiped as a Buddhist divinity. In the Valley, Buddha is at once Viṣṇu and Śiva, and with perfect logic Viṣṇu in the form of Buddha can establish in Nepal (as he is said to have done at Pārvatī's command) a Śivaliṅga by name Karuṅikeśvara, a term half-Buddhist, half-Śaiva.¹⁷

As a specific, but purely random, example of contemporary Nepali nonsectarianism one may regard the hilltop shrine of Mhaipi-ajimā, an important goddess of Greater Kathmandu (Map 4:2). Mhaipi-ajimā is worshiped by Buddhists as Jnānaḍakinī, by Hindus as Maheśvarī, or by either simply as Ajimā, a forbidding divinity much favored by *boksis* (witches) who, it is said, often foregather there. This goddess shares her shrine proper with "Singhini" and "Baghini," ubiquitous guardian figures of Buddhist derivation, with the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, with Śiva, with Durgā as Umā (and in a number of separate manifestations, as the Navadurgā), with Agni, Gaṇeśa, a serpent king, and one or two "curing gods" and local godlings. Nearby in the courtyard are subsidiary shrines and images that include Kṛṣṇa, Nārāyaṇa, Gaṇeśa, again, the Five Tathāgatas, and the shrine of a Jyapu family's *kuḷadevatā*.

The catholicity of Nepali worship is equally well-illustrated by a painting of the game of chance known to Nepalis as *nāgapāsa* ("snake-dice") and

¹⁶ Wright 1966:79-81, 107-108; Hasrat 1970:38-40, 47-48. It is not wholly impossible that the renovation of the Licchavi *caityas*, in which the finials were removed and perhaps images also (as discussed in Chapter 7), is a visible sign of, and the only witness to, some sectarian dis-

sension about which we otherwise have no information. This aspect is discussed by Wiesner 1980.

¹⁷ *Nepāla-mahātmya*, chap. 1, vv. 57-66; chap. 12, vv. 1-5.

often elsewhere as “snakes and ladders” (Plate 331). By means of dice, players move through the squares from the bottom to the top. There are seventy-two squares, each occupied by one or more deities, or an anthropomorphized philosophical concept or aspect of human behavior (*māyā*, illusion, and *lobha*, greed, for example). As determined by one’s throw, the inauspicious black snakes lead from evil behavior to fierce gods; the auspicious red snakes, and one polycephalous white one, from good behavior to benign gods. The object of the game is to arrive in Śiva-, Viṣṇu-, and Brahmāloka, the heaven of the chief Brahmanical triad; the three are represented in the top center squares numbered 67-69, and repeated in larger format at the top. Though the triad proclaims the Śivamārgī bias of this particular painting, it by no means prevents the inclusion of deities from other sources. There are several Buddhist divinities, for example at squares 10, 32, and 50; others are purely folk—for example, the Nāga at number 14, and Apāna at 53—while many others cannot easily be categorized and may be local manifestations.¹⁸

Despite the tolerance the Nepalese show for each others’ gods, it has long been fashionable and politic to profess Śivamārga, the premier religion of what is now hailed as the “only Hindu kingdom in the world.” The popularity of Buddhism began to decline in the twelfth century, and the decline was accelerated with the advent of Sthitimalla, and again with the Gorkhali conquest. Even among the Newars, traditionally Buddhist adherents, Śivaism is emerging triumphant. By Oldfield’s estimate, as recently as 1880 two-thirds of the Newars were Buddhists,¹⁹ but at the 1971 census only 7.5 percent

¹⁸ As generously verified by Mahesh Raj Pant, reading left to right and right to left from bottom to top, the deities and concepts are identified by number and name as follows: 1 Utpatti, 2 Māyā, 3 Krodha, 4 Lobha, 5 Bhavaloka, 6 Moha, 7 Mada, 8 Āścarya, 9 Kāma, 10 Tapa, 11 Gandharva, 12 Asardhā, 13 Ādideva(?), 14 Candra, Sūrya, 15 Nāga, 16 Doṣa, 17 Dayā, 18 Harṣa, 19 Karma, 20 Dāna, 21 Dharma, 22 Mamatā, 23 Indraloka, 24 Susaṅga, 25 Kusāṅga, 26 Śoka, 27 Prathama, 28 Sudharma, 29 Adharma, 30 Uttama, 31 Sparśa, 32 Mahāloka, 33 Gandha, 34 Rasa, 35 Nṛpa, 36 Saḍa, 37 Jñānam, 38 Prāna, 39 Samāna, 40 Dhyāna, 41 Janaloka, 42 Antara, 43 Siddhi, 44 Kuvidyā, 45 Suvidyā, 46 Viveka, 47 Sarasvatī, 48 Yamunā, 49 Gaṇ-

of all Nepali respondents claimed to be Buddhist, compared to 89.4 percent Hindu.²⁰ But these statistics reflect, more than the attrition of Buddhist doctrine, the social milieu and the need to “pass” into Śivamārga if one is to get ahead in a Hindu kingdom. It corresponds to “climbing the ladder” (*siri carnu*) by means of intercaste marriage. Moreover, the statistics tell nothing about the Buddhist deities, who for the most part continue to receive their immemorial due, even if some of their devotees wish to call themselves Śivamārgī. All Nepalese may adore Śiva Paśupati, but so also do they Matsyendranātha.

It is obvious that in the Kathmandu Valley, religion is not a compartment to be entered once a week or in times of stress, but an all-pervasive force that continuously affects almost every action in each person’s life, even those actions that are ostensibly secular and social. It is religion, also, that has endowed the Valley with untold numbers of shrines and temples,²¹ sculptures and paintings. And it is essentially religion that has inspired an immense body of legend and folklore, which in its way also has created “monuments” of the Kathmandu Valley.

As a fundamental part of the culture, therefore, religion in the Kathmandu Valley cannot be studied in isolation, or by means of one or two disciplines. For example, one cannot understand Nepalese Buddhism through recourse to general texts on Buddhist philosophy. Nor can Nepalese Buddhism be grasped by studying only its sculptures and shrines as art-historical monuments, or the behavior of Nepalese Buddhists as anthropological subjects. Nor can the status of Nepalese Buddhism today be understood without reference to its past.

gā, 50 Tapaloka, 51 Prthvī, 52 Teja, 53 Apāna, 54 Bhakti, 55 Ahaṁkāra, 56 Ākāśa, 57 Vāyu, 58 Agni, 59 Matyaloka, 60 Subuddhi, 61 Durbuddhi, 62 Suruci, 63 Tāmasa, 64 Prakṛti, 65 Vaivasvaka, 66 Ānandaloka, 67 Śivaloka, 68 Viṣṇuloka, 69 Brahmāloka, 70 Satvoguna, 71 Rajoguna, 72 Tamoguna.

¹⁹ Oldfield 1880:11, 132.

²⁰ The remainder are Muslim and of other faiths, including slightly more than a hundred Jains.

²¹ The only intensive survey yet conducted of the monuments of the Kathmandu Valley estimates that there are close to 10,000 sacred shrines (*Kathmandu Valley* 1975: 1, 33), a gross underestimate, in my opinion.

To a certain extent, the understanding of Nepalese religion depends on a multiplicity of approaches and methods, flexible and varied to suit the material. Except in special instances, Brahmanism in the Kathmandu Valley—its doctrines, practices, and continued untroubled success—does not seem to be sufficiently different from that of India to merit particular attention. But the local aspects of Nepalese Buddhism, together with its evolution and dissolution through the years, demand just that. In the instance of indigenous cults, such as that of the all-important Red Matsyendranātha, still another approach is required. For here the genesis, history, and the contemporary manifestations of his cult are aspects of primary concern. Or again, while Viṣṇu's role in contemporary culture is less pervasive than that of Śiva/Bhairava or the Mother Goddesses, in contrast to them his icons are manifold. Diverse, and including the most monumental and magnificent, Viṣṇu icons permit an unparalleled documentation of the underlying philosophy of one of the most interesting deities in the Kathmandu Valley. Or, to take another example: the goddesses in their beneficent forms are merely beautiful creatures, to be admired but not feared and, frankly, they are not very interesting. They provide beautiful sculptures but legends of limited appeal, and with the exception of Lakṣmī, they take a back seat in Nepalese culture. These same goddesses in their maleficent forms provide compelling legends, if few noteworthy sculptures, and their worship is all-embracing and all-pervasive. But in all instances, precisely because so little factual material has been gathered about the temples, *vihāras*, stupas, and in situ sculptures, my primary aim in this section is to focus on the monuments. In so doing, my purpose is to provide a more solid historical foundation upon which the physical remains may be viewed, to show how they shed light on the Valley's past, and what they signify in contemporary Nepalese society.

While it is Buddhism and Brahmanism that have spawned most of the monuments that crowd the Valley, indigenous and folk religions also have their monuments. These are the web of legend and

what, for lack of a better term, may be labeled "curiosities." The Fish of Asan-tol, the head of Bheḍa-singa, or the Twelve-year Well²² are scarcely objects of aesthetic appreciation, but no less than the art monuments they eloquently reveal the domain of the gods, which in the Kathmandu Valley is never very distant from that of the mortals. The rich legends and folk tales merge the history of earthly beings and that of the gods, and often propose to explain (and sometimes do) the divine manifestations in stone, wood, paint, and bronze. Studded with the names of prestigious kings and priests, gods and demigods who have trod the sacred Valley, the web of legend unites, and indeed confounds, the past and present and links the sacred sites one to another. The legends add an important dimension to in situ monuments, and often assist in unraveling their mysteries. For example, without recourse to folklore and anthropology, the nature of the "Jalaśayana Viṣṇu" of Balaju, a seventh-century image long believed a seventeenth-century work, could never have been revealed a millennium after its installation.²³

The headings of this section devoted to the sacred monuments and the gods are misleading, for they belie the fundamental aspect of Nepalese culture that I have just described, in which doctrines and practices are largely syncretic, and the deities comprise a single pantheon worshiped by all. But in this context some division is required to unravel the complex nature of Nepalese religion in its historical, anthropological, and artistic ramifications. Thus, the section is somewhat arbitrarily divided into four chapters: the Brahmanical and Vedic gods, Buddhism, the female divinities, and folk and indigenous cults. I have brought all the goddesses together for several reasons. One is an attempt to simplify the chapters devoted to the gods; and another is the difficulty, both iconographic and philosophical, in categorizing the goddesses by cult. For example, often only the context allows us to identify with certainty such major goddesses of the two pantheons as the Brahmanical Pārvatī and Lakṣmī and the Buddhist Tārā. Further, in their ferocious forms the goddesses are made one in

ing history remains to be told; on the Twelve-year Well, see Chapter 12.

²³Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:89-125.

²²For the Fish of Asan-tol see Slusser 1972a:9-12; Bheḍa-singa, worshiped as Bhairava, is a stone ram's head buried in a Kathmandu crossroads, a "curiosity" whose interest-

their common bond of tantrism and folk practice. The final chapter treats of a particular group of gods and demigods, voluptuous dryads and austere saints, emaciated sages and yogis, and the mystery of water and the serpents who dwell within. These represent a fabulous potpourri of local and foreign personalities who, in sum, convey much of the unique flavor of the Kathmandu Valley.

THE BRAHMANICAL GODS

The Cult of Śiva

Śiva, one of the triad at the summit of the Brahmanical pantheon (with Brahmā and Viṣṇu), is the paramount god of Nepal (Plates 332-369). His origins are obscure, but he corresponds to the Vedic Rudra, metamorphosed over the years by the accretion of innumerable, and often seemingly conflicting, concepts.²⁴ But by at least two centuries before the birth of Christ, the syncretic deity existed under the name Śiva, Auspicious.

Of diverse nature, Śiva is at once pacific (*saumya, śānta*) and fierce (*ghora, ugra, bhairava*). He personifies the disintegrative forces of the cosmos, death and destruction, and the malignant forces of nature. He is also associated with creation and preservation, respectively the primary functions of Brahmā and Viṣṇu. Not only is Śiva auspicious, he is the Great Lord (Maheśvara), the Great God (Mahādeva), Lord of the Universe (Jageśvara), Lord of Animals (Paśupati) and, indeed, he has more than a thousand names that define his multiple aspects. At times he is a benign god who plays an ordinary role of loving husband and doting father intent on the pleasures of family life (Plates 349-355). Yet he is at once Naṭarāja, the cosmic dancer, to whose thunderous rhythms the worlds tremble (Plates 196, 356, 357). He is also Yogeśvara, the arch yogi, ash-smearing and with matted locks. And, again, he is Demon Lord (Bhūteśvara) or the Terrible One (Bhairava), gruesome and fearful to behold, a god to be placated with blood

²⁴ The evidence is inconclusive respecting Śiva's history. The much-discussed Mohenjo-daro seal, often supposed to represent a prototype of Śiva Paśupati, has recently been shown to have nothing to do with the deity, and most probably to represent a divine bull-man (Srinivasan

and alcohol rather than adored with flowers and vermilion (Plates 361-369).

Śiva's cognizances (weapons, dress, ornaments, signs, and gestures) are many. Chief among them are his vertically positioned third eye and an erect penis (*ūrdhvaliṅga*). The former is the organ of destruction from which his terrible wrath blazes forth; the latter, a symbol of yogic self-control in which psycho-sexual energy is converted to spiritual benefit. Other important symbols of Śiva are the trident (*triśūla*), the double-headed drum (*damaru*), the ascetic's rosary (*rudrakṣa mālā*) and water pot (*kaṃaṇḍalu, tumbi*), and tiger-skin loin cloth and serpent ornaments, a complement that varies in accordance with a given manifestation. Śiva's vehicle and omnipresent companion is Nandi, the placid bull; his consort is Pārvatī (and her innumerable aspects and names as Śiva's *śakti*); and his children are Kārttikeya, the warrior god, and Gaṇeśa, the elephant-headed maker and remover of trouble. Śiva's principal abode is Mt. Kailāsa in the Himalaya (Map 1).

The Abstract Śiva: Śivaliṅgas

Śiva's generative role is testified by many of his names, such as Hiranya-retas (Having Golden Semen) or Ghṛiṣheśvara ("rubbing lord," Lord of Coition), and in some measure by the *liṅga* (phallus). But whatever the *liṅga*, or Śivaliṅga, may have once signified—and does still in Nepali folk practice—in developed Śivaism it is of limited significance as a symbol of procreation. In either case, symbol of yogic control or procreation, the *liṅga* is the deity's abstract (*niṣkāla*) form, his primary manifestation, and takes many shapes. The naturalistic forms favored in pre-Gupta India²⁵ are not familiar in Nepal, however, where for the most part *liṅgas* tend to be abstractions only vaguely reminiscent of an erect penis. An evocative boulder or other object (Plate 334) is also frequently worshiped as Śiva's emblem, as is occasionally even a worn Licchavi *caitya* whose Buddhist origin has been forgotten.

1976). Nonetheless, such a bull-man may have become one of the important strands of Śiva's complex nature.

²⁵ The Gudimallam *liṅga*, for example (Banerjea 1956: pl. xxxi, 3).

Typically, the Nepali linga is a shaft of carved stone, round in cross-section or in segments of different shapes (Plates 49, 332-334). These are square, octagonal, and round, three parts that symbolize among other things the Brahmanical triad. Sometimes the shaft is elaborated with an engraved line (*brahmāsūtra*) that demarcates the glans and then vividly recalls the symbol's origin as the male organ of copulation (Plate 333). Less common are "face lingas" (*mukhalinga*) which combine phallic and anthropomorphic components. This juxtaposition alludes to the concept of raising transubstantiated semen to the highest psychic center, the head. Some *mukhalingas* bear the deity's face carved in high relief on one side of the shaft only, known then as a one-face linga (*ekamukhalinga*) (Plates 334-336), others bear four equidistant faces, and are called *caturmukhalingas* (Plates 337-342). Each of the four is different, and they are generally held to characterize the basic aspects of Śiva, pacific and terrific. But the four faces (together with an imagined fifth) are regarded otherwise by the Pāśupatas, the Śaiva sect most intimately associated with Nepal. They interpret the faces as the five elements, which signify Śiva as the personification of the universe.

In Nepal some of the linga faces, pacific and terrific, are coiffed with tight curls such as are usually associated with Buddha images (Plates 337, 338). In most instances such lingas probably originated specifically as Pāśupata cult objects, and the curly-headed aspect represents Lakuliśa, the revered systematizer of the Pāśupata sect.²⁶ In the Indian tradition, Lakuliśa often appropriates iconographic features of the Buddha, such as his short curls and his *dharmacakra mudrā*, Turning the Wheel of the Law. But a four-faced linga in Mrigasthali, unique to my knowledge, has two such heads carved on opposite sides of the linga (Plate 337). They are both

²⁶ This probably took place about the second century A.D., and since that time Lakuliśa has been intimately associated with the development of the cult.

²⁷ Pal 1974:fig. 123. See also fig. 124 for a different view of the Mrigasthali linga.

²⁸ It may be seen in Pal 1974:fig. 124, who also concluded that the Mrigasthali image bears the head of the Buddha (84-85).

²⁹ Local persons claim that the image was so named for

of pacific mien, therefore excluding Aghora, the euphemistically named fierce aspect of Śiva commonly represented on *caturmukhalingas*, who is sometimes depicted with short curls.²⁷ Given the syncretic religious climate of Nepal, where a linga such as Karuṇikeśvara bears a name half-Buddhist, half-Śaiva, it is likely that one of the Mrigasthali linga faces does, in fact, represent the Buddha. One of the two even has the *uṣṇīṣa*, typically a *lakṣaṇa* of the Buddha.²⁸ This particular linga also bears one Ardhanārīśvara face—that is, one side male, the other female—a conjoint representation of Śiva and his consort Umā, often declared as residing in or near the linga. Such faces are fairly common on Nepalese *caturmukhalingas*, as may be observed on the linga known as Tāmreśvara (Copper Lord), in Deopatan (Plate 340).²⁹ On the right, Umā's side of the Tāmreśvara face, the hair is brushed into elegant ringlets which, cascading coquettishly over her brow, are restrained by a crested tiara. The tiara is more elaborate on Umā's side; in the helix of her ear she wears a jeweled half-moon stud, and in the lobe, a large disc. Śiva's coiffure is altogether different; part of it is pulled up into his characteristic *jaṭā* in which the symbolic half moon is stuck, the remainder flows behind his ear. He wears a serpent earring. A peculiarity of the androgynous Tāmreśvara (together with others occurring on Nepali *caturmukhalingas*) is that Umā is placed on the right side. This is contrary to expectations; in theory female divinities belong on the left side of their consorts (Plates 349-355, 389, 390, 397). This is Pārvatī's place in ordinary Ardhanārīśvara syncretisms, Lakṣmī's place when joined to Viṣṇu (Plate 409),³⁰ and even Viṣṇu's place when joined with Śiva (Plates 358, 359). Viṣṇu's position in the traditional female place is determined by his role in the Churning of the Ocean legend. He took the form of the bewitching

a copper sheath (*kośa*, *kaṇaca*) that once embellished it, but which some impious person appropriated. One wonders rather whether the name may, in fact, derive from Tāmrakuṭṭaśāla, a reference point Jayadeva II mentions in this general vicinity (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 149 [563-572]).

³⁰ Except when Viṣṇu is flanked by both of his chief companions, Lakṣmī and Garuḍa, when Lakṣmī occupies the place of honor on the right (Plate 383).

Mohinī in order to cheat the *āsuras* of their share of the immortalizing *amṛta*. The convention of placing the female on the right in the *mukhalinga* syncretisms seems to be without precedent, and can apparently only be explained as another example of the Nepali penchant for innovation. This may also explain a peculiar linga-like sculpture in Bankali, Paśupatinātha; rather than bearing a face on one side, the linga itself terminates in a complete head, bearded and with an elaborate coiffure.³¹ Of indeterminate date, the personage's hairstyle is reminiscent of some of the earliest known Nepali sculptures, such as the Makhantol Garuḍa, Kathmandu, and others that are more difficult to place in time (Plate 591).³² The bust may represent a yogi, and could even mark the gravesite of a *sannyāsīn*, a class of persons who are interred rather than cremated. There are many such tombs in the Bankali-Mrigasthali area. The bust may also represent Lord Śiva himself.

Beneath the faces sculptured on Nepalese *mukhalingas* there is usually a pair of relief hands that display the water vessel and seed rosary (*ḥamanḍalu* or *tumbī*, and *rudraḥṣa mālā*), two characteristic yogic emblems common to Śiva's iconography. These, in effect, make of the "faces" a bust. The linga normally stands upright in a *jalahārī*, a rectangular or round base, grooved and spouted to drain the oblations. Although popularly believed to represent the female sex organ (*yoni*), the *jalahārī* came to be interpreted in this way only as a comparatively late tradition, especially under the influence of *vāmācārī* (left-hand) tantra.

In the Kathmandu Valley, lingas may bear specific names, usually compounds of the donor's or some other distinctive name, and *Īśvara* (Lord, that is, Śiva)—thus Ratneśvara (from the name Ratnasaṅgha), Nepāleśvara, Kirāteśvara (Plate 336), or Kumbheśvara (literally, Lord Water Vessel) (Plates 341, 342).³³ A linga may be installed as the principal cult object of a temple (as is Paśupatinātha or Kumbheśvara), be placed in a simple shrine, or be set up as an unnamed emblem open

to the skies. Lingas frequently commemorate the dead, and are sometimes established as part of the *śrāddha* ceremonies. Others honor the living. One such, for example, provides the second dated monument in Nepal, Saṃvat 388 Jyestha (A.D. 466).³⁴ Although a linga may be established at any auspicious place—and thousands are scattered throughout the Valley—a favored location is beside a river, particularly at its confluence (*veṇī*, *dobhāna*). An even more favored place is in the environs of a prestigious Śaiva *tīrtha* (holy place, place of pilgrimage), foremost of which is Paśupatinātha.

In his yogic and creative aspect symbolized by the linga, Śiva accepts only the offerings proper to pacific deities.³⁵ Chief among these is sanctified water (*jala*) with which the shaft is bathed and which, in shrines, often drips continuously from a vessel suspended overhead. Water may be supplemented by other acceptable foods—milk, honey, sugar, ghee, and yogurt (curd)—the "five ambrosias" (*pañcāmṛta*)—that drain via the *jalahārī*, often to waiting devotees who collect them as a sovereign sanctified gift from the god (*prasāda*).

The individual popularity of the lingas, which from at least A.D. 466 have been accumulating in the Kathmandu Valley, is variable. Some, like Paśupati (Plate 339), have enjoyed uninterrupted worship into modern times as the center of a nation-wide cult; others have been destroyed or abandoned and their shrines allowed to decay, while still others are only worshiped sporadically, or by a few nearby persons. The Māneśvara linga is of the latter sort. A large, superbly cut, polished shaft that seems once to have adorned Mānagrha palace in Hadigaon, Māneśvara is now only worshiped locally as a subsidiary attraction to the Mother Goddess Māneśvarī, with whom he shares a temple. An even more impressive Licchavi Period linga, now tilting crazily on the Rājarājeśvarī-ghat at Paśupati, is ignored (Plate 333). It may perhaps be identified as the once famous linga Anahavrāteśvara that King Śaṅkaradeva (ca. A.D. 425) is said to have established here; it was to mitigate the

³¹ Discussed and illustrated by Pal 1974:51-52, figs. 72, 73.

³² The Makhantol Garuḍa may be seen in Pal 1974: figs. 99, 100.

³³ On this important linga see Chapter 12.

³⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 3 (31-33). Both linga and shrine have disappeared, leaving only the inscribed *jalahārī*.

³⁵ Except the "hidden Śiva," Luku-Mahādeva, discussed below.

distressing effects of a nearby well that too faithfully mirrored the future of those who gazed within.³⁶ Elsewhere, the Licchavi Anantalingeśvara, not far from Patan, is still important in the contemporary milieu while, conversely, what must have been a Śivaliṅga of great renown at Lembaṭidraṅga (now Lele village) is lost and forgotten. The only reminder of it is a temple ruin surrounded by a vine-entangled cluster of lingas—some in Licchavi *āvaraṅas*—that once shared the sacred aura of the prestigious linga within (Plates 245, 338). The history of Bṛṅgāreśvara is different still. It may be one of the most venerable lingas in the Valley, inasmuch as the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, perhaps in deference to tradition, sees fit to introduce it as the primordial Nepalese deity, even before Paśupati. Established at Bṛṅgāregrāma (now Sunaguthi village), the linga seems to have been in continuous worship although, unexplainably, its identity was lost for awhile. But in the time of the *mahāpātra* Viṣṇuśiṃha of Patan (ca. A.D. 1536-1556), its name was reestablished when, during the cleaning of a nearby well, copper votive vessels were recovered engraved with the name of Bṛṅgāreśvara.³⁷



Of the many lingas in Nepal, none has played a more influential role than that which embodies Paśupatinātha, Lord of Animals (Plate 339). One of the innumerable manifestations of Śiva, Paśupati is the supreme god of the Pāśupatas, a sect of the *ghora* type, whose existence in India can be traced to the second century B.C.³⁸ The Pāśupatas

either introduced their deity into Nepal at such an early date that even in India he often came to be thought of as a Nepali god, or the Nepali Paśupati in fact represents a local syncretism of Śiva with an indigenous pastoral god, protector of animals.³⁹ This is suggested by the nature of his legends, which concern a gazelle and a marvelous cow, and by an allusion in the *Mahābhārata*, in which Śiva assumed the guise of a Kirāta, an indigene of the Himalaya, to give Arjuna a weapon named Pāśupata.

To the Nepalese, at least, there is no question respecting Paśupati's origin in the Valley and his long association with it. For, as the chroniclers aver, "first of all there was nothing in Nepal except Paśupatināth, whose beginning and end none can know or tell."⁴⁰ His origin legend, as told in the *Nepāla-mahātmya*, also names the Kathmandu Valley as the locale of Śiva's manifestation as Paśupati. Śiva, tiring of the ceaseless adulation of the gods at Benares, thought to masquerade as a gazelle in the Slesmāntaka wood of the Nepal Valley.⁴¹ The gods traced him thither, and after entreating him to no avail, at length forcibly seized their Lord by the horns, which promptly shattered. Bounding to the right bank of the Bagmati, his present temple site (Map 6:22; Plates 343, 344), Śiva declared, "since I have dwelt in the Slesmāntaka wood in the form of a beast (*paśu*), therefore throughout the universe my name shall be Paśupati." Viṣṇu then erected a fragment of the broken horn as a linga, and all the gods, including Buddha, hastened to offer obeisance. In time, the god's temple crumbled, as temples are wont, and buried the di-

able importance in Nepal (see Chapter 12; cf. Banerjee 1956:450-452; Lorenzen 1972; S. Dasgupta 1962).

³⁹ Lévi 1905:1, 365-366 conjectured that the Pāśupatas were responsible for substituting Paśupati for an indigenous god.

⁴⁰ Hasrat 1970:23.

⁴¹ Chap. I, vv. 9-32 and in partial versions in the chronicles (*Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 17a, b; Wright 1966: 53-54; Hasrat 1970:33; N. Paudel 1963:2-3). The *Nepāla-mahātmya* (Nepal the Noble, or Eminent) is a local Purana that was incorporated into the well-known *Śkandapurāna* at an unknown date, but most likely around the fifteenth century. It is described by Lévi 1905:1, 200-205. The version I have consulted, Muktinath Khanal 1971, gives the Sanskrit verses followed by a Nepali translation.

³⁶ Hasrat 1970:40 spells the name Anahavrāteśvara. Wright 1966:82 gives an implausible spelling of Apansajati-smaranabirateswara. The name may be Anantavrāteśvara, Lord of the Serpent Vow (*ananta vrata*), a Vaiṣṇava rite, to be sure, but in Nepal no less applicable as a linga name than is Karuṅikeśvara (Lord Buddha).

³⁷ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 9-11.

³⁸ The name "Pāśupata" has an esoteric meaning. *Pāśu*, or *paśu*, means "beast" and "soul," *pāśa*, "fetters" (which bind the soul to mundane existence and, presumably, to bestiality). *Patī* means "lord," and in the name "Paśupatinātha," is doubled by the addition of the suffix *nātha*, which also means "lord." A number of sects developed from the Pāśupatas, such as the Kāpālikas; like the mother sect, they practice asocial behavior and achieved consider-

vine linga. But at length, a sagacious cow, remembered by many names, sprinkled her milk over the spot, leading a curious herdsman to reveal anew the wondrous linga, Paśupati-nātha.

Venerable as the deity on the Bagmati is considered in legend, and as he in fact appears to be, the first firm date at the site of his temple is A.D. 477 (Samvat 399 Āṣāḍha), inscribed on a linga named Ratneśvara.⁴² We must wait until a half-century later, A.D. 533 (Samvat 455 Caitra), for our first reference to the deity himself, engraved on Bhasmeśvara, a linga established in "Lord Paśupati's realm (*ḷsetra*)" (Plate 49).⁴³ The chronicles, however, credit the building, or sometimes rebuilding, of Paśupati's "beautiful temple" to Supuṣpa, alternately known as Paśuprekha (he who has seen Paśupati).⁴⁴ He was a Licchavi king who, according to the genealogy of Jayadeva II, began a long series of kings that immediately preceded Jayadeva I—thus a very remote, or legendary, ruler. Further, the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* lists specific gifts tendered to Paśupati by Vṛsadeva and Dharmadeva, the great-grandfather and father of Mānadeva I, who ruled about A.D. 464 to 505.⁴⁵ If the chronicle is correct, as it often is respecting even quite remote events of the Valley, these gifts would certify the temple's existence prior to A.D. 400.

A date around the beginning of the fifth century would correspond to the style of the linga itself, a giant *caturmukhalinga* carved with four heads in high relief (Plate 339). Although the original was broken by the Muslims in A.D. 1349 and was replaced a few years later by Jayasimha-rāmavardhana of the Bhoṭarājya, the new linga was probably closely modeled after the venerated original.⁴⁶ Pal, who has studied the linga, affirms that the

⁴² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 10 (50-54).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, inscr. 34 (155-157).

⁴⁴ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 19b, 20b; Kirkpatrick 1969: 188, 259; Wright 1966:75.

⁴⁵ Fols. 20b, 21a. Hasrat 1970:40 names Śaṅkaradeva, rather than Vṛsadeva, as the donor of the colossal trident, named Manbegi.

⁴⁶ There seems to be a popular impression in Nepal that the "original" linga stands by the western gate of the compound. D. Regmi 1960:68 n. 18 states that the linga "now lies [that is, stands] amidst ruins of a temple near the Sanctuary of the Western gate," a statement omitted in the 1969 edition of the same work. J. Regmi 1973:pl.

faces are "reminiscent of the early Licchavi style," and compares them to a magnificent *ekamukhalinga* in the environs that he describes as "as close a copy of a Gupta sculpture as we are likely to encounter in Nepal" (Plate 335).⁴⁷

There is a suggestion, perhaps far-fetched, that the Buddhists, traditionally the founders of Deopatan, may have enjoyed primal rights over the site that became Paśupati's. They may have worshiped as Buddhist a local deity who was at length metamorphosed to the Śaiva god. This would compare to another famous Nepali deity, Rāto Matsyendranātha, in which a Bodhisattva was welded to a local god, a syncretism now revered by Buddhists as Buddhist, as a form of Śiva by Hindus. The *Svayambhū-purāna*, a Buddhist *mahātmya*, equates Paśupati with Avalokiteśvara, and affirms that he "will receive homage from local Brahmans, Bhaṭṭa [South Indian] Brahmans, Kṣātriyas, and even Śudras, and his name will be Paśupati."⁴⁸ The late chronicles, Buddhist and Brahmanical, each tell a tale suggestive of Buddhist occupation of the site and sectarian dissension over rights to it.⁴⁹ Apparently Buddhist priests had some influence there into the sixteenth century.⁵⁰ Contemporary practice also suggests some identification of Paśupati with a Buddhist divinity. Annually, on the day known as *mukhāṣṭamī*, Kārtika-śukla-aṣṭamī, the linga is adorned with a Bodhisattva crown. On that day Buddhists are permitted to worship Paśupati in the guise of Avalokiteśvara, or, if they prefer, see in the crown and the four faces of the linga the five Tathāgatas. That Paśupati will soon assume undisputed possession of the site is evident, however, for the custom of celebrating *mukhāṣṭamī* is declining. Today few Bud-

r, b also refers to this western linga as the "original." According to Nepalīs I have asked, however, and as it appears in the plate, this linga is unbroken, so it could not be the original.

⁴⁷ Pal 1974:83. The whole linga is illustrated by Singh 1968:174.

⁴⁸ There are several rescensions of the *Svayambhū-purāna*, but they can scarcely be dated previous to the sixteenth century. It may belong to a cycle of legends originating in Khotan and transmitted to Nepal via Tibet (Brough 1948).

⁴⁹ Hasrat 1970:20-21, 38-39.

⁵⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 33.

dhists observe the ritual and Paśupati's priests crown the linga (or claim they do) behind closed doors.

Why a Śaiva deity should annually wear a Buddhist crown is unknown. But the custom of crowning the linga is popularly associated with a certain Śaiva devotee known as Virūpākṣa ("diversely eyed," "having deformed eyes"), a name for various legendary personalities, demons, and deities, among whom is the three-eyed Śiva (Plate 345). Unwittingly having cohabited with his mother, Virūpākṣa inquired of Śiva in what way he could expiate the heinous crime. Śiva recommended drinking molten metal. Enraged at the imposition of such an unreasonable penance, Virūpākṣa sought to destroy Śiva, who fled in terror. Virūpākṣa hunted Śiva everywhere, smashing his emblems without restraint. But when he came to Paśupati, the compassionate Buddha, or some say Avalokiteśvara, concealed the endangered linga under his own crown, not only saving the linga but causing the duped Virūpākṣa to make obeisance to Śiva in disguise.⁵¹

We do not know when Śiva Paśupati became the paramount deity of Nepal. That he had attained great prestige by the fifth century is suggested by the number of extant accessory lingas then already established within the aura of the Paśupati *ḥsetra*. By the time of Aṃśuvarman, however, about A.D. 605-621—a king who proclaimed in all his *prāśastis* to be "favored by the feet of Lord Paśupati" (*bhagavat-Paśupati-bhaṭṭāraka-pādānugrhitah*)—there seems little doubt that Paśupati was the most popular and influential deity in the Valley. It is not improbable that this powerful ruler's public espousal of Paśupati as the chief deity further elevated the already prestigious god. Pal surmises that Aṃśuvarman's own rise may have been directly related to his successful courting of the powerful Brahmans who must have been associated with Paśupati's cult.⁵² In any event, in declaring himself "favored by the feet of Lord Paśupati," Aṃśuvarman coined an ex-

pression that, with few exceptions, was employed by all successor kings of the period, Ābhīra Gupta and Licchavi.⁵³ Moreover, in a slightly different formula—"laden with the dust of Lord Paśupati's lotus feet" (*Paśupaticarana ḥamala dhūli dhūṣarita*)—this avowal was renewed at the beginning of the fourteenth century by Jyotirmalla, after whom it was employed by successor Malla kings without exception.

As the recipient of the universal adoration of the Nepalese, Paśupati's shrine is the kingdom's most holy beacon. It is by visiting the linga that pilgrims begin their circuit of the sacred places of Nepal Mandala, and Paśupati is the lodestar that guides their return.⁵⁴ Even worshipers from distant realms are attracted to Paśupati. In the fourteenth century, the Khasas of western Nepal were his devotees, and their king, Ripumalla, once came to the Valley solely as a pilgrim. Even now, Indians, despite their general scorn for what they conceive as the rough unorthodoxy of the mountain people, still swarm to Paśupati. His temple is the goal of pilgrim and sadhu from all parts of the subcontinent, especially to celebrate Śiva's Night (Śiva-rātri), the deity's great annual festival. On this occasion, thousands of devotees pay their homage to Paśupati. The Tribhuvana Rajpath, the mountain road winding up from India, is clogged with his followers. Many now come in trucks, but more are afoot; the dust rises in clouds above the meager bundles balanced on the pilgrims' heads, adding a new dimension of grey to the ash-smearing naked bodies of the holy men. And not unlike the medieval fairs of Europe, the pilgrims and ascetics are accompanied by fakirs and tricksters, with traders in bangles and seashells, miniature lingas, vessels to fill with sacred water from the Bagmati, and, above all, vast stores of red and yellow powders and unnumbered garlands and blossoms to bestow upon the god. Following the night-long vigil, clustered around campfires in the winter chill, the devoted first bathe in the purifying Bagmati and

⁵¹ Wright 1966:60-61; Lévi 1905:1, 361.

⁵² Pal 1970:3; 1974a:6. Confirmation of the influential role Paśupati's priests once played in Nepalese politics is suggested by an edict of Yaḥsamalla (ca. A.D. 1428-1482) in which he forbade local Brahmans to officiate at the temple, and staffed it with Brahmans from India, a cus-

tom still in vogue. Moreover, the Indian priests were forbidden to marry locally and thus engender family ties that might have prejudicial repercussions in national politics.

⁵³ Eschewed by only the puppet Licchavi kings, Dhruvadeva and Bhīmārjunadeva.

⁵⁴ *Nepāla-mahātmya*, chap. 29.

then, as a living tide, flow through the eastern courtyard gateway (Plate 344), make their obeisance and oblation to Paśupati, circumambulate the temple, and depart by another gate, assured of the divine Paśupati's good will for another year.⁵⁵

Like most other famous *tirthas*, however, even Paśupatinātha has substitute shrines here and there that are more readily accessible to certain distant devotees. One such is at Gorkha, and another is in the Bhaktapur Darbar Square (Figure 3:19). This is the impressive Newar-style temple of Yakṣeśvara, a name that memorializes Yakṣamalla, king of Nepal from A.D. 1428-1482.⁵⁶ Legend affirms that the king raised this substitute temple not from sloth but from devotion. Frequent summer floodings of the Manohara River, which lies between Bhaktapur and Deopatan, forced the royal devotee occasionally to miss his daily *darśana*, beholding of Paśupati. As a remedy, Paśupati himself suggested in a dream that his royal devotee construct a substitute shrine near his palace and thus insure the great god's uninterrupted daily worship.

Nucleus of Deopatan, City of Gods, the home shrine of Paśupatinātha is surrounded by a vast religious complex oriented toward the sacred Bagmati, which glides to the Ganges through its midst (Map 6). The Paśupati complex proper, on the right bank, consists of a walled compound, pierced with several gateways through which passage is reserved to Hindus and Buddhists of accepted castes.⁵⁷ Within the compound, the principal sanctum is a richly decorated, two-roofed Newar-style temple of square plan, a late Malla restoration. Four functional doors reveal to the circumambulating devotee the diverse faces of the linga. Separated into a number of adjoining courtyards, reminiscent of palace compounds, the Paśupati compound is filled with many other shrines and temples, diverse in appearance, age, and en-

⁵⁵ Respecting the festival, see Anderson 1971:242-249.

⁵⁶ No record of the donation has been preserved, but the linga is named after the king, and it was either he who built it, or his widowed queen, Kīrtilakṣmī, shortly after his death. Her gifts to the temple certify its existence by A.D. 1487 (N.S. 607 Āṣāḍha) (Paudel 1965:17-19).

⁵⁷ This was apparently not always so, and may have been a product of the Ranas' extremes respecting ritual purity. Certainly the description Oliphant 1852:76-77 provides of Paśupatinātha sounds like an eye-witness one, as does

shrined deities, with images, lingas, inscriptions, resthouses, priests' lodgings, *mathas*, and more—the glorious and disorganized accretion of centuries. Or, as a jaundiced mid-nineteenth-century English visitor said after viewing the most holy place of Nepal, "Push-putty, is a very sacred place, a heap of odd, brass-covered, bell-surmounted, picturesque temples, inhabited by dirty fakeers, and almost as dirty but more amusing monkeys, both monkeys and fakeers as sacred as they are dirty."⁵⁸

The northern gateway gives egress to Kailāsa, a grassy hill named for Śiva's mountain abode, dotted with lingas and Licchavi architectural fragments, and a favorite spot for conducting *śrāddha* ceremonies. The eastern gateway leads directly down to Ārya-ghat; access to this is also restricted. Ārya-ghat is the preferred site for royal cremations, and is the most sacred of several burning and bathing ghats that border the river. There are also a number of shrines and important images there (Plate 345). Immediately upstream, below Kailāsa and along the narrow and mysterious river gorge, lies Sūrya-ghat with its numerous Licchavi lingas (Plate 332); downstream is Rājarājeśvari-ghat, beaded with temples, lingas, and images, both Buddhist and Brahmanical (Plates 333, 343, 377). On the opposite bank, reached by a footbridge, lies Mrigasthali, the wooded Deer Grove, legendary Slesmāntaka where Śiva once dwelt as a gazelle. Still part of Paśupati's domain (Paśupati *ḥṣetra*), Mrigasthali is scattered with countless lingas by many names, icons of Śiva in many forms, and innumerable shrines and images of other gods, both Buddhist and Brahmanical (Plates 336, 352, 558).

Of Paśupati's original shrine—raised by Supuṣpa/Paśuprekha or another—there are no visible remains,⁵⁹ and even the sacred linga is a replacement. But as attested by chronicles and inscriptions, gift Kirkpatrick's (1969:188-189). A sketch by the Oldfields in April 1853 (H. and M. Oldfield 1975:pl. 12) indicates a vastly simpler complex, which does not appear to be walled.

⁵⁸ Egerton 1852:196. The description offered by Oliphant 1852:76-77 is scarcely more sympathetic.

⁵⁹ So it has been reported to me, but I suspect, as may be observed in so many other temples, that beneath the elevation there may well be ancient foundations that have escaped notice.

after gift of gold, silver, and jewels, costly sacrifices, and land endowments have assured an unbroken cult and the continuous replacement, restoration, and embellishment of linga and temple. The earliest recorded gifts, if the chronicle is correct, are Vṛṣadeva's trident, flanking the northern door of the temple, and Dharmadeva's colossal stone bull (later gilt) that faces the western one. King Śivadeva II (ca. A.D. 694-705) offered a silver lotus; a similar gift was proffered by his son and successor, Jayadeva II; and a silver lotus was again given in the twelfth century by another Śivadeva, who also "covered Paśupati's temple with a golden roof."⁶⁰

With great regularity, such gifts continued to flow to Paśupati. In A.D. 1297, for example, Anantamalla also "gave a gilt roof to the temple and erected a [metal] flag at the four corners." Viramadevī, a Bhaktapur princess, sheathed with gilt copper the great bull Dharmadeva had given.⁶¹ Jayasīma-rāma-varddhana restored the linga, Sthitimalla gave costly sacrifices, and his son, Jyotir, proffered a golden finial.⁶² Or again, "the middle roof of the temple of Pashupati being in very bad repair, [Gaṅgarāṇī] caused it to be taken off, leaving the temple with two roofs. The gold of the one taken off was made into a gajura and placed on top of the temple, which was thoroughly repaired."⁶³ Pratāpamalla courted Paśupati with liberal gifts, and his daughter-in-law, Queen Ṛddhilakṣmī (involved in the scandal with the rapacious *cautārā*, Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Jośī) completely restored the termite-ridden temple, an eight-month long operation begun in the fall of A.D. 1696. A contemporary description of the event reveals what such an undertaking entailed, and graphically illustrates how Nepalese temples endure piecemeal from age to age. In

817 *Kārtika kṛṣṇa* 13 *svātī* . . . this day the finial

⁶⁰ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 20b, 21a, 22b, 24a; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 148 (548-562).

⁶¹ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 27a. Viramadevī was also the donor of a renowned linga, Indreśvara, which she established in Panauti village in A.D. 1294 in memory of her husband. It is enclosed in an impressive temple, in size second only to Changu Nārāyaṇa, which bears some of the finest wood carving in Nepal (Slusser 1979a). Situated at a *trivenī*, where three streams come together

on the top of the temple of Paśupati-nātha was taken out and the temple structure was broken. . . . [In Pauṣa] . . . new construction began. Five days later on the day of *ekādaśī* . . . the door frames were set up. Later in the month of *Chaitra* . . . *Kotyāhuti* was begun with the lighting of fire. On *Vaiśākha śukla* 11 . . . the finial was placed on the temple, a garland-like gold chain was offered, there was the great bath and also the great sacrifice (*mahāvali*) flagstaffs came up, on *Jyeṣṭha śukla* 9 . . . *Kotyāhuti* was completed, after four days both the king and the queen mother returned. Their coming back was ceremonial.⁶⁴

In the nineteenth century, Rana Bahadur Shah donated a silver *jalahārī* to Paśupati, and in his desperate efforts to save Kāntimatī, his queen afflicted with smallpox, he offered to the deity the Bhandarkhal (*bhāṇḍārakhāla*), extensive gardens lying at the western part of the complex. The most astonishing gift of all, however, was that of King Rajendra Vikram Shah, who in A.D. 1829 "collected a lakh and 25,000 oranges . . . and offered them to Pashupati-natha. The whole temple was filled with them, only the head of Pashupatinatha being above them."⁶⁵

It is evident that centuries of munificence on the part of kings and their subjects should engender a vast temple treasure. One of the most beautiful *ekamukhalingas* in the Kathmandu Valley, a superb Licchavi work known as Bhāṇḍāreśvara, Lord of the Treasury, is considered to be the guardian of the deity's wealth. In active worship, but little known, the linga is enshrined on the banks of the Dhobi Khola, some distance west of Deopatan (Map 6:6). Because of Bhāṇḍāreśvara's role as guardian of Paśupati's treasure, it is incumbent upon newly arriving Bhaṭṭa Brahmans from India, Paśupati's priests since the fifteenth century, to take

(one, in fact, mythical), Indreśvara is a *tīrtha* of great importance. Every twelve years it is the venue of a popular religious fair (*mela*).

⁶² D. Regmi 1966:part 1, 414.

⁶³ Wright 1966:143. Gaṅgarāṇī is usually identified as Pratāpamalla's grandmother, although an unpublished *thyāsaphu* suggests this may not be so.

⁶⁴ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 151.

⁶⁵ Wright 1966:182.

oath on the linga before assuming their duties at his temple.

Mortals have not only been liberal in Paśupati's regard, but, as frequent references to temple thieves attest, at times they have been covetous. One such thief, so the legend goes, was himself a divinity, a serpent, who taking advantage of the flooded Bagmati entered the temple and seized Śiva's wondrous one-faced *rudrakṣa* seed.⁶⁶ Another may have been Jayaprakāśamalla, one of the last Malla kings to reign in the Kathmandu Valley. The chronicles assert that he robbed the temple,⁶⁷ and so does the Capuchin missionary, Father Giuseppe, who lived in Patan at the time of the alleged event. Indeed, the missionary's story is well worth repeating.

They [have the] tradition, that at two or three places in *Nepal*, valuable treasures are concealed under ground. One of those places they believe is *Tolu* [Gvala, Deopatan]; but no one is permitted to make use of them except the king, and that only in cases of necessity. Those treasures, they say, have been accumulated in this manner:—When any temple had become very rich from the offerings of the people, it was destroyed, and deep vaults dug under ground, one above another, in which the gold, silver, gilt copper, jewels, and every thing of value were deposited. When I was in *Nepal*, *Gainprejas* [Jayaprakāśa], king of *Cat'hmandu*, being in the utmost distress for money to pay his troops, in order to support himself against *Pri'hwinarayan*, ordered search to be made for the treasures of *Tolu*; and, having dug to a considerable depth under ground, they came to the first vault; from which his people took to the value of a lac of rupees in gilt copper, with which *Gainprejas* paid his troops, exclusive of a number of small figures in gold, or gilt copper, which the people who had made the search had privately carried off; and this I know very well; because one evening as I was walking in the country alone, a poor man,

⁶⁶ The berry of *Elaeocarpus Ganitrus*, the *rudrakṣa* (Rudra-eyed), is a rough brown seed or nut, sacred to Śiva and is employed in rosaries and garlands worn by his devotees. It is normally divided into twelve or fourteen sections or "faces," but the fewer the faces, the rarer and more potent the talisman. Extraordinarily rare—produced once in a century, say the Nepalese—an *eḱamuḱha* (one-

whom I met on the road, made me an offer of a figure of an idol in gold, or copper gilt, which might be five or six sicca weight, and which he cautiously preserved under his arm; but I declined accepting it. The people of *Gainprejas* had not completely emptied the first vault, when the army of *Pri'hwinarayan* arrived at *Tolu*, possessed themselves of the place where the treasure was deposited, and closed the door of the vault, having first replaced all the copper there had been on the outside.⁶⁸

If the account is even partly true, as is likely, since such testimony of the missionary's as can be checked is usually correct, we may well deduce why so few early metal images, and no Licchavi copperplate inscriptions, have survived. The attempted sale of the image to a stranger, moreover, too faithfully reflects the contemporary scene in which sacred images "in gold, or copper gilt" are also often "cautiously preserved under [the seller's] arm."

Although Taleju, one suspects, was often first in the hearts of the Malla kings, Paśupati has had the most prolonged and intimate association with both king and commoner. As *Nepālādhipati*, Lord of *Nepal*, Paśupati has received royal obeisance, coins have been struck in his honor,⁶⁹ it is probable that the institution of two new eras relates to him, he has been invoked as divine witness to treaties, pledges, and endowments recorded on countless copperplates, and his temple and courtyard have been preferred locales for establishing royal inscriptions. In difficult times kings and their subjects have sought refuge with Paśupati, and some have performed penance and sought remission from sin before him. *Pratāpamalla*, for example, expiated a heinous crime by residing at Paśupati for months, during which time he erected numerous lingas and a temple, performed lavish sacrifices, including *ḱoṭyāhuti* and *tulādāna*, and gave gifts of all kinds to Paśupati. "He then placed em-
face) berry, a crescent-shaped sport, is the most coveted. In 1969 an "*eḱmuḱhi*" was said to have a market value equivalent to some \$10,000.

⁶⁷ Wright 1966:155; Hasrat 1970:90.

⁶⁸ Giuseppe 1801:311-312.

⁶⁹ S. Joshi 1960:60-61, pl. 7, figs. 2-4.

blems of Śiva, with temples built over them, at intervals of a pace, all the way from Pashupati to Kantipur, and hung up a *pataḥa* (flag) of cloth, extending from the temple [of] Pashupati to the temple of Mahadeva in Mohan-chok in the durbar at Kantipur."⁷⁰ In linking temple and palace, the king must have imitated Gaṅgarāṇī, his grandmother, who also stretched a banner from Paśupati to the palace in order to sanctify the royal residence.⁷¹

Thus to Paśupati, century after century, have come his adorers, humbly, singly, and at times in pressing multitudes. Bestowing upon him costly treasure, they have gratefully borne away in return the certainty of his benevolence, externalized in the *ṭikā*, a vermilion daub on the brow, and the *prasāda*, the sacred liquids in which he has bathed, or a flower petal or two hallowed by contact with him. Close to him in life, it is at his side at the ghats on the Bagmati that by preference his devotees come to him in death.⁷² And on these same ghats, until the custom was outlawed in 1920, thousands of satis have followed their lords on the pyres.



In the Kathmandu Valley, Śiva not only manifests himself in prestigious lingas such as Paśupatinātha, but in the humble and curious lingas generically known as Luku-Mahādeva, or -Mahādyo, the Hidden Śiva. In this form he enjoys no gilt-roofed temple, no priests, and no pressing multitudes, but resides in the corner of the Newar household's open courtyard, secreted under a rubbish heap. Ignored throughout the year, on one day only his hiding place is revealed. For a few hours he is treated like an honored guest and adored as the god he is. His auspicious day coincides with the opening of a popular three-day festival, which begins on the fourteenth day of the dark half of Phālguna. Devoted to the Mother Goddesses, the festival is known as Piśāca-catur-

daśī, or Pācare, literally "Goblin's Fourteenth." Bundled against the chill February dusk, the worshipful family, as a part of the evening's ceremonies, uncover the linga and welcome Luku-Mahādeva to a feast prepared for the Mother Goddesses. Since the Mother Goddesses are maleficent forms to be placated, the feast includes meat, alcohol, garlic, onions, and other foods abhorrent to Śiva in his pacific forms, but which Luku-Mahādeva uncomplainingly accepts. Honored further by a halo of lighted lamps, Luku-Mahādeva gives as his *prasāda* the lamps' soot, which the women and children apply as auspicious eye-shadow in lieu of the traditional collyrium. At last, after the feast is over and the lamps gutted, Luku-Mahādeva retires to his rubbish heap to await for another year his one day of honor.

The origin of Luku-Mahādeva and the folk customs associated with him are clouded. But the practice is said to have originated when Virūpākṣa, angered at Śiva's recommended penance, tried to destroy the god.⁷³ Fleeing in terror, Śiva sought refuge in the interior of a domestic rubbish heap. He was undetected in this unlikely spot, and the chase was at last terminated by the Buddha's clever intervention at Paśupati's shrine. Śiva emerged, by chance, at the time of the domestic feast of Piśāca-caturdaśī in honor of the Mother Goddesses; the startled family invited the divine guest to share the meal, albeit one traditionally not to his taste.

The Anthropomorphic Śiva: Icons

Śiva's most popular and primary manifestation is the abstract linga, his *niṣkṣala* form, but he is also embodied in anthropomorphic form (*saḥala*), in aspects both pacific and ferocious. Anthropomorphic forms are textually recommended for use on external temple walls, and in this way Śiva icons frequently appear as decorative and symbolic elements on Nepalese temples (Plates 346, 347).⁷⁴ But large icons, most frequently of stone, serve on

⁷⁰ Wright 1966:146-147; see also Hasrat 1970:76.

⁷¹ Lévi 1905:1, 360. According to Lévi and to Wright 1966:84-85, she too had a model in the sixth-century king, Śivadeva I, but this is not verified by inscriptions or the early chronicles.

⁷² There are, of course, many other cremation sites, and Buddhists would normally not be cremated at Paśupati.

⁷³ Anderson 1971:263-265 collected a variant story respecting the origin of Luku-Mahādeva.

⁷⁴ Most Licchavi Period stone plaques are now separated from the temples they originally decorated (for example, Plates 346, 347), although plaques still in place on the outside walls of a late Licchavi *śikhara* temple in the Paśupati compound illustrate their original use.

occasion as the chief cult object of the sanctum, and are common as free-standing sculptures in the fountains and beside the streets and paths (Plates 24, 348-356, 358-360). Smaller icons, typically bronze, wood, or painted pictures, are often gathered in the sanctum as accessory images to a linga or a cult image, and are also used in domestic worship. But despite the importance of Śivaism in Nepal Mandala, there are no major heroic sculptures on Śaiva themes.

Śiva has many guises, as his mercurial nature demands. Sometimes he stands majestically alone, elsewhere he is accompanied by Pārvatī as a separate image or physically joined in a syncretic composition, half-male, half-female. Known technically as Ardhanārīśvara (literally, "Lord Half-woman"), the latter image type is unknown among early Nepalese sculptures (other than Ardhanārīśvara faces on lingas), but achieved considerable popularity in the late Malla Period.⁷⁵ Elsewhere, in a composition known as Umā-Maheśvara, one of the most characteristic representations of divinity in Nepal, Maheśvara (Śiva) enjoys his royal ease (and sometimes dalliance) with Umā (Pārvatī), often in company with the faithful Nandi, his children Gaṇeśa and Kārttikeya, and his palace retainers (Plates 349-355). Sometimes Śiva's yogic aspect is emphasized; elsewhere he is the cosmic dancer (Plates 196, 356, 357),⁷⁶ or, again, he is combined with Viṣṇu in a syncretism technically known as Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa, Hari-Śaṅkara, or Hari-Hara (Plates 358, 359). In a unique instance, in a weathered sculpture dating from the third or fourth century A.D., Śiva shares a *caturmukha*-type shrine with Devī, Viṣṇu, and Brahmā (Plate 360). There are occasional representations of the god in the guise of the deified Nātha, Gorakṣanātha (Gora-

khanātha), an important manifestation of Śiva whose story I will defer until Chapter 12.⁷⁷

Given the magnificence and interest of many of the Śiva icons—even amusement, when, for example, the sculptor of a Hari-Hara image has tried to divide the gods' mounts, and in so doing produced a grotesque, half bull, half bird (Plate 359)—it is difficult not to linger over each, telling its story both in terms of the history of Nepalese art and the role it plays (or sometimes unaccountably does not) in Valley life. But since a number of Nepalese Śiva images have recently been fully treated in art-historical terms,⁷⁸ and because there are more pressing aspects of Śiva's cult as practiced in the Kathmandu Valley, it will be necessary here to pass over most of his painted and sculptured representations. But because they so well characterize the way Nepalese art illuminates the religious climate of the Valley, both now and in the past, I will pause briefly to discuss two images, both Umā-Maheśvara compositions, and both inscribed and dated—one Licchavi, and one belonging to the period of the Three Kingdoms (Plates 351, 355).

The Licchavi Period image, in situ in Sikubahi locale, Patan (Map 8: b-10), provides the first incontrovertible evidence of the antiquity of the Umā-Maheśvara theme in Nepal Mandala,⁷⁹ and demonstrates the long intimacy of Śiva with the cult of the Mother Goddesses. It also provides a striking illustration of the continuum of culture that is so fundamental in Nepali history. Dated s.s. 495 (A.D. 573), the somewhat damaged, and disastrously repaired, image shares a hypaethral shrine with a number of Mother Goddesses in aniconic form. According to the inscription on the base of the image, someone of the family of Prince Vajraratha, who "was out of the country toward the south,"

⁷⁵ That it was known to the Licchavis, however, is evident, since the Deopatan Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa inscription compares the composite image of the two gods to the composite Ardhanārīśvara (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 50 [198-203]); Pal 1970:130).

⁷⁶ Śiva Natarāja, King of Dancers, of transcendent importance in India, is an icon type of little significance in Nepal. As Nāsadyo, the dancing god is the patron of traditional Newar dance groups, who consider him a fierce form to be courted with animal sacrifice and alcohol. Most Nāsadyos are inconsequential images like that enshrined in

Hanuman Dhoka Nasal-chok, or they decorate the *toranas* of Śiva temples (Plate 196). Therefore the dancing Śiva illustrated in Plate 356 is of exceptional interest.

⁷⁷ Gorakṣanātha is most usually worshiped in the form of symbolic footprints, but there are occasional anthropomorphic representations (Slusser and Vajracharya 1974: figs. 33, 35).

⁷⁸ Pal 1974:97-102.

⁷⁹ On the evolution of the Umā-Maheśvara image, see Kramrisch 1964:39; Banerjee 1967; and Pal 1968a.

had erected terra-cotta images of the Mātṛkas (Mothers), but “in the course of time . . . [they] had greatly deteriorated and had broken limbs. After seeing the statues damaged in this way, the very pious Babhruvarṃā thought to repair them. But before he could carry out the work, Fate intervened, and reaping his just rewards, he went to heaven.”⁸⁰ But his sister-in-law, an avowed Vaiṣṇavī, commissioned a new set of images, this time in stone, that Babhruvarṃā might have “eternal rest in heaven and that greater religious merit might accrue to her mother, father, husband, and herself.”

With the exception of the inscribed Umā-Maheśvara image, which was obviously an integral part of the sister-in-law’s gift of Mātṛka images, all of the stone images of the goddesses, like the terracottas they replaced, have disappeared. Nonetheless, in still another metamorphosis, now as a row of common boulders, the goddesses’ cult flourishes with undiminished vigor, as it did in the time of Prince Vajraratha, Babhruvarṃā, and his devoted sister-in-law.

The second image to be considered, carved in a singularly inappropriate mottled stone, is filled with the customary principals, Śiva, Umā, Kārttikeya, Gaṇeśa, and Nandī (Plate 355).⁸¹ But, like other late Malla examples, it is also laden with accessory images and objects—Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Sarasvatī, Sūrya, Candra, Gaṅgā, sages, rocks, trees, water, birds, animals, and the customary sporting *ganās*, the mischievous retainers of Śiva’s court. The pedestal inscription informs us that “Jayantikā, wife of Mahendramalla [king of Kathmandu], to please Śiva established a *maṭha* together with an image. Mahendramalla arranged a ration for Vīraśaiva [which] his queen distributes to the yogis who live in this *maṭha*. Established N.S. 699 Āṣāḍha [A.D. 1579]. . . .”⁸² Thus we learn that the image, now derelict and unworshiped in an open court near Hanuman Dhoka, was once an object of veneration

in a *maṭha* occupied by Vīraśaivas, or Līṅgāyatās. They are Śaiva sectarians of late advent in Nepal, especially familiar in seventeenth-century Bhaktapur. Since Līṅgāyatās consider only the linga as a suitable object for Śiva worship, it is of more than passing interest in terms of Nepalese religious history that the queen would find it appropriate to offer—and the Līṅgāyatās to accept—an anthropomorphic representation of the god and his consort. Although it may have been only an accessory image, the inscription suggests that it was given as the cult image, together with the *maṭha* building. With this insight, we can no longer be certain that all of the anthropomorphic Śiva images in the Kathmandu Valley must be assigned to the Pāśupatās, who encouraged the veneration of both iconic and aniconic objects of worship. The Pāśupatās were established earlier and were more numerous than the Līṅgāyatās, however, and the great majority of Śaiva monuments in the Kathmandu Valley doubtlessly pertained to them.

As institutions, a few Pāśupata *maṭhas* exist even today. The chief ones are the Pūjāri-*maṭha* attached to the Dattātṛeya temple in Bhaktapur (now dislocated, following the restoration of the building); the *maṭha* of the Gorakṣanātha temple in Mrigasthali, Paśupatinātha; one near Balaju; one in Kathmandu; and a couple in Patan. Each under the ministrations of a *mahanta*, these *maṭhas* are composed of Śaiva ascetics (*sannyāsins*). The most thriving community is the Gorakṣanātha *maṭha*, but it is peopled almost exclusively by Madheses, *sannyāsins* from India and the Tarai. With the above-named exceptions, the rest of the Śaiva communities are defunct and the buildings that housed them in ruins. An exception to physical ruin is the newly restored buildings of the Pūjāri-*maṭha* (Plates 180-183). The remainder of the some thirty-five buildings that are known to have once sheltered Śaiva congregations now simply serve as ordinary dwellings that house a Śivamārgī family,

graph. Only by wetting the image—thus minimizing the color contrasts in the stone—was I able to secure a reasonably satisfactory reproduction.

⁸²G. Vajracharya 1976: document 8 (197). That Jayantikā was the wife of Mahendramalla is shown by M. Pant 1977:85-86.

⁸⁰D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 53 (211-213).

⁸¹Discovered in a cramped nook, the neglected, moss covered image, although artistically inconsequential, was obviously of great importance to Nepalese culture because of the content of the dated inscription. Even after I had cleaned it, however, the contrasting colors of the veined stone made it virtually impossible to get a clear photo-

usually hereditary occupants who are descendants of former inmates (Plate 184).⁸³ If these *mathas* function at all institutionally, the head of the family is considered the *mahanta*, and as chief priest is ministrant to a modest Śaiva shrine in the *matha* courtyard. Physically and institutionally, the *mathas* parallel the history of the *vihāras* in the Kathmandu Valley.⁸⁴

The declining and almost defunct institution of the *matha* has deep roots in the antecedent Licchavi institution, the *mandali*. These were Śaiva congregations, largely Pāśupata, housed in their own permanent complexes, and charged with the care of it and of a particular Śiva image or linga housed within.⁸⁵ The *mandali* were given considerable autonomy by the state. Local authority was often vested in them, as it was in the Buddhist *samghas*, and the religious community administered the secular population in lieu of other local or central government. A *mandali* sometimes controlled entire villages. For example, it was the Vāsa-Pāśupatas whom Śivadeva II (ca. A.D. 694-705) directed to collect taxes and levy the corvée from Vaidyagrāma (Laghan-tol, Kathmandu) for the five porters required for the annual trip to Tibet.⁸⁶ Numerous royal charters refer to *mandali*, name the installed deity—Vajreśvara and Śivadeveśvara, for example—recapitulate the rules governing the *mandali*, exhort the community to follow them, and specify endowments.⁸⁷

The Terrible Śiva: Bhairava

Śiva as the Destroyer, in his cosmic role of stamping out ignorance and evil, assumes many terrifying forms under many different names. But a single fierce aspect, embodied in one destructive image type (*samhāramūrti*), has captured the Nepali imagination and achieved a position of out-

standing importance in the art and culture of Nepal Mandala. This is Śiva as Bhairava (Bhairab), or Hathudyo, as he is often known to Newars (Plates 361-369). A god to be feared and placated with blood and alcohol, Bhairava is one of the paramount maleficent deities of the Valley. His vehicle is no longer the lovable Nandi, but a hideous dog, despised scavenger and familiar of the cremation grounds. Especially closely associated with the Mother Goddesses (Mātṛkas), whose cult similarly permeates Nepalese life, Bhairava is equally at home in the *vihāras* and in the temples and shrines of all the deities, Buddhist and Brahmanical. He lurks in the home, in the fields, and at the cremation ghats, and even dwells in holes in the roadway or the wheels of vehicles. In short, wherever the Nepali is, physically or psychologically, Bhairava is not far away.

The classical texts enumerate sixty-four different Bhairavas, grouped by eights with a leader. Each is the companion of a terrifying female counterpart, a *yoginī*. The names of some of the textual Bhairavas, such as Unmatta and Vaṭuka Bhairava, are familiar to the Nepalese. But for the most part, Nepalese Bhairavas conform in neither number nor kind to the texts; many, in fact, seem to be indigenous deities who were absorbed into Bhairava's cult. For example, one Bhairava type seems to have originated as the presiding deity of the Licchavi *pañcālī*, whose members feasted together in the name of their particular deity.⁸⁸ As a lingering tie, the custom is preserved in contemporary practice where the associations who care for certain Bhairavas, and also feast in his name, are known as *pañci gūthī*.

In Nepal, Bhairava is worshiped equally comfortably in iconic or aniconic form. He seems particularly at home in natural stones of unusual form

⁸³ It is interesting that the name "Jangam" is encountered as a caste name among some of the Bhaktapur families living in the *mathas*. It derives from *jaṅgama*, the name coined in eleventh-century India to distinguish the newly ordained priesthood of the Liṅgāyatās (Basham 1967:337).

⁸⁴ A study of the *matha* is long overdue. My own research has only touched on the buildings and the institution in passing. But many of the *mathas* still house aged and knowledgeable informants who are a valuable, and

disappearing, resource for understanding the *matha*.

⁸⁵ D. Vajracharya 1967c. There are also occasional references to Vedic and Vaiṣṇava communities, but they do not seem to have been as common as the Śaiva *mandali* (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 28, 70 [138-140; 282-289]; 1967c:114).

⁸⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 139 (514-518).

⁸⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 112, 125, 128, 139 (426-428, 472-473, 481-484, 514-518).

⁸⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 107 (407-410).

or size, such as the immense boulder known as Tika Bhairava at a wild confluence near Lele village—a natural emblem made doubly potent by a fearful painted representation nearby (Plate 361). Bheḍa Siṅga (Ram's Horn), a stone carved in the rough shape of a ram's head, scarcely visible at the bottom of a hole in a busy Kathmandu crossroads, is also worshiped as Bhairava; dangerously blocking the principal vehicular route through Patan, it is another Bhairava with no tangible symbol beyond that of his dwelling place in the deep pit in the roadway.⁸⁹ In one of his most important manifestations, enshrined in a splendid Newar-style temple in Kirtipur village, Bhairava is worshiped in the form of a tongueless tiger known as Vyāghreśvara (Lord Tiger), or in common parlance, Bagh Bhairab (Tiger Bhairava). The tiger image is said to commemorate an occasion when children, amusing themselves while caring for their flocks, innocently fashioned a clay tiger. Leaving it to seek a leaf for the tiger's tongue, the children returned to find that not only had Bhairava appropriated their toy as one of his dwelling places, but had also devoured their flocks. Tiger Bhairava is preserved in the Kirtipur temple, and the children and their charges are immortalized in a nearby shrine. The "children" are embodied as the *gothālā* (herdsmen), in fact a third- or fourth-century sculpture of Śiva, Pārvatī, and Nandi (Plate 349); the devoured flock is symbolized by five adjacent Mother Goddesses of similar date (Plates 545-547).

Bhairava also appears to be associated in some manner with large stones that have been carefully shaped into a sphere some two feet in diameter. Known to the Newars as *gucca* (ball), one such has given its name to a Deopatan neighborhood, Gucca-tol, where it lies unattended by the roadside. I have seen such balls in two other locations, one abandoned in Tistung village (Licchavi Tesuṅga), west of the Valley, the other at Sathighar

⁸⁹ The Patan Bhairava's dwelling place was no menace to pedestrians, but became a hazard with the increase of vehicular traffic. For a while the hole was railed to signal its existence, but the railing was soon demolished by the cars. During my time in Nepal, Bhairava on one occasion demonstrated his displeasure with the United Christian Mission by disastrously attracting one of its VWs into his lodging. It will be of great interest to see how long the Patan Bhairava will hold out in the contemporary milieu.

(Palanchok). The Sathighar example is elevated on a platform and is worshiped as Mahādeva (Śiva). It bears an inscription in Bhujīmol characters (circa fourteenth century), "this is the work of Anantadevī."⁹⁰ A fourth ball is incorporated into a hypaethral Mother Goddess shrine, probably of Licchavi date, inside Paśupati's compound (Plate 560). Contemporary practice throws no light on these curiosities, but it is probable that they originated in ancient times, and may be identified as the Bhairava- or Arinī-sīlā, the "debt payer" stones mentioned in the late chronicles.⁹¹

In the Kathmandu Valley, Bhairava also characteristically manifests himself in a ferocious mask-like face with glaring eyes, bared fangs, and disheveled hair; he is decorated with skulls, serpents, and other forbidding and macabre ornaments (Plates 361-364). In this abbreviated form, we meet Bhairava as the Aghora aspect of Śiva on one side of early *caturmukḥalingas* (Plate 339). Indeed, legend affirms that when the Palpa king, Mukunda Sena, invaded the Nepal Valley in the Malla Period, "the Aghora Murti (the southern face) of Pashupati showed its frightful teeth, and sent a goddess named Maha-mari (pestilence), who within a fortnight cleared the country of the troops of Mukunda-sena."⁹² Such faces are also molded, painted, or both, on the side of large jars used for storing beer, the *tepa* or *ḥom*, symbol of Bhairava and intimately associated with his cult (Plate 362). Bhairava's terrifying face may be painted in manuscripts and on banners and walls (Plate 361), or it may be carved of wood and hammered out in metal repoussé (Plates 363, 364). Among the latter, the largest, most horrendous, and of greatest cultural importance, is the White (Sveta) Bhairava (Seto Bhairab) (Plate 364). Affixed to an outside wall of Hanuman Dhoka, Sveta Bhairava was an offering of Rana Bahadur Shah in honor of Indra at his festival in A.D. 1795.⁹³ Usually concealed by a lattice shutter, the face is only fully

⁹⁰ Unpublished, translated by G. Vajracharya.

⁹¹ Hasrat 1970:41; Wright 1966:83-84. What relationship, if any, these large balls may have with the rounded stones of all sizes often piled around Sivaliṅgas and anthropomorphic icons, I do not know.

⁹² Wright 1966:115.

⁹³ The image is inscribed and dated v.s. 1852 Bhādra, now published by G. Vajracharya 1976:document 77 (264).

revealed during the week-long annual celebration of Indra-jātrā, a festival in which Bhairava plays an important role. On certain evenings of the festival, a copper tube is placed in Sveta Bhairava's mouth, from which, supplied from a hidden reservoir, he dispenses beer into the upturned mouths of the pressing crowds, thereby conferring benefit throughout the year. Other lesser Bhairavas, even domestic images,⁹⁴ perform this function during Indra-jātrā, and it is during the same festival that Bhairava faces are displayed with abandon in the squares and along the public ways (Plate 362).

Frequently, the face symbolizing Bhairava is even further reduced, and he is represented only by his fearsome eyes. In this way, painted or carved on door jambs, he often guards the domiciles of men and gods (Plates 127, 141). In sets of three, Bhairava's eyes glare from the wheels of the great wooden chariots (*rathas*) that serve the gods in their ceremonial outings (Plate 365). On the wheels of Matsyendranātha's chariot, the eyes signal the dwelling place of four separately named Bhairavas associated with the deity's cult; elsewhere, they often signal his relation to locomotive force in general. That is another reason why he presides over the tongue of Matsyendranātha's chariot (Plate 363).

Somewhat less commonly, Bhairava is also worshiped in fully anthropomorphic images that iconographically and functionally have much in common with the Buddhist Saṃvara and Mahākāla, the Great Black One (Plates 366-368, 479, 480). Of the famous Bhairavas, the smallest must be the gilded Bhairava upon which focuses all the radiant glory of his gilded Bhaktapur temple façade (Plate 366); one of the largest and most awe-inspiring is without doubt the Black (Kāla) Bhairava of the

Kathmandu Darbar Square (Plate 367). Of superhuman size, Kālabhairava's body is painted black, his ornaments brilliant in red, white, and yellow, and he is enveloped in blazing orange flames. He tramples underfoot a nude goblin (*vetāla*), and with his many arms he drapes himself with a flayed human skin, grasps a clutch of severed human heads and the ritual skull cup, and brandishes a sword, shield, and trident. One hand is displayed in the typical gesture of Nepalese tantric deities, the *anḅuśa mudrā* (elephant goad gesture), in which the ring finger and thumb are joined in a circle.⁹⁵

Of indeterminate date and unknown origin, Kālabhairava, like so many other important images of the Kathmandu Darbar Square, was introduced into it by Pratāpamalla in the seventeenth century. One story has it that the king, hearing that there was a frightful image in a reservoir, had it dragged out and brought to the palace;⁹⁶ another claims that workmen constructing a canal to link the pond of the Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa of Budhanilkantha to that of the palace Nārāyaṇa, encountered an obstruction that proved to be the image of Kālabhairava.

Tremendously popular in contemporary Nepal, Kālabhairava played an even more important role in the immediate past. Known also as the Adālata (Court) Bhairava, he was the chief witness before whom civil servants were sworn into office. Liti-gants also swore to the truth of their statements while touching Bhairava's foot, and he who bore false witness, it is alleged, vomited blood and died on the spot. We may also infer from Wright's remarks that as late as the nineteenth century, Kālabhairava was the occasional recipient of human sacrifice. For in speaking of the "huge and hideous

⁹⁴ One such is in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in which a Bhairava face, affixed to the pedestal of an image of Bhairava and his *śakti*, is pierced through to accommodate the beer-dispensing tube (Pal 1975:pl. 65). This image provides a striking illustration of the importance of contemporary practice in understanding the Nepalese past. Without this insight, the mask at the bottom of the composition remains no more than an unexplainable whimsy of the artist.

⁹⁵ The Nepalese define this distinctive and ubiquitous gesture as *anḅuśa mudrā* (Buddhisagar Sharma 1962a:fig.

34). In Japanese Buddhist iconography this *mudrā* is associated with special forms of Amitābha (Amida), and is therefore known as *Amida mudrā* (Saunders 1960:72-75, fig. 11d, c, pl. v). In some works it is referred to as the *vyākhyāna mudrā* (Pal 1970:114-115), a term synonymous with *cīnmudrā*, usually defined as the gesture in which the thumb is joined to the index finger, rather than to the fourth, or ring, finger as in the Nepalese sculptures (Banerjea 1956:254-255; Rao 1968:1, 16-17, pl. 5, fig. 15).

⁹⁶ Wright 1966:146.

figures" of the Darbar Square, Wright affirms that "I have twice heard of people having committed suicide on the steps in front of one of these images. The suicide always takes place at night, and the body is found in the morning, with its throat cut from ear to ear, and its limbs decorously arranged, lying on one of the steps!"⁹⁷

It is tempting to tell the stories of the many Bhairavas who play an important role in Nepalese life—the Akāśa (Sky) Bhairava of Asan-tol, Kathmandu (worshiped as the remains of the Kirāta king, Yalambar, eponym of Yala [Patan], beheaded in the *Mahābhārata* war); the Sky Bhairava of Halchok village who, as a masked *lakṣhe* dancer, comes annually to Kathmandu to fight a buffalo to death at Indra-jātrā;⁹⁸ and many more. But as the single most important Bhairava manifestation in Nepal Mandala, and one that most graphically illustrates the indigenous nature of Nepalese Bhairava worship and its permeation of Nepalese culture, I shall confine myself to Pacali Bhairava of Kathmandu (Plate 369).

Pacali Bhairava's principal shrine, or chief seat (*pīṭha*), lies well beyond the confines of the old city walls, surrounded by nonriverine cremation *masāns*; it is not far from the cremation and bathing ghats on the Bagmati just above the confluence with the Vishnumati (Map 4:27). Reached by a web of cobblestone paths, the shrine is hypaethral, canopied by the gnarled and drooping branches of a giant pipal tree. The sanctum is a sunken quadrangle in which Bhairava in the form of a stone of modest size emerges from the brass plates flooring the shrine. Behind the stone is a minor gilt Bhairava image, itself apparently of little cult significance. A few feet away, in the raised forecourt, lies a copper repoussé *vetāla*, the goblin-like "*betal*" who receives the copious blood sacrifices offered in Bhairava's name. Like the

Mother Goddesses, with whom the Bhairava cult is so intimately intertwined, Pacali Bhairava also has a related shrine, a "lineage house," the *deochem* (Newari) or *ḥula ghara* (Nepali), inside the city. Unlike any of the other maleficent deities who enjoy paired shrines—*pīṭha* and *deochem*—Pacali Bhairava has twelve of the latter. This number is in keeping with the cycle of twelve common to all Nepalese religious affairs. The *deochem* are not used at the same time, but are the private homes of twelve Jyapu (Dongal) families residing south of the Darbar Square. Annually, in rotation, they host the fearsome god. As host, they guard Bhairava in the form of a large beer jar (*tepa*, *ḥom*) elaborated on one side with the modeled face of the god. The oldest male of the host household, the *thākāli*, serves as the deity's priest and performs his daily worship (*nitya pūjā*). Once a year, Bhairava in the form of the jar of beer is carried from the lineage house; this coincides with Dasain, the national festival in honor of Durgā, Śiva's consort in her militant form. The old beer is emptied at a special place on the Bagmati (Pañcanadi, one of the nine auspicious places men bathe during Dasain), and the jar is ritually cleansed and filled anew. On Pañcamī, the fifth day of Dasain (or Pañcakom, as it is known to Bhairava's intimates), the vessel is exposed for a day of ardent worship in Bhairava's *pīṭha*. Late at night the urn is returned to Kathmandu in a tumultuous procession whose goal is Hanuman Dhoka.⁹⁹ Traditionally, Bhairava receives at the palace a sacrificial buffalo in the name of the king. This concludes the annual ceremony, and the urn is then installed anew in the next of the twelve appropriate Jyapu homes. Every twelfth year, preceding the god's installation in his *deochem*, a special dance is performed in the Darbar Square by the *gūṭhī* in charge of Pacali Bhairava's affairs. This ceremony was traditionally

tor of Bhairava's *śakti* so that he may perform his role in the festivities. The drinking, together with the fact that the urn must be carried in a nonstop rush, has on at least two occasions ended in calamity, when the clay pot was dropped. Both sites, near Chikamugal-tol, are well remembered, and sacrifices are made there regularly in Pacali Bhairava's name. Sometime during the Rana period, the occasion of the last mishap, the urn was replaced with the gilt metal one now in use.

⁹⁷ Wright 1966:7 n. 4.

⁹⁸ The barbaric rite was halted during the Rana regime, but there have been recent attempts to revive it. The custom may well originate in Licchavi times, since two inscriptions mention the bullfight (*goyuddha*) festival celebrated in Dakṣīnakoligrāma (southern Kathmandu) (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 115, 129 (433-437, 485-489)).

⁹⁹ There is much drinking during the festival—for one thing, it induces a trance-like condition in the impersona-

accompanied by a ritual exchange of courtesies with the king of Kathmandu (and later Nepal) at a modest hypaethral shrine in the roadway adjacent to Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa.

To some extent, all Nepalese count themselves the devotees of Pacali Bhairava, and, as neutral ground, his *piṭha* was a favorite venue for diplomatic exchanges between the quarrelsome kings of Kathmandu and Patan. But he is most intimately associated with Jyapus and Manandhars, Newar farmers and (formerly) oil-pressers who inhabit the southern half of Kathmandu. It is the Jyapus who preempt Bhairava's cult, but both groups turn often to the deity in their affairs. Manandhars and Jyapu youths who live south of Hanuman Dhoka, for example, undergo one of their most important *samśkāras* (sacraments) at Bhairava's *piṭha*, a hair-cutting ceremony through which they pass to manhood and are integrated into their caste.

Pacali Bhairava may originally have been the deity of a Licchavi *pañcālī* of Dakṣiṇakoliṅrāma, from whence his name, rather than from five (*pañca*) lingas, as is frequently thought.¹⁰⁰ But the first specific reference to the god occurs in a fourteenth-century copperplate inscription affixed to Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa (a site intimately associated with his contemporary rites), where as Lord Pacali (*pañcali bhahrāhra*) he is invoked as a treaty witness.¹⁰¹ But, as is true for so many deities in the Valley, his devotees have their own conception of his history. To them he is a reincarnated mortal (usually identified as a king of Pharping), who nightly consorted with a girl of the lowly butcher caste (Kasain) who resided outside the walls of southern Kathmandu. One night, doubting that her lover could really be Bhairava, as he claimed, the Kasaini implored him to reveal to her his immortal form. To this he agreed on the condition that, once satisfied, she would restore him to human form by scattering over him some consecrated

grains of rice. But when Bhairava became manifest in all his terrible majesty, the terror-stricken girl forgot the magic rice clutched in her hand, and fled. Before the pursuing Bhairava could catch and calm her, the cock of dawn began to crow. Bhairava, by now near the cremation grounds, quickly concealed himself in a roll of straw matting that had served to carry a corpse to the ghats. His buttocks were not quite hidden, however, and the first risers found him so. Thus, Bhairava's ill-concealed buttocks are still worshiped in the form of the stone that protrudes through the brass flooring of the *piṭha*. Originally, the stone may have been reminiscent of human buttocks, and helped to engender the story. In any event, Pratāpamalla allegedly caused "the greater part of the emblem of Panchlinga Bhairava to be covered up, because people from the plains of India, seeing the jalhari, used to laugh at the Nepalese for sacrificing animals to Mahadeva."¹⁰² The fleeing Kasaini, say the Nepalese, was also turned into a stone, and is enshrined near Bhairava's *piṭha*, in a hypaethral shrine shared with other Mothers. In the form of a gilt skull cup (*kapāla*), she also has a place in the *deochem* beside Bhairava's beer jar. As his *śakti* she shares his worship and plays an important part in his annual festival.¹⁰³

The Cult of Viṣṇu

The term Śivamārgī, which the Nepalese apply to themselves if they are not Buddhists, is deceptive. For although the sectarian-sounding name in fact broadly signifies Hindu, and is understood to embrace all of the Brahmanical and Vedic gods, it obscures the importance of Viṣṇu, one of the most beloved gods of Nepal Mandala (Plates 370-412). Licchavi inscriptions, temple sites, and stone sculptures attest that the importance of Viṣṇu equalled—perhaps even surpassed—Śiva in ancient Nepal.

earliest image yet identified as Bhairava is a small bronze dating from the Transitional Period, circa tenth century, now in a collection abroad (Pal 1974:fig. 151).

¹⁰² Wright 1966:145.

¹⁰³ See Anderson 1971:156-163 for a lively description of some of the Nepalese Bhairavas and the festival of Pacali Bhairava.

¹⁰⁰ Nepali 1965:303.

¹⁰¹ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 27 (18-21). No image of any Bhairava has been recovered from Licchavi times, unless the Bhairava-śilā are of that date and were indeed worshiped in his name. The Vajrabhairava mentioned in an inscription of Śivadeva II (circa A.D. 694-705) is another name for the fierce Yamāntaka, a Buddhist divinity (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 141 [523-526]). The

Despite continuous burgeoning of Śiva in Nepali esteem, a process that appears to have begun with Amśuvarman's elevation of Paśupati in the early seventh century A.D., Viṣṇu has held his own into our time as one of the nation's paramount divinities. However, it would not be correct to speak now of Vaiṣṇavas, or even really of a "cult" of Viṣṇu in the sense of an exclusive sectarian system of beliefs and ritual. Rather, Viṣṇu is merely one of the most important gods in the Valley to whom all Nepalese pay their homage—even if the Bud-dhamārgis sometimes disguise their allegiance by identifying his image as that of the Buddha or Avalokiteśvara.

Viṣṇu, or Nārāyaṇa, one of the deity's names in his supreme aspect, is a primary godhead of the Brahmanical trinity—which, with Brahmā's eclipse, is in effect now a duo. As Śiva is the Destroyer, Viṣṇu is the Preserver and, further, largely preempts Brahmā's role as the Creator. He is a resplendent god, a benevolent savior to be adored, not feared. Thus he is worshiped with fruits and flowers, and shuns blood and alcohol. His gentle nature is evidenced in his majestic and placid images, interrupted only occasionally by a fierce form that he sometimes assumed briefly in order to overcome evil and preserve the universe (Plate 394). Even his tantric representations, so characteristic of Viṣṇu images of Malla Nepal, are still predominantly placid, in no way comparable to the maleficent forms of Śiva or the Mātṛkas (Plate 390). In contrast to Śiva, whose anthropomorphic icons in Nepal are few compared to the abstract linga, Viṣṇu icons are legion, his symbolic representations few. It is decreed that Viṣṇu "is to be always worshipped in his images; but when these are wanting, then alone other objects are to be used for this purpose."¹⁰⁴ Of these "other objects," the most common in the Kathmandu Valley is the *śālagrāma* (saligram), a fossil ammonite of black stone that occurs in the Kali Gandaki River of western Nepal, and is considered to be a celestial form of the god.¹⁰⁵ But even this symbol is often anthropomorphized by adding a face in red and

yellow paint. Normally, *śālagrāmas* are confined to domestic worship, or are piled as accessories to Viṣṇu images (Plate 387), a practice reminiscent of the rounded stones often piled around Śivaliṅgas and Śiva icons. Viṣṇu may also be worshiped in the form of his footprints (Viṣṇupada), impressed to distinguish them from the relief prints that symbolize Gorakṣanātha, a form of Śiva.

Because of Viṣṇu's historical role and continuing importance in contemporary life, Viṣṇu is one of the most rewarding deities for the student of Nepalese culture. He is a divinity of profound philosophical interest, and a savior figure with whom it is easy for Westerners to empathize, as we cannot, for example, with Bhairava or the maleficent Mātṛkas, who remain outside our ken.

Immensely complex, Viṣṇu is a deity of many origins, and composed of many strands of different ages and importance. Among them, however, three constituents predominate and help us to define his character: Āditya Viṣṇu, a Vedic solar deity; Nārāyaṇa, a cosmic deity; and a deified hero, Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa. Like Śiva, Viṣṇu has many aspects, innumerable names, and several distinctive cults. His concepts and legends have engendered an exceedingly rich iconology, providing the Kathmandu Valley with some of its most sublime, monumental, and heroic sculptures.¹⁰⁶

Viṣṇu's cosmic nature is perhaps no better expressed than by the god himself in the *Mahābhārata*, where in the guise of Kṛṣṇa he aids the Pāṇḍavas in their epic struggle with the Kauravas. The god expounds to Arjuna, one of the Pāṇḍavas, his universality, his immanence in all beings and objects, the diversity of his nature, and his variable manifestations. Arjuna longs to see such an all-encompassing divinity, and begs the god to reveal himself in the universal form (*viśvarūpa*) of which he has spoken so vividly. Obliging, in all his cosmic majesty, Viṣṇu materializes before the awed Arjuna in a visitation known as Viśvarūpa-darśana (Plates 370-373). With body both stalwart and resplendent, with diverse heads, pacific and terrific, and with numerous arms displaying a host of

means exhausted, although a book and many papers have been devoted to it, particularly Pal 1963, 1967a, 1970, 1972b, 1974.

¹⁰⁴ Banerjea 1956:394, quoting from the *Nārada Pañcārātra*, a Vaiṣṇava text.

¹⁰⁵ Landon 1928:11, 14-15.

¹⁰⁶ The study of Vaiṣṇava iconology in Nepal is by no

weapons and symbols, the god declares: "Gaze, then . . . I manifest for thee those hundred thousand shapes that clothe my Mystery."¹⁰⁷ As Pal has discussed, there is no more courageous and effective attempt to depict these events in plastic form than by some unknown sculptor of the Late Licchavi Period (Plates 371, 372).¹⁰⁸ As a theme of considerable appeal in Nepal Mandala, Viṣṇu Viśvarūpa was attempted many times in the seemingly difficult media of stone and bronze. Important paintings, if they existed, have not survived.

One of these plastic works of the Universal Viṣṇu, far less ambitious than the Changu Nārāyaṇa masterpiece, and considerably predating it, stands forgotten by the wayside in Chabahil village (Plate 370).¹⁰⁹ Much damaged by the years, the image is mistakenly worshiped as Bhagavatī (Durgā) or as Dhōdigu, the fox-god, for its presumed relationship with a nearby fox-like image. Nonetheless, the Chabahil image is unmistakably Viṣṇu in his cosmic manifestation astride the three worlds. Like the Changu example, Viṣṇu is multiheaded, his several arms display a variety of weapons, and he is supported by Pṛthvī, a personification of earth, and a Nāgarāja (serpent king), symbol of the underworld. Identification of the remaining figures in this much-weathered composition is hazardous, but Lakṣmī, the god's chief consort, is almost certainly one of them.

Following by a millennium the execution of the Chabahil image, Pratāpamalla commissioned a Viṣṇu Viśvarūpa to celebrate the Indra-jātrā of A.D. 1657 (Plate 373).¹¹⁰ Executed in lost-wax casting and repoussé, the Kathmandu image in its way vies with the Changu masterpiece on this same theme. The later work, however, attempts to convey Viṣṇu's cosmic nature through imposing size, heroic stance, and the physical incorporation of the "hundred thousand shapes that clothe [his] Mystery." No longer the staunchly immovable god of the earlier images, the Kathmandu Viṣṇu assumes the vigorous *pratyāliḍha* stance, the "heroic diagonal." This, together with his forbidding principal face and rotund body, makes him altogether

Bhairavalike. The many gods the universal Viṣṇu incorporates are shown as a *nāga*-canopied pyramid of diverse heads, complemented by multiple limbs. The Bhairavalike central face is flanked by those of Indra and other well-known gods of Hinduism, and above is the Buddha; the rest of the forty-odd heads depict fantastic, theriomorphic deities common to Nepali tantric imagery. The diversity of the deities is further defined by the cognizances displayed in some of the many hands. Each of the thirty-two principal hands holds a separately cast image, scarcely two inches high, each often jewel-inlaid and displaying in its tiny hands clearly identifiable attributes. In the deity's lower principal hands, for example, an unmistakable Bhīmasena battles a *daitya* (demon). Innovative also is Viṣṇu's rotund belly bearing the *udare-mukha* (literally, "face belly") from whose mouth dangles another miniature cast figure. Normally, this technical tour-de-force of seventeenth-century metalwork is stored in the Hanuman Dhoka treasury. But it is annually displayed outdoors for the week of Indra-jātrā and, quite unaccountably and quite unnoticed, is exposed once again in the nearby royal *vihāra*, Lāykū-bahil, on the occasion of Janai-pūrṇimā.

The Viśvarūpa theme must have had particular appeal to Pratāpamalla, who also had it executed in wood, a charming folk carving preserved over the Hanūmān gateway of the palace (Plate 141). It is flanked by the worshiping images, also in wood, of this interesting ruler and one of his queens, and on the other side, by Kṛṣṇa and the milkmaids. Miniature representations of Viṣṇu Viśvarūpa are also sometimes encountered in manuscripts prepared in the period of the Three Kingdoms, and the Viśvarūpa theme occurs in murals of that time.



The magnificent concept of godhead embodied in Viṣṇu is apparent in his aspect as Nārāyaṇa afloat in the immense void of the cosmic ocean, symbol of the generative life force that is also Viṣ-

¹⁰⁷ Pal 1970:51.

¹⁰⁸ Pal 1967a:45-54; 1970:50-61; 1974:78-79.

¹⁰⁹ Shortly after I left Nepal, my assistant G. Vajracharya, in continuing our search for early images, discov-

ered the Chabahil Viṣṇu. I am grateful to Catherine Dick for photographing it for me.

¹¹⁰ Dated by a dedicatory inscription engraved on the pedestal, N.S. 777 Śrāvaṇa (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1961i).

ṇu himself (Plates 374-377). Technically known as Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa (Nārāyaṇa-Lying-on-the-Water), Anantaśayin, or Śeṣaśayana (Lying-on-the-Serpent Ananta, or Śeṣa), in this form after each cyclical destruction of the universe Nārāyaṇa drowns for untold eons in the infinite watery reaches. At length arousing himself, the godly aspects issue from Viṣṇu's navel, a concept symbolized by the divine lotus supporting Brahmā, the Creator (Plates 374, 375). The recumbent deity is supported on the immense coils of the polycephalous serpent Ananta (Endless), or Śeṣa (Remainder), a divine being who symbolizes the waters remaining after the cosmic ocean, in the endless cycle, is again transmuted into life. Moreover, ocean, serpent, and deity are one, for Nārāyaṇa is conceived as both the water and Ananta/Śeṣa upon whose undulating coils he reclines. It is Viṣṇu/Ananta/Balarāma (one of his avatars), symbol of cosmic waters and the netherworld, whom we see as the lowest image of the Changu Nārāyaṇa Viśvarūpa (Plate 371).

During the infinite interim, between destruction and creation, Viṣṇu, as conceived by a seventh-century Licchavi panegyrist, lolls on his serpent couch with Lakṣmī, his ocean-wet body thrilling to the touch of her breasts.¹¹¹ Like any mortal on a lazy afternoon, the god is pictured lying with half-closed eyes, drowsily stifling recurrent yawns, and with an idle finger languidly digging in his ears. Rather than for pleasure, this digging is an allusion to the terrible demons, Madhu and Kaiṭabha, who, like the godly aspects that issue from Viṣṇu's navel, emerge from his ears (Plates 374, 375). Personifying violence and ignorance, the cause of evil, the demonic pair attempted to frustrate the creation of the universe, until Viṣṇu thwarted them by reab-

sorbing them into his body. But periodically, Madhu and Kaiṭabha emerge anew to entrain the endless cycles of universal disasters until, once more, they are reabsorbed into the divine essence that is Viṣṇu. Thus Nārāyaṇa's vast body, itself the cosmic waters, serpent, and divinity, is a divine essence that contains within it all aspects of the universe, godly and demonic. The god is at once the Creator of the universe, for a time its Preserver, and at last its Destroyer. He is also the epitome of *māyā* (illusion), the eternal cosmic dream.¹¹²

Like the god's universal manifestation as Viśvarūpa, such a cosmogony and lofty concept of divinity was bound to challenge Nepalese artists. There are no fewer than three monumental Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa stone sculptures bequeathed by the Licchavis. One, in all likelihood Bhumbhukikā, mentioned as a recipient of Aṃśuvarman's largesse, was taken to Hanuman Dhoka in the seventeenth century by Pratāpamalla;¹¹³ a second was installed in a pool at Balaju between about A.D. 633 and 643 by Viṣṇugupta;¹¹⁴ and a third, also commissioned by Viṣṇugupta, was established at Budhanilkantha (Plate 376). The Budhanilkantha image is the largest, and as an object of great importance in contemporary culture will be discussed below.

Jalaśayana imagery continued to capture the Nepalese imagination. The fourteenth-century noble, Madanasimha-rāma-varddhana of the Bhoṭarājya, commissioned a sculpture on this theme, now abandoned on a slope below the mountain town of Palanchok—a large but pedestrian composition that clearly overtaxed the artist's skills.¹¹⁵ Minor stone sculptures of late date, usually quite grotesque, dot the ghats of the Bagmati and Vish-

2, 4, 5, 17, 18, where they are discussed in extenso, pp. 84-127.

¹¹¹ From the invocation of a joint inscription of Bhūmarjunadeva and Jiṣṇugupta, erected in Thankot village A.D. 633 (ss. 57 Kārtikā) (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 115 [433-437]).

¹¹² One of the most poetic explanations of the Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa aspect, which has influenced my understanding and description, may be found in Zimmer 1968:1, 12-14, 165-166.

¹¹³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 77 (320-335); Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:126, fig. 17. Detail photographs of the Budhanilkantha image and other Nepalese Jalaśayana images may be seen in Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:figs. 1,

2, 4, 5, 17, 18, where they are discussed in extenso, pp. 84-127.

¹¹⁴ Strictly speaking, the image is not a true Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa but a composite of Śiva and Viṣṇu, an altogether unique image of unusual symbolism, long erroneously scorned as a seventeenth-century reproduction of the Budhanilkantha image (Slusser and Vajracharya 1973: 89-125).

¹¹⁵ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:127, fig. 18. In all likelihood it was in emulation of Viṣṇugupta's gifts, as I have proposed Slusser 1979a.

numati, the principal Valley streams, both associated with Viṣṇu (Plate 377).¹¹⁶ In the Late Malla and the Shah Periods the recumbent Viṣṇu was a popular theme in mural and manuscript paintings, and for paintings on multi-layered paper that served both a didactic purpose and as icons for domestic worship (Plates 374, 375).¹¹⁷ Oddly, considering the immense attraction the Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa had for Nepalis of all times, no bronze representation of the theme is known.¹¹⁸ Truly, as the *Himavatkhanda* declares, "Nepal is beautified by the presence of Nārāyaṇeśvara who dwells in the water and is incessantly served by *yaḅṅsas*."¹¹⁹



In his role as universal savior, Viṣṇu is envisioned as soaring about the skies, keeping close watch on the affairs of the three worlds—earth, heaven, and the nether regions. This is accomplished seated majestically astride his faithful companion and vehicle (*vāhana*), Garuḁa (Plates 378, 379), a figure venerated in Nepal as a divinity in his own right (Plates 64, 240, 243). Known technically as Garuḁāsana Viṣṇu (Viṣṇu-Seated-on-Garuḁa), it is this aspect that provided the cult image for Viṣṇu's hilltop temple at Changu. Sequestered inside the shrine since at least the fourth century A.D. (a dating discussed below), the famous Nārāyaṇa provided the model for countless successor images of various dates, widely distributed throughout Nepal Mandala.¹²⁰

The many aspects of Nārāyaṇa/Viṣṇu may be reduced to a fundamental five, from whence one of the names of his principal cult, the Pāñcarātra. Flowering in India about the same time as the Pāśupatas, the Pāñcarātra is the only historically

¹¹⁶ The Sanskrit name of the river, whence the popular name Bagmati, is Vāgavati, and was derived from Vāk, the Vedic goddess of speech, who is identified as Sarasvatī, one of Viṣṇu's consorts.

¹¹⁷ Such an icon was included in the murals destroyed in the Hanuman Dhoka palace wing, discussed in Chapter 6, and a manuscript illustration may be seen in Pal 1970: fig. 1.

¹¹⁸ A bronze exhibited recently at Asia House, New York, was mistakenly identified as a Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa (Pal 1975:pl. 82). As the disposition of arms and legs and the broken tangs on the feet attest, it originally stood upright as part of the decoration of a temple *torana*.

significant Vaiṣṇava cult in Nepal, and has determined much of Nepal's Vaiṣṇava imagery. Of the primary aspects conceived by the Pāñcarātrins, only three need concern us: the god's supreme, emanatory, and incarnatory aspects.

In his supreme (*para*) form, Viṣṇu is the Universal Monarch and Creator who is, in essence, formless. Nonetheless, icons of the Supreme Viṣṇu (or more exactly, Para Vāsudeva) were formulated and are the most common form of representation of Viṣṇu in the Kathmandu Valley (Plates 65, 380-383). Among the most ancient and most recent, images of Viṣṇu in his supreme aspect achieved great popularity from the tenth century onward. As befits a monarch, the Supreme Viṣṇu is always depicted sternly erect, and displays in his four arms his chief cognizances: the wheel of life (*caḅra*), the club (*gadā*) to dissipate illusion, the conch shell (*śaṅkha*) embodying the primordial sound of the cosmos, and, to signify his creativity, the lotus (*padma*), a fairly late addition to his symbology. The *caḅra* and *gadā* also serve as his primary weapons, and are occasionally personified as Cakra-puruṣa and Gadānārī, literally, "wheel man" and "club woman." Less frequently, the conch or lotus replaces the more familiar personifications; then they are known as Śaṅkha-puruṣa and Padma-puruṣa (Plate 65). Generically, such personifications are known as Āyudhapuruṣa ("weapons men"). Sometime in the Transitional Period, the Para Viṣṇu icon was elaborated to include minor flanking images of the god's chief consort Lakṣmī and his mount Garuḁa (Plate 383). Another popular Nepalese arrangement for icons of the Supreme Viṣṇu is as a *caturmukha*, in which four identical images, alone or, later, flanked by Lakṣmī and

There is one like it in situ over the northern door of the Changu Nārāyaṇa temple, and a similar image in stone is an accessory in the shrine of Satya Nārāyaṇa (Plate 381).

¹¹⁹ Chap. 70, v. 44 and Nepali translation p. 162.

¹²⁰ Such images are quite common in stone, but less familiar in bronzes and paintings. Two important in situ stone examples are illustrated by Slusser 1976:fig. 8, and Pal 1972:fig. 4. The latter represents a subsequent development in which the god's consorts are introduced, either seated on Garuḁa's outstretched wings or standing nearby, as they occur, for example, in an unpublished eighteenth-nineteenth century image in the Kumbheśvara temple courtyard, Patan.

Garuḍa, are addorsed to a linga-like column (Plate 385). Reminiscent both of the Buddhist *catur-mukha* shrines (Plates 273-275) and the *catur-mukhalīngas*, which probably provided the Vaiṣṇava model, it is obvious why the image is not regarded as sectarian, and why both Buddhāmārgī and Śivāmārgī find it natural to worship such an image.

In Pāñcarātra theosophy, there are twenty-four forms that emanate from the Supreme Viṣṇu, each of which combines certain of his multiple aspects. Of these emanations (*vyūha*), four are primary, twenty secondary, and all have specific names (Śrīdhara, Keśava, Hari, for examples). They are known generically as *caturviṃśatimūrti*. Each of the four primary aspects (*caturvyūha*) (one of which is the Supreme Viṣṇu [Para Vāsudeva] himself) faces a specified quarter of the universe, and each displays two special objects to symbolize the particular aspects he embodies. Thus Saṃkarṣaṇa (who is also Balarāma, another form of Viṣṇu) faces south, holds the pestle and plow, and personifies the aspects time and death (Plate 386); Pradyumna faces west, and holds bow and arrows (yogic fire); Aniruddha north, with sword and shield (renunciation); and Vāsudeva east, with wheel and club (Plate 387). Thus, together with the lotus and conch, the two symbols all the emanations hold, Vāsudeva commands the chief symbols of Viṣṇu. Casually regarded, individual icons of the emanatory forms look very much alike, and are rarely referred to in contemporary Nepal more specifically than as "Narain." This is understandable, because the only differences among the images of the twenty sub-emanations (and in some instances among all twenty-four) is in the disposition of the four chief symbols, each god displaying one of the possible twenty-four permutations. Fourteen of the *caturviṃśatimūrtis* may be seen enshrined one above the other in the median vertical border of the Bhaktapur Viṣṇu-maṇḍala (Plate 383). The Supreme Viṣṇu is most frequently represented with the arrangement of symbols particular to Śrīdhara (Plates 385, 387).

¹²¹ Dated by an in situ inscription n.s. 686, but published as n.s. 684 by D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 18 (21-23).

¹²² They were discovered by accident. Deceived by the

Like the composition of four identical images of the Supreme Viṣṇu (Plate 385), one of the most favored ways of representing the *caturvyūha*, the four primary emanations, is as a *caturmukha*. In Nepal such images are usually referred to as a *caturmūrti* or Char-Narayan (*cāra*, four). A splendid example is enshrined at Nārāyaṇa Hiti, Kathmandu (Plates 386-388), and another, named in the dedicatory inscription "*caturvyūhātma-ka-Viṣṇu*," was commissioned by the *mahāpātra* Purandarasiṃha (who received a singularly pedestrian image for his pains). This was to serve as the cult image of a Newar-style temple erected in the Patan Darbar Square in A.D. 1566.¹²¹ Today the latter is scarcely worshiped, while the former attracts a steady stream of devotees. The four Nārāyaṇa Hiti emanations have special priests exclusively devoted to their care. They accord them an exceptionally protracted daily worship (*nitya pūjā*) prior to the public's arrival at the shrine. The gods are awakened at an early hour and stripped of their clothing, ornaments, and yesterday's faded flowers and withered fruits. While waiting for their baths, they are carefully protected by a tent-like garment concealing all but their eyes. After a thorough cleansing with water and washcloth, they are dried, dressed in white dhoti and brilliant outer garments, and the central column to which they are addorsed is crowned with silver and gilt *nāgas* and a full-blown gilt metal lotus. The principal Vāsudeva aspect, which faces the main (eastern) door, then receives further attention. His feet, club, and wheel are sheathed in silver, his eyes covered with silver foil, his lips painted, and a Vaiṣṇava sect mark applied to his forehead in brilliant colors. At last his gilt crown is adjusted and he is garlanded with gilt and silver chains (Plate 388). As a final touch, the god is almost buried beneath freshly gathered blossoms. Even the little faces painted on the *śālagrāmas* piled at the deities' feet are renewed in the course of the daily *pūjā*. It is little wonder that the existence of four sublime early Viṣṇu images under such splendor was previously unsuspected.¹²² Beyond its

cult trappings, I had supposed the image was as recent as the *śikhara* temple in which it stood. This proved otherwise during an especially early-morning visit with my colleague G. Vajracharya to study the associated Garuda

style, the only clue to the history of the Nārāyaṇa Hiti Caturvyūha is an entry in the *Bhāṣāvamśavalī*; it states that "Dharmagatādeva built a *caturmukha* Nārāyaṇa west of his palace and made two fountains and a *tīrtha* which became famous as Nārāyaṇa-dhārā."¹²³ Although Dharmagatādeva is an alternate name for King Dharmadeva, who ruled about A.D. 450, the high Gupta quality of the images precludes identification of the donor as this king. They were almost certainly installed around the seventh century, a particularly fecund period in the history of Nepal Mandala.

Less common by far than as four adorsed images—and in Nepal confined to the Late Malla Period—Viṣṇu's four primary emanations are also crystallized in the form of a multiheaded deity. Technically, such images are referred to as *Vai-kunṭha*, the name of Viṣṇu's heavenly abode, or as *Caturānana* (four-headed).¹²⁴ An exceptionally striking example, long out of worship, occupies a corner of an open porch in Nasal Chok, Hanuman Dhoka, and another in stone stands in the Changu Nārāyaṇa courtyard (Plates 389, 390). Such images are usually endowed with four different faces: two human, one placid (*Vāsudeva*) and one fierce or female (*Aniruddha*); and two animal, a lion (*Samkarṣaṇa*) and a boar (*Pradyumna*). In the Changu Nārāyaṇa example, however, the deity has more than the usual number of heads, the Hanuman Dhoka image fewer. In the latter, the demonic (or female) face that would be hidden from the worshiper was omitted. The bronze was formerly enshrined facing Hanuman Dhoka, but when the temple was destroyed in the 1934 earthquake the deity was carried to the palace for safekeeping. At the time, an amulet was recovered bearing the name Jagajjaya, the ruler of Kathmandu from A.D. 1722 to 1734, who had consecrated the Viṣṇu temple in the memory of his deceased son, Rājendra.¹²⁵

image (which we suspected was the Licchavi image *Pratāpamalla* had brought to Hanuman Dhoka but later banished because it gave "much annoyance" [Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:135-137, fig. 25]). The visit coincided with the deities' baths, when the images were revealed in all their seventh-century glory.

¹²³ B. Paudel 1963:62.

¹²⁴ The term *Caturānana* has been proposed as more apt than *Vaikunṭha* by Pal 1974b:37.



In the endless cycle of Destruction and Creation, each time evil gets out of hand and the universe goes awry, Viṣṇu in his role as universal savior is called upon by his immortal companions, the *devas*, to set things right. To do so, Viṣṇu adopts some special form—a fish, a tortoise, or boar, a dwarf, or even on one occasion the likeness of the Buddha. These are his incarnate (*vibhava*) forms, most commonly known as avatars (*avatāra*). There have been many such incarnations of Viṣṇu, but with the Gupta period they were codified to a stereotyped ten, the *Daśavatāra*. These may be seen as the superior border of the *Bhaktapur Viṣṇu-maṇḍala* and in the painting of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī (Plates 383, 409). Each incarnation is conceived to have taken place on a special day, a birthday so to speak, and thus the Nepalese lunar calendar is studded with their *jayanti*, each now celebrated with differing degrees of enthusiasm. In the Valley, Viṣṇu's incarnate forms are also accorded special worship as a group when, on each successive evening of the annual *Indra-jātrā*, a *tableau vivant* of the *Daśavatāra* is enacted on the steps of one of the Viṣṇu temples in the Kathmandu Darbar Square. Individually, some of the avatars have only limited appeal to the Nepalese, and are rarely worshiped apart from the group. For example, the little island shrine of *Macche-Narayan* (*Matsya-Nārāyaṇa*) at *Macchegaon* is the only exclusive souvenir in the entire Kathmandu Valley of Viṣṇu's avatar in the form of a fish (*matsya*).¹²⁶ Yet others—for example the Boar, Man-lion, and and Dwarf—have endlessly fascinated the Nepalese (Plates 391-396). Representations of these three have often been repeated in a variety of media since at least the fifth century A.D., their legends are the best known and the most often told, and they play a well-defined role in the cultural life of Ne-

¹²⁵ G. Vajracharya 1976:25; P. Sharma 1975:55-56. Pal 1970:110, fig. 78 had supposed the image to date from *Pratāpamalla's* reign.

¹²⁶ It is possible that a bas-relief stone carving embedded in the busy crossroads of *Asan-tol*, Kathmandu, represents Viṣṇu's *Matsya-avatāra*, but if so, it is no longer associated with him and is now merely a folk godling known as the "Fish of *Asan-tol*" (Slusser 1972a:9-12).

pal Mandala. The Ābhīra Gupta, Bhaumagupta (ca. A.D. 567-590), for example, appears to have chosen Viṣṇu's avatar as the boar, Varāha, as the subject of a commission (Plate 392). As the savior of Earth, personified as the goddess Bhūdevī (Pṛthvī), the boar is depicted surging from the watery abyss with the goddess perched on an up-raised elbow, an image type emulated in many places and at many times in Nepal Mandala (Plate 393).¹²⁷ Because of this association with Earth, Varāha is conceived as the god of earthquake; each time the earth shakes he is shifting his burden from one tusk to the other.¹²⁸ In this guise, as "Bhūkadyo" (from Sanskrit *bhūmikāmpa*, earthquake), one of his most distinguished representations is at Bhaktapur. Formerly enshrined at Gahhiti-tol in the center of the town, Bhūkadyo is said to have been banished to the cremation ghats after having miserably failed his devotees in the 1934 earthquake.¹²⁹

Viṣṇu as Narasiṃha, half man, half lion, is the only fierce nontantric representation of Viṣṇu, a cunning form he devised in order to destroy evil embodied in the form of a demon (Plates 391, 394). Although there are many representations of Narasiṃha, early and late and in various media, none is more forceful or more culturally interesting than the image Pratāpamalla established in the Nasalchok of Hanuman Dhoka (Plate 394). As we have seen from the king's own words (Chapter 8), this was to mitigate the distressing possession by Narasiṃha, whom he had personified in a dance drama in the palace courtyard.

As the tortoise (*kūrma*) avatar, Viṣṇu is best known in paintings that recount the popular story of the gods and demons churning the ocean in the quest for *amṛta*, the elixir of immortality. In this form, Viṣṇu descended to the abyss and supported the mountainous churn. On rare occasions the

Kūrma-avatāra is given plastic form, as may be seen beneath the Boar avatar on one of the *tunālas* of a Kathmandu *sattal* (Plate 391).

During the churning of the ocean, many other marvels besides *amṛta* were brought forth, among which were Lakṣmī and a fabled jewel, both of which fell to Viṣṇu. Known as *kaustubhamāni* or *śrīvatsa*, the jewel is depicted in Nepalese iconography in the center of Viṣṇu's breast in the form of an endless knot composed of two intertwined hearts (Plates 383, 394, 409).¹³⁰ It is a *mahāpuruṣa lakṣaṇa*, one of the signs of an outstanding personality, and the chest of the Buddha (and in India the Jinas) is also so marked.

The incarnation of the incomparable monarch Viṣṇu in the form of an insignificant dwarf (*vāmana*) is especially popular in Nepal, where it has been illustrated time and again (Plates 391, 395, 396, 434). The story provides the theme for two of the earliest dated Nepali stone reliefs, both offered by King Mānadeva I in honor of his mother in A.D. 467 (s.s. 389 Vaiśākha) (Plate 395).¹³¹ The incarnation was occasioned by the illusions of Bali, king of the demons (*asuras*) who, having conquered the earth, thought to extend his realm over heaven, too. Besought by the frightened gods, Viṣṇu in the form of a dwarfed Brahman mendicant appeared before Bali and his queen as they were about to perform the Vedic horse sacrifice, the *aśvamedha yajña* (Plates 395, 396, 434). As a Brahman entitled to gifts at such times, the Dwarf was offered whatever he wished. His modest request for that which he could cover in three steps was readily granted by Bali. But the boon once granted, Viṣṇu became manifest as the cosmic god, and with two strides encompassed the universe. With the third step he returned the arrogant Bali to the underworld—in Mānadeva's relief, the discomfited *asura* king is shown tumbling on his way,

¹²⁷ The historical and cultural implications of the image, now worshiped as Vārāhī, a form of Durgā, are explored by Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:131-135, fig. 22, and the art-historical ones by Pal 1970:26-28, figs. 4, 5; 1974:67-69, fig. 92. Pal 1974 also illustrates one of the several other Varāha avatars, and compares them with Indian examples (figs. 93-95).

¹²⁸ Crooke 1896:1, 35.

¹²⁹ Nepali 1965:330; Gutschow and Kölver 1975:28, 32.

¹³⁰ In a fourteenth-century Nepali painting of Viṣṇu in a private collection, the *kaustubhamāni* is represented by a thin gold plaque fastened to the deity's breast under the paint, now revealed by deterioration of the painting.

¹³¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 4, 5 (34-38). Whether one sculpture may in fact be a later copy is explored on art-historical grounds by Pal, who discusses the two inscribed stone sculptures and two well-known ones of later date (1970:30-44, figs. 7-10; 1974:17-20, figs. 1-4).

above the sacrificial horse (Plate 395). This popular Viṣṇu avatar is known alternately as Trivikrama (Viṣṇu of the Three Strides), Viṣṇuvikrānta (Striding Viṣṇu), or simply Vāmana (Dwarf). Mānadeva, for example, referred to it as Viṣṇuvikrānta, but another Licchavi donor funded a *goṣṭhī* to serve Lord Vāmana (*bhagavan Vāmanas-vāmi*).¹³² Colloquially, the avatar is usually known in modern Nepal as Baman- or even Bahun-avatar. The latter name is thought especially suitable, since *bahun* not only signifies Brahman, but the number fifty-two, thus, as inches, a fitting size for a dwarf.

It is of considerable interest that one of Mānadeva's Viṣṇuvikrānta donations was erected in Mrigasthali, at the confluence of an intermittent stream with the Bagmati (Map 6:13). Known as Tilganga, the Sesame Seed Ganges, the streamlet's name attests to a long association of Viṣṇu with the site. Traditionally, sesame seed (*tila*), an important aliment in Nepal, is believed to originate from Viṣṇu's perspiration, and he is the crop's protector. On Māgha- or Tila-saṅkrānti, the winter solstice and the first day of the solar month of Māgha, sesame seed and oil play an important ritual role, foods containing sesame are eaten and presented to family priests, and Viṣṇu is an object of special worship. Even though it is mid-winter and considered the coldest day of the year, people bathe in the chilly waters of Viṣṇu *tirthas*, and on that day certain Viṣṇu images are especially venerated. One of these is Satya Nārāyaṇa, who in Sthitimalla's time, at least, was known as Tilapāla Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu Protector of the Sesame Seed (Plate 381).¹³³ Another equally early image, said to have been self-generated from a merchant's store of seed, is the famous Bhaktapur Tilamādhava, Mādhava of the Sesame Seed. On Tila-saṅkrānti the temples of both the Hadigaon and Bhaktapur deities are open all day, the priests observe elaborate *pū-*

¹³² In s.s. 460 Jyestha (A.D. 538); D. Vajracharya 1973: inscr. 37 (168-169).

¹³³ The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fols. 21b-22a records that Jivagupta (the Ābhira ruler Jisṇugupta) offered "Lord Tilapāla Viṣṇu of the temple below the hill of Nandala [Hadigaon] a golden chain for his beautification and donated a pilgrim's shelter, many fields, a garden, and a building [for his support]."

¹³⁴ We know from the Anantalingeśvara inscription of Narendradeva that Vāmana-dvādaśī was celebrated in

jās, and throngs come in honor of Viṣṇu who, in the instance of Satya Nārāyaṇa, is otherwise a much-neglected image. At the curious folk celebration of Bala-caturdaśī, or Satbij (Seven Seeds), which earlier in the calendar round commemorates the demon-ghoul Bala's demise, sesame also figures. Then sesame and other food grains are scattered at Tilganga and throughout Mrigasthali, in the belief that for each seed offered the gods on that day, the donor will not only acquire merit equal to a gram of gold, but will escape the cycle of rebirth. This is also the day the Nārāyaṇa of Changu makes one of his twice-yearly visits to Kathmandu (Plate 411). At Tilganga, a few persons come each year on the Dwarf's birthday, Vāmana's Twelfth (Bhādra-śukla-dvādaśī), to pay homage to his image—as the Nepalese may well have each year since A.D. 467, when Mānadeva erected the temple and image at this sacred Viṣṇu *tirtha*.¹³⁴

There are other incarnate aspects of Viṣṇu which, despite being his avatars, are worshiped more as distinct deities in their own right. Such a deity is Rāma, or Rāmacandra (Plate 397). As the epic hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the hero-god's legend is well known, he has a number of temples and shrines, and his representations are common—although of these, few predate the Malla Period.¹³⁵ Like other important gods, Rāma serves many families as a lineage deity (*ḥuladevatā*).¹³⁶ A contingent of Newars, for example, now worship as Rāma with his twin sons, Lava and Kuśa, the portrait image of King Viṣṇugupta and his sons; they are embodied in an icon of the Supreme Viṣṇu with two personified emblems, Śaṅkha- and Padmapuruṣa (Plate 65). Compared to Rāma's worship in India, his cult in Nepal Mandala is modest. Bhaktapur is an exception, where Rāma claims a considerable following and has numerous shrines.

Licchavi Nepal (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 129 [485-489]), but there is the possibility that the Tilganga image is a copy of the Lazimpat companion, and if so we do not know when it was established at the site.

¹³⁵ Only one Licchavi Period image of Rāma is known, a circa seventh-century A.D. relief at Paśupatinātha published by Goetz 1955a:fig. 1 as a fifth-century work.

¹³⁶ Typically, Viṣṇu in his various forms serves as *ḥuladevatā* for the Newars, who do not seem to relate themselves to Śiva.

Elsewhere, Rāma is offered a rather lukewarm devotion, and there is only minimal observance of his special *jayanti*, Rāma-navamī (Rāma's Ninth). In fact, it is Rāma's helper, the monkey-god, Hanūmān, guardian and gatekeeper, who everywhere in the Valley outshines Rāma in popularity (Plates 398, 399).

Another significant avatar of Viṣṇu, codified as his eighth, is Balarāma (Plates 400, 401). He is at once Viṣṇu's avatar; an incarnation of the cosmic serpent Ananta/Śeṣa (who is also Viṣṇu [Plate 371]); Kṛṣṇa's elder brother, a Dionysian-like agrarian god; and a parallel emanatory form as Saṃkarṣaṇa, one of the *caturvyūhas* (Plate 386). Because his iconography so distinctly displays the water-symbolizing serpent, a creature of fundamental importance in Nepalese culture, one would expect Balarāma to be one of the most popular deities of Nepal Mandala. In contemporary Nepal, however, his role is a very modest one. Though he is sometimes worshiped in icons that have nothing to do with him (Plate 470), unexplainably his own images are out of worship. They cannot even be identified by those who proudly bear Balarāma's name as their own. As suggested by a newly found Licchavi sculpture, it is probable that his cult was once of greater importance, as it was at Mathura. Moss and dirt-covered, the Licchavi Balarāma relief (Plate 400) is sequestered in the same cramped court as the Liṅgāyata Umā-Maheśvara (Plate 355). It conforms perfectly to early textual references, as embodied in more than a score of Kuṣāṇa images of Balarāma found at Mathura.¹³⁷ Surrounded and canopied with serpents, the deity stands in graceful *tribhaṅga* (triple-curved) pose, his head markedly inclined and his right knee flexed, just as the texts recommend. He is four-armed, holds the grain-hulling pestle and the ploughshare (his primary cognizances, shared by Saṃkarṣaṇa), clasps a wine cup to his chest, and throws his fourth arm upward in drunken abandon. He wears a magnificent *ḥṛitimukha*-adorned crown and the prescribed single earring. But, true to the Nepali penchant for innovation, his plough is decorated with an elegantly carved *maḥara* instead of the recommended lion. In his representation at the base of the Changu Nārāyaṇa Viśva-

rūpa, he also holds a *maḥara*-decorated plough (Plate 371). Other images of Balarāma, of later date, also closely conform to the textual description of the multi-faceted Vaiṣṇava deity (Plate 401).

Since the Buddha is also conceived as an incarnation of Viṣṇu, it is little wonder that in the non-sectarian ambience of Nepal Mandala, Janārdana (a Viṣṇu emanation) came in the form of Buddha to establish a linga named Karuṇikeśvara;¹³⁸ that the Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa of Budhanilkantha is alternately worshiped as Buddha; or that Changu Nārāyaṇa is alternately worshiped as Avalokiteśvara. Both Viṣṇu and Buddha are lofty personages and compassionate saviors and, in the *caturmukha* icons, they share iconic types, carved, without doubt, by the same artists. Even the rites associated with Viṣṇu and Buddha are similar, as attested by modern practice and in the scenes of worship portrayed at the bottom of their respective banner paintings (*paṭa*, *paubhā*). Indeed, the Pāñcarātra view of Viṣṇu incarnated as Buddha seems to have backfired in Nepal Mandala. The Pāñcarātrins originally incorporated the Buddha as the "arch deluder," who by advocating false doctrines would sow confusion among the demons and thus destroy them.

Kṛṣṇa (Black) is sometimes thought of as an avatar of Viṣṇu (and in parts of India is substituted for Buddha in the *Daśāvātāra*), but he is more often considered an independent god with his own personal cult. A deity of ancient and complex origins, Kṛṣṇa's cult did not burgeon until about the fifteenth century, at the time of the general revival of Viṣṇuism under the influence of the Bengali teacher Caitanya (A.D. 1485-1533) and his followers. In Nepal, Kṛṣṇa worship was given particular impetus by the Maithilī influx.

Kṛṣṇa's story is long and involved, filled with gods and kings, demons and monsters, cowherders and lovelorn maidens, together with an enormous cast of characters that tax the memory. Studded with violence and with amour, the Kṛṣṇa legend is at once charming and joyous, unbecoming, and profoundly tragic. It is told in minute detail in the *Mahābhārata*, *Harivaṃsa*, *Bhagavata Purāṇa*, and other texts, and in Nepal is the subject of Pahārī-style narrative paintings on walls, banners, multi-

¹³⁷ N. P. Joshi 1973:245-249.

¹³⁸ *Nepāla-mahātmya*, chap. 1, vv. 57-65.

layered paper, and in manuscripts, of woodcarvings, bronzes, and stone sculptures (Plates 402-407).

In brief, Kṛṣṇa, like his elder brother, Balarāma, is created by Viṣṇu to destroy the terrible tyrant Kāṃsa, half-brother of Kṛṣṇa's mortal mother. Apprised that his sister's son is destined to destroy him, Kāṃsa murders each of her offspring at birth. Through one of the countless miracles that stud the Kṛṣṇa legend, the god-child escapes, to be raised incognito among the cowherds of Gokula and Vrindāvana, near Mathura on the Yamunā River. A delightful prankster kept out of mischief by being tied to the butter churns (Plate 402), Kṛṣṇa later fluctuates between satisfying the passion of Rādhā and her companion *gopīnīs* (maddened with love by the strains of his flute), and vanquishing a succession of demons who seek to destroy him. Two such contests, for example, are depicted in a didactic painting used in household worship: one is Kṛṣṇa destroying the cow-demon Vatsāsura, the other the crane-demon Bākāsura (Plate 402). Another contest concerns the monster dragon Ugrāsura who in attempting to destroy Kṛṣṇa, is, like the other demons, himself destroyed (Plate 403). After scores of such contests, right triumphs, and Kṛṣṇa at last destroys Kāṃsa, as prophesied. But with this event, the saga of Kṛṣṇa has only begun. There is still a struggle with Kāṃsa's avenging kinsmen and with various deities and demons; the *Mahābhārata* war and related adventures; and at last the deity's lonely death.

As a hero and savior at Vrindāvana, Kṛṣṇa not only vanquished his own adversaries, but also those of his companion cowherds. One such was the fearful serpent Kāliya, whose presence in the Yamunā had sorely tried the herders (Plates 404-407). The subjugation of Kāliya, a theme known as Kāliyadamana, is of uncommon interest in Nepal, and in contrast to other Kṛṣṇa exploits, it has often been rendered in plastic form. Among the

several extant Kāliyadamana sculptures, foremost is the one Pratāpamalla recovered from a Licchavi ruin and installed in Hanuman Dhoka (Plates 404, 405). Of probable seventh-century date,¹³⁹ the masterpiece is now ignored in a stagnant pool, sequestered in an interior courtyard closed to public view. There the divine child, at the apex of a monstrous pyramid of writhing serpentine coils, with a mere flick of a folded kerchief subjugates the astounded Kāliya. A supplicant *nāginī*, perhaps Kāliya's queen, regards the conflict, and what may be a herdboy joyously clambers from amidst the constricting coils.¹⁴⁰ As Pal has observed respecting this portrayal, "rarely has a Nepali sculptor—or for that matter his Indian counterpart—displayed such understanding of the psychology involved in the dramatic conflict between a child self-assured in his divinity and a monster arrogant in his self-delusion."¹⁴¹ The Hanuman Dhoka Kāliyadamana must once have been much admired, and it probably provided the model for another Kāliyadamana executed in wood a millennium later in the adjacent courtyard (Plate 406). Elsewhere, in a small stone relief of the Malla Period, an adult Kṛṣṇa subdues Kāliya with a club (Plate 407). Other Kāliyadamana images may yet be found, since both Yoganarendramalla of Patan and Jitāmītramalla of Bhaktapur are known to have commissioned such works.¹⁴²

It is probable that the Kāliyadamana theme owes its widespread appeal in Nepal to its association with the serpent, a creature of much significance there. Viṣṇu is not only himself the cosmic serpent Ananta/Śeṣa, symbol of life-generating and life-sustaining water, but he is intimately associated with the destruction of evil forces embodied in serpents or other creatures associated with water. For example, besides Kāliya there is Hiranyakṣa (Golden Eye), ravisher of Earth in the Varāha avatar; the marine demon conch, Pañcajana, and the *grāha*, a rapacious aquatic monster of the Gajendramokṣa legend (Plate 408). Gajendra, king

¹³⁹ The image has been variously dated between the fifth and seventh centuries. Pal has recently proposed the seventh-century date first assigned by Kramrisch 1964:29, pl. 4 (Pal 1974:66-67, figs. 90, 91; 1970:88-91, fig. 51).

¹⁴⁰ A recently found unpublished inscription casts some doubt on the dating of the image, and perhaps identifies

the accessory figures as the deceased son and daughter-in-law of its donor. If the image is in fact a Licchavi work, as it seems, it is the unique representation of Kṛṣṇa at that time, and his worship is supported by no epigraphs.

¹⁴¹ Pal 1974:67.

¹⁴² An unpublished *thyāsaphu*, and B. Paudel 1964a:15.

of the elephants, so the tale goes, while sporting in a pond with his companions, was seized by some denizen against whom all his elephantine force was of no avail.¹⁴³ At last, Gajendra pulled up some lotus blossoms and, holding them aloft as an offering, called upon the compassionate Viṣṇu for aid. Viṣṇu, of course, responded to his entreaties, and hurrying thither on Garuḍa, released the suffering beast. Since both Gajendra and the monster were in fact former human beings whom misfortune had thus reduced to animal adversaries, the merciful Viṣṇu restored them to their previous forms. In the Nepali painting (Plate 408), both are seen ascending from the pool on cloud vehicles (the *tai* borrowed from Chinese art), while a royal pair and a host of deities regard the scene from other cloud vehicles.

In contemporary Nepal, countless men bear Kṛṣṇa's name, but his most devoted followers are Gorkhali women. Although Kṛṣṇa is popular everywhere, just as Bhaktapur is Rāma's domain, so is Patan Kṛṣṇa's. His shrines are encountered in most of the Patan *toles*, and two of the most imposing temples of the Darbar Square are consecrated to him. One, erected in memory of Yoganarendramalla in A.D. 1723 (N.S. 843 Māgha), is of octagonal plan, a type of temple unexplainably reserved exclusively to Kṛṣṇa. The other, of square plan and a donation of Siddhinarasiṃhamalla in A.D. 1637 (N.S. 757 Phālguna), is the god's principal shrine in Nepal Mandala. It is much frequented at all times, and the god's great annual festival to commemorate his birth (*janma*) is held here: Kṛṣṇa's Eighth, or Janmāṣṭamī, on Bhādra-śukla-aṣṭamī. After a day of fasting, Kṛṣṇa's devotees crowd in and around the temple, wreathed in incense and the smoke from thousands of flickering oil lamps, to celebrate an all-night vigil commemorating the god's birth on the stroke of midnight. During the Patan celebration of Gai-jātrā, a common masquerade and mime is of Kṛṣṇa with his favorite wives, Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā. This trio was popular in the Late Malla Period as an image type known as Veṇudhara Kṛṣṇa—fluting

Kṛṣṇa flanked by his dancing consorts. In A.D. 1649, when Pratāpamalla lost Rupamatī and Rājamatī, two of his favorite queens, he memorialized them in this way. Building a temple near the palace, the Vaṃśāgopāla, he placed within the sanctum a Veṇudhara Kṛṣṇa flanked by portrait images of his own deceased queens, "so that they might find a place in heaven."¹⁴⁴

Viṣṇu is frequently worshiped in company with Śiva in a joint image known as Hari-Hara, Hari-Śaṅkara, or Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa (Plates 358, 359); with Śiva and Brahmā as a three-headed image known as Dattātreyā (a deity best represented in Bhaktapur); and on at least one occasion in ancient Nepal, Viṣṇu was combined with Brahmā, Śiva, and Devī as a *caturmukha* shrine (Plates 360, 431). But the most innovative way of worshiping him conjointly is with Lakṣmī in a composite image type known outside the Kathmandu Valley only textually, and in the Valley only from the Late Malla Period.¹⁴⁵ Technically referred to as Lakṣmī-Vāsudeva or Vāsudeva-Kamalajā, the conjoint image parallels the Ardhanārīśvara icon of the Śaivas, with one side male, the other female (Plate 409). Each half of the image displays its own cognizances, and stands on its own vehicle, Viṣṇu on Garuḍa, Lakṣmī on the tortoise. Such images are paralleled by another popular late image type of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī worshiped as Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa. Usually highly tantricized, the Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa image type depicts Viṣṇu, normally seated on Garuḍa, holding Lakṣmī, his *śakti*, as a diminutive figure on his lap. It is similar to the Changu Nārāyaṇa Caturānana Viṣṇu with Lakṣmī, except for the multiple heads of the latter composition (Plate 390).

As Viṣṇu's inseparable companion, his mount Garuda, or Suparṇa, half bird, half man, is a major accessory of Viṣṇuism. In contrast to other *vāhanas*, Garuda is frequently worshiped as an independent deity in his own right. The celebrated Changu Garuda (Plate 64), for example, is even the *kuḷadevatā* of certain Newar Shresthas. However, Garuda is never enshrined as a cult object but, in a conventional half-kneeling pose with

[86-88]).

¹⁴⁵ Pal 1963; D. Bhattacharya 1966.

¹⁴³ The event is alleged to have taken place at Sonepur, the confluence of the Gandak and Ganges (Dey 1971:60).

¹⁴⁴ N.S. 769 Phālguna (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 50

hands joined in the reverential *namaskāra mudrā*, faces an enshrined Viṣṇu (Plates 240, 243). Although he sometimes kneels at ground level or on a low pedestal, Garuḍa is most frequently placed aloft on a tall pillar, the Garuḍadhvaja. Rooted in ancient Indian pillar worship, the Garuḍa-crowned standard became in India a favorite Vaiṣṇava way of honoring Viṣṇu, as it has continued to be in Nepal into modern times.

Garuḍa was originally himself a solar deity, the celestial sunbird, Garutmān. In Indian iconography he began as the sunbird, and progressively became humanized. But in Nepal, the reverse was true. From the Licchavi Period almost to the end of the Malla Period—and there are Garuḍas from every age—most independent images of Garuḍa are represented in human form with the addition of cape-like wings.¹⁴⁶ Moreover, in such early images as the Garuḍa of Makhan-tol, Kathmandu,¹⁴⁷ or of Changu Nārāyaṇa (Plate 64), the moustached faces are so individualized that they appear to be portraits.¹⁴⁸ As such, they may probably be compared to the portrait images of the late Malla kings, who are similarly placed on tall pillars before the Taleju temples (Plates 32, 239). Even in strongly tantricized late Malla representations, it is often only Garuḍa's wings and feet that are fully avian (Plates 379, 383, 390). Although there are some earlier examples, it is largely only from the eighteenth century that the Nepalese Garuḍa begins to reassume the bird form with which he began in the remote past.¹⁴⁹ This is especially true when Garuḍa, grasping in his talons his adversaries the serpents, replaces the familiar *kīrti-mukha* and strings of jewels at the apex of *torāṇas* (Plate 414). Even in much earlier images, however, when the humanized Garuḍa actually bears Viṣṇu Garuḍāsana, he has clawed feet (Plate 378).

Garuḍa's traditional enmity with the serpents, his characteristic emplacement on a tall pillar, and his transfer from an independent solar deity to the mount of the solar Viṣṇu is explained in a single

legend. Garuḍa's mother was enslaved by a co-wife, mother of the Nāgas. The Nāgas promised her freedom if Garuḍa would bring them the elixir of immortality (*amṛta*). On his return from having successfully wrested the coveted potion from the gods, Garuḍa encountered Viṣṇu, who marveled at the messenger's abstinence from tasting the immortalizing nectar himself. To reward such sterling character, Viṣṇu conferred eternal life on Garuḍa, and granted him in perpetuity the right to be seated above himself; in return, Garuḍa became Viṣṇu's mount. But although Garuḍa duly delivered the *amṛta* and won his mother's freedom, Indra craftily deprived the Nāgas of their due, and thus generated the eternal quarrel between them and their half-brother, the celestial bird Garuḍa. It is this quarrel that Nepali woodcarvers so often perpetuate at the apex of *torāṇas* (Plates 196, 199, 414).



Although in Nepal Mandala temples, shrines, *sīrthas*, and images of Viṣṇu abound, there is no place more sacred to him than the Hill of the Palanquin, in Newari, Changu (*cāṅgum*), in Sanskrit, Dolādri, Dolāgiri, or Dolaśikhara. The deity worshiped there is known as Changu Nārāyaṇa, colloquially, Garuda Narain, and in Licchavi times as Dolaśikhara-svāmin, Lord of the Hill of the Palanquin.¹⁵⁰ In Viṣṇu worship, the celebrated Nārāyaṇa of Changu is comparable to Paśupati-nātha in Śiva worship. Crowning the hill, his temple occupies the center of a walled courtyard at the top of a steep stairway ascending from Changu village (Plate 410). Now a hamlet, Changu is a cluster of Newar houses reached by winding flagstone pilgrim paths from Bhaktapur and, from the opposite direction, by fording the Bagmati. Unlike Paśupatinātha, the temple compound is open to all, but only devotees are allowed to view the cult image.¹⁵¹ The large paved courtyard is hemmed by *dharmaśālās*, whose open porches face the central

¹⁴⁶ Pal 1974:figs. 98-106; Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:figs. 24, 26, 28; Vajracharya and Slusser 1974.

¹⁴⁷ Pal 1974:figs. 99-100; Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:fig. 28.

¹⁴⁸ Pal 1974:73 also writes of this probability.

¹⁴⁹ Pal 1974:fig. 107.

¹⁵⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 77, 119 (320-335, 452-453).

¹⁵¹ This was not always so. In Sylvain Lévi's efforts at the turn of the century to disinter and take rubbings of

temple, the largest of all in the Newar style, and a dazzling restoration of the eighteenth century. Around the temple are a number of subsidiary shrines to Kṛṣṇa, Śiva, Chinnamastā, and other Mātṛkas (Figure 15). The courtyard is studded with images of Viṣṇu in various aspects and of various dates, some broken and some on ruined temple foundations. There are also images of the Buddha and Avalokiteśvara, folk gods, Śivaliṅgas, and more. To these are added a number of inscriptions, early and late, and the gilt portrait images of Bhūpālendramalla and Queen Rddhīlakṣmī (Plate 69), protagonists in a political and social scandal of seventeenth-century Kathmandu, but nonetheless generous donors to Changu Nārāyaṇa. Stored on the porches of the *dharmasālās* are also several elaborate palanquins (*ḥhaṭas*) used for certain of the god's festive outings.

The first firm date that can be attached to this prestigious Vaiṣṇava shrine is A.D. 464, the year Mānadeva returned from his successes against the Mallapurī to raise his celebrated inscribed Garuḍadhvaja in front of the temple (Plates 47, 48). That the shrine already existed is made clear by the text of the inscription that refers to the enshrined image.¹⁵² Changu Nārāyaṇa may be quite old, as is suggested by the text of a newly reported inscription engraved on the gilt sheath (*ḥavaca*) that adorns the underlying cult image. Offered by Aṃśuvarman in A.D. 607 (M.S. 31 Māgha), the gift was ordained because the previously donated sheath "had become dilapidated with the passage of time."¹⁵³ Considering that the sheath is of metal, well-protected in a temple, and handled only by the deity's priests, it would seem that a considerable "passage of time" would have transpired to

the now celebrated pillar inscription, the French savant had to direct his Nepalese military escort to these ends from the distant gateway (Lévi 1908:111, 1-2). A quarter-century later, Perceval Landon, whose investigations in the Valley were under Rana auspices, had to obtain special permission to visit the temple (Landon 1928:1, 221).

¹⁵² D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 73-74; D. Vajracharya 1973:18.

¹⁵³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 76 (317-319); Slusser 1976:84-92.

¹⁵⁴ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 20a; D. Vajracharya 1973:318-319, 416-417; Slusser 1976:95 n. 51. The *Gopālarāja*

necessitate Aṃśuvarman's replacement of it at the beginning of the seventh century. Indeed, this information supports the chronicle's attribution of the temple's foundation to Haridattavarman. Although he left no inscriptions, Haridatta apparently was a historical figure, a king who antedated Mānadeva by several generations. According to the chronicle, Haridatta consecrated four hilltop temples to Nārāyaṇa at the same time. Three are among the most celebrated temples in Nepal: Changu Nārāyaṇa, Ichangu (alternately, Iśāna [Western]) Nārāyaṇa, and Śikhara Nārāyaṇa.¹⁵⁴ The fourth is Lokapālasvāmin, a temple now passed into oblivion, along with bustling Haṃsagrhadraṅga, where it stood.¹⁵⁵ The chronicle's attribution receives indirect epigraphic support from two inscriptions concerning Ichangu Nārāyaṇa, one of the four related temples. One of the inscriptions, dated A.D. 1200, states that the Ichangu temple was built by Haridatta, thus confirming Haridatta's relationship with the Changu temple.¹⁵⁶ The other inscription, from the mid-seventh century, specifically associates Haridatta's son, King Vasurāja, with the affairs of Ichangu temple.¹⁵⁷ If Haridatta is indeed the founder of the four temples, then the original shrine at Changu and the Garuḍāsana image within would be dated roughly to the beginning of the fourth century A.D. Very likely Changu Nārāyaṇa and Paśupati are contemporaries.

Changu Nārāyaṇa also has a legendary origin, one version of which is recounted in the *Nepāla-mahātmya*.¹⁵⁸ In one of his many contests against evil, Viṣṇu beheaded a demon who, being also a Brahman, caused the god to commit one of the five most heinous crimes. Knowing himself to be cursed with like fate, Viṣṇu on Garuḍa wandered

vamśāvalī, fol. 30b, followed by the *Bhāṣāvamśāvalī* (B. Paudel 1963:81), also ascribes Changu Nārāyaṇa and three related temples to King Viṣṇugupta. However, this is a patent error, since there is considerable historical evidence that the temple long predates his time. An inscription of Viṣṇugupta himself speaks of repairs that he made at the temple site; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 119 (452-453).

¹⁵⁵ Slusser 1976:95 n. 51.

¹⁵⁶ *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963e.

¹⁵⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 109 (414-418), and pp. 318, 418.

¹⁵⁸ Chap. 2, vv. 1-69.

hither and thither until in time he came to the summit of Dolādri. There, at length, unrecognized, he was beheaded by the hermit Sudarśana. His crime expiated, but minus a head, Viṣṇu declared: "Freed from this curse I shall stay here. Oh Sudarśana! Worship me here. Persons who worship me on the twelfth day of the moon or on the day of the full moon, as well as Wednesday, will definitely reach heaven."

This Nepalese tale reflects a peculiarity of Changu Nārāyaṇa's cult, and is almost certainly related to the legend of the headless Viṣṇu recorded in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*: annoyed by Viṣṇu's popularity, the jealous gods had him beheaded. But then, distraught by the loss of the peerless deity, the malefactors begged the Aśvinas, the heavenly physicians, to restore Viṣṇu to life.¹⁵⁹ In what may represent a daily reenactment of Viṣṇu's murder and resuscitation, the upper portion of Nārāyaṇa's gilt *kaṇaca* is removed as one of the rites of his *nitya pūjā*. To facilitate what appears to be the ritual beheading, the *kaṇaca*—a unique example—is fashioned in two parts, each the gift of a different king, a millennium apart.¹⁶⁰ The lower inscribed portion, covering the god's torso and his mount, is Aṃśuvarman's gift, the head, Bhūpālendramalla's. The Malla gift was made because in A.D. 1676 (N.S. 796 Pauṣa-śukla), "while performing the daily worship of Garuḍa Nārāyaṇa, when the priest removed the head, the neck and its ornaments broke off."¹⁶¹ Although ritual beheading seems to be the explanation for this daily removal, we do not know the original, or even contemporary, significance. Nor do we know the condition of the underlying image. Clarifica-

tion must await further research at the temple site.¹⁶²

Buddhists, who worship Changu Nārāyaṇa as the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, have a different version of the deity's origin.¹⁶³ After a heroic struggle with the serpent Takṣaka, Garuḍa, Viṣṇu's mount and arch enemy of the serpents, was about to emerge the victor. But the compassionate Lokeśvara intervened and, as a sign of reconciliation, draped the snake around Garuḍa's neck. The humbled Viṣṇu, seated on his snake-adorned mount, took Lokeśvara on his own shoulders, thus creating the sectarian, and in Nepal, rare, Hari-Hari-Harivāhanodbhava-Lokeśvara icon. Just as the characters were so arranged, a griffon passed by and, seizing them as they were, installed them on Dolādri. Today, however, the griffon has departed, and Avalokiteśvara exists only as a pleasant stone sculpture behind the temple. There remains only Viṣṇu on the snake-wreathed Garuḍa as the much-revered Garuḍāsana Nārāyaṇa, the cult image of the temple sanctum. Copied in two versions in the courtyard, one a ninth- or tenth-century masterpiece (Plate 378), the other from about the thirteenth century, the Changu Garuḍāsana provided the model for innumerable copies (and later variants) scattered throughout the Valley (Plate 379).¹⁶⁴

Garuḍa, wreathed with Takṣaka, also exists as a large independent image that kneels on the paving in devotional attitude facing the shrine door (Plate 64).¹⁶⁵ It may be a portrait of Mānadeva, and may once have crowned the king's Garuḍa standard that faced the door. Whether the Garuḍa fell from the pillar by natural causes, or was

¹⁵⁹ So, at least, is the version recorded by Rao 1968:1, 75. But as Kramrisch 1975 elaborates in a paper that has significant bearing on an understanding of the Changu Nārāyaṇa image and associated ritual, Viṣṇu was decapitated by his own bow as a divine act of retribution for failing to honor a pledge entered into with his companion deities.

¹⁶⁰ The only other known example of such a two-part *kaṇaca* is that of Tilamādhava Viṣṇu of Bhaktapur, but the sheath is of late manufacture, and is very likely copied from the famous Changu Nārāyaṇa example.

¹⁶¹ It was not actually replaced until almost twenty years later, N.S. 814 (A.D. 1694) (G. Vajracharya 1967:25).

¹⁶² The enigma of the Changu Nārāyaṇa image is discussed in greater detail by Slusser 1976:90-92. In this respect, it is unlikely to be mere coincidence that the most important Nepalese manifestation of the headless Mātṛkā/*yoginī*, Chinnamastā (Plate 544), resides in an adjacent temple in the courtyard, a juxtaposition also noted by Lévi 1905:1, 367.

¹⁶³ Lévi 1905:1, 367.

¹⁶⁴ Pal 1974:75-78, fig. 111; Slusser 1976:fig. 8.

¹⁶⁵ For the full view and a discussion of the image, see Pal 1974:75-78, fig. 98, and Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:130 n. 138.

brought low by the Muslim raiders, is of little concern to most Nepalis. The less sophisticated point to a large split in Garuḍa's occiput, caused, they say, by the discus of his master who, despite his promise of long ago, would not tolerate the elevated position of his subordinate mount. Temple priests affirm that the Changu Garuḍa, because of his struggle with Takṣaka, still annually perspires on Nāga-pañcamī, Serpents' Fifth, the day the Nepalese devote to serpent worship.¹⁶⁶ The handkerchief with which the priests mop Garuḍa's brow was traditionally sent to the king at Kathmandu, for water in which even a thread of it has been steeped is held to be an infallible remedy for snakebite.

Like Paśupati, Changu Nārāyaṇa has also prospered from the benefactions of Nepalese kings and their subjects. While offerings have been fewer than those to Paśupati, they have been no less continuous or sumptuous. One of great consequence, but by no means the first, was Mānadeva's victory pillar offered in A.D. 464. This gift was preceded or followed by the gilt sheath for the cult image. Changu Nārāyaṇa was also the object of Aṃśuvarman's largesse. He not only restored Nārāyaṇa's golden *ḥavaca* "according to the old model," but the next year, A.D. 608 (M.S. 32 Āṣāḍha), he stipulated a cash donation of "pu[rāna] 6, pa[ṇa] 2" for Dolasīkharasvāmin. This sum equaled that accorded Paśupatinātha, the only deity to precede Changu Nārāyaṇa in the list of divine recipients. Viṣṇugupta also paid his homage to Changu Nārāyaṇa. By repairing a fountain that his relative Bhogavarman had given, he again brought to the mountain-top shrine water pronounced "clean and sweet like the nectar of the gods (*amṛta*)."¹⁶⁷

Offerings to Changu Nārāyaṇa have also included countless restorations of the temple, again and again reduced to ruin by time, earthquake, and fire. Counting only from the late sixteenth century, there have been several major restorations. Viśvamalla of Bhaktapur is said to have raised a new temple over the ruins of a predecessor that

¹⁶⁶ The legend is solemnly told by the temple priests, and is recorded by Wright 1966:25.

¹⁶⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 77, 119 (320-335, 452-453).

"had fallen to the ground," only to have it in turn damaged by fire. A few years later, Gaṅgarāṇī of Kathmandu and the rebuilder of Paśupati's temple, also repaired that of Changu Nārāyaṇa.¹⁶⁸ After several decades, the temple again needed repairs and these were attended to by the Kathmandu Queen Mother R̥ddhilakṣmī in A.D. 1694 in the midst of her tumultuous regency.¹⁶⁹ At the completion of the work, she set up a golden *torana*, performed *tulādāna* (offered the deity her own weight in gold and jewels), and gave to the Brahmans an elephant, 108 horses, 108 cows, 108 female buffaloes, 108 goats, 108 sheep, ornaments, cloth, and food grains. It was then also that the upper portion of Nārāyaṇa's *ḥavaca* was replaced in King Bhūpāendra's name. The queen mother concluded these events by setting up in the coveted place facing the main door of the temple (just behind the stub of Mānadeva's Garuḍadhvaja) a gilt shrine containing gilded portrait images of herself and her son in devotional attitudes (Plate 69). But within twenty years the temple had been "guttled by fire" and needed rebuilding again. This was done by Bhāskaramalla, and the completion was a festive occasion marked by the presentation of gilt roof hangings to the temple by all the Valley rulers.¹⁷⁰

Changu Nārāyaṇa dwells in an ancient—and as yet enigmatic—image of stone sheathed with Aṃśuvarman's and Bhūpāendra's gold. But for certain travels he abandons his anthropomorphic form and his mount Garuḍa, and moves in spirit into a large silver water pot (*ḥalaśa*). For not only does the populace toil up Dolādri to visit Nārāyaṇa, but he returns the compliment by coming twice yearly to Kathmandu, once at the winter solstice, Māgha- or Tila-saṅkrānti (Pauṣa-śukla-pūrṇimā), and again during the summer (Śravaṇa-śukla-dvādaśī). Borne on foot by his priests, Nārāyaṇa is accompanied by his consorts Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in smaller silver vessels (Plate 411). Arriving at the outskirts of Old Kathmandu at dusk, the deities are formally welcomed by a palace honor guard at a modest *dharmaśālā* beside the Rani

¹⁶⁸ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 564; Wright 1966:143.

¹⁶⁹ N.S. 814 Phālguna (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 148-149).

¹⁷⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 877.

Pokhari, just outside the former city gates. Then with pipe and drum and the crack of musket shots, the platoon escorts Nārāyaṇa in a rush through the crowded bazaar. Today few persons take much notice of his passage, but the elderly greet him with devotion and toss coins into the outspread aprons of his bearer priests. Making directly for Hanuman Dhoka, the cortege stops at the palace gates for a short welcome ceremony presided over by Durgā as the living Kumārī. Nārāyaṇa then formally enters the palace for a rendezvous with Taleju and, traditionally, the king. After the appropriate ceremonies, Nārāyaṇa and his company leave the palace and hurry headlong out of the sleeping city to make their way up the winding paths to Dolādri before dawn.

There are two legends that purport to explain Nārāyaṇa's visits to the capital. One avers that a former Kathmandu king desired to visit Changu Nārāyaṇa daily but was often thwarted by flooded rivers. Nārāyaṇa solved the dilemma by advising the king to cancel the visits altogether, and promised that he himself would visit the palace twice a year to receive the monarch's homage. The other legend runs that once upon a time Viṣṇu came to Hanuman Dhoka to announce his intention of leaving the Kathmandu Valley. The king, however, quickly instructed the populace to place broken water jars along the proposed route, since empty water jars are such an inauspicious sign that they would dissuade even an immortal from beginning a journey. As the king divined, seeing the broken pots, Nārāyaṇa postponed his departure and returned to Dolādri to await a more propitious start. But to this day, since even now the broken water pots are carefully displayed along Nārāyaṇa's route through the city, the signs have augured ill for undertaking a journey. Thus Nārāyaṇa always returns to his hilltop shrine and, while awaiting an auspicious day, continues to bestow his benevolent patronage on the Valley and its populace.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ See Anderson 1971:229-230.

¹⁷² Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:85-87. The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 21b, mentions the deity's "exceedingly beautiful dwelling place" (*atisundara āvāsa*), but we do not know whether this refers to the pool in which the image now lies open to the skies. Archaeological remains



Second only to Changu Nārāyaṇa in Nepali worship of Viṣṇu is the Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa of Budhanilkantha village (Plate 376). Consecrated by Viṣṇugupta about A.D. 641, the Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa is the largest sculpture in the Valley and one of its outstanding masterpieces. Carved from a single block of stone, dragged across the Valley by forced labor (*viṣṭi*), the immense Viṣṇu is supported by the coiled mass of Ananta. Together they appear to float in the spring-fed pool surrounding them, a Viṣṇu-tīrtha once known as Narasiṃha.¹⁷² Cared for by a hereditary Brahman priesthood, only certain priests of whom may traverse his vast body, the image is the object of a protracted daily worship. Like a sentient being, the god is cleansed, anointed, perfumed, censed, fanned, painted, and ornamented; his thousand names are chanted, and his praises hymned. Even the "sweatband" on his forehead is changed in response to the ardent mountain sun to which he lies exposed. During the priestly worship, and all day long, there is an ever-changing coterie of devotees in attendance, respectfully bowing at Viṣṇu's feet, tendering their garlands and bouquets to the priests to carry to his distant head, and taking in return a sip of the hallowed pool or a drifting flower petal as the god's *prasāda*.

But the special day of worship of Budhanilkantha Nārāyaṇa—and of all Viṣṇus—is *ekādaśī*, the eleventh day of every lunar fortnight, three of which are particularly important. Viṣṇu is believed to slumber during the four summer months (*catur-masa*), beginning on Hariśayani-ekādaśī (literally, Viṣṇu's-Lying-Down-Eleventh), a day celebrated with special worship. This observance is repeated two months later, on Hariparavartanī-ekādaśī, when it is thought that Viṣṇu turns over in his sleep. But the greatest celebration of all is Hari-bodhinī-ekādaśī, when Viṣṇu awakens in the fall

and legend together suggest that the image may once have been canopied. According to Nārāyaṇa's priests, the four stone posts of indeterminate date placed at the image's head and feet once supported a roof. However, echoing the story of Aśoka Gaṇeśa (told further along) and of certain other deities in the Kathmandu Valley, after the

once again to care for his people. Then the long, dusty road winding to his shrine is glutted with devotees, most on foot and the rest packed in open trucks or in whatever vehicle they can commandeer. Laden with bright blossoms in bouquets and garlands, paddy, vermilion, and fruits, one by one throughout the long festive day, Nārāyaṇa's admirers, Śivamārgī and Buddhamārgī, descend to his pool to halt briefly before his recumbent form. Respectfully touching their brow to Nārāyaṇa's venerable toe, each adds his tribute, until by day's end the divine image is blanketed with the vermilion and blossoms of his adorers, and his crystal pool awash with fruits and flowers.¹⁷³

It is a custom in Nepal Mandala to conceptualize certain divinities as having four chief manifestations, each one charged with the guardianship of a particular quarter of the Valley, and each individually designated by a name denoting location, imagined color, aspect, or distinguishing attribute. In keeping with the generally relaxed Nepali attitude toward specifics, the quartet is by no means immutable. But although individual selections may vary from person to person, each worshiper chooses four from among a slightly larger list of acceptable candidates. Thus, although three of the Four Gaṇeśas are firmly established, the fourth is variously named Kārya Vināyaka (near Bungamati) or Candra Gaṇeśa of Chabahil. The identification of the Four Vārāhīs, the Four Yoginīs, and other divine quartets is likewise variable. Nārāyaṇa, who also has four chief manifestations, is no exception. Like the Gaṇeśas, three of the Nārāyaṇas are fixed: Changu, Ichangu, and Śikhara Nārāyaṇa. The fourth was almost certainly Lokapālasvāmin of Hamsagrhadraṅga. But because settlement and shrine have foundered since Licchavi times, and have long been forgotten, today the proposed substitute for the fourth Nārāyaṇa is usually Viśāṅkhu Nārāyaṇa, residing in the same general quarter. Less frequently, either Macche Nārāyaṇa or the Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa of Budhanilkantha is named.

As part of the festivities associated with Hari-bodhini-ekādāśī, it is incumbent upon Nārāyaṇa's

devotees to perform on the following day (Kārtika-śukla-dvādaśī) what is known as the Char Narayan Jātrā, the festival or pilgrimage of the Four Nārāyaṇas. The *jātrā* consists of rendering homage to each of the quartet in a single day. Depending on which deity is selected as the fourth, this represents a circuit of approximately forty-four miles, and traditionally is accomplished on foot. Significantly, this rite is not performed at any time for any of the other quartets of deities. It suggests once again that, as the chronicles aver, there is a historical relationship among the four alleged foundations of Haridatta—Changu, Ichangu, Śikhara, and the defunct Lokapālasvāmin. Moreover, it can hardly be fortuitous that Kārtika-śukla-dvādaśī, the day the pilgrimage is performed, is the very one upon which Lokapālasvāmin was consecrated, and which in Narendradeva's time (ca. A.D. 643-679) was still marked with an annual celebration.¹⁷⁴

Presumably as Hamsagrhadraṅga fell into decay, so also did the prestigious Lokapālasvāmin shrine. Located near the southern rim of the Valley, shrine and settlement alike were possibly buried by an avalanche. Legends respecting the Budhanilkantha image, adjacent to the eastern rim, certainly suggest that it was once so covered, and according to the late chronicles so was Ichangu Nārāyaṇa. They report that "Ichangu Narayana was buried under a rock that fell from the Yamalaya mountain. Sivananda Brahman erected in its place an image, which had been carried thither by the stream of the Vishnumati."¹⁷⁵ That the chronicle may be essentially correct is suggested by the Ichangu cult image. For despite Haridatta's legendary foundation in the fourth century, and seventh- and thirteenth-century epigraphic evidence for the shrine's existence, the image in the temple sanctum is not an early work but a minor gilt emanatory Viṣṇu of late Malla times.

The curious grotto now sacred to Viśāṅkhu Nārāyaṇa, the deity who most often completes the quartet, is located in the same quarter of the Valley as the missing Lokapālasvāmin. Since the other

roof fell into decay attempts to replace it were frustrated by the deity. Preferring the open sky, Nārāyaṇa obstructed the work until it had to be abandoned.

¹⁷³ See Anderson 1971:175-182 for a lively description

of Haribodhini-ekādāśī.

¹⁷⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 129 (485-489).

¹⁷⁵ Wright 1966:129; Hasrat 1970:59 also mentions the replacement image; Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:87 n. 54.

shrine could no longer be found, it is likely that in time the grotto became the substitute. But this could scarcely have predated the fifteenth century, for the *Nepāla-mahātmya*, the pilgrim's guide that meticulously lists all of the important holy places of the Valley, makes no mention of the Viśānkhu Nārāyaṇa. Moreover, from the *Nepāla-mahātmya* one suspects that what became the shrine of Viśānkhu Nārāyaṇa was once sacred to a godling named Gaṇeśa Bhārabhuteśvara. For in the same location and in exactly the same way that one now visits Viśānkhu Nārāyaṇa, "one climbs a mountain to adore Gaṇeśa who resides in a grotto accessible by a narrow slit; do not enter but only look at Bhārabhuteśvara."¹⁷⁶

Despite the tradition that Śikhara, or alternately, Sekha or Śeṣa Nārāyaṇa, is one of the Four Nārāyaṇas, and therefore an early Licchavi foundation, there are no artistic or historical data to support such a date. The image is an indifferent one that certainly has nothing to do with Haridatta's time. It is sheltered in the small half temple imaginatively constructed against the mouth of a cave in a cliff side above a series of spring-fed pools. The oldest identifiable monument at the site is a relief of Viṣṇu in the Dwarf incarnation, which may be dated to about the thirteenth century (Plate 434).¹⁷⁷ It was at this time that Pharping was known as Śikhrapurī, after the temple. As one of the Four Nārāyaṇas, Śikhara Nārāyaṇa is nonetheless a highly venerated deity in contemporary Nepal, and was certainly so in the Malla Period. In the early fourteenth century, the Khasa king Ādityamalla stayed near the shrine for twenty-two days, Śrīnivāsa and his minister Bhāgirātha Bhaiyā of Patan together offered the deity the stone Garuda facing the temple (a testimony to the technical decline of stone carving by the seventeenth century), and Jayaprakāśa of Kathmandu endowed

¹⁷⁶ *Nepāla-mahātmya* chap. 29, vv. 36-40.

¹⁷⁷ Pal 1974:19, fig. 4.

¹⁷⁸ Petech 1958:113; Pal 1970:fig. 95; and an in situ inscription.

¹⁷⁹ Traditionally, Newar adolescent girls are married to Nārāyaṇa in a ceremony known as *yihī*, in which the divine groom is symbolized by the wood apple (*bel* fruit, *Agela marmelos*). By this custom, if a Newar's future mortal husband should die, she is not considered a widow because she is still married to Nārāyaṇa. The Newar

the temple with lands for the perpetual worship of the deity.¹⁷⁸

The cult of Viṣṇu has left a fundamental mark on the Kathmandu Valley. Thousands of persons bear his names—Vishnu, Narayan, Ram, Krishna, Damodar, Govinda, Gopal, Hari, Balaram, Upendra, Rishikesh, and more; he is the sacred groom of every Newari girl (Plate 412);¹⁷⁹ his legends are on every tongue; his festivals are fervently celebrated; and there is no corner without a shrine, temple, *tirtha*, or image of Viṣṇu in one or more of his many aspects. In the Kathmandu Valley images of Viṣṇu are known from at least the third or fourth century A.D. (Plate 380), and his aspects, incarnations, and legends have been continuously represented in every possible medium into modern times. He was clearly a profound force in Licchavi Nepal, when epigraphs were filled with Viṣṇu's many names, and often decorated with his symbols (Plate 50), poems and panegyrics were inscribed in his honor, the most sublime and monumental images were undertaken, and his most important shrines were consecrated. While once great Vaiṣṇava shrines such as Nupunna and Haṃsaḡṛha have faded into oblivion, others such as the Nārāyaṇas of Changu and Budhanilkantha figure strongly in contemporary life. Such kings as Mānadeva and the Ābhīra Guptas were especially attracted to Viṣṇu; some bore his name, and Licchavis and Guptas consecrated some of his most glorious images. Indeed, if sectarianism ever existed in Nepal Mandala, these kings may have been Vaiṣṇava. Even with Aṃśuvarman and the burgeoning of Śivaism as the state religion, Viṣṇu's popularity remained undimmed. The Malla and Shah kings considered themselves Viṣṇu's mortal incarnation and filled their *praśastis* with his names. The explosion of the Kṛṣṇa cult found in the long-established Vaiṣṇava atmosphere of the

"widow" therefore undergoes none of the disagreeable sanctions imposed on widows in the Hindu tradition. In fact, Newar marriages are much more egalitarian in all respects, and a woman is free to leave or divorce her husband, to remarry, and she scorns sati. The contrast between the Newar and Gorkhali customs in this respect have often been a source of friction between the two ethnic groups. In India pseudo marriage with Viṣṇu is performed with the basil (*tulasi*) plant sacred to him; there the *bel* fruit is assigned to Śiva (Crooke 1896:1, 110-112).

Kathmandu Valley a congenial climate. The new imagery of tantric, or Sahajiyā Viṣṇuism—the popular Viṣṇu-maṇḍala, for example (Plate 383)¹⁸⁰—met a similarly warm reception, and the sometimes outlandish forms, already familiar from Vajrayāna Buddhism, were merely added to the well-known repertoire of Vaiṣṇava images. If Bhaumagupta's sixth-century Dharani Varāha (Plate 392) became transmuted to an emanatory Sow Goddess, Dhūm-vārāhī, what matter?¹⁸¹ The image stood stalwart as before, was tendered the same devotion, if differently conceptualized, and new ways of worshiping were merely blended with the old. Indeed, if Nepal is a Hindu kingdom, the nation has not only Śiva and Śakti to thank for its so becoming, but also the splendid god Viṣṇu.

Other Brahmanical Gods

Bhīmasena

Although in fact a Vaiṣṇava deity, Bhīmasena (Bhimsen) (Plates 413, 414) is such a specialized god in Nepal, and his cult so separate from Viṣṇu's in concept and practice, that to include him in the cult of Viṣṇu would be both academic and misleading. Originating as one of the five Pāṇḍava brothers of *Mahābhārata* fame, Bhīmasena became in India a deified hero, the guise in which he is still worshiped there and even further afield.¹⁸² But in Nepal, in an unexplained metamorphosis, Bhīmasena became a god of good fortune, whose twin tasks relate to commerce and love. The latter may be influenced by Bhīmasena's legendary compassion for Draupadī, the wife of the five Pāṇḍava brothers. The genesis and process of his role as a god of commerce, a job that is Gaṇeśa's in India, is not clear; but as such, Bhīmasena became one of the most popular deities of Nepal Mandala. This would be natural, considering that the traditional *raison d'être* of Valley culture was commerce. Nor is it surprising that today Bhīmasena's most fervent devotees are merchants, and that his most celebrated temples are in the city bazaars.

¹⁸⁰ The elaborate type of Nepali Viṣṇu-maṇḍala is unknown in India, although it may have once existed. Its symbolism is essentially Pāñcarātra, but is strongly permeated by tantrism.

¹⁸¹ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:134-135.

¹⁸² According to Crooke 1896:1, 89-91, Bhīmasena also

Despite the prevalence of Bhīmasena's cult—which led one early nineteenth-century observer to speculate that it predated Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley¹⁸³—Bhīmasena as a Nepalese god of commerce appears to be a phenomenon of the Late Malla Period. The earliest reference to him in the Kathmandu Valley (apart from general ones to the Pāṇḍavas) is A.D. 1540,¹⁸⁴ all of his images are works of the Late Malla Period, and his standard dress of jacket and long skirt (*jāma*), usually pleated, reflects the Mughal dress affected at the courts of the Three Kingdoms.

Bhīmasena's cult is apparently relatively recent in the Kathmandu Valley, and its immediate source is Dolakha, a large Newar settlement in eastern Nepal. Even today in Dolakha, Bhīmasena worship exceeds that of Śiva and Śakti in popularity, and his annual festival is the chief event of the region.¹⁸⁵ According to his legend, which may well cloak the cult history, Bhīmasena entered the Kathmandu Valley in the guise of a man-servant attached as dowry to a Dolakha bride. Her groom, a Kathmandu resident and now Bhīmasena's master, soon set the new servant to prepare his paddy fields west of the Vishnumati. After a few days the master went to inspect the fields, but found nothing done, and the unconcerned servant seated idly smoking his pipe in the shade. Upbraiding him, the owner was requested to shut his eyes a moment. On opening them, he perceived a carpet of new green rice plants gently stirring in the wind. Knowing then that his servant was divine, the awed master fell at his feet had asked what he wished. Bhīmasena demanded that a temple be built for him on a spot he could reach with three steps—obviously a reflection of the Dwarf's request. The boon granted, Bhīmasena took three giant strides across the river and into the city, where his celebrated Kathmandu temple now stands.

It is possible that the Bhīmasena legend not only embroiders history, but provides a partial clue to his transformation as the god of commerce. He was served as a village guardian, and the primitive Gonds worshiped him as a rain god.

¹⁸³ Hamilton 1971:25.

¹⁸⁴ N.S. 660 (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 612).

¹⁸⁵ Nepali 1962:322.

perhaps first associated with the fields as a heroic guardian figure, and later, by extension, guardian of the granary and of trade. When, how, and in what form the Bhīmasena cult became associated with Dolakha is unknown. In India, worship of Bhīmasena in his manifestation as a hero figure was prevalent in Bihar and Mithilā in medieval times. Perhaps in this form the cult spread to Dolakha, where at length the metamorphosis into the Nepali god of commerce took place. That Mithilā and Dolakha had some relations is clear, for it will be recalled that when the ill-fated Maithilī ruler Harasiṃha died in the Nepalese Tarai in A.D. 1324, he was actually en route to a refuge in Dolakha.

Paradoxically, while conceptually the Nepalese Bhīmasena has little to do with the Pāṇḍava warrior hero, his images have as little to do with commerce and trade, and certainly not with love. Bhīmasena is always portrayed in a heroic or martial posture, standing erect with legs widespread and brandishing an enormous club, or sometimes sword and shield (Plates 413, 414). His jacket is usually of mail, and he is helmeted for battle, often with the curious "Grecian" helmet that in late Nepali works is emblematic of the *asuras*. Images of Bhīmasena are commonly encountered out of doors, but they are also enshrined in major temples such as those in Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhaktapur (Plate 243). He shares with Durgā the lion as his vehicle, and a *simhadhvaja* usually faces his temples. Despite Bhīmasena's legendary association with Kathmandu, his chief temple is in Mangal Bazaar, Patan. It is a Newar-style temple restored and enlarged by Śrīnivāsamalla "with the advice" of his celebrated minister, Bhagīratha Bhaiyā, in A.D. 1681, "when the three towns were in harmony as one."¹⁸⁰ It is at the Patan temple that a particularly boisterous and alcoholic nocturnal Bhīmasena-jātrā is annually celebrated. In keeping with temples consecrated to Bhairava and to Mātṛka groups, Bhīmasena's temples are always of rectangular plan, and like many Bhairavas and some Mātṛkas, he is worshiped in a sanctum on the second floor.

¹⁸⁰ In N.S. 801 Mārga (*Abhilekha-saṃgraha* 1962n).

¹⁸⁷ Wright 1966:146; Hasrat 1970:75; Lamshal 1966:87; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 612.

¹⁸⁸ This without doubt represents a charm necklace such

This is not surprising, for Bhīmasena's cult is conceptually closely associated with Bhairava's, and many devotees worship him as a form of that god. That the merger of the two gods was already under way in the Malla Period is evident in names such as Bhīma Bhairava, or as in a hymn addressed to Bhīmasena by Pratāpamalla, where he is addressed as Sivarūpa.¹⁸⁷

Kārttikeya

The fortunes of the sons of Śiva and Pārvatī have been not unlike the history of the brothers Balārāma and Kṛṣṇa in the Kathmandu Valley: the cult of the older, Kārttikeya, waned, while that of the younger, Gaṇeśa, waxed. Thus, Kārttikeya seems to have been a deity of some eminence in Licchavi Nepal and even into the Early Malla Period, when Gaṇeśa apparently played a minor role. But with the Late Malla Period, and continuing into modern times, Kārttikeya's cult declined, and Gaṇeśa emerged as a deity of first rank.

Like so many deities of diverse origins, Kārttikeya has many names. But of the standard repertory only two, Kārttikkeya and Kumāra, are familiar in the Kathmandu Valley. He is most often now known simply as Siṭhīdyo (in effect, "the god who presides over the sixth day of Jyestha-śukla"). Reminiscent of Viṣṇu's incarnations to destroy evil, Kārttikeya was conceived in order to slay the demon Tāraka, invincible except at the hand of a son of Śiva. In Nepalese imagery, however, while Kārttikeya's martial aspect is signified by his ever-present spear, he is generally shown in the guise of a child (Plates 415-417). Thus, his pudgy little body is half nude and his hair arranged in the "crow's wing" (*kaṅka-pakṣa*) proper for youths, a coiffure shared by the child Kṛṣṇa Kāliyadamana and the released herd-boy (Plates 404, 405). Kārttikeya usually wears bell-shaped earrings and, like the youthful Mañjuśrī, a distinctive necklace of medallions often interspersed with tiger claws (Plates 416-419, 475).¹⁸⁸ In childish form, Kārttikeya was one of the first accessory figures introduced into Nepali Umā-Maheśvara reliefs, where he remained as an

as small Newari children wear, especially when threatened by disease. Typically, the necklaces are composed of coins, claws, odd-shaped stones, beads, and a variety of objects believed useful in warding off evil.

almost constant companion through the most recent (Plates 350, 352-355). In such reliefs, he is usually depicted, spear in hand, seated like a mahout on Nandi's neck (Plate 415), or astride his own mount, the peacock (Plate 354). In this way, on the peacock and reminiscent of Garuḍāsana Viṣṇu, Kārttikeya is also frequently depicted in independent images (Plates 416, 421). Kārttikeya is also depicted in other ways, seated without the peacock, for example; or standing flanked by praying devotees, reminiscent of Buddhist iconography;¹⁸⁹ or flanked by animals, particularly the cock, another of his symbols (Plate 417).

Among the many legends respecting Kārttikeya's unorthodox conception and birth, one begins with his abandonment in the Ganges. Amidst the reeds he is discovered by the Pleiades, personified as six Mātṛkas; they are known as the Kṛttikās, whence derives his name Kārttikeya. Since each goddess wished to suckle him, in order to satisfy their maternal longings, Kārttikeya sprang five additional heads. He is shown with his six heads in a magnificent late Licchavi relief, and again, in Malla times, when he is seated with his brother Gaṇeśa on Pārvatī's lap (Plates 418-420).

In the Licchavi relief, at Hadigaon, the Nepali artist has vividly recreated the dramatic moment when Kārttikeya, seated on Viṣṇu's mount, arrayed with the weapons of his companion gods, and surrounded by Agni's flaming luster, sets forth to destroy Tārakāsura (Plates 418, 419).¹⁹⁰ But symptomatic of the deity's decline, despite the unambiguous and magnificently told story in stone, today not even the most informed passerby can identify the image as Kārttikeya. Some understand him to be Harihara—half Viṣṇu, half Śiva—but most, bemused by the many arms, are content to worship him ardently as the beloved goddess Bhagavatī. Even his shrine is entirely devoted to her symbology. Other Kārttikeya images have fared no better. Because of the bells he wears as ear ornaments, both of his important standing images, one

in Kathmandu (Plate 417) and one in Patan, are identified as Ghaṇṭakārṇa (Bell Ears). In the texts, Ghaṇṭakārṇa is an eighteen-armed minor deity with quite different attributes, who is the sometime attendant of Kārttikeya, of Śiva, or of other gods; in contemporary practice he is a scapegoat ogre (Chapter 12).¹⁹¹ Finally, in icons where Kārttikeya is shown seated astride his peacock, he is universally acclaimed as "Garuḍa Narain."

The decline of Kārttikeya's fortune in Nepal since Licchavi times has been closely paralleled in post-Gupta northern India.¹⁹² But in the Kathmandu Valley there is still a lingering trace of his cult as an honored deity. Kārttikeya has a special calendar day reserved in his honor, known as Kumāra-ṣaṣṭhī or Siṭhī-nakha, the sixth day of the bright half of the lunar month of Jyeṣṭha, just preceding the onset of the summer monsoon. Traditionally, and apparently for practical reasons, the day is devoted to the cleaning and repair of buildings and water sources, and it is also the day for concluding the annual ceremonies connected with the *kuḷadevatās*. It was also the day once consecrated to the battle of stones between Yaṅgala and Yaṃbu, and it was on Jyeṣṭha-śukla-ṣaṣṭhī that Aṃśuvarman chose to promulgate his charter respecting old Mānagrha palace (Chapter 5). Some of these customs associated with Kumāra's Sixth, like the stoning, have already died out, and others are moribund. But of some significance, both as a cultural artifact and for the clues it provides toward localization of the site of Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana, one Kārttikeya image is still honored on his day. This is the Siṭhī-dyo enshrined in Mañjuśrī-tol, Kathmandu (Map 7:m-6; Plate 421).

Prior to Kumāra-ṣaṣṭhī, a contingent of Newars from Sanagaon (Thasi) village, south of Patan, come to ready the Kathmandu god for his annual celebration. They are the *niḥhū*, hereditary officiants, who bring with them two vessels of water from the Tekhu-dobhan, the auspicious confluence of the Bagmati and Vishnumati.¹⁹³ These are

tion of which was kindly communicated to me by letter by G. Vajracharya. He referred to the Thasi villagers as *nyaku*, who must be hereditary officiants (usually called *niḥhū*), such as those similarly charged with preparing Rāto Matsyendranātha for his great festival (Chapter 12).

¹⁸⁹ Slusser 1972:103-104, pl. 55; Pal 1974:138, fig. 248.

¹⁹⁰ Slusser 1972:94, pl. 49; Pal 1974:139-140, fig. 249.

¹⁹¹ Mallmann 1963:60-61; Slusser 1972:103-104.

¹⁹² Rao 1968:11, 415.

¹⁹³ To my great regret, I did not discover the Kathmandu Siṭhī-dyo nor witness his celebration, the descrip-

placed on a platform (*dabali*) near the Siṭhī-dyo shrine. After a day's fasting, the *nikhū* bring the enshrined Kārttikeya to the *dabali*, remove the cult garments and ornaments, and with the sanctified river water perform the deity's ritual bath, the *mahāsnāna* or *abhiseka*. Returned to the shrine to dry, the god is brought forth again the next day, is given his annual repainting, and is again enshrined.¹⁹⁴ At length, on the evening preceding the Sixth, Kārttikeya, arrayed in all his finery, is again brought outdoors, where a lengthy *yajña* is performed by Brahman priests in his honor. In the morning, Kumāra's Sixth, the newly painted and gaily decorated Siṭhī-dyo, together with a priest attendant, is placed in a palanquin (*khata*) and borne toward Hanuman Dhoka. Along the route the cortege is met by a group of Newars from Balambu village, located at the western end of the Valley, who because they claim that the deity was stolen from them, bring to it special offerings. The enlarged procession then proceeds along a traditional route to Hanuman Dhoka. At the palace they are received by Taleju's priests and, after a rest, return to Mañjuśrī-tol. There, in charge of a priestess, the deity is enshrined for still another year in what may be the site of the ancient Śaṣṭhīdevakula of Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana, where Aṃśuvarman and his successors may well have worshiped (Chapter 5). However, like Changu Nārāyaṇa's mysterious and altogether wonderful visits to the city, few persons outside the immediate principals are remotely interested in these obviously very ancient and significant proceedings.

Gaṇeśa

Kārttikeya's younger brother, the roly-poly elephant-headed Gaṇeśa (Ganesh), has an altogether different story in modern Nepal (Plates 422-430). Gaṇeśa's name resounds on every tongue, and many bear it as their own; he has a temple in

every neighborhood and every square; his images are at the roadside, crossroads, and along the pathways, by the rivers, in the forests and on the hills, beside the doors and gateways,¹⁹⁵ in the *dharma-śālās*, and in the homes and courtyards; and almost invariably Gaṇeśa shares the shrines of all the other gods. In every public or domestic rite, Gaṇeśa's name is the first invoked; the salutation "Om Gaṇeśa" opens the text of Nepalese manuscripts, Śaiva or Buddhist; his form commonly precedes all others in narrative paintings;¹⁹⁶ his image watches over the flame of the ritual oil lamp (*sukunda*); and his name is hymned, his shrine visited, or his image circumambulated before commencing the worship of any other deity, even the most exalted. The thousands of persons who stream into the shrine of the Budhanilkantha Nārāyaṇa on Haribodhinī-ekādaśī, for example, enter and bow at Nārāyaṇa's feet only after first carefully circumambulating the nearby Gaṇeśa.

Gaṇeśa's popularity, not unlike that of Bhīmasena and Lakṣmī, gods of fortune and wealth, proceeds from characteristic human concern with fortune, good and bad. For in Nepal, Gaṇeśa's fundamental role is to create—and to remove if it so pleases him—obstacles to success in human endeavors. This role was assigned to him by his father, Śiva, whose independent procreation of the boy had so enraged Pārvatī, according to one of Gaṇeśa's many origin legends, that she cursed Śiva's child with a monstrous elephant head and pot belly. Nothing daunted at his splendid son's transformation, Śiva pronounced: "thy names shall be Gaṇeśa Vināyaka, Vighnarāja, the son of Śiva; thou shalt be the chief of the Vināyakas and the *ganas*; success and disappointment shall proceed from thee; and great shall be thy influence amongst gods, and in sacrifices and all affairs. Therefore shalt thou be worshipped and invoked first on all

¹⁹⁴ G. Vajracharya, on seeing the enshrined image swathed in cult clothing, first believed it to be of stone and of Licchavi date. Exposed for his bath, the deity appeared to be of wood, and the photographs suggest a late Malla image. D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 658, refers to the image as "bronze but hollow." Thus, like Seto Matsyendra-nātha (Plate 600), Siṭhī-dyo may be painted repoussé copper rather than wood.

¹⁹⁵ Although in Nepal Hanūmān is the chief door guardian and gatekeeper, Gaṇeśa is also a guardian figure. Thus Gaṇeśa images and shrines often provide one clue to the emplacement of now vanished city gates.

¹⁹⁶ In the Viṣṇu-maṇḍala (Plate 383), for example, an image of Gaṇeśa in the uppermost left-hand corner introduces the Daśāvātāras and all the other gods.

occasions, or otherwise the object and prayers of him who omits to do so, shall fail."¹⁹⁷

In his dual role, as a god both beneficent and maleficent, to be both loved and feared, Gaṇeśa is worshiped in a manner proper to deities of both categories. Thus, he may be offered lighted lamps, blossoms, fruits, or—especially—*laḍḍu*, a sweet of which the gourmand god is inordinately fond; or, as often, his image may be drenched with alcohol and the blood of a sacrificial cock or goat.

Although there is an infinite number of legends that purport to explain Gaṇeśa's unusual form and attributes,¹⁹⁸ his historical origin is obscure. His crystallization into an iconographic type seems to have occurred quite late in India, certainly not before the Gupta Period. The deity's roots are much more profound, however, and link him to various demigods and theriomorphic imps who figure among Śiva's retinue, the *ganas* or *gaṇeśvaras*, to whose leadership he was eventually promoted. In early Nepali imagery, elephantlike imps frequently appear. One is engaged in Mārā's assault on the meditating Buddha (Plate 422), another is among the *ganas* who make sport for the enthroned Umā and Maheśvara (Plate 352). In later Umā-Maheśvara reliefs, such elephantine imps become the evolved Gaṇeśa who, befitting his role as the *ganas'* leader, occupies the central position among them (Plates 354, 355). But as in Gupta India, in Licchavi Nepal the iconographically developed Gaṇeśa was also familiar. This is attested by an inscribed Licchavi *śilāpatra* that bears an image of Devī seated between standing attendants, beneath which is Gaṇeśa (Plate 423).¹⁹⁹ Seated between tripods that support a conch and a bowl of offerings, Gaṇeśa was apparently included to insure the success of the goddess's worship. Devī, flame-haloed and bearing sword and shield, is strikingly like the Bhoginī of Licchavi coins. However, the nearly effaced multiline inscription engraved in Gupta characters below the relief has so far resisted reading, preventing certain identification of the goddess. That the lower image is Gaṇeśa, and not merely an elephantine *gana*, is clear by the devel-

oped iconography. Mirroring the iconography of Malla Period Gaṇeśas, he holds in his upper pair of hands a wreath and hatchet, and with his trunk he dips into the telltale bowl of *laḍḍu* supported in one of the lower hands. The fourth hand probably holds his broken tusk, as it does in later images, in allusion to one of his most famous legends: one moonlit night, after a great feast of *laḍḍu*, Gaṇeśa, or Lambodara (Big Belly), as he is often known, was wending his way homeward on his incongruous little overloaded rat. As fortune would have it, a snake crossed their path, and the startled rat unseated his well-fed master, whose belly burst at the fall. Undaunted, Gaṇeśa repacked his emptied stomach with the feast, and secured it with the very snake that had occasioned the rupture. Candra, the moon, burst out laughing at such a spectacle, and the aggrieved Gaṇeśa hurled one of his own tusks at him, causing Candra to lose his luster. Adding still another name to his repertory, Ekadanta (One-tooth), the repentant Gaṇeśa later modified the curse so that the moon might wane, but would also wax again. The story not only incidentally explains the phases of the moon, but accounts for Gaṇeśa's broken tusk, serpent girdle, and the bowl of *laḍḍu* usually shown in his icons. Gaṇeśa should also have a third eye, like his father Śiva, and he often wears snakes as bracelets and anklets, and as his sacred thread (Plate 424).

The Licchavis and their successors through the Early Malla Period knew Gaṇeśa, but apparently were more likely to worship his brother; by about the fifteenth century this situation was reversed. For it is about this time that images of Kārttikeya become infrequent, those of Gaṇeśa numerous. Inscriptional references to Gaṇeśa also rarely predate the fifteenth century.²⁰⁰ Reminiscent of his ancestry as a sporting *gana*, the ungainly Gaṇeśa is frequently shown dancing, often with a girdle of bells or with a host of small bells attached to his legs (Plates 424-426). At other times he is seated, sagely enjoying his bowl of *laḍḍu* (Plate 427). But then he must be only resting for a moment, for he

¹⁹⁷ Rao 1914:1, 41.

¹⁹⁸ Rao 1968:1, 35-47.

¹⁹⁹ The provenience of the stele is unknown. It long stood on the porch of the Bir Library, housed then at

Trichandra College, but was later shifted to the National Museum, where it is labeled a fourteenth-century Durgā.

²⁰⁰ J. Regmi 1973:203.

still wears about his sturdy legs the tinkling bells his Newar devotees even now wear for their own dancing (Plate 428). By Pratāpamalla's time, images of Gaṇeśa are often strongly tantricized and, like companion gods of the period of the Three Kingdoms, Gaṇeśa, too, sprouts multiple heads and limbs (Plate 429). As Mahāgaṇeśa, he also has a *śakti*, and in late imagery is sometimes shown struggling to hold her on his belly-filled lap. Gaṇeśa is also worshiped everywhere in natural boulders that are vaguely elephantine in appearance (Plate 430). In this form he is enshrined in a full-scale temple in one of his celebrated manifestations, Kohena Gaṇeśa at Chobar on the Bagmati.

Gaṇeśa is conceived to have four principal manifestations in the Kathmandu Valley, although, like Nārāyaṇa the proposed candidates vary. Most frequently, the Four Gaṇeśas are identified as Sūrya Vināyaka (Binayak) near Bhaktapur, Aśoka Gaṇeśa of the Kathmandu Darbar Square, Candra Gaṇeśa of Chabahil village, and Kohena (Vighna) Gaṇeśa of Chobar gorge. Each supervises a different sector of the Valley, is thought to be of different color, and has his own myths and legends and his own specialty. Aśoka Gaṇeśa, for example, is held to be the deified incarnation of an oil presser (Manandhar), and Sūrya Vināyaka is widely consulted as a curing god by the deaf and dumb.

Certainly the single most celebrated Gaṇeśa shrine is that of Aśoka Gaṇeśa in Kathmandu (Figure 1:5). Belying its significance, the shrine is one of the smallest on the Darbar Square; in contrast, the most imposing one (Plate 188) is virtually ignored. The Aśoka Gaṇeśa shrine, a one-roof Newar-style structure, has no finial (*gajura*). This is in deference to Gaṇeśa's wish that he might continue to regard the *aśoka* tree, friendly canopy of his primitive hypaethral shrine. Gone now, the tree is reproduced in gilt metal repoussé inside the shrine. Seated among its gilt leaves, Aśoka Gaṇeśa invests an image of stone. But he has four gilt metal sheaths (*kośa*, *ḥavaca*) with which, in rotation, he is dressed every Tuesday, the special day of worship for all Gaṇeśas. His special day is Gaṇeśa's Fourth (Gaṇeśa-caturthī). In keeping with the Mātṛkas and Bhairavas, with whom as a maleficent obstacle maker Gaṇeśa has much in

common, the little Darbar Square temple is his *pīṭha*, and he also enjoys a companion *deochem*. This is a nearby townhouse with gaily painted doorway and *torana*. The Nepalese royal family enjoys a special relationship with Aśoka Gaṇeśa, and certain of their *samśkāras* are performed under his watchful supervision.

Brahmā

In Epic-Puranic cosmogony, the summit of the pantheon is shared by three gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, respectively the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of the universe. But Brahmā failed to achieve a position equaling that of his companions, no sect ever evolved around him, and such personal cult as did exist was of far less significance than that of Śiva or Viṣṇu. In later theology, his role as creator was essentially preempted by Viṣṇu, and Brahmā was relegated to something of a grandfather figure (*pitāmāha*), a kindly advisor to whom the gods could turn in distress, and who served as intermediary and messenger between them and Viṣṇu. Brahmā is even sometimes pictured as a rather inane, helpless, and even dissolute god who easily becomes the tool of the *asuras*.

Brahmā characteristically has four (and in some traditions five) heads that have different symbolic meanings in different mythologies (Plates 431-433). But the most widely accepted tradition is that the addorsed heads symbolize the four Vedas, an association further emphasized by frequently including a manuscript as one of Brahmā's symbols. A less lofty explanation of the polycephalous Brahmā avers that the god, while maintaining a dignified posture to avoid his sons' ridicule, grew the supplementary heads the better to regard lustfully his resplendent daughter, Sarasvatī, in her respectful circumambulation of him as her father. Brahmā's ascetic nature is symbolized by his normal meditative pose, the rosary, water vessel, buckskin garment, and yogic coiffure (Plate 433). Brahmā may have two or four arms, and in late imagery is bearded. The deity's prescribed vehicle is the *hamsa*, the wild gander or swan, but in Nepal, as the "lotus-born" (*kaṃalayonī*), he is almost invariably borne on a lotus.

In the Kathmandu Valley there are no temples of Brahmā, his images are few, and his role in

Nepalese affairs minor. There are fewer than a half-dozen important independent in situ stone sculptures of Brahmā, and all predate the Malla Period.²⁰¹ However, Brahmā is a familiar accessory figure of paintings and bronzes, either as he issues from Viṣṇu's navel (Plates 374, 375); as he occurs in assemblies of all the gods (Plate 408); as with Indra he receives the Buddha at his birth, and on his descent from the Tuṣita heaven (Plates 446, 460); or, as one of the unmistakable Hindu gods, he is trampled underfoot by Buddhist sectarian images.

In contemporary Nepal, Brahmā has virtually no cult, and such independent images as exist are not worshiped; or if homage is rendered at all, it is usually in the name of other gods. A magnificent Brahmā in Chapagaon village, for example, a donation of two otherwise unknown Ābhīra Guptas, is frequently identified as Śiva (Plate 432).²⁰² Because, as a relief work, Brahmā's rear head is not rendered, a few persons come closer to the mark when they identify the three-headed image as Dattātreya, the conjoint representation of the Brahmanical trinity, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva.

But even the neglected Brahmā plays a minor role in contemporary Nepalese culture. For example, as a souvenir of his role as the priestly officiant at the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī, his image is painted on the clay vessels used in the symbolic marriage of Newar girls with Nārāyaṇa; and in the form of a broom, Brahmā is present on the Buddhist domestic altar at the celebration of *pāñ-cadāna*, when families tender their offerings to Buddhist priests and "monks."

THE VEDIC TRADITION

Certain of the gods who watched over the Vedic Aryans on the plains of Asia still watch over the affairs of men in the Kathmandu Valley. These

²⁰¹ Pal 1974:26, 135-136; figs. 11, 244, 245.

²⁰² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 33 (153-154).

²⁰³ It is doubtful that the *yūpa* was still used in thirteenth-century Nepal when the Śikhara Nārāyaṇa Dwarf incarnation was established (Plate 434, and Pal 1974:fig. 4). It was most likely copied after the *yūpas* made familiar by sculptures from the Licchavi Period. Obviously the

are chiefly Sūrya, Indra, and Agni, gods who in the Vedic theophany personified celestial, atmospheric, and terrestrial forces of nature. In the Hindu tradition, the Vedic gods gradually lost their preeminence as their concepts were modified and assimilated into new and more powerful divinities such as Śiva and Viṣṇu, or a host of new goddesses who began to emerge as equivalent and sometimes greater forces. But even as late as the Kathmandu Valley Licchavis, there lingered on an active Vedic tradition. Not only do Licchavi inscriptions extoll the names of Sūrya, Indra, Agni, and their lesser companions, but it seems apparent that there was actually a Vedic cult. There is the suggestive evidence of the name "Yūpagrāma" (Licchavi Patan, discussed in Chapter 5), and given the exact and detailed rendering in sculptures of the *yūpa*, the Vedic sacrificial post, it is conceivable that it was a familiar object in contemporary culture (Plate 434).²⁰³ Moreover, the inscriptions leave no doubt that there were practicing Vedic priests and adherents in Licchavi Nepal. For example, Mānadeva lauds his father as having been a performer of *yajña* sacrifice, and in the early sixth century, we find Vedic priests (*yāj-ñiṣṭha*) and Brahmans cooperating to establish a *gosthī* for the care of a Vaiṣṇava deity; the Ābhīra Guptas also took pride in their Vedic orientation.²⁰⁴ Even in the Malla Period, moreover, when tantrism was in its heyday, Vedic rites were still performed on occasion.²⁰⁵

Quite apart from Viṣṇu, who absorbed many of the Vedic sun god Sūrya's aspects, Sūrya clearly enjoyed a flourishing cult in the Kathmandu Valley. There are frequent references to the deity in Licchavi inscriptions. One of them is on the pedestal of a missing Sūrya image consecrated in A.D. 480 (s.s. 402 Āśāḍha), where Sūrya, in keeping with the Vedic tradition, is declared to be the same as Indra.²⁰⁶ The apogee of Sūrya worship appears to have come much later, however, in the Transi-

Licchavi posts also could have been traditional renderings, but coupled with other evidence for an existing Vedic cult, it may be that the *yūpas* were then copied from life.

²⁰⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 2, 22, 28 (9-30, 61-109, 138-140); 1967c:114.

²⁰⁵ Pal 1970:20.

²⁰⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 12 (59-60); Pal and

tional and Early Malla Periods. This is the time when almost all of the scores of Sūrya images, many of them inscribed and dated, were consecrated, and temples and shrines must have been erected. Of the latter there now remains only a probable vestige, the foundations of a small *śi-ḥhara* temple (now enshrining a linga), which is fitted with winged horses like those that pull the solar chariot (Plate 208). As suggested by an inordinately large number of Sūrya images to be found in and around Panauti, one of the chief settlements of the Bhoṭarājya and an auspicious *triveni*, the village seems to have been a particularly active center of medieval Sūrya worship.

Sūrya in his earliest representations in medieval Nepal stands majestically alone (Plate 435) or is flanked by small accessory figures. These are usually his acolytes, the staff bearer Daṇḍī and the scribe Piṅgala;²⁰⁷ or the personified planets which, together with Sūrya, comprise the Nine Planets (Navagraha) (Plate 436). Like Sūrya images of northern India, the Nepalese Sūrya may be crowned, booted, and mailed (or wear a lapelled jacket) in the northern, or Scythian mode (*udīcyaveśa*); or he may be barefoot and in a dhoti, as in the south Indian tradition.²⁰⁸ Later Sūrya imagery in the Kathmandu Valley is usually narrative, and attempts to capture the daily drama of the resplendent god's passage through the heavens in his solar chariot drawn by seven winged horses (Plate 438). These representations are charged with accessory figures such as Sūrya's charioteer, Aruṇa, his acolytes, the personified planets, and the goddesses Ūṣā and Pratyūṣā. The latter are allegories of dawn who dispel the forces of darkness, often represented as demonic figures fleeing the oncoming sun chariot.

Candra, or Candramas, the personification of the moon, has an almost identical icon in the Kathmandu Valley, except that his chariot is pulled by seven geese, a local peculiarity apparently derived

from tantric Buddhist literature.²⁰⁹ In paintings, the deities are further distinguished by color, Sūrya red and Candra white. Curiously, in Nepal there are no stone sculptures of Candra, but numerous mandala paintings; Sūrya, who has so many stone sculptures, has no mandalas. About the time of the Three Kingdoms the practice of making independent images of these astral divinities passed out of fashion, although paired representations of the two gods as accessory figures or as decorative and symbolic emblems remained common. Builders frequently employed the solar and lunar chariots as a motif for carving round windows, balanced like medallions on either side of the door or another larger window. The paired Sūrya-Candra motif is seen in paintings (Plate 383) and often serves as striking ear ornaments for other gods—Pratāpamalla's Viśvarūpa, for example, although Candra has been lost (Plate 373). In aniconic form, as simple discs, or disc and crescent, Sūrya and Candra are also included in many sculptures and paintings in all periods (Plates 357, 367, 368, 371), and Candra alone is a characteristic crescent embellishment to Śiva's coiffure. Images of the Navagraha were also fashioned, not only as ensembles where eight are accessories to a dominant Sūrya, but where all are of equal importance. Such a group, for example, was carved above a fourteenth-century *jaladroni* in Bhaktapur (Plate 233).²¹⁰

Considering the profound influence the planets are believed to exercise on human destiny in Nepalese culture, it is not surprising that the astral divinities continued to be courted for so long. But in the contemporary environment their luster seems to be fading. Even Sūrya's role is largely limited to ritual invocation in the morning prayer. But when devotees of Nārāyaṇa, Sūrya's successor, conclude their night watch prior to the god's awakening on Haribodhini-ekādaśī, it is in the name of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa that they greet the first rays of the morning sun.

Bhattacharyya 1969:6-7. The mandala at Paśupati-nātha, previously identified as a "ring encircling a solar disc" (Gnoli 1956:inscr. 87), is named in the inscription Pārthivaśilā, and was in honor of the goddess Pṛthvī (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 29 [141-142]). It is probable, however, that the much-debated seated image at nearby Ārya-ghat, today often worshiped as a Licchavi queen, is in fact an

early Sūrya (Pal 1974:46-48, fig. 64).

²⁰⁷ Pal 1974:figs. 28, 29.

²⁰⁸ On the iconography of the Nepalese Sūrya, see Pal and Bhattacharyya 1969:9-20 and Pal 1974:142-145.

²⁰⁹ Pal and Bhattacharyya 1969:21-22.

²¹⁰ Pal 1974:figs. 256-257.

Agni's cult is centered on two shrines, one at Svayambhūnātha, the other at Patan. At Svayambhū, Agni is worshiped in the form of a demonic folk image set in a hypaethral shrine known as Agnipura, the Mansion of Agni (Plate 439). In Patan he is worshiped in the form of a perpetual fire contained in a large *yajña kunda* housed in a rectangular temple known as Agniśālā. Through priestly intermediaries, Agni, the fire, is offered oblations of sandalwood, common wood, ghee, and cereals by his devotees in return for granting them longevity. Further, the scent of the burning sacrifices is believed to purify the air, bring rain, and increase the harvest. The Patan Agniśālā is essentially a local Newar institution, but on birthdays, a particularly appropriate time for worshipping Agni, it is thought, people from other places and other ethnic groups come to the shrine or send a representative bearing offerings to Agni in their name.

There are two other places in the Kathmandu Valley where perpetual fires are maintained, one at the shrine of Pacalī Bhairava and the other, a bona fide *yajña kunda*, at the Sankhu shrine of Vajrayoginī.²¹¹ But how or whether these sites are related to Agni worship is not clear. Agni is, of course, also invoked in contemporary Nepal at the time of the *homa* or *yajña* sacrifice performed in the fire pits in the *vihāras* and elsewhere.

The ultimate origin of the Patan Agniśālā must be the Vedic fire altar, and there were antecedents in Licchavi Nepal. Amśuvarman informs us that there was an Agniśālā among the temples incorporated into a compound of Mānagrha palace.²¹² Until a half-century ago, a perpetual fire was also maintained in Hanuman Dhoka palace, from which the townspeople were permitted to borrow flame. It is not impossible that the Hanuman Dhoka fire was the lineal descendant of the traditional palace Agniśālā, and is rooted in that of

Kailāsakūṭa-bhavana. The Patan cult of Agni practiced today, however, is not purely Vedic, but is permeated with tantrism and Śiva-Śakti worship. The fire is tended by a Brahman and his wife who personify Śiva and Śakti, and it is Śiva's emblem, not Agni's, that is on the temple *torana*.²¹³

This phase of Agni's cult may perhaps be traced to medieval Bengal. According to the Buddhist chronicle, a perpetual fire was formerly worshiped in a village known as Jhul, west of Patan toward the Valley rim, by persons who had brought back the custom from Bengal.²¹⁴ At Jhul, just as in contemporary Patan, the worship was to be performed by Brahman couples in the guise of Śiva and Śakti. However, a particular devotee, having lost his wife but loath to lose Agni, took as a substitute a Brahman widow, in the Hindu tradition a despised and inauspicious creature. Agni was so displeased that he blazed up and consumed the blasphemous Brahman together with the entire village. As a consequence, King Śaṅkaradeva (ca. A.D. 1069-1083) reestablished the destroyed *yajña*- or Agni-*kunda* in Patan.²¹⁵ The substitute widow, by name Yaśodharā, escaped the conflagration and fled with her son to Patan, where she repaired a *vihāra* and had her son tonsured and made a monk. But to conceal this from her relatives, also Agnihotras, that is, those who sacrifice to Agni, she did not permit the hair-cutting ceremonies to be performed before the *āgama* deities of the *vihāra*, as was the custom. Despite the inconsistencies and bias of the tale, there there may be some historical truth to the story. Even now Yaśodharā's connection with a Patan *vihāra* is well known at Bu-bahal, whose Sanskrit name is Vidhyādhara-brāhmaṇa-saṃskārita-Yaśodharā, roughly, "the Brahman winged celestial built by Yaśodharā." It would be interesting to investigate whether the hair-cutting ceremonies (*cūḍā karma*) performed there today as one of the *saṃskāras* of Shakyas and Vajracharyas

²¹¹ According to Kirkpatrick 1969:151, in the early nineteenth century a perpetual fire was maintained at Svayambhūnātha; perhaps it was related to the shrine Agnipura.

²¹² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 72 (301-308).

²¹³ The chief priest is the oldest member (*thākālī*) of the Patan group which hereditarily serve the shrine. If his wife dies he must relinquish the post to the next oldest

person. When his own death is imminent, he is brought to Agniśālā to expire and is cremated in a traditional place on the Nakhu Kholā, a stream south of Patan. According to the incumbent in 1970, the chosen priest is loath to assume the office since it is believed to presage an early death.

²¹⁴ Wright 1966:106-107.

²¹⁵ Wright 1966:107; Hasrat 1970:47.

does differ from that performed in the other *vihāras*.

In contemporary Nepalese life, Agni's affairs have not only been largely usurped by Śiva and Śakti, but by a mother goddess concerned with fire and flame. Known as Jvālā-māī or Jvālā-mukhī, Flame Mother or Flaming Face, the goddess is worshiped, among other places, in an impressive temple near Asan-tol, Kathmandu.

Of all the Vedic gods in Nepal, the story of Indra, or Śakra, is perhaps the most interesting. Fundamentally a solar divinity, Indra was once a Creator, King of the Gods, and Lord of the Atmosphere. But whereas in India he has been reduced to a *dikpālaka* leader, a figurehead charged with guardianship of the eastern quadrant of the universe,²¹⁶ in Nepal he is still an important and honored deity. Indra's name is familiar to every tongue, his images abound, and he is the center of an annual festival whose duration is exceeded only by that of the premier goddess, Durgā.

The name of Indra is well known in Licchavi epigraphs,²¹⁷ but there are no extant Indra sculptures of Licchavi date. In fact, as one more intriguing anomaly of the Kathmandu Valley, whereas Indra has untold images in bronze, wood, and paint (Plates 440, 442-446, 471), he has not a single independent image in stone. Like that of Sūrya, the rise of Indra's cult in Nepal seems to be a phenomenon of the Transitional Period. Of particular interest in the history of Indian religion, moreover, whereas in India Indra's cult seems to have survived only to the tenth century, it is exactly from then that images of Indra begin to be abundant in Nepal.²¹⁸

As befits his role as King of the Gods and Lord of the Atmosphere, one of Indra's most common Nepalese representations is as a king, crowned, richly bejeweled, and seated in royal ease (*mahārājilā*) (Plate 440). The deity's chief cognizances are a third eye—horizontally positioned, in contrast to Śiva's vertical orb—and the thunderbolt

(*vajra*), symbol of his mastery of the atmosphere. The latter is usually grasped in one hand, but is sometimes anthropomorphized as Vajrapuruṣa (Plate 471). In Nepal, Indra may be recognized by a distinctive crested crown, worn usually by him but rarely by other gods. I know of fewer than a half-dozen such instances: three Nepali—an image of Mañjuśrī and two of Avalokiteśvara (Plates 462, 463, 474)—and two foreign, one Gandhāran and one Khotanese.²¹⁹ It seems quite possible, despite the absence of Licchavi Period Indra images, that the single-crested crown perpetuates a type worn by Licchavi kings. This is suggested by terracotta figurines recovered from a Licchavi Period midden at Dhumvarahi, Kathmandu (Plate 441).²²⁰ Some of these terra cottas also wear knee boots, and others the broad-lapelled coat, both characteristic elements of northern, or Scythian, dress as perpetuated in so many Sūrya images in northern India and Nepal. It may be noted that the Khotanese "Iranian Bodhisattva" who wears this same type of crown also wears the same knee boots. Thus it is possible that not only the Khotanese legend cycle is reflected in Kathmandu Valley legends²²¹—which may perhaps be earlier than heretofore supposed—but also Khotanese royal dress. But Indra's crown, still current in contemporary icons, is the only survival to our time.

Less well known than the regal Indra, but more typical of the deity's icons in worship in Nepal, is a "yogic" Indra. In this form, the god sits with crossed legs (*padmāsana*) and extends his arms stiffly from the shoulders with his palms turned toward the viewer (Plate 442). The significance of this image type is not certain but, like the crowned king variety, is apparently peculiar to Nepal. Nonetheless, as for all things related to the gods, legend provides a ready explanation.

Indra, it seems, once sought as a gift for his mother a unique blossom that grew only in the Kathmandu Valley.²²² Thinking to steal down under cover of the first autumnal morning fog, Indra

²¹⁶ On Indra's decline in India, see especially Bhattacharji 1970:249-283, also the chapters on Viṣṇu and his Kṛṣṇa avatar, who ended in assuming Indra's place.

²¹⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 7, 12, 70, 129, 145, 146, 148, 149.

²¹⁸ Rao 1968:11, 517; Pal 1974:138.

²¹⁹ Lyon and Ingholt 1957:pl. 502; Bussagli 1963:57.

²²⁰ Others are illustrated by Thapa 1970:fig. 8.

²²¹ Brough 1948.

²²² Although embroidered by the Nepalese and transferred to a local setting, the Nepali legend is based on the Pārijāta-haraṇa (stealing of the heavenly flower) episode,

was nevertheless apprehended. Unrecognized, the god was pilloried like any common thief, his arms outstretched and tied to a pole. Indra's mother, observing her son's disgrace, hurried to identify him to his captors, who at once released the immortal thief and became his devotees. Thus, say the Nepalese, these curious images not only commemorate Indra's inadvertent imprisonment but, in the extended arms and open hands, prove that he is not stealing anything.

It is as the "pilloried thief" that images of Indra are most commonly displayed during the deity's annual eight-day harvest festival, the Indra-jātrā. At that time, the story of the god's quest, subsequent imprisonment, and release is reenacted in rites that last for the duration of the festival. They begin with the deity's imprisonment at the foot of the tall ceremonial pole, the Indradhvaja, raised for the jātrā (Plate 443), and end with his release on the final day. Throughout the festival, small wooden pavilions are erected before the houses and at the crossroads, where images of Indra, usually as the pilloried thief, are exposed. The principal pavilion is erected near Hanuman Dhoka, at Maru-tol, the alleged site of the god's apprehension (Plates 444, 445).²²³ Raised high on four carved posts, the pavilion is roofed and supported on four carved wooden elephants. These symbolize the guardians of the quarters as well as Indra's vehicle, the white elephant Airāvata, which became Indra's prize at the churning of the ocean. The large gilt repoussé image of Indra seated within the pavilion is gaily adorned, and he is offered thousands of oil lamps by his devotees. They are placed on a lofty wooden

recorded in the *Harivamśa*, in which Indra is discomfited by Kṛṣṇa (Bhattacharji 1970:266).

²²³ Some claim that the incident took place in Panauti, once apparently a center of Indra (and Sūrya) worship, as was also nearby Śrīkhaṇḍapur (Khāḍpu village) (Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:177-178). The prestigious Śiva temple is called Indreśvara, one of the rivers of the *trivenī* is named for Indra's consort, Śacī (alternately Indrāṇī), and legends respecting Indra's association with the village abound. It is at Panauti, legend affirms, that Indra seduced the beautiful Ahalyā, wife of the *ṛṣi* Gautama. Gautama revenged himself by turning Ahalyā into a stone, seen at the northeast corner of the temple compound, and cursed Indra to bear upon his body a thousand female genitalia. But following joint penance by Indra and

scaffold across the way, or massed on the pavement below the pavilion.²²⁴

With respect to these curious images of Indra, an entry in the memoirs of Father d'Andrade, a seventeenth-century Jesuit missionary, is of more than passing interest. When he was in Tibet, the priest gave to some domiciled Newar goldsmiths a cross to copy. He was assured "that many of the same pattern were to be found in their native land, and that different sizes were made in wood and in various metals. They were usually placed in the temples, and for five days of the year they were planted on the public roads, where the people came in crowds to adore them, throw flowers and light up a great number of lamps. These crosses were named in their tongue 'Indor.'"²²⁵

As practiced in Nepal, the Indra-jātrā seems to be essentially a harvest festival over which Indra presides in his traditional role as the dispenser of summer rains and winter fogs, both essential to the year-round farming activity of the Kathmandu Valley. But other gods and demigods are now thought to be the chief rainmakers, and through the years the festival has been modified, now incorporating diverse aspects that seem to have little to do with Indra or an agrarian celebration. For example, coinciding with Indra-jātrā is the three-day festival of the living Durgā, the Kumārī-jātrā—a festival within a festival, so to speak—and it is during Indra-jātrā that the Bhairava masks and images of various gods are on public display (Plates 362, 364, 373). At this time also the ritual circumambulation (*upāḥo vanegu*) of some of the cities in commemoration of the dead takes place

Indrāṇī, Śiva commuted Indra's curse and turned the *yonis* into eyes. Indra's third eye is an allusion to these thousand eyes; it may be that his "yogic" form relates to his penance. More likely, the form is related to the Manichaean Hormuzd of Central Asia (who is Indra), a problem to be explored elsewhere.

²²⁴ The annual raising of Indra's pavilion is an interesting illustration of how tradition holds out against progress. Even though in recent years Maru-tol has been macadamized, each year Indra's *gūthiars* doggedly excavate four holes in the paving to set up their pavilion as tradition demands, and around which wheeled traffic struggles in the busy roadway as best it can.

²²⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 1005-1006.

(Chapter 5) and, for the same reason, the bereaved bathe in the Pond of Indra, Indra-daha.

Although the first record of the celebration of Indra-jātrā in Nepal cannot be traced earlier than the fifteenth century, the custom is profoundly rooted in antiquity. The Indradhvaja is related to Indra's role in the Ṛgvedic creation myth, and the custom of erecting such a pole is known in Epic and Puranic literature. It is identical to the god himself.²²⁰

The cult of Indra in Nepal Mandala encapsulates much that is characteristic of its cultural and religious life. The distinctive local types of Indra images illustrate again the Nepalese penchant for innovation. They underscore the fact that the Nepalese response to incoming currents from India has

²²⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 614; Banerjea 1956:45, 103 n. 3; Kane 1968:11 (1968), 825-826; Irwin 1976:739-740, 745.

not been slavish provincialism, but local, fresh, and imaginative. This fact is also brought out by the Valley's independent action in maintaining Indra in his place of honor despite his declining fortunes in India. As a universal phenomenon in the Valley, intertwined with that of other gods, Indra's cult demonstrates again the nonsectarian nature of Nepalese worship, illustrates how legends permeate the cultural fabric, and how they and the monuments together serve anthropology and history. Incorporated into Buddhism in two forms, a Brahmanical attendant of Śākyamuni Buddha and as the Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi, Indra provides a fitting deity to lead us from the matters we have just explored to those that are about to come, the story of Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley.



CHAPTER 10

BUDDHISM: EVOLUTION AND DISSOLUTION

AMONG the many endowments with which Nepal Mandala is blessed, few are more significant than its Buddhist heritage. The closely packed *vihāras* distinguish the townscapes, the glittering stupas add luster, and the glory of stone sculptures is everywhere. Bronzes, paintings, and manuscripts on Buddhist themes have spread the Valley's fame far afield. But it is perhaps of greatest significance, that here alone Mahāyāna Buddhism has survived as a living tradition. Valley Buddhists have sometimes been pressured, but scarcely persecuted; Buddhist monuments have been destroyed by nothing less benign than time and neglect.¹ The Kathmandu Valley is thus not only an immense museum of Buddhist antiquities, but is a unique oasis of surviving Mahāyānist Buddhist doctrines, cultural practices, and colorful festivals.

To appreciate the wonder of Buddhist survivals in the Kathmandu Valley, one has only to compare it with Magadha or Kashmir. Magadha, corresponding to Bihar state and part of Bengal, was for a millennium and a half the Buddhist holy land, and Kashmir was long a close rival. Yet in either area, the one now Hindu, the other professing Islam, there is so little left of Buddhism in the cultural fabric—or even among physical remains—that one is hard pressed to imagine that

¹ The only known exception is the Rana century, but even then persecution was limited and by no means addressed to the whole Buddhist community, nor to the gods

there ever was a Buddhist past. A study of Valley Buddhism is therefore all the more important to the study of medieval Buddhism in these areas, about which relatively little is known of its development, liturgy, iconography, and sociology. The stupas, *vihāras*, sculptures, and the Nepalese Buddhists themselves provide an unbroken link with the Buddhist past. Many of the monuments in worship today are Licchavi foundations; even a few monastic congregations lingered into the seventeenth century. And even now, despite secularization of the *vihāras* and doctrinal modifications, there are hundreds of existing *samghas* with a complex intra- and extramural social organization. There is also a sizable Buddhist community that, as of old, turns to the stupas, the *vihāras*, and the sacred images within, and as penitents and celebrants observe the ancient and unbroken cycles of Buddhist ceremonies and festivals.

But as this chapter will make clear, despite the unique survival of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley, Buddhism has been slowly declining since about the twelfth century. Today, the process has picked up speed, and Buddhism is rapidly disappearing. But Nepali Buddhism as a living force has hardly been explored, and even its monuments await documentation. The study of

or shrines. But see Chapter 7 respecting the renovation of *caityas* and Chapter 9, especially note 16.

Buddhist remains in the Kathmandu Valley, social and physical, is urgent.

In this chapter I have set down what I could, both as a sort of twentieth-century complement to the useful nineteenth-century observations, and to provide a foundation, however shaky, for Buddhist studies to follow. These, if they are to be done at all, must not be too long delayed.

THE LICCHAVI PERIOD

The first firm evidence for the existence of Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley is provided by the Licchavis. However, it seems probable that the introduction of Buddhism long preceded the historical period, and that Buddhist history in the Valley is essentially as old as the doctrine itself. Siddhārtha Gautama Buddha, a princely scion of the Śākya clan, was born about 563 B.C. at Lumbini, now just inside Nepal's frontier with Bihar state, India (Map 1). Miraculously stepping forth from Queen Māyā's side, as she rested in the Lumbini grove (Plates 446, 447), the newborn infant took seven steps (*saptapada*) to symbolize his role as the universal monarch. Succeeding steps led the Buddha away from Nepal, the land of his birth, to which he would never return; but the remainder of his mortal career was spent in nearby Magadha, adjacent to the Nepalese Tarai.

That the doctrine of the Śākya Sage, Śākyamuni Buddha, soon flowed northward seems certain. Under the patronage and proselytization of Aśoka, the Mauryan emperor, Buddhism had reached even distant Ceylon by about the third century B.C. For Nepal, we have the accounts of the visit of the Buddha's chief disciple Ānanda and, more probable, of the Buddhist monks from Śrāvastī, who are said to have accompanied traders to the Valley entrepôt.² The reference to early immigration of Śākyas from Kapilavastu supports such intercourse, and is in turn given credence by the subsequent mention in Licchavi inscriptions of domiciled Śākyas.³ Other evidence for the early intro-

duction of Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley is provided by the monastery known as Guṃ-vihāra (The Monastery of the Wooded Hill). Located on a hilltop near Sankhu, the *vihāra* is now part of the domain of the popular goddess Vajrayogini. Mānadeva I is supposed to have repaired here as a penitent, and Guṃ-vihāra was the recipient of Aṃśuvarman's largesse, in this respect second only to Paśupati and Changu Nārāyaṇa.⁴ In contrast to all other *vihāras*, which are named in Sanskrit in Licchavi inscriptions, the Sankhu foundation is referred to by its popular indigenous name. Such usage suggests that in this instance the Licchavis perpetuated the local name of a preexisting monastery, as we know they did for some eighty percent of Nepalese place names. If so, the foundation of Guṃ-vihāra, and probably other *vihāras*, may have long antedated the Licchavis. A mutilated image found at Hadigaon, to be dated about the second or third century A.D., most likely represents a Bodhisattva, and if so would also attest to a venerable history of Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley.⁵ The Patan stupas, discussed further along, may also point in this direction.

As in India, early Nepalese Buddhism undoubtedly closely followed the teachings of Gautama Buddha. Known variously as Śrāvakayāna (Way of Disciples), Theravāda (School of the Elders), and by the once pejorative term, Hīnayāna (Little Vehicle, Lesser Way), early Buddhism was essentially a system of ethics concerned with personal salvation. Buddha was considered mortal, and there were no deities; humanity was the instrument of its own fate. The primary goal was extinction of self (nirvana); it would be achieved by extinguishing desire, which bound one to rebirth and an eternal round of painful existence. As the means to this end the Buddha prescribed a disciplinary Eightfold Path to be followed in company with other disciples (*śrāvaka*), men and, separately, women, gathered into celibate communities (*samgha*). Housed in a monastery (*vihāra*), the monks and nuns devoted themselves to studying the *sūtras*, the doctrinal texts considered to

38, pl. 5, who first drew attention to this important sculpture, considered it to be a proto-Bodhisattva, and dated it to the second century A.D.

² See Chapter 1.

³ D. Vajracharya 1973:172-173, 456.

⁴ D. Vajracharya 1972b; G. Vajracharya 1966a:8-9.

⁵ Pal 1974:40-41, fig. 54. Banerjea and Rijal 1968:37-

have emanated from the Buddha. Originally, since there were no divinities, there were no objects of worship; but in time the symbolic stupa filled this void and, at length, the image of the Buddha himself.

Concomitant with the doctrinal evolution of Buddhism in India in the first three centuries A.D., as new dogmas evolved and council succeeded council, the Theravāda communities in the Kathmandu Valley were very likely soon joined by adherents of Mahāyāna (Great Vehicle) Buddhism. Reflecting the Buddha's own rejection of immediate personal salvation after his hard-won Enlightenment, Mahāyāna doctrine espoused the theory of the Bodhisattva, an enlightened one who defers nirvana to aid others in its attainment. As a further departure from orthodoxy, the Mahāyānists proclaimed the divinity of the Buddha, joined to him a divine host, and issued new canonical texts. Although one may suppose that the revised doctrine soon began to have Valley adherents, secure evidence for the existence of Mahāyāna Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley is not available before the middle of the sixth century. It is then confirmed by Licchavi epigraphs and by sculptures of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, a tradition firmly established by the following century (Plates 276, 277, 448-451).⁶

Incontestable evidence that tantric (Vajrayāna, Sahajīyā) Buddhism was familiar in the Kathmandu Valley at least by the seventh century A.D. is provided by two Licchavi epigraphs. One of these, issued in the reign of Aṃśuvarman, explicitly refers to "Vajrayāna" (Plate 52); the other, from Gorkha, west of the Valley, dated M.S. 122 (A.D. 698), records the consecration of an image of Vajrabhairava (Yamāntaka), a ferocious emanation

⁶ Two images of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara were consecrated in the mid-sixth century. One, labeled Āryāvalokiteśvaranātha, dates from the reign of Rāmadeva (ca. A.D. 545), and is still worshiped; the other, now missing, was established in A.D. 557 (s.s. 479) (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 40, 43 [177-178, 185-186]). The extant image is discussed by Pal 1974:23-24; 1974a:9-10, who illustrates all of the most important sixth-century Nepalese images of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas (1974:figs. 8, 166-168, 181; 1974a:figs. 37, 48-51, 54, 56, 57). To these unequivocally sixth-century works may be added others probably of the late sixth or early seventh century: an

tion of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.⁷ It is probable that Vajrayāna Buddhism, or some of its cult aspects, antedate this time, however. Tārānātha asserts that Vasubandhu, regarded as the leader of the Yogācāra school that flourished in the fourth century, visited Nepal (where he eventually died), and initiated the Nepalese in the practice of mantras.⁸ The *Mañjuśrī-mūla-kaḷpa*, redacted about the eighth century A.D., adds that King Mānadeva, presumably the celebrated fifth-century ruler, was a *mantra siddha*.⁹

It is only with the seventh century, however, that we begin to have ample evidence for the existence of the Vajrayāna concept of the Five Tathāgatas in the Kathmandu Valley. Formulated in India as the fruit of a long evolutionary process, the notion of the Five Tathāgatas, Jinās, or "Dhyāni Buddhas," is of fundamental significance in the Vajrayāna pantheon and rituals. By name Vairocana, Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha (alternately, Amitāyus), and Amoghasiddhi, these five emanate from the primordial Ādibuddha, and are the authors of the five worlds (three past, the present, and a future). Each Tathāgata is conceived as the spiritual father of a particular Bodhisattva who is incarnate in an earthly (Mānuṣi) Buddha. Each Tathāgata presides over a particular direction, and is associated with a particular element, one of the five senses, and other specific aspects. Each may be recognized by his particular color, symbol, *mudrā*, and *vāhana*, and each has his own consort.

Indisputable evidence for the existence of the Vajrayāna pentad in Licchavi Nepal is provided by a *caitya* at Om-bahal, Patan, stylistically datable to about the seventh century (Plates 282-284).¹⁰ Four of the Tathāgatas, identified by their distinctive *mudrās*, are enshrined in niches facing the

inscribed pedestal from another missing Avalokiteśvara image, consecrated in Aṃśuvarman's reign, and the Tyagal-tol, Patan *caitya* inscribed with hymns to the Buddha and various Bodhisattvas (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 97, 98 [386-388]).

⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 89, 141 (370-371, 523-526).

⁸ Snellgrove 1957:101.

⁹ Jayaswal 1936:211.

¹⁰ Pal 1974a:11 overlooked this monument in observing that there were no Licchavi *caityas* bearing representations of the Five Tathāgatas.

cardinal directions, and above them the fifth, Vairocana, is repeated in four other niches. The Om-bahal *caitya* fully corroborates the observation of the Chinese envoy, Wang Hsüan-t'sê, that the Nepalese adored "five celestial spirits" and carved them in stone.¹¹ The envoy's report of the sacrificial lamb tendered to these spirits, inconsistent with orthodox Mahāyāna practice, also suggests tantric influence.

That tantrism was definitely in the air of seventh-century Nepal is apparent from other considerations. Images of the Brahmanical Mother Goddesses such as Śivadutī, Bhagavatī, and Jayavāgīśvarī point in this direction (Plates 537, 547) and more specifically, there is epigraphic evidence. Reflecting a characteristic tantric preoccupation, we hear of Pāśupatas wearing "garlands of skulls," and even in Mānadeva's day, the *karana pūjā* was performed, a mode of worship involving the typical tantric oblation of alcohol.¹²

It is apparent from epigraphic, plastic, and literary evidence that throughout much of the Licchavi Period the various Buddhist doctrines, and diverse sects within them, coexisted. In Aṃśuvarman's time, for example, when Vajrayāna Buddhism was already an established fact, a Mahāyāna *samgha* of nuns belonging to the Cāturviṃśā sect flourished in Patan (Plate 450); elsewhere there were apparently Mādhyamika communities (as suggested by the name Madhyama-vihāra, an object of Aṃśuvarman's largesse); and Mahāsaṅghikas are known from Narendradeva's time (A.D. 643-679).¹³ There are also several carvings of the Wheel and Deer, symbolizing the Buddha's sermon in the Deer Park at Sarnath, a hallmark of Theravāda Mūlasarvāstivādins (Plates 52, 324).¹⁴ Adherents of differing doctrines may at times even have been members of a single community, housed in the same *vihāra* but following their individual doctrinal inclinations.¹⁵

The coexistence of the diverse doctrines is also borne out in the diversity of iconographic tradi-

tions current at the same time. Coeval with the Om-bahal *caitya*, clearly a Vajrayāna monument, other *caityas* are Mahāyānist or reflect a transitional hesitancy between the two. There are the well-known *caityas* of Dhvaka-bahal, Kathmandu, and Nag-bahal, Patan, seventh- and early eighth-century works that are primarily Mahāyānist in concept (Plates 273, 276, 277).¹⁶ So also is the Lainchaur *caitya* (Plate 286) with two images of the Buddha displaying *bhūmiśparsa mudrā*, and two, *samādhi mudrā*. Others are more ambiguous. For example, the Tyagal-tol *caitya*, essentially a Mahāyānist cult object, bears couplets addressed to Amitābha and Akṣobhya, significantly the two Tathāgatas of the Vajrayāna pentad to crystallize first. Samantabhadra, Vajrapāṇi, and Avalokiteśvara, three of the Bodhisattvas associated with the pentad, are also praised, although they are not paired with the Tathāgatas they later invariably accompanied. A *caitya* at Alko-hiti, Patan, stylistically a probable seventh-century monument, seems even more transitional. Carved into niches facing the four directions are Buddha images that display four different gestures, which agree with those of four of the Five Tathāgatas. Three are seated with folded legs, one in *samādhi mudrā*, another in *varada mudrā*, and the third in *bhūmiśparsa mudrā*. The fourth image is seated with pendant legs in the so-called "European" manner (*pralambapādāsana*), and makes the *dharmacakra mudrā* common to Vairocana. Rather than Vairocana, however, the image could represent Maitreya or Śākyamuni Buddha. In essence, the position reflects Kuṣāṇa royal practice, and in Buddhist iconography is typically the prerogative of Maitreya, less frequently of Śākyamuni Buddha, and rarely, Avalokiteśvara.¹⁷ In any event, the Alko-hiti sculpture, whatever deity is intended, is almost certainly the earliest Nepalese example of this type of image. Of further interest, one of the Alko-hiti meditating Buddha images is seated upon and canopied by a

¹¹ Lévi 1905:1, 164.

¹² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 14, 112 (62-64, 426-428).

¹³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 77, 95, 136 (320-335, 382-383, 508-510). That the name of the Mādhyamika's chief exponent, the Mahāsiddha Nāgārjuna, enjoys such a prominent place in Nepalese culture may also reflect a particular local intimacy with the sect.

¹⁴ Pal 1974:figs. 158, 162.

¹⁵ Snellgrove 1957:46-47.

¹⁶ Pal 1974a:8-20, figs. 23-32.

¹⁷ Pal 1974:114; 1974a:34. Mallmann 1948:257 and Auroy 1937:89-90 point out Avalokiteśvara, in an unusual manifestation, seated this way at Ellora.

serpent, recalling an incident in the Buddha's life when the serpent Mucalinda sheltered him during torrential rains at Bodhgaya (Plate 281). Much later, the Mucalinda motif becomes associated in Nepal with the Tathāgata Amoghasiddhi whose identifying gesture, rather than the earth-touching one at Alko-hiti, is absence of fear (*abhaya mudrā*). Thus it may be that the Alko-hiti monument not only reflects a time of doctrinal transition, but graphically confirms the thesis that the Tathāgatas evolved from popular attitudes of the Buddha Śākyamuni.¹⁸

Further testimony respecting the doctrinal diversity of the Buddhists in Licchavi Nepal is provided by Hsüan-tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, and Tārānātha, the Tibetan historian. The former heard in Vaiśālī that the monks of seventh-century Nepal studied both doctrines,¹⁹ and Tārānātha, writing of the following century, corroborates this observation. "In the small country of Nepal [the Buddhist doctrine] was extremely active. . . . [there] the Mantrayāna and the Mahāyāna were very strong, and though in general there were quite a large number of [Theravāda] disciples (*śrāvakaḥas*), all the kings and the nobility honored the Mahāyāna."²⁰

Tārānātha's comments fully accord with the epigraphic and plastic evidence, which attests that while Vajrayāna Buddhism was known in Licchavi Nepal, the earlier doctrines continued to have greater currency. It is only in the tenth and eleventh centuries that we begin to find significantly abundant sculptures and manuscripts relating to Vajrayāna themes. In Nepal, Vajrayāna Buddhism did not reach its zenith until the Transitional and Malla Periods.

We do not know how solidly Buddhism was entrenched in Licchavi Nepal, either among the indigenous population or their rulers. King Vṛsadeva (ca. A.D. 400) is identified as a Buddhist by a descendant, and the Buddhist chronicle claims Śiva-

deva II (A.D. 694-705) as a convert.²¹ But except for Amśuvarman's avowal of Śivaism, it is not clear what religious affiliation the Licchavi rulers professed. From diverse evidence we can conclude that whatever it was in name, they in fact manifested an all-embracing catholicity of worship, a nonsectarianism like that of their descendants. Hsüan-tsang was told that in Nepal the "*saṅgharāmas* and Deva temples are closely joined."²² Licchavi inscriptions make abundantly clear that temple and *vihāra* were similarly close in the hearts of the people, or at least of royalty, for whom we have the principal evidence. The early kings appear to have consecrated as many stupas and *vihāras* as they did monuments to Śiva and Viṣṇu, and to have donated to all the gods with equal generosity. Even the avowed Śaiva Amśuvarman continued this tradition, as his inscriptions demonstrate. Moreover, as Pal surmises, these very inscriptions may in fact be a clue to the official status of Buddhism prior to Amśuvarman's time.²³ It may be that for assistance to the throne by a powerful Paśupati priesthood, Amśuvarman in return proclaimed Śivaism as the official state religion. But, astute politician that he was, his continued concern with Buddhist establishments assured no spiritual or political trouble from that quarter. We even hear of Buddhist monks extolling the virtues of the Śaiva king.²⁴ But even before Amśuvarman, Brahmanism may have outweighed Buddhism in royal popularity. In the Licchavi corpus there are not only comparatively few inscriptions concerned with Buddhism, but fewer still are decorated with Buddhist symbols. Again and again the *śilāpatras* are embellished with the Vaiṣṇava wheel and conch and, beginning with Amśuvarman, the Śaiva reclining bull.

In any event, Buddhism in its various manifestations was very much a part of the Licchavi scene. To judge by the number of references to *vihāras*, royal and "ordinary" (*samānya*), and to *saṅghas*

¹⁸ Bénisti 1960:81-85. But there is also the view that the Tathāgatas may be personifications of Śākyamuni's various epithets as found in Mahāyānist literature, such as Amitābha, Boundless Light, Akṣobhya, Imperturbable, and so on, to which were assigned different distinguishing *mudrās*.

¹⁹ Beal 1969:11, 81.

²⁰ Snellgrove 1957:101.

²¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 148 (548-562); Wright 1966:86-87.

²² Beal 1969:11, 81.

²³ Pal 1974a:6.

²⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 88 (368-369).

of monks and nuns, Buddhist communities must have been very numerous.²⁵ The 2,000 Nepalese Buddhist clerics, Theravāda and Mahāyāna, reported by Hsüan-tsang can scarcely have been exaggerated.²⁶ The Buddhist communities may have been organized primarily for ethical considerations but, as the inscriptional evidence makes clear, they were nonetheless very much concerned with temporal life. Like the Śaiva communities, the Buddhist *saṃghas* enjoyed considerable autonomy and secular influence.²⁷ The Licchavi (and Ābhīra Gupta) rulers often granted whole villages to the jurisdiction of a *saṃgha*; Narendradeva, for example, gave one to the *āryabhiṣus* of Śivadeva-vihāra.²⁸ In such instances the *saṃgha*, rather than the ordinary secular offices, was entrusted with the administration of not only its own community, but of the attached village. It was authorized to impose forced labor, to adjudicate disputes, to conduct trials, and to impose sentences. In cases considered beyond its competence, such as those concerned with the commission of one of the five heinous crimes, the criminal was remanded to the king's court, but all of his goods and properties fell to the *saṃgha*. The *saṃgha* also benefited from concessions given to it by the rulers in rent-free lands, and by the considerable royal taxes it was permitted to collect and keep in money and kind. *Samghas* also, of course, enjoyed the benefits of innumerable *goṣṭhī* endowments given to them by king and commoner.

Physically, the *vihāras* of the Licchavi Period were apparently not significantly different from

the numerous *vihāra* buildings that still adorn the Kathmandu Valley, a presumption I have already discussed.²⁹ Attached to them as one of the chief cult objects was the symbolic stupa, both in the form of impressive mounds and as numerous small stone *caityas*. It is probable that the large mounds were most often royal donations. Such are several extant stupas whose foundations antedate the early sixth century, although they have since been enlarged and renovated in conformity with changing doctrine.

One of the earliest foundations is the stupa of Svayambhūnātha, the Self-Existent Lord, whose continuously paramount role in the Buddhist milieu may be compared to Paśupatinātha in the Brahmanical one (Plates 2, 26, 27, 217, 223, 225, 494, 495). Svayambhū stupa was almost certainly founded about the beginning of the fifth century by the Buddhist King Vṛsadeva, the great-grandfather of Mānadeva I. The principal evidence for this ascription is provided by the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, whose reliability in the cultural realm is now well established. According to the chronicle, King Vṛsadeva consecrated the *Singu-vihāra-caitya-bhaṭṭārīka*.³⁰ "Singu-vihāra" is identified by the *Bhāṣāvamśāvalī* as a previous name for Svayambhū-vihāra, an identification made secure by the Newari name for Svayambhū hill, colloquially Sīngum.³¹ The chronicle's assignment of the monument to Vṛsadeva is further supported by a fragmentary inscription set up near the stupa by Vṛsadeva's descendant, Mānadeva.³² Commencing with the name of Vṛsadeva, the incomplete *śilāpatra* ap-

thus: King Vṛsadeva reigned 100 years. He consecrated Singu-vihāra and *caitya*.

³¹ According to Lienhard 1974:134 n. 2, the correct spelling, and the one recorded in the *Svayambhū-purāna*, is *sā* (cow) *hyēn* (horn, tail) *gu* (hill), but Newars say Sīngum (D. Vajracharya 1973:77). The latter may perpetuate more closely the indigenous name of the hill, the former representing the Newari translation of Gopuccha (Cowtail) and Gosṛṅga (Cownhorn), Sanskrit equivalents also employed in the *Svayambhū-purāna*. Gosṛṅga was the name of a celebrated hill and religious center in Khotan, and the name may have been transferred to Svayambhū/Sīngum along with the cycle of Khotanese legends thought to have come to Nepal. On this transfer see Brough 1948.

³² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 18 (74-78). The stele has

²⁵ Ibid., inscrs. 1, 72, 88, 90, 95, 97, 122, 133-136. See also Pal 1974a:5-7.

²⁶ Beal 1969:11, 81.

²⁷ D. Vajracharya 1967c, from which the discussion of the secular role of early communities is largely drawn.

²⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 133, 134 (496-506).

²⁹ There were apparently no *caitya* halls or cave monasteries in the Valley, such as existed in India. The several rock-cut chambers at the Guṃ-vihāra site, Sankhu, have not yet been studied, nor those said to exist on the slopes of Nāgārjuna near Kathmandu. But they may prove to be early local reflections of the Indian institutions.

³⁰ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 20b. The published transliterations, beginning "Rājā śri Viswadeva varṣa 100," are incomplete, but D. Vajracharya 1973:77 reads "ten kṛta Singu-vihāra-caitya-bhaṭṭārīka pratiṣṭhat sampūrṇa kṛtam,"

pears to be concerned with Mānadeva's immediate ancestors and, particularly, to commemorate Vṛṣadeva's *śrāddha* at the celebrated stupa he seems to have founded. That the stupa was an object of worship in Licchavi Nepal is evident from the Licchavi *caityas* and inscriptions in the environs, and because it is apparently named in one of Aṃśuvarman's inscriptions (Plate 52).³³

We do not know whether the name Svayambhū, Self-Existent, was bestowed on the stupa by the founder, whether it was subsequently derived from its similarity to an indigenous topographic name, Singu, Sīngum (or perhaps Sāhyeṅgu), or, indeed, whether some of the latter names derive from the former. In referring to the stupa, the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* employs only the Newari name—Sīnagu, Syengu, Sāhmegu—or Yendeñceta (the Kathmandu *caitya*).³⁴ Other Newari-language sources do the same.³⁵ However, the stupa was apparently called Svayambhū in Aṃśuvarman's Gokarna inscription, and the notion of self-existence seems already to have been familiar in Vṛṣadeva's time.³⁶ Thus, either explanation of the name seems plausible.

It is possible that we owe to the piety of Vṛṣadeva another extant stupa of the Kathmandu Valley, a monument in the village of Bandegaon, south of Patan. Of insignificant appearance, the little village stupa is nonetheless of considerable cultural importance. Complementing three of the oldest and most prestigious stupas in the Valley—Svayambhū, Bodhnātha, and Dharmadeva (Chabahil)—the

now disappeared, but the reading is based on an early rubbing.

³³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 18, 96 (74-78, 384-385). Compared to the wealth of Licchavi remains at Paśupati-nātha, it is of interest how few there are at Svayambhū. D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 89 (370-371) deciphers the relevant portion of Aṃśuvarman's Gokarna inscription as [*Svayam*]bhūcaitya-bhāṭṭā[raḥa].

³⁴ Fols. 20b, 26b, 43. Variants of the name are manifold, both in modern and Old Newari.

³⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 155. An unpublished inscription on a sixteenth-century *paṭa* commemorating the restoration of Svayambhūnātha refers to it as "Syambu [or] Svayambhū" (Plate 495).

³⁶ Pal 1974a:4 n. 3 explains that the term *svayambhū* was known in India prior to A.D. 316. Snellgrove 1957:95 believes that "the name 'self-existent' scarcely came to be

Bandegaon stupa completes a set of four in conformity with a familiar Valley pattern of relating four deities—the Four Gaṇeśas or the Four Nārāyaṇas, for example. Although, in fact, two of the stupas were built by Vṛṣadeva's successors, he is traditionally credited with having founded the Bandegaon stupa to round out the existing three. This was alleged to emulate the Brahmanical practice respecting the divine quartets.³⁷

One of the set of four stupas, now simply called Chabahil like the village it dominates, was established about the middle of the fifth century by King Dharmadeva, whose name the stupa long bore (Plate 218). The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* affirms that Dharmadeva built *Dhamode-caitya-bhāṭṭāriḥa* in Rāja-vihāra.³⁸ Later chronicles also call the stupa by Dharmadeva's name, associate him with it either as the builder or renovator, and attest to the location of his foundation in Deopatan, northwest of Paśupati-nātha.³⁹ Further, Manju-vihāra, the derelict *vihāra* whose courtyard the stupa once glorified, was formerly known as Dharmacaiti-vihāra (Dharmadeva-caitya-vihāra), and nearby Cārumatī-vihāra was named Mahārāja- or Rāja-vihāra.⁴⁰ Even Dharmadeva's name remained attached to the stupa until very recent times. Nearby seventeenth- and eighteenth-century inscriptions, for example, explicitly name it the Dharmadeva-caitya, and, in corrupted form, the name lingered on as Dandeo, as Oldfield knew it, or Dhanade (Dhanado, Dhamado), an alternate name now in use by many Newars.⁴¹

applied to buddhahood much before the sixth century. It is certainly a characteristic notion of the early tantras." P. R. Sharma 1973a:93 affirms that the notion of the Primordial Buddha perhaps did not evolve before the tenth century.

³⁷ Hasrat 1966:37.

³⁸ Fol. 21a.

³⁹ The Buddhist chronicle (Wright 1966:61, 83) assigns the foundation to the legendary "Dharma Datta," no doubt the same as Dharmadeva, who is said to have subsequently repaired the stupa. The Brahmanical chronicle (Hasrat 1970:37) names the stupa Dhanadeva, but assigns its foundation to his grandfather, Vṛṣadeva.

⁴⁰ As attested by unpublished in situ inscriptions at both *vihāras*.

⁴¹ One nearby inscription is dated N.S. 777 Kārtika (A.D. 1656), and records repairs to the "Dharmadeva-caitya" by

The name Chabahil, now applied to the stupa and to the part of Deopatan in which it is located, is of recent origin. Rather than deriving, as it is alleged, from Cārumatī, the name of a fictive daughter of the Emperor Aśoka, the name seems to have generated the daughter, and in fact to derive from a quite different source. It became a custom from about the middle of the seventeenth century, when trade relations with Tibet were intensified by Pratāpamalla, for Newar traders to break their journey, going and coming, at Mahārāja-vihāra. On the outward journey the trader's family accompanied him as far as the *vihāra*, where they spent the night with him. In the morning, before separating, the trader fortified himself with the *prasāda* of the *vihāra*'s famous Vajrayāna deity, Gupteśvarī-yoginī, and with auspicious foods offered by his family. Similarly, the homecoming traders were received here by their families, and after thanksgiving in the *vihāra* and an overnight rest, were escorted the rest of the way home. Since in Newari *cā* means "night, overnight," the *vihāra* began to be familiarly known as Cā-bahil, the "monastery of the overnight stop," a name at length applied to the stupa and the surrounding settlement.⁴²

That the site of Dharmadeva-caitya and the related royal *vihāras* has been occupied since early Licchavi times is evident. There are several Licchavi *śilāpatras* adjacent or attached to the stupa. One of them is considered by some scholars to antedate the Changu Nārāyaṇa pillar inscription; a hoard of clay seals found next to the stupa date from Narendradeva's time.⁴³ There is also the testimony of sculptural remains and votive *caityas*. Near the stupa are images of the Buddha and a Bodhisattva

Pratāpamalla; another is dated *n.s.* 835 Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa (1714), and records Mahindrasimha's repairs to "Dharmadeva-caitya." Oldfield 1880:11, 258.

⁴² Acharya 1963:10 records thus the origin of the name, but it is also remembered by many persons, particularly old people and the priests attached to Marārāja-vihāra.

⁴³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 1, 121, 161, 166. Several of the clay seals were dug up just east of the stupa, and may formerly have been enclosed within a companion *caitya*.

⁴⁴ The Buddha and Bodhisattva images and several of the relief plaques are published by Pal 1974:103-105, figs. 158-161, 166, 187.

that date, respectively, from the sixth and eighth centuries, and attached to the drum are several relief plaques of probable seventh- or eighth-century date (Plate 453).⁴¹ Numerous Licchavi *caityas* cluster around the prestigious monument (Plates 265, 266, 268) and others—some of early form and with original squat finial in place—are to be found at nearby Mahārāja-vihāra.

The fourth stupa of the culturally related quartet is the celebrated mound north of Deopatan, known variously as Bauddha, Bodhnātha, or Khāsā (Khāsti, Khāsau) (Figure 25; Plates 215, 216). Nepalese tradition and the chronicles credit its foundation to Licchavi royalty, the one ascribing it to Mānadeva I as atonement for an unwitting parricide, the other to a successor, Śivadeva I (ca. A.D. 590-604).⁴⁵ Even the Tibetans, who have appropriated the site and claim it to be a Tibetan foundation, vaguely associate the stupa with the Licchavis. They affirm that the name Khāsti commemorates a Tibetan lama who was Mānadeva incarnate.⁴⁶

Given the conflicting traditions and the almost total absence of above-ground Licchavi remains in the environs—no Licchavi inscriptions, no unequivocally early images, and few votive *caityas*—the history of the monument can now probably only be established by archaeological investigation. It seems probable, however, that Mānadeva was the builder, because of the persistent tradition that links his name to the stupa; and that Śivadeva, the chronicler's choice, was its restorer. The Tibetan association with the monument, and its virtual abandonment by Nepalese Buddhists, cannot be traced to much before the thirteenth century.⁴⁷ Thus it is probable that sometime in the Transitional or Ear-

⁴⁵ The legends are reported by Lévi 1905:11, 6-8; Wright 1966:66-67; Hasrat 1970:28-30; Kesar Lall 1966:15-16. The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, fol. 21b, affirms that Śivadeva founded "the big Khāsau *caitya*."

⁴⁶ Lévi 1905:11, 7-8 n. 1. The name Khāsti probably relates to the Mānuṣi Buddha Kāśyapa, whose relics are said to be enclosed in the stupa. Popularly, the name is held to mean "dew," the collection of which figures so prominently in the Nepalese legend of the stupa's origin (Snellgrove 1957:288 n. 22; 1961:9 n. 3). For the Tibetan origin legend see Lévi 1905:11, 7 n. 1; Landon 1928:1, 204; Snellgrove 1957:98-99.

⁴⁷ Snellgrove 1961:94 n. 3.

ly Malla Period the Tibetans enclosed the old and perhaps ruinous Licchavi stupa in the ambitious construction we see today. With its complex and elaborate *vimśatikona* plinth, Bodhnātha may emulate the great stupa of Gyantse in western Tibet. Such a move would have been in keeping with the practice of enlarging a stupa by adding successive shells to the sacred core structure. One is frequently surprised to glimpse at the rear of tunnel-like niches, or through chinks left for this purpose, entombed images attached to the earlier structure (Plates 452, 460). Thus, were it possible, a section through Bodhnātha would very likely reveal a core structure corresponding to one or more Licchavi works, in size and form perhaps not unlike the nearby Dharmadeva *caitya* in Chabahil.⁴⁸

A second extant stupa, unrelated to the quartet, may also perhaps be assigned to Mānadeva. Adjacent to the Sankhu Vajrayoginī temple, the stupa now fills a Newar-style temple dedicated to Mahāmāyūrī, one of the Buddhist spells (*dhāraṇīs*) anthropomorphized as a goddess. Both temples occupy the site of ancient Guṃ-vihāra, a monastery and numerous sacred sites in the environs with which Mānadeva's name is intimately associated.⁴⁹ Legend affirms that after unwittingly killing his father, Mānadeva repaired to Guṃ-vihāra to perform penance; there, in further atonement, he undertook the construction of Bodhnātha.⁵⁰ According to the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, under the influence of the king's penance "a large *caitya* rose up and remained."⁵¹ Fantasy aside, this entry may well refer to the enshrined *caitya*, the only monumental stupa at the site. In any event, evidence for the stupa's antiquity is provided by four Licchavi *caityas* gathered around it, all of simple undecorated form characteristic of the oldest *caityas*,

⁴⁸ Snellgrove 1961:94 also believes that Bodhnātha is an ancient foundation: "One can well imagine beneath the present splendid superstructure and revêtement a simple dome similar to the present western *caitya* of Pātan."

⁴⁹ All of the related sacred sites contain the common element *mana* in their names, variously construed as *māna*, derived from Mānadeva, or *maṇi*, jewel.

⁵⁰ One wonders if the legend in some way reflects the sudden death of King Dharmadeva, to which Mānadeva refers in the Changū Nārāyaṇa pillar inscription.

⁵¹ Fol. 20b.

⁵² Perhaps this is the source of the strange locution

and each still having in place the original squat finial.

In addition to these five stupas, which may almost certainly be identified as foundations of the Licchavi kings, there are four others (plus a probable ruin) that because of their apparent antiquity must be discussed here. These are the so-called "Aśoka" stupas, whose impressive mounds give the Patan periphery its cachet (Map 8; Figure 26; Plates 220, 221).

There are four of these stupas, one on each side of the city, which are popularly, if gratuitously, attributed to the Emperor Aśoka, thus dating to the third century B.C. The stupas do not occupy the cardinal points of the compass, as consistently reported, nor are they equidistant from the present city center or any other point. From the Darbar Square crossroads, the East Stupa is almost a mile, the North Stupa less than a half-mile, and the distance between the East and West Stupas is one-and-a-half miles, compared to less than a mile between the North and South ones (Map 8). The stupas all have proper names corresponding to the general region in which they are located: Laghan (South); Yampi, Zimpi, Epi, Ipi (North); Puco, Pulcho, Pulchok (West); and Tyeta, Teta, Traitas, Traitā (East). These names are sometimes combined with *thūr*, from Old Newari *thūra* (stupa).⁵²

Except for the thoroughly renovated North Stupa, which received its cemented new look in this century,⁵³ all are simple, grass-grown brick mounds to which the shrines of the directional Buddhas were later attached (Figure 26; Plates 220, 221). For the most part, the finials have been considerably altered from those described or pictured by early observers.⁵⁴ Three of the stupas rise

taudu, used by both Oldfield and Landon respecting these stupas. Or, to echo Snellgrove's question (1961:93 n. 1), "Is [*taudu*] Newari *taḥ-du*, 'big heap'?"

⁵³ See Lévi 1905:1, 331 for its appearance at the turn of the century, and H. and M. Oldfield 1975:pl. 32 as sketched in 1855.

⁵⁴ Lévi 1905:1, 263, 331; Wright 1966:10; Landon 1928: 1, 13, 16; Oldfield 1880:1, 124. Lévi 1905:11, 2 writes that the wooden scaffolding formerly attached to the finials supported protective matting in the rainy season (cf. Plate 217) and an umbrella of wood and cloth for one week of the dry season.

directly from the ground and closely compare in size: the North, East, and West Stupas, respectively, measure 78, 80, and 86 feet in diameter. The South Stupa is much larger than its companions, with a diameter of 159 feet, which makes it considerably broader than the Great Stupa of Sānchī.⁵⁵ Reminiscent of the latter's *medhi* and elevated circumambulatory path, the South Stupa is erected on a circular platform. Of carefully laid brick masonry all but obscured by grass and general decay, the platform extends almost fifty feet beyond the stupa. It is possible that, like the Mauryan stupas, this stupa also once had an enclosing rail. This is suggested by Landon's tantalizing reference: "I made a note in 1908 that a small piece of railing near the Laghan [South] stupa is quite unlike any other kind of stone I have seen in the Valley, and is strongly reminiscent of the typical double convex rails at Buddhgaya. I was not, however, able to discover it in 1924."⁵⁶ Neither did intensive inspection in the course of more recent research disclose this or other vital companion fragments.

There is a possibility that there was also a fifth mound closely related in form and size to the well-known four. There are many references to a fifth and central stupa, which if identified at all is frequently considered to be the stupa at Pimbahal (Plate 222).⁵⁷ Although it is true that the latter represents a restoration almost a decade after its destruction by Shams-ud-dīn,⁵⁸ the stupa corresponds in neither size nor type to the other mounds, and rather than at the center of the city, it lies almost at its western limit (Map 8: d-4/5). If there were a fifth stupa, there is a strong possibility that

⁵⁵ Brown 1965:1, 14, pl. 12 gives the diameter of the Great Stupa as 120 feet without the *medhi*. Volwahren 1969:93 gives the diameter as 36.6 meters. The diameter of the Patan stupa is 48.5 meters.

⁵⁶ Landon 1928:1, 209 n. 2.

⁵⁷ Snellgrove 1957:94; Landon 1928:1, 18; D. Regmi 1960:42; 1966:part 2, 866-867. Lévi 1905:11, 1, 81 unexplainably identified it with a small *caitya* in the Darbar Square.

⁵⁸ Petech 1958:118.

⁵⁹ Wright 1966:77.

⁶⁰ Lamshal 1965:2-3. Although it is not clear, the entry seems to refer to two monuments.

⁶¹ They might even have originated as pre-Buddhist

it is the unexplored midden just northwest of the Darbar Square, today popularly identified as the ruin of a Kirāta palace. Closely hemmed by houses, and in the rainy season obscured by dense vegetation, the midden cannot be thoroughly examined. However, it is terraced, brick-faced, and closely corresponds in size to the three smaller stupas, measuring eighty feet on one axis but reduced to sixty-eight on the other, probably by the encroachment of the abutting houses (Figure 26). Surface bricks compare almost exactly in size with those that revet the West Stupa, but are smaller than those found in the platform of the South Stupa.

The legend that the Emperor Aśoka erected the four stupas during a visit to Nepal, each "founded on the anniversary of the commencement of one of the four Yugas," is preserved, or originates, in the Buddhist chronicle edited by Wright.⁵⁹ The *Bhāṣāvamśāvalī*, a Brahmanical rescension, attributes the construction of at least one of the stupas (but not the expected four) to the piety of a wealthy merchant in the reign of Vṛṣadeva (ca. A.D. 400).⁶⁰ Called *sthulado caitya*, the merchant's foundation is specified to be at Pulchok, the site of the West Stupa. The early chroniclers, however, while recalling the founders of other important stupas, are silent about the imposing Patan monuments. Is it possible, given the universal tradition of the stupas' extreme antiquity, that they so long antedated the Licchavis that the chroniclers knew no tradition respecting the founders? If so, the stupas could well date from the early days of Buddhism.⁶¹ That the mounds could survive so long should occasion no surprise. With the exception of the inconclusive central one, which is a

funerary tumuli clustered at this benign halt on the trans-Himalayan trade route like those at the crossroads and along the trade routes of northern India (Irwin 1974: 714-720). One cannot resist further speculation that, like the tumuli of India, the Patan ones may have been associated with a pillar cult. Central Patan was known as Yala and Yūpagrāma, the "Village of the Sacrificial Post." If not with reference to a Vedic community, the name might be derived from a sacred pillar or pillars associated with the tumuli, one of which, the "Kirāta palace," lies almost at the crossroads within what was Yala village. Given the conservatism of tradition in the Valley, one could speculate (if not fantasize) still further that the Malla name for the Patan central crossroads, Hatapātala

ruin, the mounds lie outside the destructive pressure of city population, and three even today have fields around them. Moreover, they were sheltered both from the Muslim iconoclasm and Hindu indifference that in India combined to destroy so many of the correspondingly ancient mounds.

In the Kathmandu Valley, even when icons of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas began to be favored as objects of Buddhist worship, the stupa maintained a preeminent place as a devotional object. Old stupas were often enlarged or modified to harmonize with doctrinal developments, and new stupas were constructed even in relatively late times. The Thahiti stupa, Kathmandu, for example, was founded in A.D. 1482,⁶² and others are very likely more recent. But we have no information respecting the foundation of many of the large and important Valley stupas, including those in Yat-kha- and Sighah-bahal, in Kathmandu; the Mahābuddha stupa of Kathmandu; the stupas at Guita-tol, Patan; or the impressive mound at Kir-tipur. Associated dates respecting *gūṭhīs*, donations, and restorations provide only a *terminus a quo*. How many may actually be Licchavi, or even Kirāta, foundations only archaeological research is likely to reveal.

It is evident in comparing the extant thousands of Licchavi *caityas* with the relatively few Buddhist sculptural remains that the stupa was the primary cult object of the Buddhists of Licchavi Nepal. But they also worshiped a limited repertory of images of the Buddha, and certain favored Bodhisattvas. Small bronzes (and probably wood carvings) must have been objects of domestic wor-

(The Marketplace Ruin) recorded in an eighteenth-century *thyāsaphu* (D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. III, 51) preserves some memory of the remnants of the cult objects.

⁶² The date A.D. 1524 provided by Snellgrove 1961:99 is actually the date of a restoration by Sūryamalla; according to an in situ inscription, the stupa was established in N.S. 552 Vaiśākha in the time of the *patra* Mahendrarāja.

⁶³ Some are still in *vihāra* shrines, as at Dhathu- and Ciram-bahil, Patan, while we know from inscriptions that others now exposed in the streets were once so installed: the triad at Chapat-tol, for example (Plate 450).

⁶⁴ D. Vajracharya 1973: inscr. 1 (1-8). The inscription is next to the Dharmadeva stupa, and may refer to the nearby royal *vihāra* buildings.

⁶⁵ Pal 1974:figs. 162-165. It is not impossible that the

ship, large stone sculptures were enshrined in the *vihāras*, and narrative stone reliefs were attached to the stupas (Plates 224, 453, 454).⁶³ There were also painted representations, probably on cloth banners (*paubhā, paṭa*) and in manuscripts, and certainly on walls; from an inscription we know, for example, that as a painted mural the *Kinnara Jātaka* once embellished a Deopatan *vihāra*.⁶⁴ Sometimes representations of the Buddha were only symbolic. He might be shown in the form of a sacred water vessel, by the Wheel of the Law (a reference to his sermon in the Deer Park), by the *vajra*, and even, as in early Buddhism, by a pointedly empty space (Plates 52, 224, 270, 324, 454).⁶⁵ In anthropomorphic form, a standing cloaked figure was preferred, ponderous and in the Gupta tradition, although there are a number of seated Buddha images (Plates 448-451, 466).⁶⁶ Narrative reliefs depict scenes of worship or refer to specific events of the Buddha's life—Mārā's assault, for example, the serpent Mucalinda's intervention, the visit of King Prasenajit and his queen, or the offering of food by Sujātā (Plates 281, 422, 450, 455-457).⁶⁷

The most popular Bodhisattvas in the Licchavi Period appear to have been Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāṇi, and somewhat less so, Maitreya. They are the Buddha's companions on several *sarvatobhadra* or *caturmukha* type *caityas*, and two of them, Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi, are frequently his attendants in reliefs (Plates 273, 275-277, 466, 472).⁶⁸ These Bodhisattvas were also objects of independent worship, as attested by their individual sculptures in stone and bronze (Plate 464).⁶⁹ To

lotus throne of Plate 270 has been emptied of its occupant.

⁶⁶ Pal 1974:figs. 166-168, 170-171, 177, 178, 181.

⁶⁷ On the identification of Prasenajit and Sujātā, see Pal 1974:109-110.

⁶⁸ In some early reliefs, the iconography of Vajrapāṇi is not specific, and the second Bodhisattva may be Mahāsthāmaprāpta, one of the Buddha's characteristic companions in early triads (Plates 450, 451; Pal 1974:fig. 178). That one is Vajrapāṇi is suggested, however, by the characteristic *caitya* complement, and by later reliefs in which Vajrapāṇi is clearly to be identified as the second Bodhisattva (for example, Plate 466, and Pal 1974:fig. 182).

⁶⁹ Pal 1974:figs. 8, 13, 14, 187, 202-204.

judge by the number of sculptures and epigraphic references,⁷⁰ Avalokiteśvara was apparently the most beloved, and Licchavi Buddhists laid the foundation for a cult that flourishes into modern times. I shall discuss these Bodhisattvas in the context of the Transitional Period.

THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

The declining political fortunes of the Licchavis was not accompanied by a corresponding decline in Buddhism. Rather, Buddhism appears to have reached its zenith during the Transitional Period. Despite the uncontested triumph of Śiva Paśupati, there were even occasional kings who apparently professed Buddhism—Siṃhadeva (ca. A.D. 1099-1122), for example—or who abdicated to enter Buddhist monkhood and end their days in a *vihāra*.⁷¹ So strong was Buddhism that in Tibet, Nepal was erroneously considered a Buddhist country.

We do not know what changes came about in the organization of the Buddhist *saṃghas* at this time. One must suppose, however, that deprived of Licchavi royal patronage and privilege, in time the *vihāras* lost their secular power, and perhaps some of their wealth. But they apparently increased in numbers and were significant as a cultural force.

It is not improbable that by the Transitional Period Patan, at least, with its interlocking web of *vihāras*, had become essentially a Buddhist university center not unlike the celebrated ones of Bengal and Bihar. From Odantapurī, Nālandā, Vikramaśīla, and other Indian centers of Buddhist learning, knowledge and teachers streamed into the Nepalese *vihāras*. Nepalese Buddhists went to the Indian centers to study, and from them teachers such as Atiśa and Ratnarakṣita came to Nepal. Moreover, the Valley *vihāras*, no less than the Indian ones, were centers to which the Tibetans grav-

itated for Buddhist instruction. In the eleventh century the Tibetan Drok-mi, for example, spent a year in Nepal studying Sanskrit, and later became the teacher of the great Tibetan yogin, Marpa.

How many monks and lay followers clung to Theravāda and Mahāyāna doctrines cannot be said. But it is probable that, just as many of the early iconographic traditions persisted, so did the early doctrines in one form or another. But by the Transitional Period, Vajrayāna Buddhism had come fully into its own; it was the accepted doctrine in both India and Nepal, and it passed from the Nepalese *vihāras* into those of Tibet. It was the time of the *siddhas* and yogins, the Great Perfected Ones, tantrics who through rigorous discipline and study possessed supernatural powers, and were assiduously sought out as teachers. Of them more will be said in Chapter 12.

From the hands of the Nepalese monks there was a vast outpouring of manuscripts, except that now, rather than *sūtras*, they were more commonly *tantras*.⁷² Most of the extant works of the Transitional Period date from the eleventh century on, are written in Sanskrit, employ diverse scripts, and are sometimes illuminated.⁷³ Prepared on strips of palm leaf and, finally, on thick homemade papers, cream-colored or frequently black or dark blue to accommodate texts exquisitely written in silver and gold, the manuscript leaves were bunched between solid covers of carved and painted wood, ivory, or metal repoussé (Plates 61, 446, 491).

While the stupa seems to have lost none of its popularity as a Buddhist cult object, it was joined by an ever-increasing repertory of images. Carved, cast, and painted in the *vihāra* workshops, Nepali creations by Nepali craftsmen, the icons included new forms, and they were more manifestly hieratic than Licchavi works. But like them, they were descendants of an ancient Indian tradition that, similarly, influenced the Pāla style in nearby India.⁷⁴

an established tradition. From India there are surviving *tantras* in Gupta script from the sixth and seventh centuries, and in Nepal in Licchavi script from the ninth century (Chattopadhyaya 1970:18-19; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 190 [599]).

⁷³ Respecting the scripts, see Appendix 11.

⁷⁴ Notwithstanding the analysis of eleventh-century il-

⁷⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 43, 97, 172 (185-186, 386, 591).

⁷¹ Petech 1958:57; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 160. Both Mānadeva (ca. A.D. 1137-1140) and Rudradeva II (ca. A.D. 1167-1174) are said to have abdicated in favor of Buddhist monastic life (Wright 1966:109; Petech 1958:60, 68).

⁷² It is evident that manuscript preparation continued

With the unquestioned triumph of Vajrayāna Buddhism by the tenth century, the earlier cults were joined, and some at length surpassed, by esoteric ones revolving around such cosmic deities as Hevajra, Heruka, and similar beings of tantric Buddhism. As attested by the Gorkha Vajrabhairava image, it is evident that some of these deities and their cults go back to Licchavi times. But the proliferation and widespread popularity of these forms attended the Transitional and Malla Periods.

In keeping with the tantric declaration of the preeminence of the female principle in the cosmos, Buddhist female divinities increasingly entered the scene in the Transitional Period. They comprise a vast pantheon as divinities in their own right, as consorts of the gods, as personified spells (*dhāraṇīs*), and as special creatures such as the awe-inspiring *ḍākinīs* and *yoginīs*. Most of these goddesses, despite certain local differences, are well known to the tantric Buddhist pantheons of India and Tibet, and some will be met in the following chapter. Among the most important in the Valley from this time onward were Tārā, the Saviouress, and Prajñāpāramitā, the Goddess of Transcendental Wisdom. Among other offices, they are the consorts, respectively, of Avalokiteśvara and Mañjuśrī, Bodhisattvas of supreme importance in Nepal. Very likely these goddesses were already familiar to the Licchavis, but this cannot be ascertained either by epigraphs or sculptures. It would certainly seem that Prajñāpāramitā, in the form of the original *sūtra* that she personifies, must have been brought into Nepal with other Mahāyāna manuscripts soon after the *sūtra*'s codification in India. In any event, from the eleventh century onward, there is a plethora of manuscripts of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-Prajñāpāramitā*, which were copied endlessly in the Valley *vihāras*. To these were joined personifications in all mediums, in the form of the goddess. Usually seated, Prajñāpāramitā has four arms, one of which displays as her chief cognizance the sacred text.⁷⁵

luminated Nepalese manuscripts by Foucher 1900, who made this apparent, most students of Nepalese art have considered it to be strongly influenced by Pāla art. Pal 1974:164 has pointed out that, in fact, the similarities proceed from the common reliance of Nepalese and Pāla art on the same sources.

Tārā, the Saviouress, has many forms, both beneficent and maleficent, but in Nepal one of her most popular manifestations is as the benign confederate or, alternately, consort, of the beloved Avalokiteśvara.⁷⁶ Her iconography as a lotus-bearing goddess is so simple that, out of context, she can be mistaken for the Brahmanical goddesses, Lakṣmī or Devī (Plate 526). Thus it is possible that some images of the Licchavi period, generally identified as Devī,⁷⁷ could have actually been consecrated in Tārā's name, and that her cult is older in Nepal than can be demonstrated. This is particularly probable given the many Tārā images Hsüan-tsang reported for northern India, and the generally widespread popularity of her cult from the eighth century on.

A third Buddhist goddess who came to have an important following in Nepal is Vasudhārā (Basundhara), the goddess of good fortune, wealth, and abundance (Plate 505). Although we have no evidence for her cult in the Licchavi Period, beginning with the Transitional Period her images are ubiquitous. In Nepal, Vasudhārā is characteristically represented seated, and in her six hands she displays attributes that proclaim her special qualities, such as the vase of plenty and a sheaf of grain.⁷⁸ Such a goddess does not appear in the standard early works devoted to Buddhist iconography, and is rarely, if ever, known to Indian Buddhist art.⁷⁹ Considering Vasudhārā's popularity in the Valley, both in iconic and textual form, it seems possible that this particular manifestation is a Nepalese creation.

Despite the increasing ascendancy of the tantric pantheon, the familiar nontantric forms of Buddhist deities that had been favored by the Licchavis continued to prosper. As before, their images graced the public places and were installed as the principal cult objects in the *vihāra* shrines. The tantric divinities, because of their esoteric nature and appeal to privileged initiates, were more often consigned to the privacy of the domestic chapel or the secrecy of the *vihāra āgamas*. Commonly dis-

⁷⁵ Pal 1974:fig. 239; Mallmann 1975:305-307.

⁷⁶ On the iconography of Tārā, see Mallmann 1975:368-379.

⁷⁷ Pal 1974:fig. 218.

⁷⁸ Kramrisch 1964:fig. 15.

⁷⁹ Mallmann 1975:441-442.

playing supernumerary heads and limbs, and often terrible to behold, they were more familiar in manuscripts, bronzes, and in mandala paintings than in stone reliefs (Plate 465).

As in the previous period, in the Transitional Period images of the Buddha Śākyamuni continued in popularity and, despite significant differences in iconography, style, and detail, perpetuate the simple cloaked figure familiar to Licchavi devotees. As before, the Buddha was depicted as a solitary hieratic figure, or in narrative reliefs that portrayed some event in his life (Plates 165, 458-460).⁸⁰ Representations of the Five Tathāgatas also became increasingly familiar, but were for the most part worshiped with the stupa to which they were usually attached.

In the Transitional Period, the same familiar Bodhisattvas were worshiped, among whom Avalokiteśvara, the Luminous Lord of Infinite Compassion, was the most popular. Known by many names—Padmapāṇi (Lotus-bearer), Lokeśvara and Lokanātha (Lord of the World), and as preferred in Nepal, Karuṇāmaya—Avalokiteśvara became without question the foremost deity of Nepalese Buddhism.⁸¹

Stylistically, the later nontantric images of the Bodhisattva are quite distinct from the known images of the Licchavi Period, but nonetheless perpetuate the earlier iconic type, particularly as seen at Dhvaka-bahal (Plates 461, 462, 466, 468).⁸² To satisfy an apparently insatiable demand, images of the beloved god must have poured out of the various ateliers by the thousands, and in all media. Even today, in Kathmandu and Patan alone there are more than two score major in situ stone sculptures of the deity that date from the Transitional Period;⁸³ evidence of his continued popularity, they are still in worship. In contrast to India, where after about the tenth century images of Avalokiteśvara are usually seated, this is a rare form in Nepal, where the standing image has been universally preferred into modern times. Another distinguishing feature of the Nepalese Avalokiteś-

vara is the retention of the diadem symbolizing the Three Jewels (Triratna), Buddha-Dharma-Saṃgha, a convention largely abandoned in post-Gupta India. As an alternate, the Nepali Avalokiteśvara is sometimes given Indra's crown (Plates 462, 463).

As the god of compassion, the world savior, the succor of the dying, the protector of travelers,⁸⁴ the giver of rain and fertility, it is not surprising that Avalokiteśvara has been everywhere extremely popular with Mahāyāna Buddhists. Hsüan-tsang, for example, reported the number of images of the Bodhisattva he saw in his travels; they were particularly numerous in Magadha (Bihar and Bengal). That Avalokiteśvara would be especially popular in Nepal may be correlated in some measure with his confusion with Śiva, a deity who shares many of the Bodhisattva's attributes, and who is also known as Lokeśvara, Lord of the World.⁸⁵ More particularly, it is related to the assimilation of Avalokiteśvara into the cult of the deified Nātha yogin, Matsyendra (Macchendra), a deity of prime importance to be discussed in the final chapter (Plates 593-600). This merger is so complete in contemporary Nepal that images of Avalokiteśvara are frequently simply identified as "Macchendranath."

Of perhaps equal popularity during the Transitional Period was the Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi, the Thunderbolt Bearer. He is the Buddhist equivalent of Indra, like him bears the symbolic *vajra* (frequently anthropomorphized as Vajrapuruṣa, a dwarf attendant), and is closely associated with the *nāgas* who in Nepal traditionally help to control the rain (Plates 464-467). Beginning about the eighth century, Vajrapāṇi is familiar in Buddhist art and literature as the Buddha's guardian companion, a role he invariably shares with Avalokiteśvara (Plate 466). Such office may be foreshadowed in the undifferentiated Bodhisattvas seen in early Nepalese reliefs (Plates 450, 451).⁸⁶ As the Buddha's guardian, Vajrapāṇi occupies the left-hand post, Avalokiteśvara the right—the rela-

⁸⁰ The Yatka-bahal *torana*, a wood carving depicting the preaching Buddha (Plate 165), cannot be dated, but it is quite probably a survival from the Transitional Period or, at the latest, the Early Malla Period.

⁸¹ On Avalokiteśvara, see particularly Mallmann 1948.

⁸² Pal 1974:114-120, fig. 13.

⁸³ For some of these and supplementary examples of the Transitional Period works, see Pal 1974:figs. 50, 188-193.

⁸⁴ Respecting this role, see the legend of Simhasārtha Bahu, Chapter 12.

⁸⁵ Mallmann 1948:111-115, 132-133.

⁸⁶ Pal 1974:figs. 177, 178, 182.

tive positions they also usually occupy on the *catur-mukha caityas*. This arrangement is also preserved in wood carvings that most likely date to the Transitional or Early Malla Period (Plates 467, 468). Now only remnant plaques arbitrarily cemented into the wall of a Patan shrine, the images may come from blind windows, and most likely once flanked an image of the Buddha. The left-hand Bodhisattva represents Vajrapāṇi with Vajrapuruṣa and a female companion, perhaps his consort; the right-hand one is Avalokiteśvara engaged in dispensing the nectar of happiness to the thirsty spirits of the dead, the *sūcimuḥha* ("narrow mouths"), a motif familiar in Gupta India.

Even the anthropomorphized *vajra* seems to have had an independent cult in Nepal Mandala during the Licchavi and Transitional Periods. There are a number of portable bronzes of Vajrapuruṣa, which though they may once have accompanied larger separate images of the Bodhisattva, show no sign of previous physical attachment, and could have been made as independent objects of worship (Plate 469).⁸⁷ Support for an independent cult is provided, moreover, by a large in situ stone relief Vajrapuruṣa, which almost certainly was consecrated independently (Plate 470). Known variously as Balabala, a Nepalese culture hero, or Balabhadra/Balarāma, an avatar of Viṣṇu, the image has today been transformed into a folk god who (through liberal oilings) is importuned by women seeking ease in childbirth.⁸⁸

In all instances, either as an independent image or in company with the Bodhisattva, Vajrapuruṣa is typically represented as a rotund dwarf from whose skull protrudes part of the *vajra* (Plates 464, 466, 467, 469, 470). He crosses his arms against his breast in the gesture of submission (*vinaya-hasta*), wears a dhoti overdraped with an animal skin, has a fluttering scarf or cape, and is adorned with serpents and various ornaments, often including unmatched earrings.

The concept of the *āyudhapuruṣa*, the general

⁸⁷ Pal 1975:fig. 24.

⁸⁸ The image stands above a separate stone slab that bears a fragmentary inscription recording the establishment of a trust by one Nālavarmī, and dated Śamvat 109 Vaiśākha (A.D. 685); D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 137 (511). The slab must have served as a random support, and can

term by which all personified attributes are designated, was particularly common in the Gupta Period, especially but by no means restricted to Viṣṇu's weapons, and was known in Licchavi Nepal (Plate 65). Although the use of personified emblems continued to be enjoined in later iconographic texts, with the exception of the Nepalese Vajrapuruṣa they are seldom encountered in the post-Gupta period.

The Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi both conceptually and iconographically has much in common with his Brahmanical counterpart, Indra or Śakra. This is not surprising when we consider that so many of the Mahāyāna deities represent adaptations of preexisting deities.⁸⁹ As popular gods of long-established and highly respected standing, the Brahmanical deities were incorporated into the Mahāyāna pantheon, where under new names they often continued their former duties. Indra and Vajrapāṇi are therefore in essence one, primarily rain gods who bear the same chief symbol, the thunderbolt. In both instances it may be in the form of Vajrapuruṣa (Plate 471). Indra is sometimes even called by the same epithet, Vajrapāṇi. Only Indra, however, has the horizontal third eye and the emblematic elephant, Airāvata; in turn, only Vajrapāṇi bears the flywhisk.

In addition to their office as rain makers, both deities also serve as general guardians of the world quarters, and as specific guardians of the Buddha. Both are said to have accompanied the Buddha on his return to Kapilavastu, and Indra is said to have been present at the Buddha's birth (Plate 446) and to have aided him in his flight from his father's palace.⁹⁰ With Brahmā, Indra also received the Buddha on his descent from the Tuṣita heaven where he had gone to preach to his mother, raising over his head the parasol of universal kingship (Plate 460).⁹¹ Indra also performs this office for Dīpaṅkara Buddha (Plates 175, 483).

In the Kathmandu Valley, as the cult of Indra waxed, that of Vajrapāṇi waned, apparently during

scarcely relate to the image that stylistically proclaims a much later date.

⁸⁹ Banerjee 1956:557-563.

⁹⁰ Getty 1962:50.

⁹¹ Pal 1974:fig. 180.

the Transitional Period. Beginning about the eleventh century, Nepalese images of Vajrapāṇi become increasingly rare, and those of Indra increasingly common.

Despite the popularity of the Bodhisattva Maitreya in early Buddhist doctrine and art outside the Kathmandu Valley, there is little sign of it within. His golden diadem may well have been guarded by the *nāgas* in a flaming pool near the Licchavi capital, as Wang Hsüan-t'sê was informed, but, significantly, Maitreya is not named in the Tyagaltol *caitya* hymns,⁹² and his representations are relatively few. Although there are occasional independent images of Maitreya in situ and as bronzes abroad,⁹³ he is more often depicted as one of a company. Standing, he occurs on Licchavi *caturmukha caityas* (Plates 277, 472),⁹⁴ and seated, may occupy a niche on the Patan Alko-hiti *caitya*. Although, as I have discussed, the image could represent Vairocana, or Śākyamuni Buddha, or even Avalokiteśvara, it is perhaps meant to denote Maitreya in his role as the future Buddha. If so, it would be the earliest known plastic representation of the seated deity in Nepal.

Just as there is a certain conceptual and iconographic interplay between Vajrapāṇi and Indra, so is there between Maitreya and Brahmā. Like Brahmā, Maitreya is considered a kindly counselor and an ascetic. As a Bodhisattva, he carries Brahmā's vase of immortality and seed rosary and, when garbed as an ascetic, wears the same black antelope skin and yogic chignon (into which a miniature stupa may be tucked). Indeed, the Brahmā attending the Buddha in the two Patan reliefs of the Descent (Plate 460)⁹⁵ is remarkably similar to antecedent Maitreya images, illustrating once again the commingling of iconographic and conceptual ideas of Buddhamārgī and Śivamārgī.

It may be mentioned here that in the Kathmandu Valley, no cult of real importance ever seems

⁹² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 167 (588); Pal 1974a:5.

⁹³ Pal 1975:frontispiece; 1974:fig. 212; 1974a:figs. 71, 72; Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:fig. 12.

⁹⁴ The tentative identification of the otherwise unexplained second Buddha on the Dhvaka-bahal *caitya* as Maitreya (Pal 1974a:8-9, 34-35) seems confirmed by the constancy of the complement and the disposition of the four deities on two other *caityas*, Naga-bahal and Tapahiti. On both, Maitreya is addorsed to Buddha Śākyamuni, just

to have developed about Maitreya. Thus it is of interest to point out two important shrines in Kathmandu where Maitreya is worshiped today, one at Jamala-vihāra, the other at Musun-bahal. Each shrine is dominated by a large image of polychrome painted clay, modeled in situ over an armature, which depicts an enthroned Maitreya Buddha turning the Wheel of the Law (Plate 473). The interior of the Musun-bahal shrine simulates a rocky grotto, evidently an allusion to the Tuṣita heaven where Maitreya awaits the time to descend to earth and restore the "lost truths in all their purity." The image is undated, but repairs effected in A.D. 1640 provide a *terminus a quo*.⁹⁶

The companion Maitreya at Jamala-vihāra compares closely with the Musun-bahal image, except that there is less modeling, and the garments are composed of Nepalese handmade paper affixed to the image and polychrome painted. It was made in this century on the model of the Musun-bahal image. The old *vihāra* of Jamala village was carelessly filled in with debris when the rest of the historic village, once the Licchavi settlement Jamayambī, was destroyed to make room for the palaces of Bir Shumshere Rana. But the monastery was later cleared and reconsecrated in the time of a successor, Chandra Shumshere (1901-1929). Residents of Musun-bahal recall the frequent visits of a person who came to "memorize" their image in order to duplicate it for the reestablished *vihāra*. These repeated study visits vividly bring to mind Hsüan-tsang's account of the colossal wooden Maitreya at Dardu, north of the Punjab. It was made by the Arhat Madhyāntika who "by the power of divine locomotion . . . enabled an artist to ascend to the Tuṣita heaven and caused him to observe personally the characteristic marks (of Maitreya's body). After going there three times, the meritorious work was finished."⁹⁷

Like Maitreya, the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī seems as at Dhvaka-bahal, and the two are flanked by correspondingly addorsed images of the guardian Bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Vajrapāṇi.

⁹⁵ Pal 1974:fig. 180; 1974a:35.

⁹⁶ In N.S. 760, as recorded in a manuscript in the possession of Hem Muni Vajracharya, a priest of Musun-bahal.

⁹⁷ Beal 1914:66; 1969:1, 134.

to have had limited appeal to Nepalese Buddhists of the Licchavi and Transitional Periods. That the theologians were aware of his importance in the pantheon is manifest by the couplets on the Tyagal-tol *caitya* which, except in the instance of Mañjuśrī, are otherwise each addressed to two or more divinities.⁹⁸ But with the exception of the Vajrabhairava image established at Gorkha, a tantric manifestation of the Bodhisattva, there are no images of Mañjuśrī known to date from the Licchavi Period. Their absence may not be significant, however, since this is in keeping with Indian practice; these images of Mañjuśrī did not become familiar until the post-Gupta period.⁹⁹

The earliest plastic representation of Mañjuśrī in Nepal Mandala appears to be an image inscribed as "Mañjunātha" consecrated in Kathmandu in A.D. 920 (Plates 474, 475).¹⁰⁰ Typologically, the image conforms to a Nepalese convention of rendering Mañjuśrī as a plump adolescent, a form textually recommended but not practiced elsewhere.¹⁰¹ In this form Mañjuśrī is conceived as a prince, manifest in the Kathmandu image with a splendid patterned dhoti, jeweled belt and ornaments, and what may be the Licchavi royal crown. In Nepalese art this crown is usually the prerogative of Indra, king of the gods, but is occasionally also accorded Avalokiteśvara (Plates 440, 445, 462, 463). Like Kārtikkeya (Plate 419), with whom Mañjuśrī has much in common conceptually and iconographically, Mañjunātha wears a distinctive talisman necklace, reminiscent of those still used on occasion by the Newars to divert evil from their children (Plate 475).¹⁰²

⁹⁸ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 167 (588); Pal 1974a:5.

⁹⁹ Mallmann 1964:18 and n. 8.

¹⁰⁰ The inscription on the attached pedestal is in very early Newari script, still clearly transitional from a Licchavi antecedent. According to G. Vajracharya, who has kindly examined the inscription for me, the abraded space for the year date between the expected salutation "Om" and the visible month date is so small that it could only accommodate a single sign which, however, can render two digits such as 20, 30, 40. There are enough letters remaining of the ruler's name to reconstruct it as Śaṅkara-deva [I], whose only known record is dated N.S. 40. Thus, the inscription is probably also dated N.S. 40 (A.D. 920). The reading published by D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 2 is less complete than Vajracharya's, but on paleo-

Mañjuśrī subsequently achieved considerable renown in the Kathmandu Valley as a culture hero believed to have come from China to fulfill the destiny of Svayambhū. In later imagery, rather than as a plump prince, Mañjuśrī is more commonly depicted as a resplendent god of transcendental wisdom and lord of speech (Vaḡiśvara), a role symbolized by his emblems, a book and the sword with which he drives away ignorance.¹⁰³

THE MALLA PERIOD

By the end of the twelfth century, a change had come about in Nepalese Buddhist practice that would at length mean the end of monasticism and entrain the decline and virtual dissolution of Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley. With few exceptions, the *vihāras* were by no means retreats, but stood in the cities and towns adjacent to Hindu temples, surrounded by the houses of the laity, both Buddhamārgī and Śivamārgī, and often of the monks' own families. Indeed, the *vihāras* were the very fabric of Patan and Kathmandu, and were totally integrated into the cityscape. This had been true since the Licchavi Period, when the *vihāras* were likewise an integral part of the urban scene and "*saṅgharāmas* and Deva temples [were] closely joined." In the context of Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhism, the monks and nuns were apparently able to exist as islands of socially egalitarian, celibate communities, physically close but socially distinct from the surrounding society. The latter, Hindu and lay Buddhist, was slowly becoming a

graphic evidence Regmi also assigns to it a date previous to A.D. 1000.

¹⁰¹ Pal 1974:123, figs. 207, 208. Today the Kva-bahal bronze image of Mañjuśrī is called Bhaiṣajya-Lokeśvara, undoubtedly a reference to Bhaiṣajyaguru, the Supreme Physician, a god popular in Tibet and one of the eight Medicine Buddhas. The boss held in the Nepali Mañjuśrī's right hand is identified as "medicine," thus the medicine plum (*myrobalan*) that is Bhaiṣajyaguru's cognizance.

¹⁰² Mañjuśrī also has certain affinities with Brahmā and even with Kṛṣṇa, who as a child also wears the talisman necklace (Mallmann 1964:16-17, 33-35, 45-46).

¹⁰³ Mallmann 1964:23-68; Pal 1974:figs. 206, 214; 1975:fig. 22.

single, caste-oriented community that conformed to Hindu social tradition.¹⁰⁴

Apparently, the principal catalyst that propelled the monks and nuns out of their *samghas* and back into the familiar and nearby secular milieu was the doctrine and practice of Vajrayāna. The conventual, celibate community ceased to have the same value it had as one of the Three Jewels, Dharma-Saṃgha-Buddha. Celibacy was nullified by the ritualistic practices associated with the female principle, *prajñā*; learned yogins and *siddhas*—and the disciples who sought them as teachers—were often solitary wanderers without a fixed base in a *vihāra*.

Moreover, within the *vihāra* itself a profound change had taken place. In conformity with early Buddhist doctrine, the *samgha* was traditionally composed of an egalitarian congregation. Such theoretical social stratification as existed—*arhat*, *bhikṣu*, *śrāvaka*, and *cailaka* (defined by Hodgson as “adepts,” “mendicants,” “readers,” and “scantly robed,” that is, ascetics)—was based on individual achievement.¹⁰⁵ Upward mobility was in these terms. But at length a caste-like hierarchy had evolved inside the Nepalese *vihāras* that reflected the caste-structured society outside the walls. An anomalous kind of cleric had emerged known as *vajrācārya*, “master of the thunderbolt,” “master of absolute power.”¹⁰⁶ These religious masters apparently replaced the *arhats*, or similar heads of the *samgha* but unlike them, had become in effect

Buddhist priests. Socially they outranked the rest of the *samgha* composed of ordinary *bhikṣu* (monks) (Plate 476), or “Śākya-bhikṣu,” a name derived from Śākyamuni Buddha, the Śākya Sage, from whom the monks claimed common descent.¹⁰⁷ That such an internal hierarchy had begun by at least the mid-twelfth century is evident from a number of Buddhist manuscripts copied by persons already using the distinguishing titles *Vajrācārya-bhikṣu* and *Śākya-bhikṣu*.¹⁰⁸

The physical conditions and the doctrinal and social climate prevailing by the end of the Transitional Period provided almost irresistible conditions for channeling the monks and nuns back into the secular community. Like others around them, and notably the highly respected Brahman priests, *vajrācārya* and Śākya-bhikṣu began to marry. No longer supported by the lay community, they turned into secular callings the skills they had acquired in the service of the faith. Previously outside the caste structure, the one-time monks now, like others, had to find a place in the established social hierarchy. As highly respected persons in the community, these *vandya* (Sanskrit: “worthy one”; vernacular, *bandya*, *banhra*, *bare*) assumed, and were granted by society, an elevated hierarchical position.¹⁰⁹ The *vajrācāryas*, who commanded the highest rank in the religious community, continued to occupy it in the secular context. Even *vajrācāryas* who no longer chose to function as

¹⁰⁴ There is some evidence that the Licchavi state was concerned to make it so, as attested by an inscription of Aṃśuvarman in which he enjoined the inhabitants of Bungamati village to toe the line respecting the observance of ordained caste occupations; D. Vajracharya 1973: inscr. 71 (290-300).

¹⁰⁵ Hodgson 1971: part 1, 30, 63.

¹⁰⁶ The word *ācārya* signifies one who has completed his training in Sanskrit; *vajra* is the thunderbolt, symbol of the ultimate Buddhist value. Thus *vajrācārya* signifies one who has completed the study of tantric Buddhism through Sanskrit.

¹⁰⁷ According to Hodgson 1971: part 1, 30, 51-52, 63-64, in the early nineteenth century there were four theoretical subdivisions of the *vandya*: *vajrācārya*, *Śākya-bhikṣu*, *bhikṣu* (*bhikṣhu*), and *Chiva*- (*Chivaka*)*bare*. Oldfield 1880: I, 181-182; II, 138-139 listed nine occupational classes composing the *vandya*, among which appear the same four. The “Chiva-bare” (Oldfield’s Chiwarbharhi) were

said to derive their name from the *caitya* (colloquially, *chiva*), the inclusion of which distinguished their *vihāras*, or, alternately, from *cailaka*, the inferior division of the four groups that traditionally composed a *samgha*. In nineteenth-century practice, the divisions were fictional. But the existence of the names may reflect a period when all of the earlier monastic divisions—*arhat*, *bhikṣu*, *śrāvaka*, *cailaka*—rather than just the two we now know, had become castes or subcastes. But the lingering names provide our only indication, and, if so, they certainly did not survive.

¹⁰⁸ D. Regmi 1965: part 1, 654.

¹⁰⁹ Scholars sometimes write as if the *vajrācāryas* were not also *vandya* (Petech 1958: 186). But the term is collective, as made clear by Hodgson 1971: part 1, 30, 51-52; Oldfield 1880: I, 180-181; II, 77, 133; Wright 1966: 125; and Snellgrove 1961: 8, to whose authority may be added my own observations in modern Nepal.

priests automatically belonged to a religious aristocracy if they confirmed their status by the observance of the proper initiation rites. Literally, they became "Buddhist Brahmans." Scaled a notch below these, the monks who were not *vajrācāryas* retained the honorific title *bhikṣu* or Śākya-bhikṣu, even when they were in fact no longer monks. As part of the lay community, the "worthy ones" thus occupied an elevated standing comparable to the Brahmans and Kshatriyas, the upper divisions of the four Hindu *varṇas*. Beneath the *vandya* came the rest of the Buddhist community: the Uray (Udas), the merchant-trader group, in essence Vaisya; the Jyapus as Sudras; and finally the low-caste occupational groups. Thus the Buddhist community essentially became a formally caste-structured counterpart of the Hindu one.

In the case of the *vajrācārya* and Śākya-bhikṣu, their elevated position in the society was no longer earned through individual wisdom, religious endeavor, or even magical skill, but was automatically conferred by heredity. To confirm one's right in either class, it was merely necessary for the individual to submit in childhood—and indeed, often in uncomprehending babyhood—to a symbolic rite of tonsure and mock acceptance of the monk's vows (Plates 487, 488).¹¹⁰ If the one-time monks did not abandon the *vihāras* altogether, they assumed the property rights to those in which they had dwelt as part of a *samgha*, and held them in perpetuity for themselves and their descendants. The *vajrācāryas* monopolized the worship of the *vihāra* deities, and gathered the attendant emoluments; for a fee they also ministered the domestic rites of the Buddhist laity, now including the Śākya-bhikṣu (Plate 492). The latter could not act in full priestly capacity, but only as assistants in sacerdotal affairs. Many *vajrācāryas* at length forsook any priestly functions at all, or adopted in

addition secondary professions that became hereditary. But in any event, the title was retained as a capitalized surname, Vajracharya.¹¹¹ The Śākya-bhikṣus, who similarly converted their title to a family name, Shakya (like Śākyamuni, from whom they claimed descent), largely followed the crafts they already knew. This was particularly gold- and silver-smithing and the fabrication of religious images; the *vihāras* served as their dwelling place, workshop, and foundry. Thus the *vihāras* corresponded loosely to guildhalls. They were occupied by families pursuing hereditary professions and enjoying high social esteem with all the rights and privileges this entails in a caste-structured society.¹¹² But at the same time, the sacred shrines and the images within were preserved, and the *vihāras* served as centers for the socio-religious affairs of the entire Buddhist community.

Although it had begun before the close of the Transitional Period, the drift from *samgha* to secularization was a gradual process effected over the course of the whole Malla Period. In the initial Malla years, the then recent destruction of the Indian *vihāras* by the Muslims sent many a refugee from the shattered communities to the Nepalese *vihāras*, but the traditional and continuing ties with Indian Buddhism and its revitalizing contact were forever sundered. Alone, and affected by pressures from within and without, during the succeeding century perhaps the majority of Nepalese *samghas* capitulated to their social environment and dissolved. Even so, many must have long survived in one form or another. Dharmasvāmin, the Tibetan monk who spent eight years in Svayambhū-vihāra in the early thirteenth century, observed that there were *vihāras* where monks were sheltered and fed, and a few *samghas* existed well into the seventeenth century. At that time, in the Patan kingdom alone, Siddhinarasimha located twenty-five communities

(Plates 490, 492, 493, 600). In early paintings, the Nepali *bhikṣus* are depicted with closely cropped hair (Plate 476).

¹¹¹ In Nepali spelling there is no difference between the name as applied to a family or to a priest.

¹¹² Hodgson 1971: part 1, 30, 52, 63-64 *passim*; Oldfield 1880:ii, 76-80, 131-144; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 654-661; Snellgrove 1961:7-8; 1957:chap. 3; Rosser 1966:78ff., 116-134; Fürer-Haimendorf 1956; Nepali 1965:167.

¹¹⁰ Apparently even in the nineteenth century, the *vandya* continued to keep their heads clean shaven after the ceremony of tonsure "as a mark of distinction between themselves and all other classes of society" (Oldfield 1880:ii, 77, 139). Hodgson 1971:part 1, 31 also noted that there were only tonsured Buddhists dwelling in the *vihāras*. This is no longer the case, although Buddhists acting in priestly capacity are often, but not always, clean shaven

and turned over to them *vihāra* buildings that had been abandoned by their former inmates.¹¹³

By A.D. 1382, when Sthitimalla officially became the head of the Nepalese state, the secularization of the *vihāras* was well under way, and caste as it functioned in the Buddhist community was already well established by social custom; it only remained to give it official sanction. But whereas the preceding centuries had witnessed the decline of monastic Buddhism, until this time there was no accompanying decline in the number of practicing Buddhists. The Buddhāmārgī community merely changed its structure and composition. But about the mid-fourteenth century, apparently under state coercion, the Buddhist community began to drift progressively into the Hindu fold. Official pressure to do so seems to have been applied initially by the zealously orthodox Sthitimalla, but in one way or another it continued throughout the rest of the Malla Period.¹¹⁴ In the Patan kingdom, for example, up to the time of Siddhinarasiṃha (A.D. 1619-1661), the *vandyā* had apparently been permitted to neglect the performance of certain purification rites following a death in the family. But the Patan king undertook to remedy this unorthodoxy by instituting new regulations that affected not only the lay *vandyā*, but also members of functioning *saṃghas* who theoretically were not subject to the social regulations governing the laity. He also interfered with the internal organization of the *vihāras*, and even, to remedy a shortage of carpenters, directed the *vandyā* to take up the trade.¹¹⁵ At the same time the ruler sanctioned no repression of the Buddhist faith. He himself built new *vihāras*, offered homage to Buddhist divinities, and was an ardent devotee of Avalokiteśvara in the form of Rāto Matsyendranātha.

That Buddhism survived in the Kathmandu

Valley even to the end of the Malla Period is largely due the benign influence of Tibetan Buddhism. For beginning in the sixteenth century, the roles of purveyor and receiver of the doctrine were reversed. By the seventeenth century, Tibet in turn had become the Buddhist holy land. It was in the reign of Pratāpamalla that the trade relations between the two countries became closer, and from that time the Newar traders began to travel regularly to and from Lhasa, and to even settle there and in Kuti, the border trade town, on a semi-permanent basis. The majority belonged to the Uray caste group—Manandhars, Tamrakars, Tuladhars, Chitrakars, and so on—who were traditionally lay Buddhists. They discovered Buddhist Tibet to have a very congenial social climate, in which they found themselves respected not only for their wealth and craftsmanship, but as repositories, however imperfect, of ancient Indian traditions. The Urays, moreover, observed in Tibet a casteless Buddhism in which they could be initiated as monks, as they could no longer be in caste-structured Nepal, and thereby gain even greater status through their knowledge of Buddhist doctrine.¹¹⁶ On their return to their homes, which were particularly in Kathmandu and Patan, they brought not only trade goods, but a revitalized doctrine and almost forgotten ideas respecting casteless social organization and the Buddhist's respected role in society. This operated as a powerful brake and deterrent to the Buddhist drift into Hinduism.

The Uray also brought back to Nepal Buddhist paintings and bronzes made for them by Tibetan monks according to the latter's aesthetic concepts. The paintings, except for stock inscriptions in Newari, were purely Tibetan, replete with Central Asiatic and Chinese influences that, with Nepalese contributions, had by now been fused into the Ti-

shipped. Thus, Sthitirājamalla sanctioned the long overdue repairs to Svayambhū stupa, and evidenced considerable geniality respecting the consecration of Buddhist images, as attested by a copperplate inscription recording the installation of an image in Lagan-bahal, Kathmandu (Rajvamshi 1965b).

¹¹³ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 561; Wright 1966:161.

¹¹⁴ Buddhist tradition asserts that it was forced on them by the Hindu reformer, Śaṅkarācārya (Wright 1966:125-126). But not only is there no evidence for his interference in Nepal, but his career long predated the beginning of the Buddhist decline in the Kathmandu Valley. In Nepal, it should be emphasized, "official pressure" may have been exerted respecting the avowed *mārga* and related customs, but not concerning the deities one wor-

¹¹⁵ Wright 1966:159-161.

¹¹⁶ Lokesh Chandra 1968.

betan style (Plate 583). And not only did the Uray travel to Tibet, but Tibetans came to Nepal. They came as traders in wool, salt, horses, and jewelry, and some to pass the winter at the stupa of Bodhnātha, removed from the rigorous Tibetan cold. The Tibetans also came to care for Bodhnātha and to take a hand with the decaying stupa of Svayambhūnātha; on more than one occasion, both funds and skills for restoration of these monuments emanated from Lhasa. The Tibetans also established monastic communities to which the Nepalese were attracted, and which they sometimes joined.

Thus, despite all that had transpired to efface Buddhism in Malla Nepal, it was by no means dead. As late as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, China, at least, still conceived of Nepal as a Buddhist country. For this reason, the Ming emperors took care to choose as their emissary to the Nepalese court a Buddhist monk who had already successfully treated with unruly Tibetan Buddhist sects. That the Chinese were not totally deceived in their estimate of the Nepalese religious climate, even though their embassy treated with the wrong court, is evident by the Buddhist texts and golden stupas Madana Rāma sent the Chinese in return. (Buddhist Patan even sent a Buddhist image with the tribute to China by the Shahs at the end of the eighteenth century.) Throughout the Malla Period new *vihāras* and stupas were regularly constructed, and new Buddhist cults rose and flourished. Even Siddhinarasimha moved, rather than destroyed, a *vihāra* in the path of his expanding palace. The strength of the Buddhist community in Malla Nepal, however, is best evidenced by its size as late as the nineteenth century, when it was estimated that two-thirds of the Newars were Buddhist.¹¹⁷ Under the stresses laid upon it since the twelfth century, however, the practice of Buddhism had become in many ways quite different from what it had been in earlier times.

During the Malla Period, the majority of *vandya* had become secularized, and although they dwelt in the *vihāra* buildings, few were practicing monks. Secure in their inherited places at the top of the

¹¹⁷ Oldfield 1880:11, 132, 277; Hodgson 1971:part 1, 64 said they were the "vast majority."

¹¹⁸ Wright 1966:160.

¹¹⁹ The story is well known in the *vihāra*, is recounted

Buddhist social hierarchy, the *vandya* ceased to study the doctrine of Buddhism; in the *vihāras* of the Malla Period there was little teaching and less learning. Leaders and followers together had become content with the ritualistic forms peculiar to tantrism. As a priest, the *vajrācārya* fulfilled his expected role in the performance of the required *pūjās* of the enshrined images of the *vihāras*, the supervision of socio-religious affairs of his community, and his attendance on the domestic rites of his client families.

By the Malla Period, tantrism had become an all-pervasive force that colored alike Buddhist and Hindu belief and practice. As previously discussed, the faiths may have had distinct names, Buddhāmārga and Śivamārga, but in essence they had become one. In the tantric climate then prevailing, respect for religious leaders was no longer based on their competence in doctrine and Sanskrit, but in their wonder-working powers as magicians. Nepalese folk history abounds with tales of the mystic-magical exploits of renowned *vajrācāryas* like Jamana Guvāju or his Brahman counterpart, Lambakārṇa Bhaṭṭa. Such practitioners were believed to be able to fly, to appear and disappear, to foretell the future, animate the inanimate, and, especially, through their special skills coerce the gods. Siddhinarasimha, it is said, was so impressed by one *vajrācārya* who had defeated some jugglers by his display of magic skills that he awarded him a landholding in his capital.¹¹⁸ Even now at Musun-bahal, Kathmandu, one may still see the charred doorway of the house of another *vajrācārya*, testimony to the onetime owner's magical powers. This *vajrācārya*, so it is told in Musun-bahal, had gone on some mission to Tibet. About to drink a cup of tea in the sedate company of a renowned lama, the *vajrācārya* suddenly perceived that his house in Nepal was on fire. Quickly dashing the tea to the ground, the Nepali tantric's powers were such that the single cupful fell as a copious rain over distant Musun-bahal, quenching the fire and saving the house in which his descendants still dwell.¹¹⁹

By the Malla Period, the familiar pantheon of in the Brahmanical chronicle (Hasrat 1970:81), and with the addition of picturesque details in "The Adventures of Surat Bajra" (Kesar Lall 1966:41-42).

Nepal Mandala had become enormously swollen with the introduction of new Vajrayāna deities and supplementary tantric manifestations of the old ones.¹²⁰ In a notion familiar to Hindus but elaborated by Buddhists, the tantric gods were characteristically imagined as having numerous heads, human and animal, and multiple limbs by which they could display as many symbols and gestures as their nature and activity demanded.¹²¹ The gods' dual nature, benign and terrifying, was expressed in scores of images, particularly as complex bronzes or as occupants of elaborate cosmic paintings, often of mandala form (Plate 200). When in a threatening mood, the gods wore tormented expressions, with staring, blood-shot eyes and grimacing mouths from which might protrude forked tongues and tusks (Plates 357, 465, 478-480). Their hair on end and aureoled with flames, these fearful gods, familiar of the cremation grounds, wore terrible ornaments of skulls and bones, severed heads and hands, and flayed skins, human and animal. Even relatively benign looking *ḍākinīs* and *yoginīs* could display with equanimity their own severed head, as from their gushing trunk they quenched their companions' thirst (Plate 544).¹²² Typically, the tantric gods carried a chopper poised above a human skull cup imagined filled with human flesh or blood. In agitated postures, they stood upon their distinctive vehicles or trod beneath their dancing feet corpses that might be personifications of ignorance, often in the form of Hindu gods. And hidden away on the upper floors of the *vihāras* or in the household chapels were the erotically entwined *guhya* (secret) images symbolizing the metaphysical notion of the union of Prajñā and Upāya, but none the less graphic for all that (Plates 477, 478). In the considerable interchange between the Hindu and Buddhist pantheons, in general the Buddhists did the greatest borrowing,

¹²⁰ Extremely complex, the essential pantheon of tantric Buddhism is common to Nepal and Tibet, and can best be approached through such studies as Mallmann 1975, Getty 1962, and Gordon 1967. Other deities, like the personified *dhāraṇīs*, for example, appear to be local, and for the most part await iconographical studies. Some idea of the diversity of the Nepali Vajrayāna pantheon may be obtained from the elaborate iconography of Chusya-bahal, Kathmandu, recently analyzed by van Kooij 1977. See also, Buddhisagar Sharma 1962.

but the iconographic influences more often seem to have flowed the other way. Nowhere is this more evident than in tantric imagery, and particularly in that depicting ritual copulation. Used with abandon in Buddhist iconography, copulating pairs entered the Hindu repertory very late, and with restraint, largely to represent the union of Śiva and Śakti (Plate 512).¹²³

Reflecting the emphasis that the female principle had come to assume in tantrism, Vajrayāna worship included a host of female divinities. But in the syncretic religious atmosphere of Nepal Mandala, their concepts, cults, and manifestations became inextricably tangled with that of the Brahmanical Mātṛkas, the subject of the following chapter. So also were entangled the Hindu Bhairava and the Buddhist Mahākāla.

Mahākāla, the Great Black One, began to command a cult of considerable importance in Malla Nepal (Plates 479, 480). To Buddhists he is one of the Eight Terrible Ones, a Defender of the Law. Characteristically, he is a guardian of the *vihāra* buildings and, opposite the anomalous Gaṇeśa, is inevitably installed in a niche in the *vihāra* entry vestibule. In his role as defender and guardian, Mahākāla is one of the chief protectors of all the other Valley gods, a task he shares with Sankata Bhairava of Te-bahal, Kathmandu. In the Kathmandu Valley, representations of Mahākāla rarely conform exactly to his textual description, and often incorporate aspects that are rightly those of other divinities: Saṃvara, Hevajra, and Heruka, emanations of Akṣobhya. Conceptually related to Bhairava, from whom he probably derives, the Buddhist deity is teamed with Bhairava in practice, shares aspects of his iconography, and the name Mahākāla, one of Bhairava's epithets. Like Bhairava, too, Nepalis conceive of Mahākāla as a *piṭha devatā*, the temple of the Tundikhel Ma-

¹²¹ Mallmann 1975:2.

¹²² In these respects Nepali images are generally less exaggerated than their Tibetan counterparts. Even when loathsome forms are demanded by the texts, Nepali artists seem particularly reluctant to show their goddesses thus, and while supplying them with gruesome symbols take care to keep the forms and faces attractive. The fierce Ugratūrā, discussed in Chapter 11, is a case in point (Plate 199).

¹²³ Pal 1974:101-102.

hākāla, Kathmandu, for example, representing his *pīṭha*, which is paired with a companion *deochem* inside the town. Thus it is often difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish the two deities. Iconographically, even the famous Kāla Bhairava of the Kathmandu Darbar Square conforms as much to Saṃvara as to Bhairava (Plate 367).

Like many other Vajrayāna deities, Mahākāla's popularity developed in the Malla Period, the date of most of his known images. They are dotted here and there by the wayside and installed in every *vihāra*; the one of greatest renown came to be the Mahākāla enshrined on the Tundikhel, Kathmandu (Plate 480). Hieratically posed on a prostrate corpse, the obese and oil-blackened Great Black One is garlanded and crowned with skulls and serpents and carries his prescribed skull-emblazoned wand (*khaṭvāṅga*) and gruesome chopper and skull cup. Twice a year he is further adorned with a girdle of human bones like that worn by many other fierce divinities, and at times by their priests (Plates 478, 556, 562). Of indeterminate age, the image is probably a product of the Malla Period. It has a legendary origin instructive both with respect to the Nepalese view of the oneness of the two Mahākālas, Śaiva and Buddhist, and of the tantric climate in which the skill of the priest was pitted against the cunning of the gods.

It appears that a famous *vajrācārya*—some say Jamana Guvāju—was once grazing his goats on the Tundikhel. Chancing to see Mahākāla cruising the sky road overhead, he thought it would be an excellent thing to get a god of such immense size and fearsome aspect to settle in the Valley as a protector. Accordingly, he engaged an artisan to fashion an image in the likeness of the god he had seen, and through the power of his mantras forced the unwilling Mahākāla to enter it. Mahākāla protested that it was wrong to imprison him by force because as Great Time, that is, Eternity (a second meaning of *kāla* and applied to Śiva), he must ceaselessly circle the earth. As an alternative, the deity proposed that every Saturday night he would inhabit the image, but otherwise be free to come and go as he chose. The wise priest, well aware, as the Nepalese say, that “a one-eyed uncle is better than none,” agreed to the god's proposal. Accord-

¹²¹ Getty 1962:12-14.

ingly, even today, Śivamārgīs or Buddhamārgīs who want to be doubly certain that Mahākāla hears their prayers make certain that their visits fall on Saturday. The choice of that day is very likely related both to the conception of Mahākāla as a *pīṭha devatā* and to his presumed association with Saturn, traditionally a source of misfortune. Because of his color, Mahākāla is also often identified with Rāhu, another of the Navagraha. For that reason also, black predominates as the color of offerings considered suitable to the Great Black One.

In the Vajrayāna context of Malla Nepal, the Buddhist pantheon was enormously enlarged, and new gods such as Mahākāla came to swell it. But this did not diminish the luster of the familiar stupa, the Buddha Śākyamuni, the Five Tathāgatas, and the nontantric manifestations of the Bodhiśattvas, of Vasudhārā, Tārā, and similar divinities (Plates 505, 526). Traditional images of the Buddha Śākyamuni continued to be made and installed in the shrines, and the events of his mortal life provided a common theme in Malla paintings and sculptures (Plates 481, 482).

As a new development in the Malla Period, the cult of the “Buddha of Fixed Light,” Dīpaṅkara Buddha, achieved great popularity. Born on an island (*dvīpa*) to a miraculous display of lamps (*dīpa*), Dīpaṅkara Buddha was one of the many predecessors of Gautama Buddha.¹²⁴ In fact, it was he who foretold Gautama's coming. Once, in the course of Dīpaṅkara's worldwide progress to spread the Law, he encountered a Brahman youth who, unbinding his hair, spread it before Dīpaṅkara's feet. Treading upon it, Dīpaṅkara announced the youth's destiny as Buddha Śākyamuni. But uniquely in Nepal and in the period of the Three Kingdoms, representations of this event invariably depict Dīpaṅkara standing not on the boy's hair but on the undulating body of a serpent, which *vāhana*-like appears to carry him along (Plates 175, 483). That this is indeed the intent is made clear by a legend, preserved in manuscript, in which Dīpaṅkara is referred to as “one who moves on a snake vehicle” (*nāgayāna calamāna*) and “one who is carried by a snake” (*ahināyaka*).¹²⁵ The association of Dīpaṅkara Bud-

¹²⁵ The manuscript, entitled *Dīpaṅkara-vastu-patala*, is

dha with the *nāgas*, demigods of great importance in Nepal Mandala, is explained in the following way. The *nāgas*, it seems, had seized Prajñāpāramitā (Perfection of Wisdom, Knowledge) and selfishly held her in custody. But Dīpaṅkara Buddha successfully wrested her away, and thus was able to spread the Buddhist doctrine to the world quarters.

There are scores of Malla Period images of Dīpaṅkara Buddha in the Kathmandu Valley. Typically, the smaller images have wooden bodies with painted or cloth garments (or both), to which a gilt metal repoussé head and hands are affixed (Plate 484). Large images typically have head and hands fastened to a hollow basketry torso, concealed with clothing and ornaments, permitting its animation by a man within at the periodic reenactment of Dīpaṅkara's travels to spread the Law (Plates 500, 501). Traditionally, the donor of such an image was supposed to spend the day of consecration inside the image. Afterwards he could keep the Dīpaṅkara image at home or, preferably, install it in a *vihāra*, often one he had expressly constructed to receive it. Such images figured among the most common offerings to the *vihāras*, some of which possess a dozen or more. Many are carried to Svayambhū for the yearly celebration of the Buddha's birthday (Plate 496). Their usual place is the *vihāra*'s side chapels but, exceptionally, Dīpaṅkara occupies the chief shrine, as in Patan's Dīpavati-vihāra (Plates 485, 486). The Patan image may qualify as one of the earliest of the Nepalese Dīpaṅkaras, if an undated inscription said to be on the image permits us to assign it to the thirteenth century.¹²⁶

The cult of Dīpaṅkara Buddha achieved little popularity in India, except in Gandhāra, whence it spread to Central Asia and China. Given the relatively late date of its prominence in Nepal, the Dīpaṅkara cult very likely came from this direction. Since Dīpaṅkara Buddha is considered,

an uncataloged work in the Nepalese Archives, probably from the seventeenth century, but copied from an earlier version. Its existence, together with a translation of the revealing passage, was kindly communicated to me by Deepak Bhattacharyya, Calcutta.

¹²⁶ D. Regmi 1966:part 1, 595, 615; part 3, inscr. 21 (11-12).

¹²⁷ Pal 1974:figs. 194-197.

among other things, to be a protector of merchants, one can suppose he came into fashion in the period of the Three Kingdoms as the patron of Newar traders who then so diligently plied the Tibet trade.

In the Malla Period, the cult of the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara flourished as before. By then, if not earlier, he had become the patron of Nepal Mandala in the form of Rāto Matsyendranātha, a syncretic deity whose cult will be explored in a later chapter. To Avalokiteśvara's familiar forms, represented in images typologically little removed from the Dhvaka-bahal relief,¹²⁷ were added many that were previously unknown. One of these was Ekadaśamukha Avalokiteśvara, the compassionate god of eleven heads; others were Amoghpaśa (Plate 200) and Cintāmaṇi Lokeśvara.¹²⁸ The latter seems to be a Nepali invention which, as a god of wealth, can probably be traced to the Uray, the Newar Buddhist merchant-trader caste.

By the beginning of the Malla Period, the cult of Vajrapāṇi, who once seems to have vied with Avalokiteśvara in Valley favor, had begun to wane. But that of Mañjuśrī waxed in its place. According to legends crystallized in the *Svayambhū-purāna*, Mañjuśrī came to the Valley from China to fulfill the destiny of Svayambhū.¹²⁹ He drained the lake, made Svayambhū-in-the-Form-of-Light (Jyotirūpa) approachable, and after the design of his valiant sword Chandrahas, created and peopled in his own name, Mañju (sweet), a great city (*paṭṭana*), the Mañjupaṭṭana of legend, primordial Kathmandu. As such Mañjuśrī became a Buddhist culture hero. His name is attached to many places, such as Mañjuśrī-vihāra, Kathmandu, where he is said to have rested from his labors of city-building, or Tham-bahil, his miraculous spontaneous creation. There are many images of Mañjuśrī of Malla date, but his principal manifestation is in the form of his footprints near Svayambhūnātha, where his

¹²⁸ Pal 1975:figs. 16-20; 1966; 1967; 1968.

¹²⁹ Mitra 1971:247ff.; Hodgson 1971:part 1, 115-120. Mañjuśrī is of Indian origin, but in the course of his introduction into China he seems to have been absorbed so completely into the cult of a local deity that even in India he was often considered a northern importation (Mallmann 1964:16-17; Lévi 1905:1, 330-340; Getty 1962:110-111; Bhattacharyya 1968:100).

cult is merged with that of Sarasvatī, his Brahmanical alter ego.

THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

The Kathmandu Valley of the twentieth century is rich with souvenirs of its once glorious Buddhist past. This is evident in the hundreds of stupas and *vihāras*, the thousands of votive *caityas*, the untold numbers of Buddhist images in stone, metal, wood, and paint, a treasure of manuscripts, and in the customs and behavior of an important and colorful segment of its people. In Patan alone there are still to be found 155 sites called *vihāras*, and there remain almost a hundred in rapidly modernizing Kathmandu (Maps 7, 8). There are even a few in Hinduized Bhaktapur, and one or more in many Newar villages.¹³⁰ In Patan and to a lesser extent in Kathmandu, the *vihāras* are so numerous in relation to the adjacent houses that one feels as if they were the fundamental urban matrix, the houses and temple squares merely occupying the leftover space. In Patan, particularly, the *vihāras* comprise a human warren, where by means of narrow alleys and covered passageways one can pass among them, rarely having to leave the sacred domain. In the older, eastern part of the city there is often not a hundred feet between one *vihāra* and another, and sometimes two and three share common walls. One can hardly imagine what Patan and Kathmandu were like when their *vihāras* were being constructed and kept in repair by the busy hives of monastic activity they enclosed.

The *vihāras*, whose physical remains I have described previously (Chapter 6; Plates 142-179)

¹³⁰ I inventoried the city *vihāras* in a site-by-site canvass in the summer of 1970. While twenty-two of the Patan *vihāras* are merely family shrines, as are a few of the ninety-three *vihāras* of Kathmandu, the vast majority are actual *vihāra* quadrangles, some of which once served as bona fide monasteries. It is possible that *vihāras* were once equally numerous in Bhaktapur, but that a conscious Hinduization of the old capital from the mid-fourteenth century effaced all but a remnant, the twenty-three extant sites.

¹³¹ The sociology of the *vihāras* is a subject far too complex to treat in the present context, but see Allen 1973 for

are no longer monasteries, but remain an important institution in contemporary Buddhist life. They are Buddhist centers where individual, family, and community events transpire and where, in effect, the preserved shrines serve as Buddhist temples. In Patan and Kathmandu, the *vihāras* are organized into two main divisions: there are eighteen chief *vihāras* in each city, independent of each other, but to each of which is attached a varying number of the remaining *vihāras* as dependents. In the case of Patan, some of the dependencies are in nearby Chobar and Kirtipur villages, once part of the Patan Kingdom. If the Bhaktapur *vihāras* were similarly organized into chief and branch *vihāras*, there is no apparent trace. Each Nepali *vihāra*, chief or branch, has a particular membership, still called a *samgha*, and within it a hierarchy of office, the privilege and duties of which depend on social rank—that is, whether one is a Vajracharya or a Shakya—age, and many other factors.¹³¹

All of the *vihāras* have two names, a formal one in Sanskrit, often debased, combined with the word *vihāra* or *mahāvihāra*, and a popular one combined with the local equivalent, *bahā* or *bahī* (Nepali, *bahāl*, *bahīl*). The Sanskrit names derive variously from location (for example, Dakṣiṇa-vihāra, the Southern Monastery), doctrinal associations (Sukhavati- or Sthavirapātra-vihāra), a particular feature (Suvarṇa- [golden] vihāra), famous Indian monasteries (Vikramaśīla), and especially a donor's name (Rājakṛta- or Bhaskarakīrti-vihāra).¹³² Theoretically, but not in practice, the suffix *vihāra* denotes a foundation dedicated in the name of an ordinary mortal, the suffix *mahāvihāra* (great monastery) in the name of a Buddhist "saint."¹³³

an introduction. As institutions, the *vihāras* and their *samghas* are in urgent need of study while there still remain within them elders who can help reconstitute the fast-disappearing Buddhist past.

¹³² In this context, the recurrent Sanskrit word *kṛta* means "built by"; *kīrti*, *kīrtana* (glory, fame, mentioning) has been employed since Licchavi times to designate collectively any foundation—*dharmasālā*, fountain, *vihāra*, and so on—offered for the benefit of others (D. Vajracharya 1973:180-181, 209).

¹³³ Hodgson 1971:part 1, 53.

Vihāra nicknames are almost always short, of one or two syllables, either derived from the Sanskrit name, the location, or from an event connected with the *vihāra*. The Karunāpura-vihāra of Kathmandu, for example, for a reason that can no longer be explained, is familiarly known as Musyabahal, the “monastery of baked soy beans.” Similarly, Muktipura-vihāra becomes Mukum-bahal; Harṣacaitya-vihāra, Haku-bahal, and so on. Although I diligently tried to collect the formal names of all the *vihāras*, and append them to location maps 7-9, they must be taken with the proverbial grain of salt. There are relatively few *vihāras* about which there is full agreement respecting the Sanskrit name. Even the priest in charge of the shrine and the *vihāra*’s inhabitants often disagree among themselves, claim a name different from that appearing in inscriptions on the premises, or insist that the *vihāra* has only a common name. This explains why the names in my lists may not agree with those published elsewhere.¹³⁴

The architectural differences between a *bahī* and a *bahā* cannot be satisfactorily correlated with institutional differences, past or present. The term *bahī* is variously claimed as the diminutive of *bahā* or as a derivative from *bāhira* (Nepali, outside) because they were “outside” family life or, alternatively, were those inhabited by hermits “outside” the cities.¹³⁵ Hodgson seems to distinguish the *bahī* and *bahā* as “great and common *vihāras*,” that is,

¹³⁴ Shakya 1956a; Snellgrove 1961:116-120.

¹³⁵ Rosser 1966:126; Wright 1966:161.

¹³⁶ Hodgson 1971:part 1, 53n. The entry is by no means clear; he may also mean to say that the *bahī* encloses a *cāitya*, a *bahā* a *kuṭāgār*, that is, a shrine normally dedicated to divinities other than the Five Tathāgatas (Dhyāni Buddhas); see also Hodgson 1971:part 1, 30.

¹³⁷ Rosser 1966:126; Hodgson 1971:part 1, 52n. This view is supported by the observation of Allen 1975:8 that Shakyas living in *bahīls* were regarded as slightly inferior to those who dwelt in *bahāls*.

¹³⁸ So I have heard from informants, and so reports *Kathmandu Valley* 1975:1, 51. I was not able to secure a satisfactory definition for the expression *gandhuri-* or *gandhūli-dyo*. Presumably it derives from Sanskrit *gāmdhūli-deva*, a term encountered from time to time in Nepali sources. According to Monier-Williams 1899:s.v., *gām* is the accusative form of *go*, cow; *dhūli*, powder or dust. There is no entry for *gāmdhūli*, but *godhūli* is de-

mahāvihāra and *vihāra*.¹³⁶ Rosser assigned the *bahī* to the *bhikṣubare*, a class which, if it ever existed as a separate entity, was socially inferior to Śākya-bhikṣus.¹³⁷ Some Nepalese Buddhists hold that the *bahī* were schools for novices; others claim them as *vihāras* in which a *bahī-dyo* (Dīpaṅkara Buddha) is installed; still others define them as *vihāras* consecrated to *gandhuri-dyo*.¹³⁸ To add to the confusion, Rosser suggests that they may be a recent institution, while those who inhabit them frequently assert that they are the more ancient.¹³⁹ Finally, there is no agreement concerning whether the all-important rite of tonsure may be performed in the *bahī*.

The definitions of a *bahī* are for the most part contradictory, and some are patently erroneous. Traditionally, at least, all *vihāras*, *bahī* and *bahā*, were similarly “outside” family life, and few of either type lay “outside” the cities. There is no contemporary evidence to support any special connection of the *bahī* with Dīpaṅkara Buddha, images of which are to be found as accessories in almost all *vihāras*; likewise, *gandhuri-dyo* is found in both types of *vihāra*. Nor is there anything to suggest that one is an older institution than the other; both types are represented among *vihāras* that may qualify as Licchavi foundations—Cābahīl and Uku-bahal, for example. The only thing that may now be said with certainty is that the *bahā* and *bahī* are architecturally very distinct, and

defined as “earth-dust,” that is, haze, with the general connotation of a pale, unrisen, or setting sun. How the idea relates to the Nepali *gāmdhūli* deity, if at all, I cannot say. We know from an inscription, however, that in N.S. 508 Jyēṣṭha (A.D. 1388), a *gāmdhūlibhaṭṭāraka* was installed in Lagan-bahal, Kathmandu (Rajvamshi 1965b), thus exploding the theory that such deities were exclusive to *bahīls*. Another inscription, said to be in the courtyard of Guita-bahīl, Patan, informs us that Siddhinarasimha installed a *gandhulibhaṭṭāraka* in a “newly constructed temple” (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 275). It cannot have referred to the *bahīl* shrine itself, which long predates Siddhinarasimha and enshrines Dīpaṅkara Buddha (Plates 485, 486). The king’s *gāmdhūlibhaṭṭāraka* is identified as Maitreya; the one in Lagan-bahal appears to be an image of the Buddha.

¹³⁹ Among whom is Sudarshan, a well-informed and highly literate monk of Gana-bahal, Kathmandu.

that no *bahī* qualifies as a chief *vihāra*; as an educated guess, the *bahī* may well have been a school for novices.

The *vihāras* are the prescribed venue for the performance of the rite of tonsure, a *samskāra* by which Vajracharya and Shakya youths symbolically accept the rites and duties of monkhood (and for the former, priesthood), and thus confirm their caste status. The rites must be performed in a chief *vihāra*, and specifically the one in which these same rites were performed for one's ancestors. This is true no matter in what *vihāra* the youth or his family now reside or worship, or how far they may live from the prescribed *vihāra*, even if in a distant bazaar.¹⁴⁰

For Shakyas the hair-cutting rite is known as *bare-chuyegu* (Sanskrit, *cūdā-ḥarṇa*) and for Vajracharyas, *ācāh-luyegu*, from *ācāryābhiṣeka*, a traditional rite of tantric yogins. In part, the two ceremonies correspond. The rite may be performed for a solitary child but, for economic reasons, it is usually a group celebration. Ranging in age from mere babies to little boys, the fasting candidates are assembled in the *vihāra* courtyard. There they are stripped, given a purificatory bath, and the head is ceremonially shaved (Plate 487). Each newly tonsured child is then garbed with a monk's yellow robe, invested with a staff and begging bowl, whispered a secret mantra, and exhorted to observe celibacy and strict monastic discipline (Plate 488). This he does for four days, even symbolically begging his meals, albeit sometimes in his mother's arms. Finally the "monk" returns to the *vihāra*, announces that he does not find monkhood congenial, and requests, and receives, release from his vows. He then returns permanently to secular life.

For a Vajracharya youth, further rites are necessary by which he is initiated into the rights and duties of the priesthood (which very likely he will never follow). At that time he is invested with the *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā* (bell), one the symbol of absolute power and the male principle, the other the symbol of impermanence and the female principle. Until he completes this stage of his initiation, he holds only the rank of a *bhikṣu*. If he fails to

complete it, he remains one permanently, irrevocably forfeiting not only his own status as a *vajrācārya*, but that of his descendants.

Theoretically, in the belief that *vajrācāryas* descended from Brahmans, the latter can become *vajrācāryas*, and anyone who submits to tonsure and takes the monk's vows can become a *bhikṣu*. But whereas even into the nineteenth century there were many instances of Brahmans being inducted as *vajrācāryas*, this is an unheard-of practice today, and for centuries there have been no bona fide admissions to the "monkhood." In effect, the *vandyas* is a completely closed caste. The *vajrācārya*'s only mobility is downward into the *bhikṣus*, and the latter are essentially without mobility in either direction.

The ceremony of tonsure is one of the most picturesque, and touching, of Nepalese rites to observe, as little boys cheerfully submit to a host of indignities heaped upon them by their elders. But that these elders have no understanding of the mockery they make of Buddhism, once the glory of the Kathmandu Valley, is saddening. Justification for the mime is said to be provided by the sacred texts: this is apparent in an account of an alleged renunciation of monkhood by King Śivadeva II, the probable founder of Uku-bahal.

Sivadeva-barma . . . became a bhikshu. Four days after becoming a bhikshu, the Raja told his Guru that it was impossible for a man, who had enjoyed the comforts and luxuries of a king, to lead that kind of life. He therefore begged him to show him some means, by which he could live comfortably in this world, and yet obtain salvation in the next. "It is written," replied the Guru, "in the Dharma-sastra, that a bhikshu can return to the Grihastha mode of life, and is then called a Bajradhrik or Bajracharya. Also, that those who are descendents of Sakya Muni, are after the ten sanskaras or ceremonies, Bandyas or Bhikshus, and they can also worship Kulieswara, and still lead a grihastha life." Having said this, the Guru took off the ochre-dyed cloth from the Raja's

¹⁴⁰ Some Buddhists maintain that the rite can be performed in a *bahī*, none of which qualify as a chief *vihāra*.

If so, these *vandyas* may be descendants of the disaffected sector reported by Rosser 1966.

body, and performed the ceremony of Acharya-bhisheka.¹⁴¹

In this context it may be noted that many Śivamārgī boys go through a very similar ceremony related to the first of the four *āśramas*, or ideal stages of life, the *vratabandha* (colloquially, *bartaman*), literally, "tying into the regulations" (Plate 489). Traditionally, this was the time when the Brāhmacārin should live with a teacher and learn the Vedas. But more practically, in modern Nepal this stage of life is compressed into a day. After ceremonial preparation, including partial tonsure, the candidate is "taught" the Vedas in an hour and, if of accepted caste, is invested with three of the six threads composing the sacred cord (*yajñopavīta*). Then, shouldering a deerskin and bundle on a stick, the youth symbolically begs for his keep, returns to his guru, becomes a graduate, listens to the convocational address in Sanskrit (of which neither guru nor disciple may understand a word), acquires the final three sacred threads, resumes ordinary dress, and goes home.

Despite the secularization of the *vihāras* as residences and workshops for the *vandya* and their families, the *vihāras* are still of fundamental importance as religious institutions. Each has conserved its shrines and, if one by one accessory images have decayed or slipped away into foreign collections, the principal images are still in place. In all except the most derelict *vihāras*, the main ground-floor shrine is opened for worship at least for a while every morning.¹⁴² The ceremonial *pūjā* of the principal deity, usually a Buddha or a Bodhisattva, is performed by a *vajrācārya* selected on a rotational basis from qualified members of the *vihāra's saṃgha*. Known colloquially as *guwāju* (*guvāju*, *gubhaju*, *guru-ju*), the *vajrācārya* also serves as priestly intermediary for persons of the locale who come to tender offerings and secure the deity's blessing (Plate 490). Rich and important *vihāras* like Hiraṇyavarṇa-mahāvihāra (Kva-ba-

hal), Patan, have more than one daily worship, and the officiating *vajrācārya* even enjoys the service of acolytes. In poor and decadent *vihāras* like Naksal-bahal, Kathmandu, the *vajrācārya* (in this instance appointed by the state, but no longer paid by it) merely comes each morning out of devotion to care for the deity, since there are almost no worshipers and no significant offerings or other emoluments of office. But even there and in similarly abandoned and decaying *vihāras*, at least one devotee somehow daily contrives to tender the deity a fresh flower or a thimbleful of rice.

There are no longer to be found in the Nepalese *vihāras* monks whose mastery of doctrine and Sanskrit can vie, as in the past, with that of Indian scholars, like those who were once eagerly sought as teachers by the Tibetans. Their replacements, the *vandya* caste, secure in their inherited position, have no need to read the sacred texts and are no longer able to. Their grasp of Buddhist doctrine is minimal, at best. Manuscripts that were once the glory of Nepal are ritually thumbed, and have been transposed into cult objects of even less significance than the mute *vajra* or tinkling *ghaṅṭā* (Plates 491, 493).¹⁴³ Some texts, like the magnificent volumes of blue paper lettered in silver and gold at Thambahil, Kathmandu, are ceremonially opened only during the yearly exposition of *vihāra* relics, when they are reluctantly and briefly exposed to the gaze of the pious, or curious, in return for cash. Others are not only sealed by the priests' inability to comprehend them, but are physically sealed, because they are considered of such potency that, like Pandora's box, they must not be opened. Scholar Hem Raj Shakya, for example, devoted many months to convincing his own caste brethren to open a palm-leaf manuscript to enable him to study the colophon.¹⁴⁴

Knowledge of Buddhist doctrines has ceded to ritualism. The highest values are placed on the *vajrācārya's* mitre, the *bhikṣu's* red cap, or the twin scripts only as objects of worship, an opinion supported by Hodgson's remark (1971:part 1, 14) that persons who possessed manuscripts, or parts of them, as heirlooms "were content to offer to sealed volumes the silent homage of their *pūjā* (worship)."

¹⁴⁴ Shakya and Vaidya 1970:colophon 8 (15).

¹⁴¹ Wright 1966:86-87. I was not able to find an explanation for the name Kulieswara.

¹⁴² I was not able to gather trustworthy information respecting the worship of the esoteric deity enshrined in the overhead *āgama*.

¹⁴³ Even a century ago, Bendall 1974:5 observed that the priests were ignorant of Sanskrit and used the manu-

staffs of priestly office, *vajra* and *ghaṇṭā*, held in hands that repeat *mudrās* that have for the most part long lost meaning (Plates 492, 493). Such manuscripts as are read at all serve primarily as guides to ritual and, like other symbols of office, help set the priest apart from and above the lay community. As a disillusioned priest spoke of his peers a century ago, "the Tantras and Dhāraṇīs, which ought to be read for their own salvation, they read only for the increase of their stipend and from a greedy desire of money."¹⁴⁵ But this harsh judgment should not imply that the priests are venal. It is merely that today most are ignorant, and being a priest or his assistant is much a job like any other. Few engage in it as a full-time profession, but turn to a variety of occupations, preferably but by no means exclusively white-collar or skilled artisanry. It should be borne in mind that many persons named Vajracharya and Shakya, among whom are to be found brilliant scholars, serve in no sacerdotal capacity at all.

The condition of the Buddhist doctrine in modern Nepal is perhaps best revealed by the responses of the above-quoted priest to Hodgson's twenty-point questionnaire on Buddhist philosophy.¹⁴⁶ Even more succinctly, it is summed up in the answer to the question, "what is the difference between Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Buddhism?" that I once put to a Shakya reputed for his learning. "The only difference," he observed, "is that Mahāyānists can eat before doing their *pūjā* while the latter must fast until afterward."



Among the myriad of cult objects now familiar to Buddhists in the Kathmandu Valley, none compares in cultural importance with Svayambhū, the Self-Created or Self-Existent (Figure 27; Plates 2, 26, 27, 217, 223, 225, 494, 495). Like Paśupati among Brahmanical sites, Svayambhū is not only one of the most venerable Buddhist sites, but the most sacred. Although its worshipers know nothing of King Vṛṣadeva and his pious deed of long ago, they are

aware from the familiar legends of the *Svayambhū-purāna* how exceedingly ancient and miraculous in nature is the stupa. For Svayambhū chose to manifest himself in the midst of Kālihrad, or Nāgavāsa, the lake that filled the Valley before man, or even Paśupati, dwelt therein. Of flame,¹⁴⁷ or alternately an image of crystal "one cubit high," Svayambhū-in-the-Form-of-Light (Jyotirūpa) emanated from a resplendent lotus "as large as the wheel of a chariot. It had ten thousand golden petals. It had diamonds above, pearls below, and rubies in the middle. Its pollen consisted of jewels. Its seed lobes were gold, and stalks lapis-lazuli." In time, however, the compassionate Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, finding the lake "full of monstrous aquatic animals and the temple of Svayambhū almost inaccessible, opened with his sword the . . . valleys" and drained the lake. Then the Bodhisattva Vajrasattva, "fearing that wicked men in the Kāliyuga, would steal away the jewels of Svayambhū and destroy his image, concealed him under a slab of stone." At last there came to the celebrated holy site the king-turned-*bhikṣu*, Śantaśrī or Śantikarācārya, who raised over the hidden Svayambhū a stupa "studded with gems, and having a golden wheel attached."¹⁴⁸

The legendary stupa of Śantikarācārya, alas, is no longer to be seen, or that of Vṛṣadeva—for the Svayambhū of today, no less than the temple of Paśupati or of Changu Nārāyaṇa, is but the end product of a long succession of stupas that have crowned the hill. Suffering the ravages of time and storm, fire and quake, war and neglect, Svayambhū with each significant repair has been modified to conform to the then existing doctrinal development. In each instance, however, in accordance with stupa building everywhere, the primitive monument must not have been replaced, but merely encased.

Although certain repairs and perhaps enlargements must have been carried out in Licchavi times, the first certain account of such a restoration occurs in A.D. 1129, as recorded in an inscription adjacent to the stupa.¹⁴⁹ Probably the most exten-

flaming pond that so entranced the Chinese travelers Wang Hsüan-t'sê and Hsüan-tsang.

¹⁴⁸ *Svayambhū-purāna* (Mitra 1971:246-252).

¹⁴⁹ Shakya and Vaidya 1970:inscr. 1 (55-56) (who,

¹⁴⁵ Hodgson 1971:part 1, 52.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 41-53.

¹⁴⁷ It is to be speculated whether the flame on the water part of the legend may have any connection with the

sive renovation took place in 1372 when, with the permission of King Arjunadeva and his aspirant successor, Sthitimalla, the *mahāpatra* of Kathmandu repaired the stupa almost a quarter-century after its sack by the Muslims.¹⁶⁰ It may be that the stupa's basic form as we know it today, with directional chapels and towering finial, was fixed at that time.¹⁶¹ But many renovations and repairs followed this major restoration, each of which must have occasioned certain further modifications or elaborations. The distinctive prayer wheels and broad ambulatory, for example, were Tibetan innovations of the present century.

One of the most frequent repairs has been either to replace the central wooden shaft, the *yaṣṭi*, or to repair the elaborate finial attached to it. Jyotirmalla inscribed himself as bowed beneath the weight of the fame he had gained in restoring the top of Svayambhū, and we know from an inscribed *paṭa* that his son, Yakṣamalla, did the same.¹⁶² From another inscribed *paṭa*, we learn that the finial, or a part of it, was replaced in A.D. 1565 by the *mahāpatras* Nara-, Udhava-, and Purandarasiṃha of Patan (Plates 26, 495); thirty years later Śivasimha, while making "bounteous offerings" to the Brahmans, repaired the stupa again, and replaced the central beam.¹⁶³ After another fifteen years, the top of the stupa was struck by lightning which once more necessitated Śivasimha's intervention.¹⁶⁴ In the reign of his successor, Lakṣmīnarasimha, "Syamarpa Lama came from Bhot [Tibet], and renewed the *garbhakath* [*yaṣṭi*] of Swayambhu . . . and gilt the images of

however, overlooked the date, Nepal Saṃvat 249, recorded at the top of the inscription). According to a communication from G. Vajracharya, an unpublished seventeenth-century *thyāsaphu* refers to an even earlier restoration in the reign of Harṣadeva (ca. A.D. 1085-1099).

¹⁶⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 29 (21-24).

¹⁶¹ That chapels of some sort had already been affixed by at least the seventh century is suggested by the votive *caityas* of that period on which chapels commonly appear.

¹⁶² D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 422; Kramrisch 1964:151, plate 97.

¹⁶³ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 15; Wright 1966:143; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 53.

¹⁶⁴ D. Vajracharya 1962:main part, 15.

¹⁶⁵ Wright 1966:146.

the deities."¹⁶⁵ A quarter-century afterward, Lakṣmīnarasimha's son, Pratāpamalla, had to again repair the stupa.¹⁶⁶ In 1680, a diarist records that a "mad man" scaled the stupa at night and dismantled a part of the *harmikā*,¹⁶⁷ which was replaced only to be struck down by a storm a few years later.¹⁶⁸ In 1751, again a Tibetan lama came to supervise repairs to Svayambhū, the cost to be met by Jayaprakāśamalla, and the great central beam to be supplied by Prithvi Narayan Shah.¹⁶⁹ These repairs consumed thirty-nine kilograms of gold, 3,500 of copper, and for the consecration ceremonies, a large quantity of musk. Another inscribed *paṭa* records repairs or a donation to Svayambhū stupa in 1808,¹⁷⁰ but in 1816,

during a violent storm, its central beam was snapped in two . . . and the whole spire fell to the ground. . . . Some years elapsed before a new spire was built. At length, in 1825-26, great efforts having been made to collect the necessary funds, which were raised by a general subscription . . . assisted by contributions from Lhasa, a new beam was prepared from a tree felled in a forest to the north of Mount Sheopuri, and was brought by great labor to the summit of the Sambhunath hill. The hemisphere was cut into; the central chamber or garbh was opened; the remains of the old beam were taken out; the new one was firmly fixed in its place; the chamber was again permanently closed; the hemisphere rebricked up, and a new spire—the present one—erected. During the last thirty years, no extensive repairs have been required.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁶ Kramrisch 1964:pl. 97. The *paṭa* was painted in Pratāpamalla's reign, but also records the earlier repairs of Yakṣamalla.

¹⁶⁷ In N.S. 800 Phālguna (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 114).

¹⁶⁸ In N.S. 819 Vaiśākha (1699) (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 155).

¹⁶⁹ Lévi 1905:11, 5-6.

¹⁷⁰ In the collection of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco (Avery Brundage Collection), acc. no. B.61.D. 10+.

¹⁷¹ Oldfield 1880:11, 222-223. A golden opportunity was lost to examine the cross section of the stupa, and particularly the enclosed relics, which certainly would have further clarified the history of the monument. A similar

Nonetheless, Lar-fon describes the state of decay he observed in 1908, when the stupa was in no better condition than when Oldfield had sketched it years before. Twenty years later it had been restored; together with subsequent repairs, this brought the stupa to the nearly mint condition in which one finds it today.¹⁶²

The imposing white mound of Svayambhū, aglitter with gilt, eyes beamed to the four corners of the Valley, crowns and dominates Sīngum or Sāhyēngu, Cowtail Hill. Vṛsadeva's subjects must have leveled the summit to facilitate the stupa construction—perhaps in pursuit of merit or perhaps as *viṣṭi* (forced labor). But at that time, and for long after, when it was a forest fort (*vanadūrga*), the summit, except for the immediate stupa area, was wooded. It may well be Sīngum that Wang Hsüan-t'sê describes as an "isolated mountain covered with an extraordinary vegetation; [with] temples . . . disposed there in numerous storeys which one would take for a crown of clouds."¹⁶³ But one by one, as the fame of Svayambhū waxed, the trees have ceded to accessory gods, *caityas*, temples, *vihāras* and, of late, Tibetan *gonpas* (monasteries). Indeed, with the disappearance of the last tree in the early part of the century,¹⁶⁴ man and the gods have totally preempted the summit platform. For Svayambhū may perhaps be self-created, but it is no longer self-existent, an island unto itself as the origin legend would have it. Diverse deities jostle the stupa, crowd the great hilltop platform, everywhere dot the slopes below, and spread over its twin summit to the west.

Curiously, and in surprising contrast to Paśupati, only a few of the gods seem to have come to the hill in Licchavi times, unless we assume that the Muslim sack was so thorough as to destroy earlier manifestations. But this seems unlikely. In any event, with the exception of one or two minor images and some *caityas*, at Svayambhū there are no visible images of assured Licchavi date. Those of the Transitional Period are equally scarce. The great majority of sculptures in bronze

opportunity was lost when Dharmadeva stupa, Chabahil, was opened in 1845 (Oldfield 1880:11, 259).

¹⁶² Landon 1928:1, 198; 11, 213 n. 1; Oldfield 1880:11, plate facing p. 219.

¹⁶³ Jayaswal 1936:242-243.

and stone date from the Malla Period. Here at Svayambhū, as at so many places in the environs of Kathmandu, Pratāpamalla's hand is particularly evident. It was as a prince, in company with his father, that he established the multipart colossal image of Akṣobhya at the foot of the eastern stairway—a sculptural technique emulated even less successfully by Prithvi Bir Bikram Shah in three similar images set further up the slope.¹⁶⁵ As king, Pratāpamalla placed at the head of the stairs the enormous *vajra-dhathu-maṇḍala*, an impressive gilt *vajra* borne on a stone mandala (Plate 223). To Pratāpamalla are also to be assigned the two tall *śikhharas* flanking the *vajra*, named Pratāpapura and Anantapura after himself and a consort, Ananta Priya, and dedicated to esoteric Vajrayāna deities.

Around the periphery of the platform are *dharmaśālās*, secular habitations, the Tibetan *gonpas*, a *bahil*, and five special shrines, or "mansions" (*pura*) (Figure 27). The foundation date of the five shrines is unknown, but they are very likely associated with the concept of the Vajrayāna pentad, and are most likely products of the Transitional Period. They are claimed as the works of the legendary Śāntikarācārya, a figure intimately associated with Svayambhū legend. Three of the shrines are dedicated in the names of Vedic nature gods: wind, earth, and fire (Vāyupura, Vasupura, and Agnipura [Plate 439]),¹⁶⁶ and two to serpents. Of these, one is Nāgapura, the other the mysterious Śāntipura, a cave related to a heroic deed of Pratāpamalla to which I shall return in the final chapter. Near the western side of the stupa, and vying with it in popular appeal, is the temple of Hārītī (Plate 225). Dedicated to the goddess of smallpox—Hārītī to Buddhists, Śītālā to Hindus—the deity attracts a never-ending stream of worshipers from far and wide. For although there are many shrines to this dread goddess, she of Cowtail Hill is by far the most revered.

Still closer to the ancient flame or crystal image thought to be enclosed within the immense white

¹⁶⁴ Landon 1928:1, 200.

¹⁶⁵ G. Vajracharya 1964b:17-18.

¹⁶⁶ The deities bear the names of Vedic gods, but today, at least, are godlings who are worshiped accordingly.

anda of the *caitya* are the Five Tathāgatas, each enshrined in a gilded niche spaced around the stupa together with their respective consorts and guardian animals (Plate 223). Moreover, in a most unusual occurrence, Vairocana, rather than imagined present in the center of the stupa, also enjoys a shrine adjacent to Akṣobhya on the eastern side. But despite Akṣobhya's popularity with the Nepalese, at Svayambhū the greatest devotion is tendered Amitābha, Boundless Light, the Buddha of the Present World who governs the western quarter. Even the beguiling monkeys who freely enjoy Svayambhū's domain wisely frequent the western side of the stupa, where they fare well on the bountiful offerings bestowed on the two favorite gods, Hārītī/Śitalā and Amitābha. Not unlike Brahmā, Svayambhū, the Self-Existent, is too lofty a concept to count much in the ordinary affairs of men. By contrast, Hārītī, Amitābha, and the other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas whose images are scattered nearby are infinitely more approachable, and therefore the natural objects of devotion.

Toiling up the narrow stairway to the white and gold stupa of Svayambhū have come the humble and the famous, priest and penitent, king and subject, and a host of exalted *siddhas* and common monks from other lands. Among the *siddhas*, Vāsubandhu, said to have come to Nepal in the fourth century, may have been one of the first. Of his successors we know little until the eleventh century, when history records that the Indian Mahāsiddha Atiśa passed a year in the Kathmandu Valley, visited Svayambhū, and with royal assistance founded a monastery. We may also be certain that in the same century the Tibetan Drok-mi frequently visited the sacred site during the year he spent studying Sanskrit in Nepal Mandala. Svayambhū must always have been a favorite stop on the itinerary of the monks and yogins, Tibetan and Indian, as they passed to and from the monasteries of Bengal and Bihar and those of the high plateaus to the north.

¹⁰⁷ They apparently missed the "considerable pieces of gold" that Father Giuseppe 1801:314-315 reported that the troops of Prithvi Narayan Shah found around the "tombs" [stupas ?] when digging fortifications on the sacred hill.

¹⁰⁸ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:121-122. A motor road now reaches to within a few hundred feet of the summit,

Not all, however, have come to Svayambhū with devotion. The Khasas in their frequent incursions into the Valley seized Svayambhū's wooded slopes, not from affection but to profit by its strategic location vis-à-vis Patan, Deopatan, and Kathmandu. The Doya (Maithili) must also have done so in the course of their long harassment of the Valley. The army of Shams-ud-dīn swarmed over the sacred hill bent on loot and destruction, leaving the stupa a smoking ruin in their wake.¹⁰⁷ But even from this disaster, in time Svayambhū rose again to assert its premier place in Valley Buddhism.

The people of Nepal, and more particularly, perhaps, the work-worn feet of the Jyapu, have most often climbed the formidable eastern stairway. Swinging baskets balanced at the ends of their *nol*, the Jyapu have come laden with offerings to the many Buddhist gods, bestowing on each a measure of hard-won rice, a fruit, or a flower, and beseeching divine protection in return (Plate 27). Indeed, with the possible exception of Svayambhū's occasional occupation by hostile forces, one would suspect that not a day had passed without the reverential circumambulation of the stupa by pious worshipers. Moreover, for those aged and infirm who cannot undertake the arduous climb, there is a substitute *tirtha*, in keeping with the long-established tradition in Nepal.¹⁰⁸ The large stupa of Sighah-bahal, Kathmandu, doubles for the celebrated stupa; adjacent to it is a second Hārītī temple, a Śāntipura cave and related "mansions," a *vihāra*, *dharmaśālās*, dwelling units, and all the other significant features of Svayambhū conveniently brought to the capital city (Figure 28).

If at all possible, however, it is to the real Svayambhū that the Nepalese go in joy and in sorrow. Here they assemble in joyous crowds to celebrate the arrival of spring, and here they feast to mark the closing of the Buddhist penitential month. At the stupa Buddha's birthday is celebrated year after year,¹⁰⁹ and every twelfth year the *samyak* (alternately, *samek*, assembly), when images, paint-

but even so one must still climb a steep stairway to reach the stupa itself.

¹⁰⁹ In his account of Rana persecution of Tibetan monks and would-be Nepalese followers, Dharmaloka 1950:11 says that the birthday celebration, forbidden by the Ranas, was renewed about 1940.

ings, and other sacred objects are brought from all the *vihāras* to spend a day near the prestigious stupa (Plate 496). For the twelve-year *samyak* celebration, Vajracharyas and Shakyas converge on Svayambhū and its green slopes to participate in the traditional feast offered to them by the patron of the *samyak*. For this *ḥīrti*, the patron not only earns great merit, but the right afterwards to bear "Samyak" as a title. Finally, when the Buddhist's life is done, it is most often to the foot of Singuṃ that the funeral cortege winds. For there one may be assured that the smoke of the funeral pyre will mingle in its ascent to heaven with the incense incessantly tendered to the long-venerated stupa of Svayambhūnātha.



To Valley Buddhists, the event of greatest importance is the celebration of their sacred month, known in the Newari calendar as Gūla or Gūladharma.¹⁷⁰ The month is calculated from the first day of the waxing moon of Śrāvaṇa to the last day of the waning moon of Bhadra, a period normally corresponding to mid-July/mid-August. Buddhists devote the entire month to special ceremonies at home, in the *vihāras*, and at all the sacred sites of Buddhism in the Valley and beyond. Traditionally, each day begins with fasting and prayer, while the *vandyā* and certain other caste groups are expected to pay daily homage to Svayambhū (Plate 497). This is usually done by groups, often *gūthī* associations who, rushing on foot to the accompanying clash of cymbals and the thump of drums, complete their devotions before engaging in their day's work. Meanwhile, Buddhist women and girls fashion enormous numbers of clay votive images, inserting a grain of paddy in each as the soul (*ātman*), and striving to complete a hundred thousand by the end of the month. The Buddhist priests make daily visits to the homes of their

¹⁷⁰ Slusser 1972a:6-9.

¹⁷¹ Some informants claim that this occurs in the late evening of the same day, others the following morning. Of interest in terms of the historical division of Kathmandu into Yambu and Yangala, this right is vested in the priestly families of two *vihāras*, one from Lagan-bahal, which has undisputed rights to the remaining offerings of all the southern half (*ḥvane*) of Kathmandu, the other from Itum-bahal, which enjoys similar rights from Hanu-

client families to officiate at special domestic rites and to collect their special dues. They also sit in the neighborhood *pāṭis* or the *phalaca* of the *vihāras*, reciting from memory or stumbling through the sacred texts and participating with others in the singing of devotional songs (*bhajana*). The month is also the traditional period for penitential fasting in the *vihāras*, a grueling rite especially observed by women.

One of the first important community ceremonies of the month is the celebration of Panch-dan (*pāñcadāna*), the "Five Offerings" given to the *vandyā* by lay Buddhists. Initiated at Patan, the ceremony is held later on in Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Deopatan, and, curiously, at Pulchok, a settlement on the very edge of Patan. Each Buddhist householder ritually prepares his home, setting up in it a temporary altar upon which are exposed the household images (together with Brahmā as a broom and the *nāgas* as a twist of rope) (Plate 499). In front of the altar are placed baskets or mounds of the five offerings: four cereal grains and salt. All day long the *vandyā* of the city file through the pious Buddhist homes collecting their share of the offered alms. Most wear ordinary dress, but the *vajrācāryas* sometimes wear their sacerdotal gowns and miter. Traditionally, a special *vajrācārya* known as *phu-bare* (the last *vandyā*) or *ḥaya-bare* (the last gift *vandyā*), is the last to come. Sounding his symbolic bell to announce the end of Panch-dan, he touches the remaining consecrated food with his *vajra* and takes control over it.¹⁷¹

In Bhaktapur, the Panch-dan ceremony is further enhanced by a procession of images of Dīpaṅkara Buddha, each animated by a stalwart devotee within (Plates 500, 501). It is said that formerly scores of these images were taken out in procession in Bhaktapur, but today fewer than a half-dozen make their spectacular rounds in company with the alms-seeking *vandyā*.¹⁷²

man Dhoka north (*thane*). Some say there is also a third family from Nhu-bahal, which also has rights to a part of the northern sector of the city.

¹⁷² On the occasions I witnessed the procession there were only five, related perhaps to the concept of the Vajrayāna pentad, and very likely engendering the view common in Bhaktapur that they represent the five Pāṇḍava brothers of the *Mahābhārata*. Although I was not aware of it, Gutschow and Kölver 1975:44 n. 1 observed that the

Celebrants often claim that the custom of observing the Five Offerings commemorates an incident when Brahmā divested himself of his fifth head to offer it to Lord Buddha. Patan Buddhists say it is in remembrance of the time when the Buddha himself sought alms in Patan. On that occasion, between the modest offerings of Guitanākī, the old woman of Guita-tol, and the munificent ones of a king, the Buddha chose to accept the former first as the more meritorious. Indeed, in Guita-tol, where the crone lived, people still tender their *pāñcadāna* in her name (Plate 502). Few, to be sure, recognize in the tale the well-known Jātaka now recast in local setting.¹⁷³

The practice of transferring Jātaka and other classic tales to Nepal and peopling them with Nepalis is by no means peculiar to Patan, however. In a later chapter we will see a similar metamorphosis in which Avalokiteśvara's rescue of the shipwrecked Buddha and his companions becomes a tale concerned with Newar traders from Kathmandu. Another is the *Vyāghrī Jātaka*, the story of the Buddha and the starving tigress. In the original Jātaka, the Buddha, incarnate as Prince Mahāsattva of the Pāñcālas, a people of northern India, gave his own body to feed a starving tigress. By so doing he earned such merit that his next incarnation was in *devaloka*, the realm of the gods. In the Nepali version, the locale of the story is shifted to Panauti, east of the Valley, and Prince Mahāsattva becomes the Panauti ruler's son. As told by Nepalis, the prince and his brothers ask and receive permission from the king to go hunting (Plate 503).¹⁷⁴ On the way they encounter the starving tigress, and though Mahāsattva offers her his own body, she refuses to take it. The Panauti prince, twice compassionate, therefore strips and feeds himself to her by his own hand. The grieving family, gathering the dead prince's remains,

Dīpankara procession pursued a counterclockwise *pradaḥ-sinā* of the city. It may be noted that alms can be distributed to the *vandya* under the patronage of individuals at any time of the year. Today such offerings are infrequent and on a reduced scale, but even a century ago, according to the graphic description of Oldfield 1880:11, 303-312, they were offered to thousands of *vandya*.

¹⁷³ The legend is current in Patan and is told by Wright 1966:57-58.

enclose them in a stupa, the origin, say the Nepalis, of Namobuddhā/Namara, one of the most famous Buddhist *īrthas* in Nepal (Map 3). Located in the hilly terrain south of Panauti, the chief shrine, a northern style *chörten*, is believed to contain the prince's relics (Plate 504), while on a nearby peak a smaller stupa marks the site where the sacrifice took place.¹⁷⁵ In connection with the Nepali story, it is of interest to note that the fourth-century pilgrim, Fâ-hien, noted a place near Taxila where a stupa also marked the place where "the Bodhisattva threw down his body to feed a starving tigress."¹⁷⁶

To return to the celebration of Gūla, another event of the sacred month is the display and community worship of sacred relics in the *vihāras*, a remarkable event called "Looking-at-the-Gods-in-the-Vihāras," the *bahī-dyo-boyegu*. Although traditionally observed for ten successive days, commencing with the twelfth day of the waxing moon, today the festival begins according to the whim of each *samgha*—if they do not ignore it altogether—and rarely lasts more than a day or two. On display is a jumble of images in bronze or wood, manuscripts, carved wooden chariots (or parts of them), palanquins, pedestals and thrones, secular and sacerdotal garments, ritual vessels, and paintings on cloth (Plates 502, 505-508). These include not only the well-known *paṭas* of rectangular format, but long, scroll-like banners that are stretched around one or more sides of the *vihāra* courtyard (Plate 508). Among other subjects, such banners recall the *vihāra*'s origin legend or history, illustrate a Jātaka in local dress, or chart the sacred sites of the Kathmandu Valley.

The display of scrolls in the Nepalese *vihāras* continues a tradition known even in Mauryan India, when itinerant showmen (*śaubhika*) carried scrolls known as *paṭacitra*, *yamaṭaṭa*, from place to

¹⁷⁴ The tale is only briefly mentioned in the Buddhist chronicle (Wright 1966:73-74), but *Mahāsattva-jīvanī* (the life of Prince Mahāsattva) is one of the most popular and widely told stories in Nepal Mandala.

¹⁷⁵ The suggestion of Brough 1948:336-337 that the Namobuddhā legend comes to Nepal by way of Khotan seems to be supported by the style of the monument related to the legend.

¹⁷⁶ Legge 1965:32.

place to entertain the public.¹⁷⁷ Such a display is described centuries later by Bāṇa in the *Harṣacarita*: “Entering the bazaar street he saw a *yama-paṭiḥa* surrounded by a number of eager and excited boys and explaining (to them) the fruits of the other world from a painted picture scroll with Yama on a terrible buffalo in it suspended from [the] top [of a] rod held in his left hand, by pointing with a cane held in his other hand.”¹⁷⁸ Viewing the *vihāra* scrolls year after year, the *saṃgha* elders, like the poet’s *yama-paṭiḥa*, know by heart the pictured tales (though few can decipher the captions), and willingly impart the age-old stories to “a number of eager and excited boys” and other auditors.¹⁷⁹

The Patan *vihāras* boast the richest treasure at *bahī-dyo-boyegu*, but a greater number of Kathmandu *vihāras*—fifteen in 1970—still display the sacred relics. Even in Bhaktapur the tradition survives in a few *vihāras* (Plate 507). But each year the participating *vihāras* are fewer in number and, sadly, as time and thievery take their toll, so are the objects displayed. So too are the alms-bearing worshipers who, like the disappearing cult objects, slip one by one from the Buddhist fold.

In mid-month, beginning with *Gūla-pūrṇimā*, the day of the full moon, *Buddhamārgī* engage in three consecutive days of celebration, in part overlapping the Brahmanical thread-tying (*Janai-pūrṇe*) and the nationally celebrated Cow Festival (*Gai-jātrā*). The first day is devoted to the worship of the Patan East Stupa and the second, Cow’s First (*Newari, saparu*), to that of the four “Ashok” stupas. Beginning at the North Stupa at dawn, a procession of men and boys rushes barefoot through the hushed and sometimes rain-washed streets to circumambulate the four tumuli, perhaps

¹⁷⁷ R. Das Gupta 1968a:54.

¹⁷⁸ Sivaramamurti 1970:96.

¹⁷⁹ There are still such itinerant showmen in the Kathmandu Valley. They especially congregate in the Patan Darbar Square for the celebration of Kṛṣṇa’s birthday, when, placing their scroll on an easel, they recount the god’s exploits to the admiring crowd. The horizontal scrolls, as superimposed registers, are compressed as polychrome murals in the Malla palace rooms. Both the painted caves at Ajanta and the *citraśālās* of ancient Indian palaces provide venerable antecedents to the Nepalese practice (Sivaramamurti 1934; 1970:92). The scroll-

in harmony with a tradition their ancestors initiated two millennia ago. Wearing the traditional leg bells (*ghungru*) that rhythmically sound to their hurrying feet, the men go in pairs dragging between them a rolling object—even a Coca-cola can will do—symbolizing the Buddhist Wheel of the Law eternally revolving to destroy sin.

It is on the third day, however, that the chief event, the remarkable Festival of Lights (*mata-ya*), takes place. This is particularly a Patan celebration, and takes its name *mata-ya* from the lighted tapers most participants carry. It is restricted to men, who rush by the hundreds in a breathless procession from dawn to dark, paying their respects and leaving token offerings at all the important Buddhist sites of the city (Plate 428).¹⁸⁰ Most participants wear elaborate or amusing costumes—a clown, a mendicant Śiva in a tiger skin, a group masked and dressed like women, another group gowned as the Five Tathāgatas, and often an entire *gūthī* association identically costumed. A number of men who have suffered a death in the family during the year perform a special penance by undertaking the day-long ceremony fasting and naked except for a loin cloth and a cummerbund. At each of the scores of sacred sites they prostrate themselves in the dust, until by sundown they can barely rise to continue the final sites.

Mata-ya also is a socially significant occasion for the entire community, *Buddhamārgī* and *Śivamārgī*, for under the protective anonymity of the masks it provides the occasion for untempered and uncensored social comment. Local and national affairs and even the conduct of individuals can be publicly criticized with immunity. Especially towards the end of the long day, crowds of spectators are entertained (and sometimes chastened)

like members that crown the ceremonial gateways (*toranas*) at Sāñchī and elsewhere are also thought to represent scrolls, the central portion displayed for the edification of persons passing through the gate, and the surplus rolled at either end.

¹⁸⁰ Some say that it is essentially a *caitya pūjā*, and that only the individual stupas and the *vihāras* that enclose a *caitya* are visited. But since scarcely a *vihāra* does not have an associated *caitya* of some sort, this means the monasteries alone account for some 150 stops, to which must be added all the isolated stupas, a prodigious pilgrimage for a hot August day.

by the pungent commentary delivered incognito.

Like so many things in the Kathmandu Valley, there is little agreement respecting the underlying rationale of *mata-ya*. The Jyapus, at least, are firm in their belief that it is a memorial for the dead, similar to Gai-jātrā, a festival it follows and with which it may be popularly confounded. Many *vandya* claim that the masked participants represent the minions of Mārā, who on this day seek atonement for having tried to prevent the meditating Buddha from attaining Enlightenment.

The Kathmandu equivalent of the Patan *mata-ya* is the Worship of the Vihāras (*bahā-pūjā*), but it may be observed at any time of the year, and is initiated by any Buddhist prepared to meet the considerable expense it entails. In the first of the two stages of the rite, the donor and his family priest "count" the *vihāras*, that is they visit them, make a token offering, and announce the forthcoming event. The second stage takes place a month later, when the donor and priest, accompanied by as many persons as wish to participate, again make the rounds of all the *vihāras*, but this time with a substantial offering (Plate 509). While the *bahā-pūjā* is said once to have been a common sight in Kathmandu, today it is rarely performed.

The sacred Buddhist month concludes on the last day of the waxing moon (*aunsi*), when processions of holiday-clad women wind to the rivers and ceremonially dispose of the thousands of votive images they have made during the month. The following day, the first of the new moon, the prayers and penance of the month are officially closed for another year by picnicking and merry-making on the green and tree-clad slopes of the foremost of Buddhist beacons, Svayambhūnātha.

The crowds of celebrants at *saparu* or *mata-ya* do not imply, of course, that Buddhism in the Kathmandu Valley is alive and well. From a majority in the nineteenth century, professed Buddhism no longer compose even ten percent of the Valley population.¹⁸¹ For in the "only Hindu kingdom in the world," as the Nepalese proclaim, it is as a Hindu that one gets ahead best. This is

¹⁸¹ In the 1971 census, 7.5 percent of respondents claimed Buddhism. That even this many still exist indicates a greater resiliency than Oldfield's gloomy prognostication (1880:11, 72) that "before another century shall have

known even to traditionally Buddhist communities that live outside the Valley; for example, the Thakāli of western Nepal have now almost wholly changed over to Hinduism. In the broadest sense one cannot "become" a Hindu but must be born one, but it is nonetheless possible for Buddhists to pass into the Hindu milieu by effacing the past. In a place as small as the Kathmandu Valley, where it is not easy to lose one's identity, it is difficult to complete the transition in one generation, but it can be effected in two. The process is largely confined to the Jyapu, and is accomplished by two simple expedients: changing one's family name to Shrestha, which signifies one's religious preference as a Hindu, and by replacing the family *vajrā-cārya* with a Brahman.¹⁸²

Some Buddhists are aware of the state of affairs, and to remedy it, like the Nepalese of old setting out for Nālandā or Vikramaśīla, send their sons to study in Sri Lanka. So far, however, the differences not only of the unfamiliar Śrāvakayāna doctrine, but of food and climate, has produced more homesick little boys than finished monks eager to revitalize their atrophied faith. More effective have been the communities of Tibetan monks who, continuing their role as teachers begun in the sixteenth century, and armed with the familiar Mahāyānist doctrine, have established congregations here and there in the Kathmandu Valley. But with the Chinese suffocation of Tibetan Buddhism, even this life-giving stream has virtually ceased to flow.

Between the two doctrines, Śrāvakayāna and Mahāyāna, there were altogether in 1970 almost a dozen monastic congregations in the Kathmandu Valley, two of which were composed of nuns. Some, like Kindol *samgha* on the slopes near Svayambhūnātha, are composed of Tibetan lamas; others, like Gana-bahal or Sighah-bahal, both in Kathmandu, house Newars. In the latter two, the monks are yellow-robed Śrāvakayānas whose learning is once again perhaps approaching that of the learned *bhikṣus* of the Nepali Buddhist past. What this may augur is difficult to guess when one con-

passed away, the religion of Buddha . . . will have died a natural death, from the effects of its own internal corruption and decay."

¹⁸² Rosser 1966:92-104.

siders that the few learned monks and nuns (exactly twenty-seven Newars in 1970) are pitted against not only a sea of Buddhist ignorance, but one which, like the Valley's lake of yore, is steadily draining away to the brighter realm of Hinduism.

In this realm, however, immigrant Buddhists

continue to practice familiar customs and to be surrounded by the immortal host they have always known. With none are they more closely acquainted than with the Mother Goddesses, beings of universal Nepali reverence whom we are about to meet.



CHAPTER 11

MOTHERS AND GRANDMOTHERS: THE ENCOMPASSING HOST

THE ABUNDANT and varied female divinities who dwell in the Kathmandu Valley are omnipresent and all-pervading in Nepalese culture. Most are syncretisms, and are worshiped equally by Śivamārgī and Buddhamārgī. In name, the Valley goddesses frequently appear to be the well-known deities of the Hindu-Buddhist pantheon; in fact, they are commonly understood quite differently in Nepal than in India or Tibet. They are worshiped in different ways or in ways that died out centuries ago in India, and they cannot be wholly explained in terms that hold good for India, Tibet, or any other country. More often than not, the imported Buddhist and Brahmanical goddesses have been grafted onto ancient indigenous “root” divinities, the ubiquitous “mothers” and “grandmothers,” *māīs* and *ajimās*, whose cult practices and legends reinforce aspects of the goddesses that in ancient India had already contributed to the formation of the developed Hindu-Buddhist pantheon.

Because of their syncretic nature, few goddesses worshiped in the Kathmandu Valley today can be safely identified as Buddhist, Brahmanical, or folk, the essential strands in their composition. The same goddess is often worshiped under different names in both Buddhist and Brahmanical guise, and at the same time may be designated as a specific *māī* or *ajimā*. Like the gods, even those goddesses who can be categorized by sect are nonethe-

less objects of universal worship: “Buddhist” and “Brahmanical” goddesses often fraternize in the same festivals, are worshiped in the same rites, and even coalesce in certain manifestations (Plate 544). Finally, the female divinities of the Kathmandu Valley are unified by the common bond of tantrism.

A basic concept that links, and confounds, all the Valley goddesses is that of *śakti*. The word *śakti* literally means “energy.” But in India it acquired a particular religious significance when *śakti* came to denote the cosmic force that energizes the universe and all its manifestations, including the gods themselves. In the course of time the abstract concept became transformed as a personalized Śakti, a supreme female divinity conceived as the embodiment of cosmic energy. She was equated with Durgā, a syncretic deity known by scores of names, including Umā, Pārvatī, and Devī, who emerged as the consort of Śiva. By at least the fourth century A.D., *śaktism* had given rise to a distinct sect of Hinduism known as *Śākta*. Its adherents, also called Śākta, worship Śakti (Durgā) as the supreme deity.¹

In a broader sense, *śaktism* represents the cult of the female divinities in general, and seems to be a reassertion of much older cults of the Mother Goddess that prevailed widely in prehistoric times. In India, Śākta was most developed in the north-

¹ Sircar 1967:14-15; Banerjea 1966:113-114, 118.

east, the area now corresponding to Assam and Bengal, which may have influenced the corresponding development in Nepal; there are marked similarities evident today between practices surrounding the cults of the goddesses in the two regions.

Although *śaktism* was articulated philosophically, and evolved into a significant cult in the Hindu context (that is, Śākta), the ideas that gave rise to it were broadly adaptable to Buddhism. In time, Buddhist theologians embraced them in essence, but they did not employ the term *śakti* or consider energy to be embodied in the female principle. Moreover, the Buddhists soon devised an iconic type to express these cosmic notions: the separate governing forces, male and female, made one through the act of divine copulation (Plates 477, 478, 564). Much later, the Hindus in turn borrowed the Buddhist iconic type, but used it sparingly, and chiefly to represent the union of Śiva and Śakti (Plate 512). In Vaiṣṇava iconography it was not used at all. Viṣṇu's romantic Kṛṣṇa-Rādhā aspect was stressed, and his consort was typically placed beside him or on his lap (Plates 383, 389, 390). Although the vast majority of images depicting ritual copulation are Buddhist, in Nepal it is the Hindu term *śakti* that is indiscriminately applied to all of them. *Śakti* is also the term Nepalis apply to all tantric or tantricized female divinities, regardless of origin.

The Nepalese goddesses, like their masculine counterparts, have dual natures, pacific and terrific, and countless manifestations in each category. With few exceptions—Tārā and Vasudhārā, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī—the goddesses in their passive, beneficent guises have little appeal to the Nepalese. Beyond providing the themes for magnificent sculptures and paintings (Plates 513-515, 526, 529), they play a minimal role in Nepalese culture. In their dynamic and terrible aspects, however—*māīs* and *ajmās*, *ḍākinīs* and *yoginīs*, Mātṛkās and other creatures propitiated with blood and alcohol—the goddesses have come to dominate the socio-religious life of the Kathmandu Valley. The beneficent goddesses, and the gods in all their guises, are worshiped, to be sure. But it is the dynamic and terrible goddesses, and their inevitable com-

panion Bhairava, who are essential to the Nepalese religious experience.

DURGĀ, THE UNIVERSAL MOTHER

The goddess conceived as Śiva's consort is the most influential, all-pervading deity worshiped in Nepal Mandala. Indian literary and archaeological evidence suggests that she represents a synthesis of innumerable local, and even foreign, divinities who in time coalesced as the supreme goddess.² As she evolved, the goddess absorbed distinctive traits of these regionally diverse divinities. Some were fierce goddesses presiding over destruction and death, others benign and motherly benefactors. Another personified virginity, still another embodied lofty philosophical ideas. Each component made a specific contribution to the ritual, myth, and complex personality of the developed goddess Durgā. These diverse origins are reflected in her many conflicting manifestations and in her many names. Like the names of Śiva with whom she came to be paired, they seem endless.

In her pacific aspect, this Great Goddess is usually referred to in the Kathmandu Valley as Pārvatī, Umā, Gaurī, Bhavānī, or simply Devī, a generic term meaning Goddess. In the guise of Pārvatī and Umā, she is typically represented as Śiva's lovely companion and the mother of his children (Plates 348-355, 420). Sometimes she is fused with Śiva's body, or on the linga, with his face, in the Ardhanārīśvara syncretism (Plate 340). On at least one occasion in the Kathmandu Valley she shares a *caturmukha* shrine with the Brahmanical trinity, Brahmā, Śiva, and Viṣṇu (Plate 431). Frequently the Great Goddess is represented in independent images—in Nepal then often known as Gaurī—in which she appears as a statuesque woman or a resplendent maiden, opulently clothed and ornamented (Plates 513-515). But on these occasions, unless she is identified by an inscription or displays special cognizances such as the mirror (*darpaṇa*) or trident (*triśūla*), she cannot be distinguished from other lotus-bearing, boon-bestowing goddesses such as Lakṣmī or Tārā (Plate 516). But quintessentially,

² M. Chandra 1973:1-16; Sircar 1967; Bhattacharji 1970:

158-177.

they themselves are corollary manifestations of Durgā. Thus, whoever they may be, as the Goddess they are also Devī.

In her dynamic and terrific aspects, the Nepalese usually refer to Durgā by the endearing term "Bhagwati" (Bhagavatī: Divine, Illustrious, Adorable) or, less frequently, as Durgā (Unconquerable). Durgā also has many popular secondary manifestations in the Valley, such as the virgin Kumārī, Taleju, and the fearful Kālī/Cāmuṇḍā. She is also widely worshiped in collective aspects known variously as Mātṛkā (Mothers), Navadurgā (Nine Durgās), and the Daśamahāvīdyā (Ten Great Knowledges).

Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardinī

Durgā in one of her fierce and militant aspects is a destroyer of demons (*asuras*), the perennial adversaries of the gods (*devas*) in the cosmic struggle between good and evil. In this role she is accorded universal reverence in the Kathmandu Valley as the slayer of Mahiṣa, a demon who assumed, among other guises, the form of a giant water buffalo (Plates 346, 517-520, 531). Durgā alone among the divinities was capable of defeating the hitherto invincible Mahiṣāsura. Accompanied only by her lion mount, the goddess set forth against him. "Pervading the cosmos with her light, causing the earth to bow at the touch of her feet, grazing the firmament with her crest, shaking the underworld with the playful twang of her bowstring, and filling the sky with her numerous arms,"³ the goddess engaged Mahiṣāsura in terrible combat and destroyed him. In so doing she set the cosmos to right once more, and earned the epithet Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardinī, the Unconquerable Goddess Crushing the Buffalo Demon.

Images of Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardinī, identified simply as Bhagwati by the Nepalese, are widely encountered in the Kathmandu Valley—stone sculptures by the wayside or splendidly enshrined, bronzes, metal repoussé and wood carving on the

temple *toranas*, and paintings in manuscripts, on multi-layered paper, and on walls. Typologically similar to one another, the images depict a resplendent young woman performing the divine act of retribution with studied ease. Aureoled with bejeweled arms, the goddess typically strides to her left (*pratyālīḍha*), the archer's energetic pose, triumphantly placing one foot on the defeated Mahiṣa, the other on her lion mount. In most works the buffalo literally stands on his head, or severed neck, at her side (Plates 346, 517, 518). As a later convention, the *asura* is shown being slain as he issues in human form from the decapitated buffalo (Plates 518, 519).

The Mahiṣāsura-mardinī theme is one of Durgā's earliest and most important myths. In India it was given iconic form at least by the Gupta Period.⁴ It apparently also entered Nepal at an early date, as suggested by an inscribed pedestal in the courtyard of the Bhagavatī temple of Palanchok. Dated s.s. 425 Māgha (A.D. 503), the derelict pedestal proclaims the consecration of an image of "Devī Bhagavatī Vijayēśvarī."⁵ The pedestal must have been relegated to the courtyard when, for some reason, the original enshrined image had to be replaced—according to tradition, by King Jagajjyotīr of Bhaktapur (A.D. 1614-1637).⁶ The name of the earlier image recorded on the pedestal, and the fact that its replacement is Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardinī, leaves little doubt respecting the theme of the sixth-century original.

The Palanchok Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardinī is one of a quartet, in keeping with the Nepalese practice of relating four manifestations of a given deity. Another image is in the village of Nala, and the remaining two are in Kathmandu, one Sobhā (Beautiful) Bhagavatī west of the city, the other at Naksal, an eastern suburb (Map 4:3, 13; Plate 517).

A popular legend (told also about other sets of images) claims the quartet as the work of the same sculptor, despite drastic efforts to prevent him from duplicating the original. First came the

landed householder; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 16 (67-70).

⁶ This attribution was provided by the incumbent priest, a ninth-generation attendant of the image, and seems to be confirmed by the late Malla style of the image itself.

³ Zimmer 1968:1, 98.

⁴ Banerjea 1956:497-498.

⁵ The image was not offered by one of Mānadeva's queens, a universally accepted attribution in Nepal, but in Mānadeva's reign by one Vijayasvāminī, the wife of a

Palanchok Bhagavatī, a work so excellent, it is said, that it caused the artist to be deprived of two fingers as a precaution against his making a counterpart. Undaunted, he created a second image, the Bhagavatī of Nala, for which he lost his right hand, then Sobhā Bhagavatī, for which he lost the left. Again commissioned by one of Mānadeva's queens, the crippled sculptor miraculously produced as the fourth and final work the Bhagavatī of Navasagara (Naksal) (Plate 517). For this feat the "queen regent was much pleased with him and gave him so much wealth as rendered him quite independent."⁷

Notwithstanding the legend, the images are not coeval. The Naksal Bhagavatī is almost certainly a work of the twelfth or thirteenth century, while the Palanchok and Sobhā Bhagavatī images are both products of the period of the Three Kingdoms. The Nala image is undatable, since the image proper has almost completely weathered away and is now worshiped in the form of an impressionistic polychrome sketch on the weathered stele. In size and form, the latter closely compares to the Naksal stele, and thus might be of similar date.

Among the Four Bhagavatīs, the Sobhā Bhagavatī plays the premier role today, and is assiduously courted at her riverside shrine. The Naksal Bhagavatī, probably one of the oldest extant images on the Mahiṣāsura-mardinī theme in the Kathmandu Valley, is also of considerable importance as a cult object. Like certain other sculptures, it is possible that the image was hidden for a time by some calamity, most likely an earthquake, later to be rediscovered and reconsecrated. The chronicles aver, however, that the concealment was intentional because the image was considered so terrifying that "no one would pass that way [and] the people therefore buried it, and covered the place with stones."⁸ In another account, the arrogance of

a particular king so provoked the wrath of the Navasagara Bhagavatī that she "caused an unquenchable fire to appear from a well which was before her temple."⁹ The fire not only consumed the offending king but many of his subjects as well, and desolated the surrounding legendary city of Visalanagara.

Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardinī is immensely popular in the Kathmandu Valley. She is worshiped not only in the legion images that are consecrated in her name, but in many others rightfully belonging to other divinities. "Bhagwati" is the name most commonly invoked to identify any image that is iconographically puzzling to the Nepalese, particularly multiarmed gods or goddesses that remind them of the familiar multiarmed Durgā. Thus the number of images worshiped in Durgā's name far exceeds the number of her bona fide icons, plentiful as they are.

It is to Bhagavatī that Dasain, or Durgā-pūjā, the chief national festival of Nepal, is dedicated. Lasting for ten ritually filled days, the celebration draws near its close on the Great Ninth day, Mahānavamī, when thousands of buffaloes, innocent bearers of Mahiṣa's guise, together with sheep, goats, and lesser creatures are slaughtered in her name. Private sacrifice is made in the home (if only a pumpkin in lieu of a living creature), at special temples, and particularly in the historic military headquarters, the Kot (*ḷvatha*, fort) of Kathmandu. There the royal family, government officials, and others witness a grisly, if colorful—and to the Nepalese joyous—ceremony in which an unbelievable bloodletting takes place in Durgā's name.¹⁰

The sacrifice of the buffalo is understood and ennobled as a reenactment of divine retribution. But the roots of this practice penetrate remote antiquity, and long antedate the developed Mahiṣāsura-mardinī theme. Behind it we perceive a sav-

American technicians of the USAID Mission to Nepal, deepening an artesian well not far from Svayambhūnātha in the Tahachal locality, found that the Nepali warning not to use a blowtorch at the site was quite correct. Flames enveloped the operation and work had to be suspended until they could be quenched.

¹⁰ On the Dasain festival see Anderson 1971:142-155.

⁷ Hasrat 1970:30.

⁸ Wright 1966:108.

⁹ Hasrat 1970:31. The "unquenchable fire" is reminiscent of the flaming pond reported in seventh-century Nepal. The presence of subaqueous gases is a natural phenomenon still apparent in well-drilling operations, when these gases issue by the most convenient route. As recently as 1969

age huntress in search of blood, particularly that of the male buffalo, symbol of Yama and death.¹¹ From ancient times the Great Goddess has also demanded flesh, human and animal, as part of her ritual, both as Mahiṣāsura-mardinī and in her collective Mātṛkā form, discussed below.

Kumārī, Durgā's Virgin Aspect

One of the most intriguing manifestations of Durgā in the Kathmandu Valley is in her virgin (*ḥumārī*) aspect in which, as the personification of maiden virginity, she invests the body of a living virgin girl (Plates 521-523). There are a number of these "Living Goddess" Kumārīs in the towns and villages, popularly known as "Deo-māju" (Goddess-mother), who during their office are worshiped exactly as if they were the divine Durgā herself.¹² The Kumārī institution is of special interest because it typifies survivals that thrive in the Kathmandu Valley although moribund or obsolete elsewhere, and because it underscores the remarkable religious syncretism characterizing the Valley. Durgā, this Brahmanical goddess par excellence, is worshiped in the body of a Buddhist girl whose shrine is in a *vihāra*.

The principal Kumārī, the Rāj-Kumārī (state or royal Kumārī) (Plate 521), is a goddess of considerable importance in Nepal Mandala. Her shrine and dwelling place is Rājālakṣmīkula-*vihāra*, familiarly known as Kumārī-bahal, Kumārī-*cheṃ*, or Kumārī Ghar (house), one of the principal buildings of the Kathmandu Darbar Square (Figure 1:13). Except for the explicit Mahiṣāsura-mardinī and related Durgā iconography everywhere evident in the opulent wood carving, the Kumārī-bahal conforms to the type of a three-story *vihāra*. But in this instance the Kumārī's personal shrine

¹¹ Bhattacharji 1970:166-168.

¹² There are four Kumārīs in Kathmandu, three in Bhaktapur, two in Patan, and at least one each in several villages like Tokha, Bungamati, Kirtipur, and Chabahil. Allen 1975:6-7 identified eleven specific manifestations. There are also transitory bands of Kumārīs, such as the Kumārī-gana and Pāñca-Kumārī, discussed below. I was not able to verify the statement of Nepali 1965:312 that there is a Kumārī in every *vihāra*. As discussed further along, some Kumārīs also incorporate Vajrayāna deities,

on the top floor supplements the expected shrines—the principal one on the ground floor, here devoted to the Five Tathāgatas,¹³ and the *āgama* above it. Lesser Kumārīs, such as those of Kva-bahal (Kathmandu), Haka-bahal (Patan), and Caturvarṇa-mahāvihāra (Bhaktapur), are also associated with specific *vihāras*, but need not be permanent residents of them.¹⁴

There are a number of legends, varying in time, place, and cast of characters, that purport to explain both the institution of the Kumārī in the Kathmandu Valley and the apparent paradox of a Buddhist embodying a Brahmanical divinity. The most familiar account holds that during the reign of Jayaprakāśamalla (A.D. 1735-1768), a virgin girl from a Shākya family claimed to be possessed by Bhagavatī. The king, considering the girl an impostor, banished her, whereupon his queen became seized with convulsions. Taking this as a divine sign of his error, the monarch recalled the girl and decreed that she should be worshiped as the goddess Durgā she professed to be. A variant tale claims that a Shākya virgin girl died as the result of an unseemly sexual assault by the king, who established the cult of the virgin goddess in atonement. Still another story avers that Durgā, in exchange for an annual chariot procession and a special temple devoted to her in her virgin aspect, recompensed the king by prolonging for another twelve years the doomed Malla dynasty. Or again, the institution is credited to Trailokyamalla of Bhaktapur (A.D. 1561-1610) who, having forfeited the right to see Durgā in person, obtained permission to worship her henceforth in the body of a Buddhist girl.¹⁵

The connection of Jayaprakāśamalla with the Kumārī institution is certain, for in A.D. 1757¹⁶ he did indeed construct the Kumārī Ghar for the but even so they are not disassociated from Durgā.

¹³ Allen 1975:12 erroneously identifies the ground floor deity as Śākyamuni Buddha.

¹⁴ According to Allen 1975:37, the Mu-bahal Kumārī, Kathmandu, is an exception, and is expected to live in special quarters in the *vihāra*.

¹⁵ Hasrat 1970:59-60. Allen 1975:21 cites a similar story respecting the Patan Haka-bahal Kumārī.

¹⁶ According to an unpublished *ṭhyāsaphu*, the *vihāra* was completed in n.s. 877 Phālguna.

state Kumārī, and instituted, or perhaps only resuscitated or elaborated, her annual chariot procession. But the rest of the legends respecting the king and the Kumārī must be apocryphal, inasmuch as the Kumārī institution in the Kathmandu Valley long antedates his reign. A diarist recorded the attendance of Kumārī at the Dasain sacrifice held in the Mul-chok of Hanuman Dhoka in A.D. 1638,¹⁷ and she was familiar centuries before that. There are at least two late thirteenth-century manuscripts, dated, respectively, A.D. 1280 and 1285, concerned with choosing, ornamenting, and worshipping Kumārī.¹⁸

We cannot trace the Kumārī institution in the Kathmandu Valley with certainty before the thirteenth century. But the chronicles, illuminated by contemporary practice, suggest that it antedates this time. The Wright chronicle tells us that Guṇakāmadeva, most likely the twelfth-century ruler, instituted the Indra-jātrā by erecting images of Kumārīs.¹⁹ Considering the intimacy of the Indra and Kumārī-jātrā in modern Nepal, the allusion is suggestive. It is made doubly so by a subsequent entry in the same chronicle. Lakṣmikāmadeva (A.D. 1192-1197), "thinking that his grandfather [allegedly Guṇakāmadeva] had acquired so much wealth and conquered the four quarters of the world through the aid of the Kumaris, resolved to do the same." He therefore worshiped Kumārī in the form of a Buddhist girl dwelling in a "bihar near the [Patan] Durbar, known by the name of Lakshmi-barman, . . . erected an image of Kumari and established the Kumari puja."²⁰ The *vihāra* is modern Haka-bahal (Lakṣmī [kāmadeva]-saṃskārīta-ratnakara-mahāvihāra), removed to its present site in the seventeenth century in the course

¹⁷ N.S. 758 Āśvina, from an unpublished *thyāsaphu*.

¹⁸ N.S. 400 Vaiśākha and N.S. 406 Mārga (Petech 1958: 95, colophon 3; 97, colophon 12). Allen 1975:3-4 also noted these early references, but although he had not examined the texts, he inexplicably stated that "it is evident that the King [Anantamalla] himself performed both *pujas*." Moaven 1974:169 errs in considering the Kumārī institution no older than the eighteenth century.

¹⁹ Wright 1966:104. But what is meant by Kumārī "images" is not clear.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

²¹ Allen 1975:3 thought the *vamśāvalī* entry might provide "a clue to the possible origin of the unique practice

of enlarging the palace. That the *vihāra* was traditionally the seat of a Kumārī dating back to its foundation by Lakṣmikāmadeva seems to be substantiated by the fact that the chief (and formerly royal) Patan Kumārī is exclusively associated with this *vihāra*, from whose membership she continues to be chosen.²¹

To my knowledge, the Licchavi records are silent about Kumārī worship. However, the late chronicles assert that Śivadeva I (A.D. 590-604) placed Four Kumārīs at the crossroads of "Naubali" or "Navatol" (Deopatan) when he established the city, and that Vāsudeva, an undocumented successor, placed "Kumārī Gaṇa and Naudurgā" near Jayavāgīśvarī.²² Considering that there is, in fact, a very ancient Mātṛkā shrine attached to Jayavāgīśvarī temple, itself unquestionably a Licchavi foundation (Plates 537, 548, 549), the chronicles may be correct, and reveal a previously unimagined antiquity for the Kumārī institution in Nepal Mandala.

The practice of worshipping Durgā in her virgin aspect is not an indigenous institution of the Kathmandu Valley, but has profound roots in India and many parallels with virgin goddesses elsewhere.²³ The concept of Kanyākumārī, the Virgin Damsel, was familiar to Vedic philosophers; at the beginning of the Christian era Greek mariners reported her to enjoy a flourishing cult at "Cormori," the southern tip of India, whence the name Cape Cormorin.²⁴ In time, as with so many other local goddesses, Kumārī was absorbed by Durgā, and emerged as one of the many manifestations of the Supreme Goddess.

It is not clear whether in ancient India Kumārī was worshiped in the body of a living girl, as in Nepal. But contemporary practice suggests that

of worshipping young girls as living Kumaris." Rather than the origin, which we know is far more remote, the entry seems to point only to an earlier instance of the institution in the Kathmandu Valley than can be unequivocally documented. More particularly, it suggests an early association of the Kumārī with Buddhist castes. It may be noted that the Wright chronicle only identified the girl as *bandyā*, which could be Shakya or Vajracharya. Today the membership of Haka-bahal is exclusively Vajracharya.

²² Hasrat 1970:41-42; Wright 1966:84.

²³ Bhattacharji 1970:164.

²⁴ Banerjea 1966:115-116; Bhattacharji 1970:158.

such was the case. As in so many instances, the Nepalese institution is almost certainly a survival that allows us to deduce a past that is otherwise lost or almost lost in India. And in this instance, even in India, the link with ancient practice is not quite broken. The worship of a living Kumārī is now practiced at Cormorin; in the 1920s, at least, it flourished in the far north in Kangra Valley, in the Panjab;²⁵ and it occurs in Bengal. The Bengali Kumārī is most frequently a Brahman girl who briefly impersonates the goddess Sarasvatī.²⁶ But at the Calcutta Durgā-pūjā, still enthusiastically celebrated—and in ways paralleling Valley practices—a virgin girl is briefly placed on a pedestal as a representative of Durgā, and receives the offerings made in her name.²⁷ It is doubtful if in India the goddess was ever worshiped in the body of a Buddhist girl; this aspect seems to be a local innovation, not unlike the annual investment of Paśupati with a Bodhisattva's crown.

In Nepal, the office of the state Kumārī is always held by a Shakya girl belonging to a family with membership in one of the Kathmandu *vi-hāras* (*bahāls* only, not *bahils*). Other Kumārīs are variously drawn from Vajracharya or Shakya families, and an occasional Kumārī is selected from other castes, such as the Jyapu girls of Kilagal-tol, Kathmandu, Sulihma-tol, Patan, or Tokha village. In any event, when chosen, a Kumārī is normally a little girl of three or four, theoretically without blemish and, optimally, exhibiting thirty-two special signs of her divinity.²⁸ Unless removed from office by death or some other calamity, particularly the loss of a tooth or a wound accompanied by

bleeding, she retains her divine status until the approach of puberty disqualifies her and returns her to the secular milieu. She often does not marry, for there is a widespread notion that husbands of former Kumārīs court premature death.²⁹

Successors to Kumārīs are chosen in various ways, depending on their importance and locale. Usually several qualified candidates—girls of proper age and condition: Shakyas from Kathmandu *bahāls* for the Rāj-Kumārī, Vajracharyas from Haka-bahal for the chief Patan Kumārī, Mikhabahal area Jyapunis for the Patan Sulihma-tol Kumārī, and so on—are interviewed by a selection committee consisting of various officers. For the state Kumārī these include such persons as the Bada Guruju (a Gorkhali Brahman and chief royal priest), the Rāj-guvāju (a *vajrā-cārya*), and various other Buddhist and Hindu officials; for lesser Kumārīs the officials are correspondingly less illustrious. The committee narrows the field to the most promising candidate, whom they designate Kumārī. Lottery is also used to determine the final selection of some Kumārīs.³⁰ Certain candidates, notably the Rāj-Kumārī, the chief Bhaktapur Kumārī, and formerly the Patan royal Kumārī, are put through rather arduous tests to ascertain that they are worthy to host the fearless goddess Durgā, the Unconquerable. Such tests normally take place at Dasain, and consist in exposing the child to the gruesome buffalo heads garnered from the oblations offered in Durgā's name.³¹

There is considerable variation in the installation rites of Kumārīs, ranging from lengthy, com-

on Kumārīs and deposed Kumārīs staggers the imagination.

²⁵ For details consult Allen 1975:8-10, 22-23, 32-33, 37, 40, 42, 47.

²⁶ I have been told by many Nepalis that formerly all of the prospective candidates were herded into a room filled with the heads, and the children's behavior observed from without. Moaven 1974:173-174. 182 reports that only the outgoing and incoming state Kumārī are subjected to such testing, while the chief Bhaktapur Kumārī annually has to undergo a series of similar tests. Allen 1975:10, 32-33, 35 describes the current way of testing the newly chosen state Kumārī and comments on the Bhaktapur tests.

²⁵ Allen 1975:2, 61 n. 2.

²⁶ Bharati 1965:136, 160 n. 95.

²⁷ Monier-Williams 1899:292 s.v.

²⁸ As an anomaly, the Bhaktapur Tibukche-tol Kumārī is a tiny baby, annually replaced. A rough list of the thirty-two prescribed signs is given by Moaven 1974:186-187, and another by Allen 1975:63-64 n. 8.

²⁹ Curiously, the Bhaktapur chief Kumārī is said to be in demand as a marriage partner; so are the Shakya youths, who as Gaṇeśa and Bhairava serve as the state Kumārī's processional attendants. Allen 1975:30 reports that the chief Patan Kumārī also experiences no difficulty in finding a husband, and discusses (p. 12) the marriage prospects of others. The potential for psychological studies

plex *pūjās* to simple ceremonies.³² The state Kumārī, once installed in office, takes up residence in the Kumārī Ghar, which serves both as her home and temple until she leaves office. Except for the Mu-bahal Kumārī, other Kumārīs live at home; they occupy a simple Kumārī-chem on occasion, receive their devotees in a special *vihāra* shrine, or in the instance of the Kva-bahal and Kilagal-tol Kumārīs of Kathmandu and the Jyapu Kumārī of Patan, are enshrined in their clients' *āgama* as occasion demands. The state Kumārī has her own special hereditary attendant family and an exalted priesthood, Hindu and Buddhist. Newar Śivamārgī priests (*ṣarmācārya, ācāju*) are in charge of her installation, conduct her Dasain activities, and offer *nitya pūjā; vajrācāryas* also worship her daily and play the leading role in her chariot festival. Except on special ritual occasions, most lesser Kumārīs are attended by family members, who also double as priests and perform the daily worship. For the most part, worship consists of the same rituals and offerings one presents to any deity of placid nature.³³ Kumārīs, however, may receive meat and even alcohol, but not blood sacrifice.

The life style of Kumārīs varies in accordance with their importance, the number and kind of restrictions increasing as status rises. While the Kilagal-tol Kumārī leads a life not greatly different from other little Jyapu girls in the quarter, the state Kumārī's behavior is hedged with many proscriptions. For example, while the former may play barefoot in the street with her companions, the latter's feet must not be polluted by contact with the ground, and she is thus normally carried by her attendants. In fact, she rarely leaves the *vihāra* confines except for ritual purposes such as those of Dasain or the reception of Changu Nārāyaṇa on his annual visits to Hanuman Dhoka (Plate 521). All Kumārīs are believed to be omniscient, and thus are traditionally unschooled. All are expected to coil their hair in a topknot, exhibit a third eye painted on their forehead, thickly ring their eyes with collyrium, redden their toes, and

wear red clothing and special ornaments. The degree of observance of these regulations is again dependent on the importance of each Kumārī, and whether she is actually under worship.

One of the most important events respecting the Rāj-Kumārī is her annual procession, the Kumārī- or Ratha-jātrā. Coinciding with Indra-jātrā, the Kumārī-jātrā is less protracted, and lasts only three days. On the opening day, the king comes to Hanuman Dhoka to receive Kumārī's blessings and her divine renewal of his mandate to rule. A symbolic rite of some significance, Kumārī's blessing was, according to tradition, appropriated by Prithvi Narayan Shah when he and his troops invested the city during the combined celebration of Indra- and Kumārī-jātrā.³⁴ Each year after this consecration rite, in front of massed worshipers and spectators, the solemn little goddess is installed in her waiting temple-like chariot. Kumārī's attendants, two Shakya youths representing Bhairava and Gaṇeśa, are placed in separate smaller chariots, and all three vehicles, creaking and swaying, are laboriously dragged by the goddess' devotees over the rough roadways.³⁵ Each day the chariots visit a particular quarter of Old Kathmandu, rigorously following a prescribed route along which Kumārī is worshiped by the populace.

Subsidiary Kumārīs do not play such a significant role in Valley affairs, nor enjoy a spectacular chariot procession. But all are worshiped as divine repositories of Durgā, and fulfill many specific religious functions in their respective communities. A few, notably the Vajracharya Kumārīs of Kva- and Mu-bahal, Kathmandu, are somewhat anomalous figures.³⁶ They at once embody Durgā and various Vajrayāna divinities, for the most part as nonspecific as "Vajradevī." As the latter, they are involved in special Buddhist rituals; as the former they discharge various duties respecting Dasain or other essentially Hindu rites. Their dual nature, Hindu and Buddhist, is made evident by the Mu-bahal Kumārī. She may be conceptualized by Buddhists as "Vajradevī" but, traditionally, if ill-

³² See Allen 1975:10-11, 22-23, 32-33, 37, 40.

³³ See Allen 1975:11-15, 23-25, 32-33, 36, 40.

³⁴ Wright 1966:157; Lévi 1905:11, 54.

³⁵ These attendants are alleged to have been added to the processional by Jayaprakāśamalla. It is possible that

the Ratha-jātrā had already existed, and the king's embroidery of it by this and other additions engendered the belief that he created it. On the *jātrā* see Anderson 1971:134-135.

³⁶ Allen 1975:36-40.

ness or death interferes with the function of the Rāj-Kumārī—for in the Kathmandu Valley smallpox has not respected Kumārīs³⁷—the Kumārī of Mu-bahal serves as her accepted substitute. Like the Kva-bahal and Kilagal-tol Kumārīs, whose chief concern is with the *āgama* deities and *ḥula-devatās* of their Buddhist clients,³⁸ even the state Kumārī plays a definite role in relation to the *āgama* deity of the *vihāra* in which she dwells.

In addition to the various permanent Kumārīs installed in the towns and villages, there are many temporary Kumārīs. Such are the Kumārī-gaṇa, eight or more little girls (and occasionally a little boy or two) who serve as the followers or attendants (*gaṇa*) of the permanent Kumārīs. Normally, the *gaṇa* are only assembled for a few hours during Dasain, when they play a particular ritual function in the celebration.³⁹ One of the most important of these troops is the Bhaktapur Kumārī-gaṇa, eight little girls recruited from Thimi village, who for a period at Dasain come to Bhaktapur to serve as host to Durgā's collective manifestation as the Mātrkā.⁴⁰ Another assembly is the Pāñca-Kumārī, five little girls whose chief function seems to be that of serving as an occasional welcoming committee to local and foreign dignitaries. They are the embodiment of a fivefold manifestation of Durgā known by the same name.⁴¹

The explanation of why these Kathmandu Valley Kumārīs are embodied in Buddhist children seems to lie in the abrogation of caste differences recommended by *vāmācarī* ("left-handed," anti-nominian) tantrism. Commingling of diverse castes, impossible in secular affairs, ensured dividends from such ritual. According to Hindu tantra every religious performance should be prefaced with the worship of Gaṇeśa and Kumārī.⁴² But to be effec-

³⁷ Hasrat 1970:83. The Kumārī from Haka-bahal, who served as the chief Patan Kumārī when I lived in Kathmandu, had recovered from smallpox, but her face recorded the past affliction. Despite the proscription against blemishes, these scars apparently did not invalidate her position as the Kumārī. Neither, apparently, did the onset of puberty, since the same girl was in her late teens when Moaven 1974 and Allen 1975 studied the institution.

³⁸ These are Pradhans, a Newar caste group that is normally Śivamārgī. The Pradhans of Tham-bahil, who claim to have originated in Mithilā, told me that they had adopted Buddhism "three or four hundred years ago."

tive, the caste relationships should be topsy-turvy, Brahmans worshipping a low-caste Kumārī, and low-caste persons worshipping a Brahman Kumārī. The Patan Sulihma-tol Deo-Brahmans, Newar Śivamārgīs, appear to have knowingly conformed to this injunction in choosing a Jyapuni as their Kumārī. Moreover, to a Hindu, a Buddhist Jyapu would be even more debased, and thus be a still more effective instrument.

That this is the rationale behind choosing Buddhists rather than Hindus as Kumārīs seems apparent in the Patan legend respecting Durgā's incarnation as a living child. The goddess is made to state explicitly that she would "enter into the body of a young girl whose parents were of degraded and low profession."⁴³ No matter that the parents were apparently high-status Buddhists, Vajracharyas of Haka-bahal, next to the palace; they were nonetheless Buddhists, and to an orthodox Hindu therefore degraded. Further, these particular Vajracharyas lived by scavenging gold from worn-out images and other gilt objects—glorified "junk men," as it were, a low-status profession often still practiced by the members of Haka-bahal.

Why, in conformance with the practice of the Sulihma-tol Deo-Brahmans and the Kilagal-tol Pradhans, Jyapus at the bottom of the Buddhist scale were not more often chosen instead of Vajracharyas and Shakyas at the top, may also be made clear by Allen's research. Hindus apparently found it difficult enough to bow down before even the high-status Buddhists, let alone the low. It is said, for example, that one of the Bhaktapur kings rebelled at worshipping Kumārī in the form of a Shakya girl, and substituted a Deo-Brahman girl in her place.⁴⁴ But the latter, by crying at the sight of the buffalo heads displayed at her installation

Apparently this is also true of the Pradhans of the Itumbahal/Kilagal-tol area. See Allen 1975:38-42 for more on these Kathmandu Pradhans.

³⁹ Allen 1975:20, 28, 31-32, 44 describes a number of these transitory groups.

⁴⁰ Auer and Gutschow 1974:19, lower fig.

⁴¹ The confusion between Kumārī and Kaumārī, together with the latter's special manifestations, Pāñca-kaumārī and Bālakaumārī, is discussed below.

⁴² Allen 1975:43.

⁴³ Allen 1975:21, 63 n. 6.

⁴⁴ Allen 1975:33.

ceremony, revealed her unsuitability to be Durgā's vehicle. The rebellious king, remanding his order, willy-nilly continued to respect the tradition of worshipping Kumārī in the form of a Buddhist girl.

Taleju, the Royal Tutelary

Another manifestation of Durgā in the Kathmandu Valley is Taleju, known by many alternate names, such as Tulja, Turja, Tava, Tamva, Talamoṇḍe, Taleśvarī, and Māneśvarī (Plate 524). A deity of limited influence today, Taleju was long of widespread significance in Nepal Mandala. A somewhat mysterious figure of clouded and complex origins, Taleju is conceived as a form of Durgā, particularly in her Mahiśāsura-mardinī aspect. This identification is certified by the alternate names with which she is addressed in Malla Period inscriptions such as Kālikā, Caṇḍikā, Parameśvarī, and Bhavānī; by her iconography; and by ritual practices associated with her. These inscriptions also make clear that Māneśvarī is an alternate name for Taleju, and that both signify Durgā.⁴⁵ As a tantric manifestation, Taleju is worshiped esoterically in aniconic form as a mystic diagram (*yantra*, *maṇḍala*) but almost all of the accessory iconography related to her and her temples is that of Durgā, usually as Mahiśāsura-mardinī. Moreover, even today Durgā's principal sacrifice is rendered to Taleju at Dasain. This takes place in front of Taleju's accessory temples in the Mul-choks of the three palaces (and at the old Shah palace at Gorkha), whither she is brought from her companion main temples to receive it.

In Kathmandu Valley practice and mythology, Taleju is also equated with Kumārī. Since both are manifestations of Durgā, this fusion is not altogether surprising. But it seems paradoxical that Kumārī, a placid child-goddess who eschews blood sacrifice, should also be conceptualized as the bloodthirsty, demon-destroying Taleju. That this is so is nonetheless apparent in the legends that purport to explain the institution of worshipping Durgā in the form of a virgin girl. In all of these

accounts, for one infraction or another, a king forfeits his traditional right to communicate with Taleju in visible form. Trailokyamalla of Bhaktapur (A.D. 1561-1613) was such a king, it is said. In return for establishing Taleju's symbol clandestinely and allowing no female to see it, the goddess promised to visit the ruler in person. The king therefore secretly installed a diamond-studded *yantra* in her honor. But one day his daughter intruded on his devotions and accidentally saw it. Revoking her boon, Taleju announced, however, that she would incarnate herself as a high-caste girl; "accordingly the Rajah caused a Bandyā girl to be worshipped by the name of Kumārī, or virgin."⁴⁶ The same legend is told in Kathmandu, where the king becomes Ratnamalla and the female intruder his sister Gaṅgā. Patan also has its own special version.

The current essential identity of Kumārī and Taleju in the Kathmandu Valley is especially apparent in their common involvement in the celebration of Dasain. Although it may be primarily Taleju's affair when she receives her annual oblation of blood, Kumārī also plays a leading role. Indeed, many of Kumārī's most important activities focus on Dasain. Most Kumārīs are selected at this time, the fitness of the chief Kumārīs as Durgā's vehicle is tested by exposure to Taleju's bloody oblations, and installation of the chief Kumārīs takes place in the Mul-choks of the three palaces, the traditional seat of Taleju's temples, into the very sanctums of which the Kumārīs are sometimes introduced. These chief Kumārīs also share Taleju's own priests, the *ḥarmācārya*, who preside over the Kumārīs' selection, installation, and many subsequent rituals of the cult.⁴⁷

The intimacy between these two seemingly dissimilar deities, Taleju and Kumārī, is also evident in the custom of consecrating a white stallion to each of the two Talejus of Bhaktapur and Kathmandu. But opinion is divided as to whether the stallions belong to Taleju or Kumārī. The dichotomy is apparent in the celebration of the national Horse Festival (Ghoḍa-jātrā), which in Kathman-

occasioned by some irregularity on the part of the traditional *ḥarmācārya* priests that caused them to lose office (Allen 1975:64 n. 10).

⁴⁵ B. Paudel 1965b:45, 48 notes.

⁴⁶ Hasrat 1970:59-60.

⁴⁷ Allen 1975:10, 28, 34-35. That Taleju's priests in Patan are Deo-Brahmans is apparently a recent innovation

du closes the celebration of Piśāca-caturdaśī. Formerly, a principal feature of the event was the king's visit to the shrine of Bhadrakālī, a form of Durgā, in which he was accompanied by Kumārī on horseback.⁴⁸ The visit, like so many other religious aspects of the now secularized Ghoḍa-jātrā, has been dropped, and today the stallion, like Kumārī, is merely brought along to the festival as a nonparticipating observer. The Bhaktapur and Kathmandu stallions also play a minor role at Dasain, a time sacred to both goddesses. Kathmandu legend asserts that the custom originated with Pratāpamalla, when he gave a stallion to Taleju to facilitate her journeys to and from the palace to play at dice with him.

The nature and antiquity of Taleju as manifested in the Kathmandu Valley is not easy to define. Related to the Indian goddess Taleju or Turja,⁴⁹ the Nepali Taleju appears to be a local amalgam that, like Durgā herself, is derived from various sources. Suffixes with *-ju*, *-monḍe*, *-monḍebhāra*, *-ēsvārī* and other variables encountered in Malla records, the root *tala* may derive from the tantric designation for genitalia. As such, it would define the predominant aspect of Taleju's evolved personality, similar to Guhyēsvārī, discussed below. The word also corresponds to one of the names of Śiva, Tala or Tāla, with whom in his symbolic linga form the goddess has certain associations. These are apparent in the intimate relationship Taleju once had with the Śivarātri celebration at Paśupati,⁵⁰ and continue in her association with the Māneśvara linga. Less likely, the root word *tala* of her name might be related to the same term, which meant "field" or "hamlet" in ancient India and Nepal, thus a *grāmadevatā* or village tutelary.

But the most intriguing aspect of the Nepali Taleju, to my knowledge hitherto unperceived, is her total absorption of the ancient Māneśvarī, a goddess who appears to have played a role in relation to Licchavi royalty very like Taleju's in rela-

tion to the Malla kings. Māneśvarī seems to have been intimately connected with Mānadeva I, the illustrious Licchavi king. In name she shares with him the vocable *māna*, as did also Mānagrha, the palace he probably built, and the Māneśvara linga he must have established by its door. The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* specifically credits Mānadeva with establishing her cult,⁵¹ though the name Māneśvarī does not appear in his or other Licchavi inscriptions. But it seems certain that she was the king's chosen personal goddess, his *iṣṭadevatā*, with whom successor Licchavis maintained a similar rapport. It seems most likely that Māneśvarī is the unspecified Devī who heads the list of Mānagrha deities, the objects of Amśuvarman's largesse in appeasing the Licchavis he had dispossessed of their throne. That Māneśvarī was the personal deity of the then Licchavi kings, their self-elected *iṣṭadevatā*, rather than their lineage deity, the *kuḷadevatā*, is made clear by the same inscription, which specifies a separate allotment to the palace *kuḷadevatā*. The worship of Māneśvarī, presumably a form of Durgā, must always have been closely linked to that of Māneśvara, and whatever the vicissitudes of kings and palaces during the decline of both, the deities' cult endured at the Māna-māneśvarī temple in Hadigaon. In this connection, it hardly seems fortuitous that in modern Nepal this Māneśvarī is the *iṣṭadevatā* of certain Newar Shresthas known as the *lāylava*. The term apparently derives from *lāyḱū*, the Newari word for palace, and signifies royal descent.⁵² Except for the *ḱarmācārya* who presides over her worship, no one but the *lāylava* has the right to see the goddess.

One must at least speculate as to whether the white horse associated with Taleju/Kumārī, an aspect of her cult that otherwise remains unexplained, also has the same ancient source. We know that a sanctified horse was required in ancient Indian coronation ritual, as it was in ancient Nepal, and is in the coronation of the kings of Nepal today.⁵³ Since the white stallions, one each

⁴⁸ Anderson 1971:266; Allen 1975:17.

⁴⁹ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 593; Sircar 1948:14; Allen 1975:48-49, 63 n. 5.

⁵⁰ G. Vajracharya 1967:24.

⁵¹ Fols. 20b-21a.

⁵² My informant specifically used the term *iṣṭadevatā*

to define Māneśvarī's relationship to the *lāylava*. But the terms *iṣṭa-* and *kuḷadevatā* are employed loosely in modern Nepal, so her exact relationship with this group is still to be determined.

⁵³ D. Vajracharya 1973:305.

in the Bhaktapur palace and Hanuman Dhoka, pertain to the cult of Taleju/Kumārī, one suspects that this has long been so, and that they are the living reminders of the rapport that once existed between the “coronation horse” and the Devī of Mānagrha, for each of which Aṃśuvarman provided “३ पु, १ पा.”

Be that as it may, the first unequivocal documentation of Māneśvarī is provided by a manuscript colophon dated N.S. 344 Kārtika (A.D. 1224).⁵⁴ But the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* preserves an interesting piece of gossip about King Bhāskaradeva (ca. A.D. 1045-1048), a king the chroniclers remember for his short reign and the infamy of having “sold his father’s crown and devastated the golden image of Māneśvarī.”⁵⁵ The VK records the same shocking crime, but names the goddess “Manahara.”⁵⁶ This is apparently a variant form of the goddess’ name and, again varied, is applied to the Valley’s third largest river, the Manohara. The Bhāskaradeva episode, if true, would provide the earliest record of Māneśvarī by name.

That Taleju’s cult in the Kathmandu Valley antedated Harasiṃha, the Tirhutia king widely held to have introduced it about A.D. 1324, is documented history. As we know from a previous chapter, Harasiṃha died a broken refugee in the pestilential Tarai, and had nothing to do directly with bringing the goddess from Mithilā. But Taleju appears to have been held in high regard in that country, and it is not improbable that she was the tutelary of Nānyadeva’s dynasty. She was almost certainly well-known to Harasiṃha’s queen, the omnipotent Bhaktapur refugee, Devaladevī. It is abundantly evident that Taleju was favored by Sthitirājamalla, and with his subsequent irruption into the affairs of Nepal Mandala, the goddess was apparently raised to an eminence she had previously not enjoyed in Nepal. As we know, on Sthitimalla’s visit to Patan, the fractious nobles made haste to please the new Valley strong man

by restoring a run-down temple of Taleju. Nepali tradition points to Mithilā, and ultimately probably the Karṇāta country, as Taleju’s source. Tulajapur, an old center of Taleju worship in India, lies on the Karṇāta border in Maharashtra state, west of Poona. It is to “Nayardeśa” in the Karṇāta to which the Brahmanical chronicle explicitly traces her. Among the troops of Nānyadeva, the Karṇāta conqueror of Mithilā, so declares the chronicle, “was a caste called Dwināju [Dwimāju] Newars who had kuladevatās or family gods called Dwināju with them. [With their aid] Nānyadeva conquered the country and took possession of Bhatgaon.”⁵⁷ The gods called Dwimāju sound suspiciously like what appears to be a Nepali colloquial name for Taleju, that is, Do-, Du-, or Dui-māju, the Mother Goddess of the Doya (Maithilī).⁵⁸ By involving Taleju in the *Rāmāyana*, the Buddhist chronicle also claims Maithilī origin for her by way of south India. Ravished from “Amarpur” by Ravana, Taleju was at length rescued by Rāma and installed in his capital at Ayodhyā—“secretly [so] no mention is made of it in the Ramayana”—whence she was brought to Simraongarh, Nānyadeva’s capital (Map 1).⁵⁹ That many of the Newars associated with Taleju’s cult claim Maithilī descent is also suggestive of the deity’s ties with Mithilā.⁶⁰

With the burgeoning of Taleju’s cult in the Valley from the mid-fourteenth century onward, what had until then apparently been two relatively distinct manifestations, Māneśvarī and Taleju, became one—conceptually, in the interchange of names, and in cult. Indeed, if Māneśvarī was the traditional tutelary of the kings of Nepal, her absorption into the new tutelary, Taleju, could hardly have been otherwise. From this time on there is no Taleju or Māneśvarī, only an inseparable syncretism, Taleju/Māneśvarī, called by either name, as one chose. This syncretic divinity, in essence Durgā, was the intimate associate of Malla roy-

⁵⁴ The colophon of this manuscript published by Petech 1958:86, no. 7, omits the first line, in which Māneśvarī is clearly named: Śreyostu||svasti bhramarakṛidāketubhat-tāraka-pādānuhīrṇityārādhamānā bhagavati Śrīmāneśvarī-pādapaṅkaja||Rājādhirāja paramēśvara paramabhaṭṭāraka raghuvamśa śrīmadabhayamalladevasya vijayarājye||.

⁵⁵ Fol. 23b.

⁵⁶ VK (3).

⁵⁷ Hasrat 1970:50, 53. On page 50 the spelling is Dwināju, but on page 53, Dwimāju, which seems correct.

⁵⁸ G. Vajracharya 1976:152-155 believes that Duimāju should be identified as Lakṣmī.

⁵⁹ Wright 1966:118-121.

⁶⁰ Allen 1975:38-39.

alty. In the combined manifestation, Taleju/Māneśvarī's most ancient and prestigious royal temple is in the Bhaktapur palace, Tripura. Even in the period of the Three Kingdoms, when each capital had its own royal Taleju temple, Śrīnivāsa of Patan, as a mark of special favor, was allowed to visit the eminent Bhaktapur Taleju to receive her personal blessing.⁶¹

Today, except for a brief annual resuscitation at Dasain, the Taleju/Māneśvarī temples are closed, and her cult is virtually extinct. But for more than a millennium, first as Māneśvarī, then as Taleju, she vied even with Paśupati in popularity among the rulers of Nepal Mandala. In the Malla Period, Taleju/Māneśvarī filled essentially the same role as the most usual personal deity for the royal dynasties that Māneśvarī seems to have filled for the Licchavis. She was, as well, the ordained lineage deity of the Malla kings.

In each of the Three Kingdoms, in addition to her principal and Mul-chok temples, Taleju enjoyed a third royal temple. It was consecrated to Degutale, that is, the *degu* (*ḥuladevatā*, lineage deity) Taleju. Although the names Taleju and Degutale are sometimes cited in inscriptions as if they were distinct deities,⁶² the pillar inscriptions in front of, respectively, the Taleju and Degutale temples of Kathmandu make clear their correspondence. In one the goddess is referred to as Taleju, and in the other as Parameśvarī-degutale-māju, but both inscriptions also name her Kālikā and Bhavānī, alternate names of Durgā. Finally, the Degutale pillar inscription alludes to her role as the slayer of demons, and elsewhere Taleju is specifically named as *ḥuladevī*, the Malla lineage deity.⁶³

It was apparently the right of each successor Malla king to receive from his predecessor the esoteric mantra for the control of Taleju. Accord-

⁶¹ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 298.

⁶² See, for example, the inscription published by Tewari et al. 1964:61-62.

⁶³ *Samskṛta-sandeha* vol. 2, nos. 4-6; D. Regmi 1966: part 4, inscns. 64, 71b (129-131, 152).

⁶⁴ D. Regmi 1966: part 2, 64-65. Lakṣmīnaraśiṃha apparently died around A.D. 1657, but the exact date has not been verified. His last inscription is dated N.S. 761 *Aśāḍha* (1641), the year of his confinement. An inscription of Pratāpamalla, dated N.S. 778 *Māgha* (A.D. 1658) describes

ing to the chronicles, Pratāpamalla was deprived of this right through court intrigue, which played off the deposed, insane, and incarcerated Lakṣmīnaraśiṃha against his son. As the former's death approached, the dying father is supposed to have withheld the mantra from his son, who in any event was too distrustful of his father to go and receive it.⁶⁴ Indeed, some say that as there was no one to receive the mantra, Taleju was about to abandon Nepal, but the clever intervention of an attending tantrist forced her to stay.⁶⁵ Others attest that Siddhinarasiṃha of Patan observed the lost mantra ascending into the sky as a blaze of fire. He therefore had a search conducted for someone who knew the mystery of the mantra of Taleju.

Accordingly a Brahman named Viśvanāth Upādhāya, an inhabitant of Boulimatole in Patan was found, who was made Guru to Siddhinarasiṃha to instruct him in the *mantra* whilst a temple was built for the goddess. When Siddhinarasiṃha was performing the *prāṇapraṭiṣṭhā* or vivification of the image of Tulja [which had been secretly brought from Kathmandu by his mother] . . . a pure blaze of fire was discerned to enter the temple.⁶⁶

Not only did most Malla kings proclaim themselves to be favored by the feet of Paśupati, but from the time of Sthitimalla most of them (and the Rāmavarddhanas) also proclaimed themselves to be favored by Māneśvarī.⁶⁷ Among other deities, Māneśvarī was most frequently invoked as witness to pacts arranged among the Malla kings.

Although the principal Taleju temples are attached to the palaces of the former Malla kingdoms, there were others as well. One at Nawakot is still functional, and Taleju temples are to be found in Panauti, Kirtipur, and other villages. The

him as deceased, thus probably confirming the Wright chronicle's date, N.S. 777 *Bhādra* (D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 60; Wright 1966:148).

⁶⁵ The Wright chronicle (1966:144) asserts that the mantra was lost.

⁶⁶ Hasrat 1970:66-67.

⁶⁷ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 368-369. The notable exceptions are the late Patan kings, who after Yoganarendra were not direct Malla descendants.

residents of a small court in Brahma-tol, Kathmandu, the Lāykū-nani (Royal Palace Court) (Map 7: 0-6/7), claim that the "original" Taleju was formerly installed there. According to them, it is still required that the first Dasain sacrifice be made in this court. Similarly, residents of Tachapal-tol, Bhaktapur, maintain a shrine and an *āgama* for the worship of Wanelāykū Taleju. This epithet commemorates the time when Taleju dwelt in the eastern neighborhood before being "taken away to the darbar" (*wane-lāykū*).

It is more than probable that the small temple known as Tāna-deota or Tāna-dyo-ajimā, next to the Kathmandu Taleju temple, is also a venerable Taleju temple (Figure 1:53). It seems already to have been old when Ratnamalla built his Taleju temple next to it in A.D. 1501.⁶⁸ Traditionally, Tāna-deota was installed by King Śaṅkaradeva II (ca. A.D. 1069-1083) as his *kuḷadevatā*, and all were forbidden to erect a higher temple.⁶⁹ The Newars who worship Tāna-deota consider her to be the elder sister of the nearby Taleju, and offer her year round the same blood sacrifices that the younger sister enjoys only at Dasain. Tānadeota is the *kuḷadevatā* of Newar Shresthas known as *thaḷulavata*, like the *lāylava*, a group loosely related to Malla royalty. The rights of entry into the temple are theirs alone. Given these clues, one must wonder whether this "elder sister" may not be, in fact, the earlier Māneśvarī.

In the Malla Period, it may be noted, Taleju was long worshiped in close association with a deity known as Yaṅṅāmoṅḍe and later Yantāju. Their temples stood side by side, and when gifts were offered to one they were offered in equal measure to the other. On more than one occasion the *Gopā-larāja-vamśāvalī* records simultaneous gifts of flags to Talamoṅḍe and Yaṅṅāmoṅḍe, and Śrīnivāsa constructed a gilt shrine to Yantāju, his *iṣṭadevatā*, in the middle of the Mul-chok near the temple of Taleju (Plate 128).⁷⁰ The identity of Yantāju has

long been a mystery, but it now seems probable that she is in fact Maheśvarī, a form of Durgā. By the late Malla Period, certain of the collective forms of Durgā, known as the Mātṛkā, superceded the Vedic protectors of the directions. Alternately, these successors were known by the Newari names of the eight directions over which they presided, Maheśvarī being conceived as the protector of the north (*yantā*) (Plate 534).⁷¹

*Durgā the Beneficent:
Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī*

Two of the most familiar and popular goddesses of Nepal Mandala are Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, benevolent divinities worshiped in their own right as independent goddesses quite distinct from the illustrious Bhagavatī. Like her, they have remote origins, are many-stranded, and have convoluted histories. But quintessentially both goddesses are manifestations of the Great Goddess, and in one way or another are ultimately identified with her. While recognizing their independent cultural role, it will not be out of place to treat Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in relation to Durgā.

Lakṣmī, or Śrī-Lakṣmī as she is also known, is the goddess of plenty, the patroness of fertility, and the resplendent benefactress who bestows upon her votaries numerous offspring, health, longevity, success, and prosperity. She is in essence an Indian Ceres, the Latin corn goddess whose name derives from the same root as Śrī, one of Lakṣmī's names. Ultimately, Lakṣmī is the evolved form of the chthonic fertility aspect of the Universal Mother, Durgā.⁷²

Lakṣmī is conceived as a beautiful young woman who, like the beneficent Pārvatī and Tārā, characteristically holds a lotus in one hand and extends the other in the boon-bestowing gesture (*varada mudrā*) (Plates 336, 525). Unless identified by an inscription, by a more specific cognizance, or by

⁶⁸ Wright 1966:137.

⁶⁹ Lévi 1905:11, 196.

⁷⁰ Fols. 47a, 51a; *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1962m.

⁷¹ At least that is the direction over which she presides in a *yoni-caḅra* depicted in a manuscript dated N.S. 861 (A.D. 1741), and north is the direction in which her various Kathmandu shrines may now be found (Gutschow and

Bajracharya 1977:fig. 1). In Bhaktapur her principal shrine today lies in the southeast (Map 9). I am indebted to G. Vajracharya for deciphering the names on the *yoni-caḅra*.

⁷² Bhattacharji 1970:159-163, 172; Zimmer 1946:90-96; M. Chandra 1973:1-16.

context, Lakṣmī therefore cannot be distinguished iconographically from a number of other goddesses in their benevolent aspects (Plates 516, 526). Like Vasudhārā, the Buddhist goddess of abundance, Lakṣmī may carry a sheaf of grain and the vase of plenty (Plates 336, 505). The lotus, symbol of beauty and fertility, is especially associated with Lakṣmī. Two of her alternate names, Kamalā and Padmā, mean "lotus," and she is known by diverse epithets that emphasize this relationship.⁷³ Unaccountably, this characteristic symbol is omitted in the Patan painting (Plate 525). In Nepal, Lakṣmī's *vāhana* is the tortoise, an element that causes her to be confused with the tortoise-borne Yamunā, personification of the River Jumna (Plate 129). Thus the images of Yamunā and her companion, the *maṅgala*-borne Gaṅgā (River Ganges), placed in conformance with Indian tradition beside Nepalese temple doors, are now often worshiped as Śrī and Lakṣmī. So is the Paśupati-nātha Pārvatī "Lakṣmī" (Plate 513), because chance has placed the image upon an outsized tortoise, once probably a pillar support.⁷⁴

In Lakṣmī's developed mythology, she is perceived as Durgā's daughter. She was also one of the marvels that the Churning of the Ocean brought forth, a prize that fell to Viṣṇu. As Viṣṇu's consort, Lakṣmī shares his cult and is a familiar inclusion in numerous Vaiṣṇava icons (Plates 359, 374, 375, 383, 389, 390, 409). Lakṣmī also has a tantric manifestation in which her aspect as Viṣṇu's *śakti* is emphasized. In this way she is metamorphosed to Vaiṣṇavī, an emanation of Durgā and one of her collective manifestations as the Mātṛkās.

In contemporary Nepali practice, the principal appeal of Lakṣmī is as a beloved domestic divinity who presides over the family's fortunes. As such, one of the most important national festivals, Lakṣmī-pūjā or Tihār, is celebrated in her honor.⁷⁵ But

⁷³ Zimmer 1946:91.

⁷⁴ Pal 1974:fig. 216 illustrates the complete image and tortoise.

⁷⁵ On her festival, see Anderson 1971:164-174.

⁷⁶ Like a group of stylistically related early goddesses (Slusser 1972), Gaja-Lakṣmī also wears the heavy "doughnut" anklets that may be felt under the water. Despite attempts to clear the fountain drain, I was only able to lower the level, not drain the water completely.

Lakṣmī has no independent temples consecrated to her, and insofar as they can be identified, no important sculptures are worshiped in her name. Paradoxically, the one outstanding stone sculpture in the Kathmandu Valley that is unmistakably Lakṣmī is worshiped as Śītalā, the goddess of smallpox. Partly submerged in a clogged Patan fountain, the sculpture depicts the well-known illustration of Lakṣmī by elephants, a theme familiar in early Buddhist art in India and known as Gaja-Lakṣmī (Plates 527, 528). The somewhat matronly goddess holds a full-blown pink lotus and raises one hand in assurance (*abhaya mudrā*). At her sides, supported on tall blue lotuses, elephants bathe her from upturned vases of plenty, as adoring votaries (one now destroyed) regard the scene.⁷⁶

Sarasvatī, another familiar of Nepal Mandala, is somewhat like Lakṣmī. She too is pictured as a beautiful young woman who is Durgā's daughter and one of Viṣṇu's consorts (Plates 529, 530).⁷⁷ In fact, she is the *ḥumārī* aspect of Durgā herself.⁷⁸ As the latter's emanatory form she may display a third eye. Sarasvatī also incorporates the Vedic goddess Vāk, personified speech, origin of her alternate names Vāgdevī and Vāgiśvarī, whence the name of the Bagmati (Vāgavati). Sarasvatī is the goddess of learning and culture, a role symbolized by her chief attributes, the book and lute (*vinā*); her vehicle is the swan, an allusion to an early association with Brahmā as daughter or consort.

In the Kathmandu Valley, the cult of Sarasvatī has become confused with that of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, also a deity of learning. Buddhists consider them consorts. The two are further confused because of the correspondence of one of Mañjuśrī's names, Dharmadhatu-vāgiśvara, with Sarasvatī's alternate, Vāgiśvarī. Because the former is worshiped as the symbol of a stupa, and in paintings is often represented within it, the stupa also be-

⁷⁷ The image illustrated in Plate 529 is now enshrined under lock and key in the Hadigaon main square (Map 5:20), but according to the townspeople, until a few years ago it was enshrined below the bluff not far from Satya Nārāyaṇa and the river. Stolen, the image was recovered in Chetrapati, Kathmandu, and installed in a safer place.

⁷⁸ Bhattacharjī 1970:164.

came a symbol of Sarasvatī.⁷⁹ Sarasvatī's most famous shrine near Svayambhūnātha is, in fact, consecrated to Mañjuśrī. But the Nepalese flock there to celebrate Sarasvatī's annual festival, Vasanta- or Śrī-pañcamī, the first day of spring, when all seek her blessings in cultural and intellectual endeavors.⁸⁰

One encounters many stone sculptures of Sarasvatī in the Kathmandu Valley, for the most part dating from the late Transitional through the Malla Period. In some she stands and displays in her four hands the rosary and book, water vessel and *varada mudrā* (Plate 530); in others she is seated, plays the *vīṇā*, and displays the rosary and book.

Durgā's Collective Manifestations

Durgā not only has innumerable individual manifestations, terrific and pacific, but collective ones, groups of personified aspects, each one of which is perceived as a distinct deity with a different name. Such groups originated in India as a corollary of *śaktism*, and the cults and practices associated with them now bear an indelible tantric imprint. Three such collectives have profoundly affected the religious climate of the Kathmandu Valley: the Mātṛkā (Mothers), Navadurgā (Nine Durgās), and, to a lesser extent, the Daśamahāvidyā (Ten Great Knowledges). In both India and Nepal the composition of each group is inconstant, the complement varying in name and number, and characterized by considerable overlapping and interchange among all. In Nepal these Durgās of various name and aspect are often blended with indigenous deities, the *māīs* and *ajimās*, and many, though in essence Durgā, are worshiped as important deities in their own right.

In contrast to India, where the classic number of

Mātṛkās is seven, the Saptamātṛkā, in Nepal they are thought to number eight, the so-called Aṣṭamātṛkā. In practice, the Nepali number of Mātṛkās varies, as does the complement. But the most common constituents are Brahmāṇī, Maheśvarī, Kumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, Cāmuṇḍā, and Mahālakṣmī (Plates 531, 534).⁸¹ Two of them, Cāmuṇḍā and Mahālakṣmī, have especially complex origins; the others are related to well-known gods: Brahmā, Śiva, Kumāra, Viṣṇu, and Indra. As their *śaktis* they personify the energy residing within their masculine counterparts, bear their names, display their emblems, and employ their *vāhanas*. Although in India a number of these same manifestations are considered pacific,⁸² in Nepal all are classed as *hitvādyo*, somewhat fierce or forbidding deities who expect blood sacrifice. Propitiation is the dominant aspect of their worship.

The Navadurgā (Naudurgā), the nine forms of Durgā, is a very fluid group that even in India varies enormously in its components.⁸³ In Nepal the group is also unstable, and except for sharing Kālī and Harasiddhī, is totally different from any of the diverse Indian lists. In addition to these two goddesses, the Nepalese Navadurgā include favorite deities such as Vatsaladevī, Jayavāgīśvarī, and Guhyeśvarī, with the remainder of the complement filled out with obscure divinities according to personal preference.⁸⁴ In practice, however, the Nepalese Naudurgā are synonymous with the Aṣṭmātṛkā, to which a variable ninth manifestation is joined to complete the set. Thus, when the Nepalese speak of the Naudurgā, they in fact refer to the Aṣṭamātṛkā.⁸⁵

The Daśamahāvidyā, the Ten Great Knowledges, is also an unstable set of Durgā manifestations that has much in common with Vajrayāna

aspect. In the following discussion I shall reserve the terms Mātṛkā and Mothers to refer specifically to these collective manifestations of Durgā, and otherwise use the more general term "mother goddesses."

⁸² Banerjea 1966:126.

⁸³ Banerjea 1956:490 n. 1, 500 n. 1.

⁸⁴ Lévi 1905:1, 377-378 records one such list.

⁸⁵ See, for example, the list of Navadurgā gathered from a Patan *vajracūrya* by Allen 1975:49.

⁷⁹ It is also a Nepalese tradition to represent the goddess Uṣṇīsavijayā inside a stupa. In paintings this goddess, whose color is white, is often the one depicted, although the accompanying inscription is likely to name her "Dharmadhātu-vāgīśvara," that is, Mañjuśrī.

⁸⁰ Anderson 1971:230-232.

⁸¹ The Nepalese prefer the locutions Brahmāyaṇī and Indrāyaṇī, and in pronunciation they do not distinguish between Kumārī, a Mātṛkā, and Kumārī, Durgā's virgin

divinities.⁸⁶ In Nepal, the only Mahāvidyā forms of consequence today are Bhairavī and Kālī; the latter is the paramount figure from whom the other nine unfold, and is a member of the Navadurgā/Aṣṭamātrkā. But others, such as Chinna-mastā, Bagalamukhī, or Tārā (here a name for Durgā) are well known. The Nepalese also sometimes assign Annapūrṇa and Durgā Mahiṣamardinī to the group, and substitute other personal or local favorites at will.⁸⁷

In the Kathmandu Valley, the various collective manifestations of Durgā are worshiped both as groups and as individuals. In popular conception, the goddesses who compose the collectives are perceived more as independent divinities, rather than as Durgā herself; each has a distinct origin and personality, her own shrines and temples, and a personal following of dedicated votaries. The cults and practices associated with the collective Durgā are inextricably mingled with that of the cults of other goddesses of diverse origins—the indigenous *māis* and *ajimās*, the terrifying manifestations of the Buddhist Tārā, the personification of smallpox as Śitalā/Hārītī, and the various *yoginīs* and *dā-kinīs*. Like them, the collective Durgā is also fused with the Bhairava cult. Some of the Durgā aspects, moreover, like Vārāhī, Guhyeśvarī, or Chinna-mastā, are worshiped in multiple forms, some of whom are aspects of the collective Durgā, others distinct entities of the Vajrayāna pantheon. In the ways, places, and forms in which she is worshiped, the collective Durgā is indistinguishable from her Valley companions, her many sisters, mothers, and grandmothers. It will therefore be well to consider all these goddesses together as the indivisible body they are in Nepalese concept and practice.

THE CULT OF THE MOTHER

Aspect and Abode

Tantric and tantricized goddesses invest a variety

⁸⁶ Banerjea 1956:560 n. 1; Rawson 1972:53-54 briefly describes the Mahāvidyā.

⁸⁷ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 581-583. A typical Nepali conception of the group's components may be found in Kölver 1976:76.

⁸⁸ On the evidence of a brief undated dedicatory in-

scription on the pedestal of the image of Jayavāgīśvarī illustrated in Plate 537, D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 156 (583) assigns it to Amśuvarman's time; G. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 3 (124) places it in the late fifth or early sixth century.

of objects and are worshiped in many forms. One of their most characteristic realizations is as a natural boulder, but they are as apt to select the form of a mystic diagram (*yantra*, *maṇḍala*, *yonī-caṅkra*), a triangular orifice in stele or temple wall, or to occupy the auspicious vessel of abundance, filled or imagined as filled with water and burgeoning vegetation (*pūrṇa kulaśa*, *-ghaṭa*, *-kumbha*) (Plates 411, 454, 533-536). But these same goddesses do not altogether eschew iconic form. Thus in one place and time they may manifest, for example, as a boulder; in another, they may take anthropomorphic or theriomorphic form in painting or sculpture. At times icons are major sculptures, and serve as the principal cult object, or objects, of temple and shrine (Plates 537, 545-551, 558, 560, 561, 566, 567).⁸⁸ Elsewhere, images may be only minor accessories, back-ups, as it were, to the principal aniconic forms. In this way they may on occasion occupy the sanctum proper (Plates 532, 542), but more typically crowd the surrounding precincts of temple and shrine. Thus, images of the goddesses appear on *toranas*, among the wood carvings and metal repoussé of temple doorways, windows, and façades, and they are especially in evidence as carved roof brackets (Plates 199, 538, 539, 556, 557, 559). Even goddesses who are worshiped exclusively in emblematic form, appear as accessory images at their places of worship (Plate 524). In both forms, the tantric and tantricized goddesses are installed in domestic chapels, *vihāra āgamas*, and in their "lineage houses" (*kula ghara*, *deochem*). Typically, it is in the form of portable icons that they are carried about in their various comings and goings (Plate 539). The goddesses seem no less at home in, or more loath to occupy, one kind of image or another. When commissioned from the meager purses of the poor, they are as often the folkish products of artisan and carpenter as they are the more familiar masterworks that steadily drift from the shrines to private and museum collections (Plates 540, 541).

In addition to boulders, mystic symbols, vessels, and the usual kinds of icons, the Navadurgā/Aṣṭamātrkā and the Daśamahāvīdyā take still other forms. When collectively enshrined in the rectangular temples proper to them, they are typically manifest in lifesize manikins of wood or other material. Garbed in clothing and ornaments that mirror those of the women who worship them, they stand or sit along the rear and side walls of the sanctum. Accompanying them as other manikins are Gaṇeśa and Bhairava, and frequently Śiva in other manifestations. Thus there are usually as many as a dozen or more deities in the assembly. Such groups are very common—for example, in the temple of Macali-ajimā (Martyeśvarī), Kathmandu, or that of Rājarājeśvarī, Paśupatinātha (Maps 4:30, 6:14). They are especially numerous in Bhaktapur, but, interestingly, rare in Patan. Occasionally, like the individual Durgā who becomes Kumārī, the collective Nine or Eight manifest themselves as Kumārī-gaṇa. Or again, Bhairava-like, they are worshiped in the form of masks. Many of the latter are of metal repoussé, copper, silver, or gilt, and their normal place is in the *deochem*, whence they are brought as ritual demands (Plate 542). Other masks, of polychrome painted papier mâché and metal ornament, are part of an ensemble. They are worn on special occasions by persons privileged to impersonate the goddesses as members of sacred dance groups (Plate 543).

Textually, the goddesses in tantric or tantricized manifestations are often imagined as the antithesis of the placid ornamental young women they are conceived to be in their beneficent aspects. When terrifying, their mien, activity, dress, and ornament should be metamorphosed to all that is fearful and hideous. As repositories of energy, their active nature is elucidated in the postures of the dance or of the hunting stance, the “heroic diagonal” of the archer’s pose known as *pratyālīdha* (Plates 512, 524, 538, 544). Bhairava-like, their stiff and bristly hair should rise as flames above a grotesque face with bulging bloodshot eyes and grimacing mouth, from which a forked tongue and fangs protrude. They may be corpulent and nude. Their prescribed ornaments are skulls and severed heads, flayed skins and twining serpents, and they delight

to the rattle of aprons of human bones (Plates 478, 524, 538, 544, 556, 557). They bear grisly attributes, such as the death’s head staff (*khaṭvāṅga*), the chopper (*karīri*) with which to flay and hack up human bodies, and the human skull cup (*kapāla*) from which to eat and drink the flesh and blood they crave (Plate 544). In images dating from the period of the Three Kingdoms, tantric goddesses typically bear two little flags in their coiffure and display the *aṅkuśa mudrā*, in which the thumb and ring finger form a circle (Plates 524, 562).

In practice, however, Valley artists have been reluctant to depict even the terrifying goddesses in the macabre forms the texts exact. Except when portraying Kālī/Cāmundā, they cling for the most part to the beneficent goddess type, merely decorating a beautiful maiden with some of the expected gruesome ornaments and attributes (Plate 544). The Terrible Tārā, Ugratārā/Ekajaṭā, may be selected as a case in point. Her *sādhana* depicts her as one of the most terrifying manifestations of the Vajrayāna pantheon. Dwarfed and obese, she should stride upon corpses and, eyes red and round, should laugh obscenely to reveal buck teeth and protruding tongue. Her garment is a tiger skin and her ornaments snakes and a wreath of skulls (*mundamālā*).⁸⁹ But as encountered in Nepal Mandala, Ferocious Tārā is depicted as an attractive girl of pleasant mien; properly wearing her skull wreath and serpents and wielding the prescribed weapons and attributes, she treads her corpses in an abstracted manner, and does not terrify at all (Plate 199).

Very likely, the most venerable goddesses of the Kathmandu Valley are embodied in the boulders that serve even now as the primary manifestation of so many. But the oldest representations that are iconographically datable are stone sculptures carved between about the third and the seventh century (Plates 545-551). Some of these sculptures are isolated, and the deity often unidentifiable; others are in groups that almost certainly represent sets, or partial sets, of the Mātrkāś, Durgā’s collective manifestation. Such a group is enshrined near the Vyāgeśvara (Bagh Bhairava) temple of Kirtipur, while others are encountered among the ruins in the Satya Nārāyaṇa compound, Hadigaon; at Nai-

⁸⁹ Getty 1962:125-126; Mallmann 1975:161-164.

kop; at Kamaladi Gaṇeśa, Kathmandu; at Paśupati-nātha; and at the temple of Jayavāgīśvarī, Deopatan (Plates 545-549, 560, 561). One of the Kirtipur goddesses, by reason of her lotus seat, a characteristic cognizance of Brahmā, could be Brahmānī (Plate 546); her animal-headed companion holding a fish is Vārāhī, if the head is that of a boar rather than a jackal (Plate 547). If a jackal, the image would represent Śivadutī, another manifestation of Durgā, who is also assigned the fish as an attribute.

Among the numerous isolated early images of the mother goddesses there is an occasional encounter that may be clearly recognized as a Mātrkā (Plate 550). The majority of independent images, however, cannot be identified in terms of their iconography, and are now worshiped in various guises, the most common of which is Śitalā/Hārītī, the goddess of smallpox (Plate 551).⁹⁰ Others are merely defined as Māi, Ajimā, Ajimā-māi, or named as some specific local godling. The Kirtipur Mātrkās, for example, are worshiped as exotic figures in the Bagh Bhairava legend, mentioned in a previous chapter, while in Kathmandu an inscribed image corresponding to the Kirtipur Vārāhī/Śivadutī (Plate 547) is variously identified by its votaries.⁹¹ Some worship the image as Dakṣa, beheaded at that very place by Śiva, his insulted son-in-law, who then considerately replaced the severed head with that of a goat; others identify the image as Dhōcvale, the "Goat of Heaven" (literally, the "fox-like nannygoat"), an important figure of Newar legend, the benefactress of orphans and helpless children.

The preferred abodes of the mother goddesses are as diverse as their aspects. Typically, the terrific goddesses prefer the ghats and cremation grounds (Sanskrit, *śmaśāna*; Nepali, *masān*), which lie beyond the confines of the towns and cities. Some, like Kaṅga-ajimā (Kaṅkeśvarī, Cāmuṇḍā), Lutī-ajimā (Indrāṇī), or Maiti-devī (Kaumārī) of Kathmandu have their principal temples at such places (Plate 552). Another, Vajravārāhī (a Buddhist *ḍākīnī* merged with the Mātrkā Vārāhī), lives near the *masān* in a sacred forest near Chapa-

gaon. An occasional goddess, like Gupteśvarī, dwells in a cave; others live in a hole (Plate 553). Still other goddesses prefer hilltops. One of these is Mhaipi-ajimā, a goddess identified by some as Maheśvarī, by others as Jñāneśvarī (Jñānāḍākīnī) enshrined in company with Yogāmbara, her consort. Hilltops are also the preferred dwelling places for most *yoginīs*, and for the primitive *māīs* and *ajimās* who are especially thinly venerated as Buddhist or Brahmanical divinities. Among the latter are, for example, Pulchokī-māi and Champa-devī, each of whom has preempted one of the peaks that overlook the Valley. The chief hilltop *yoginīs* are the Sankhu Vajrayoginī (in fact Ekajāta/Ugratārā); the Pharping Vajrayoginī; Akaśayoginī (Pulchok, Patan); and Akaśayoginī (Vidyāśvarī) near Svayambhūnātha. Other goddesses, like Dakṣiṇakālī or Sundarijal-māi, dwell by secluded (or once secluded) streams or waterfalls, while still others—Annapūrṇa, Luchubhalu-ajimā (Cāmuṇḍā), or Mahālakṣmī of Thankot—prefer the bustle of town or village. They also indiscriminately frequent temple, *vihāra*, house, and courtyard (Appendix V).

Some goddesses dwell within well-appointed temples not significantly different from those of Paśupati or Changu Nārāyaṇa (Plate 189). Many others have only hypaethral shrines (Plate 533). Still others have had temples built over what were obviously once typical hypaethral shrines. Characteristically, the sanctums of such latter-day enclosures are very open, the temple's multiple doorways or colonnades permitting an unobstructed view, and the sanctum itself often sunken well below the present ground level (Plates 187, 532, 552, 554). These sunken and airy sanctums have much to say about the antiquity of many of these goddesses and their ultimate chthonic origins. Symbols of such divinities should be open to the skies and woe to the misguided votary who closes them in.⁹² Indeed, there are occasions when the divinities themselves take steps to rectify the ill-advised notions of their too-solicitous devotees. Vajravārāhī of the Chapagaon grove, for example, frustrated all attempts to install the finial, the final act in the

1973:inscr. I (122).

⁹² This is also true of the cult of the mother goddesses in India (Kosambi 1960:27).

⁹⁰ Slusser 1972:97-104, pls. LI, LII; Pal 1974:fig. 59 errs in locating the image at Kva-bahal, Patan.

⁹¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 154 (582); G. Vajracharya

building of her temple, it is claimed, simply because the offended goddess herself nightly saw to its removal. Bowing at last to the goddess' desire, the final building stage was omitted. Her temple stands thus today. In the same way, as we have seen, the shrine of Aśoka Gaṇeśa is open to the skies, and even the lack of shelter for the Budhanilkantha Nārāyaṇa, well outside the tantric fold, is said to be that god's desire.

Not all goddesses exact an airy, ground-floor sanctum. A number prefer the second floor of a temple, just as do Bhīmasena and some Bhairavas. Among them are, for example, Sikālī-devī (Mahālakṣmī) of Khokana, Harasiddhi of Harasiddhi village, and Bālakaumārī of Sunaguthi. There are many others.

The numerous temples and shrines where Durgā is worshiped in her collective form are, of course, ultimately consecrated to her. But usually one of the number, such as Vaiṣṇavī or Indrāṇī, is selected as the mistress of a particular temple, even though she shares it with the rest of the collective. The temple is known by her name; hers is the chief symbol or icon in the sanctum and the central image on the *toranas*; and she provides the motif for the "forehead image" (*lalatabimbha*) installed in the lintel over the doors (Plates 538, 559).

The almost universal companions of the various mother goddesses are Bhairava and Gaṇeśa, together with two curious guardian figures known as Singhini and Baghini (Plates 199, 562). Usually explained as "Lion Son" and "Tiger Daughter," they are in fact the lion-headed Siṃhavaktrā and her tiger-headed companion, Vyāghravaktrā, Buddhist *dākinīs* who are the fearful psycho-sexual partners of yogins. But their identities have been long forgotten in the Kathmandu Valley, and they are worshiped simply as guardians or children of the goddesses. It is as the latter that they accompany the Sankhu Vajryayoginī as major images in her shrine; as guardians they are teamed with many other deities (Plate 357).

In addition to these ubiquitous four—Bhairava, Gaṇeśa, Singhini, and Baghini—many other gods and godlings and divinities of the Hindu-Buddhist pantheon are worshiped in and around the temples and shrines of the mother goddesses. It is, for

example, a perfectly acceptable place for the consecration of Buddhist images or for the establishment of stupas (Plates 346, 552). Similarly, the mother goddesses are often installed in the precincts of illustrious gods, such as Kumbheśvara, the locale of an important Daśamahāvidyā shrine, or Paśupatiṇātha, which harbors one to the Mātṛkās (Plate 560). These goddesses even invade the sanctuaries of Viṣṇu, a god who remains resolutely aloof from their cult. Vakupati Nārāyaṇa of Bhaktapur, for example, is willy-nilly a neighbor of the Navadurgā, and Changū Nārāyaṇa of the Daśamahāvidyā (Figure 15).

Pīṭha-devatās and Śakti-pīṭhas

All of the collective manifestations of Durgā (Aṣṭamātṛkā, Navadurgā, Daśamahāvidyā), a number of other goddesses, the associated Bhairavas, and certain other deities are known in Nepal Mandala as *pīṭha-devatās* (Nepali) or *piganadyo* (Newari), literally "gods having a *pīṭha*," that is, a place, seat, or altar. These *pīṭhas* (pronounced "peet") are the principal shrines of this class of divinity, are normally hypaethral, and most commonly lie outside the walls (or former walls) that delimited the old cities and towns. We have already encountered one of the most famous *pīṭhas*, that of Pacali Bhairava (Plate 369). Others are those of Vaiṣṇavī, Mahākālī, and Cāmuṇḍā (Plates 532, 542, 552). The *pīṭhas* are normally paired with a related shrine inside the town, usually a house-like temple known as the "lineage house," the *ḷula ghara* (Nepali) or "god house," *dyochem* or *deochem* (Newari) (Plate 555). The *deochem* serves as a special residence for the *pīṭha-devatās*, a shrine for their icons, a storehouse for their treasure or special accoutrements, and together with the *pīṭha* is the focus for various ceremonies connected with them. Thus, while Kaṅkeśvarī's *pīṭha*, her principal shrine, is at one of the cremation ghats on the Vishnumati (Plate 552), her related *deochem* is well inside Old Kathmandu near Yatkha-bahal (Map 7: h-3, h-7). Similarly, Tuṅāl-devī's *pīṭha* is in the open fields, her *deochem* in the center of Hadigaon (Map 5:1, 18). In Bhaktapur, most of the *pīṭhas* of the Navadurgā lie at various points around the city outside the line of the former city walls, while their *deo-*

chems lie well within (Map 9). But sometimes both *pīṭha* and *deochem* are inside the town, and from time to time, side by side. Tripura-sundarī of Bhaktapur provides an example, as do Naradevī, Annapūrṇa, and Aśoka Gaṇeśa, all of Kathmandu.

The Valley *pīṭha-devatās* are related to the concept of the *śakti-pīṭha*, a corollary of *śaktism* and Durgā worship.⁹³ According to Indian tradition, Durgā in her particular manifestation as Satī imolated herself over an insult Dakṣa, her father, offered Śiva, her husband. Maddened with grief at Satī's death, Śiva wandered hither and yon bearing her corpse on his shoulder. Finally, piece by piece, it dropped away (or, alternatively, was cut away by Viṣṇu's *caakra*). Wherever a fragment fell it became a *śakti-pīṭha*, a place sacred to Durgā. In the form of Bhairava, Śiva established himself near every one, so that he might keep eternal watch over his beloved's body. Thus everywhere Bhairava's shrines complement those of Śakti.

The association of the limbs of Durgā with the Śākta *tīrthas* may be related to a particular tantric ritual known as *pīṭhanyāsa*, and it has other connotations especially associated with the *linga*.⁹⁴ The concept of the paired shrines, *śakti-pīṭha* and Bhairava/Śiva, was already entrenched in India by at least the seventh century, as we know from that attentive chronicler, Hsüan-tsang. He particularly noted one pair of shrines in Gandhāra, a mountain-top *śakti-pīṭha*, below which was a Śiva temple especially sacred to the Pāśupatas.⁹⁵

The accepted number of the *śakti-pīṭhas* varies from four to more than a hundred, but the most generally agreed-upon number is fifty-one. They are largely scattered in Bengal, but a few spill into Nepal and the Himalaya.⁹⁶ Few of the *śakti-pīṭhas* traditionally located in Nepal can be identified, and they appear to be now of limited significance. But Nepalese mythology adds to the traditional accounting a *śakti-pīṭha* that is of profound importance in the Valley. This, they say, is the place where Satī's anus or, alternatively, her pudendum fell, *guhya* (Sanskrit and Nepali, to be concealed, private parts). Thus Guhyeśvarī is at once the

Mysterious Supreme One, the Secret, Hidden, Anus or Pudendum Goddess. Her *pīṭha*, paired with the majestic Paśupatinātha, lies on the opposite side of the Bagmati in Mrigasthali (Map 6:29). Now walled around to limit access to accepted castes, and sheltered by a gilt baldaquin, a gift of Pratāpamalla,⁹⁷ Guhyeśvarī's shrine is hypaethral. She is manifest as a water-filled pothole surrounded with the carved stone petals of a lotus. Thus at her *pīṭha* the celebrated goddess appears little different from a minor locality godling such as Bhaktapur's Khāna-devatā (Plate 553). Like all *pīṭha-devatās*, however, Guhyeśvarī also manifests herself in images.⁹⁸ Their normal locale is in the *deochem* or private *āgamas*, from which on occasion they are taken to the Mrigasthali *pīṭha* or other places, as ritual demands.

Guhyeśvarī is one of the chief national divinities, and is ardently worshiped by all Nepalese. But they conceive of her in different ways. To Śivamārgīs she is Guhyakālī (Durgā) and *śakti* of Paśupatinātha, the nearby complementary Śiva shrine. Buddhamārgīs claim her as Prajñāpāramitā, but worship her variously as Nairatma, the fearful consort of Heruka, or as Fire Yoginī (Agniyoginī) named for the subaqueous fire that is said once to have emanated from the pothole.⁹⁹ As Agniyoginī, Guhyeśvarī completes the complement of the Valley's Four Yoginīs. Her companions are usually identified as Vidyāśvarī (Kathmandu) and the two famous Vajrayoginīs, one of Sankhu, the other of Pharping.

As with all the *pīṭhas* where the deities are worshiped in natural, undatable objects, we have no way of determining the antiquity of Guhyeśvarī's cult. Nor, in the particular Valley circumstances, can we be sure whether Guhyeśvarī was first a local, a Hindu, or a Vajrayāna divinity. The chronicles assign her discovery to Pratāpamalla, but a colophon entry establishes her existence under this name by at least A.D. 1405.¹⁰⁰ Buddhists claim that she was discovered by Mañjuśrī when he drained the Kālihrada. At this place, they say, was rooted the lotus that supported Svayambhū Jyotirūpa, and

⁹³ Sircar 1948.

⁹⁴ Sircar 1948:7.

⁹⁵ Beal 1969:1, 113-114; Banerjea 1966:124.

⁹⁶ Sircar 1948:17 ff., 80-100.

⁹⁷ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 594; Wright 1966:148.

⁹⁸ Pal 1975:figs. 71-72.

⁹⁹ Wright 1966:148.

¹⁰⁰ N.s. 525 Āṣāḍha (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 595).

the flower's recumbent stalk (looking to the modern eye very like a rocky ridge) still joins the two deities.¹⁰¹ The Buddhist assessment may not be too far wide of the mark, for whatever the origins of the evolved Guhyeśvarī, she was very likely grafted to an indigenous *māi* or *ajimā* long worshiped at the site of the phenomenal subaqueous fire that once glowed in Guhyeśvarī's *pītha*.

As a corollary of the role Bhairava plays in *śaktism*, the cult of Bhairava and that of the terrible mother goddesses are inextricably mingled. Bhairava is at once companion to the Sixty-four Yoginīs, to Śakti, and to all the collective forms of Durgā. Thus the Mātrkās are always paired with a specific Bhairava manifestation, who is conceived as their special consort, and shares in their rites. In Bhaktapur, for example, seat of an ardent Mātrkā cult, there is a special Bhairava group, the Aṣṭabhairava, an important assembly that complements the Aṣṭamātrkā group. Gaṇeśa, too, plays some role in their cult, and frequently associates with them. Bhaktapur, for example, even has a complementary set of Aṣṭagaṇeśa.

*Purveyors of Disease:
Śitalā and Hārītī*

Despite the beneficent Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, Tārā and Vasudhārā, the majority of the Valley goddesses are imagined to be malevolently disposed toward man. They cherish no affection for mortals except as purveyors of the delicacies they prefer, blood and alcohol. The mother goddesses are particularly feared as the source of disease and death, legitimate concerns in any society, and augmented in the Kathmandu Valley by the spiritual proximity to ancient agrarian societies with like preoccupations. The Nepalese seek out diverse gods and godlings for relief of various ills, but in the case of epidemic disease they turn specifically to the mother goddesses. They are considered at once personifications of the disease itself, the causes of it, and, if properly propitiated, the ones to take it away. The Bhairavī of Nawakot, for example, one

of the Daśamahāvidyā, is believed annually to disseminate *awal* (malaria) in the Trisuli Valley lowlands, sparing only those who adequately appease her. But she always graciously grants a brief respite on the occasion of her annual festival.¹⁰² Another is Bagalamukhī of Patan who, with the terrible Bhairava that shares her shrine at Kumbheśvara, is the source of cholera. Even the chains that fetter the Bhairava do not prevent her dread messenger from walking abroad from time to time. Another fearful goddess is Sikālī-devī (Siddhikālī, Mahālakṣmī) of Khokana village, a divinity widely propitiated to ward off various poxes.

But the most terrible being, and therefore the most ardently worshiped, is the goddess of smallpox. Known variously as Śitalā her Brahmanical name, Hārītī (her Buddhist equivalent),¹⁰³ or by indigenous names such as Ajimā, Māi, Mahāmāi, Ajimā-māi, Ajimā-māju, she is considered responsible for the smallpox epidemics that have scourged the Kathmandu Valley with unremitting regularity until most recent times. So identified is Śitalā with epidemic disease that even the early Catholic missionaries understood her name to be synonymous with the disease itself, reporting that Nepal was "subject year round to epidemics of smallpox or measles, in the language of the country, Sizilā."¹⁰⁴

Perhaps more than any other calamity, the devastation of pestilential smallpox is the tragic leitmotif of the historical documents. As observed in Chapter 4, along with fire and quake, drought and famine, such visitations are constantly mentioned in the early chronicles. It is a theme repeated by their successors. In the reign of Bhāskaramalla of Patan, A.D. 1717-1722, for example, it is said that the pestilence raged for two years, during which between thirty and a hundred or more persons died daily. It became so destructive that even the Kathmandu Kumārī died, the "two dreadful teeth became visible in the mouth of Paśupatināth and the . . . nine planets upset themselves."¹⁰⁵ There was a particularly devastating epidemic at the end of the eighteenth century, in which King Rana Bahadur

¹⁰¹ Hodgson 1971:part 1, 116 and n.

¹⁰² Oldfield 1880:11, 298.

¹⁰³ Mallmann 1975:179 does not mention this aspect of Hārītī; Banerjea 1956:380-384.

¹⁰⁴ Lévi 1905:1, 122.

¹⁰⁵ Hasrat 1970:83. In the Kathmandu Valley the Nine Planets are also equated with the Nine Durgās, as discussed below.

Shah's favorite queen also died, a personal tragedy that occasioned his well-known excesses against the heedless goddesses.¹⁰⁶ Maddened with grief, Rana Bahadur had the heartless Svayambhū Hārītī and other goddesses whom he had entreated in vain dragged from their shrines, vilified with excrement, and destroyed.¹⁰⁷ In a desperate ploy to keep Girvan Yuddha, his son, safe, the king also attempted to expel all the stricken children from the Valley. This event is remembered in a tragic Newar song that describes the exodus and suffering that accompanied it.¹⁰⁸ Finally, in A.D. 1816, "smallpox became so virulent in the country that hundreds and thousands of men, women and children, old and young, were swept away. The rivers, tanks, and canals were crowded with dead and dying; and in the streets a man had scarcely room to walk and the dogs dragged away the neglected and putrefied corpses and vultures died with surfeit of human flesh."¹⁰⁹

It is little wonder, therefore, that the Nepalese have considered the propitiation of the goddess of smallpox one of their chief concerns. But paradoxically, despite the cult offered the deity in every byway, hamlet, and town, not even a half-dozen images may be identified as Hārītī, and, iconographically, there is none of Śītālā. I encountered only four bona fide Hārītī images in the Kathmandu Valley: a nineteenth-century replacement of the smashed Hārītī sculpture at Svayambhū; another at Kāṭhesimbhū (the Svayambhū substitute *tīrtha* in Kathmandu); a seventh or eighth century work in a private courtyard at Chapat-tol, Patan; and a late bronze installed in the vestibule of Uku-bahal, Patan.¹¹⁰ With these exceptions, Śītālā/Hārītī is worshiped either in the guise of other deities, male or female, or in undifferentiated mother-goddess images that are often stone sculptures of considerable antiquity. Cases in point are

¹⁰⁶ Slusser 1972:98 n. 30.

¹⁰⁷ Common people have also apparently been driven to these lengths. From time to time one sees images worshiped as Śītālā that have been mutilated, one is told, by parents from whom Śītālā, heedless of their pleas, has exacted all their children.

¹⁰⁸ Lienhard 1974:232-234, song 96.

¹⁰⁹ Hasrat 1970:97. Vultures are considered inauspicious. Thus, when Rana Bahadur sought every means to save his queen, he ordered all vultures to be caught and

two early Viṣṇu images, the Gaja-Lakṣmī of Patan, and several unidentifiable female images scattered in various places throughout the Valley (Plates 382, 527, 528, 551).¹¹¹ Despite the implicit iconography of Gaja-Lakṣmī and the obvious maleness of one of the Viṣṇus (at Kumbheśvara, Patan), both images figure prominently in the Śītālā/Hārītī cult. A serious *pūjā* in the dread goddess' name ideally should begin with the "Śītālā" of Naihiti (Gaja-Lakṣmī), proceed to the Kumbheśvara "Śītālā" (Viṣṇu), and terminate at her shrine of shrines, the Hārītī temple at Svayambhū.

All this suggests that in the Kathmandu Valley the cult of the smallpox goddess, still often called simply Ajimā or Māi, represents an indigenous cult subsequently fused with Hindu-Buddhist concepts from India and cloaked with borrowed names. That this should be so is not surprising, since the Indian counterparts undoubtedly had similar backgrounds. Hārītī was initially an ogress who fed on succulent children. But on the Budha's command that she be nourished in the *vihāras*, Hārītī was transformed into a protectress of children and symbol of fertility, as she is depicted in her images in Nepal. The reformed Hārītī not only ate in the *vihāras*, but moved into them as a guardian figure, a fact that probably explains her presence at Svayambhū, and certainly explains her presence in the *phalacā* of Uku-bahal. In the Nepalese *vihāras*, Hārītī's guardian role was at length usurped by Gaṇeśa, and she apparently began to slip back into her old habits. But rather than becoming an overt cannibal as before, she profits more subtly from the pox she sows.

The Death Dealers: Kālī and Cāmundā

Just as the mother goddesses preside over epidemic killed, offering a prize as incentive. Masses of vultures were burned at Jawalakhel, Patan, a site afterward considered as an inauspicious *masān*. Its evil influence had to be counteracted by erecting there an image of Sarasvatī (Banda 1962:41). Wright 1966:180 describes the ravages of the epidemic in terms similar to those of the Brahmanical chronicle, and adds that Śītālā "entered the durbar" and claimed King Girvan Yuddha.

¹¹⁰ Slusser 1972:pls. LIII, LV.

¹¹¹ Slusser 1973:102, pls. LI, LII.

disease, so also is death their domain. The central figures are Cāmuṇḍā and Kālī, hideous manifestations of Durgā, symbols of the inexorable passage of Time and ministrants of death and destruction (Plates 542, 556-562, 565-567). Theoretically different manifestations—Cāmuṇḍā a Mātṛkā, and Kālī chief of the Mahāvidyā—the goddesses are essentially one, as their origin legend makes clear.

Durgā, it is said, had to vanquish not only the terrible *asura* Mahiṣa, but also a pair of villainous demons known as Śumbha and Niśumbha. For this purpose, she produced from herself the goddess Ambikā. Hearing of Ambikā's great beauty, Śumbha resolved to possess her. To that effect he sent his generals Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa at the head of a vast army. But from Ambikā's brow, furrowed with rage, there sprang forth a tertiary manifestation of Durgā known as Kālī, the Black One. "Black and scowling, with drawn sword and lasso, holding a [death's head] mace . . . wearing a necklace of skulls, clothed in a tiger-skin, grim with emaciation, mouth hideously distorted and the tongue protruding. . . . Her eyes were red and sunken and she started a terrible uproar that filled the quarters."¹¹² Consuming horses with their warrior-filled chariots and elephants with their riders, Kālī quickly dispatched the audacious Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa. Victoriously returning to Ambikā with the generals' severed heads, Kālī was given the name Cāmuṇḍā to memorialize her feat. It is these vanquished generals who often appear as accessories in Durgā Mahiṣāsura-mardinī icons (Plate 518).

In the Kathmandu Valley, Kālī and Cāmuṇḍā are not distinguished conceptually or iconographically. Expected features of Cāmuṇḍā's iconography—her owl *vāhana*, for example—are absent, as are Kālī's protruding tongue and ear ornaments of severed human hands. The goddess of death is represented by what is essentially a single image type named interchangeably Kālī or Cāmuṇḍā, hence best considered Kālī/Cāmuṇḍā or simply Kālī, the term most frequently employed by her votaries.

Kālī, Death personified, is conceived as a hideously emaciated, almost naked crone with sunken face and fleshless bones (Plates 556-561, 565-567).

Her bristly hair rises as flames, and fangs protrude from a distorted mouth. Her breasts are sagging and desiccated, and her body is adorned with fearful ornaments. Skulls and severed heads compose at once her diadem and garlands, serpents are her necklace, flayed skins her cloak, and human bones her apron. Aureoled in flames, she squats, stands, or dances in a frenzy on a prostrate corpse (*śava*) or on two naked crawling figures representing Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa (Plates 558, 559, 562). More rarely she sits on or beside a pile of human skulls (Plates 560, 561). Often with many arms—usually eight—she wields sword and shield, carries the double-headed drum (*damaru*) and death's head scepter, a halved human skull, a chopping knife, and a severed human head. In later imagery, like Bhairava and all Nepalese mother goddesses of terrific nature, she displays one hand in the typical "elephant goad" gesture (*anḱuśa mudrā*) in which thumb and ring finger join; and as in the case of her companion goddesses, two little flags are stuck in her hair (Plates 559, 562).

Kālī naturally frequents the cremation grounds, and her temples and shrines are often conveniently nearby. Her association with the *masāns* is frequently alluded to in paintings, and sometimes in sculptures (Plates 562, 564, 565). In paintings representing the copulating gods, Kālī is usually a prominent habituée of the surrounding cremation grounds (Plates 564, 565). Among the tantric images that line the royal bath of the Patan palace, there are a number of small stone sculptures representing Kālī at the *masān*. In one, for example, we encounter the Supreme Kālī, in this instance well fed on cadavers and placidly standing on one of them (Plate 562). She is flanked by wildly dancing Tiger Head and Lion Head, the *dākinīs* Simha- and Vyāghravaktrā. The three are encircled by the flames of the burning pyres, among which, in another register, unfolds a scene of nocturnal revelry. Observed by various animals, several goblins and godlings, chopper and skull cup in hand, cavort among the pyres. Respectfully distant, in still another register, a scavenger pig, jackals, and a vulture ring the scene. They await an end of revelry to profit by the unburned remains

¹¹² Bhattasali 1929:207.

of the dead. With typical Nepali eclecticism, a row of alternating Sivaliṅgas and *caityas* comprise the lowest register.

The dread Kālī is a figure of extraordinary popularity in the Kathmandu Valley. Her principal manifestation as a deity of national importance is Dakṣiṇakālī, "Kālī of the South" (Plate 566). Presiding from within her shrine near Pharping, which she shares with other Mātṛkās, the grinning Kālī squats on a prostrate corpse. With her principal hands she clutches between inelegantly spread knees the ubiquitous *kapāla*, and in supplementary hands displays other terrifying emblems. As with many mother goddesses, Saturday is the preferred day for the worship of Dakṣiṇakālī, when Nepalese from all walks assiduously court her with lavish animal sacrifice. Dakṣiṇakālī's popularity may be a recent phenomenon, since she is barely mentioned in the chronicles, and few legends attach to her. Her once secluded riverside shrine suggests, however, that fundamentally she is an indigenous *ajimā*.

In Kathmandu, Kālī/Cāmuṇḍā has five major manifestations: Bhadrakālī (Lumarhī-ajimā), the most important; Kaṅkeśvarī (Kaṅga-ajimā); Svetakālī (Naradevī); Luchubhalu-ajimā; and Raktakālī.¹¹³ Bhaktapur and Patan are also well endowed with Kālī shrines, and there is virtually no village or hamlet that does not have one or more dedicated to her (Plate 567). Her immense popularity is further attested when she is worshiped as part of Navadurgā or Mātṛkā ensembles, for it is invariably Kālī to whom accrues the lion's share of clothing, ornaments, and offerings. Although she is characteristically worshiped in the form of a boulder, Kālī/Cāmuṇḍā is also widely encountered in iconic form, in masks, stone sculptures, as

¹¹³ If, as Auer and Gutschow 1974:22 write, there is a formal group of Eight Kālīs in Kathmandu, it is essentially a theoretical pattern that is not reflected in the cultural practices associated with these more popular Kālīs. Even Raktakālī, who has a rather well-endowed temple, is of limited significance in Kālī worship today.

¹¹⁴ Bhattasali 1929:205-206. Mallmann 1975:371 says the Black Tārā is almost the same (*à peu près pareille*) as Black Ekajaṭā; Getty 1962:125-126 speaks of the "Blue" Tārā as identical to Ekajaṭā or Ugratārā.

¹¹⁵ Bharati 1965:60-61 affirms that Hindus worship her

carved and repoussé insignia on her temples, as roof brackets, in paintings, and on ritual objects.

Kālī has a parallel manifestation in the Kathmandu Valley in the black form of Ugratārā, the Buddhist Ferocious Tārā, or Ekajaṭā, an analogous form.¹¹⁴ Her most important manifestation is at Guṃ-vihāra, Sankhu, where she is referred to in late Malla inscriptions as Ugratārā Vajrayoginī, a name now shortened to Vajrayoginī.¹¹⁵ But while the Sankhu goddess is certainly not Vajrayoginī, nor Nilasarasvatī, as some say, neither does she exactly fit the textual description of any form of Ugratārā.¹¹⁶ Her principal image, of imposing size, is almost hidden by clothing and ornaments. But rather than the expected blue or black of Ugratārā or Ekajaṭā, her face and hands are red, in keeping with a form of Vajrayoginī. She has only two arms, one holding up a sword (whence one of her alternate names, Khadgayoginī), the other a blue lotus. She is flanked by smaller images identified as "Lion Son" and "Tiger Daughter" (the ubiquitous *dākinīs* Siṃha- and Vyāghravaktrā). A trio in a nearby shrine is identical, except that they are gilt, perhaps a reference to one of the golden or yellow forms of Vajrayoginī.¹¹⁷ As depicted on the *torāṇa* of her temple, the deity compares more closely with the Black Tārā or Ekajaṭā in her symbols and ornaments, but she is by no means the dwarfed and grisly creature the texts call for (Plate 199). The Black Tārā should tread on corpses, but the typically innovative Nepalese have preferred to give her the same two crawling figures, the vanquished Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, that usually accompany Nepalese images of Kālī/Cāmuṇḍā.

Apart from the indigenous *ajimās* and *māīs* who must have preceded her, the cult of the goddess of

as Śaṃkarī, Śiva's consort, an identification that, if true, escaped me.

¹¹⁶ B. Bhattacharya 1968:248-249 accepts the image as Ugratārā. According to tradition, it was brought to Nepal by Bengali priests from Dacca district about A.D. 1350. On the shrine and legends, see Slusser 1972a:13-24. At other Vajrayoginī sites, such as Kathmandu's Vidyāśvarī or Patan's Akāśayoginī, there is an attempt to depict a form of *yoginī* with one leg thrown up into the air, a convention apparently absent at Sankhu.

¹¹⁷ Mallmann 1975:432.

death apparently has a long history in the Kathmandu Valley. In an unfinished Licchavi relief depicting the Buddha's Temptation by Mārā, she appears as an emaciated figure with pendant breasts, her bristling hair caught in a skull-emblazoned fillet, and holding aloft an unfinished object, apparently intended as a corpse (Plate 422). An unequivocal Kālī/Cāmuṇḍā occurs in various extant early Mātṛkā assemblies, and would certainly have been included among the terra-cotta Mātṛkās mentioned in the Sikubahi inscription (Plates 351, 560, 561). It seems hardly fortuitous that the most important Cāmuṇḍā temple of Patan should be just next to this ancient seat of Mātṛkā worship (Map 8: b-10). As Kālī of the Forest, Vanakālī (Bankālī), the goddess is represented in another early and culturally important image (Plate 558).¹¹⁸ Aureoled in flames, and again by her own arms with their fearful emblems, Kālī is eating flesh from a skull, and stamping out with her dancing feet on a corpse the rhythm of relentless destruction she embodies. Honored to near oblivion with colored powders and paints, her image is kept drenched and her shrine awash with the blood of her daily oblations.¹¹⁹ Indeed, Vanakālī provides a striking visual realization of the Bloody Cāmuṇḍā's own description of herself. "I shall kill the *asuras* . . . and eat them up; then my teeth, hair, body and weapons will all become red with their blood and for that reason they will call me in the world as Rakta-Chāmuṇḍā."¹²⁰ Like the Nakṣal Bhagavatī and certain other deities, Vanakālī may have been hidden for a time. According to the chronicles, Śivadeva I caused the image to be uncovered, because "in the reign of Raja Dharmadatta [she] had eaten up the army and concealed her[self] in a wood. The flesh of the human bodies was still sticking to her teeth."¹²¹

The extraordinary popularity of Kālī/Cāmuṇḍā in the Kathmandu Valley (and of her counterpart, Ugratārā) graphically illustrates what appears to

be a Nepali preoccupation with the ineluctable passage of time and ultimate destruction and death. It is rooted in age-old concepts related to the "negative elementary character," the "dark half of the black and white cosmic egg,"¹²² the terrifying aspect of the primordial mother goddess as expressed in such fearful chthonic deities as Niṛṛti. But Nepali enthusiasm for Kālī, the death dealer, is also related to the more recent necrophilic notions expounded by tantrism.

Imagery of the cremation ground is an important aspect of tantrism and operates on many levels, real and symbolic. The aspiring *sādhaka*, for example, was enjoined to perform his meditations at the *śmaśānas*, if possible seated upon a corpse or its remains, and in company with unclean scavenger pigs, dogs, and vultures. Such a one, wrapped in meditation, may be seen in the cemetery depicted in Plate 564. The *sādhaka* thus confronted death in its most gruesome form, and comprehended it as the consummation of life. As his skills improved, the tantrist's association with the dead and their flaming pyres might become metaphorical. But it was no less a real and basic aspect of his route to spiritual success.¹²³ This is the rationale behind the cremation ground scenes that the Nepali artist almost invariably included in tantric paintings, and occasionally even sculptures (Plates 477, 512, 562-565). At the *masān*, in the gloom of a night illuminated by the lurid flicker of the funeral pyres, surrounded by rotting corpses, bleached bones, repulsive scavengers, cavorting demons, and *ḍaḍhinīs* in frenzied dance, the *sādhaka*—yogins, siddhas, and striving monks—serenely pursue their individual paths to salvation. The Nepali cremation ground formula undoubtedly influenced Tibetan iconography in the same direction.¹²⁴

A perusal of a Nepali version of the *Vetālapāñcavimśati*, the "Twenty-five Stories of the Vetāla," is especially instructive respecting Nepali necrophilic obsession. The tales are told by a *vetāla*, a

¹¹⁸ The image bears on the pedestal an undecipherable mantra in Licchavi script that on paleographic evidence dates it to the late eighth or early ninth century; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 187 (597); G. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 10 (131). Stylistically, the image is problematically assigned to the tenth century by Pal 1974:fig. 284.

¹¹⁹ For a view of Kālī as she normally appears, see Pal

1974:fig. 284.

¹²⁰ Rao 1968:1, 333.

¹²¹ Wright 1966:84; Hasrat 1970:41.

¹²² Neumann 1972:147-149.

¹²³ Rawson 1972:47, 52-53, 57.

¹²⁴ Pal 1977:97, figs. 1, 2, cover.

goblin-like creature who appropriates corpses as a dwelling place. In general, the Nepali version closely follows the Sanskrit text, until it comes to a scene that takes place in the cremation grounds. Then the translators pull out all the stops on cremation ground imagery.

When [the king] arrived at the burning ground, he saw that it was filled with ghosts and spirits, and the foul odor of smoke, and the howling of the biras [spirits]. It was as terrible as the cloud of destruction unlit by lightning. It was filled with vultures and other birds of prey sitting on branches wrapped in entrails that made them look like festival flags. The wind blew through hundreds of thousands of impure bones, making a sound like the anklets of dancing yoginīs. Thousands of white bones filled the burning ground like countless stars in the sky. Jackals shrieked on every side. . . . Shrieks horrible to hear were heard as if made by mad wild dogs and others who had satiated themselves on blood. . . . In every direction were cruel eyes of ghosts and demons. . . . It was filled with the terrifying thunder of clouds. . . . It was like a house of woe, giving pleasure to ghosts, spirits, and demons. Filled with deceit, its flames reached the clouds. It was filled with crores [tens of millions] of ghosts, spirits, corpses and the like, filled with flesh-eating animals, but because of the flames, nowhere was there a tree remaining. . . . It was a dancing hall for drunken female demons who had tremendous buttocks and breasts as big as large pots. Vultures, jackals, crows, hawks, and other obscene birds lived there. It was filled with vetālas who beat out rhythm for crowds of naked dancing yoginīs, dākinīs, śākinīs, and piśācīs. It rang with their laughter. It was like the fear of Fear, the illusion of Illusion, and the death of the king of Death.¹²⁵

It is uncommonly difficult for a Westerner to come to terms with the gruesome Kālī. Considerable research would be necessary, moreover, even to begin to understand the various Nepalese con-

¹²⁵ Riccardi 1971:11, 122.

¹²⁶ One of the most rewarding, yet neglected, fields of cultural research in Nepal lies in the domain of the mother goddesses. Particularly useful would be a study of Kālī

ceptions of her.¹²⁶ At some levels she must be quite like the primordial Nirṛti, a terrible arbitress of death to be held at bay as long as possible. On other planes, Kālī perhaps essentially represents Fate, and her gruesome forms are only an expression of all-destroying Time. And, then again, although Kālī destroys mortals in the flesh, she is the same goddess who as Pārvatī or Umā tenderly loves them. Thus Kālī, too, is partly an object of affection. This is evident in the endearing epithets addressed to her, such as Kālikā, "Little" or "Dear Kālī," and is particularly illustrated in the imagery of an eighteenth-century Newar song.

Oh Kālī, little child of the mountain, you are the deliverance of the world!

The garment on your body is like blue clouds. Your belt is of tiger-skin. There are skeletons in your diadem (made of) skulls. On (their) heads is the glitter of pearls.

Round your neck (hang) the skulls of men. On your thighs there is a garland of bones (shining) like precious pearls. In your four hands you hold the sword, the skull, the spear and the drum.

In cutting into pieces the heart (of the Daitya) [demon], you pull out his intestines (and) kick (him) with your feet. You are red with blood through the blood-drops of the youthful body of your enemy, the Daitya.¹²⁷

The tantric concepts related to Kālī and other terrible goddesses have also apparently served to fortify Nepali attitudes respecting various classes of disease- and death-dealing witches, ghosts, and goblins, the ubiquitous *boḡsis*, *bhūtas*, *pretas*, and *piśācas*. These terrible creatures, like the divinities themselves, are most often manifested in female form.

One of these is the widely feared *boḡsi*, a human witch who deals in calamity, destruction, and death. Widows are particularly suspect as *boḡsis*, since to master the craft one should sacrifice one's husband, or at least one's eldest son. *Boḡsis* are thought to frequent the shrines of the *piṭha-deva*-and, perhaps even more useful, one of the institution of the Navadurgā.

¹²⁷ Lienhard 1974:144-145. A similar song in praise of Kālī (Caṇḍikā) is published by Wright 1966:211-212.

tās and to congregate by night at certain mother goddess shrines. Two of the most notorious gathering places are the shrines of Sobhā Bhagavatī and Mhaipi-ajimā (Map 4:2, 3). *Bokṣis* also haunt cremation grounds where, like *dākinīs* of old, they dance naked. To carry out their nefarious work, they are believed to possess their victims. Such was a case described to me by a Buddhist school teacher and sometime priest whose grandmother was possessed and destroyed by a *bokṣi*: bedridden, the grandmother had already reached the ripe age of eighty-five when a *bokṣi*, masquerading as a kindly neighbor, offered her a dish of sweetmeats. Unwillingly eating some of the delicacies at the neighbor's insistence, the old woman soon became senile. But resisting the *bokṣi*'s powers, the grandmother lingered for five more years, until the witch's will had its full effect and the old lady died. In these events, in my friend's view, natural causes simply had no place.

A different example of *bokṣi* possession concerns the father of another acquaintance. In this case the *bokṣi* came and went, using the father's body to effect her nefarious undertakings. Each time she invested the man, her presence became manifest in a trembling of his thumbs, which soon spread through his whole body. Thus possessed, the father was incredibly strong, for example once eating an entire feast prepared for more than twenty persons. Fortunately, one day he was able to vomit up the *bokṣi*'s powerful agent, a large areca nut. Unable to destroy it, the family threw it into a latrine, thus breaking the *bokṣi*'s spell and ending the father's periodic seizures.

A further threat is Crossroads-ajimā (Chvāsa-ajimā), a dangerous female spirit who is to be found in every locality. Disposed toward evil of every kind, Crossroads-ajimā is constantly propitiated. All ritually unclean things are consigned to her at the crossroads, the place she frequents.¹²⁸ Similarly, the *khya* is a domestic female spirit that invests every Newar home. In her white form she may be likened to the good fairy, but in her black one she is malignant and calamity incarnate.

¹²⁸ On the Indian mothers at the crossroads see Kosambi 1960.

¹²⁹ Slusser 1972a:45-47.

¹³⁰ This is particularly evident in Allen 1971:49-60. The *Pūjāvidhi* diagram depicting the correspondence of the

Particularly dangerous to all men is the *kich-ḥinni*, an evil spirit disguised as a beautiful woman, except that her feet turn backward. She lurks about trying to tempt men into a carnal relationship in which, if she is successful, she is able vampire-like to sap their strength and so destroy them. The story of Pratāpamalla's encounter with a *kichḥinni*, which almost cost him his life, is perfectly believable in twentieth-century Nepal.¹²⁹

*Two Puzzling Goddesses:
Pāñca- and Bālaḥaumārī*

The resemblance between the names of two distinct manifestations of Durgā, Kumārī and Kaumārī, is the source of considerable confusion in Valley cult. Kumārī is Durgā in her virgin aspect, Kaumārī is a Mātṛkā; their only theoretical correspondence is that both are Durgā. But the fact that the Nepalese do not distinguish the *names* of the two, calling both Kumārī, has led to a certain intertwinning of their cults and confusion in the mind of devotee and scholar alike.¹³⁰

Kaumārī personifies the energy (*śakti*) residing in Kumāra (Kārttikeya), the war god. As his feminine counterpart, Kaumārī bears his name, rides his mount, the peacock (whose feathers she often displays in her hand), and may carry Kumāra's emblems, the lance (*śakti*) and cock (*kuḥkuta*). She also shares his color association, red (yellow, saffron), related, as is the peacock, to Kumāra's mythological association with Sūrya.¹³¹ As a Mātṛkā (and in Nepal one of the Navadurgā), Kaumārī is a distinct personality with a specific role in local cult practice. She has no direct association with Kumārī, the virgin Durgā, except as one of the Mātṛkās, all of whom figure in Kumārī's cult.

In contemporary Nepal, there is considerable overlap in the perception of these theoretically distinct goddesses. This is particularly evident with respect to two special manifestations of Kaumārī, Pāñca- and Bālaḥaumārī, known respectively as Pāñch Kumārī (Five Kumārīs), and Bāl Kumārī (Child Kumārī). But despite these colloquial Navadurgā and Navagraha is revealing in this respect (Pal and Bhattacharyya 1969:39). There are two "Komari," one identified with Ketu, the other with Mercury.

¹³¹ Rao 1968:11, 430-444.

names, fundamentally they are part of the cult not of Kumārī, but of the Mātṛkā Kaumārī.

With respect to Pāncakaumārī, this identification is substantiated by an investigation of one of her most famous manifestations. This is the Kathmandu goddess familiarly known as Maiti-devī or, alternately, Maiti-ajimā or Gyaneśvarī (Jñāneśvarī). Like other Mātṛkās, Maiti-devī has paired shrines, a *pīṭha* in the Gyaneśwar suburb of Kathmandu (Map 4:18) and a *deochem* in nearby Maligaon (Map 5:27).¹³² She also has a companion Bhairava in Unmatta Bhairava, whose *pīṭha* lies not far from her own. As the principal emblem of her Gyaneśwar temple *torāṇa*, Maiti-devī rides a peacock, is flanked by Kumāra and Gaṇeśa, and is surrounded by representations of companion Mātṛkās. Her preferred oblation is blood, tendered on Tuesday and especially Saturday, when she comes to her *pīṭha* in iconic form. Thus, the ensemble of the twin shrines, companion Bhairava, type of sacrifice, and explicit Kaumārī iconography establish Maiti-devī as Kaumārī, a Mātṛkā and *pīṭha-devatā*, not Kumārī, the virgin maiden. That Maiti-devī's chief festival is celebrated in Tihār, rather than Dasain, also further distinguishes her from Kumārī.

How Kaumārī came to be associated with the concept of a five-fold manifestation is unclear, and has yet to be investigated. Apparently unknown in India, Pāncakaumārī may be a Nepalese innovation. At her *pīṭha*, the goddess is represented by five stones, an assembly variously identified as five specific personalities. If the latter, one stone is invariably deemed Maiti-devī herself, another Dhanbhaju, Hārītī's thieving son immobilized at the site,¹³³ while the remaining three are identified as various other important goddesses, such as Dakṣiṇakālī or Manakāmana. Pāncakaumārī's name and symbolic pentad of stones also apparently evokes a conceptual association with Pacali Bhairava, a god whose name is often, if erroneously, supposed

¹³² Informants also claim Chetrapati, Kathmandu, as the seat of her *deochem*, a point of conflict I failed to resolve in my field research. This may be correct, and the Maligaon shrine in fact belong to a different Kaumārī manifestation, since she and Maiti-devī are sometimes listed as two of the Four Kaumārīs.

¹³³ Hārītī's attempted theft of flowers from Maiti-devī is alleged to be the source of the implacable enmity be-

to derive from *pāñca*. Significantly, only these two receive blood sacrifice indirectly through the medium of a *vetāla* that lies at the threshold of their sanctums (Plate 369). One thing is clear. There is no single conception respecting the identity and nature of this pentamerous goddess.

Although there is little doubt that today Pāncakaumārī is essentially the Mātṛkā Kaumārī, it seems more than probable that she evolved from the Buddhist Pañcarakṣā, five goddesses personifying protective charms (*dhāraṇīs*). In Nepal, and elsewhere, the most important of the five is Mahāmāyūrī, Great Peacock, protector from snake-bite.¹³⁴ Like Kaumārī, this spell goddess rides a peacock, symbolizing the Buddhist divinity's "Golden Peacock" mantra, and displays peacock feathers in her hand. The identification of Pāncakaumārī with the Pañcarakṣā, and in particular with Mahāmāyūrī, seems even more probable when we consider that the site of Pāncakaumārī's most famous shrine is known as "Māyūrī-tīrtha," whence the name Maiti- or Mayata-devī.¹³⁵ The *tīrtha* is now some distance from the Dhobi Khola, but the stream must have once coursed nearby, as confirmed by tradition as well as by the ruins of ghats and the site's continuing importance as a *masān*. A previous Buddhist occupation of the site may also explain both the anomaly of *vajrācārya* priests ministering the shrine of a Hindu Mātṛkā, and the presence of numerous *caityas* and Buddhist remains in the environs of her temple.

It seems possible that when the Mātṛkā were set up as protective rings around the cities (as discussed below), this Buddhist *tīrtha*, long an important feature of the sacred geography, accommodated the eastern guardian.¹³⁶ The peacock association of Mahāmāyūrī, the most prominent member of the previously installed divine pentad, made the peacock-riding Kaumārī, customary guardian of the southeastern compass point, the logical choice to share her predecessor's shrine. In time,

tween the two goddesses.

¹³⁴ Mallmann 1975:289 and n. 2; Getty 1962:136-139.

¹³⁵ Naraharinath 1966:101.

¹³⁶ In this connection, it is interesting that the Deopatan *upaḷo vanegu*, after crossing the river, makes a special detour to circumambulate the isolated shrine of Maiti-devī (Map 6).

the memory of the Pañcarakṣā and Mahāmāyūrī dimmed, but the five stones representing them endured. They were explained as the Five-times Illustrious Kaumārī (Śrī-pāñca K[a]umārī-devī), as she is referred to in inscriptions at the site. Finally the goddess was imagined to be a special five-fold form, Pāñcakaumārī or, more often, Pāñch Kumārī, the Five Kumārīs. In any event, Maiti-devī's close association in legend and cult with Hārītī, and her reputation as the special tutelary of witches,¹³⁷ suggests that this was not the first metamorphosis of the goddess. Maiti-devī is almost certainly a riverine *māi* or *ajimā*, fundamentally a chthonic divinity who long predated both Mahāmāyūrī and Kaumārī.

No less difficult to assess is Bāl Kumārī, a deity of considerable importance in the Kathmandu Valley. Like Pāñcakaumārī, Bālakaumārī is, in fact, Kaumārī who, while playing her proper role as a Mātṛkā, is often simultaneously perceived as Kumārī.¹³⁸ To my knowledge, the form is not familiar in India, and like Pāñcakaumārī may be a Valley innovation.

In addition to numerous shrines and temples, Bālakaumārī has four chief manifestations.¹³⁹ One, the most important, resides at Thimi; and a second, the Kvachem (fortress) Bālakaumārī, near Sankhamul, Patan (Plates 539, 554). But interestingly, the other two "Bālakaumārīs" correspond to Maiti-devī and a Kaumārī of nearby Maligaon. The latter is variously identified as a distinct manifestation, or simply Maiti-devī, as represented at her *deochem*. This teaming suggests that despite the difference in names, Nepalis essentially perceive Pāñca- and Bālakaumārī as one.

The prefix *bāla* attached to Kaumārī's name means "child." It apparently derives from her principal role as a fertility goddess and protector of children. Farmers look to her for rain and relief from famine and drought,¹⁴⁰ women seek her aid

in conception, and parents turn most often to her when their children sicken. The coconut, symbol of fertility, is required as an offering to Bālakaumārī, and by the scores they garland her Thimi sanctum.¹⁴¹ In contemporary Nepal, however, the inherent meaning of the name Bālakaumārī, "Kaumārī of Children" or the "Child's Kaumārī," has been quite altered. It is now construed as the "Child Kumārī," the redundant *bāla* and *kaumārī* determining the conception of the goddess herself as a little girl.

But that Bālakaumārī is, in fact, the Mātṛkā, and quite distinct from Kumārī is made clear by her iconography and cult. Consistent with Kumārī's feminine counterpart, Bālakaumārī rides the peacock (Plates 416, 539), a cognizance that usually adorns a tall standard near her shrines. As a Mātṛkā, she expects blood sacrifice (as Kumārī does not), is clearly a *piṭha-devatā*, and plays in every way a Mātṛkā's role. Finally, that she is Kaumārī is made clear at Bhaktapur, where Durgā's Kaumārī aspect is named Bālak[a]umārī. But even at Bhaktapur, where there is no doubt that she is the Mātṛkā Kaumārī, the misconception about her maturity is evident. In the dance ensemble representing the Navadurgā, whereas all the other Durgās are danced by adults, she alone is danced by a youth.

Like Pāñcakaumārī, the manifestation of Kaumārī as Bālakaumārī has yet to be investigated. Her genesis may have been in part dictated by her association with Kumārī, in principle a war god but more often conceived in youthful guise (Plates 415-417), and himself a protector of children. As Bālasvāmin, one of his many names, Kumārī would easily engender Bālakaumārī, a logical feminine counterpart. It is also probable that Bālakaumārī in fact represents an amalgam of Kaumārī with a predecessor *māi* or *ajimā*, a primitive ogress who, like Hārītī, in time metamorphosed into a

¹³⁷ Tradition holds that aspiring *boḥsis* who sacrifice seven consecutive days to Maiti-devī obtain her aid in their nefarious endeavors. Women without such aspirations, even if fervent devotees, therefore arrange a break in their daily devotions, taking care never to worship more than six days in a row.

¹³⁸ See Allen 1971:51-54.

¹³⁹ Wright 1966:70.

¹⁴⁰ Wright 1966:170.

¹⁴¹ Crooke 1896:106 writes that the rationale of the coconut as an offering related to fertility is its resemblance to a human head, making of it a suitable substitute for human sacrifice. In India and Nepal a pumpkin can also be substituted for blood sacrifice and, when necessary, even for the substitute coconut.

beneficent protector of children. At Thimi, "Bāl Kumārī" is the town's tutelary deity, and her shrine dominates the principal town square. Ultimately, she may have been the *grāmadevatā* who, despite manifold changes and accretions, has contrived to maintain a premier place into modern times.

*Propitiation:
Animal and Human Sacrifice*

The roles of the malevolent mother goddesses and their votaries are clearly defined, the one intent on doing evil, the other concerned with circumventing it. But the fruits and flowers that please Lakṣmī or Sarasvatī, the Buddha or Viṣṇu, are to no avail in propitiating this class of deity. There is a variety of foods acceptable to them; some foods are proper for one occasion but not for another, and some, like duck eggs, are agreeable to one deity, abhorrent to another. But these goddesses are *hitvādyo*, and the principal offering to all is flesh and blood—a custom now particularly Nepali as it falls into disuse in India.

The sacrificial animals are chiefly male water buffaloes, goats, and cocks, to which may be added two other selected creatures, normally rams and drakes, to complete the especially acceptable "five-animal sacrifice," *pāñcavalī*. Newar sacrifice is performed by disengaging the animal's jugular vein by a slit in the neck, and severing it in front of the divinity, whose image is sprayed and at length encrusted with the hot blood pumped out by the victim itself (Plates 451, 542, 548, 549).¹⁴² Satisfied with this part of the sacrifice, the deity returns the flesh to the donor. Frequently the horns of the sacrificial animal are fastened to the temple façade as a tally. Blood sacrifice may be made at any auspicious time, but the preferred occasions are Tuesday and Saturday. The weekly bloodletting at the shrine of Dakṣiṇakālī is second only to the Dasain sacrifice to Bhagavatī.

At a few shrines, the living animal is presented

¹⁴² For details, see Oldfield 1880:11, 346-350. It may be noted that the sacrificial animal is not perceived as "victimised," since it is given the chance to refuse the role. A few drops of water are sprinkled in the ear immediately before the sacrifice. Shaking it out signifies acquiescence.

to the deity but sacrificed elsewhere, a custom that the offerants themselves cannot satisfactorily explain. For example, the *vetāla* in the forecourt of Pacali Bhairava's *pīṭha* receives the blood consecrated to Bhairava (Plate 369), a custom paralleled at the *pīṭha* of Maiti-devī (Kaumārī). There is a similar custom at the temple of Vajrayoginī/Ugratārā/Ekajaṭā at Sankhu. Tradition holds that when Śaṅkarācārya allegedly reestablished orthodox Brahmanism in the Kathmandu Valley, he attempted to extirpate this popular Buddhist goddess. Since he was not able to do so, it was decided that the two *mārgas* should have equal access to the goddess, and that blood sacrifice could be offered to her.¹⁴³ But the actual sacrifice is not performed at the temple itself. The living creature is only shown to the goddess, and is slaughtered far down the hillside at the joint shrine of Bhairava and Gaṇeśa. This suggests that the long association of the site with Guṃ-vihāra exercised a restraining influence or, alternatively, that some chthonic *ajimā* underlies the present Vajrayāna manifestation. In contemporary Indian practice, primitive mother goddesses who have been Brahmanized into loftier concepts receive their oblations in this manner. The sacrificial animal is shown to them alive, and slaughtered at some distance from their shrine.¹⁴⁴

It is quite evident that the malevolently disposed goddesses, together with Bhairava, were not always content with animals, but demanded human sacrifice (*naravali*). This is testified by the chronicles, by the reports of nineteenth-century observers, by oral traditions, and by contemporary practices.

The late chronicles take *naravali* for granted in the Malla Period, and consider it an accepted Licchavi custom. They aver, for example, that Aṃśuvarman caused human flesh to be burned in the form of incense before a special Bhairava, and that humans were sacrificed to Vatsaladevī, a manifestation of Durgā.¹⁴⁵ Śivadeva I is said to have instituted the latter custom and recommended it to his successors. The sacrifice was to be tendered on Caitra-kṛṣṇa-dvādaśī, initiating a three-day festi-

Otherwise, the animal is presumed unwilling, and therefore unsuitable, and is released.

¹⁴³ Hasrat 1970:39.

¹⁴⁴ Kosambi 1960:26, 138.

¹⁴⁵ Hasrat 1970:41-43; Wright 1966:84-85.

val. On the following day youths and virgins were feasted, and on the third day (corresponding to the celebration of Piśāca-caturdaśī, discussed below) the goddesses were taken in procession. However, one Vāsudeva “discontinued the human sacrifice which was established by his great grandfather, and in lieu of it enjoined the sacrifice of a goat.”¹⁴⁶ The Wright chronicle identifies the reforming king as “Viswadeva-barma.” Perhaps both names signify Viṣṇugupta. The entry suggests, moreover, as many in the chronicles do, that though customs may be “a piece of cruelty,” even kings do not meddle lightly with those respecting the gods. The accustomed human sacrifice suppressed, “Nara-siva made a great noise. The Raja went to see what was the matter, and the Narasiva came to seize him.”¹⁴⁷ Wright’s *pandit* identifies Narasiva as a man-jackal (*nara-sivā*), and Wright questions whether it may have been the sacrificial priest. More likely it was a *lākhe* dancer, whose special role this seems to have been (Plate 587).

The late chronicles offer several descriptions of human sacrifices that seem too specific and too graphic to be mere fantasy. One such sacrifice, which entrained others, is alleged to have taken place in Patan in the late eighteenth century. The event coincided with one of the occasions when the Kathmandu ruler, Jayaprakāśamalla, briefly occupied the Patan throne. According to the account, one Sodhan, a resident of Bu-bahal, went with his companions to perform his customary early morning worship at the Vaiṣṇavī *pīṭha*. There the company surprised “a Sannyasi Gosain sitting on the body of a man, whom he had sacrificed, and performing anjanasadhan [*ajñāna* ? *sādhana*]. The Sannyasi, seeing these men enter the temple, ran away before he had completed the sadhan. Sodhan occupied his seat [on the corpse], completed the ceremony, and gave the anjan to his companions.” By accepting the “anjan,” the companions came into Sodhan’s power, took up residence with him, and assumed the name and char-

acter of the *pīṭha-devatā* assigned to each. Sodhan then instructed people not to go to the temples, “but to come to his house, where, he said, every god was to be found. He even sent men to fetch to [it the belongings of the gods, and] people brought many offerings, and Sodhan and his companions ate and drank freely. Jaya-prakasa heard of this, and sent men to arrest them. Many escaped, but all those who were caught were sacrificed, each to the Pitha-devata whom he had [im]personated.”¹⁴⁸

No less revealing of tantric practices involving human sacrifice is an account pertaining to the reign of Girvan Yuddha Shah, A.D. 1806-1837. Assuming the form of the horse Kalki, an avatar of Viṣṇu, an “insane Brahman” sacrificed to Guhyeśvarī a horse, a Kusle (descendant of the Kānphaṭā and allegedly the class of persons most commonly victimized for this purpose), and, unparalleled abomination, a Brahman woman.¹⁴⁹

Several Western observers also mentioned the practice of sacrificing humans in the Kathmandu Valley in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Wright rather graphically described the “suicides” at Kālā Bhairava’s shrine, Francis Hamilton was told of such sacrifice, and Lévi reported that Kañkeśvarī claimed human victims.¹⁵⁰

The oral tradition which affirms that until very recent times certain goddesses were given human sacrifice, at least occasionally, is so widespread that it cannot be lightly dismissed. Two of the most rapacious were Sikālī-devī (Mahālakṣmī) of Khokana and Harasiddhi Bhavānī-triśakti (Jantala-devī) of Harasiddhi (Jala) village. Harasiddhi, in Nepal a somewhat anomalous deity who is in essence Durgā but sometimes considered male (Plate 538),¹⁵¹ is said to have been particularly demanding. All agree on her insatiable appetite and the extreme fear she inspired because of it; most also agree that the custom of appeasing her with *naravali* was in vogue up to a half-century ago.¹⁵² Even now there are many Nepalis who feel uneasy about but at her temple in Dhulikhel, although the image on the *torana* depicts a goddess, she is worshiped as a god. Wright 1966:88 n. 126 also notes the bisexual nature of the Nepalese Harasiddhi.

¹⁵² Instructive in this respect is the legend about the Harasiddhi dancers told by Kesar Lall 1966:36.

¹⁴⁶ Hasrat 1970:42.

¹⁴⁷ Wright 1966:87 n. 121.

¹⁴⁸ Wright 1966:170-171.

¹⁴⁹ Wright 1966:180.

¹⁵⁰ Wright 1966:7 n. 4; Hamilton 1971:35-36, 211; Lévi 1905:1, 378.

¹⁵¹ She is considered a goddess in Harasiddhi village,

the safety of their children with respect to this voracious goddess. For it is widely held that at least at the close of every twelve-year cycle, Harasiddhi's hierophants abduct a child, preferably a little girl, to gratify their goddess. The future victim, so it is declared, is kept in seclusion and trained for the honor of serving the goddess in this way. Immediately prior to her sacrifice she is adorned with fine clothing and ornaments, feasted, and drugged with alcohol or *bhān* (hemp). Reminiscent of the human-flesh incense *Aṃśuvarman* allegedly offered *Bhairava*, the body of the sacrificed child is said to be dried and powdered.¹⁵³ Known as the "supreme incense" (*mahā dhūpa*), the powder commands a high price as a powerful agent of sorcery and a potent protective charm.

The goddess *Naradevī* (*Neta-ajimā*, *Cāmuṇḍā*) of Kathmandu has a similarly unsavory reputation. People claim that she was such a notorious eater of men (*nara*, whence her name *Naradevī*), that she was at last entreated to desist. She agreed to forego her daily *naravali*, but warned that she would henceforth consume the same number at one time. Thus the heavy loss of life occasioned by the 1934 earthquake is commonly laid at *Naradevī*'s door.

Perhaps the most unimpeachable testimony respecting the offering of human sacrifice to the mother goddesses comes from the traditions respecting two famous *Mātrkās* of Kathmandu, *Kaṅga-ajimā* (*Kaṅkeśvarī*, *Cāmuṇḍā*) and *Lutī-ajimā* (*Indrāṇī*) (Map 4:5, 6). *Kaṅga-ajimā* is particularly notorious for her appetite for human flesh. *Amaramalla* thought it prudent to discontinue her annual dance festival because on one occasion she took the opportunity to eat one of the dancers while he was in animal disguise.¹⁵⁴ Both she and *Lutī-ajimā* reaped an annual sacrifice on the occasion of the celebration of *Siṭhī-nakha*.¹⁵⁵ For several evenings, but especially on the sixth and last

night (*saṣṭhī*, *siṭhī*) the inhabitants of the northern half of the city (formerly *Yaṃbu*) and the southern half (*Yaṅgala*) assembled in the dry bed of the *Vishnumati* to fight and often kill one another in a battle of stones. Prisoners seized from the *Yaṃbu* faction were forthwith sacrificed to *Kaṅkeśvarī*, whose shrine lay in *Yaṅgala*, and *Yaṅgala* prisoners to *Lutī-ajimā*, in *Yaṃbu* territory (Map 7).

Traditionally, the custom is said to have been instituted by King *Guṇakāmadeva*, the legendary founder of Kathmandu, in response to a command of the war god, *Kārttikeya*. In the mid-eighteenth century, *Jayaprakāśamalla* ordered an end to these bizarre rites, but a supernatural noise heard soon afterward caused him to remand his order and respect the ancient tradition. The battles continued with great earnestness into the early nineteenth century, with many contestants seriously wounded or killed. By that time, however, the prisoners were no longer dragged off and killed with buffalo bones, but were released after a night's captivity. But according to *Wright* the sacrifices were not discontinued until the mid-nineteenth century, when *Jang Bahadur Rana* abolished the institution "on the occasion of the British Resident, *Colvin*, being struck by a stone whilst looking on." The slaughter at the temple of *Lutī-ajimā* of a number of priests whom *Rana Bahadur Shah* suspected of sorcery in the death of his father suggests, given the goddess' reputation, that human sacrifices nonetheless continued to be made to the awful goddess.¹⁵⁶ Even at the turn of the century, *Lévi* affirmed that her companion, *Kaṅkeśvarī*, still claimed an annual human sacrifice.¹⁵⁷ Today the battles and sacrifices have ceased. Moreover, quite inexplicably, considering how strong tradition is in *Nepal Mandala*, the custom appears to be altogether forgotten by the Nepalese.¹⁵⁸

Some contemporary practices may also echo a time when it was an accepted custom to appease

¹⁵³ Allen 1975:52.

¹⁵⁴ *Naraharinath* 1966:40-41; *Wright* 1966:139; *Hasrat* 1970:62.

¹⁵⁵ See Chapters 5 and 9.

¹⁵⁶ *Wright* 1966:105 n. 167, 154; *Hasrat* 1970:47, 94; *Hamilton* 1971:43-45.

¹⁵⁷ *Lévi* 1905:1, 378.

¹⁵⁸ *Hasrat* 1970:47 n. 2, an observer in *Nepal* in 1966,

reported that the *Newars* still hold mock battles in which they pelt each other with stones and other objects every evening during the celebration of *Siṭhīnakha*. But during my years in Kathmandu (1965-1971) I saw no evidence of the continuation of the tradition in folk behavior, nor could I find anyone who recalled the tradition. Such fighting does take place between *Upper* and *Lower Bhaktapur* on the occasion of *Bisket-jātrā*.

the goddesses with the sacrifice of human flesh, even one's own. The most widely known example of such sacrifice in modern Nepal takes place in Bode village on the occasion of the New Year celebration. Then, as an offering to Mahālakṣmī, ritually prepared men run spikes or needles through their outstretched tongues. Afterward, bearing clusters of lamps on their heads and displaying their outstretched, needle-filled tongues, they pass through the village in procession, returning at length to Mahālakṣmī. There they extract the needles and plug the holes with mud scraped from the floor of the goddess' shrine.¹⁵⁹

Like the practice of affixing burning lamps to one's body—as is done also in nearby villages like Thimi and Nakadesh—the Bode tongue-boring rite is clearly associated with tantric sacrificial practices, and has remote antecedents in India and further afield. For example, in the Pallava and early Chola Periods in seventh- and eighth-century south India, Durgā was offered *navakāṇḍam*, that is, flesh cut from nine parts of the body; we learn from the *Harṣacarita* of similar practices in northern India.¹⁶⁰ In order to avert the king's death "nobles were burning themselves with lamps to propitiate the Mothers. . . . In another place a group of relatives was intent on an oblation of their own flesh, which they severed with keen knives. Elsewhere, again, young courtiers were openly resorting to the sale of human flesh."¹⁶¹ In modern India, as in the Kathmandu Valley, the echo of such self-sacrifice to the gods also persists.¹⁶²

Another contemporary practice in the Kathmandu Valley almost certainly reflects the onetime sacrifice of humans to the goddesses. This concerns the "catching fish" (*na lākhegu*) rite of masked dancers who impersonate the Navadurgā in Bhaktapur. As part of their performance, the dancing divinities pretend to seize little children who, half in terror, half in fun, scramble wildly to elude

them.¹⁶³ Despite the apparent good fun surrounding "catching fish" today, the rite must once have been more somber. Originally it probably provided a means for the random seizure of sacrificial victims. Very likely this was one of the methods by which the Harasiddhi Navadurgā dancers obtained their sacrificial victim. In other dance performances also, masked dancers pretend to seize people, and sometimes have to be literally dragged away from their "victims" by the dancing divinity's attendants. Perhaps that was what the "man-jackal" Naraśivā had in mind when, protesting the deprivation of Vatsaladevi's customary sacrifice, he "made a great noise" and tried to seize the king.

It seems likely that the transition from human to animal sacrifice often involved an intermediary step in which a human effigy was offered, perhaps in company with a substitute animal. This is suggested by an account respecting Raṇajitmalla's difficulty in performing *koṭyahuti* correctly, to rectify which he was advised to offer human sacrifice. Instead, at the instigation of a concubine, the officiating priest made an image of the king's son, but "no sooner had the [priest] committed the image to the flames than the Rajah's son and heir . . . died."¹⁶⁴

Caretakers and Priests

The goddesses who dwell in the Kathmandu Valley are courted by all, but in their terrific forms it is the Newars who dominate the cult. Most of the shrines and *pīthas* of this class of goddess are in charge of the Newar untouchable castes. They function as caretakers, not as priests, known as *dyo-*, *deopāla*, or *deola*, and have the right to the offerings tendered at the shrine. The majority are Poḍe, but some are Kasain, Cyāme, or Kusle—sweepers, butchers, former public executioners, supervisors of cremations, and holders of similar unpleasant occupations. It is baffling how such castes came to control these shrines, but it is very likely

to have been approved in the Kathmandu Valley, it is difficult to understand the copper plaques that are said to be substitute sacrifices (Rawson 1972: figs. 6-9). Perhaps they were used in the household shrines, where it would have been awkward to perform real blood sacrifice of large animals like those depicted on the plaques. I never encountered them in Nepal.

¹⁵⁹ For a description of the tongue-boring rite, see Anderson 1971:47-49.

¹⁶⁰ Sircar 1967:27; Bhattacharji 1970:168.

¹⁶¹ Lorenzen 1972:17.

¹⁶² Sarkar 1972:103-105.

¹⁶³ Gutschow and Kölver 1975:44.

¹⁶⁴ Hasrat 1970:61. Since animal sacrifice seems always

a corollary of tantric practices in which caste distinctions were purposely abrogated, a "left-handed" turn intensifying their effectiveness.¹⁶⁵

No less puzzling is that the hereditary priests who serve the goddesses, predominantly aspects of Durgā, are so often *vajrācāryas* rather than Hindu priests, that is, Brahmans or the Newar *ḥarmācāryas*. Cases in point are Maiti-devī (Kaumārī) and Naradevī (Cāmuṇḍā) in Kathmandu, and Brahmāṇī in Bhaktapur, all Mātṛkās served by *vajrācāryas*. Even the goddesses' cult associate Bhairava is sometimes tended by a *vajrācārya*—for example, the Kathmandu Akāśa Bhairava. Still other goddesses, such as Mhaipi-ajimā (who conceptually is both Jñānaḍākinī and Maheśvarī) and Vajravārāhī (in Nepal at once a Buddhist *dāḥinī* and the Mātṛkā Vārāhī) are ministered solely by a *vajrācārya*. Similarly, the priest of Tundikhel Mahākāla, worshiped in both Buddhist and Brahmanical guise, is a *vajrācārya*.

Certain priests, such as those of Harasiddhi or Sikālī-devī of Khokana, are of special interest, since they cling to ancient traditions of coiffure and dress, wearing their long hair in a bun, and on ceremonial occasions donning a turban, shirt, and ankle-length pleated skirt. Their garb bears certain affinities with female dress, and perhaps reflects a time when priestesses played a role in the affairs of these deities.

There is considerable variation respecting the approachability of these goddesses by their votaries. Most can be worshiped directly without recourse to a priestly intermediary, but some are conceived to be extraordinarily dangerous, and the wise eschew direct contact. As an extra precaution, such deities may be shielded from view by a curtain. Even the safety of a stranger is feared for in the presence of these dread goddesses. In my wanderings, children often warned me away with a concerned "she'll get you if you don't watch out!"¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 576-577 also suspects that this is the reason.

¹⁶⁶ The welcome of strangers at the shrines of the mother goddesses varies. For example, in Kathmandu I could study at leisure the Mātṛkās enshrined with Macali-ajimā, but was denied by the discomfited temple guardian more than a glimpse of the same assembly at Wotu-tol. Again, although one of the priests of Changu Nārāyana

Social Organization and Celebrations

The relationship of the mother goddesses and their advocates is an intensely personal one. Paśupati may have bared his fangs to intimidate Mukunda Sena, the Palpa invader, or Changu Nārāyana may have spoken from within his shuttered shrine, but always it has been the mother goddesses who have been the most articulate and who have entertained the closest personal relationship with mortals. Their votaries most often intercede with them directly, and the goddesses are often veritable "mothers," personally rewarding or punishing their "children" as occasion demands. Jayavāgīśvarī, for example, once nailed a thief to his tracks, and Kumārī presented to a favored suppliant a golden buffalo head "with the value [of which] he made a suit of silver armour set with precious stones."¹⁶⁷ The goddesses served as chief advisors to kings, discoursed with them, and gave their divine permission in royal undertakings. Harasiddhi, for example, personally directed Ratnamalla to take control of Kathmandu; and so that the destitute Jayaprakāśamalla might regain his throne, Guhyeśvarī created a fearful army visible to the enemy alone. Displeased, Taleju refused to dice any longer with her lustful votary, Pratāpamalla, and Harasiddhi caused the licentious king to "vomit blood from the mouth" and die.¹⁶⁸

All the divinities are conceived to have human needs, and their images are bathed, fed, oiled, and clothed as animate beings. But the mother goddesses even more faithfully reflect human society together with its vanities and follies. The goddesses may be immortals, but they are part of an interlocking kinship system in which they are also mothers and daughters, wives and sisters, and procreate sons and daughters. Some are poor, some rich, some weak, and some powerful, and no less than mortals the goddesses are beset with petty

became a warm friend, he took care to see that I never glimpsed the headless Chinnamastā and her companions in the courtyard temple. Yet, paradoxically, I received an unsolicited invitation to visit the bloody upstairs sanctuary of the fearful Sikālī-devī of Khokana.

¹⁶⁷ Hasrat 1970:57; Wright 1966:136.

¹⁶⁸ Hasrat 1970:79.

quarrels and jealousies. So, too, they are intent on the pleasures of social life with its frequent outings and visits, feasts and festivals.

The mother goddesses are often conceived of as sisters. In Thecho village, for example, where both Bālakaumārī and Brahmāṇī have important temples, Bālakaumārī is considered to be the latter's younger sister.¹⁶⁹ A more complex situation exists in larger settlements such as Kathmandu, where a large number of goddesses are held to be sisters. Among the Kathmandu sisters, the four most important are Lumarhī-ajimā (Bhadrakālī), Kaṅga-ajimā (Cāmuṇḍā), Lutī-ajimā (Indrāṇī), and Luchubhalu-ajimā (Cāmuṇḍā). Although cloaked with alternate Mātṛkā names, each has clearly preserved a distinct personality that may be a legacy from their ultimate source as indigenous mothers or grandmothers. Among the four sisters, Bhadrakālī is held to be the eldest and Kaṅkeśvarī the youngest. While the latter's name must derive from one of Cāmuṇḍā's epithets, Kaṅkālī (Fleshless One), popularly it suggests the local kinship term *kāncī* (youngest sister), and has thus apparently determined her kinship position.

Another sister, Lutī-ajimā (Indrāṇī), was traditionally the poorest of them all, and burdened with many children, as well. In a tale all too reminiscent of human folly, Lutī-ajimā, because of her ragged appearance, was slighted at a family feast given by the elder sister, Bhadrakālī. But later Lutī-ajimā repaired her fortunes through a miraculous acquisition of gold (*luṭī*, "liquid gold") that came from the blood of one of her brood injured at the feast. Or, as another account has it, the gold was distilled from a pot of nettles she prepared in lieu of the feast of which they were deprived. But because she had been despised when poor, Lutī-ajimā chose henceforth to celebrate her annual festival apart from that of her sisters. Thus while all the others convene on Goblin's Fourteenth (Piśāca-caturdaśī, Paçāre), Lutī-ajimā alone celebrates on Bala's Fourteenth, a day sacred to the memory of the demon Bala. Similarly, two other "sisters," Hārītī and Maiti-devī (Kaumārī) are engaged in an implacable feud over the theft of some flowers. Their an-

¹⁶⁹ There are four celebrated manifestations of Avalokiteśvara, the Four Lokeśvaras (Red and White Matsyendranātha, Ādinātha of Chobar, and Karuṇāmaya of Nala),

tagonism dictates, moreover, that those who worship the one must forgo worship of the other.

Sometimes the goddesses are perceived as children. Almost everywhere the two guardian figures Singhini and Baghini are identified as the son and daughter of the principal deity. Or again, when worshipers are questioned about the identity of the smaller boulders that usually flank that of the principal deity—for example, the twelve with Kaṅkeśvarī—the stones are most often identified as her children. Yet the iconography of the *prabhāmaṇḍala* surrounding each boulder declares them to be related Mātṛkās, Gaṇeśa, Bhairava, Siṃha-, and Vyāghravaktrā.

Like humans, the goddesses also have ancestral homes (Nepali, *maiti ghara*; Newari, *thachen*: "mother's house") that they must leave on the occasion of their marriage. Thus, in the Newar villages a given goddess' *pīṭha* outside the town is equated with the *maiti ghara* where the "mother" still dwells, although her "daughter" has moved to the *deochem* in the town. At Lubhu, for example, Mahālakṣmī, the "mother," dwells at the *pīṭha* in the distant fields, while Mahālakṣmī, the "daughter," lives in town. Similarly, at Sunaguthi, "Mother Bālakaumārī" is to be found outside the town, "Daughter Bālakaumārī" within.

Just as humans are sometimes nostalgic for the family home, so also are the goddesses, who therefore occasionally return to it. Such a one is the Nakwa Bhagavatī, according to tradition a goddess brought from Nawakot by Prithvi Narayan Shah and installed in the Karna-chok, Hanuman Dhoka (Figure 1:27). Annually, on Caitra-pūrṇimā, she is permitted a nine-day leave of absence, much of which is spent on the winding footpaths between the capital city and her *maiti ghara* in Nawakot. On arrival, Bhagavatī is offered the traditional *pāñcavali*, five-animal sacrifice, and ceremonially conducted into the town to spend the coveted one or two nights at home before returning to Kathmandu. Then, at the shrine of Ajimā in Balaju, she is received again with *pāñcavali*, and escorted back to her temple in Hanuman Dhoka.

The goddesses, no less than those who worship

who are often held to be sisters. On the "four brothers" see Wylie 1970:14 n. 20.

them, enjoy outings of various kinds. Sometimes they are impromptu calls, such as the time Vatsaladevī was discovered sitting in Lutī-ajimā's shrine.¹⁷⁰ At other times they are more formal occasions surrounded with much pomp and ceremony. One such formal outing is that of the Kathmandu Kumārī; another is that of Bhadrakālī (Vaiṣṇavī) of Bhaktapur when, on Bisket-jātrā, she is pulled abroad in a towering chariot.¹⁷¹ During her rounds she meets, quarrels or mates, runs away, is placated with the gift of a new blouse, and makes up with her consort Bhairava, who is similarly pulled about in an even grander chariot of his own.¹⁷²

The principal outing for the Kathmandu sisters, Lutī-ajimā excepted, is during Piśāca-caturdaśī (Pacāre), Goblin's (Ghost's, Demon's) Fourteenth, when they jointly celebrate a three-day festival.¹⁷³ In iconic form, the goddesses are carried by their followers in gaily decorated palanquins (*ḥhatas*) that, transferred from shoulder to shoulder, are rushed about the town in ceaseless motion for the duration of the festival. Honored beneath a red umbrella, and accompanied by the traditional instrumental groups and a tumultuous crowd of partisans, each goddess whirls through the narrow streets of the old city, carefully avoiding some sisters and meeting in prescribed ways and places other sisters out celebrating in the same way. For even the friendly sisters must carefully observe the ritually prescribed relationships that operate to channel the affairs of human society.¹⁷⁴ These same icons, stored meanwhile in the *deochem* of each, are also given an outing every Saturday when, in common with many other terrific mother goddesses, they are taken to their *pīthas* to spend the day (Plates 539, 542). Other images are brought from the

¹⁷⁰ Hasrat 1970:82.

¹⁷¹ Legends that purport to explain the festival suggest that originally it was for the goddess alone, and that the Bhairava aspect, which now overshadows that of the goddess, was a later addition. The exact identity of the goddess honored at Bisket-jātrā is puzzling. At her *pītha* at Yashimkhel (Field of the Linga), where the chief and final events of the festival take place, she is Vaiṣṇavī, one of the Navadurgā/Aṣṭamātrkā; but for the purpose of the festival she is called Bhadrakālī. As Vaiṣṇavī her Bhairava consort is Krodha Bhairava (Terrible Bhairava), whose *pītha* lies nearby; as Bhadrakālī it is the Bhairava of the

homes of various outcastes such as the Poḍe, who claim to be unafraid to house these dread goddesses in their own homes.

Except to the goddesses' Newar partisans, Piśāca-caturdaśī is of limited religious importance in the calendar round of festivals celebrated in the Kathmandu Valley today. Now its salient aspect is Ghoḍa-jātrā, a national celebration best compared to a fun-filled sports rally. Increasingly secularized, Ghoḍa-jātrā's metamorphosis is typified by the vestigial role that Kumārī and the white stallion now play, and the elimination of Bhadrakālī's once paramount role. But there are many indications that Piśāca-caturdaśī was once a celebration of fundamental religious significance, designed perhaps to minimize the ill effects of an inauspicious planetary conjunction. As such it was particularly concerned with the chthonic forces and the indigenous "root" manifestations of deity in the Valley. This is clear in the number and kind of rites devoted to this class of deity during this same three-day period, the last two days of the dark half of Phālguna and the first day of Caitra. Each rite may be in itself of minor or purely local significance, but taken together they are very suggestive. For not only is it a time of complex rituals involving the mother goddesses, it is also a time when various other gods, and more particularly, godlings, have their day. It is on Goblin's Fourteenth, for example—significantly the one day in the year—that Luku-Mahādeva, the enigmatic Hidden Śiva, is worshiped. It is then, too, that the men of Itum-bahal, Kathmandu, shoulder their *nols*, and through the dark and sleeping streets carry their promised annual feast to the reformed cannibal, Gurumāpā, now safely installed in the open Tun-

Taumadhi-tol temple. Gutschow and Kölver 1975:46 n. 2 also pondered this dichotomy, but were not able to explain it. On Bisket-jātrā see Anderson 1971:41-49; Gutschow and Kölver 1975:pls. 9-10, 46-48; Auer and Gutschow 1974:14-16.

¹⁷² The forceful collision of the chariots at one point in the procession is variously interpreted as the deities fighting or mating.

¹⁷³ On the festival of Lutī-ajimā, see Anderson 1971:194-197.

¹⁷⁴ For a lively description of some of these outings, see Anderson 1971:268-271.

dikhel beyond the city walls.¹⁷⁵ In that same place lives the chastened demon Ṭunḍi, run underground, it is said, by the galloping horses that still course the field for that purpose on Ghoda-jātrā.¹⁷⁶

Not only is it clear that Goblin's Fourteenth was related to the worship of chthonic divinities—the mother goddesses in their fearful aspects, various godlings, demons, and ogres—but there are many clues to suggest that it was a special time for appeasing them with human sacrifice. The lore associated with Gurumāpā and Ṭunḍi, for example, suggest that both were accustomed to eating human flesh, especially in the form of succulent children (Plate 585). This delicacy was at length denied Gurumāpā by the simple expedient of negotiating a substitute feast. The less fortunate Ṭunḍi, however, similarly denied his accustomed food, was left to his own devices. Thus it is held that even now at least one child inexplicably disappears at Ghoda-jātrā. Further, it hardly seems fortuitous that it was just prior to Piśāca-caturdaśī that Śiva-deva is alleged to have ordered human sacrifice to be given Vatsaladevi.¹⁷⁷ The feasting of “unmarried boys and virgins,” rather than a pleasurable event, has a sinister overtone when we consider “catching fish” and the traditions concerning the feasting of Harasiddhi's intended victims. “Unmarried boys and virgins,” moreover, sounds suspiciously like the Kumārī-gaṇa. It suggests that more profound investigation of this institution, as well as the myriad manifestations of Piśāca-caturdaśī, might lead us down some very intriguing pathways into the Valley's—and man's—past.

The Mātrkās as Regents of Space

A fundamental role of the mother goddesses is as guardian protectors of Nepal Mandala, a task specif-

¹⁷⁵ On Gurumāpā see Chapter 12 and Slusser 1972a:3-4.

¹⁷⁶ Anderson 1971:266-267.

¹⁷⁷ Wright 1966:84. The date given in the chronicle is the “12th of Chait Badi” (Caitra-śukla-dvādaśī), thus the fortnight following Phālguna-kṛṣṇa. But the third day after is specifically defined as Piśāca-caturdaśī, hence we must assume the date meant was Phālguna-kṛṣṇa-dvādaśī.

¹⁷⁸ This is also true in India (Rao 1968:11, 356).

¹⁷⁹ Rāhu originally represented the demon of the eclipse, and Ketu a deification of comets and meteors (Mallmann 1963:81).

ically devolving on the Mātrkās, the collective manifestation of Durgā. Charged with the guardianship of encompassing space, the Mātrkās have usurped the traditional *diḱpāla* role of such venerable gods as Agni, Indra, and others. One of the most common types of worship accorded them, the *disi pūjā*, is concerned with this role. Each goddess is assigned a special direction, the four cardinal and four intermediate points of the compass and its center.¹⁷⁸ These positions are not immutable, as were those of their Vedic predecessors, but may vary from place to place and time to time. For example, the directions assigned the Mātrkās in an eighteenth-century Nepali manuscript do not correspond to those over which the same goddesses preside in contemporary Bhaktapur (Map 9; Plate 534).

Not only do the Mātrkās guard the compass points, but they are also regarded as regents of the sky. As the Navagraha they are equated with the Navagraha, male personifications of the so-called Nine Planets, that is, five planets (Saturn, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Mercury), the sun, the moon, and the moon's ascending and descending nodes (Rāhu and Ketu).¹⁷⁹ In Nepali dogma, each Mātrkā has a definite association; for example, Cāmuṇḍā with Saturn, Indrāṇī with Venus, and Vaiṣṇavī with Sūrya, the sun.¹⁸⁰ Each also presides over specific days of the lunar calendar. In Hindu-Buddhist thought the astral bodies are conceived as exercising a direct influence on human affairs. They can “possess” individuals—hence their collective name, “Seizers”—and when angered they cause wars, epidemics, and other baleful visitations.¹⁸¹ Thus the Navagraha are regularly propitiated to render them favorable, and are worshiped with special rites in time of danger. Given the similarity of name and the correspondence of number

¹⁸⁰ Pal and Bhattacharyya 1969:39-43. Neither the Nepali complement nor the association agrees with the Indian conception (Banerjea 1956:490 n. 1). In this connection it is interesting to note that the Navagraha are integrated into the tantric Buddhist pantheon, and that, further, in Nepal the Buddhist Dhāraṇīs known as the Seven Days (Saptavāra), counterparts of the Mātrkās, are also associated with the planets (Mallmann 1975:276; van Kooij 1977:60-66).

¹⁸¹ Banerjea 1956:429; Mallmann 1963:81; 1975:276; Wright 1966:181.

and malevolent disposition, it is little wonder that the Navagraha and Navadurgā came to be identified as one manifestation.¹⁸²

As guardian protectors, the images and symbols, shrines and temples of the Mothers are everywhere in the Kathmandu Valley. In this role they at times invade even the *vihāras* (Plate 163). All the towns and many villages have one or more large rectangular temple in which the group is worshipped as an ensemble in iconic form. Almost invariably the Eight Mothers are accompanied by Gaṇeśa and Bhairava, sometimes Śiva in other forms, and often Baghini, Singhini, and other deities. Oddly, Vīrabhadra, the inevitable companion of the Indian Saptamātrkā, is absent. Overshadowing these temples in religious significance is the ensemble of paired Navadurgā shrines, the *deochem* with its icon, the *pīṭha* with its boulder. Roughly corresponding to the compass points over which each goddess is believed to preside, the *pīṭhas* are situated around the towns, the cities, the Valley, and even beyond in ever-widening circles of divine protection. There is practically no city and few villages that are not ringed by the Mothers.¹⁸³ Patan appears to be an exception, where the Daśamahāvidyā are the most important collective. But even in Patan one encounters members of the Eight or Nine, such as Bālakaumārī and the ubiquitous Cāmuṇḍā.

It is the set of Navadurgā at Bhaktapur that best illustrates the traditional role of the Mātrkās as guardians of Nepal Mandala. In this city, the Nine Durgās are of particular importance in contemporary practice. They are the primary cultural theme to which all Bhaktapur is tuned. The collective consists of the traditional Eight Mothers complement, to which Tripura-sundarī, a form of Durgā,

¹⁸² One wonders whether the transition from male personalities to female ones was facilitated by the concept of *dikḥanyā*, a quarter of the sky identified with a young virgin.

¹⁸³ See Gutschow and Bajracharya 1977 on those encircling Kathmandu. Similar sets may be traced out at Thimi and many other settlements.

¹⁸⁴ Auer and Gutschow 1974:22 mistakenly took Taleju to be the ninth manifestation; Kölver 1976:69 correctly defined it as Tripura-sundarī. The Navadurgā complement as defined by Bhaktapur votaries varies greatly. Deities are often held to be identical—for example, Indrāṇī and Bāla-

is added to complete the Nine Durgās.¹⁸⁴ These nine goddesses are the city's chief guardians, and when Bhaktapur was a city-state, they were particularly cherished in times of war. As manifestations of the Navagraha, they must also have been propitiated when Śitalā stalked abroad, or when Bhūkadyo shook the earth, bringing even palaces and temples low. Each of the Nine Durgās is charged with superintending the particular section of space over which, at Bhaktapur, she is conceived to preside (Map 9).¹⁸⁵ Eight of the *pīṭhas* ring the city in a protective enclosure, seven (or possibly only six) of which lie just outside the former course of the city walls. The ninth Durgā, Tripura-sundarī, presides over the Tripura palace area, once the mystic if not geographic center of the Bhaktapur state.

In conformity with the dictum that each *śakti-pīṭha* is to have a companion Bhairava, each of the Bhaktapur Navadurgā is so endowed. Although there are many Bhairavas in and around the city, these companion Bhairavas are formalized as a special group, the Aṣṭabhairava. Each of the Navadurgā also has a *deochem* within the town (Plate 555); together they share an impressive temple at Gache-tol, at the eastern end of the city (Map 9: c-10); and they enjoy numerous secondary temples dedicated to their collective worship.

Among the many concentric rings of divine protection around the city, the Navadurgā are intermediate between smaller spiritual circles within the walls and larger ones in the Valley, on its rim, and beyond. The inner circles are the collective shrines of the Nine Durgās' companion Bhairavas, Gaṇeśas, and the Daśamahāvidyā; the outer circles chiefly repeat manifestations of the Navadurgā set, their Bhairavas, and other mother goddesses.¹⁸⁶ Together,

kaumārī—while others such as Bhairava, Gaṇeśa, Singhini, Baghini, and other divinities associated with them are often named Durgās. From some informants I have collected the names of as many as eighteen "Nine" Durgās.

¹⁸⁵ I differ from Auer and Gutschow 1974:22 in the location of the Kaumārī *pīṭha* and *deochem*. I identified the Kaumārī (Bālakaumārī) *pīṭha* and *deochem* as lying between those of Mahālakṣmī and Brāhmaṇī, but Auer and Gutschow locate the K[a]umārī *pīṭha* and *deochem* between Vaiṣṇavī and Maheśvarī.

¹⁸⁶ N. Paudel 1963:31-32; Gutschow and Kölver 1975: 22; Auer and Gutschow 1974:38.

the *pīthas* of the Navadurgā in effect comprise a mystic diagram, a *yantra*, *yonī-caḥra*, *maṇḍala*, or *diḥmaṇḍala* (directional mandala) (cf. Plate 534). Tripura-sundarī as “Sovereign of the Mandala” (*maṇḍaleśa*), occupies the central sanctum; the Aṣṭamātrkā occupy the peripheral gallery (*paṭṭikā*). In fact, the city becomes a fully developed mandala composed of concentric galleries—circles or squares—the intermediary ones occupied by the Bhairavas, Gaṇeśas, and Mahāvidyās, the peripheral gallery by the Mātrkā, and, beyond, the cremation grounds. The one-time city wall compares broadly to the *prākāra*, the enclosing “wall” of the mandala, and the city gates to the *toranas*, the gateways to the sanctum.¹⁸⁷ By extending the mandala perimeter to the rim of the Valley and beyond with other divine ensembles, Bhaktapur and Tripura-sundarī, its “Sovereign,” lie at the center of a Great Mandala (*mahāmaṇḍala*). Some of Bhaktapur’s shrines also serve again as segments of intersecting galleries that enclose other distant sanctums—Kathmandu, for example.¹⁸⁸ In sum, Bhaktapur may be a city where mortals dwell, but effectively they are born, develop their lives, and die in the midst of a mandala filled with immortals, a polychrome *pāta* comparable to those in the shrines they frequent.¹⁸⁹ The town is nothing more or less than a “mandala to walk on, a spiritual instrument to overcome the manifested world.”¹⁹⁰

The mandala scheme of Bhaktapur (like others in the Kathmandu Valley) is geometrically imperfect because in all likelihood the tantric concepts that inspired it postdate the evolved city and a preexisting sacred geography. As we know, Bhaktapur was not a planned city, but gradually co-

¹⁸⁷ One of the most concise descriptions of a mandala may be found in Mallmann 1975:41-42; see also Monod-Bruhl 1971.

¹⁸⁸ Gutschow and Bajracharya 1977.

¹⁸⁹ Niels Gutschow, in collaboration with others (Auer and Gutschow 1974; Gutschow and Kölver 1975; Gutschow and Bajracharya 1977, and various forthcoming works) has done the most original and extensive work pertaining to the concepts of ordered space in the Kathmandu Valley, with particular reference to Bhaktapur. Respecting the conception of Bhaktapur as a mandala, see especially the Bhaktapurako-nakṣa (Map of Bhaktapur), an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century Nepali painting reproduced by Auer and Gutschow 1974:38 and Kölver

alesced from diverse settlements beading one of the highways to Tibet. Village gods, the *grāmadevatās*, the shrines of *māīs* and *ajimās*, endured, and these preexisting sanctuaries, sanctified by long traffic, were the core to which, over time, the various ensembles needed for realizing the mandala were joined.¹⁹¹ The employment of such shrines, scattered at random in and around the ancient settlements, thus dictated the irregular pattern of the *pīṭha* ensembles, and with them the geometrically imperfect mandala.¹⁹² The use of ancient shrines also plausibly explains the anomaly of Mahālakṣmī’s *pīṭha*, which alone of the *pīṭhas* of the Eight Mothers once clearly lay within the city walls.¹⁹³ The sanctity of the old shrine forbade moving it to an optimal location outside the wall; engineering or other considerations dictated the latter’s course, thus enclosing the *pīṭha* within the city.

The choice of Tripura-sundarī as the ninth Durgā and Sovereign of the Mandala is of considerable interest. It may provide the *terminus a quo* for the institution of the Navadurgā mandala in Bhaktapur, and therefore perhaps elsewhere in the Kathmandu Valley. The exclusion of Taleju as the *maṇḍaleśa* suggests that the Navadurgā complex predates the burgeoning of her cult in fourteenth-century Nepal; the installation of Tripura-sundarī in the mandala’s inner sanctum, a place corresponding to the location of the Tripura palace complex and seat of Tripura lineage, suggests a possible twelfth-century date. This accords with the traditional view that on the instruction of the Navadurgā themselves, Ānandamalla (that is, Ānandadeva I, A.D. 1147-1166) set up the images “to ensure the security and protection of the town inter-

1976, which illustrates the conscious Nepali conceptualization of the city as a mandala.

¹⁹⁰ Pieper 1975:62.

¹⁹¹ This is also the view of Gutschow and Kölver 1975:43.

¹⁹² This will be best appreciated by the schema drawn up in Auer and Gutschow 1974:22.

¹⁹³ Bālakaumārī’s *pīṭha* lies outside the *pradaḥsinā patha*, but may lie within the former walls, the emplacement of which I was not able to determine in that quarter of Bhaktapur. The *pīṭha* of Tripura-sundarī is also inside the town, but she is the chosen ninth at Bhaktapur and accessory to the Eight Mothers.

nally and externally." Legend also proclaims the role of a Mother and her related Gaṇeśa in this king's westward conquest. In this connection, if we accept Guṇakāmadeva of Kathmandu fame as the twelfth-century ruler by that name, other chronicle entries may also support the flowering of the Navadurgā's cult at this time. For it is written that Guṇakāmadeva "revived the worship of the two sets of Nava-Durgas, the one inside, the other outside" Kathmandu.¹⁹⁴

At Bhaktapur, despite the central schematic position of Tripura-sundarī, the goddess now seems to be peripheral to the cult. When asked to specify the Nine Durgās, informants invariably have the most difficulty in recalling her name, if they do at all. Tripura-sundarī's current low profile, coupled with limited traffic to a shoddy shrine amid the rubble of the old palace, explains why Auer and Gutschow supposed the nearby, magnificently enshrined, Taleju to be the ninth and central goddess.¹⁹⁵

Everywhere in the Kathmandu Valley, the Navadurgā are danced in the bodies of masked men, who are then perceived as the divinities themselves. But in contemporary Nepal, the Bhaktapur ensemble commands the premier place, is danced with the greatest frequency, and is the most influential in community affairs. The origin of the institution in Bhaktapur is unknown. But a son of Rayamalla (A.D. 1482-1504) is alleged to have introduced the custom of dancing the Navadurgā because he "heard that they had been seen dancing at night."¹⁹⁶

The masks representing the Bhaktapur Navadurgā are domiciled in the main Gache-tol Navadurgā temple, in custody of a woman known as

¹⁹⁴ Wright 1966:103-104, 110; Hasrat 1970:46.

¹⁹⁵ Auer and Gutschow 1974:22.

¹⁹⁶ Wright 1966:129.

¹⁹⁷ Niels Gutschow, who closely followed the Navadurgā during his residence in Bhaktapur, explains that they actually only dance in twenty-one *ṭols*, omitting others at the far western part of the town. These are presumably "new" *ṭols*, created after the dance tradition was firmly established, which would confirm both of our theories of Bhaktapur's later western development (see Gutschow and Kölver 1975:16-18, 44).

¹⁹⁸ The fact that a young boy dances Bālakaumārī reveals the Nepali conceptualization of this goddess as a

gāthini. She is, in effect, a priestess of the Gāthā (alternatively, Banmālā), a Jyapu subcaste that inhabits the eastern *ṭols* and dominates the Bhaktapur Navadurgā affairs. Members of the dance group are always Gāthā, but the individual offices are not hereditary (as with many dance groups), and change annually before Dasain. The Navadurgā are danced on approximately forty occasions a year, including a prescribed display in each of the some two-dozen *ṭols* of Bhaktapur, appearances in some of the nearby villages, and special command performances that sometimes take them far afield.¹⁹⁷ Costumed in elaborate dress and ornaments, each dancer wears a special mask, annually made anew and painted with the goddesses' prescribed color and other iconographic details (Plate 543). The goddesses are accompanied by several supplementary dancers representing two Bhairavas, White and Black (Sveta and Kālā), Gaṇeśa (who carries a mask of Śiva at his belt), and Singhini and Baghini, the ubiquitous *dākinīs*. The *dākinīs* and Bal Kumārī, the Mātṛkā Bālakaumārī, are danced by young boys.¹⁹⁸

In a typical performance, such as that which precedes the celebration of Śiva-rātri, the costumed dancers assemble in the late evening at the place they are to perform. After some preliminary dancing, they themselves worship the mask of Mahālakṣmī, a Mātṛkā considered to be the "mother" of all; she is never danced, but her mask is carried in a *khata*.¹⁹⁹ The dancers then sacrifice a few piglets, after which they confide their masks to the Mātṛkā *pīṭha* of the quarter. Then, together with a crowd of men and boys they noisily rush by torchlight through the fields outside the former city walls in search of more sacrificial piglets.²⁰⁰

little girl, a *ḥumārī*.

¹⁹⁹ My impression is that only seven of the nine Durgās are danced, and that Tripura-sundarī is also excluded.

²⁰⁰ I was informed that the search through the fields for piglets only occurred on three special occasions each year. The occasion I am describing took place below the Indrānī *pīṭha* near Khauma-tol. Given what we know of the Navadurgā institution, the piglets may be substitutes for human children. The claims of Hamilton's assistant, a "Got" (Gāthā), respecting human sacrifice by the Navadurgā dancers, of which he was one, also seems to support this surmise (Hamilton 1971:34-36).

Once caught, the piglets are taken to a Bhairava shrine near the dance site, there to be disembowelled by the hands of Kālā Bhairava who, as a god, himself consumes the hot blood.²⁰¹ After a feast and a night's rest together, the group, as the deities they impersonate, pass much of the following day dancing and being worshiped by the residents of the quarter. It is then that they attempt to seize the children in the "catching fish" rite.

The Bhaktapur Navadurgā dancers seem to be a vivid relic of what must have once been a thriving and widespread custom in the Kathmandu Valley. Oldfield described two such performances, one by a dance group attached to "Neta Devi" (Naradevī) of Kathmandu, the other by a group associated with the Nawakot Bhairavī, and he said that the goddesses were also danced in Patan, Bhaktapur, Kirtipur, and Thimi.²⁰² Today dance groups other than the Bhaktapur group perform only on special occasions—the Halchok Bhairava at Indra-jātrā, for example—or in celebration of a twelve-year cycle, such as the Pacali Bhairava dancers.

The Harasiddhi dancers now also perform sporadically, but once they were the most famous and sought-after in Nepal Mandala. They were invited regularly to the capital cities to appear before royalty. It was after one such performance that Pratāpamalla is said to have found Yoganarendra, thought to be an incarnation of Harasiddhi, peacefully asleep in his bedchamber. There was his alter ego, the goddess "Harasiddhi with sword in her hand and the blood of a demon which she had already devoured streaming out of her mouth." And it was on the occasion of one of Harasiddhi's dance performances in Kathmandu that Pratāpamalla laid lascivious hands on the goddess, who punished him with death. The late chronicles are full of references to the Harasiddhi group. They consign it to hoary antiquity, attributing its origin to the legendary Vikramajit, a ruler who in Nepali legend is generally synonymous with Mānadeva I. Curiously, the chronicles also reveal a puzzling history of alternating cessation and rejuvenation of the Hara-

²⁰¹ Niels Gutschow informs me that sometimes all the dancers partake of the blood sprayed directly into their mouths from a sacrificial buffalo. This was also the way it was described by Oldfield 1880:11, 296-297.

siddhi dance group, a pattern that has yet to be explained. Perhaps it had to do with their excesses in respect to human sacrifice.²⁰³

It seems evident that the ubiquitous shrines of Nāsadyo, a terrific godling of the dance now identified with Śiva Naṭarāja, also reflects the former importance of impersonating divinities in the form of masked dancers. Shrines of Nāsadyo seem to be especially numerous in Bhaktapur, where, like Gaṇeśa shrines, each locality has its own.



As attested by the archaeological evidence, the roots of the cult of the mother goddesses in the Kathmandu Valley are profound (Plates 545-551). Certain goddesses may be relative newcomers, importations that accompanied burgeoning tantrism, as their origin legends suggest. Harasiddhi, for example, is said to have been sought in Central India; Annapūrṇa was imported from Benares to be settled in Bhaktapur "in a fortunate hour."²⁰⁴ But the legends of many goddesses confirm the archaeological evidence, and seem to point to far more remote origins in the indigenous Valley past. Those concerning Lumarhī-ajimā (Bhadrakālī) and a sister Luchubhalu- (Luchumaru-, Luchuphu-) ajimā (Cāmuṇḍā) are instructive in this respect.

Lumarhī-ajimā is worshiped in aniconic form in a hypaethral shrine, her *pīṭha*, east of Old Kathmandu (Map 4:24). The shrine is encircled by paved roads, and through it hundreds of civil servants pass daily between the old city and Singha Darbar secretariat. But once upon a time the *ajimā*'s shrine lay in the midst of paddy fields. One day—as a popular version of her origin has it—a Newar farmer discovered a little girl crying in his fields, and to pacify her gave her his lunch. Suddenly disappearing without a trace, the child left the farmer's rough fare on the ground in the form of golden bread (Newari, *lumarhī*). The amazed farmer, realizing that the child was divine, memorialized her manifestation in his fields with a shrine that became famous as the Grandmother of the Golden Bread, Lumarhī-ajimā.²⁰⁵

²⁰² Oldfield 1880:11, 295-297.

²⁰³ Hasrat 1970:27, 46, 61, 70, 79; Wright 1966:139.

²⁰⁴ Hasrat 1970:49.

²⁰⁵ A more elaborate version is told in the Wright chron-

One of Lumarhī-ajimā's sisters, Luchubhalu-ajimā, became manifest in an even more curious way. She originated as a golden dish that Lumarhī-ajimā had wished to bestow upon a favored devotee. But the latter was too afraid to accept the terrible *ajimā's* gift, and so ran away to the town. The pursuing *ajimā* at length tired, and set the dish down near Kel-tol where, as a stone, it was worshiped as Luchubhalu-ajimā until a half-century ago. But then a temple to Cāmuṇḍā was erected over the old hypaethral shrine; in a most unusual occurrence, a permanent icon of that *Mātrkā*, in the form of a small metal image, was

icle, which also says that she was brought from Kāmarūpa

installed within. Such a legend, in part incorporating history, must recapitulate a frequent metamorphosis in the Kathmandu Valley, where venerable *ajimās* and *māīs* have taken on new names and a suitable iconography to conform with deities of the Hindu-Buddhist pantheon.

Surmise as we may, the exact history of the Nepalese mothers and grandmothers is now obscured. But two things seem certain: that an incredibly rich area of anthropological research has been yet barely tapped, and that the mother goddesses have achieved a cult of unparalleled significance in the beautiful Valley of Kathmandu.

(Assam) (1966:92, 104).



CHAPTER 12

GODS AND DEMIGODS: SERPENTS, SAGES, AND SORCERERS

NEPAL MANDALA is by no means the exclusive dwelling place of such illustrious divinities as the Bud-dhas and Bodhisattvas, Śiva and Viṣṇu, Durgā and the mothers and grandmothers. Crowding among them are myriad other sacred beings. In the benign Valley, close to the mystic Himalaya, congregate sages and sorcerers, genii, and ogres. There, too, are the Siddhas and Nāthas, the Great Magicians, Perfected Ones and Lords, who in some places and at some times have challenged the supremacy of Śiva and Śakti. Divine water and the sacred serpents who dwell within are everywhere. No less than Paśupati-nātha and Changu Nārāyaṇa, Bhagavatī or Avalokiteśvara, these beings, gods and demigods, are a vital force in Nepali life. Without their stories that of the immense “mandala to walk on” would be incomplete.

THE DIVINE WATERS

Water is everywhere venerated in Nepal Mandala. This is in harmony with Indian cosmology, in which water is a divine, life-giving, and life-maintaining substance, the counterpart on earth of *amṛta*, the immortalizing elixir of the gods.¹ From the chalice of the moon the celestial waters issue to circulate as rain, as the sap of vegetation,

¹ On Indian water cosmology, see Zimmer 1946:27-53, 59-63; 1968:1, 165-168. On the role of water in Indian

as nourishing milk, as blood, as generative semen. Boundless and imperishable, water is essential to mortal life. Water is one with the symbolic Cosmic Serpent, Ananta/Śeṣa, and with Viṣṇu, whose prime materialization of cosmic energy it is. It is divine itself, and also at specific times and places it harbors the essence of other divinities. The gift of water by establishing a fountain or creating a tank is considered an act of religious merit, and water (who may tender it, who may receive it) is a fundamental symbolic substance in the definition of Nepalese caste relationships. Even in death the communion with water is unbroken, for by choice the dying and dead are bathed in it. If possible, one's last hours are spent by the riverside, preferably the Bagmati, partially immersed at the Paśupati ghats. After cremation, the ash is swept into the stream to reintegrate with the vast circulating network of earthly and celestial waters.

The Nepalese attitude toward this sacred substance is especially crystallized in innumerable *tīrthas*, places of holy pilgrimage preferably located near water—on the banks and at the confluence of rivers and streams (*dobhāna, veni*), at ponds and pools, at springs, and even at seemingly mundane wells. Pilgrimage to these places and bathing in their waters is to the Nepalese one of the most compelling religious activities. *Tīrthas* are associ-

folk culture, see Crooke 1896:1, 35-60.

ated with various gods and goddesses, and they vary widely in prestige and in the purposes for which they are visited. At one, for example, the pilgrim seeks offspring, at another a cure, and at a third good fortune. At others he asks no more than the blessing of the presiding deity.

Foremost among the Valley's sacred waters is the Bagmati. Its banks, from its hallowed source at Bagdwar (Bagmati-dvāra, door, gateway) on the flanks of Shivapuri to its juncture with the river of rivers, the Ganges, is studded with holy places and *tīrthas* (Plates 343, 344, 568-570). Of miraculous origin—which miracle it was depends on one's Śaiva or Buddhist bias—the Bagmati (Vāgavati) bears the name of deity. Buddhist legend understands it as Vāgīśvara, a name of Mañjuśrī; to Śivamārgīs it is Vāk, the Vedic goddess of speech who, merged with Sarasvatī, entered the Vaiṣṇava cult. Likewise, the Vishnumati, the Valley's second river, bears a deity's name, is beaded with celebrated *tīrthas*, and has its own wondrous legends, Buddhist and Brahmanical. As the Vishnupadi, an alternate name, it issues from Viṣṇu's foot (*pada*), as Vaiṣṇavas declare the Ganges is also born; as the Keshavati it proceeds from the tonsured hair (*keśa*) of the first Nepali monks ordained by Krakucchanda, the Buddha of the First World. Sister streams, the Manohara and Hanumante, also are named for illustrious deities, and are no less endowed with holy places. Indeed, it is a mean rivulet that does not have its divine association and beckoning *tīrthas*.² Of similar renown are springs and fountains and the waters that collect as pools and ponds, or are stored in tanks and reservoirs. Of these, many are in the Valley proper, but many occupy pockets of the surrounding slopes or nestle among the towering peaks beyond.

One of the most distant Nepali beacons where bathing is meritorious is Muktinātha, a Śaiva *tīrtha* perched among the dizzying ramparts of the Annapurna range (Map 2). One hundred eight *maḥāra* spouts channel into the temple compound the chill waters provided by the bounteous goddess, Annapūrṇa. It is the same goddess of plenty

² See Lévi 1905:1, 325-330 for a list of some of the most important Nepali *tīrthas* and their legends. Clark 1957: 174-175 provides another list, and various *mahātmyas* and

who from her little temple in Asan-tol presides over the Kathmandu grain market. More celebrated still is the Fountain, or Pool, of Śiva, Gosainkund—one of its many names. Several days' climb north of the Valley, Gosainkund is one of a chain of sacred lakes, the penultimate source of the Trisuli River (Map 2; Plate 572). The Trisuli's ultimate source, however, is a rocky crevasse, cleft by Śiva's trident (*triśūla*) as he plunged into Gosainkund. For at the Churning of the Ocean, so it is said, the *asuras* and *devas* not only brought forth the coveted *amṛta*, the elixir of immortality, but a deadly poison. From it not even the *devas* were immune—that is, none save Śiva. To protect his companions, the Great God took the awful potion into his own mouth. Badly burned—whence the sobriquet, Nīlakaṇṭha, "Blue Throat"—Śiva sought relief in an icy pool fed by the Himalaya's eternal snows (Plate 573). Plunging into its depths, the deity rested some thousand years or more, and at length went on his way. But his passage sanctified the pool, and some see there even now the recumbent god himself. It is a "Jalaśayana Śiva" formed by two rocks submerged in the crystal depths of Gosainkund. Indeed, to the Nepalis, Gosainkund is perhaps even more esteemed than the famous Manasarowar, the "most excellent lake of the mind" (*manas*). In Indian sacred cosmography, the lake is regarded as the holiest of pilgrimage sites. Its broad reaches mirror the very abode of Śiva, the majestic Kailāsa that towers over its shores (Map 1). There, too, is the mystical Mt. Meru, Cosmic Pillar and *axis mundi*.

Tīrthas of all kinds may be visited according to personal whim—or the dictates of snow-filled passes—but pilgrimage is preferably an annual affair at prescribed times of the lunar calendar. Thus at Śiva-rātri thousands come to bathe at Ārya-ghat in the shadow of Paśupatinātha (Plate 344). Father's Day, in turn, exacts a visit to Gokarna Mahādeva (Plate 568), and Mother's Day to the spring-fed tank near Thankot known as Mātātīrtha (Map 3: 37). Indra's Pool (Indra-daha) is visited on a particular day of Indra-jātrā, while those who cannot make the arduous trip for bathing at Gosainkund *purānas* provide still others. See, for example, Mitra 1971: 249-250.

under the August full moon visit Kumbheśvara, Patan, a more accessible substitute for the mountain pool (Plates 342, 576).

In water cosmography, all of the *tīrthas* are conceived as linked by way of a vast network of channels, terrestrial, celestial, and mystic. In this way not only are the Valley's various waters interconnected, but they join the most sacred waters of India. This is made abundantly clear by the adventures of a Patan duck and an Indian yogi. The former, last observed swimming in the temple pond at Kumbheśvara, was recovered when the owner chanced to go to Gosainkund; the latter, losing his staff and bowl when bathing at the South Indian Godavari River, found them again at another Godavari, the spring-fed pool on the Valley's south rim.³ Because of these subterranean waterways, the renown of certain *tīrthas* is augmented by the mingling of famous streams. One such is Indra- or Śacī- (Indrāṇī) *tīrtha* at Panauti, a distinguished site at the confluence (*veṇī*) of two affluents of the Sun Kosi. The confluence is in fact a *triveṇī* by virtue of a third affluent, the Lilavati, a mystic stream visible only to sages. In the same way, the confluence of the Bagmati and Vishnumati becomes the "Five-rivers *Tīrtha*" (Pañcanadi, -nari). For at that point the illustrious Nepali rivers are joined, so some say, by the three most sacred rivers of Hinduism, Gaṅgā, Yamunā, and Sarasvatī.

On one historic occasion the waters of various *tīrthas* were mingled in quite another way. When the Rani Pokhri was built just outside the Kathmandu city gates, Pratāpamalla had brought to it by canal and container water from fifty-one of the most revered *tīrthas* of Nepal and India.⁴ In this particular instance, however, despite the intermingling of such waters, the pond fell into ill repute. It became a gathering place of ghosts, and when it was not used for suicide it was shunned by the public altogether.⁵

One of the most ubiquitous objects of Nepali culture is the water vessel, known usually as *kalaśa*, *ghaṭa*, or *ḥumbha*. Empty, such a vessel is inauspicious, but filled (*pūrṇa*)—or in art, imagined filled—with water and the vegetation water nourishes,

it becomes sanctified and auspicious. The *pūrṇa kalaśa* is at once the productive womb and inexhaustible cornucopia. It crowns the dwellings of the gods, lines the processional way of mortal and immortal, and, real or symbolic, often flanks the doorways of temple and shrine, palace and farmhouse (Plates 26, 109, 141, 175). From its auspicious bowl, burgeoning with plants, spring strong columns and pillars, and under its sign buildings endure (Plates 198, 242, 298-301, 303-305). The *pūrṇa kalaśa* signifies the generosity of the gods, and often sanctifies and seals the words of kings (Plates 50, 56, 173, 336). From the inexhaustible depths of paired vessels, water issues to nourish the fountains and reservoirs, and from them is poured the divine substance for the *abhiṣeka* of gods and kings (Plates 229, 230, 342, 447, 492, 528). A vessel of water is also required during the worship of the gods (Plates 65, 339, 429, 492, 498).

The *pūrṇa kalaśa* is a potent symbol of divinity. In early Nepali reliefs, such vessels symbolize the Buddha (Plates 224, 454), but later become a sign of the mother goddesses (Plates 535, 536). It is in this form we see the goddess Annapūrṇa at Asantol. One of the most sacred days of the ritual-filled Nepali calendar is "Ghaṭa-sthāpana," when a vegetation-filled vessel is arranged to symbolize the presence of Durgā and ceremonially to announce the beginning of her festival, Dasain. From the depths of the *pūrṇa kalaśa*, the womb, new gods are sometimes spawned. Such a one was the Vedic Lord of Waters, Varuṇa. Another is the sage Aḡaṣṭya, and in Patan there is the celebrated Śiva known as Lord of the Water Pot, Kumbheśvara (Plates 341, 342, 576, 590). The miraculous origin of deities such as these is often remembered by such epithets as *ḥumbhayoni* or *ḥumbhasambhava*, "born of the water pot." The water-filled vessel is also ordained as the temporary dwelling place of gods. For example, when an image is repainted or repaired, the deity's essence or soul (*ātman*) is transferred to a vessel for safekeeping. It is also in this manner that the gods sometimes journey. In such a vessel Matsyendranātha was brought to the Valley from distant Kāmarūpa, and even now Changu Nārāyaṇa and his consorts

³ Wright 1966:167; Lévi 1905:1, 328.

⁴ Clark 1957.

⁵ Slusser 1972a:36-47.

come thus to Kathmandu on their twice yearly visits to Hanuman Dhoka (Plate 411).

The divine waters are also contained in smaller vessels conveniently carried in one hand. Known as *kaṃaṇḍalu* or *tumbī*, such vessels are the particular insignia of the yogin, mortal and divine. In them mortal yogis are wont to transport the waters of renowned *tīrthas* over long distances, thus prolonging their contact with them (Plate 589). The Supreme Yogi Śiva, Viṣṇu in his yogic aspect, Brahmā, and Maitreya all carry as a primary cognizance the *kaṃaṇḍalu* or *tumbī* (Plates 337-341, 348, 355, 433, 472). So too, on occasion, do the anthropomorphized Śeṣa/Ananta, the serpent king Nāgarāja, the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, and many other divinities (Plates 371, 505). When carried by the gods, the vessels are conceived to be filled with *amṛta*, heavenly counterpart of terrestrial waters.

As in India, the mythology of Nepal embodies water in anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, and vegetal forms. The two most sacred rivers of Hinduism, the Ganges and Jumna, are conceived as goddesses, Yamunā and Gaṅgā. Paired, their auspicious images are commonly guardians of temple doors (Plate 129). In late Umā-Maheśvara reliefs, an anthropomorphic and acrobatic Gaṅgā is often seen above Śiva's head, a reference to the legend of her tumultuous descent, stayed by the Great God's matted locks (Plates 354, 355). The celebrated *tīrtha* of Gosainkund is anthropomorphized in a complex "Jalaśayana Harihara," a seventh-century image installed in a pool at Balaju.⁶ Water-dwelling plants such as the lotus, and amphibious creatures, real and imaginary, signify water, and many are conceived to exercise control over it (Plate 237). One such is the frog, which for this reason has a day consecrated to its worship during the critical rice-planting season.⁷ Another is the *maḥara*, a creature of fantasy both reptilian and elephantine. Ubiquitous in gem-spouting pairs on the *toranas*, the *maḥara* is conceived as the proper vehicle for

dispensing water at the fountains (Plates 179, 199, 233-236, 258, 259, 265, 320, 482, 483). But in water symbolism, all these varied symbols pale before the arch symbol and materialization of water, the serpent.

THE SACRED SERPENTS

It is little wonder that the Tibetans thought of Nepal as the "Land of Serpents," and understood the name Khopva (Bhaktapur), one of its most important cities, to mean "Palace of the Serpent."⁸ The serpent is of transcendent significance in Nepali culture. It is a primary symbol of water, a subject of profound veneration, plays a prominent role in legend and cult, and is one of the most ubiquitous motifs in Nepali art.⁹

According to Nepalese mythology, there are nine chief *nāgas* who dwell in the Kathmandu Valley. Each is a specific personality with his own name, color association, preferred dwelling place, and personal legends. The Nāgarāja, their king, is Kārkoṭaka, ruler of Pātala- or Nāgaloka, the serpent underworld. Originally, the nine *nāgas*, together, with their serpent retinues, dwelt together in the immense lake known as Kālihrada (Kāli's Pond) or Nāgavāsa (Dwelling Place of the Serpents). When Mañjuśrī (or alternately, Viṣṇu) drained Nāgavāsa, some of the nine glided away with the discharging waters, although they later returned. But Kārkoṭaka, his queen Kāli-nāginī, and his court moved to the small pool known as Taudah, near Chobar. There, from an underwater palace, Kārkoṭaka has reigned continuously to our time.

The returned *nāgas*, chief among them Vāsuki and Tākṣaka, all preside over famous riverine *tīrthas*. The pairs, *tīrtha* and *nāga*, are identified in the *Svayambhū-purāna*, a number of which are pictured in the Cleveland *Tīrtha-mahātmya* (Plates 569-571).¹⁰ In the painting the *nāgas* are in human form, canopied with multiple serpent

⁶ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:119-124.

⁷ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 663-664; Nepali 1965:327-328.

⁸ Lévi 1905:1, 54, 320.

⁹ Nepalese beliefs respecting serpents mirror and perhaps even magnify those of India. The similarity of thought and practice between the two countries is abundantly

evident in the literature, e.g., Fergusson 1873; Crooke 1896:11, 121, 134-136; 143-144; Zimmer 1946:37-38, 59-121; 1968:48-67.

¹⁰ Mitra 1971:249-250. The Cleveland painting is more fully discussed by Slusser 1979.

heads, each distinguished by color. Each sits at the *tīrtha* over which he presides, both *nāga* and *tīrtha* identified by Newari captions. Lesser serpents reside at other riverine *tīrthas*, in the ponds, fountains, and wells, and in the moist subterranean depths, the Pātāloka or Nāgaloka that underlies the Valley. The subterranean dwelling place of the *nāgas* is a real concern when selecting a building site. In principle, if the priest's examination of the soil reveals their presence, and it is believed that they would be disturbed, another site must be sought.

One would suppose in the monsoon climate of Nepal that drought would be infrequent. But there is apparently sufficient irregularity in the rains as to interfere with the requirements of wet rice culture. For example, in 1969 the monsoon rains arrived on schedule, but were scant. The paddies of many farmers could not be planted until so late that the still unripened grains were lost to the autumn frosts. Such conditions, rather than no rain at all, may account for the recurrent drought and subsequent famine that Nepali history records. But whatever its nature, drought is a real concern in the Kathmandu Valley, and the quest for rain is an incessant preoccupation.¹¹ As symbol, the materialization, and the chief controller of rain, the serpent looms large in Nepali culture. Notwithstanding the complementary roles of other rain givers such as Indra, Matsyendranātha, and Bāla-kaumārī, it is the *nāgas* upon whom the Nepalis most depend for the annual, timely, and copious dispensation of rain. This dependence is made clear by a number of legends and practices respecting the *nāgas'* role in this critical area of Valley life. Instructive in this respect is the history of the Twelve-year Well, the Bāhra-barṣa Inār of Musunbahal, Kathmandu (Map 7: 0-6).

Once upon a time, so runs the legend, not a ray of misfortune touched the subjects of King Guṇakāmadeva. But it occurred to the monarch that at some future time misery might descend upon his people in the form of drought and famine. Thinking to forestall this calamity, Guṇakāmadeva sought the counsel of a famous *vajrācārya*, Śāntikara-guvāju, or as he is also known, Śāntikarācārya. This Śāntikara was by no means an ordinary *vihāra* priest. He lived in a cave in the shadow of

Svayambhū, and was famous for his prodigious feats of magic. Through his powerful mantras, he was able to coerce not only the commoner ghosts and goblins, but even the most powerful gods. Devoting his talents to implementing the king's kind intentions toward his subjects, Śāntikara advised the monarch to woo Kārkoṭaka, the king of the snakes, the ultimate controller of rain. Guṇakāmadeva agreed, and choosing an auspicious day, the king, Śāntikara, and selected workmen assembled at Musunbahal. There, to the incessant recitation of hymns in praise of the snake king, they began to dig a well leading toward his realm. For twelve years the excavations and the panegyric continued, until at last the pit opened directly into the underworld. On the day of consecration, Kārkoṭaka came to the bottom of the well and Śāntikara and Guṇakāmadeva intoned 108 hymns of extravagant praise in his honor. Much pleased by this, the Nāgarāja granted them the coveted boon: "If a drought should ever befall Nepal Mandala, come to the portals of my realm, sing the same 108 hymns you did today and I promise that abundant rain will fall." With this he glided away to his subterranean palace. Śāntikara then sealed the bottom of the well with a great rock, closed over the top, and set down in golden letters a record of all that had been done, together with the texts of the laudatory hymns.

Now it came to pass that some years later a drought did indeed fall upon Kathmandu, just as King Guṇakāmadeva had feared. The well was opened and ceremonially emptied of its waters. However, try as they would, the workers could not budge the stone blocking the entrance to Nāgaloka. Śāntikara realized at once that the root of the trouble lay with a serpent of Chobar *tīrtha*, who resented the praise that had been showered upon the serpent king. By means of irresistible mantras, the tantrist forced the Chobar snake to manifest himself in a vessel of water set up in the adjacent *vihāra*. Disposing of the malefactor, Śāntikara again inscribed, this time with the serpent's blood, the 108 hymns dedicated to Kārkoṭaka. Then, reading out the hymns from the blood-inscribed manuscript, Śāntikara caused rain to fall over the arid land, to the immense joy of the people. In the event of another drought the prayers ordinary Newar songs in fact originated as rain charms.

¹¹ Lienhard 1974:21 points out that many ostensibly

should be read from the same tantra, Śāntikara declared, and stored it safely away in his cave at Svayambhūnātha. This cave is Śāntipura, one of the five "mansions" surrounding the stupa (Figure 27).¹²

There is another version of this popular rainmaking tale, which dispenses altogether with the episode of the Twelve-year Well. In one variant it is preserved in the *Svayambhū-purāna*,¹³ illustrated in the Cleveland *Tīrtha-mahātmya* (Plates 569-571). In general the variant accounts agree that King Guṇakāmadeva, in despair over the drought-ridden condition of the kingdom, addressed Śāntikara-guvāju for relief. In order to bring rain, Śāntikara prepared a *dikṃmandala* and invited the nine chief serpents to occupy their appointed places within. Varuṇa cheerfully seated himself at the center, and one by one the others followed suit, taking their places around him. Kārkoṭaka, however, abstained from coming, thereby vitiating the mandala. But Guṇakāmadeva, aided by Śāntikara's charms, brought him by force (Plate 571). Even so, the rain did not fall. At length the *nāgas* confessed that Śāntikara's paintings of them on the mandala had no power. They must be drawn in the serpents' own blood. The nine offered blood for this purpose, enabling Śāntikara successfully to perform *nāga sādhana*. At once the sky darkened and the rain fell in abundance. In recognition of the *nāgas'* service to the kingdom, King Guṇakāmadeva established in their honor a shrine at Svayambhūnātha. It is Nāgapura, or Vaśiga, one of the five "mansions." It lies just in front of the stupa's northern chapel, in which the Tathāgata Amoghasiddhi sits enthroned on a *nāga*; it is not far from Śāntipura, the cave where Śāntikara then dwelt and, say some, yet dwells. The story closes with Guṇakāmadeva relinquishing the throne in favor of monkhood, and Narendradeva taking his place. It is the latter's coronation *abhiṣeka* with which the Cleveland painter concludes the legend.

But there is another chapter. In Narendradeva's reign an even longer drought ensues. The *nāgas*

¹² This legend is told in the *vihāra*, and in similar form is published by Sijapati 1969:29-33. Some Musun-bahal residents claim an alternate origin for the well. In recognition of medical advice tendered by a frog who dwelt in a muddy pond near the *vihāra*, Guṇakāmadeva ordered the pond converted to a well, sanctified it, and established

are helpless because they are immobilized under the meditating Nātha, Gorakṣa. This occasions the quest for Matsyendranātha, another rainmaker, whose story we will take up in a while. The *nāgas* were eventually freed and the drought brought to an end. That they continued to be wooed with the *nāga sādhana* until quite recently seems clear. We learn from the Buddhist chronicle that Viṣṇumalla, the Patan ruler between A.D. 1729 and 1745, sent a *vajrācārya* from Mahabauddha-vihāra to the Kvāche Bālakaumārī, herself a rain-giver, "to perform purascharana and nag-sadhana, after which the rain fell."¹⁴

There is considerable faith in the rainmaking power of the tantra said to have been written in the Chobar *nāga's* blood and preserved in Śāntipura. It is history that once in time of drought Pratāpamalla actually entered the forbidding shrine in search of it. This courageous deed is recorded in detail—and with the braggadocio one associates with the king's records—on a *śilāpatra* standing beside the doorway (Plate 574).¹⁵ The king's remarkable quest is also recorded in a painting (Plates 67, 575). In it we follow the king's progress past subterranean pools and through various chambers to the recovery of the tantra, and his safe return.

The rainmaking tantra, the Twelve-year Well, and Kārkoṭaka's boon are not confined to legend. The Twelve-year Well exists; it is opposite the shrine of the Musun-bahal Maitreya (Plate 473). As in the days of Guṇakāmadeva and Śāntikara, it is still regarded as the instrument of salvation in time of severe drought. At such a time, with the king's permission, the *vihāra gūthiars* make the necessary ritual preparations. The well is opened, and to the sound of music thought to inhibit a miasma, four ritually qualified men begin dipping out the water. With it they lustrate the surrounding crowd. When at last the well is emptied, the stone closing the portal to Nāgaloka is lifted. In accordance with the Nāgarāja's promise of long ago, the panegyric of 108 hymns is recited into the

a *gūthi* for its maintenance.

¹³ Hasrat 1970:21-22; Wright 1966:56; Lévi 1905: 1, 322-323.

¹⁴ Wright 1966:170.

¹⁵ G. Vajracharya 1965a; and Slusser 1979.

well, and in return, rain, so it is said, falls in abundance. Not only are there occasional openings of the well for the propitiation of Kārkoṭaka, but the well undergoes a special cleaning every twelfth year. The year 1969 marked the close of such a cycle. With the permission and at the expense of His Majesty the King of Nepal, the well was cleaned according to tradition. Very likely it has been for centuries past and—the gods willing—may be for centuries to come.

The legends and practices respecting Kumbheśvara, the distinguished Patan Śivaliṅga (Plate 341), are no less illustrative of the Nepali concern with rain and its purveyors, the *nāgas*. The elegant temple we know today was apparently erected in A.D. 1392, but the number of roofs were perhaps increased in the seventeenth century (Plates 56, 185).¹⁶ That there were still earlier temples is almost certain. The site is clearly a very old religious center, as certified by inscriptions and stone sculptures from the Licchavi and Transitional Periods (Plate 577).¹⁷ The linga is known by two principal names: one, Sarveśvara, Lord Arrow-wielder, a name of Rudra/Śiva; the other, Kumbheśvara, Lord of the Water Pot. The provocative name Kumbheśvara is said to derive from the linga's miraculous origin. It "appeared to Sarbapadacharya from a jar of water, when he was worshipping."¹⁸ In legend, Kumbheśvara is also linked with another *ḥumbhayoni*, the sage Aḡaṣṭya, likewise spawned from a water pot (Plate 590).

The location in the midst of Patan notwithstanding, Kumbheśvara presides over a water *tīrtha*. Distant Gosainkund, so it is held, wells forth as the spring beside his temple. Visiting the spring or the tank it feeds in the courtyard is thus akin to visiting the inconveniently remote Pool of Śiva. Indeed, on Śravaṇa-śukla-pūrṇimā, the preferred day for bathing at Gosainkund, thousands swarm to the Kumbheśvara tank instead. Rather than the recumbent "Jalaśayana Śiva" of Gosainkund, in the tank of Kumbheśvara they encounter

the Great God in quite another form. During the month preceding the August full moon, Kumbheśvara wears a special gilt sheath (*ḥośa*, *ḥavaca*) of spiraled serpents crowned with a *pūrṇa ḥalaśa* (Plate 342). At midnight preceding the full moon, the sheath is removed and the regular sheath restored to the linga (Plate 341). The alternate is carried from the temple with pomp and ceremony, and installed in a special pavilion newly erected in the nearby tank (Plate 576). With the tank's springfed waters, the first bathers begin at once to drench the serpent-entwined linga, the priests, crowding worshipers, and themselves. Such water play continues for twenty-four hours, until the linga is retired the following midnight, ending the festival. The serpent linga is then stored away for eleven months, and will not be seen again until the next year.

The bathing coincides with Janai-pūrṇimā/Rakṣa-bandhana, the day for the ritual renewal of the sacred thread (*yañnopavīta*, *janai*) for those of high caste, the receipt of a protective thread bracelet for others.¹⁹ But this aspect seems coincidental. It almost certainly represents a merging of Brahmanical custom with far more primitive antecedents. Corresponding to the end of the rice-planting season, the festival coincides with two other annual rain-related rites. One is Serpent's Fifth (Nāga-pañcamī), when the serpent is worshiped and its image pasted on every Nepali's door. The other is the day when Jyapus accord the frogs in their fields an oblation of rice. The frogs have earned it as purveyors of the water by which the rice was nourished. Like these overtly rain-related rites, the Kumbheśvara *mela* is also intrinsically agrarian and rooted in the worship of serpents as the ultimate source of rain. This is attested by the festival's emphasis on water—the communal lustration of gods and mortals in the form of the hilarious water play of the bathers. The practice of sheathing a linga with serpents is apparently unique to Kumbheśvara. Like the festival itself, it almost certainly

fourteenth-century construction.

¹⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 157 (583); *Abhilekṣa-samgraha* 1961j; Pal 1974:figs. 56, 57, 67, 68, 143.

¹⁷ Wright 1966:77.

¹⁸ See Anderson 1971:94-98 for a lively description of Janai-pūrṇimā at Kumbheśvara.

¹⁶ D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 35 (33-35); Wright 1966:167 credits the five roofs to Śrīnivāsa, and we know from an unpublished inscription dated N.S. 793 Mārga (A.D. 1672) that he did gild the roofs. While there is this doubt about the roofs, the organic harmony of the temple suggests that the five roofs are in fact part of the

signifies a conjunction of diverse concepts. The sheath can hardly be other than the serpent who once presided over the sacred spring; the linga it covers is the respectable Brahmanical replacement. The shift from one to the other is perfectly apparent in the linga's legendary origin; it emerged from the vessel of water which, until that portentous moment, had been Sarbapada's primary object of worship. But once a year, at the time when rain is the critical factor determining famine or feast, the serpent is recalled to his honored place. Innocently pressing forward to worship the linga, the water-drenched crowds have no idea upon whom they in fact bestow their homage. But, Nāgarāja, King of the Serpents, has no overt place in this annual reassertion of the serpents' primordial rights. Captured a millennium and a half ago in a magnificent stone sculpture, the dirt-encrusted Nāgarāja is today abandoned in a villainous cul-de-sac in the temple courtyard (Plate 577). Yet when Nāgarāja reigned supreme by the welling spring, it must have been this same benign and resplendent image toward whom the multitudes pressed, beseeching rain. From the brilliant jewel in his forehead, now gone like his votaries, he surely beamed an eternal promise.

As symbol, associate; purveyor, and materialization of water, the serpent is conceived to be present wherever there is water. Real serpents are thought to dwell in water and moist places, and representations of them abound at the fountains and ponds. Serpents of carved stone provide encircling balustrades, and stone and metal serpents are incorporated among the symbolic ornament (Plates 130, 226, 229, 579). Formerly, at the consecration of a new reservoir it was mandatory to establish in the middle a *nāgakāṣṭha*, a "serpent timber."²⁰ In effect a serpent standard (*nāgadhvaja*), the emblem consists of a wooden pole surmounted by a gilt copper repoussé serpent's head (Plate 226). Its function was, presumably, to ensure an ever-full pond. The fashion has passed, however, and few complete *nāgakāṣṭhas* have survived.²¹ For the most part,

²⁰ A custom shared with India (Bhattachali 1929:216).

²¹ From the Vasantapura pavilions of Hanuman Dhoka one may look down on a fine example in the adjacent Nāga Pokhri. It is said to have been snatched in time of war by Pratāpamalla from the Tawa Pokhri in Bhaktapur

only the stub of a rotted timber, etched with the telltale scales, remains at the center of old ponds as a reminder of the custom.

Serpents are closely associated with another terrestrial treasure, the jewels and precious metals stored within their subterranean realm. They share its custodianship with the *yakṣas*, beneficent earth genii in anthropomorphic form. The *nāgas* themselves carry a jewel embedded in their heads, and jewels are displayed on their expanded hoods (Plates 173, 404, 407, 577-580). By means of them the serpents' murky haunts are brightened. The waters of the Rani Pokhri, wrote Pratāpamalla, were "illuminated by the jewels of the hooded serpents."²² As custodians of earth's treasures, the *nāgas'* wealth is limitless. Kārkoṭaka, king of the serpents, enjoys a vast treasure which, at the draining of Kālīhrada, Mañjuśrī duly moved to the little pond of Taudah. There Kārkoṭaka constructed an opulent darbar. "The walls of the palace were of gold, the windows of diamond, the rafters and beams of sapphires, the pillars of topaz adorned with rubies. The darkness of the subterranean place was dispelled by the light emanating from large jewels in the heads of the Nags. . . . [Kārkoṭaka's queen sat] on a throne studded with jewels of several sorts, shaded with three umbrellas of white diamonds, one above the other."²³ Indeed, Kārkoṭaka's wealth was considered of such significance that "during [Surendra Bikram Shah's] reign an unsuccessful attempt was made to draw off the water [from Taudah], with the view of getting the wealth supposed to be sunk in it."²⁴

Custodian of the earth's treasures—water, gems, and precious metals—the serpent is the fitting guardian of gods, kings, and common men, their dwellings, and the treasures, contained within. As guardian (*pratihara*, *dvārapāla*), the serpent typically watches over the comings and goings through windows, doors, or any opening through which the unwanted might otherwise pass (Plates 39, 44, 137, 140, 174, 252, 316, 317, 553). Often as semi-anthropomorphized pairs, a *nāga* and *naḡinī* guard a

(D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 75-76; B. Paudel 1964a:11-12).

²² G. Vajracharya and M. Pant 1961.

²³ Wright 1966:121.

²⁴ Wright 1966:120 n. 191.

doorway, and within the coils of their intertwined bodies protectively encircle an entire building or the sanctum within it (Plates 143, 213, 580). The ordinary house is guarded from year to year with paper prints of serpents, pasted anew to the door at the annual celebration of Nāga-pañcamī. To secure the houses of his subjects from robbery and to dispel their fears, King Guṇakāmadeva even “invented a trumpet in the shape of a serpent and it [sounded] when blown: *tutmasha, tutmasha*—the meaning of which [was] very mysterious.”²⁵ Serpents also coil protectively around the pillars crowned (or once crowned) with the images of kings, and spread their polycephalous canopy overhead so that the kings may safely reign (Plates 30-33, 47, 75, 384).

The serpent is specifically the guardian of treasure. The Fire Nāga, for example, was long charged with the care of Maitreya’s diadem, once stored in A-ki-po-li, the flaming pool east of P’ouo-lo-tou. Enclosed in a golden chest, the diadem rose to the surface on command, but sank out of sight if anyone tried to seize it.²⁶ As the guardian of Paśupati’s treasure, Vāsuki, one of the nine chief *nāgas*, has his own much-trafficked temple next door. It is said that Vāsuki once rendered the deity a signal service in this respect. One of the trouble-making Chobar serpents, blocking the Bagmati so as to flood the Great Lord’s temple, insinuated himself into the treasury and made off with the precious *eḱamukha rudrakṣa* (one-faced *rudrakṣa* seed). But the theft was observed by the alert Vāsuki, who retrieved the coveted object and restored it to the treasury.²⁷ Vāsuki is also the custodian of King Guṇakāmadeva’s treasure, secreted in neighboring Kailāsa. This service is perhaps rendered in recognition of the king’s having roofed his temple with gilt copper.²⁸ According to the chronicles, the worship of Vāsuki may have had a brief eclipse. But King Jayakāmadeva, “in order to put a stop to theft and snake bites, revived the worship

of Balasuki Nag, and made offerings to him of musical instruments. From that day no cases of robbery or snake-bite took place in the city.”²⁹

Serpents are the intimate associates of commoner and king and, themselves divine, are the elect companions of the gods. Theoretically, towns and cities are sometimes laid out in a mandala “such as a serpent would make by bringing head and tail together” (Plate 89). Perhaps this was the plan used by the *nāgas* themselves in founding their own city, Nāgadeśa, now less romantically known as Nakdesh (Map 3). (Similarly, Kathmandu’s House of the Nāga, Nāgaśālā, is now suburban Naksal.) The serpent supports the house, one of the main beams is sacred to it,³⁰ and in its custodial role, a serpent is imagined coiled in the family strongbox. A home is especially blessed if a serpent takes up residence within. It is honored as a special household god, and its death is thought to presage calamity for the host family. The serpent’s attendance at domestic ceremonies is desirable, and its presence is often signified by a twist of rope. By means of the serpent one is also led through life’s maze to the heavenly dwelling place of the gods (Plate 331).

As companion to the gods, serpents are ubiquitous ornaments on the temple *toranas*. They are typically grasped as pairs in the talons of their adversary, the celestial sunbird, Garuḍa, or in the maw of the ever-ravenous Kīrtimukha (Plates 140, 151, 196, 199, 414). As the primary symbol of water, it is the *nāgas*’ prerogative to lustrate the gods (Plate 447). Quartets of serpents in silver and gilt, arranged as a baldachin, symbolically lustrate stupa and image. Both Paśupati and Guhyeśvarī, for example, have such baldachins, gifts, respectively, of the Kathmandu kings Mahendra and Pratāpamalla.³¹ On one occasion, the serpents of Matsyendranātha’s baldachin took charge of his *abhiseka* when the officiating *pūjāris* fled before the attacking King Mukunda Sena of Palpa.³²

Guhyeśvarī, the chronicles mention only “iron beams in the shape of a jantra” or “wrought iron beams.” But an old photograph of Guhyeśvarī *piṭha* (where photography is now prohibited) reveals a roofless temple structure surmounted by the serpent baldachin.

³² Hasrat 1970:51.

²⁵ Hasrat 1970:47.

²⁶ Lévi 1905:1, 157-158.

²⁷ Hasrat 1970:77; Lévi 1905:1, 323-324.

²⁸ Wright 1966:104-105.

²⁹ Wright 1966:105.

³⁰ See Appendix V.

³¹ Hasrat 1970:64, 77; Wright 1966:148. Respecting

The serpent, like other divinities, has two temperaments. In his beneficent form he is associated with similar divinities—Viṣṇu, the Buddha, or Lakṣmī, for example. As the intimate of Viṣṇu, who is ultimately one with the Cosmic Serpent Ananta/Śeṣa, the serpent is in one way or another commonly incorporated into Vaiṣṇava images (Plates 374-377, 392, 400, 401). As the succoring Mucalinda, the serpent is paired with the Buddha (Plates 281, 455-457); a serpent provides the canopied throne of the Tathāgata Amoghasiddhi (an image type apparently inspired by the Mucalinda theme); and a serpent is the willing vehicle of Dīpaṅkara (Plates 175, 483). Although in Nepal it is the tortoise that is Lakṣmī's familiar, on occasion she too may be placed under the serpent's guard (Plate 525).

In his sinister aspect, the serpent is sometimes adversary of the gods (Plates 404-407), and man fears him for the harm he may do. The serpent and its poisonous bite is one of the Eight Great Perils (*aṣṭamahābhaya*) that travelers fear, and from which they beseech protection from Avalokiteśvara, Tārā, and Dīpaṅkara. One of the most important *dhāraṇīs* (spells) is for protection from snakebite. It is personified as Mahāmāyūrī, Great Peacock, a goddess who once claimed considerable standing in the Nepali pantheon. At Guṃ-vihāra/Vajrayoginī, for example, she has her own very substantial temple. It encloses what appears to be Mānadava's stupa. Next to the temple, and extending into the sanctum, is a rock outcrop, walled around as a companion shrine. The outcrop is revered as Vāsuki-nāga. Mahāmāyūrī with her sister spell goddesses, together known as the Pañcarakṣā (Five Protections), apparently once also had numerous lesser shrines. Some, as we have seen, have drifted into the possession of Pāñcakaumārī, others perhaps have fallen to the *nāgas* from whose malevolence Mahāmāyūrī protects. There is, for example, an underground shrine at Laghan-khel, Patan, known as Jamatung. Within are five stones that Pratāpamalla is said to have brought from the hill-top shrine of Pulchoki-māi; in time of drought Buddhist priests enter Jamatung and worship the five mothers until rains begin.³³

Just as the serpent's beneficent nature is empha-

³³ Hasrat 1970:78.

sized in relation to the deities in pacific form, its maleficence is exploited in relation to them in terrific form. Durgā uses serpents as fearful weapons to destroy the demon emissaries Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa, and the baleful serpent is thought fitting companion to the repulsive carrion eaters of the cremation grounds (Plates 518, 562, 563). Like the ubiquitous death's head, the serpent signifies the terrific nature of the gods. The *ghora* faces incorporated into images that are otherwise pacific are not only denoted by a wrathful countenance, but by the two most terrible symbols, skull and serpent (Plates 372, 419). With the mothers and grandmothers, Bhairava, Gaṇeśa, Mahākāla, and many other deities, serpents are everywhere. Replacing the jeweled ornaments of the placid gods, they insinuate themselves as ear ornaments, twine around the neck, waist, and limbs, and even compose the Brahmanical sacred thread (Plates 340, 355, 366-368, 424-427, 464, 465, 469-471, 479, 480, 536, 558). On one occasion even the placid Viṣṇu is made to wear the forbidding serpent ornaments. But in this instance the artist has obviously been influenced by the familiar Bhairava/Mahākāla image type, and has simply arrayed Varāha in the same, if erroneous, way (Plate 393).

In Nepal Mandala, serpents are often imagined in human form, and are thought to behave similarly. For example, Siṭhī-nakha, the principal day of *degu* worship, is chosen as the annual day for cleaning wells and fountains. It is supposed that the *nāgas* also have lineage deities, and thus will have vacated their homes on that day to attend their ancestral shrines. That serpents suffer the same misfortunes as mortals and attempt to rectify them in the same way is taken for granted. The serpent Tuchak (Tākṣaka), afflicted with leprosy, sought relief by performing penance at Gokarna-tīrtha on the Bagmati; the affected eyes of Kārkoṭaka's queen were treated by a mortal physician.³⁴

The ability of serpents to assume human shape and of humans to become serpents is an accepted fact of Valley lore. Once Pratāpamalla, in company with his favorite tantric practitioners, the Brahman Lambakārṇa Bhaṭṭa and the Buddhist Jamānaguvāju, observed some serpents performing *pūjā* at the Mother Goddess shrines. Apparently to test

³⁴ Hasrat 1970:13; Wright 1966:120-121.

the efficacy of their magic powers, the three overpowered the *nāgas* and prevented them from returning to their homes. But on the following day the king and his priestly counselors discovered that the *nāgas* were actually women, “some . . . from respectable families,” who had merely assumed the form of snakes. Thus the three withdrew the power of their mantras, and allowed the women to proceed to their homes.³⁵

To this day the citizens of Thimi village shun the waters of the Siddha Pokhri of Bhaktapur because of a particular serpent-human interchange. It seems that a Thimi woman doubted the ability of her husband, a Siddha renowned for his magical skills, to transform himself into a serpent. Like Pacali Bhairava and his Kasaini mistress, the Siddha prefaced his transformation with instructions to his wife to scatter over him a handful of consecrated rice that he might resume his human form. Too frightened to do as bidden, the woman fled, pursued by the imploring Siddha in serpent form. At length finding his case hopeless, the Siddha slid into the pond at Bhaktapur, where he has dwelt in serpent form ever since.³⁶

In the Cleveland *Tirtha-mahātmya*, in a reversal of roles, it is the serpent Vāsuki—like Kārkoṭaka, also caught by Guṇakāmadeva—who transforms himself into a Siddha (Plate 569, lower left). Kārkoṭaka frequently assumes human form, as he does for purposes of discourse with Śāntikara in the Cleveland painting. On another celebrated occasion, when his queen, Kālī-nāginī, was afflicted with a malady of the eyes, Kārkoṭaka took the form of a Brahman. In this guise he begged a “Baid” (*vaidya*, physician) to attend his stricken wife. The *vaidya* agreed, and accompanied his client until at length they arrived at the pond of Taudah. “It was shaded by trees, large fish played in it, and it was covered with waterfowl.” The Brahman then asked the *vaidya* to close his eyes for an instant, and forthwith leapt with him into the waters. After entering the resplendent underwater palace where the *nāginī* waited upon her jeweled throne, Kārkoṭaka resumed his serpent form, “took the Baid by the hand, and gave him a seat near the throne. He himself mounted the throne, and

showed the patient to the Baid. The Baid, having examined her eyes, took out a drug from a bag he carried at his waist, and having rubbed it on a clean stone, applied it to the eyes, which were instantly cured. Karkotak gave the Baid a handsome present and a dress of honour, and having expressed his gratitude made him a promise that his descendants would be good curers of eye-diseases.”³⁷ Of Kārkoṭaka and the dress of honor we have not heard the last.

It is obvious that the *nāgas* are perfectly capable of human discourse. It is often said that when the Buddha began to teach his doctrine, he soon realized that humanity was not yet capable of understanding its fundamental tenets, much less accepting them. He thus taught men what he could (the Śrāvakayāna doctrine), but confided the doctrinal profundities to the *nāgas*. They were instructed to hold his teachings in trust until mankind should be prepared to accept them. It was not until centuries later that the serpents revealed the fundamental concepts of Buddha’s philosophy to the great Siddha, Nāgarjuna, Arjuna of the Serpents. Nāgarjuna then taught mankind the Great Way of Mahāyana Buddhism.³⁸ In Nepali belief, the *nāgas* had first to be subdued by Dīpaṅkara Buddha, that this long-guarded knowledge might be disseminated. But Nepalis hold, with the Tibetans, that Nāgarjuna received the Mahāyāna tenets in the form of *Prajñāpāramitā*, a transfer that may have taken place in the deep caves of the very Valley slope that bears the Siddha’s name. The text, in “sixteen volumes written in gold from the river of golden sands on paper of lapis lazuli,”³⁹ were given to Tham-bahil in Kathmandu. Even now at *bahi-dyo-boyegu*, for a few coins *vihāra* officials permit a fleeting glance at a page or two of the enormous texts, meticulously lettered in gold on deep blue paper.

Finally, perhaps it is the Nepali awe of the serpent rather than of Viṣṇu that accounts for the three remarkable sculptures of Jalaśayana Nārāyaṇa and the Kāliyadamana, glory of the Kathmandu Valley (Plates 376, 404).⁴⁰ In these four superb masterworks of the Licchavi Period, the serpent is a dominant element, not merely an ac-

³⁵ Hasrat 1970:78.

³⁶ Kesar Lall 1966:37-38 records a variation of the tale.

³⁷ Wright 1966:120-121.

³⁸ Zimmer 1946:68.

³⁹ Wylie 1970:14-15 n. 21.

⁴⁰ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:figs. 1, 2, 4, 5, 17.

cessory to the god. Perhaps the serpent was perceived in a very special way because it had been the Licchavi's tutelary at Vaiśālī.

YAKṢAS AND YAKṢIS

Conceptually, the *nāgas* overlap another order of demigods, the *yakṣas*. They, together with their female counterparts, the *yakṣīs* or *yakṣinīs*, are primarily benevolent divinities related to the earth's fecundity. The *yakṣa* chief is Kubera, a god of many strands. In the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* he is classed as a demon (*rākṣasa*), the lord of robbers and evildoers.⁴¹ Elevated later to the status of a *yakṣa*, Kubera was at length incorporated into the Brahmanical, and finally the Buddhist, pantheon.⁴² In the former, he is one of the Four Dikpālas, the Guardians of the Quarters, and is known as Dhana or Vaiśravana. In the latter, he performs the same guardian role, but is known as a Lokapāla, one of the Caturmahārāja, Four Great Kings. In the Buddhist tradition, Jambhala is another of his preferred names, although not one commonly heard in Nepal. Kubera's spouse is Riddhi, or according to some traditions, Hārītī, also a divinity of checkered career; she enjoyed a period as a cannibal ogress before being reformed by the Buddha. Together, Kubera and his queen reign over Alakā, a splendid court on Mt. Kailāsa. Kubera's followers are known as *gaṇas* or *guhyaṅkas*, whence one of his titles, Gaṇadīpa, Lord of the Gaṇas.

Kubera has attained great popularity in Nepal Mandala in his dual role as guardian and dispenser of wealth. As one of the set of Dikpālas or Lokapālas, he characteristically helps guard temples or *vihāras* and the deities within (Plate 581). Buddhists favor him above the other Four Kings. Thus he is a ubiquitous figure in the *vihāras*, where he frequently serves as a *dvārapāla* (Plate 173). His chief cognizance is the mongoose or, alternatively, a money bag, from which flow endless streams of jewels and riches (Plates 581, 582). In at least one

instance, however, a Nepali artist has substituted a smiling, jewel-bearing *nāga* as the symbol of abundance, and in lieu of the usual symbols has placed a stupa in Kubera's hand (Plate 173). As in Indian custom (except in Gandhāra), early Nepali images of Kubera wear southern dress (Plate 582).⁴³ Almost all Kubera images from the Malla Period, however, are dressed in the northern style (*udicyaveśa*), the Scythian or Khotanese mode, consisting of tunic, trousers, and boots, such as Sūrya often wears (Plates 173, 435-437, 441, 581). Such dress may be influenced by Kubera's role as regent of the north; along with other influences, it is likely to have entered Nepal relatively late from Khotan.

One of the principal functions of Kubera's host, the *gaṇas* or *guhyaṅkas*, is as caryatids that support buildings and their parts, fountain spouts, and the *yakṣīs*. Licchavi craftsmen seem to have delighted in these *gaṇa* caryatids, carving them with abandon at the base of columns, on foundations and doorsills, and under the heavy stone makara spouts (Plates 241, 242, 298, 306, 307). With their remarkable portrait-like individuality and skillful carving, these early *gaṇas* provide one of the most intimate glimpses into this period of artistic greatness. *Gana* caryatids continued to be used in Malla Period architecture (Plate 309). In the Early Malla Period the contorted little gnomes remained stylistically very close to Licchavi prototypes. Typically, they were carved at the bases of roof brackets, and upon them stood tall, slender *yakṣīs*, resplendent demigoddesses of fertility. Such bracket carvings, with their contrasting forms, provide some of the finest sculptures in the Valley (Plates 162, 207, 308). The early bracket pairs—*gana* and *yakṣi*—undoubtedly perpetuate a Licchavi prototype, but none has been found in Licchavi remains.

DEMONS, GHOSTS, AND GOBLINS

There dwells in Nepal Mandala another category

the rubble of broken images in the former Mātrkā shrine in the temple compound. It was discovered by Pratapaditya Pal when we visited the site together. Later, in company with a Nepali assistant, I removed the moss to facilitate photographing the important image. On Kubera in Gandhāra and northwestern India, see Pal 1978a.

⁴¹ Coomaraswamy 1928-1931: part 1, 5.

⁴² Gaṇeśa and Kumāra were both once *yakṣas*.

⁴³ There are several other unpublished early images of Kubera, for example at Paśupatinātha and Bu-bahal, Patan, that also wear southern dress. The charming Satya Nārāyaṇa Kubera, completely mantled in moss, lay among

of supernatural beings whose character, in contrast to the *nāgas* and *yakṣas*, is basically malevolent. These are the demons (*rākṣasas*, *rākṣasīs*) and the ghosts and goblins (*bhūtas*, *pretas*, *piśācas*). Such creatures are considered to lurk in the home and the fields, and everywhere are ready to seize an opportunity to bring misfortune to mortal lives. They can be contained only by vigilance, coupled with propitiation. This means blood and alcohol. Man is particularly vulnerable at life's crises—for example, birth, marriage, a journey, illness, or death. At these times heroic protective measures must be taken. It is therefore customary when returning from a cremation, when introducing a new bride into the household, or at a similarly critical time, to make special offerings to such creatures. It is certain that they will have joined the mourners or celebrants. To keep them from entering the house, a feast is laid out on the mandala before the door. If they are kept busy devouring the food, they will be too occupied to follow into the house.

Many of the ordinary ghosts are the restless spirits of the dead. Normally their disquietude is engendered by violent death—an accident, murder, suicide, or childbirth. Other unhappy spirits may be those for whom there is no one to perform the *śrāddha*, or for whom the living have failed to perform this vital and obligatory service. The spirits of suicides are particularly feared. It is said that those of the drowned have only mucus for their food, while those of the hanged eat only the remains that cling to hairs pulled out of food. Another disturbing ghost is that of a deceased child, the *bālakṣha piśāca*. It is well known that despite the beauty of the Rani Pokhri, whose sanctified waters were “illuminated by the jewels of the hooded serpents,” its unpopularity was first caused by a resident *bālakṣha piśāca*. This, according to legend, was the brutally murdered offspring of Pratāpamalla and a *kichṅṅinni*, a sort of succubus. After a famous tantrist had destroyed the *kichṅṅinni* and laid the

child ghost to rest, the public timidly returned to the pond. But soon, as other troublesome ghosts began to roam the ill-starred precincts, the public drifted away for good. The pond's most frequent visitors had become those intent on suicide. Even the several fences put up in Rana times could not deflect them. Soon their many restless souls took the place of the quieted *bālakṣha piśāca*.⁴⁴

Another supernatural being that must be dealt with in the Kathmandu Valley is the *betāl*, *baitāl* (*vetāla*). Loosely, a *vetāla* is a goblin, but specifically a spirit who takes possession of a corpse.⁴⁵ Despite this peculiarity, the *vetāla* is essentially of benevolent character. It may elect to become one's servant in the manner of a responsive genie. This aspect of its nature is well illustrated by the *vetāla* protagonist of the *Vetālapañcavimśati*, Twenty-five Stories of the Vetāla. Nonetheless, the *vetāla* is exceptionally clever, eminently capable of trickery, an obstacle maker, and can securely bind the unwary in its spell. As the occupant and animator of cadavers, a resident of the cremation grounds, and close associate of the *bhūtas*, *pretas*, and *piśācas*, the *vetāla*, despite its ultimate good intentions, is more feared than loved in Nepal Mandala. The threshold of the Newar house is identified as the *vetāla*, and into it a nail is driven annually to keep this frightening creature at bay. At shrines and temples, the *vetāla* is frequently represented in the form of a nude corpse, his dwelling place.⁴⁶ Such is the *vetāla* at Pacali Bhairava's *piṅha* (Plate 369). In Nepal Mandala, the corpses upon which deities like Bhairava or Kālī/Cāmuṅḍā stand are not simply Śava, but are considered to be *vetālas*.

A number of demons (*rākṣasas*) still lurk in the Kathmandu Valley, and like other baleful creatures have to be reckoned with. A case in point is Jātaka-ajimā. She is a *rākṣasī* from Tibet (or, variously, Ceylon) who enjoys her own shrine attached to Tham-bahil, Kathmandu. Her story is woven into a garbled version of one of the Eight Miracles of Avalokiteśvara, in which as the mirac-

⁴⁴ Slusser 1972a:44-47.

⁴⁵ There is no acceptable English equivalent for the term *vetāla*, although both “vampire” and “goblin” have been employed. As Riccardi 1971:13 points out, the former is not at all applicable, while the word “goblin” fails to explain what a *vetāla* is.

⁴⁶ Riccardi 1971:7 n. 31 observes that the *vetāla* is generally depicted as “a small creature of horrific countenance and generally wears a yellow skirt or dress.” I have not been aware of this form in the Kathmandu Valley, where the *vetāla* seems to be universally represented as a naked corpse.

ulous horse Balāha the compassionate Bodhisattva rescues the merchant Simphala (Gautama Buddha) and his shipwrecked companions.⁴⁷ The Jātaka occurs in its more or less original form in Nepali Buddhist literature, and there are many manuscript versions (Plate 583).⁴⁸ It is best known today in modified dress, as heard at Tham-bahil and illustrated in a banner painting displayed in the courtyard for *bahi-dyo-boyegu* (Plate 584).

Jātaka-ajimā, so says the Nepali version of the miracle, had been the foreign mistress of a Kathmandu merchant known variously as Sinhala-, Simphasārtha Bahu, or Simphasārtha Āju.⁴⁹ Simphasārtha had gone trading to Tibet (or, alternately, Ceylon) with five hundred companions, each of whom unwittingly took a demones for a mistress. Warned by the compassionate Avalokiteśvara, the traders abandoned the mistresses and fled on the back of a magic horse. But one by one, except for the steadfast leader, they forgot the proscription against looking back, and were destroyed by the pursuing demones (Plate 584). The one unfed *rākṣasī*, posing as a lovely woman, followed Simphasārtha to Kathmandu. There, despite the trader's warnings, the king took the beauty into his harem. The demones soon destroyed him, and the trader inherited the throne. Having no need for his former house, Simphasārtha pulled it down and in its place built a *vihāra*. "In consideration of the Rakshasi . . . having been his mistress," and apparently in gratitude for the good fortune that came

⁴⁷ As told in the *Kārandavyūha*. It is of considerable interest that in India the Miracles of Avalokiteśvara are apparently familiar only in the very restricted time and place of the sixth- and seventh-century caves of western India (Mallmann 1948:136-141). But in Nepal, the miracles and the eight (or more) perils, the *aṣṭābhaya*, *mahāstābhaya*, with which they are concerned are well known and often illustrated. An image of Tārā near Dharmadeva stupa, for example, is surrounded with vignettes illustrating the Eight Miracles, and they are the subject of the roof brackets of Mañjunātha's shrine, Mañjuśrī-tol, Kathmandu.

⁴⁸ Mitra 1971:93-97.

⁴⁹ The name derives from the Sanskrit *sārthavāha* which means trader, merchant, or caravaner, and is used in Licchavi inscriptions; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 10, 12 (50-54, 59-60).

⁵⁰ Wright 1966:56-57; Kesar Lall 1966:28-30. An untapped reservoir lies in this legend with respect to the

of it, Simphasārtha "raised a temple for her worship and assigned land for its support."⁵⁰ To this day, the people of Kathmandu worship Jātaka-ajimā in her shrine by the *vihāra* doorway, the celebrated Tham-bahil. They are grateful for her part in founding the *vihāra*, but would be less uneasy if she had returned to far-away Tibet.

That demonolatry must have once played an important role in the Kathmandu Valley is made clear by legend and contemporary practice. Nepali legends, much concerned with demons,⁵¹ suggest that many were formerly local godlings or *grāma-devatās*. Less fortunate than many companions, absorbed into the more sophisticated Hindu-Buddhist pantheon, they were demoted and their worship outlawed. Such a transformation is evident in the instance of Balāsura, who became the terrible demon Balāsura, feeding on both the living and the dead. At length destroyed by trickery, Balāsura is nonetheless propitiated annually at the festival known as Bala's Fourteenth (Bala-caturdaśī).⁵² More notable is Gaṭhemuga or Ghaṇṭakārṇa (Bell Ears). Like Balāsura, this ogre once terrorized the Kathmandu Valley, but was destroyed by trickery. Ghaṇṭakārṇa is still feared, nonetheless. Year after year, at the close of the rice-planting season, he is again destroyed in effigy.⁵³ Despite Ghaṇṭakārṇa's apparently indigenous character, he is perhaps ultimately Ghaṇṭakārṇa of the Brahmanical pantheon, a minor divinity and follower of Kārttikeya. But this Ghaṇṭakārṇa is beneficently disposed, taking

history of Tham-bahil and its occupancy by *Buddhist* Pradhans. My guess is that the *vihāra* complex, well north of Old Kathmandu, with its peculiar choks and adjacent stupa-crowned Kumārī *āgamachem*, represents an ancient, semi-independent seat of some noble family, like the Ābhira Guptas or the so-called Vaisya Thakuris, rivals to the established throne at Hanuman Dhoka or its predecessor. In this respect the chronicle's reference to the foundation of the "village named Thambahil" by Guṇakāmadeva is of interest (Wright 1966:104). Allen 1971:38 also thought that the Tham-bahil "gardens and cloisters . . . suggest something of a palace environment."

⁵¹ See, for example, Kesar Lall 1966, Sijapati 1969, K. Vaidya 1961, and similar collections of Nepali folk tales.

⁵² Concerning Bala and his festival see Anderson 1971: 201-207.

⁵³ Anderson 1971:72-76; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 660-662.

upon himself the twin tasks of protecting cattle and warding off smallpox.⁵⁴ According to the texts, he should wear garlands, bells in his ears, and display eighteen arms. But no corresponding images have been identified in Nepal or India. In Nepal, images of Kārttikeya, conceptually Ghaṅṭakārṇa's overlord, are often identified as Bell Ears himself. This is because of the bells that Kārttikeya likes to wear in his ears (Plates 417, 419).

Like Kubera and Hārītī, under the influence of Buddhism a number of demons have been reformed. Such is the case of the cannibal ogre, Gurumāpā. His story is intimately related to Itum-bahal, Kathmandu, and its alleged founder, a gambler named Keśandra. At *bahi-dyo-boyegu* it may be followed in a banner painting displayed in the courtyard. In return for helping Keśandra, Gurumāpā was given the right to eat all disobedient children (Plate 585). But soon overstepping these bounds, like Hārītī he became an insatiable cannibal, seizing all children, good and bad. Finally he was induced to forego cannibalism in return for a yearly feast of rice and buffalo meat tendered outside the city walls (Plate 586). The bargain with Gurumāpā is honored to this day, when every year the men of Itum-bahal carry the promised feast to the reformed demon on the Tundi-khel.⁵⁵ Copper plaques in the *vihāra* courtyard depict Gurumāpā in both guises, as a cannibal engaged in eating a child, and as a harmless convert docilely consuming his feast of rice and meat. But a frightful mask of Gurumāpā, the demon, is affixed to the nearby wall and parents still invoke his name as the bogeyman.

Probably no reflection of demonolatry in Nepal Mandala is more intriguing than that provided by the curious godlings known as Bhāṭbhaṭinī or Mopātadyo. A minstrel couple (*bhāt*, bard; *bhaṭinī*, bard's wife), Bhāṭbhaṭinī, together with their child, Bhillā, are among the most popular divinities in the Kathmandu Valley. Enshrined in Visalnagar, Kathmandu (Map 4:11), the bard and his wife are represented by life-size images that hang on the sanctum wall. They are swathed in clothes and

ornaments, from which peek only the couple's faces, one yellow, the other red, and their dangling gilt feet. The couple's swaddled child, clutched in the claws of a crude, vulture-like bird, dangles from the ceiling in front of them.

The identification of this odd trio is by no means easy. The *torāṇa* insignia proclaims that the temple belongs to Brāhmaṇī. Locally she is considered to be the daughter of the nearby Tuṅāl-devī (Vaiṣṇavī), with whom she celebrates a yearly festival. But Brāhmaṇī does not occupy the sanctum, and if the trio is to be associated with any Brahmanical divinity at all, it is with Viṣṇu. Indeed, from the origin legends one suspects that the godlings are related to the story of King Triśāṅkhu, who was cursed by Viṣṇu to hang forever in midair.⁵⁶

The Bhāṭbhaṭinī origin legends are numerous, but they disagree. The godlings are at once the primary Hindu gods themselves, divinized mortals, cursed mortals, and reformed cannibal demons. For example, in one tradition Bhāṭbhaṭinī are considered to be the founders of the legendary city of Visalnagar, later destroyed by the wrath of the terrible Navasagara (Naksal) Bhagavatī. In this guise they are either demigods or Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva.⁵⁷ Some persons worship the tableau as an immortalized couple so beloved by Viṣṇu that he incarnated himself as their child, but was at length carried away by Garuḍa.⁵⁸ In one of the most popular identifications, Bhāṭbhaṭinī are the cursed parents of the child, Bhillā, whom they raised from the ill-gotten proceeds of a betrayed trust. As punishment they were banished from earth, but condemned to remain suspended above it as an object lesson to those who would also think to betray a trust.⁵⁹ In the course of the convoluted legend, the child was ravished by a vulture, a circumstance that explains why the child dangles near the suspended pair. There is still another tradition, which explains neither the presence of the *bhāt* nor the curious pendant position of the pair. It claims that Bhaṭinī, like Hārītī, had a taste for human flesh. But Viṣṇu, by means of Garuḍa, seized one of Bhaṭinī's own beloved

⁵⁴ Mallmann 1963:60-62, but N. Bhattacharyya 1971:308 refers to the Indian Ghaṅṭakārṇa as a demon.

⁵⁵ Slusser 1972a:3-4; Anderson 1971:255-257.

⁵⁶ Boner 1962:89.

⁵⁷ Hasrat 1970:27; Wright 1966:107-108; N. Paudel 1963:36-37.

⁵⁸ Naraharinath 1966:64-65; Munamkarmi 1966:47-50.

⁵⁹ Sijapati 1969:19-22.

brood, restoring it only on the ogress' promise to forswear human flesh and to become instead a protector of children.⁶⁰ It is apparently in this role that the blessing of Bhāt̥bhaṭinī is invoked by parents of children thought to be bewitched or to be suffering from mental or physical disease. Persons afflicted with paralysis believe it to be the result of displeasing these deities,⁶¹ and witches of all kinds are especially devoted to them. Blood and alcohol are the preferred offerings to Bhāt̥bhaṭinī; Saturday and Tuesday are the most auspicious days to tender them. Then streams of people of all kinds and conditions pay their respects to the uncommonly potent demigods of Visalnagar. Each apparently sees in them the divinities of the tale he most believes.

SAGES AND SORCERERS

As the preferred abode of Śiva, the archetypal yogin, the Himalaya has long attracted various kinds of ascetics, mortal and immortal (Plate 573). Among the mountain pools and caves, Brahmā has been wont to fix himself near Śiva, meditating among his acolytes (Plate 589); and Viṣṇu, who also has a yogic aspect (Plate 379),⁶² has especially favored the mountain-girt fastness of the Valley. The sage Aḡaṣṭya, generated from a water pot, is no less a familiar of Nepal, as are countless yogins and rishis (*r̥sis*, sages) of unknown name or conviction (Plates 590, 591). Themselves created to create gods and men, the rishis are the ultimate ancestors of all Nepalis.⁶³ Thus, just as one performs *śrāddha* for the ancestral dead, one tenders a libation of water to the rishis. It is a specific and frequent rite of worship known as *rishi-tarpana*. High-caste Nepalis trace their origin to one of the well-known rishis, such as Bharadvāja or Nārada, who is the eponym of their *gotra*.⁶⁴ The sacred thread they wear, the *yajñopavīta* or, in

Nepali usage, *janai*, is emblematic of this descent. In it the ancestral rishi is conceived to dwell.⁶⁵ The day on which it is annually renewed is celebrated as Rishi-tarpana or Janai-pūrṇimā.

Rishis without number, anchorites, and brethren religious disciplinarians have swarmed to Nepal Mandala and the snowclad ramparts beyond. But none has had greater cultural impact than the Nāthas and Siddhas, the Great Magicians, the Perfected Ones.⁶⁶ They are an elect group of yogins, tantric masters who flourished particularly from the seventh to the eleventh century. They originated in the most varied backgrounds—Brahmans, kings, scribes, hunters, weavers, Buddhist monks, and even abbots.⁶⁷ Each abandoned his ordained rank and caste for the life of a wandering ascetic. Choosing a master renowned for his supernatural power, each sought through him to acquire such power for himself. Buddhist or Śaiva, the yogins were united by the common bond of tantrism. Through the mastery of its esoterica, they acquired *siddhi*, or supernormal powers. Elevated far above the common practitioners, the Nāthas and Siddhas, like the gods themselves, were revered for their miraculous powers. Such a one was the Buddhist yogin Ratnarākṣita, a thirteenth-century refugee in Nepal. He "had encountered many *yi-dams* (tutelary divinities) face to face, Śamvara, Kālacakra, Yamāntaka and others. On one occasion he heard the sounds of the sixteen aspects of the Void expressed in the music with which the Nāgas and Asuras honour Avalokiteśvara on his holy mountain (Potala). He could impart knowledge through consecration and the *dākṇinis* came in person to receive the sacrificial cakes. He petrified a mad elephant by fixing his eyes in the appropriate glance."⁶⁸ Even a somewhat ordinary lama was "in possession of the six essential attributes; viz., the power of flying in the air; of hearing sounds from the distance of thousands of miles; of seeing for thousands of miles; the knowledge of what is in

⁶⁰ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 603-604.

⁶¹ Wright 1966:64 n. 67.

⁶² Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:fig. 14.

⁶³ On the rishis see Monier-Williams 1899:226-227.

⁶⁴ The Hindu *gotra* is an extensive kin group composed of numerous *thar*, loosely, "clans."

⁶⁵ Bennett 1976:189.

⁶⁶ The two terms are commonly considered to be synonymous. But strictly speaking, Siddhas are a lesser category of Nāthas. Buddhist Siddhas may be further identified as Siddhācāryas.

⁶⁷ Snellgrove 1957:86.

⁶⁸ Snellgrove 1957:105-106.

the minds of others; the knowledge of all past events; and freedom from sensual and worldly desires. Besides these, he possessed power to live and die at his own pleasure, and to be reborn when he pleased. He could also tell the events of present, past, and future times. These powers he had acquired by conducting himself according to the rules, and performing the penances imposed on him by Sakya Sinha Buddha.⁶⁹

The most exalted of this select company are the Eighty-four Siddhas, or Mahāsiddhas, and Nine Nāthas, conventional but fluctuating sets of yogins revered by Vajrayāna Buddhist and Śaiva alike.⁷⁰ The names of only a few of the canonical number are very familiar in Nepal. Three are well known: Padmasambhava, Gorakṣanātha, and Matsyendra-nātha.⁷¹ But whereas in Tibet Padmasambhava is a major figure, in Nepal he is of relatively little significance. Whatever fame he has is confined to Buddhists. Gorakṣanātha and Matsyendranātha—more familiar to Nepalis as Gorakhnāth and Macchendranāth—more than compensate for the slight importance of their companion Siddhas and Nāthas. Both appear to have been real people. They belonged to the Nāthas (lord, patron, Śiva), a Śaiva cult whose origins and history are obscure.⁷² Various considered to be of Buddhist or Brahmanical origin, the Nātha tradition in fact seems to incorporate esoteric elements from both. Spiritual descendants of the Pāśūpatas, an ancient sect of Śaiva ascetics,⁷³ the Nātha cult represents a particular phase of the Siddha cult of India. Its principal emphasis is tantric and yogic. Today the Nāthas are most frequently known as Kānpḥaṭā (“slit-ear”) yogis, a name derived from their custom of slitting the ear pinna to accommodate heavy disc earrings, the sacred badge of initiation.⁷⁴ Familiar and numerous in the Kathmandu Valley of Sthitimalla and his immediate descendants,⁷⁵ the Kānpḥaṭā are now very few. Their numbers are

intermittently augmented by itinerants from the Nepalese Tarai and Indian plains. They are almost certainly descendants of other Śaiva tantric ascetics known as the Kāpālikas.⁷⁶ Literally, “skull men,” a name earned from the practice of wearing garlands of human skulls and using a skull for an alms bowl, the Kāpālikas were an extremist subset of the Pāśūpatas. Now almost extinct, the Kāpālikas and their doctrinal practices are known largely from literary sources,⁷⁷ among them the account of the pilgrim Hsüan-tsang.⁷⁸ The Kāpālikas not only ornamented themselves with human bones, but smeared themselves with ashes, frequented the cremation grounds, and cultivated bizarre behavior (Plate 592). One early, and undoubtedly prejudiced, Indian dramatist has a Kāpālika describe himself thus:

My necklace and ornaments consist of human bones; I live in the ashes of the dead and eat my food in human skulls. I look with my eyes made keen with the ointment of *yōga*. . . . Listen to our rites: after fasting we drink liquor from the skulls of Brāhmaṇas; our sacrificial fires are kept up with the brains and lungs of men which are mixed up with their flesh, and the offerings by which we appease our terrific God are human victims covered with gushing blood from the horrible cut on their throats.⁷⁹

The Kāpālikas were certainly a familiar sight not only in ancient India, but also in the Kathmandu Valley. This seems clear from a Licchavi reference to “teachers garlanded with skulls.”⁸⁰ Moreover, though the yogis themselves are virtually extinct in both countries, they persist in a modified way in the Kathmandu Valley. No longer ascetic wanderers, but family heads, they are a Newar unclean caste known as Kusale, Kusle, or Jogī.⁸¹ They often bear the surname Kāpālika. For the most part, the Kusale occupy themselves with

⁶⁹ Wright 1966:77.

⁷⁰ S. Dasgupta 1962:202-210.

⁷¹ Snellgrove 1957:151; D. Regimi 1965:part 1, 577.

⁷² S. Dasgupta 1962:191-195.

⁷³ Lorenzen 1972:13, 173-192; Rao 1968:11, 3-4; Banerjea 1956:451-452. See also Chapter 9.

⁷⁴ Briggs 1973:3, 6-11; K. Chattopadhyay 1923:483.

⁷⁵ Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:210-211.

⁷⁶ Lorenzen 1972:1-95; Rao 1968:11, 25-32; Banerjea 1956:451-452.

⁷⁷ Lorenzen 1972:xi-xii.

⁷⁸ Beal 1969:1, 55, 76.

⁷⁹ Rao 1968:11, 26-27.

⁸⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 112 (426-428).

⁸¹ Nepali 1965:150, 177, 319, 321.

menial, caste-ordained tasks. Among these, fittingly, is the performance of ritual functions at Newar funeral ceremonies. Nonetheless, for a few days every year certain Kusale don their grisly bone ornaments, and with skull cup and Śiva's double-headed drum in hand, go silently begging through the winter streets. It is a brief resumption of their ancestral role as Kāpālikas.

The yogin Gorakha- or Gorakṣanātha was the most renowned of the Nātha sect, and is generally believed to have lived around A.D. 1200.⁸² It is traditionally held that he was the pupil of Matsyendranātha, who may have flourished in the tenth century. If so, the thirteenth-century date would be incorrect. Be that as it may, at some time he became deified and identified with Śiva. According to Nepali legend, Gorakṣanātha was a miraculous creation of Śiva (or Avalokiteśvara),⁸³ some consider him an avatar of Śiva, and his superior. As affirmed by numerous inscriptions, the apogee of Gorakṣanātha's popularity in the Kathmandu Valley was about A.D. 1367 to 1482, a period coinciding with the rise of Sthitimalla, and the reigns of his sons and famous grandson, Yakṣa.⁸⁴ The cult thereafter declined in Nepal Mandala, until it was revived by the arrival of the Gorkhalis; Gorakṣanātha had been their patron at Gorkha. Today it is chiefly the Gorkhalis, the Kusale, and Gorakṣanātha's chosen followers, the Kānpḥāta yogis, who maintain the cult. The Kusale regard the linga of Paśupatinātha as Gorakṣanātha, and in recognition of their claims to rights at the shrine receive from it a special benefice at every full moon.⁸⁵

One of Gorakṣanātha's chief shrines in the Kathmandu Valley is on the ground floor of the old *sattal*, Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa. His sanctum dates from A.D. 1379, when Sthitimalla demonstrated his devotion by turning over the historic building to him for a temple and a lodging for his Nātha disciples.⁸⁶ Their descendants, numerous Kusale squatters still lived there in 1966, when they were evicted so that the building could be restored.

⁸² Lorenzen 1972:44; Briggs 1973:250. Walker 1968:402 writes that he flourished A.D. 1120.

⁸³ Lévi 1905:1, 351-352; Locke 1973:42-43.

⁸⁴ Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:210-211.

⁸⁵ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 557-558.

Gorakṣanātha also has a number of lesser shrines and temples. One of the most important is in Mrigasthali, adjacent to the Kānpḥāta *matha*. Another is a cave near the Pharping temple of Vajrayoginī, a goddess with whom Gorakṣanātha has an unexplained affinity. It is from his shrine on the hilltop above Panauti that the mystic Lilavati, visible only to the rishis, issues to make of the celebrated *tīrtha a trivenī*.

Images of Gorakṣanātha are extremely rare.⁸⁷ He is usually worshiped in symbolic form, most often the *pāduḥā* or imprints of his feet. Gorakṣanātha is the central figure of an annual festival, the Hari-Śaṅkara jātrā, observed almost exclusively by the Kānpḥāts. As part of their ceremonies they conduct the deity and his pupil, Bhairavanātha (the one as an icon, the other as sacramental bread) to the distant pool of Gosainkund, so that they may bathe under the August full moon.⁸⁸ With most Nepalese, and Buddhist Newars in particular, the fame of Gorakṣanātha endures principally as the instrument by which his teacher, Matsyendranātha, was introduced into the Kathmandu Valley. This teacher became one of the chief figures of the Nepali pantheon. It is fitting that our story of Nepal Mandala should conclude with him.

RĀTO MATSYENDRANĀTHA

The genesis and history of the illustrious Nepali deity known as Matsyendranātha (Plate 593) is not clear. In the Tibetan tradition, the Nātha Matsyendra is identified with another Siddha, Lui- or Luyipā. Lui-pā is apparently an authentic figure of history. He belongs to the late tenth or early eleventh century, and is generally honored as the first Buddhist Siddha.⁸⁹ If so, Matsyendranātha's date would not accord with the accepted date of about A.D. 1200 for Gorakṣanātha, his alleged pupil. The discrepancy between their dates might be accounted for by the many Nāthas named Matsyendra. In tantric

⁸⁶ Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:210-211.

⁸⁷ Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:figs. 33, 35.

⁸⁸ Slusser and Vajracharya 1973:123-124.

⁸⁹ S. Dasgupta 1962:7-9, 386.

symbolism, the word *matsya* (fish) stands for senses; the title Matsyendranātha, Lord of the Fish, that is, Master of the Senses, could be conferred on any exceptionally skilled yogin.⁹⁰ Thus we cannot declare which of the many Matsyendranāthas is connected with Nepal. Nonetheless, it seems likely that it is the Great Siddha of the conventional set of eighty-four. If so, and if he is indeed Lui-pā, the best we can say is that Gorakhanātha's date is in fact earlier than the accepted A.D. 1200, and that both Nāthas flourished from the late tenth to the early eleventh century. Whatever their dates, it seems almost certain that they were companions, and perhaps teacher and disciple.

How and when Matsyendra, the Great Magician, evolved into one of the most renowned divinities of the Nepali pantheon is not clear.⁹¹ In some form he must have been a denizen of the Kathmandu Valley by at least the fourteenth century; if he is one with Lui-pā, by tradition linked to the founding of Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, then at least by the mid-twelfth century.⁹² But while Gorakhanātha's cult was firmly entrenched in Nepal Mandala by Sthitimalla's time—and perhaps by his invitation—Matsyendra's cult does not appear to have blossomed until the eighteenth century. By then, the Great Magician had been quite transformed. In effect, only his name endured, to label two quite distinct deities, one red and one white, Rāto and Sveta (Seto) Macchendranātha. The latter is essentially the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, the former a complex deity of many strands. The longest strand links him to a village deity named Bungadyo.

Reflecting his history, the god Bunga-, Buga-, Bugma-, Vugma-dyo (and more), now has many names. Chief among them are Bungamati Lokeśvara, Avalokiteśvara, Karuṇāmaya, Lokanātha, and Rāto Macchendranātha. But as Bungadyo he is clearly a very ancient deity. His shrine lay near

the Bagmati, south of Patan in a village known to the Licchavis as Bugāyūmīgrāma.⁹³ It is modern Bungamati, sometimes named Amarapura in the chronicles. Either the village developed around the shrine and became known by the same name, or as a *grāmadevatā*, the deity earned his name from the village in which he dwelt. At any rate, we know from the above inscription that Bugāyūmī village existed in Aṃśuvarman's time, and from the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* that the deity existed in the reign of Narendradeva, in the first half of the seventh century.⁹⁴ By then, Bungadyo had already begun his transformation.

In his first metamorphosis, the indigenous Bungadyo became identified with Avalokiteśvara, a syncretic form he would keep for a millennium or more. This paralleled the transformation of certain local *māis*, *ajimās*, and similar godlings into divinities of more respectable international standing, Buddhist or Brahmanical. It was also in keeping with a pan-Asian tendency to identify non-Buddhist deities as the popular Avalokiteśvara, and thus incorporate them into the fold. We know that the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara was worshiped in Nepal at least by the mid-sixth century.⁹⁵ That Bungadyo had begun to be worshiped in this guise at least by the next century seems probable. The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* affirms that King Narendradeva and his teacher Bandhudatta, two figures intimately linked to the deity's legend, "regulated the *jātrā* of Vugma-Lokeśvara."⁹⁶ The use of the term "regulated" rather than "established" suggests that both the deity's metamorphosis and his festival antedated Narendradeva's time. In any event, whenever the transformation from village god to Bodhisattva took place, the curious little godling of Bugāyūmī-Bungamati for many centuries played a dual role as Bunga-Lokeśvara. This may have been his name when King Bālārjunadeva bestowed

⁹⁰ Tucci 1969:62, 73.

⁹¹ Snellgrove 1957:113. Certain legends suggest that Matsyendranātha once almost forfeited this distinction by renouncing for a time his asceticism, but was brought back into the path of righteousness by his disciple Gorakhanātha (Lévi 1905:1, 355).

⁹² Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:208-209.

⁹³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 71 (290-300).

⁹⁴ Fol. 23a. D. Vajracharya's thesis (Banda 1962:82 n.)

that a poetic reference to Karuṇāmaya in the Paśupati inscription of Jayadeva II (A.D. 733) also proves the existence of the Bungamati god's cult at that time seems untenable. We know from extant sculptures that there were other Avalokiteśvaras, and the reference therefore need not have been a specific allusion to the Bungamati deity.

⁹⁵ See Chapter 10.

⁹⁶ Fol. 23a.

his own crown on "Vugma-Lokeśvara" in the ninth century.⁹⁷ A painting of "Nepāle Vugama-Lokeśvaraḥ" in a manuscript completed in A.D. 1071 unequivocally establishes the syncretism by the eleventh century (Plate 594).⁹⁸

Until almost the end of the Malla Period, the renowned deity of Bungamati seems to have been widely known as the "Avalokiteśvara of Bungamati." Dharmasvāmin, the Tibetan monk who lived in Nepal for a time in the early thirteenth century, refers to the deity as Ārya Bu-kham (Āryāvalokiteśvara of Bungamati).⁹⁹ The historians of the *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* invariably refer to him as Vugama-Lokeśvara or a variant thereof.¹⁰⁰ From their time until the mid-eighteenth century, all sources identify the deity as Avalokiteśvara by such names as Bunga-Lokeśvara, Lokanātha,¹⁰¹ Āryāvalokiteśvara, Karuṇāmaya, or Padmapāṇi. But suddenly, with a Patan inscription of A.D. 1748, the deity is named "Śrī-tin Macchendra-nātha," Thrice Illustrious Matsyendranātha.¹⁰² Following the Gorkhali conquest, the new name for the Bungamati deity became increasingly common. It is regularly employed in the Brahmanical versions of the nineteenth-century chronicles. The older name, Bungadyo, endured among those persons most intimately associated with his cult—the Newars of Bungamati and Patan—and in Buddhist recensions of the chronicles.

The seemingly sudden mutation into the Siddha Matsyendranātha of a venerable deity who for at least a millennium had been worshiped in the guise of Avalokiteśvara raises a perplexing question. A satisfactory answer cannot now—or perhaps

ever—be provided.¹⁰³ Given the apparently late date of the transformation and the popularity of Matsyendra's companion Gorakhanātha at Gorkha, one cannot help but suspect Gorkhali influence. This influence, as we know, had begun to penetrate the Kathmandu Valley long before the actual conquest. The Gorkhals, and particularly the yogin devotees of Gorakhanātha, may have preferred to see in this popular, potent, physically nondescript—but unfortunately Buddhist—deity, a different Lord of the World, namely Śiva Lokeśvara. Just as the Kusale still assert that Paśupati is Gorakhanātha, newcomers perhaps once claimed the Bungamati deity to be Matsyendranātha. By force of repetition, those farthest from the cult may soon have adopted the new identification; those at its center gradually admitted the additional name, but not the identification of the deity with the yogin. To the Buddhists, at least, the Bungamati "Lord of the Fish," is still no other than Avalokiteśvara. According to their legend, the Bodhisattva earned this name in memory of his having assumed the form of a fish to eavesdrop on the private seashore discourse of Śiva and Pārvatī.¹⁰⁴

In any event, Nepal Mandala, in the shadow of the yogin Śiva's Himalayan haunts, unquestionably exerted a powerful attraction on the Nāthas. It still does. They and their patron Gorakhanātha took over Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa, one of the most prestigious buildings of Nepal. Their influence seems to have extended to other important places, as well. Possibly because of it, the name *nātha* (lord) was attached to eminent deities such as Paśupati and Svayambhū.¹⁰⁵ If so, the Nāthas perhaps had a

⁹⁷ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* fol. 23a. But the fourteenth-century historians may only have applied the current name in retrospect.

⁹⁸ The paintings could have slightly postdated the colophon, but were certainly completed before the end of the century (Foucher 1900:27, 33, pl. iv, 1).

⁹⁹ D. Regmi 1965:1, 560.

¹⁰⁰ Fols. 26a, 40a, 43a.

¹⁰¹ Like Lokeśvara, Lokanātha means "Lord of the World," and is applied not only to Avalokiteśvara but to Śiva and many other deities.

¹⁰² Shakyā and Vaidya 1970:inscr. 68 (227-230). Locke 1973:80 erroneously states that the deity is called by a form of Matsyendranātha in a Patan inscription of 1746

(cf. Shakyā and Vaidya 1970:inscr. 67:225-226). There may be an inscriptional reference to Macchendra-nātha dated 1672, but as Locke 1973:70 n. 24 points out, it is doubtful.

¹⁰³ Cf. Locke 1973:96-110 for a summary of various theories.

¹⁰⁴ Wright 1966:94.

¹⁰⁵ Snellgrove 1957:114. To my knowledge, the date at which the names of these and other sites began to be suffixed with *nātha* has not been established. Certainly the practice is very old, as we know from the dedicatory inscription of the earliest known image of Avalokiteśvara, ca. A.D. 545. He is identified as Āryāvalokiteśvaranātha; D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 40 (177-178).

hand in the Chobar Avalokiteśvara's name, Ādinātha. It signifies two very distinct deities, Vajrasattva and the primeval Śiva. With similar equanimity, the Nāthas may have renamed the Avalokiteśvara of Bungamati, just across the river, Matsyendranātha. For as Snellgrove points out with reference to Ādi-Buddha and Śiva's title, Ādinātha, "primeval buddha or primeval lord, it is all the same to ordinary lay-folk and to vagrant yogins."¹⁰⁶ The names Lokanātha and Lokeśvara, Lord of the World, may be applied with equal propriety to Śiva and Avalokiteśvara; this may have influenced the transformation of the one into the other.¹⁰⁷ For, again quoting Snellgrove, "Paśupati may be Śiva and Matsyendra may be Avalokiteśvara, but both are one in Lokeśvara, the Lord of the World, whose favourite abode is the snow-peaks of the Himālaya."¹⁰⁸

The legends related to the introduction of Matsyendranātha into the Kathmandu Valley make their first appearance with the late *vamśāvalis*.¹⁰⁹ Buddhist or Brahmanical, the chronicles concur that Gorakhanātha was instrumental in introducing Matsyendranātha (as he is always named in the Brahmanical chronicles) or Avalokiteśvara (as he is identified in the Buddhist chronicles). Either in anger at the *nāgas*, in a pique because he was refused alms, or from laziness that engendered a plan to bring his teacher to him, Gorakhanātha immobilized the nine chief *nāgas*.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Snellgrove 1957:114.

¹⁰⁷ Lévi 1905:1, 356-357 also postulated something of this nature in speculating that immigrant Hindus recognized in the little god of Bungamati the petite image of the famous Lokeśvara of Mt. Kapota described by Hsüan-tsang. Lévi also proposed that the yogis would have installed Matsyendranātha in the Kathmandu Valley at the same time that they installed Gorakhanātha in the neighboring kingdom of Gorkha.

¹⁰⁸ Snellgrove 1957:113-114.

¹⁰⁹ With one exception, all are written in Nepali. The most important among the Buddhist recensions is the legend published by Wright 1966:93-102, summarized by Lévi 1905:1, 348-351. It is not incorporated into the Buddhist Padmagiri chronicle, as Locke 1973:55-56 writes. The principal Brahmanical accounts of the legend are to be found in the *Bhāṣāvamśāvalī* (Lamshal 1966:4-17), in related chronicles such as the *Rājāvamśāvalī* (B. Sharma 1968:11-13), and in the chronicle published by Hasrat

Seating himself upon them to meditate,¹¹¹ Gorakhanātha reasoned that to deprive the Valley of its rainmakers would cause a severe drought. This was merely from spite or, as most accounts agree, to cause the compassionate Avalokiteśvara/Matsyendranātha to come to the Valley's relief, and thus come also to the presence of Gorakhanātha.¹¹²

As Gorakhanātha stubbornly continued his meditation seated upon the immobilized *nāgas*, the drought worsened. By the end of twelve years—the expected mystical Nepali time span—the situation had become unbearable. King Narendradeva (or sometimes an undocumented son, Varadeva) then learned from the powerful *vajrācārya* Bandhudatta of Te-bahal, Kathmandu, where the trouble lay and how to remedy it—to seek Avalokiteśvara/Matsyendra in distant Kāmarūpa (Assam), and bring him to Nepal. Out of compassion he would end the drought; or, as most tales agree, the disciple Gorakhanātha would be forced to rise respectfully in the presence of his master. The *nāgas*, thus released, would resume their interrupted duties and the drought would end.

Accordingly, Narendradeva, Bandhudatta, and a Jyapu servant or two set off in search of Avalokiteśvara/Matsyendranātha. In most accounts they were joined by Kārkoṭaka,¹¹³ whom Bandhudatta freed from Gorakhanātha through the power of his mantras or, variously, with the help of Yogāmbarājñānaḍākinī (who curiously, even in the Buddhist

1970:44-45. The story is also told with many additions and divergences in the one chronicle that is written in Newari. Published as the *Maniratna-mālā* (A. Vajracharya 1966:2-24), it is summarized in English by Locke 1973:41-49. The chronicle originates in Bungamati, and purports to date from the early thirteenth century; on internal evidence this date must be considered spurious (Locke 1973:41-42 n. 8). All of the principal tales are summarized by Locke 1973:39-60, who also compares and contrasts their features.

¹¹⁰ Locke 1973:43; Hasrat 1970:44; Lamshal 1966:4; Lévi 1905:1, 348; Wright 1966:94.

¹¹¹ In one Brahmanical recension, Gorakhanātha imprisons the clouds for the same purpose (Lévi 1905:1, 352).

¹¹² Lévi 1905:1, 352; Locke 1973:43.

¹¹³ In the Newari chronicle, Kārkoṭaka in human form first impeded them, but was subdued by mantras.

accounts, soon became a hindrance). But the Nepalese party succeeded in carrying off the deity. This was a voluntary departure in the form of a black bee securely enclosed within a sacred water vessel. In due time, all returned to Nepal. There, because of Avalokiteśvara/Matyendranātha's beneficent presence in the Valley, the rains fell immediately; or, alternately, Gorakhanātha rose to greet his guru, thus releasing the *nāgas*. For "no sooner had he got up from his seat than the nine Nāgas crept away and the rains began to fall in abundance."¹¹⁴

There then ensued a dispute among the party as to where the deity should be enshrined or, variously, where his chariot festival should be performed. The possible alternatives were Bhaktapur (the king's residence), Kathmandu (Bandhudatta's residence), Patan (the Jyapu servant's residence), or Amarapura (Bungamati), which had been miraculously signaled as the birthplace of the god. Patan was chosen, but by unfair means. In some accounts, the deity was installed in Bungamati, but Patan was selected as the place for his chariot festival. According to Bandhudatta's decree, the deity was to divide his time between the cities, spending the summer in Bungamati and the winter in Patan.

Despite the divergence of emphasis between Buddhist and Brahmanical rescensions, all of the legends 1) agree that the introduction of the rain-giver Avalokiteśvara/Matyendranātha followed a terrible drought and famine occasioned by Gorakhanātha; 2) point to Kāmarūpa (or Mt. Kotpala by way of Kāmarūpa) as the deity's homeland; 3) credit King Narendradeva and the *vajrācārya* Bandhudatta with securing the deity for Nepal; 4) record the opposition to his abduction; and 5) indicate the internal dispute over where the deity should be enshrined and his chariot festival be performed. The contradictions of the stories are obvious. Even the Buddhist chronicle loses sight of the compassionate nature of Avalokiteśvara, and imputes his coming "to prove that he . . . possessed much power."¹¹⁵ But the legends may well reflect

some actual event. They may be concerned with the introduction of the original Bungadyo, a particularly renowned Avalokiteśvara, or, less likely, the yogin Matyendranātha. The abduction of another's gods is not unknown in Nepal, as legend and custom repeatedly attest. We have already met one such stolen god, the Siṭhī-dyo (Kārttikeya) of Mañjuśrī-tol, Kathmandu, and in Sveta Matyendranātha will shortly meet another. Certainly the relationship of the Licchavi king, Narendradeva, with Bugama-Lokeśvara seems authentic. The culturally authoritative *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* expressly assigns the regulation of the deity's festival to that king. Unfortunately, we can now only speculate. The real history of all these events, if they were indeed historical, has been thoroughly dispersed in the mists of time.

Whatever the origins of the celebrated god of Bungamati and Patan, he has long enjoyed a pre-eminent place in the pantheon of Nepal Mandala. The gift to him of a king's own crown is suggestive of the god's importance in the Transitional Period. So also is the fact that "Vugama-Lokeśvarah" is included in the Hlām-vihāra manuscript; he is conceived as one of fewer than three dozen of the most famous gods and *tirthas* in the entire eleventh-century realm of Buddhism (Plate 594). In his long residence in the Valley, Dharmasvāmin must have observed countless festivals; significantly, he reported only that of "Ārya Bu-kham." Early Malla kings and nobles—Sthitirāja and Yakṣamalla, Jaysiṃha Rāmavarddhana and Rudramalla—publicly claimed their allegiance to Paśupati and Māneśvarī, but attended the Bungamati/Patan god.¹¹⁶ Bugama-Lokeśvara's renown was not limited to Nepal Mandala. Before paying his respects to Paśupati, the Khasa king Jitārimalla "presented treasure to the temple of Bugama," and Ripumalla also came to present treasure and to witness Bungadyo's annual bath.¹¹⁷ Even the attacking Mukunda Sena of Palpa, so it is said, halted to bestow upon the famous deity a golden garland.¹¹⁸ Dharmasvāmin claimed the image to be "very famous throughout

an earlier visit to Vugama-Lokeśvara, in n.s. 408 Pauṣa (A.D. 1288) (fol. 26a).

¹¹⁸ Hasrat 1970:51; Wright 1966:115; Petech 1958: 193-194.

¹¹⁴ Hasrat 1970:44.

¹¹⁵ Wright 1966:96.

¹¹⁶ Petech 1958:108, 146; D. Regmi 1966:part 3, app. A, inscr. 56 (58-61).

¹¹⁷ *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī* fols. 40a, 43a. Jitāri also paid

India,¹¹⁹ and certainly the Tibetans knew him well. By the nineteenth century, at least, they considered him one of the "four brothers," the most esteemed manifestations of Avalokiteśvara among the thousands known in Tibet and Nepal.¹²⁰

Within the Patan kingdom, Bugama-Lokeśvara had no peer. The annals of the Patan kingdom are filled with his name. The Patan kings regularly attended the god, intimately concerned themselves with his affairs,¹²¹ made innumerable donations to his Bungamati and Patan shrines, and funded the preparation of his great chariot (Plates 68, 595). The Patan kings even reverentially accompanied the *ratha* on foot—and sometimes helped to draw it—in its slow progress through the capital city. Kings assisted in the same way every twelfth year in the chariot's even slower progress between Bungamati and Patan. At least one Patan king, Śrīnivāsa, seems even to have overtly elevated Bunga-Lokeśvara above Paśupati. He declared in his *praśasti* to be "favored by the dust of Lokanātha's feet." Patan coins were regularly struck in the name of Karuṇāmaya or Lokanātha, and the height of the god's chariot long determined the permissible height of buildings in the Darbar Square. The occasional king who omitted the respect conceived due the Patan-Bungamati deity was roundly censured in the records of his subjects.¹²² Deceived by Matsyendra's popularity, Hamilton, writing in the early nineteenth century, pronounced the deity to have the "chief superintendence over the affairs of the world. Under him are a great many Devatas, or spirits of vast power, among whom Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Siva the destroyer of this earth, do not bear a very distinguished rank."¹²³ Amusing as Hamilton's remarks are, in Patan and Bungamati they do not seem excessively wide of the mark. For a Patan painter once saw fit to supply Bugama-Lokeśvara with the vehicles of all three of these great gods (Plate 68).

In Patan and Bungamati, it was the behavior of

Bugama-Lokeśvara that, more than all other signs, presaged the future. In A.D. 1680, for example, "the paint over the face of the Buga deity came out . . . this very day Kathmandu's king Nṛpendramalla died." In 1817, when the paint similarly wrinkled and cracked, a calamitous earthquake followed. To the eye of King Viśvajitmallā, attending the chariot festival, the deity appeared to turn its back to him. Taken ill and complaining of giddiness, the king returned to the palace, only to be murdered in cold blood on the same day. The successful course of the chariot festival was particularly portentous. Years in which the shaft or axles broke frequently, the wheels became mired or other mishaps occurred, always held a high quota of misfortune. For example, at a time when King Ṛddhinarasimha assisted in pulling the cart, the axles broke no fewer than thirty-one times, and the king "died soon after the evil omens had appeared." Similarly, in Yoganarendra's last year of life the twelve-year chariot festival was fraught with ill omens. The *ratha's* axles "had broken several times . . . [and because of the delay] *jātrās* scheduled for particular days were not . . . observed." Frequently, after a succession of misfortunes with breaking axles or sticking wheels, animal sacrifices were performed at the chariot's halting place; they were even made at Svayambhū. Essentially, they were to propitiate the Bhairavas who reside in the wheels.¹²⁴

Bunga-Lokeśvara, no less than other deities, wept on some occasions, and spoke his mind on others. He was annoyed that Siddhinarasimha, in contravention of the accepted rule, had built a temple higher than his own cart. He therefore possessed the body of a child to declare: "Come Raja Siddhi-Narasimha I am not at all pleased at thy building this high temple." When the king made no response, the god departed, exclaiming "I will never come to speak anymore."¹²⁵

The luster of the ancient god of Bungamati seems undiminished with the passing years. As

304-306, 320, 330, 336, 345, 356, 360, 363; Wright 1966: 165.

¹¹⁹ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 560.

¹²⁰ Wylie 1970:14-16 n. 20.

¹²¹ Wright 1966:167-169; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 283-284, 286-287, 303, 329; *Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963f; Locke 1973: 66-77.

¹²² D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 570; 1966:part 2, 283-284,

¹²³ Hamilton 1971:32.

¹²⁴ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 117, 303-306, 336, 352, 362; B. Sharma 1969:19.

¹²⁵ Wright 1966:165.

Rāto Matsyendranātha, all Nepalis come to his feet. The people of Patan and Bungamati adore him as Bungadyo or Karuṇāmaya. Among the Buddhist Newars of the two towns, he is worshiped more than any other. In Bungamati, the socio-religious life of the whole community revolves around his cult.¹²⁶ He still occupies the two important shrines decreed by Bandhudatta. One is a Newar-style temple in the midst of the grassy enclosure of Tah-bahal, Patan; the other, a commanding *śikhara* around which Bungamati nestles (Plates 10, 146).¹²⁷

The chariot festival of Bungadyo/Avalokiteśvara/Matsyendranātha remains an annual event of national concern, which royalty attends. The imposing chariot is usually assembled at Patan, but every twelfth year at Bungamati. From Bungamati it makes its ponderous way to Patan and back, powered by the devoted, eager to serve the great god (Plates 597, 598).¹²⁸ At the end of the festival the chariot is normally dismantled, and its parts stored for the following year. As an exception, on the twelfth year the whole chariot is destroyed. Only the metal repoussé work and the *ghamā*, the great curved timber shaft, are spared. The shaft is an auspicious and coveted object that usually falls to a *gūthi* association. It is placed in some local square in front of a *vihāra* or a community building, where it serves generation after generation as a convenient seat. These tremendous wooden shafts are scattered throughout Patan. A tally, multiplied by the twelve-year interval, would reveal the long ancestry of the *ratha-jātrā*. But for this there are better indices.

Strictly speaking, the *ratha* is the ambulatory temple of Matsyendranātha, but he does not travel alone. The four Bhairavas who helped carry the *pūrṇa kālāśa* from Kāmarūpa dwell, one each, in the huge wooden wheels, and Bhairava presides at

the tip of the great curved shaft (Plate 363). The shaft is Kārkoṭaka, various *nāgas* occupy the dangling ropes and the streamers that depend from the pinnacle, the original Jyapu porter is lodged beneath the god's seat, and Bandhudatta and Narendradeva dwell, one each, in Matsyendranātha's gilt feet. At the tip of the chariot's spire is Vajrasattva, Matsyendranātha's guru, together with his spiritual father, Amitābha. A second Padmapāṇi Lokeśvara serves as rear guard, and underneath the sanctum is to be found Chaksu-kamuni, the *yakṣa* Kubera. Sūrya, Brahmā, Śiva, Viṣṇu, and Garuḍa are also symbolically present.

The quintessence of Matsyendranātha's *ratha-jātrā* is perhaps best conveyed in the words of Percy Brown, who witnessed it at the beginning of the century.

The car is a huge, unwieldy structure, with massive wheels, on the solid spokes of which are painted in distinctive colours the eyes of Bhairab or Shiva. Surmounting this is the chamber containing the deity, built up in the form of a column . . . and between 60 and 70 feet high. . . . The scene [of the chariot's progression] is a wild and barbaric one. Through the narrow streets overhung by wooden balconies crammed with excited groups of onlookers . . . the car, dragged by over a hundred willing devotees, makes its triumphal tour. . . . The superstructure of the car . . . sways until it almost overturns as the groaning wheels bump over the uneven pavement of the city, or sink deep into the soft soil of the roadway outside. . . . Like a great ship staggering through a heavy sea—its curved prow terminating in a gilt figurehead of Bhairab, and apparently forcing its way through the seething mass of humans who like billows surround it in one capacity and another—the great god

¹²⁶ Cf. Locke 1973:8, 11-16; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 668, 671-673; Nepali 1965:369-375.

¹²⁷ It was almost certainly preceded by a Newar-style temple, many of whose remnant wood carvings have been incorporated into the stone *śikhara*. The extremely large courtyard, almost like a city square, is partly dirt and partly paved with brick; above ground, at least, one searches in vain for the magnificent courtyard Father Giuseppe 1801:313 described: "I obtained a sight of the

temple, and then passed by the great court which was in front; it is entirely marble, almost blue, but interspersed with large flowers of bronze well-disposed, to form the pavement of the great courtyard, the magnificence of which astonished me; and I do not believe there is another equal to it in Europe."

¹²⁸ On the architectural aspect of the *ratha*, see Chapter 6.

Matsyendra in his car, with strain and cry makes his annual journey. On a staging somewhat resembling a deck the officiating priests take their stand, and, like sailors, cling valiantly to the oscillating structure. A procession naturally accompanies the car . . . elephants . . . bands . . . while beves of girls carrying garlands of flowers enliven the proceedings with song and dance. Other attendants bear great bells on poles, golden umbrellas, incense burners, fly-whisks, banners, and all the insignia of the great deity to whom they are doing honour.¹²⁹

Except for the absence of elephants, Matsyendra's procession is essentially unchanged since Percy Brown described it. It requires the barest imagination on the part of a modern witness to stand buffeted at the side of the English observer as "the great god Matsyendra in his car, with strain and cry makes his annual journey." Hardly more imagination is needed to join the pilgrim Fâ-hien at the Buddhist chariot festivals he watched in fourth-century Khotan and Magadha. In Khotan he saw a "four-wheeled image car, more than thirty cubits high, which looked like the great hall (of a monastery) moving along . . . with silken streamers and canopies hanging all around. The (chief) image stood in the middle of the car." In Magadha, the chariots were accompanied by "singers and skilful musicians [while the populace paid] their devotions with flowers and incense."¹³⁰ In the same way, it would take a singularly prosaic mind not to visualize the eighth-century Nepali *ratha* referred to by Jayadeva, the last Licchavi king of eminence. He speaks of a "terraced chariot" (*prāsāda ratha*), and stipulates the sums to be paid for mounting the superior section (*rathottolana*), the

installation of the upper terrace (*prāsādasamśkāra*), for painting (*citrana*), and for the "*cela-kāra*," apparently the one to clothe the images borne in the chariot.¹³¹ Although there were many *rathas* in Licchavi Nepal, it seems very likely that King Jayadeva in fact refers to that of Bunga-Lokeśvara. According to tradition, his grandfather Narendradeva "regulated the *jātrā* of Vugma-Lokeśvara," and is the king intimately concerned with his legends. It would not be surprising if his judicial-minded grandson would have further "regulated the *jātrā*"—down to the last *pana* given to the god's tailor. This would be in keeping with subsequent practice, in which the kings of Nepal Mandala, and at length of the Kingdom of Nepal, always expressed benevolent concern for the chariot procession of the god of Bungamati.

From legend and contemporary practice, one must deduce that the job of the primitive Bungadyo was to provide rain. As Bungadyo/Avalokiteśvara/Matsyendranātha, he is the raingiver still. His year's schedule of activities begin in April, just a few weeks prior to the normal onset of the monsoon rains, which marks the end of his six-month sojourn in Patan. At that time he is taken from the *vihāra*, ritually bathed, and repainted in readiness for the chariot festival. Except on the cyclical twelfth year, this begins at Pulchok near the West Stupa. Here his chariot is met by the smaller one of Mīnanātha, a deity identified in many different ways. He is at once said to be Matsyendranātha's son, his daughter, a younger brother, or "Chakuwadyo," so named from Cakra-vihāra, one of the names of his residence, or, as some say, derived from the sweets he receives from Matsyendranātha.¹³² In fact, Mīnanātha is the deity himself under a different name.¹³³ For the first stage of the

places his name in various lists of Siddhas (Tucci 1969:73; Lévi 1905:1, 355). It seems possible that the Tibetans recognized the overlapping personalities in referring to the two manifestations with the single rubric, A-kam-bu-kam (Wylie 1970:14-16 n. 21). There is some question concerning the antiquity of the Mīnanātha aspect of the festival; it may be argued as a late accretion or as one that predates Matsyendranātha (D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 657; Locke 1973:36-37). Some legends affirm that Mīnanātha (together with another deity, Pūrnacandī) entered the Valley as a companion of Matsyendranātha (Hasrat 1970:44). Suggestive of Mīnanātha's priority, however, is

¹²⁹ Brown 1912:107-109. For a detailed description of the temples, the chariot, the festival, and the social role of the deity, see Locke 1973:1-38. Oldfield 1880:11, 325-338 provides an account of the festival as witnessed in his time, and a popular account of the festival may be found in Anderson 1971: 53-61.

¹³⁰ Legge 1965:18-19, 79.

¹³¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 149 (563-572); Lévi 1908:111, 149-150.

¹³² Nepali 1965:371.

¹³³ The name Mīnanātha also signifies Lord of the Fish, is a synonym for Matsyendranātha, and often re-

deities' several weeks' passage of the city, Mīnānātha is the leader. He soon becomes the follower, as they slowly progress through the city. They follow a ceremonially prescribed route with well-defined halting places, receiving the constant homage of the Patan people. At length the chariots are brought to a halt at Jawalakhel, west of the city, not far from Pulchok.

It is at this stage that the divinity's role as the raingiver is most apparent. With uncanny regularity the climactic events of his *jātrā* do indeed coincide with the first onset of the rains. Even European observers have attested to this. Landon, for example, remarked that he set out for the day's events on a parched, cloudless day in 1924 no different from all the preceding ones. But when the image was "shown to the seething multitude . . . a spot of rain struck me at this moment, and in twenty seconds we were hastily putting up the top of the car against a driving downpour of huge drops that continued for nearly an hour, and was repeated twice or thrice before nightfall."¹³⁴ I myself can attest to a similar experience.

The climax of the deity's long annual celebration precedes the dismantling of the chariot and his return to Bungamati by palanquin. It is the public display of one of his garments. Known as *bhoṭo* (Newari, shirt), the garment is a doll-sized piece of black clothing alleged to be studded with jewels. This cannot be verified by layfolk, who only glimpse the *bhoṭo* as it is briefly held up for inspection, once on each side of the high chariot (Plate 599). At its display, a murmur of religious ecstasy surges through the enthralled crowds. At this moment the first raindrops should fall. The showing of the shirt is only one of many specific acts in the drama of the Matsyendra festival. But it is conceived of such importance to Valley society at large that the entire festival is commonly referred to as the *Bhoṭo-jātrā*, the Festival of the Shirt.

One would suppose that the display of the *bhoṭo*

the fact that most legends concur that several other chariot festivals once performed in Patan were suppressed at the institution of the Matsyendra *ratha-jātrā*, but not that of Mīnānātha. Even the chariot festival of Chobar was discontinued at that time (Locke 1973:47-48; Wright 1966: 100; Hasrat 1970:45).

¹³⁴ Landon 1928:1, 212-214.

is a fundamental, and perhaps central, aspect of Matsyendra's rites. But it is apparently a recent and wholly fortuitous addition. In none of the legends respecting Matsyendranātha is there any mention of his miraculous rainmaking shirt. Nor may a single reference be traced to it in *ṭhyāsaphus* or inscriptions. Indeed, the first notice of the *bhoṭo* is provided by Western observers.¹³⁵ There are a number of Nepali legends that purport to explain it, which borrow heavily from the tale concerning Nāgarāja Kārkoṭaka's suffering queen.¹³⁶ They suggest that the incorporation of the *bhoṭo* element into the Matsyendranātha festival was a happenstance.

The jewel-studded *bhoṭo*, according to one popular version of the tale, once belonged to a Jyapu. He had earned this unusual dress of honor from Kārkoṭaka for having cured the ailing *nāgini*'s eyes. Proud of his resplendent garment, the Jyapu even wore it into the paddy fields. One day, however, laying it by in the course of his strenuous labors, the garment was stolen. Sometime later, among the crowds attending the final day of Matsyendra's chariot festival, the Jyapu spotted the thief decked out in his own lost vest. A struggle ensued, in which even Kārkoṭaka in human guise was unable to wrest away the precious garment. At last it was decided to settle the dispute by donating the coveted shirt to Matsyendranātha. His continued possession of it should be annually reconfirmed by its display at the close of the festival.

The display of a precious and saintly relic for its wonder-working powers is, of course, commonplace. Fâ-hien observed such a phenomenon near Peshawar. The Buddha's own monastic gown had been preserved in a *vihāra* and, said the pilgrim, "it is a custom of the country when there is a great drought, for the people to collect in crowds, bring out the robe, pay worship to it, and make offerings, on which there is immediately a great rain from the sky."¹³⁷ Hence, that the showing of

¹³⁵ Oldfield 1880:11, 333-334; Brown 1912:107; Landon 1928:1, 212; Wright 1966:24.

¹³⁶ Many are published in Nepalese folktale collections, references and summaries to some of which may be consulted in Locke 1973:58-59.

¹³⁷ Legge 1965:39.

the *bhoṣo* should be an ancient and integral part of Matsyendra's festival would not be surprising. It would accord with all the other rain-associated symbolism incorporated into the festival. But for the moment, we simply do not know the history of the practice.¹³⁸

The role of Bungadyo/Avalokiteśvara/Matsyendranātha as a rain god is reaffirmed at every turn. Rain is denied by interference with the rain-making activities of the *nāgas* (or, alternately, of the clouds). A *nāga* assists in the abduction of the god, and is symbolically present in the shaft, streamers, and ropes of the chariot. The god is transported in a water vessel in which he dwells until an image can be made for him. And finally, the name *matsya* links him, in popular imagination, at least, to aquatic creatures. For although to the Siddhas the esoteric meaning of the word *matsya* may have been fully understood, to ordinary layfolk it is the fish that has triumphed. Not only do the Buddhists have their explanation of the name of the fish-incarnation of Avalokiteśvara, but the Śivamārgīs have theirs. To them Matsyendranātha was born from a fish that had eaten Śiva's semen¹³⁹ or, alternately, he originated as a Brahman foundling swallowed by a fish but recovered by Śiva.¹⁴⁰ Matsyendra's own role as a rain god is not forgotten either, when as a yogin with *vetāla* instincts he temporarily occupied the corpse of a recently deceased king. For at that time fortune smiled on the kingdom, the "clouds distributed rain at the proper time, and the grains produced inestimable harvests."¹⁴¹

The devotion of Śivamārgīs to Matsyendranātha notwithstanding, they have not always been pleased to concede that his rain-making powers exceed those of Śiva Paśupati. In Brahmanical legend,

¹³⁸ Snellgrove's hypothesis (1957:117) that the shirt may indeed have been a relic of the yogin Matsyendranātha seems untenable on two counts. One is the apparently recent appearance of the shirt, and the other its small size. The shirt cannot measure more than a foot in either direction, and is appropriate only for a little child or for the image of Matsyendranātha. A large reliquary garment could conceivably have been tailored to fit the small image, of course. In this respect, an examination of the fabric by a textile historian might be rewarding.

¹³⁹ Lamshal 1966:5-7. In passing it may be noted that just as Matsyendranātha is popularly believed to have

Matsyendra hesitates about returning to Nepal with King Narendradeva and Bandhudatta, reminding them that they already have the paramount rain god. All that was required to obtain sufficient rain, he informed his Nepali suppliants, was to lustrate Paśupati with water from the Bagmati for the month of Vaiśākha (April-May), which precedes the onset of the rains. Thus, according to Matsyendranātha's instructions, the "Rajah established the annual Jalayātrā [Water Festival] of Paśupati, which takes place in the month of Vaiśākha."¹⁴²

Another curious facet of the Matsyendranātha story is his intimate but unexplained association with the divinities Yogāmbara (the esoteric Ādi-Buddha) and his *prajñā*, the *dāḷiṇī*, Jñāneśvarī (Digāmbara). It is this *dāḷiṇī*, her name unaccountably prefaced with that of her spouse, who appears as an accessory figure in the Buddhist recensions, first as Bandhudatta's helper, then as an obstruction. At the outset of the journey, Narendradeva and Bandhudatta halted outside the Patan city wall at Lagankhel, where Bandhudatta summoned "Jogambara-gyana-dakini." After a *purascarana* in which he recited her mantra 100,000 times, "(counting each one as a thousand), the goddess was pleased, and promised her assistance. The Acharya, having gained this additional power, was now able to rescue Karkotak Nag from the grasp of Gorakh-natha, and started on his journey."¹⁴³ On arriving at their destination, Bandhudatta summoned Avalokiteśvara, who, "after giving him much insight into his secrets . . . went to reside with a Yakshini, whom he called his mother, and who was named Gyana-dakini." When Bandhudatta summoned the deity again by means of the mantras Avalokiteśvara had provided, his mother

originated as a fish, the genesis of Gorakhanātha, perhaps conditioned by the vocable *go* (cow), is attributed to cow dung. In more than one legend he is born from a miraculous pot of it (Locke 1973:42-43; Lévi 1905:1, 351), and elsewhere he sprang from the cow dung Viṣṇu used to cleanse his hands of Śiva's semen, which spawned Matsyendranātha in the belly of a fish (Lamshal 1966:6).

¹⁴⁰ Anderson 1971:54.

¹⁴¹ Lévi 1905:1, 355.

¹⁴² Hasrat 1970:45.

¹⁴³ Wright 1966:95.

opposed his departure. She did not succeed. In order to recover her son, then came "Gyana-dakini, with numerous gods, yakshas and devils . . . to attack Bandhudatta." At length an uneasy truce was concluded, and both companies traveled toward Nepal. Before crossing the Valley rim, Bandhudatta propitiated the "gods, daityas, gandharbas, yaksas, rakshasas, etc., who had come from the Kamrup mountain [and] sent them back."¹⁴⁴ Nonetheless, as the victorious party reached Laghankhel, Bandhudatta realized that Avalokiteśvara's mother was hiding in the top of a tree to snatch her son away. He cast a spell that bound her to the spot; there, as most agree, she remains.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, the tree in which the *dākini* hid and the spot in which she was transfixed play a vital role in Matsyendra's annual rites. For it is exactly beneath the tree, at some distance from his Tah-bahal temple, that his bath must be performed.¹⁴⁶ Later, when the chariot reaches Laghankhel, it must circumambulate the *dākini*'s shrine beneath the tree. She is known popularly as Dola- or Dolana-māju, "Mother One-thousand," ostensibly an allusion to her numerous offspring.¹⁴⁷ The *dākini*'s shrine is furnished with a stone replica of a *vajrācārya*'s crown, said to belong to her consort Yogāmbāra. Nearby is a lotus mandala, its nucleus a hole through which many affirm that Matsyendra's *rākṣasī* mother at last returned to Kāmarūpa.

The association of Bunga-Lokeśvara with Jñāneśvarī is further illustrated by his intimate connection with her chief shrine near Balaju, the popular Mhaipi-ajimā. The *Maṇiratna-mālā*, alone

¹⁴⁴ Wright 1966:96-97.

¹⁴⁵ The *Newari Chronicle (Maṇiratna-mālā)*, Locke 1973:46-47.

¹⁴⁶ Every twelfth year it is performed at Bungamati. In connection with these rites, it is interesting to note that by the nineteenth century, at least, Amsūvarman's first edict, promulgated in the village in A.D. 605 (M.S. 29) (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 71 [290-300]), had come to play a role in the god's affairs. Writing in 1880, Bhagwanlal Indrajī complained that he "found considerable difficulty in obtaining a sight of the stone, though [he] had an order from the Nepalese Government." This was because the inscription "lies ordinarily buried in a field to the east of the village, and is taken out every twelve years on the occasion of a great festival (*rathayātrā*) of Avalokiteśvara at Bungamati" (Bhagwanlal Indrajī and Bühler 1880:169).

among the recensions, brings into the Matsyendra-nātha legend the famous Siddha Śāntikara-guvāju as the teacher of Bandhudatta. In the service of the "goddess Yagusvon Sri Yogambar, at a place called Mhayapi," Śāntikara had once sacrificed his own son (in reality Karuṇāmaya); this was on the promise that one day a statue would be made of the child's bones, which would become the center of a great chariot festival in honor of Lokanātha.¹⁴⁸ The statue in question is clearly the curious little image of Rāto Matsyendranātha (Plate 593). Measuring scarcely three feet, the image, according to some, is made of ground bones.¹⁴⁹ Others say it is of wood (sandalwood, said Dharmasvāmin); still others claim that it is of gold covered with clay, or, alternatively, mud covered with silver; and, again, that it is at once light enough to be easily carried by one person and heavy enough to be difficult for four.¹⁵⁰ Since normally nothing is to be seen by laymen amid the god's clothing and ornaments except his vermilion face and gilt feet, there is little more to be said. Watching his transfer from chariot to palanquin, my impression was that two men had all they could do to manage. Father Locke observed that the "legs are clearly made up of a plastered frame."¹⁵¹ Perhaps the image is of clay over an armature, such as the Maitreya of Musun-bahal or the Buddha of Buddha-bari (Plates 473, 481). The written and oral legends concur in one respect about the nature of the image. All agree that following Matsyendranātha's *abhiṣeka* at the shrine of Dolana-māju, the necessary clays for subsequent refurbishing, either of the coating

The inscription, as far as the text reveals, has nothing to do with the deity. It is not known when or under what circumstances it began to be incorporated into his affairs, or when it was dropped from them. As Bhagwanlal remarked a century ago, "the reason of this custom is not known."

¹⁴⁷ Rather than from *dochi* (Newari, one thousand), the goddess' name may derive from the *Ḍoya*, and be the same as *Ḍoya-māju*, that is, Taleju (or, alternatively, Lakṣmī).

¹⁴⁸ Locke 1973:44.

¹⁴⁹ The *Newari Chronicle (Maṇiratna-mālā)*, Locke 1973:ix, 47.

¹⁵⁰ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 560; Landon 1928:1, 212 n; Bhagwanlal Indrajī and Bühler 1880:169 n. 21.

¹⁵¹ Locke 1973:ix.

or painting, shall be procured from the distant hill of Mhaipi. Legend affirms that the same hill furnished the material for the construction of Svayambhū stupa.¹⁵²

To the persons most intimately related to Matsyendra's cult, the event of greatest significance in the annual celebration is his *abhiṣeka*, the Snānjātrā. For them it equals and perhaps surpasses the showing of the *bhoṭo*. In this respect it is noteworthy that Dharmasvāmin, while making no mention of the *bhoṭo*, described the bath as the festival's salient aspect. Through the ablutions of the "miraculous image," he wrote, "made of sandal wood, of red colour, in the aspect of a five-year old boy . . . the bright vermilion red paint (of the image) is washed away. Then . . . young Tāntrics called *han-du* [*panju*], holding in their hands fly whisk, and musical instruments invite the image back to the temple amidst a great spectacle. On the eighth day (of the month) they again paint the image with red dye."¹⁵³

The refurbishing of Matsyendra's image after the bath is vested in the hands of a special hereditary group known as Nikhū.¹⁵⁴ Śivamārgī and possibly renegade Buddhists, they are the only persons who are not Vajracharya or Shakya to deal intimately with the image. But they are considered to handle only the husk of the image, as it were, for during the ten days given over to the renovation, the god within is returned, as of old, to the sacred water pot. That the Nikhū may not always have enjoyed exclusive right to refurbishing the image is suggested by an observation in the Buddhist chronicle. In A.D. 1654, "the painters of Bhatgaon did not come to the Snan-jatra of Machchhindranatha; the image was taken out by Gangaram of Kobahal and two others, and the deity was bathed by two instead of four persons." This, to be sure, was interpreted as an ill omen, further borne out by the untoward difficulty experienced with the chariot throughout the festival.¹⁵⁵

Rāto Matsyendranātha is linked in a tangled web of relations with many other deities and sacred sites. His legend involves Gorakhanātha, Kār-

koṭaka and the chief *nāgas*, the Siddha Śāntikara, Mhaipi-ajimā, Yogāmbara, Jñānaḍākinī, and Dolana-māju. Bhairava, Kubera, and a host of deities accompany him in his chariot. Gaṇeśa once played a mischievous role as obstacle maker in his story.¹⁵⁶ The Patan Kumārī attends him, the vehicles of Śiva, Brahmā, and Viṣṇu are made to serve him, and Bhairava adores him (Plates 68, 595). The Mhaipi hill furnishes his clays, and the Kathmandu *vihāra* Te-bahal takes pride in its former resident *vajracārya* Bandhudatta. The people of Pore-tol, Patan, point to the spot where the Patan headman was swallowed after unfairly judging where the chariot procession should be held. Yampi-vihāra (I-bahil), one of the Patan foundations of the legendary (or perhaps historic) Sunayaśrī Misra, is connected with him. In the Buddhist *vamśāvalī*, soon after Matsyendranātha had been brought to the Valley, the party "went to the bihar in which Sunayasi Misra once lived as a Bhikshu; and as they considered it a very sacred spot, they performed a purascharana . . . then taking possession of one-third of the bihar . . . they caused an image to be made of Aryavalokiteswara-Machchhindranatha."¹⁵⁷ Various observers have remarked that in consequence the *vihāra* had become a repository of Matsyendranātha's goods and chattels.¹⁵⁸ Even today certain of his effects are said to be stored in the melancholy and crumbling *vihāra* (Plate 508).

The principal treasure of Matsyendranātha, however, is kept by his side, and follows the god in his twice-yearly progress between Patan and Bungamati. Gilt images, lamps, vessels, and jars, carried on the heads or in the hands, and some fifty copper chests and caskets laden with ornaments and coins, bending the shoulder poles of his hierophants, are borne by a joyous and noisy retinue that accompanies the beloved and beneficent deity. Today all these goods are carefully logged in and out at the beginning and end of the three-mile course so that nothing of the god's chattels may stray. Perhaps among them may still be found Mukunda Sena's golden garland, or the jeweled ornament presented by his admirer, King Śrīnivāsa. For once upon a

¹⁵² Wright 1966:99-100.

¹⁵³ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 560.

¹⁵⁴ Locke 1973:19; Oldfield 1880:11, 328-329; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 668. They are the same hereditary group that care for Sīhī-dyo (Plate 421).

¹⁵⁵ Wright 1966:164-165.

¹⁵⁶ Locke 1973:43.

¹⁵⁷ Wright 1966:78, 99.

¹⁵⁸ Oldfield 1880:11, 326; Landon 1928:1, 214.

time, a ruby, along with part of an earring and the beaks of an ornamental Garuda and a parrot, were lost from the *bhoṭo* during the passage from Patan to Bungamati—a circumstance of special ill omen. The ruby was recovered, however, and King Śrīnivāsa had it “mounted with twelve diamonds round it, and presented it to the deity.”¹⁵⁹

Unanimous in their worship of the celebrated god of Bungamati, the Nepalis are divided about who it is they worship. He is at once Śiva Lokeśvara, Nārāyaṇa,¹⁶⁰ Avalokiteśvara, Matsyendranātha, and Bungadyo. He is also androgynous. At the time of his Snāna-jātrā, when the priests reenact the deity’s life-cycle initiation ceremonies, the *daśakarma* or *samskāras*, they perform two sets of sacraments—one, those undergone by men, the other, by women.¹⁶¹ Moreover, when the god sets out for Bungamati after the half year spent in Patan, he is said to return to his *thachem* (Nepali, *maiti ghara*), a term normally applied exclusively to a woman’s ancestral home. The identity of the Bungamati-Patan god vis-à-vis his adorers is perhaps best summed up by the nineteenth century pandit, Sundarananda Banda: “As for Śrī Matsyendranātha some worship him as Viṣṇu, some Śaivas name him Śiva. Some Sāktas call him Kālī or Tārā. Some call him Nārāyaṇa, some Āditya, some Brahmā and some Matsyendranātha. Some call him Lokeśvara. Some name him Karuṇāmaya Buṅgadeva. In this way, one by one, all sing his praises.”¹⁶²

SVETA MATSYENDRANĀTHA

There lives in the Kathmandu Valley, in a *vihāra* beside the old arterial road through Kathmandu,

¹⁵⁹ Wright 1966:165-166.

¹⁶⁰ Locke 1973:41-44.

¹⁶¹ Locke 1973:23; Nepali 1965:370.

¹⁶² Banda 1962:138-139, v. 73.

¹⁶³ Probably influenced by the color, Lévi 1905:11, 59 identifies the image as Samantabhadra.

¹⁶⁴ Wright 1966:128.

¹⁶⁵ Wright 1966:144. Even in modern times, it seems, stolen deities have rebelled in the same way at leaving Nepal. It is widely held that recently Bālakaumārī of Patan, a small gilt image, was rescued at the airport when through her own powers she caused her export crate to become so heavy as to arouse the suspicions of the customs officials. The legend respecting the abduction of

another Matsyendranātha. It is Seto (Sveta) Matsyendra, his white manifestation (Plate 600). Referred to also as Sāno, Sānu, “little,” to distinguish the deity from “big,” that is, Rāto, Matsyendranātha, Sveta Matsyendra is also worshiped as Avalokiteśvara.¹⁶³ According to legend, his image was commissioned by King Guṇakāmadeva,¹⁶⁴ but was subsequently ravished in war and carried off to the west. Having become unaccountably burdensome, the stolen image was at length abandoned in the Gandaki River by the homeward-bound king. As a consequence, the monarch soon became afflicted with an incurable skin disease and other maladies, a visitation that continued to the sixth generation. At last the cause of the royal disease was traced to the abandoned Kathmandu god who, recovered from the river, was secretly dispatched to Kathmandu and buried. Later, in the reign of Yakṣamalla, potters digging for clay unearthed the image, and it was duly enshrined by the king.¹⁶⁵

According to tradition, the site of the find was Jamala, a village known to the Licchavis as Jamayambīgrāma (Map 4:20). If so, it was apparently enshrined near the place it was found. A parallel is provided in contemporary Patan, where Ga-bahal was built to house an image accidentally unearthed at the site. Tradition holds that the transfer of Sveta Matsyendranātha to its present location in Old Kathmandu took place in the late nineteenth century, when Jamala was destroyed to make way for the palaces of Prime Minister Bir Shumshere Rana (1885-1901).¹⁶⁶ Jana- (Jamala) or Macchendra-bahal (Kanakacaitya-mahāvihāra) is said to have been built expressly to receive the displaced deity.¹⁶⁷ Such a late transfer date is untenable, however. The *vihāra* itself is one of the eighteen

Matsyendra might possibly be associated with the tradition of a second Jobo Ja-ma-li, as the Tibetans refer to Sveta Matsyendranātha. One of the “four brothers,” the deity is assigned by Tibetans to two places, Yambu (northern Kathmandu), and the monastery of Kojarnath (Wylie 1970:14-15 n. 20).

¹⁶⁶ Clark 1957:175-176. In the course of this work, the *vihāra* was carelessly filled in with debris and abandoned, but was later restored by Chandra Shumshere. It is in Jamala-vihāra that the clay image of Maitreya, copied from Musun-bahal, is installed.

¹⁶⁷ Snellgrove 1961:106 n. 2 also thought Jana-bahal was “built just as an imposing shrine for the god.”

chief *vihāras* of the city, related to many dependent *vihāras*, an unimaginable position for a late nineteenth-century foundation. Moreover, its existence and association with Jamala village and with the image apparently found there long predates the nineteenth century. This is amply demonstrated by a manuscript colophon dated N.S. 590 Śrāvāṇa (A.D. 1470), written at Jamalagaṅṭhi-vihāra in Koligrāma.¹⁶⁸ Koligrāma, as we know, signifies the northern sector of Old Kathmandu, the location of Jana-bahal. A pre-nineteenth century date for the *bahāl* and the presence of the image within is further assured by other inscriptional evidence. In A.D. 1765, for fear of the Gorkhalis poised outside the town, the water for Matsyendranātha's annual bath had to be brought secretly from the Vishnumati; the part of the ceremony normally observed at the riverside was conducted that year at Macchendra-bahal.¹⁶⁹

A close relationship of Sveta Matsyendranātha with Jamala village is evident. The village name serves as one of the popular appellations of the Kathmandu *vihāra*, and the deity is often referred to as Jamaleśvara, Lord of Jamala. It is the "Jamahmī," as the Jyapus of Jamala area are known, who are most intimately associated with the deity's ceremonial affairs. These particularly concern his annual lustration and his chariot festival. The god's own *degu* shrine, next to the Sanskrit college, lies in what was a part of Jamala, and it is exactly here, the alleged site of the potters' find, that Matsyendranātha's chariot is assembled each spring.

The image of Sveta Matsyendranātha tells little of its ancestry (Plate 600). In size and mien akin to Rāto Matsyendranātha, Sveta Matsyendra's physical makeup is likewise anomalous. With the exception of its stark face and gilt feet, the image is normally swathed in clothing and ornaments. When they are removed for his annual *abhiṣeka* and repainted, the image is still covered by successive layers of paint. There is much to suggest that it is made of copper repoussé, but the god's attendants affirm that it is of wood.

Whatever the deity's exact history, there seems little doubt that it long postdates its prestigious

counterpart of Patan and Bungamati, and was devised in emulation of it. This was not an uncommon practice in the Kathmandu Valley, as we know. Yakṣamalla, the king whose name is intimately linked with the establishment of Sveta Matsyendranātha, founded his own temple of Paśupati at Bhaktapur, and modeled an impressive Bhaktapur *sattal* after historic Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa.¹⁷⁰ The imitative behavior of his Three Kingdom successors is proverbial. It is almost certainly this practice that accounts for the similarity in physical appearance and cult practices of the two Matsyendranāthas.

The chief events of the year for Sveta Matsyendranātha are his bath and chariot festival. But they are separated by some three months, the bath and renovation performed in Pauṣa (December-January), the *ratha-jātrā* in Caitra (March-April). Both affairs are of shorter duration than those of the Patan-Bungamati deity, are far simpler, and attract a relatively moderate concurrence, largely local in origin.¹⁷¹ The chariot aspect seems to have been instituted by Pratāpamalla, although legend assigns it to King Guṇakāmadeva.¹⁷² The *ratha* of the White Matsyendranātha is far smaller than the Patan-Bungamati chariot, but like it links two sites. These are Jamala village and Kathmandu. Assembled and dismantled at Jamala, the car receives the god from a palanquin (*khata*) carried to the site. Chariot and image are then pulled into the city for the prescribed three-day traverse. In contrast to Rāto Matsyendranātha, there seems to be little association of the Kathmandu deity or his festival with fertility or raining.¹⁷³

The identification of the Kathmandu Avalokiteśvara as Matsyendranātha would be no less puzzling than the identification of Bugama-Lokeśvara in that guise, except that it is probably merely imitative. The apparent connection of the Kathmandu image with Yakṣamalla suggests that the creation of the second Matsyendranātha transpired in his reign. This coincided with the height of the popularity of the Nātha cults in the Kathmandu Valley, the century presided over by Sthitirāja and Yakṣamalla.

the Kathmandu celebration.

¹⁷² Wright 1966:144; Hasrat 1970:46.

¹⁷³ Anderson 1971:220-221.

¹⁶⁸ Rajvamshi 1966a:15.

¹⁶⁹ D. Vajracharya 1968b:94 n. 3.

¹⁷⁰ Slusser and Vajracharya 1974:215.

¹⁷¹ See Anderson 1971:217-222 for a popular account of

APPENDIX I

CALENDARS AND ERAS

ALL OF THE SYSTEMS of reckoning time in Nepal derive from Indian astronomical systems. Four principal eras (*saṃvats*) have been employed. Two are of Indian origin, the Vikrama and Śaka Saṃvat, respectively beginning 57 B.C. and A.D. 78; two are local eras, the Mānadeva (alternately known as Aṃśuvarman) and Nepal Saṃvat, respectively beginning A.D. 575 (possibly 576) and 879. The Śaka and Mānadeva eras were used successively in the Licchavi Period, the Nepal era followed through the Transitional and Malla Periods (with occasional concurrent use of Śaka and other eras toward the close of the period), and the Vikrama (Bikram) Saṃvat serves modern Nepal. The diverse eras are complemented by two separate calendar systems, one lunar (itself with varied reckonings) and one solar. The lunar system was employed from the Licchavi through the Malla Period. The solar calendar was used sporadically in conjunction with the lunar calendar from the mid-seventeenth century, and regularly with it in the Shah Period. Both calendars are used in contemporary Nepal. The lunar calendar governs religious and ceremonial life; the solar calendar, chiefly the conduct of commerce, government, and "practical" matters, although it is also not without significance in religious affairs.

THE LUNAR CALENDAR

The lunar calendar normally consists of twelve lunar months, each corresponding to a complete revolution of the moon. In written records prior to

¹ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 50. The Newari month Tachalā occurs in the manuscript *Svayambhūcaitya-jīrnoddhāravara-*

the Shah Period, the months usually bear Sanskrit names. These forms are preserved in literary Nepali, but simplified in colloquial use. A separate set of names occurs in Newari (Table I-1). These appear occasionally in the chronicles and *thyāsa-phus*, but were almost never employed in dating colophons or inscriptions;¹ their chief use today is confined to the yearly almanac.

The lunar year can begin either in the spring or fall. If in the spring, it is known as *caitrādi* or *caitrādi pūrṇimānta*, that is, the year begins after the full moon of Caitra, normally about mid-April in Western reckoning. If the lunar year begins in the fall it is known as *ḥārttikādi* or *ḥārttikādi amānta*, that is, beginning after the new moon of the month of Kārtika, normally about mid-October. As discussed below, the *ḥārttikādi* year seems to have been used continuously from the beginning of the Licchavi Period through the Malla Period. In the seventeenth century, the *caitrādi* system was used with dates reckoned in the Śaka and the Vikrama eras, and is used with them in contemporary Nepal. Table I-1 lists the names of the months of the lunar year in accordance with *caitrādi* reckoning (Sanskrit and Nepali) and *ḥārttikādi* (Newari). The first month listed in the Newari column, Bachalā, is the seventh in the *ḥārttikādi* reckoning employed in traditional Newar culture; Bachalā also begins a fortnight later (explained below), corresponding to the last half of Vaiśākha and the first half of Jyeṣṭha.

To adjust the discrepancies between the lunar and solar cycles one must intercalate six lunar months in every cycle of nineteen solar years. Thus

nana (*Vrhatśūcīpatram*, part 7, 133).

TABLE I-1. The Names of the Months in Sanskrit, Nepali, and Newari
(Left and Middle Columns Arranged in Accordance with Caitrādi Reckoning, the Right Column, with Kārttikādi)

Sanskrit and literary Nepali	Colloquial Nepali [a] = silent	Newari
1 Vaiśākha	Baiśākh[a]	7 Bachalā
2 Jyeṣṭha	Jeṭh[a]	8 Tachalā
3 Āṣāḍha	Asār[a]	9 Dillā
4 Śrāvaṇa	Sāun[a]	10 Gūlā
5 Bhādrapada/ Bhādra	Bhadau	11 Nālā
6 Āśvina	Asoj[a]	12 Kaulā
7 Kārttika/ Kārtika	Kārtik[a] or Kārtik[a]	1 Kachalā
8 Mārgaśīrṣa/ Mārga	Maṅsīr[a]	2 Thillā
9 Pauṣa	Pūs[a]	3 Pohelā
10 Māgha	Māgh[a]	4 Sillā
11 Phālguna	Phāgun[a]	5 Cillā
12 Caitra	Cait[a]	6 Caulā

periodically the lunar year has thirteen months. The intercalary is known as *adhimāsa* or *adhikā-māsa*, literally “additional month.” In the lunar calendar of the Licchavi Period and on through the fifteenth century A.D., the intercalary was always a duplicated month of Āṣāḍha or of Pauṣa; this was ordained by the *Vedaṅga Jyotiṣa* (and the Bhāradvāja system based on it) then in use.² By the early sixteenth century, other intercalary months began to appear, reflecting a change in the astronomical system followed. Today the intercalary month customarily falls in the months from Caitra to Āśvina, although on very rare occasions in Kārtika, Mārga, or Phālguna.³ In Licchavi inscriptions the name of the “true” month and its intercalary are prefixed by “first” and “second,” viz.

² N. Pant 1964a:13; 1976b; Petech 1958:15-23; 1961:229-230; D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 799.

³ N. Pant 1964a:13.

⁴ As Basham 1967:494 explains, it is possible to have

prathamāṣāḍha and *dvitiyāṣāḍha*. In Nepali the true month is usually prefixed by *śuddha* (true, correct), the intercalary, or duplicated month, by *adhikā* (additional). Thus in the thirteen-month year of Vikrama Samvat 2026 (A.D. 1969/1970), in which Āṣāḍha was a duplicated month, there was a Śuddhāṣāḍha and Adhikāṣāḍha. In the Newari series the intercalary has a distinct name, Analā.

The lunar month consists of approximately thirty lunar days known as *tithis*, equivalent to about twenty-nine-and-a-half solar days. The month is divided into two halves (*paṅśas*) of fifteen *tithis* each.⁴ The fortnight of the waning moon, beginning the day after the full moon, is called the dark half, *kr̥ṣṇa paṅśa*, or in its abbreviated form, *badi* (from Skt. *bahuladivasa*). The fortnight of the waxing moon is called *śukla paṅśa*, the bright half, or *śudi* (from Skt. *śukladivasa*). For the Newari months the dark half is suffixed *-gā*, the bright half, *-thva*.

In contemporary Nepal two types of lunar months are used simultaneously, based on the order of succession of the dark and bright halves. One, *pūrṇimānta*, the official Nepali system followed by Hindus, begins with the dark half and ends with the full moon. The other, *amānta*, the traditional Newari reckoning followed by the Buddhist community, is the reverse, beginning with the bright half and ending with the dark. In either case, because most ancient astronomical treatises follow the *amānta* system, the last day of the bright half is called the fifteenth day of the lunar month and the last day of the dark half the thirtieth.

The first fourteen *tithis* of each *paṅśa* are named alike, and essentially in accordance with Sanskrit ordinal numbers: *pratipad*, *pratipadā* (first), *dvitiyā* (second), *tr̥tīyā*, *caaturthī*, *pañcamī*, *ṣaṣṭhī*, *saptamī*, *aṣṭamī*, *navamī*, *daśamī*, *ekādaśī*, *dvādaśī*, *trayodaśī*, and *caturdaśī*. The fifteenth and final day of *kr̥ṣṇa paṅśa*, the day preceding the new moon, is called *amāvāsyā*, the final day of *śukla paṅśa*, the day of the full moon, *pūrṇimā*. In contemporary usage these *tithi* names vary according

fewer or more than fifteen *tithis* in one *paṅśa*. Further details about the nature of the *tithi* can be found in D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 793-796.

to caste and class, education, and ethnic group of the speaker. For example, *pratīpad*, the first *tīthi*, will be encountered as commonly *parevā*, and a Newari version, *pāru*, sometimes occurs even in the colloquial speech of non-Newars. *Amāvāsyā* is frequently simplified to *aūsī* and *pūrṇimā* to *pūrṇe*. Some *tīthi*s are improperly modified to sound like neighbors in the series, thus *cauthī* (*caturthī*) becomes *cauthiyā*, or *ṣaṣṭhī*, *ṣaṣṭamī*. *Ṣaṣṭhī* is frequently heard as *ḥṣaṣṭhī*, following a common modification of *ṣa* to *ḥṣa*. If Newari had a distinct series of *tīthi* names, only a few have survived in common use; for the rest, Newari speakers employ the Nepali, or modified Nepali, terms.

Each *tīthi* is considered to have its own master; for example: Agni of *pratīpad*, Gaṇeśa of *caturthī*, and the serpent of *pañcamī*. The names of master and *tīthi* are often combined, for example, Gaṇeśa-cauthī (Gaṇeśa's Fourth) or Nāga-pañcamī (Serpents' Fifth). In the same way, the names of other deities whose annual celebration falls on a certain *tīthi* are combined with it and provide the name of the festival, viz. Kṛṣṇa-aṣṭamī or Rāmanavamī. Some religious celebrations are known simply by the name of the *tīthi* on which they fall. Examples are Mahāṣṭamī and Navamī, "Great Eighth" and "Ninth," the culminating days of Dasain, the ten-day national celebration in honor of Durgā.

In each *pakṣa*, the middle days, the fifth through the tenth, are thought to be ordinary ones with no special significance. Ten in each half are critical, five auspicious and five inauspicious. The dark half begins with auspicious days and closes with inauspicious ones, a pattern reversed for the bright half.⁵ While *aṣṭamī* is recommended as a fast day, particularly for women, the most commonly observed one is *ekādaśī*. No butchering may be done then or on *amāvāsyā*, the day before the appearance of the new moon. There are two auspicious "elevenths" of particular importance, Hariśayani-ekādaśī in Āṣāḍha-śukla, when Viṣṇu retires to sleep, and Haribodhini-ekādaśī in Kārtika-śukla, when he awakens and returns. The four intervening

months, equivalent to the period from mid-July to mid-November, are called the *caturmāsa*. They are considered especially sacred, and the majority of important Nepalese religious festivals fall within that period.

THE SOLAR CALENDAR

In the Indian tradition of solar reckoning, used in Nepal, the days of the months are numbered consecutively as in the Western calendar, and the weeks (*haptā*) are divided into seven days each (*vāra*, *roja*). The first day of the solar month is known as *sanḥkranti*, and the last one *masanta* (Skt., *mā-sānta*). The names of the months are the same as those used in the lunar calendar. The weekdays correspond to the presiding planets in accordance with the Greco-Roman system; they bear Sanskrit names, preserved in literary Nepali, but modified in colloquial use (Table I-2).

TABLE I-2. The Names of the Weekdays Employed in Solar Reckoning

<i>Sanskrit and literary Nepali</i>	<i>Colloquial Nepali written</i>	<i>Colloquial Nepali spoken</i>
Ravivāra or Ādityavāra	Āitavāra	Āitabār ^a
Somavāra	Somavāra	Sombār
Maṅgalavāra	Maṅgalavāra	Mangalbār
Budhavāra	Budhavāra	Budhabār
Bṛhaspativāra	Bihivāra	Bihi- or Bibār
Śukravāra	Śukravāra	Sukrabār
Śanivāra	Śanivāra	Sani- or Sancarbār

NOTE: a. In casual speech the ending -bār is frequently omitted altogether.

⁵ While in general the Nepalese practice conforms to this pattern, as set down in the astrological treatise *Muhūrta-cintāmani*, the question of lucky and unlucky

days is much more complicated than this simple scheme suggests. An insight into these further complications may be had from D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 807-809.

In Nepal Mandala, regular dating by means of the solar month did not begin until the Shah Period.⁶ But solar reckoning was familiar in previous centuries. This is attested by the inclusion of a solar weekday in two Licchavi documents, one a gilt sheath dedicated to Viṣṇu in A.D. 607 (M.S. 31), the other a manuscript colophon in A.D. 877 (M.S. 301).⁷ The use of the solar weekday is encountered again in the late tenth century, and from time to time thereafter.⁸

In modern Nepal, the two calendrical systems are used side by side. Essentially, the lunar one governs ceremonial life, the solar one, secular. However, certain solar days are also of considerable ceremonial significance; the Saṅkranti, the first day of the solar month, is an example. Farmers, priests, temple guardians, and all those persons primarily oriented toward traditional Nepali culture would tend to cite a lunar date; the less traditional sector, the solar one. The solar calendar provides a common time reference for persons who each follow a different system of lunar reckoning, *pūrnimānta* or *amānta*. The masthead of *Gorkhapatra*, the leading Nepali-language daily newspaper, prints three dates: Nepali solar, *pūrnimānta* lunar, and a corresponding Western date. One example will illustrate the complexity of the multiple reckoning used in Nepal. The date Wednesday, 14 January 1970, is reckoned by the lunar calendar in official use as Pauṣa-śukla-saptamī,⁹ and in the traditional Newar *amānta* system as Pōhelāthva-saptamī. By the Nepali solar calendar, the sample day is Vikrama Saṃvat (v.s.) 2026 Māgha 1, Budhāvāra, frequently written as 2026/10/1/4, that is, the year (*sāla*), the month (*mahina*), date (*gate*), and day of the week (*vāra*, *roja*). On the sample day chosen, the lunar month is lagging behind the solar one, so that two month names, Pauṣa and Māgha, are involved.

⁶ N. Pant 1966:83.

⁷ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 76, 190 (317-319, 599); D. Regmi 1969:208-209. The use of the solar weekday appears in Indian inscriptions as early as the fifth century A.D. (N. Pant 1964a:1).

⁸ *Abhilekha-saṃgraha* 1963c; N. Pant 1966:83; 1967:273; D. Pant 1975a:209-211.

⁹ If the sample day had fallen in the dark half of Pauṣa, it would be necessary to cite two lunar dates. The *amānta* reckoning begins a fortnight later than *pūrnimānta* reckoning and reverses the order of the *pakṣas*.

An almanac that shows the parallel cycles of lunar and solar dates and Western equivalents is indispensable in determining festival dates, fast and feast days, and for ascertaining the corresponding dates of the various systems. It is known as *pātro* (almanac) or *pañcāṅga* (five parts), for the five astronomical essentials on which the almanac is computed: *tithi*, *vāra*, *nakṣatra*, *yoga*, and *karana*.¹⁰ Almanacs are cheap newsprint leaflets of some two dozen stapled pages, quasi astrological, and authored by different pandits; they appear annually before Vaiśākha (April-May), the beginning of the official Nepali year. But despite the almanacs' cheapness and ready availability, few households have their own. Instead, in conformance with tradition, people tend to consult the pandits, priests, or older tradition-oriented neighbors. Table I-3, abridged from one of the *pañcāṅgas* for v.s. 2026 (13 April 1969 to 13 April 1970),¹¹ provides concrete illustration of the meshing of the various solar and lunar cycles.

THE ERAS

The four principal eras (*saṃvats*) used throughout the history of Nepal Mandala are, in chronological order, Śaka, Mānadeva (Aṃśuvarman), Nepal, and currently Vikrama. Śaka was used again intermittently and concurrently with the Nepal and Vikrama eras between the sixteenth and early twentieth century A.D.; it serves even now as supplementary reckoning in the casting of horoscopes. The Vikrama Saṃvat, abbreviated v.s. (and from Bikram, often B.S.), begins with an epoch year corresponding to 57/56 B.C. It is of Indian origin, probably founded by one of the early Śaka kings, but assigned to Vikramāditya, perhaps a legendary ruler.¹² Vikrama Saṃvat was the common but not

Hence a *pūrnimānta* date of Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa-saptamī corresponds to an *amānta* date in the dark half of the preceding month, viz. Mārga-kṛṣṇa-saptamī. This is readily understandable from an examination of Table I-3, which shows comparative reckonings.

¹⁰ Simply defined, lunar day, weekday, lunar mansion, conjunction, division of the day. For expanded definitions see Monier-Williams 1899:sv.

¹¹ N. Sharma 1969.

¹² Scholars such as Basham 1967:495 consider Vikramāditya to be a legendary figure; others, for example N. Pant

exclusive reckoning used in Nepal Mandala from the beginning of the Shah Period, A.D. 1768/1769; it had frequently been employed at Gorkha in the preceding centuries. It was also used on occasion by the Western Mallas and by the Mallas of the Kathmandu Valley.¹³ It is now the official era in use throughout the Kingdom of Nepal.

The Śaka, or sometimes Śake, Saṃvat, abbreviated s.s., begins with an epoch year corresponding to A.D. 78/79. Originating in India, the Śaka Saṃvat is commonly thought to mark the accession to the throne of the Śaka ruler, Śālivāhana. His name is therefore often included in the era designation, viz. the Śālivāhana Śaka Saṃvat. Indian astronomical tradition also explains the era as commemorating the year of the destruction of the *mleccha* Śakas by Vikramāditya. In fact, the era may have been founded by the powerful Kuṣāṇa ruler, Ka- niṣka.¹⁴ As finally established by more than three-quarters of a century of painstaking research, Śaka is the unnamed era employed in the first Licchavi inscriptions.¹⁵ It was in continuous use from A.D. 464 through 604 (Saṃvat 386 through 526) and occurs in a single inscription, Saṃvat 535 (A.D. 613), almost a decade after it had been otherwise superseded.¹⁶ From about the fourteenth century, the Śaka era is encountered occasionally in the Valley alone or as one of a series of complementary dates,¹⁷ but it was popular as the chief means

of reckoning for the Western Mallas and the petty hill states, among them Gorkha. With the Gorkhali conquest, the use of the Śaka Saṃvat in the Valley became more frequent. Even when largely superseded by the Vikrama era in popularity, the Śaka Saṃvat was favored for dating coins; the last coin to be minted in the Śaka era is 1833 (A.D. 1911).¹⁸

The Mānadeva (Amśuvarman) Saṃvat, abbreviated M.S. (or A.S.), supplanted the Śaka Saṃvat in Licchavi inscriptions beginning in A.D. 605. Like its predecessor, it was simply called Saṃvat. Over the years, therefore, scholars have sought to identify the unnamed era and to ascertain its epoch year.¹⁹ Acharya was apparently the first to identify the era as "Mānadeva," Petech the epoch year.²⁰ It is A.D. 575 or 576, depending on whether the era was reckoned as *kārttikādi* or *caitrādi*, as discussed below. This choice, A.D. 575/576, has now been verified and corroborated by Dinesh Raj Pant.²¹ The identification of the era and its epoch year, by Acharya and Petech, was made possible by a veritable Rosetta Stone, medieval manuscript editions of an astronomical work known as *Sumatitantra*. There, the Mānadeva Saṃvat was included in a chronological list that gave the duration of several eras whose epoch years are known, a list fully corroborated by the Tibetan tradition.²² Pant's verification was effected

1967:250-251, are of the opinion that he was an historical person and founder of the era that bears his name. In Nepal Mandala legend Vikramāditya is often identified with King Mānadeva I.

¹³ N. Pant 1966:81-83.

¹⁴ M. Pant and D. Pant 1973:47-49; Basham 1967:496.

¹⁵ Petech 1961:227-228 and R. Majumdar 1966:111, 83 summarize the history of investigations. Unfortunately, both scholars were unaware that Baburam Acharya correctly identified the era in 1940 (Acharya 1940), an achievement for which recognition has been slow in coming even in Nepal (M. Pant and D. Pant 1976:137; M. Pant and A. Sharma 1977:14 n. 47). Acharya's identification was accepted by a number of Nepali scholars, who also reckoned the early Licchavi inscriptions as Śaka (see, for example, Pandey and N. Pant 1947, various articles published in *Samskṛta-sandēśa* during v.s. 2010-2011 [1954], and others by Saṃsodhana-maṇḍala [for example, D. Vajracharya 1957]). The identification of the era as Śaka was conclusively verified by R. Majumdar 1959 and Petech 1961:227-228. On this era see also D. Regmi 1969:

89-97.

¹⁶ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 2 through 70, and again in inscr. 80 (342-344).

¹⁷ Petech 1958:22-23; D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 43 (72-73); Rajvamshi 1967a.

¹⁸ S. Joshi 1960:125. Petech 1958:23 writes that until A.D. 1893 Nepali coins were dated in the Śaka era, the official reckoning of Nepal, after which time dates were rendered in the Vikrama era. But Śaka was not the official reckoning of the Shah dynasty, and coins were sometimes minted in Vikrama before A.D. 1893, and sometimes in Śaka through A.D. 1911 (S. Joshi 1960:125, 127).

¹⁹ With the regrettable omission of Nepali language contributions, Petech 1961:227-228 and R. Majumdar 1966:111, 85-86 provide an account of the proposed solutions. See also a discursive account in D. Regmi 1969:98-119.

²⁰ Acharya 1940; Petech 1961:228ff.

²¹ Stated as v.s. 633 (D. Pant 1977a). See also Nepal 1962:43-63 and N. Pant 1978.

²² Acharya 1940, while not specifically referring to

APPENDIX I

TABLE I-3. Comparative Reckonings for the Year v.s. 2026

<i>Gregorian calendar equivalents 1969-1970</i>		<i>Solar</i>		<i>Lunar</i>	
		<i>Official Nepalese calendar v.s. 2026^a [a] = silent</i>		<i>Almanac (pātro, pañcāṅga)</i>	
				<i>Nepali</i>	<i>Newari</i>
1969		2025			
April	12	Cait[a]	30	Vaiśākha-kṛṣṇa-ekādaśī	Caulāgā
	13	2026		-dvādaśī	
		Vaiśākha[a]	1	-trayodaśī	
				-caturdaśī	
				-amāvāsyā	
	17		5	-śukla-pratipad	Bachalāthva
				-dvitīyā	
				-tṛtīyā	
				-caturthī	
				-pañcamī	
				-ṣaṣṭhī ^b	
				-saptamī	
				-aṣṭamī	
				-navamī	
				-daśamī	
				-ekādaśī	
				-dvādaśī	
				-trayodaśī	
				-caturdaśī	
May	2		20	-pūrṇimā	
	3		21	Jyeṣṭha-kṛṣṇa-pratipad etc.	Bachalāgā
	13		31		
	14	Jeth[a]	1		
	16		3	-amāvāsyā	
	17		4	-śukla-pratipad etc.	Tachalāthva
	31		18		
June	1		19	Śuddhāṣāḍha-kṛṣṇa	Tachalāgā
	14		32		
	15	Asār[a]	1	Adhikāṣāḍha-śukla	Analāthva
	29		15		
	30		16	Adhikāṣāḍha-kṛṣṇa	Analāgā
July	14		30		
	15		31	Śuddhāṣāḍha-śukla	Dillāthva
	16	Sāun[a]	1		
	29		14		
	30		15	Śrāvāṇa-kṛṣṇa	Dillāga
Aug.	13		29		
	14		30	-śukla	Gūlāthva
	16		32		
	17	Bhadau	1		
	27		11		
	28		12	Bhādrapada-kṛṣṇa	Gūlāgā

CALENDARS AND ERAS

TABLE I-3. *Continued*

<i>Gregorian calendar</i>	<i>Official Nepalese</i>	<i>Nepali</i>	<i>Newari</i>
Sept. 11	26		
12	27	Bhādrapada-śukla	Ñalāthva
16	31		
17	Asoj[a] 1		
25	9	Āśvina-kṛṣṇa	Ñalāgā
26	10		
Oct. 11	25	śukla	Kaulāthva
12	26		
16	30		
17	Kārtik[a] 1		
25	9	Kārtika-kṛṣṇa	Kaulāgā
26	10		
Nov. 9	24	śukla	Kachalāthva
10	25		
15	30		
16	Maṅsir[a] 1		
23	8	Mārgaśirsa-kṛṣṇa	Kachalāgā
24	9		
Dec. 9	24	śukla	Thillāthva
10	25		
15	30		
16	Pūs[a] 1		
23	8	Pauṣā-kṛṣṇa	Thillāgā
24	9		
1970 Jan. 7	23	śukla	Pohelāthva
8	24		
13	29		
14	Māgh[a] 1		
22	9	Māgha-kṛṣṇa	Pohelāgā
23	10		
Feb. 6	24	śukla	Sillāthva
7	25		
11	29		
12	Phāgun[a] 1		
21	10	Phālguna-kṛṣṇa	Sillāgā
22	11		
March 7	24	śukla	Cilāthva
8	25		
13	30		
14	Cait[a] 1		
23	10	Caitra-kṛṣṇa	Cilāgā
24	11		
April 6	24	śukla	Caulāthva
7	25		
13	31		

NOTES: a. Published by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, His Majesty's Government, Kathmandu. There Pūsa is spelled Puṣa.

b. In Vaiśākha-śukla of v.s. 2026 *ṣaṣṭhi* was duplicated, and the *paṅṣa* thus actually had sixteen *tithis*.

through two complementary Licchavi inscriptions, both of which have only recently come to light.²³ Both are dated (Mānadeva) Saṃvat 31. One included an intercalary (permitting a reconstruction of the number of *tithis* in the year), the other the weekday, an element almost never included in Licchavi dating, but vital to the verification of it in terms of other eras.

Whatever the new era's epoch year might have proven to be, most scholars considered that it must have been founded, or at least put into circulation, by Aṃśuvarman. This was because as far as the inscriptions reveal, it was first used in his reign. However, with an established epoch year corresponding to A.D. 575/576, the beginning of the era antedates Aṃśuvarman's initiation of it by more than a quarter century.²⁴ Petech explained this discrepancy by concluding that the era's year one corresponded to Aṃśuvarman's then undeclared assumption of power.²⁵ He therefore assigned it to him, calling it the Aṃśuvarman Saṃvat. But the new era, it now appears, was not founded by this illustrious king but rather, as the *Sumatitantra* affirms, by a King Mānadeva whom historians label the second.²⁶ Mānadeva II left no inscriptions, and in any event his reign must have been overshadowed by the powerful Bhaumagupta. Petech theorized that this Mānadeva was a puppet installed

by Aṃśuvarman.²⁷ Thus it seems strange that such an apparently minor figure as Mānadeva II would establish a new era, or if so, that his successors would honor it. The explanation, hitherto overlooked as far as I am aware, is provided by the chronicle to which Kirkpatrick had access. According to it, Nepal was afflicted for three years running with a severe drought that ceased on this Mānadeva's "propitiating the god Pusputty by an oblation of all his riches."²⁸

If the era established to commemorate this significant event was used at all in its first twenty-eight years, there is no evidence for the fact. The first known successor of Mānadeva II is Śivadeva I, who left almost a score of inscriptions between A.D. 590 and 604. By clinging to the Śaka Saṃvat in all of them, it seems evident that Śivadeva chose to ignore the new era decreed by his forbear. But at Śivadeva's death or demise, when Aṃśuvarman became sole ruler, despite the delay of twenty-eight years he immediately put into effect the new era. Given Aṃśuvarman's devotion to Śiva Paśupati, it seems likely that this was the reason that led him formally to institute the era in retrospect. By commemorating the miracle wrought by Śiva Paśupati, it would have been one more mark of the profound esteem he pointedly showed for this deity in so many other ways. At the time the new

Sumatitantra, clearly derived from it his conclusions respecting the epoch year of both eras. It is Petech's paper, however, that most clearly spells out the role of the *Sumatitantra* (and the corresponding Tibetan tradition) in solving the epoch year of the two eras. One edition of the *Sumatitantra* is in Kathmandu, one in London, respectively dated by D. Regmi 1969:107 to N.S. 476 Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa and 587 Vaiśākha (A.D. 1355 and 1467). N. Pant 1976:50-51 reads the former as N.S. 495 Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa (A.D. 1373); Jayaswal 1936:194 gives the latter as N.S. 476. The Kathmandu manuscript was first brought to the attention of scholars in the 1930s by Hemraj Pandit (Sharma), a relative of the then royal priest, who supposed, however, that the Mānadeva Saṃvat related to Mānadeva I (Jayaswal 1936:189-196; N. Pant 1976:42). The relevant portion of the two *Sumatitantra* editions is described by Jayaswal 1936:189-196; Petech 1961:228-229; D. Regmi 1969:106-107; and D. Pant 1977. Nepal 1962:49-63; Rajvamshi 1973; and N. Pant 1976 discuss the Kathmandu manuscript. The latter, edited by N. Pant in collaboration with Devi Prasad

Bhandari and Dinesh Raj Pant, is forthcoming with introduction, reconstructed text, Sanskrit commentary, and Nepali translation.

²³ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 75, 76 (315-319).

²⁴ The initial date was long thought to be Saṃvat 30 (A.D. 606) (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 72 [301-308]). But N. Pant 1965:4 has now shown that the date of the Bungamati inscription is to be read as 29. It had been read previously as 34 (Bhagwanlal Indraji and Bühler 1880:inscr. 6; Gnoli 1956:inscr. 39). Thus Saṃvat 29 is the first known use of the new era, corresponding to Aṃśuvarman's first dated inscription as sole ruler.

²⁵ Petech 1961:230.

²⁶ Nepal 1962:43-49; D. Pant 1977. According to D. Pant 1977:271 n. 3, the Mānadeva era notation, though all but illegible, is incorporated into the main body of the text, not merely in the gloss as Petech 1961:228-229 writes.

²⁷ Petech 1961:230.

²⁸ Kirkpatrick 1969:260.

era was current, A.D. 605 to at least 877,²⁰ one wonders whether it was in fact called after the obscure Mānadeva II, the name Nepali scholars prefer.²⁰ The Tibetans, at least, knew it as the Aṃśuvarman era,³¹ and since that king seems clearly to be the one to resuscitate and give the era currency, the name Aṃśuvarman Saṃvat is perhaps, after all, a more appropriate one. But the king himself, I think, would have preferred Paśupati Saṃvat.

The Nepal Saṃvat (sometimes referred to as the Newari Saṃvat), abbreviated N.S., succeeded the Mānadeva Saṃvat in A.D. 879. It is also of local origin, and like the Mānadeva era apparently also originated with some celebrated event related to Paśupati. The *Kaisher Vamśāvali* (VK) names it *śrī-Paśupatiḥhaṭṭāraka samvatsara*, and credits its foundation to an otherwise unknown King Rāghavadeva.³² Legend prefers to assign the Nepali Saṃvat to a Kathmandu merchant, in commemoration of his meritorious act of having liquidated the national debt.³³ There are no known records dated in Nepal Saṃvat (or any other era) for more than a quarter century after its epoch year. It is first encountered in two manuscripts, one dated N.S. 28 Kārtika, the other N.S. 40 Bhādra.³⁴ Thereafter the Nepal Saṃvat is used to date virtually all subsequent documents to the end of the Malla Period.

In addition to these four chief eras, many others are familiar in Nepal Mandala; no fewer than nine are listed on the cover of the v.s. 2026 almanac. These range from remote times, like the Sṛṣṭitogātābdāh (Elapsed Years from Creation), whose epoch year is 1,955,833,101 B.C., to the Tribhuvana era of A.D. 1950. Although these eras are sometimes fanci-

ful and largely unimportant to the study of Nepalese history, they occur with some frequency. In the *vamśāvalis*, for example, one often encounters the legendary Kaligata (Kaliyuga, Yudīṣṭhira) era, whose epoch year corresponds to 3102 B.C.³⁵ At times it is employed alone, at others, combined with a series of complementary dates in other eras. The Bhaktapur kingdom often used an era known as the Lakṣmaṇa Sena Saṃvat, an importation from Mithilā favored by Maithilī pandits.³⁶ A recent Nepali publication provides the Buddha Saṃvat as its only date.³⁷ Given the number of possible eras to which any Nepali date might refer, the necessity of prefacing all dates with the era designation will be readily understood.



Inasmuch as any Nepali calendar year, lunar or solar, past or present, does not correspond to the Gregorian calendar year, the former straddles parts of two of the latter. Thus conversion of one set of dates to another is not an automatic process. For the two eras whose reckoning is firmly established as either *caitrādi* or *kārtikādi*, namely Vikrama³⁸ and the Nepal Saṃvat, the method of conversion is simple. Since the *caitrādi* Vikrama year begins with Vaiśākha, corresponding to about mid-April, most of the Vikrama year corresponds to the Gregorian year in which it began, namely, 57 B.C.; approximately three and a half months, Pauṣa-śukla through Caitra, carry over into the following Gregorian year, 56 B.C. (Table I-4). In the Nepal Saṃvat, which uses the *kārtikādi* year beginning about mid-October, we find just the opposite. Only

modify the era name, viz. "Śaṅkhadhara Nepal Saṃvat."

³⁴ The former occurs in the colophon of *Lankāvatara* (National Archives 1.1647), but N. Pant 1965:4 n. 1 apparently doubts the validity of the ascription; the other manuscript is in a private collection (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1963:15 n. 1).

³⁵ See, for example, Naraharinath 1966.

³⁶ Bendall 1974:13.

³⁷ H. Shakya 1956a.

³⁸ At its inception, the Vikrama era began with Kārtika, but by the medieval period, after which time the era was used in Nepal, it had become *caitrādi* (Basham 1967:496).

²⁰ This is the last known date in the era (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 190 [599]) but presumably it ran to 20 October 879, the epoch day of the succeeding era.

³⁰ D. Regmi 1969:111-112 writes that a chronology of eras listed in a seventeenth-century manuscript refers to the era by the name Mānadeva. If so, it provides the only evidence other than the *Sumatitantra*, as far as I know, that the era was known after Mānadeva II.

³¹ Petech 1961:228.

³² Petech 1958:13-15, app. v, 213 (VK [1]). For an early study of the Nepal Saṃvat see Keilhorn 1888.

³³ Kesar Lall 1966:31-33; Lévi 1905:11, 179-180. According to Lévi (179 n. 1), on occasion the merchant's name Sakhvā, Sanskritized as Śaṅkhadhara, has been known to

TABLE I-4. Comparative Calendar Years and Method of Era Conversion

Gregorian Year	Nepali solar and caitrādi pūrṇimānta yr.	Viḅrama begins 57 B.C.	Śaka ^a begins A.D. 78	Mānadeva ^b begins A.D. 575	Nepal begins A.D. 879	kārttikādi amānta lunar year
First year						
April-May	Vaiśākha	-57	+78	+575	+879	Kārttika Mārgaśīrṣa Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa
May-June	Jyestha					
June-July	Āṣāḍha					
July-Aug.	Śrāvaṇa					
Aug.-Sept.	Bhādrapada					
Sept.-Oct.	Āśvina					
Oct.-Nov.	Kārttika					
Nov.-Dec.	Mārgaśīrṣa					
to Dec. 31 ^c	Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa					
Second year						
to Jan. 14	Pauṣa-śukla	-56	+79	+576	+880	Pauṣa-śukla Māgha Phālguna Caitra Vaiśākha Jyestha Āṣāḍha Śrāvaṇa Bhādrapada Āśvina
Jan. 15-Feb.	Māgha					
Feb.-March	Phālguna					
March-April	Caitra					
April-May	Vaiśākha					
May-June	Jyestha					
June-July	Āṣāḍha					
July-Aug.	Śrāvaṇa					
Aug.-Sept.	Bhādrapada					
Sept.-Oct.	Āśvina					

NOTES:

a. Solid frame = probable Licchavi reckoning; dotted frame = Indian and Shah Period reckoning.

b. Solid frame = probable Licchavi reckoning; dotted frame = possible alternative.

c. This represents a schematic dividing line; the Pauṣa dates would rarely correspond exactly to the Gregorian months as shown in the table.

two and a half months fall in the Gregorian year in which it began, A.D. 879, the remainder, from Pauṣa-śukla through Āśvina in the next Gregorian year, A.D. 880. If the month—and in the case of Pauṣa, the *paḅṣa*—is known, Vikrama and Nepal era dates can be converted to Christian era dates by the proper choice of -57 or -56, and +879 or +880, as shown in Table I-4. When the month (and in the case of Pauṣa, the *paḅṣa*) is not known, the conversion number to be employed for any Vikrama date is -57, for any Nepal Saṃvat date, +880. These numbers relate the given Nepali year to the Gregorian year in which the greatest number of the former's months correspond, so, such

conversions have the greatest probability of being correct. It is evident that when a Nepali date is converted without taking the month into consideration (or in the case of Pauṣa, the *paḅṣa*), the corresponding Christian era date may be miscalculated by a year. A two-year error is also theoretically possible if the original Nepali date had actually been rendered as a current, rather than as an expired one, the latter being normal practice. But the danger is not great, since rendering dates as current is uncommon.³⁰

The conversion of dates in the Śaka and Mānadeva eras is less straightforward because we do not know with absolute certainty whether Licchavi

³⁰ Basham 1967:496.

reckoning followed the *caitrādi* or *kārttikādi* system. Circumstantial evidence clearly argues in favor of the latter. For the Śaka Saṃvat, we have the evidence from two inscriptions, both dated in the Śaka year 427. In one, dated in the month of Kārtika, Mānadeva I is referred to as the "reigning king," in the other, dated Āṣāḍha, he appears to be deceased.⁴⁰ Since this information places Kārtika before Āṣāḍha, the order ordained in *kārttikādi* reckoning, it seems evident that as used by the Licchavis the Śaka era was reckoned by the *kārttikādi* system. However, as used in India at this time, the Śaka era was *caitrādi*, as it was in the late Malla and Shah Periods.⁴¹ If it is agreed that the Licchavi Śaka era is *kārttikādi*, as it seems, dates so rendered would be converted exactly the same way as described for the Nepal Saṃvat, substituting of course, +78 and +79 for the latter's +879 and +880. Late Malla and Shah Period dates reckoned in Śaka, then *caitrādi*, would be converted like Vikrama dates, replacing -57 and -56 with +78 and +79.

Licchavi inscriptional evidence also appears to confirm that the Mānadeva Saṃvat was reckoned by the *kārttikādi* system. A proclamation dated sometime between Mānadeva Saṃvat 80 and 89 contains, among other things, a list of recommended annual religious obligations.⁴² The fact that the list begins with a celebration in Kārtika and progresses through others in the *kārttikādi* order of months clearly points to the use of the *kārttikādi* system.⁴³ The fact that both eras employed by the Licchavis were directly succeeded by an era that we know used *kārttikādi* reckoning, viz. the

Nepal Saṃvat, also supports the speculation that the preceding years were reckoned in the same way.

Until scholars are in full agreement about the nature of the Licchavi calendar year, the judicious approach seems to call for conversions as if the months were not known, a practice I have followed in this text. Thus, all Śaka years are converted to a Christian era date by adding 78 years. This is the conventional number in universal use because scholars have naturally supposed that the Licchavi year was also *caitrādi*, as in India. By this reckoning, the celebrated Changu Nārāyaṇa pillar, which bears the date [Śaka] Saṃvat 386 Jyeṣṭha is $386 + 78 = \text{A.D. } 464$; if the year is really *kārttikādi*, then Jyeṣṭha falls in the last half of the year, and the corrected reckoning is $386 + 79 = \text{A.D. } 465$. By mean reckoning, the Mānadeva Saṃvat is converted to a Christian era date by adding 576 years, the number which, if the year is *kārttikādi*, offers the greater chance of being correct. In either case, dates converted by the use of a mean number, +78 or +576, can only be off by a year (or possibly two if the original date was current, rather than an expired one). Considering that until very recently the epoch year of neither era used by the Licchavis was known, and conversions were wide of the mark by decades and worse, such possible error does not seem unduly grave. If scholars accept the Licchavi reckoning as *kārttikādi*, which seems certain, then the month included in Licchavi dates should be considered, and any date converted in the same pattern established for the Nepal Saṃvat.

⁴⁰ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscrs. 19, 20 (79-87). Although the use of the past tense may be poetic license, and alone does not signify that the king is dead, the tenor of the inscription, coupled with the fact that Vasantadeva is on the throne a few months later, suggests that he was (D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 22 [91-109]). See also D. Vajracharya 1957.

⁴¹ Petech 1958:14; 1961:229 also supposed that Licchavi dates would be the same, and made his reckonings and his assumptions accordingly.

⁴² D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 129 (485-489). Only the first digit, an eight, can be read.

⁴³ D. Vajracharya 1973:80-81 is apparently the first to explicitly declare that the Mānadeva Saṃvat should be reckoned as *kārttikādi*. But since 1961, the year in which the critical inscription was first published (*Abhilekha-saṃgraha* 1961b), this has been implicit in the papers of the scholars of the Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala. N. Pant made this apparent when he listed m.s. 67 Pauṣa-śukla before m.s. 67 Bhādrapada, the *kārttikādi* order (1965c:4). D. Vajracharya followed the same order in a later citing of these same dates (1968c:184). Rajvamshi 1977 expressly reckons the era as *kārttikādi*, but is clearly by no means the first to do so (see N. Pant 1978a:102 n. 1).

APPENDIX II

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

THREE PRINCIPAL LANGUAGES, Sanskrit, Newari, and Nepali, have been and are used in Nepal Mandala, and with them a variety of related scripts. Sanskrit, an Indo-Aryan language, was the exclusive language of Licchavi inscriptions, although most place names and many administrative terms were borrowed from the indigenous and chief spoken language, Kirātī or proto-Newari. Sanskrit-related Prakrits were also probably spoken. Licchavi Period Sanskrit is impeccable, and attests to a high degree of literacy among the ruling class.¹ Inscriptions are not only couched in pure grammar, but reveal an easy familiarity with Sanskrit literature. Sanskrit continued as the only written language almost to the end of the Transitional Period, when Newari hesitantly joined it. Sanskrit was the exclusive language of the manuscripts that poured out of the Nepali *vihāras* and *maṭhas*, and it was perceived as the only language of religion. Until about the twelfth or thirteenth century, when the Tibetans still sought and found teachers of Sanskrit in Valley *vihāras*, the quality of Sanskrit was on the whole acceptable. Thereafter it declined progressively. By the time of the Three Kingdoms, although Sanskrit endured as the chief literary and sacred language, it had become very debased.² Its undiminished luster as the prestige language of literature and religion persisted into the Shah Period, and endures into modern times.

¹ Lévi 1905:11, 111-112.

² D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 823-825, 830-833.

³ A century ago, Bendall 1974:5 complained that "even the chief priest [of Svayambhūnātha] to whom I addressed some simple Sanskrit phrases, did not so much as attempt to answer me in the classical language—a point of honor with every decent pandit in the plains of India."

But capable Sanskrit scholars are today very few.³

Maithilī, the language of Mithilā, is another prestige language that for a time exercised a considerable influence at the Malla courts.⁴ It is derived from Sanskrit and closely affined to Bengali. Its popularity dates from the time of Sthitimalla (A.D. 1367-1395), whose own roots were apparently in Mithilā. Its role as a celebrated literary language caused Maithilī to become influential in early seventeenth-century court circles. At that time it became especially fashionable for kings and pandits to compose songs and dramas in the language and the style of Mithilā, and to have them performed publicly at the courts.⁵ Maithilī apparently had relatively little further impact, and except as a school elective is neither spoken nor written in the Kathmandu Valley today. In its homeland, the Nepal Tarai and adjoining Bihar state, it claims large numbers of speakers. According to the official 1961 census reports, some twelve percent of Nepali nationals speak Maithilī as a mother tongue, making it the second largest language group in the Kingdom.⁶ As a nationwide language, however, Newari occupies second place.

Newari, the mother tongue of the Newars, is a Tibeto-Burman language. It is the indigenous language of the Kathmandu Valley, and appears to have a close affinity with Kirātī.⁷ Except for lending some vocabulary to inscriptions in Sanskrit, it

⁴ S. Jha 1958:28-29; Grierson 1909:part 1, xiii ff.

⁵ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 215-216, 233, 844-846, 849-852.

⁶ Malla 1973a:105, 115, 117; Gaige 1975:115-119.

⁷ D. Vajracharya 1968a; G. Vajracharya 1964. Brian Hodgson, writing in the late nineteenth century, was apparently the first to give serious consideration to Newari (1971:3-9); a particularly important early contribution is

does not appear in written form until the twelfth century. The first certain use is in A.D. 1173 (N.S. 293), when it was chosen as the language of a brief dedicatory inscription.⁸ For some time thereafter it was used sporadically in inscriptions and colophons, sometimes alone, but often summarizing a corresponding Sanskrit text. In more regular use by the early fourteenth century, Newari did not move boldly out of the shadows to become a literary language in its own right until about the time of Sthitimalla, the mid-fourteenth century. Apart from its continuing use in epigraphy, Newari's principal literary thrust throughout the Malla Period was in the translation of Sanskrit texts and the writing of commentaries.⁹ Newari was also used to paraphrase the classical works freely, giving rise to a distinctive literary genre known as *utkr̥ṣṭas* or *uddhṛtas* (adaptations). Newari, mixed with corrupt Sanskrit, was employed in writing the dynastic histories (*vamśāvalis*) and Newari was the language used in the journals and diaries (*thyāsaphus*). As the language of trade and commerce, it was the language in which the palm-leaf land transfers were couched. A typical use of Newari was the recording of stanzaic poetry—sacred and secular songs sung in honor of the gods and for pleasure, characteristically as alternate refrains between groups of men and women engaged in fieldwork.¹⁰ Until the seventeenth century, Newari was simply called *bhāḡhā* or *bhāṣā* (language), that is, vernacular, to distinguish it from Sanskrit, Maithili, or other imports. Then, as Nepali began to gain acceptance as a common tongue in the Kathmandu Valley, Newari began to be further distinguished as "Deśa-" or "Nepālābhāṣā," the language of the country.¹¹

The early Shah kings were patrons of Newari language and literature. Since Newari was

familiar to the Tibetans as a trade language, it remained in use for some time in that capacity, and was even used for diplomacy with Tibet, serving for example, to frame the Nepal-Lhasa treaty of A.D. 1775.¹² Under the Ranas (A.D. 1846-1951), the use of Newari was, at best, discouraged and, at worst, prohibited.¹³ But the vitality of the language was little impaired. It remained active as a spoken language, and from the 1920s there was an "underground" rise of a creative Newari literature that from 1946 on was permitted to appear in print.¹⁴ Now there are societies devoted to the preservation and propagation of Newari, and a daily newspaper, magazines, prose works, and poetry are published in it. It is also taught as an elective subject in the schools.

The long association of Newari with Sanskrit and related Prakrits has thoroughly Sanskritized it, bringing about profound changes in grammar, phonology, and vocabulary. From the late Malla Period, it has been further affected by Maithili, Persian, Arabic, and Nepali.¹⁵ Mughal influence on the language was in part transmitted through Nepali, which was similarly influenced, but in part was direct. A number of the later Malla kings evidenced a lively interest in Persian and Urdu, and a number of lexicons and dictionaries of these languages date from the period of the Three Kingdoms.¹⁶ The natural drift evident in any living language, reinforced by a decline in the use of, and eventual rupture with, the traditional written language, has caused modern Newari to be very different from the language used in the Malla Period. The latter, in its archaic scripts, is usually referred to as "Old" or "Classical" Newari, and is largely the domain of specialists.

Nepali, an Indo-Aryan language closely related to Sanskrit, is the national language of modern

the Newari-English dictionary prepared by Jørgensen in 1936.

⁸ *Occasional Reports of the Institute of Nepalese Studies*, 1:3-4. Until this find, the earliest use of written Newari was thought to be the dedication of a *jaladroni* in N.S. 353 Kārtika (A.D. 1232) (*Abhilekha-samgraha* 1961d). Hriday 1971:2 reports a Newari-language colophon dated N.S. 224 (A.D. 1104), but there is some uncertainty about the ascription.

⁹ D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 368, 638-640; 1966:part 2, 835-

839, 841, 844; Lienhard 1974:12-14; Malla 1973a:102-103.

¹⁰ Lienhard 1974:16-27 describes these, and follows with translations of a hundred typical songs.

¹¹ Clark 1957:186-187.

¹² Banda 1962:273-276.

¹³ Lienhard 1974:15; Malla 1973a:110.

¹⁴ Malla 1973a:110.

¹⁵ G. Vajracharya 1964a; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 16; 1966:part 2, 823-824, 830.

¹⁶ D. Regmi 1966:part 2, 844.

Nepal. It is the exclusive language of government, administration, primary and secondary education, the radio, and official press. According to the 1961 census, it serves more than half the nation as a mother tongue, and for the remainder is the countrywide *lingua franca*. As the "language of the Khasa," a people who since the middle ages have drifted steadily eastward through Nepal, Nepali was long known as Khas-kurā or Khas-bhāṣā.¹⁷ In use as a common language in Nepal Mandala for well over a century before the Shah conquest,¹⁸ Nepali came to be called Parbate or Parbatīyā (Parvatīyā), that is, "mountain" language, to distinguish it from "valley" language, Deśa- or Nepālābhāṣā (Newari). It is by some version of this name, "mountain language," that nineteenth-century English writers usually designate Nepali. Because Nepali was also the "language of Gorkha," a third alternate name is Gorkhali. In Nepal, the latter was used regularly into the 1920s, when it was superseded by the modern appellation Nepali.

The earliest examples of written Nepali occur in the epigraphs of the Western Mallas, the old Khasa kingdom. The ruler Puṇyamalla provides the first example with a copperplate dated Śaka Saṃvat 1259 (A.D. 1337).¹⁹ Thereafter, written Nepali was used sparingly and only for epigraphic purposes until the late seventeenth century, after which it became more common.²⁰ From the mid-seventeenth century, concomitant with the growing popularity of Nepali as a Valley vernacular, Nepali-language inscriptions were occasionally issued in the Kathmandu Valley.²¹ The earliest is a *śilāpatra* erected in the Kathmandu Darbar Square by Lakṣmīnaraśiṃhamalla in A.D. 1641 (N.S. 761 Āṣāḍha).²² A Nepali-language copperplate inscription has also been found as far east as Panauti, dated Śaka Saṃvat 1634 Śrāvaṇa (A.D. 1712).²³ The following year, A.D. 1713, marks the earliest known use of Nepali as a literary language.²⁴

Nepali is based on Sanskrit, but bears lexical im-

prints from several neighboring languages.²⁵ In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it underwent a certain Mughalization of vocabulary. More recently it has felt the impact of Hindi, from which it has in many ways become indistinguishable, and with which it shares more than eighty-five percent of its vocabulary.²⁶ Very recently recourse has been made to Sanskrit roots to construct scientific and technical words, and Sanskrit vocabulary is often self-consciously employed in a literary context. Currently the language seesaws between opposing opinions respecting the preservation of its indigenous character, and its further Sanskritization.²⁷



From the Licchavi Period to modern times, all of the traditional scripts used in Nepal Mandala derive from one parent script known as Brāhmī (and sometimes Brāhma).²⁸ It was perfected by Indian phoneticians to serve Sanskrit, but modified in various ways, Brāhmī came to serve all the chief languages of northern India (Urdu excepted), many of Further India, and those of Nepal. One of the derivative scripts was employed in the Gupta Empire, and through the Licchavis passed into Nepal to become the exclusive form of writing used in their inscriptions. By about the sixth century A.D., the Gupta script entered a new stylistic phase. It acquired a cursive character whence it became known to scholars as Kuṭilā (curved). Until 1960 both names, Gupta and Kuṭilā, were applied to the two phases as they were manifest in Licchavi inscriptions. Since then the official Nepali preference has been Licchavi, divided into two phases, early (*pūrvā*) and late (*uttara*). The early seventh century, corresponding to Aṃśuvarman's reign, is the dividing line. The occasional Nepali misuse of the prefixes "pre-" or "pro-" and "post-" to translate into English the terms *pūrvā* and *uttara*, though simply a mistake,

¹⁷ Clark 1963:vii-viii; Turner 1931:xii-xix; Hodgson 1971:1-2.

¹⁸ Clark 1957:185.

¹⁹ Pokharel 1963:3, 51-52.

²⁰ Malla 1973a:111.

²¹ D. Vajracharya 1962:80-89.

²² D. Regmi 1966:part 4, inscr. 43 (72-73).

²³ Rajvamshi 1967a:140-143.

²⁴ Malla 1973a:111.

²⁵ Turner 1931:xiii-xiv, xvi.

²⁶ Malla 1973a:113.

²⁷ Malla 1973a:111-115; Gurung 1970:20 n. 4.

²⁸ Basham 1967:396-400; Monier-Williams 1899:xxiii-xxviii.

can be misleading.²⁹ The numbers found in Licchavi inscriptions have been a subject of special study by a number of Nepali scholars by means of which earlier readings have often been improved.³⁰

Gupta script in its developed cursive form (Kutilā, late Licchavi) breathes its last in late ninth-century manuscripts.³¹ During the tenth century, it evolved into what is known as "Nepal Valley writing," Nepālākhalā (Skt., Nepālākṣara), or more commonly as "Old Newari," like the language it transcribed.³² Beginning about the eleventh century, the manuscript copyists began to elaborate Old Newari into a number of ornate scripts. Epigraphers distinguish them by special names according to the treatment of the letters' superscript horizontal bar, the "head" (*mola*, Newari, *diḥo*, Nepali). The most popular styles are known as Bhujimola (fly-headed), Golamola (round-headed), Kuṃmola (point-headed), and Pācumola (even-headed), but there are others. These fanciful systems were used into the late fourteenth century. The *Gopālarāja-vamśāvalī*, for example, is written in Bhujimola. Such scripts died out during and immediately following the reign of Sthitimalla, a time of cultural ferment.

²⁹ H. Shakyā 1963.

³⁰ N. Pant 1965; 1965a; 1965b; 1965c; 1967a; M. Pant 1963; 1964; D. Vajracharya 1968c; 1969c; Rajvamshi 1964b.

³¹ D. Vajracharya 1973:inscr. 190 (599) Petech 1958: 25 n. 3.

³² On Transitional and Malla Period scripts see: H. Shakyā 1956; 1960; 1963; 1973; Rajvamshi 1960; 1960a; 1974; Lienhard 1974:12; Malla 1973a:102-103.

³³ Rajvamshi 1974:119-120. Arabic writing had some

An exception is Rañjana, an extremely beautiful script used on occasion for sacred purposes by the Buddhist community, Tibetan and Newari, into modern times. The script employed after the fourteenth century, now designated simply as "Newari," is closely related to the writing of Mithilā, another instance of that country's cultural impact on Nepal Mandala.³³ With little further modification, the Newari script endured in use to A.D. 1909.³⁴ In modern Nepal, Licchavi (Gupta) script and all the Newari varieties evolved from it are "dead," and for the most part are read only by paleographers.

The script used in modern Nepal for writing and printing Newari, Nepali, Sanskrit, or any other language is Devanāgarī or Nāgarī.³⁵ It also serves many languages in modern India. Devanāgarī descends from Brāhmī. Its various evolutionary stages can be traced from the early fifth to the eleventh century A.D., when it essentially achieved its present form.³⁶ In broad terms, the Devanāgarī alphabet employs some fifty characters. But more than five hundred distinct signs are needed to render all the possible consonantal combinations.

small vogue at the late Malla courts, particularly as an exotic coin device (S. Joshi 1962:80; Petech 1958:103-104; D. Regmi 1965:part 1, 312-313; 1966:part 2, 88-89).

³⁴ Malla 1973a:110.

³⁵ Tibetan script, itself rooted in Brāhmī is familiar to northern border communities. The only other native script in the Kingdom of Nepal is Limbu, now a historic artifact (Riccardi 1975:54-55 n. 30a).

³⁶ Monier-Williams 1899:xxviii n. 1; Turner 1931:xix; Clark 1963:348.

APPENDIX III

CHRONOLOGY OF THE RULERS OF NEPAL MANDALA

THE FOLLOWING TABLES are meant to provide a ready time reference for the many rulers mentioned in the text. It is as complete and accurate as the source materials now generally available permit it to be. The dates given are primarily those verified by the research of the Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala, as published in such works as *Abhilekha-samgraha*, *Itihāsa-saṃśodhanaḥo pramāna-prameya*, and *Pūrṇimā*, and in D. Vajracharya's compendium, *Licchavikālakā-abhilekha*. They are supplemented where necessary by other sources cited in the text and listed in the bibliography.

The dates in this chronology will often vary from those published elsewhere. In some instances the difference lies in a previous neglect of primary sources, particularly of inscriptions. At times dates rendered in the classical sources have been amended with materials then unknown. Other

dates have been corrected through improved reading of scripts, particularly in the matter of Licchavi numbers (see especially M. Pant 1963; 1964; N. Pant 1965; 1965a; 1965b; 1965c; 1967a; D. Vajracharya 1968c; 1969c; Rajvamshi 1964b). Single year differences may often be accounted for by the manner in which era conversion was made, by round number or with the month also considered, as explained in Appendix I.

For all periods, the dates are rendered in the eras in which they occur in the original documents; they are followed by the corresponding date of the Christian era. Persons who reckon by the Vikrama era may easily convert from the original dates (see conversion chart, Appendix I). Roman numerals are used to distinguish rulers of the same name, but they do not appear in the documents themselves.

CHRONOLOGY OF RULERS

TABLE III-1. The Rulers of the Licchavi Period, c. A.D. 300-c. 879

<i>Rulers</i>	<i>Verified Dates from Inscriptions, Śaka and Mānadeva eras</i>	<i>A.D. Conversion</i>
[Haridattavarman]		
[Vasurāja]		
[Vṛsadeva]		C. A.D. 400
[Śaṅkaradeva]		C. A.D. 425
[Dharmadeva]		C. A.D. 450
Mānadeva I	s.s. 386-427	A.D. 464-505
[Mahīdeva]	Rule of a few months but no available inscriptions; cited as Mānadeva's successor in Jayadeva II stele	
Vasantadeva	s.s. 428-454	A.D. 506-532
Manudeva	One undated inscription; probable chronology	
Vāmanadeva	s.s. 460	A.D. 538
Rāmadeva	s.s. 467	A.D. 545
Gaṇadeva	s.s. 482-487	A.D. 560-565
Gaṅgādeva	s.s. 489	A.D. 567
[Bhaumagupta]		C. A.D. 567-590
[Mānadeva II]	No inscriptions; name recorded in post-facto sources as founder of new era beginning 575/576	C. A.D. 575
Śivadeva I	s.s. 512-526	A.D. 590-604
Aṃśuvarman	M.S. 29-45	A.D. 605-621
Udayadeva	M.S. 45	A.D. 621
Dhruvadeva+		
Jiṣṇugupta	M.S. 48-49	A.D. 624-625
Bhīmārjunadeva+		
Jiṣṇugupta	M.S. 55-57	A.D. 631-633
Jiṣṇugupta		
Viṣṇugupta	M.S. 57	A.D. 633
Bhīmārjunadeva+		
Viṣṇugupta	M.S. 64-65	A.D. 640-641
[Viṣṇugupta]		
Narendradeva	M.S. 67-103	A.D. 643-679
Śivadeva II	M.S. 118-129	A.D. 694-705
Jayadeva II	M.S. 137-157	A.D. 713-733
Mānadeva III	M.S. 180	A.D. 756
Balirāja	M.S. 250	A.D. 826
Baladeva	M.S. 271	A.D. 847
Mānadeva IV	M.S. 301	A.D. 877

APPENDIX III

TABLE III-2. The Rulers of the Transitional Period, c. A.D. 879-1200

<i>Rulers and probable rulers</i>	<i>Dates from all documents in Nepal Samvat</i>	<i>A.D. conversion</i>	<i>Reign or approximate reign</i>
[Rudradeva]			
[Bālārjunadeva]			
[Rāghavadeva]		879	
Śaṅkaradeva I	40 Bhādra	920	
Guṇakāmadeva I	107 Māgha-110	987-990	
Narendradeva I +			
Udayadeva	119 Mārga	998	
Udayadeva	124 Caitra	1004	
Nirbhayadeva	125 Caitra	1005	
Nirbhayadeva +			
Rudradeva I	128 Phālguna	1008	
Bhojadeva	131 Jyeṣṭha	1011	
Rudradeva I +			
Bhojadeva	132 Āṣāḍha	1012	
Bhojadeva +			
Rudradeva I +			
Lakṣmīkāmadeva I	135 Caitra	1015	
Lakṣmīkāmadeva I			
[Jayadeva]	144 Śrāvaṇa-159 Vaiśākha	1024-1039	
Bhāskaradeva	165 Śrāvaṇa-167 Āśvina	1045-1047	1045-1048
Baladeva	172 Māgha-180 Māgha	1052-1060	1048-1060
Pradyumnakāmadeva	183 Jyeṣṭha-186 Māgha	1063-1066	1060-1066
Nāgārjunadeva	188	1068	1066-1069
Śaṅkaradeva II	189 Āṣāḍha-202 Caitra	1069-1082	1069-1083
Vāmadeva	204 Bhādra	1084	1083-1085
Harṣadeva	210 Jyeṣṭha-217 Phālguna	1090-1097	1085-1099
Siṃhadeva ^a	231 Āśvina-242 Bhādra	1111-1122	1099-1122
Śivadeva ^a	240 Āṣāḍha-243 Jyeṣṭha	1120-1123	1099-1126
Indradeva	247 Āṣāḍha-256 Kārttika	1127-1135	1126-1137
Mānadeva	258 Pauṣa-259 Bhādra	1138-1139	1137-1140
Narendradeva II	254 Phālguna-264 Kārttika	1134-1143	1140-1146
Ānandadeva I	267 Āṣāḍha-287 Kārttika	1147-1166	1147-1166
Rudradeva II	288 Phālguna-295 Mārga	1168-1174	1167-1174
Amṛtadeva	295 Vaiśākha-298 Māgha	1175-1178	1174-1178
Someśvaradeva	299 Mārga-301 Kārttika	1178-1180	1178-1183
Guṇakāmadeva II ^b	306-315 Māgha	1186-1195	1185-1195
Lakṣmīkāmadeva II ^b	313 Kārttika-317 Śrāvaṇa	1192-1197	1192-1197
Vijayakāmadeva ^b	312 Vaiśākha-320 Māgha	1192-1200	1192-1200

NOTES:

a. There is a difference of opinion as to whether these are the same persons or joint rulers.

b. The overlapping dates of these three rulers implies joint rule.

CHRONOLOGY OF RULERS

TABLE III-3. The Rulers of the Early Malla Period, A.D. 1200-1482

<i>Ruler: birth, death dates</i>	<i>A-D dynastic line (after Petech)†</i>	<i>Dates from all documents in Nepal Samvat</i>	<i>A.D. conversion</i>	<i>Probable reign</i>
Arimalla I b. 274 Mārga [1153-]	A	321 Kārttika-336 Jyeṣṭha	1200-1216	1200-1216
Abhayamalla b. 303 d. 375 Āṣāḍha [1183-1255]	A	337 Jyeṣṭha-375 Caitra	1217-1255	1216-1255
Raṇaśūradeva ^a		342 Mārga	1221	
Jayadeva ^{b*}	A b	377 Mārga-377 Bhādra	1256-1257	1256-1258
Bhīmadeva	B b	378 Caitra-386 Kārttika	1258-1265	1258-1271
Sihamalla b. 349 Vaiśākha d. 408 Mārga [1229-1287]	D y	391 Āśvina	1271	1271-1274
Anantamalla b. 366 Vaiśākha d. 428 Śrāvaṇa [1246-1308]	C y	395 Caitra-428 Phālguna	1275-1308	1274-1307
Ānandadeva II	B b	431 Vaiśākha-438 Śrāvaṇa	1311-1318	1308-1320
Arimalla II* b. 396 Māgha d. 464 Āśvina [1276-1344]	C y	440 Caitra-464 Āśvina	1320-1344	1320-1344
Rājadeva b. 437 Phālguna [1317-]	B b	467 Śrāvaṇa-481 Māgha	1347-1361	1347-1361
Arjunadeva b. 458 Māgha d. 502 Māgha [1338-1382]	B b	481 Vaiśākha-501 Mārga	1361-1381	1361-1381
Sthitīmalla d. 515 Bhādra [-1395]		487 Jyeṣṭha-515 Māgha	1367-1395	1382-1395
Dharmamalla + Jyotir + Kirti b. 487 Āṣāḍha [1367-]		516 Jyeṣṭha-528 Māgha	1396-1408	1396-1408
Jyotirmalla b. 493 Vaiśākha [1373-]		529 Āśvina-548 Bhādra	1409-1428	1408-1428
Yakṣamalla b. 528 d. 602 Māgha [1408-1482]		s.s. 1350 Mārga-599 Māgha	1428-1479	1428-1482

NOTES:

a. His records overlap those of Abhayamalla, and we do not know their relationship.

b. Jayadeva's birth and death dates are unknown, although they are erroneously given in some historical

sources.

* Crowned at Deopatan.

† b = Banepa origin; y = Yuthunihman line.

TABLE III-4. The Rulers of the Independent Kingdom of Bhaktapur, A.D. 1482-1769

<i>Malla dynasty</i>	<i>First and last ascertained dates from all documents in Nepal Samvat</i>	<i>A.D. conversion</i>	<i>Reign or approximate reign</i>
Rāya, Ratna, Raṇa, Bhīma	607 Āṣāḍha-624	1487-1504	1482-1504
Vīra	624 Vaiśākha	1504	1504
Bhuvana	625 Phālguna-d. 639 Māgha	1505-1519	1505-1519
Raṇa, Vīra, Jita	642	1522	1519-1522
Raṇa, Bhīma, Vīra, Jita	643 Vaiśākha	1523	1522-1523
Prāṇa alone, with Jita, or with Jita and Vīra	644 Bhādra-668 Bhādra	1524-1548	1524-1548
Viśva	672 Pauṣa-674 Kārttika	1552-1553	1548-1560
Trailokya alone, with Tribhuvana, or with Tribhuvana and Gaṅgadevī	681 Māgha-730 Vaiśākha	1561-1610	1561-1613
Jagajjyotīr	734 Āṣāḍha-755 Śrāvaṇa	1614-1635	1614-1637
Nareśa	757 Āśvina-d. 763 Āśvina	1637-1643	1637-1643
Jagatprakāśa	765-d. 793 Mārga	1645-1672	1643-1672
Jitāmītra alone or with Ugra	794 Pauṣa-kṛṣṇa-816 Phālguna d. 829 Mārga	1673-1696 1708	1673-1696
Bhūpatīndra	cor. 816 Bhādra-d. 842 Vaiśākha	1696-1722	1696-1722
Raṇajit	cor. 842 Vaiśākha-890 Kārttika d. 891 Jyeṣṭha	1722-1769 1771	1722-1769

TABLE III-5. The Rulers of the Independent Kingdom of Kathmandu, A.D. 1482-1768

<i>Malla dynasty</i>	<i>First and last ascertained dates from all documents in Nepal Samvat</i>	<i>A.D. conversion</i>	<i>Reign or approximate reign</i>
Ratna alone or with Ari	604 Vaiśākha-d. 640 Bhādra	1484-1520	1484-1520
Sūrya	644-d. 650 Kārttika	1524-1529	1520-1529
Amara = Narendra	658 Māgha-680 Vaiśākha	1538-1560	1529-1560
Mahendra	682 Māgha-d. 694 Bhādra	1562-1574	1560-1574
Sadāśiva ^a	696 Caitra-701	1576-1581	1575-1581
Śivasīmha ^a (with Raṇajitsīmha)	698 Jyeṣṭha-737 Pauṣa 703 Māgha	1578-1617 1583	1578-1619
Lakṣmīnarasīmha	741 Māgha-761 Āṣāḍha prob. d. 777 Bhādra	1621-1641	1619-1641
Pratāpa	761-d. 794 Caitra	1641-1674	1641-1674
Nṛpendra	cor. 794 Āṣāḍha-d. 800 Jyeṣṭha	1674-1680	1674-1680
Parthivendra	cor. 800 Āṣāḍha-d. 807 Āṣāḍha	1680-1687	1680-1687
Bhūpālendra	cor. 807 Āṣāḍha-d. 821 Kārttika	1687-1700	1687-1700
Bhāskara = Mahindrasīmha	821-d. 842 Bhādra	1700-1722	1700-1722
Jagajjaya	842-854 Phālguna	1722-1734	1722-1734
Jayaparakāśa (but with legal reign interrupted by the reign of an infant son, Jyotiprakāśa)	856 Kārttika-888 Bhādra d. 890 Mārga	1735-1768 1769	1735-1768
	866-872 Phālguna	1746-1752	

NOTE: a. The overlapping dates of these two rulers apparently reflects a period of parallel rule.

CHRONOLOGY OF RULERS

TABLE III-6. The Rulers of the Independent Kingdom of Patan, A.D. 1482-1768

<i>Malla dynasty, mahāpatras, and one Shah king</i>	<i>First and last ascertained dates from all documents in Nepal Samvat</i>	<i>A.D. conversion</i>	<i>Reign or approximate reign</i>
Rāya Malla, his brothers, and a nephew in varying combinations	620 Vaiśākha-639	1500-1519	1482-1519
Viṣṇusiṃha, the <i>pradhāna mahāpatra</i> by and ruling Patan independently of Mallas by	656 Vaiśākha	1536	
Purandarasiṃha, alone or with his brothers	666 Āśāḍha-677 Mārga	1546-1556	1546-1556
Malla rule reestablished through annexation by Śivasiṃha	680 Māgha-717 Jyeṣṭha	1560-1597	1560-1597
Siddhinarasiṃha	718 Kārttika-737 Pauṣa	1597-1619	1597-1619
Śrīnivāsa	739 Māgha-781 Caitra	1619-1661	1619-1661
	778 Śrāvaṇa-805 Pauṣa d. 807 Māgha	1658-1684 1686	1661-1684
Yoganarendra	cor. 805 Pauṣa-d. 826 Kārttika	1684-1705	1684-1705
Lokaparakāśa	cor. 826 Kārttika-d. 826 Āśvina	1705-1706	1705-1706
Indra	cor. 826 Āśvina-d. 829 Caitra	1706-1709	1706-1709
Mahindra (Vīranarasiṃha, a rival, ruled briefly)	cor. 829 Caitra-d. 835 Pauṣa	1709-1714	1709-1714
Ṛddhinarasiṃha	829 Vaiśākha	1709	1709
Bhāskara = Mahindrasīṃha	cor. 835 Pauṣa-d. 837 Jyeṣṭha	1715-1717	1715-1717
Yogaparakāśa	cor. 837 Āśāḍha-d. 842 Bhādra	1717-1722	1717-1722
Viṣṇu	cor. 842 Bhādra-d. 849 Bhādra	1722-1729	1722-1729
Rājyaparakāśa	849-d. 865 Śrāvaṇa	1729-1745	1729-1745
Viśvajit	865-d. 878 Āśvina	1745-1758	1745-1758
Jayaparakāśa of Kathmandu	cor. 878 Āśvina-d. 880 Śrāvaṇa	1758-1760	1758-1760
Raṇajit of Bhaktapur	cor. 880 Bhādra-882	1760-1762	1760-1762
Jayaparakāśa (again)	cor. 882 Jyeṣṭha-883	1762-1763	1762-1763
Dalmardana Shah	883	1763	1763
Tejnarasiṃhamalla	cor. 884 Māgha-885	1764	1764-1765
	cor. 885 Vaiśākha-888 Āśvina	1765-1768	1765-1768

APPENDIX III

TABLE III-7. The Shah Dynasty Rulers of Unified Nepal, A.D. 1769 to present

<i>Birth and death dates A.D.</i>	<i>Regnal dates A.D.</i>	<i>Some prime ministers^a</i>	<i>Dates of office</i>
Prithvi Narayan 1722-1775 ascended the throne of Gorkha 1743 conquered Kathmandu and Patan 1768 conquered Bhaktapur 1769	1769-1775		
Pratap Singh 1751-1777	1775-1777		
Rana Bahadur 1775-1806 abdicated 1799	1777-1799		
Girvan Yuddha Bikram 1797-1816	1799-1816	Bhimsen Thapa	1806-1837
Rajendra Bikram 1813-1881 dethroned 1847	1816-1847	Mathbar Singh Thapa Jang Bahadur Rana Bam Bahadur Rana Jang Bahadur Rana Rana Uddip Singh	1843-1845 1846-1856 1856-1857 1857-1877 1877-1885
Surendra Bikram 1829-1881	1847-1881		
Prithvi Bir Bikram 1875-1911	1881-1911	Bir Shumshere Dev Shumshere Chandra Shumshere	1885-1901 1901 1901-1929
Tribhuvana Bir Bikram 1906-1955	1911-1955	Bhim Shumshere Juddha Shumshere Padma Shumshere Mohan Shumshere	1929-1932 1932-1945 1945-1948 1948-1951
Mahendra Bir Bikram 1920-1972	1955-1972		
Birendra Bir Bikram 1945	1972-		

NOTE: a. The complete list of prime ministers may be found in Fisher and Rose 1959.

APPENDIX IV

INVENTORY OF LICCHAVI INSCRIPTIONS ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	<i>Archives of Asian Art</i> (Pal 1972)
AbS	<i>Abhilekha-samkalana</i> (M. P. Khanal 1971)
AN	<i>Ancient Nepal</i> , 3rd ed. (D. Regmi 1969)
AP	<i>Abhilekha-prakāśa</i> (H. Shakya 1969a)
AS	<i>Abhilekha-samgraha</i> (Abhilekha-samgraha and Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala 1961–1964)
Bendall	<i>A Journey of Literary and Archaeological Research . . .</i> (Bendall 1974)
ESR	<i>Epigraphic Survey Report</i> (D. Vajracharya and J. C. Regmi 1972)
GAS	<i>Gorakḥāko aitihāsika sāmāgrī</i> (T. R. Vaidya and D. Vajracharya 1972)
Gnoli	<i>Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta Characters</i> (Gnoli 1956)
Indraji	<i>Inscriptions from Nepal</i> (Bhagwanlal Indraji and G. Bühler 1880)
IP	<i>Itihāsa-prakāśa</i> (Naraharinath 1955; 1956)
ISPP	<i>Itihāsa-saṃśodhanako pramāna-prameya</i> (main part) (D. Vajracharya 1962)
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i> (T. Ballinger 1958)
Joshi	<i>Nepālako pracina abhilekha</i> (H. R. Joshi 1973)
Kailash	<i>Kailash</i> (G. Vajracharya 1973)
KSC	<i>Kantipura-śilālekha-sūci</i> (S. Rajvamshi 1970)
Lévi	<i>Le Népal</i> , vol. 3 (Lévi 1908)
MN	<i>Medieval Nepal</i> (D. Regmi 1965; 1966)
NKMA	<i>Nepālākā kehi Mallakālina abhilekha</i> (M. P. Khanal 1972)
TCAS	<i>Ṭiṣṭung-Chitalānbhekaḥako aitihāsika sāmāgrī</i> (H. Rana and D. Vajracharya 1972)
SS	<i>Samskṛta-sandēśa</i>
*	Original image missing
**	Original image existing but moved

APPENDIX IV-1 Inventory of Licchavi Inscriptions

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Saka or Māna- deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also Published</i>
1	—	—	—	—	Chabahil stupa compound	Pedestal of image*	AS 9, p. 18 Joshi 22
2	Mānadeva I	386	Jyeṣṭha	464	Changu Nārāyaṇa	Pillar	Indraji 1 Lévi 1 SS 1:6, 40-43 Gnoli 1, 2 ISPP, pp. 102-105 Joshi 2, 3
3	Mānadeva	388	Jyeṣṭha	466	Lazimpat, Kathmandu	Śivaliṅga	Gnoli 4 Joshi 4
4	Mānadeva	389	Vaiśākha	467	Lazimpat, Kathmandu	Viṣṇu image	Lévi 2 Joshi 6
5	Mānadeva	389	Vaiśākha	467	Tilganga, Paśupati	Viṣṇu image	SS 1:10-12, 2 Gnoli 3 Joshi 5
6	Mānadeva	390	Jyeṣṭha	468	Lazimpat, Kathmandu	Śivaliṅga	IS 9 <i>East and West</i> 8:2, 192 Joshi 7
7	[Mānadeva]	[3]96	Pratham- āṣāḍha	474	Viṣṇupaduka, Budhanilkantha	Śivaliṅga	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:3, 33 ^o Joshi 9
8	—	—	—	—	Viṣṇupaduka, Budhanilkantha	Pillar	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:3, 33 ^r Joshi 10
9	—	397	Jyeṣṭha	475	Tunaldevī, Visalnagar	Pedestal of image*	IP 1, p. 57 Gnoli 5 Joshi 11
10	Mānadeva	399	Āṣāḍha	477	Deopatan	Śivaliṅga Ratneśvara	Gnoli 6 ISPP, p. 264 Joshi 12
11	Mānadeva	402	Jyeṣṭha	480	Deopatan	Śivaliṅga Prabhukeśvara	Gnoli 10 Joshi 13
12	Mānadeva	402	Āṣāḍha	480	Te-bahal, Kathmandu	Sūrya pedestal*	Lévi 3 SS 1:9, 29 Gnoli 7 Joshi 14

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna- deva Samvat</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also published</i>
13	—	410 Māgha	488	Pāñcadeval, Paśupati	Śivaliṅga	AS 1, p. 23 Joshi 15
14	Mānadeva	413 Jyeṣṭha	491	Paśupati	Śivaliṅga Jayeśvara	Indraji 2 SS 1:9, 15 Gnoli 8 IS 47, p. 6 Joshi 16
15	Mānadeva	419 Jyeṣṭha	497	Lazimpat, Kathmandu	Śivaliṅga	IS 47, p. 7 Joshi 18
16	Mānadeva	425 Māgha	503	Palanchok	Bhagavati pedestal*	<i>Himavatsamskṛti</i> 1:1, 4 IS 47, p. 9 Joshi 19
17	Mānadeva	—	—	Kel-tol, Kathmandu	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 3:1, 2 Joshi 8
18	—	—	—	Svayambhū	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 3:1, 2-3 Joshi 1
19	Mānadeva	427 Kārtika	505	Changu Nārāyaṇa	Pedestal of image*	Gnoli 9 ISPP, p. 108 Joshi 21
20	—	427 Āṣāḍha	505	Sūrya-ghat, Paśupati	Śivaliṅga	AS 1, pp. 23-24 Joshi 20
21	—	—	—	Chattracaṇḍeśvara, Paśupati compound	Slab	AS 5, p. 6 Joshi 17
22	[Vasantadeva]	428 Mārga	506	Thankot	Stele	Gnoli 12 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:2, 125-127 Joshi 24
23	Vasantadeva	434	512	Tistung	Stele	AP 4 TCAS p. 14 Joshi 26
24	[Vasa]ntadeva	435 Dvitiyā Pauṣa	513	Bahalukha-tol, Patan	Stele	AS 5, p. 7 Joshi 28

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Saka or Mana- deva Samvat</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also published</i>	
25	Vasantadeva	435	Āśvina	513	Jaisideval, Kathmandu	Stele	Indrajī 3 SS 1:9, 48-49 Gnoli 13 Joshi 27
26	Vasantadeva	43—		—	Sitapaila	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 3:1, 4 Joshi 25
27	—	449	Pratham- āśāḍha	527	Kisipidi	Stele	Lévi 6 Gnoli 14 Joshi 29
28	Vasantadeva	452	Pauṣa	530	Khapimche-tol, Patan	Slab above <i>jaladroṇī</i>	AS 1, p. 25 Joshi 31
29	—	452		530	Āryaghat, Paśupati	Pārthivaśilā	Gnoli 87 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 5:4, 277 Joshi 30
30	—	—		—	Khadyam, Balambu	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 2:1, 71 Joshi 35
31	Vasantadeva	454	Jyeṣṭha	532	Chaukitar	Stele	Gnoli 15 Joshi 33
32	Vasantadeva	454	Jyeṣṭha	532	Pasimkhya, Balambu	Stele	JAOS 78:4, no. 96 AS 5, p. 13 Joshi 32
33	—	—		—	Yaku-tol, Chapagaon	Brahmā pedestal	AS 9, p. 20 Joshi 36
34	—	455	Caitra	533	Paśupati	Śivaliṅga Bhasmeśvara	AS 1, p. 26 Joshi 37
35	—	—		—	Hadigaon	Pillar	Lévi 4 SS 2:1-3, 9-12 Gnoli 11 Joshi 23
36	Manudeva	—		—	Gairigaon, Budhanilkantha	Śivaliṅga	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:4, 444 Joshi 39
37	Vāmanadeva	460	Jyeṣṭha	538	Dugahiti, Sankhu	Vāmanasvāmī pedestal*	AS 1, p. 27 Joshi 38

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna- deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also Published</i>
38	—	462	Jyeṣṭha	540	Paśupati	Śivaliṅga (Anuparama)	SS 2:1-3, 1 Gnoli 16 Joshi 40
39	Rāmadeva	467	Vaiśākha	545	Mrigasthali	Śivaliṅga	SS 1:7, 48 SS 2:1-3, 2 Gnoli 17 Joshi 41
40	[Rāmadeva]	—	—	—	Gana-bahal dhārā, Kathmandu	Āryāvalokiteśvara pedestal**	SS 1:9, 16 Gnoli 18 Joshi 42
41	—	472	Phālguna	550	Hadigaon	Water spout	AS 1, p. 28 <i>Ramjham</i> 3:2, 24 Joshi 43
42	[Gaṇadeva]	479	Vaiśākha	557	Kotal-tol, Pharping	Stele	AS 9, pp. 19-20 Joshi 44
43	—	479	Dvitiyāsādhā	557	Brahma-tol, Kathmandu	Āryāvalokiteśvara pedestal*	AS 1, p. 29 Joshi 45
44	Gaṇadeva	482	Śrāvaṇa	560	Chaukitar	Stele	Gnoli 19 Joshi 47
45	Gaṇadeva	482	Śrāvaṇa	560	Balambu	Stele	Joshi 49
46	Gaṇadeva	[482]	Śrāvaṇa	560	Balambu	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 3:2, 3-4 Joshi 48
47	Gaṇadeva	482	Śrāvaṇa	560	Kisipidi	Stele	Lévi 7 Joshi 50
48	Gaṇadeva	482	Śrāvaṇa	560	Kulache-tol, Kisipidi	Stele	Joshi 51
49	Gaṇadeva	[482]	Śrāvaṇa	560	Deunani, Satungal	Stele	Joshi 52
50	Gaṇadeva	487	Pratham- āśādhā	565	Gachanani, Deopatan	Śāṅkara-Nārāyaṇa pedestal*	SS 1:8, 17-18 Gnoli 20 Joshi 53
51	Gaṅgādeva	489	Śrāvaṇa	567	Chapaligaon	Stele	Lévi 8 Gnoli 21 Joshi 54

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna- deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also Published</i>
52	—	492	Vaiśākha	570	Mangal Bazaar, Patan	Slab beneath water spout	AP 3 Joshi 55
53	—	495		573	Sikubahi, Patan	Umā-Maheśvara pedestal	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 5:1, 76 Joshi 56
54	Śivadeva I	512	Jyeṣṭha	590	Viṣṇupaduka, Budhanilkantha	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:3, 331-332 Joshi 57
55	Śivadeva I	—	Vaiśākha	—	Chapagaon	Stele	Gnoli 32 Joshi 58
56	—	515	Phālguna	593	Chyasal-tol, Patan	Stele	Gnoli 22 Joshi 59
57	—	—		—	Kuhmale-tol, Bhaktapur	Stele	AS 5, pp. 9-10 Joshi 60
58	Śivadeva I	—		—	Changu Nārāyaṇa	Stele	Gnoli 34 Joshi 61
59	Śivadeva I	—	Śrāvaṇa	—	Banepa	Stele	Gnoli 33 Joshi 62
60	Śivadeva I	516	Vaiśākha	594	Mangal Bazaar, Patan	Stele	IP 1, pp. 55-56 Gnoli 23 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 5:2, 102-103 Joshi 63
61	Śivadeva I	516	Jyeṣṭha	594	Golmadhi-tol, Bhaktapur	Stele	Bendall 1 Gnoli 24 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 5:2, 103 Joshi 64
62	Śivadeva I	516		594	Tulache-tol, Bhaktapur	Stele	Lévi 9 Gnoli 25, 26 Joshi 65
63	Śivadeva I	517	Pratham- āṣāḍha	595	Dharmasthali	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 5:2, 104 Joshi 66

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Saka or Mana- deva Samvat</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also published</i>	
64	Śivadeva I	517	Pratham- āṣāḍha	595	Budhanilkantha	Stele	Indrajī 5 Gnoli 27 <i>Pūrnimā</i> 5:2, 105 Joshi 67
65	Śivadeva I	519	Prathama Pauṣa	597	Satungal	Stele	Gnoli 28 Joshi 68
66	[Śivadeva I]	519		597	Tokha	Stele	Lévi 10 Gnoli 29 Joshi 69
67	[Śivadeva I]	520	Māgha	598	Dharmapur	Stele	Lévi 11 Gnoli 30 Joshi 70
68	Śivadeva I	520	Caitra	598	Khopasi	Stele	Lévi 12 Gnoli 31 Joshi 71
69	Śivadeva I	526	Vaiśākha	604	Dhapasi	Stele	<i>Pūrnimā</i> 3:3, 1-2 Joshi 72
70	Śivadeva I	526	Āśvina	604	Lele	Stele	AS 1, pp. 29-31 Joshi 73
71	Aṃśuvarman	29	Jyeṣṭha	605	Bungamati	Stele	Indrajī 6 Gnoli 39 Joshi 74
72	Aṃśuvarman	30	Jyeṣṭha	606	Hadigaon	Stele	Lévi 13 Gnoli 35 Joshi 75
73	Aṃśuvarman	31	Prathama [Pauṣa]	607	Bhatuval, Tistung	Stele	AP 7 TCAS pp. 16-17 Joshi 77
74	Aṃśuvarman	—		—	Tistung	Stele	AP 5 TCAS pp. 15-16 Joshi 76
75	—	31	Dvitiyā Pauṣa	607	Inay-tol, Bhaktapur	Stele	<i>Samikṣā</i> v.s. 2030 Vaiśākha <i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 4

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna- deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also published</i>
76	Aṃśuvarman	31	Māgha	607	Changu Nārāyaṇa	Gilt <i>kaṇaca</i>	Joshi 78
77	Aṃśuvarman	32	Āṣāḍha	608	Hadigaon	Stele	Lévi 14 Gnoli 36 <i>Pūrnimā</i> 4:2, 123
78	Aṃśuvarman	32	Bhādra	608	Sanga	Stele	Lévi 15 Gnoli 37 <i>Pūrnimā</i> 2:3, 9-10 Joshi 80
79	Aṃśuvarman	34	Prathama Pauṣa	610	Sundhara, Patan	Stele	Bendall 2 Gnoli 38 Joshi 81
80	—	535	Śrāvaṇa	613	Jya-bahal, Kathmandu	Stele	Indrajī 4 Gnoli 40 Joshi 83
81	Aṃśuvarman	—	—	—	Na-bahil, Patan	Stele	JAOS 78:4, inscr. 92 AS 5, p. 14 Joshi 82
82	Aṃśuvarman	37	Phālguna	613	Taukhel, Tistung	Stele	TCAS pp. 17-18 Joshi 84
83	Aṃśuvarman	—	Āṣāḍha	—	Vatu-tol, Kathmandu	Stele	SS 1:8, 42-43 Gnoli 43 Joshi 87
84	Aṃśuvarman	—	—	—	Gaihrīdhārā, Naksal	Stele	SS 1:9, 35-36 Gnoli 42 Joshi 88
85	Aṃśuvarman	39	Vaiśākha	615	Deopatan	Stele	Indrajī 7 SS 2:1-3, 3 Gnoli 41 Joshi 89
86	Aṃśuvarman	—	—	—	Kisipidi	Stele	Gnoli 44 Joshi 90
87	Aṃśuvarman	—	—	—	Bankali, Paśupati	Roof of Śivalinga shrine	Gnoli 46 Joshi 91
88	Aṃśuvarman	—	—	—	Pharping	Stele	AS 9, p. 21 Joshi 85

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra-charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna-deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also Published</i>
89	Aṃśuvarman	—		—	Gokarna	Stele	KSC p. 12 NKMA pp. 49-50 Joshi 92
90	—	43	Jyeṣṭha	619	Pharping	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 3:1, 5 Joshi 93
91	—	—		—	Hanuman Dhoka	Foundation stone	<i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 5
92	Aṃśuvarman	—		—	Dumja, East No. 2	Stele	AbS p. 3 Joshi 96
93	Aṃśuvarman	45	Jyeṣṭha	621	Tundikhel, Kathmandu	<i>Jaladronī</i>	Indraji 8 Gnoli 48 Joshi 97
94	—	—		—	Kāṭheśimbhū, Kathmandu	Slab	AS 1, p. 32 Joshi 121
95	—	—		—	Chapat-tol, Patan	Buddhist relief	AS 5, p. 8 Joshi 34
96	—	—		—	Svayambhū	Pedestal of image*	AS 1, p. 34 Joshi 135
97	—	—		—	Bandahiti, Kathmandu	Avalokiteśvara pedestal*	AS 1, p. 33 Joshi 129
98	—	—		—	Tyagal-tol, Patan	<i>Caitya</i>	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 2:1, 73 Joshi 86
99	—	—		—	Mangal Bazaar, Patan	Stele	Gnoli 45 Joshi 94
100	—	—		—	Bahili-tol, Patan	Slab above <i>jaladronī</i>	Gnoli 47 Joshi 95
101	—	—		—	Thimi	Stele	Lévi 5 Gnoli 49 Joshi 98
102	—	—		—	Dhungedhārā, Naksal	Viṣṇu pedestal**	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 3:1, 6 Joshi 110
103	—	—		—	Bhelbu, Balambu	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 2:1, 72 Joshi 99

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra-charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna-deva Samvat</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also Published</i>
104	Udayadeva	45 [Ā]ṣāḍha	621	Chitlang	Stele	AP 6 TCAS p. 19 Joshi 101
105	Dhruvadeva Jiṣṇugupta	48 Kārtika	624	Chinnamastā, Patan	Stele	Indrajī 9 Gnoli 50 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 6:1, 12-13 Joshi 102
106	Dhruvadeva [Jiṣṇugupta]	49 [Mā]gha	625	Maltar	Stele	Gnoli 51 Joshi 103
107	Dhruvadeva Jiṣṇugupta	—	—	Mīna-nārāyaṇa, Kathmandu	Stele	Indrajī 10 Gnoli 52 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 6:1, 13-14 Joshi 104
108	Dhruvadeva Jiṣṇugupta	—	—	Adeśvara	Stele	Gnoli 53 Joshi 106
109	Dhruvadeva Jiṣṇugupta	—	—	Kebalpur	Stele	IP, 1, p. 58 Gnoli 54 Joshi 107
110	Bhīmārjuna- deva Jiṣṇugupta	55 Āśvina	631	Balambu	Stele	Gnoli 55 Joshi 108
111	Bhīmārjuna- deva Jiṣṇugupta	—	—	Yangal-hiti, Kathmandu	Stele	Gnoli 58 Joshi 111
112	Jiṣṇugupta	—	—	Paśupati compound	Pillar	Indrajī 11 Gnoli 59 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:2, 124-125 Joshi 112
113	Jiṣṇugupta	—	—	Paśupati compound	Chattracaṇḍeśvara pedestal	Gnoli 60 Joshi 113
114	Jiṣṇugupta	—	—	Nilavārāhī, Bode	Stele	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:1, 7 Joshi 114

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna- deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also published</i>
115	Bhīmārjuna- deva Jiṣṇugupta	57	Kārti[ka]	633	Narayan-tol, Thankot	Stele	Lévi 16 Gnoli 56 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 2:4, 1-3 Joshi 109
116	[Viṣṇugupta]	57	Phālguna	633	Maligaon	Stele	IP 1, p. 94 Gnoli 57 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:4, 356-357 Joshi 115
117	Bhīmārjuna- deva Viṣṇugupta	64	Phālguna	640	Yangal-hiti, Kathmandu	Stele	Gnoli 61 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:4, 357-358 Joshi 116
118	Bhīmārjuna- deva Viṣṇugupta	65	Phālguna	641	Bhṛṅgāreśvara, Sunaguthi	Stele	Gnoli 62 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:4, 358-359 Joshi 117
119	Viṣṇugupta	—	—	—	Changu Nārāyaṇa	Stele	Joshi 118
120	—	—	—	—	Te-bahal, Kathmandu	<i>Jaladronī</i>	SS 2:1-3, 1 Joshi 119
121	—	—	—	—	Chabahil stupa compound	Mandala	<i>Pūrṇimā</i> 6:4, 336 Joshi 146
122	—	—	—	—	Yampi-bahil, Patan	<i>Jaladronī</i>	Gnoli 64 Joshi 120
123	Narendradeva	67	Pauṣa	643	Bhansar-chok, Patan palace	Stele	SS 2:1-3, 6-7 Gnoli 67 Joshi 123
124	Narendradeva	67	Bhādra	643	Yangal-hiti, Kathmandu	Stele	Gnoli 66 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 5:2, 107-109 Joshi 122
125	Narendradeva	69	Jyeṣṭha	645	Deopatan	Śivaliṅga	Gnoli 65 Joshi 124

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna- deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also published</i>
126	Narendradeva	71	Kārtika	647	Kasain-tol, Deopatan	Stele	Gnoli 68 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 2:2, 11-12 Joshi 125
127	Narendradeva	78	Kārtika	654	Bhagavatī-bahal, Naksal	<i>Jaladronī</i>	SS 2:1-3, 5 Gnoli 69 Joshi 126
128	Narendradeva	83	Bhādra	659	Gaihrindhārā, Patan	Stele	Bendall 3 Gnoli 70 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:2, 115-116 Joshi 130
129	Narendradeva	8—		6—	Anantaliṅgeśvara	Stele	AS 1, pp. 35-38 Joshi 128
130	—	89		665	Vaṭukabhairava, Patan	Stele	Gnoli 71 Joshi 131
131	—	90	Vaiśākha	666	Balambu	Stele	JAOS 78:4, inscr. 95 Joshi 132
132	[Narendra- deva]	95	Pauṣa	671	Chyasal-tol, Patan	Stele	Gnoli 72 Joshi 134
133	Narendradeva	[10]3	Jyeṣṭha	679	Yag-bahal, Patan	Stele	Gnoli 74 Lévi 20 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:2, 117-118 Joshi 136
134	Narendradeva	103	Jyeṣṭha	679	Bajraghar, Deopatan	Stele	Indraji 13 Gnoli 73 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:2, 119-121 Joshi 137
135	—	—		—	Musun-bahal, Kathmandu	Stele	AS 9, p. 22 Joshi 127
136	—	—		—	Sankhu	Stele	Lévi 17 Gnoli 75 Joshi 139
137	—	109	Vaiśākha	685	Macchendranath- bahal, Patan	Slab under Vajrapuruṣa	AS 5, p. 10 Joshi 138

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna- deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also Published</i>
138	Śivadeva II	118	Jyeṣṭha	694	Lagan-tol, Nala	<i>Jaladronī</i>	AS 5, p. 11 Joshi 140
139	Śivadeva II	119	Phālguna	695	Lagan-tol, Kathmandu	Stele	Indrajī 12 Gnoli 77 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:2, 122 Joshi 141
140	Śivadeva II	121	Bhādra	697	Bhṛṅgāreśvara, Sunaguthi	Stele	Gnoli 78 Joshi 142
141	Śivadeva II	122		698	Gorkha	Stele	IP 1, p. 39 Joshi 143
142	—	—		—	Thimi	Stele	Lévi 19 Gnoli 82 Joshi 144
143	Śivadeva II	129		705	Balambu	Stele	Gnoli 76 Joshi 145
144	Śivadeva II	—	Pauṣa	—	Narayan Chaur, Naksal	Stele	Gnoli 84 Joshi 148
145	Jayadeva II	137	Jyeṣṭha	713	Chyasal-tol, Patan	Stele	Lévi 18 Gnoli 79 Joshi 150
146	—	148	Pauṣa	724	Mīnanātha, Patan	Stele	Indrajī 14 Gnoli 80 Joshi 152
147	—	151	Vaiśākha	727	Jaisideval, Kathmandu	<i>Jaladronī</i>	Bendall 4 Gnoli Addenda A, 2 Joshi 153
148	Jayadeva II	157	Kārtika	733	Paśupati compound	Stele	Indrajī 15 SS 1:1, 1-7 Gnoli 81 Joshi 155
149	—	—		—	Narayan Chaur, Naksal	Stele	Lévi 21 Gnoli 83 <i>Pūrṇimā</i> 4:4, 360-364 Joshi 156

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Saka or Mana- deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also Published</i>
150	—	—	—	—	Gyaneswar, Kathmandu	Stele	JAOS 78:4, inscr. 93 AS 5, p. 16 Joshi 154
151	Jayadeva II	—	—	—	Gorkha	Stele	GAS pp. 13-14 Joshi 157
152	Jayadeva II	—	—	—	Minanatha, Patan	Stele	Gnoli 85 Joshi 149
153	—	—	—	—	Mrigasthali	Umā-Maheśvara pedestal	<i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 2
154	—	—	—	—	Mahabauddha, Kathmandu	Śivadutī/Vārāhī image	<i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 1
155	—	454	Jyēṣṭha	532	Balambu	Stele	
156	—	—	—	—	Deopatan	Jayavāgīśvarī pedestal	<i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 3
157	—	—	—	—	Kumbheśvara, Patan	Slab	Gnoli 88 Joshi 159
158	—	—	—	—	Phutungaon, Balaju	Stele	
159	—	—	—	—	Tusalgaon, Budhanilkantha	Stele	
160	—	—	—	—	Pulcho-bahil, Patan	Mandala	AP 1 Joshi 46
161	—	—	—	—	Chabahil stupa compound	Mandala	<i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 6
162	—	—	Dvitiyāśāḍha	—	Gana-bahal dhārā, Kathmandu	Slab	<i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 7
163	—	—	—	—	Gana-bahal, Kathmandu	Pedestal of image*	AP 2 Joshi 100
164	—	—	—	—	Bungamati-bahal, Bungamati	Stele	Joshi 147

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra-charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna-deva Samvat</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also published</i>
165	—	—	—	Dhvaka-bahal, Kathmandu	<i>Caitya</i>	Gnoli Addenda A, 1 Joshi 133
166	—	—	—	Chabahil stupa compound	Clay seal	AN 14, p. 56
167	—	—	—	Tyagal-tol, Patan	<i>Caitya</i>	Joshi 163
168	Śivadeva II	—	—	Sakhona, Lazimpat	Stele	
169	Gaṇadeva	—	—	Ga-bahal, Patan	<i>Jaladroni</i>	ESR, p. 3 Joshi 164
170	—	170 Kārtika	746	Mangal Bazaar, Patan	Water spout	AS 5, p. 12 Joshi 160
171	—	[N.S.?] 172	1052?		Bronze Viṣṇu	AAA 25, pp. 60-61 Joshi 162
172	Mānadeva III	180 Māgha	756	Yangu-bahal, Patan	Avalokiteśvara pedestal*	MN pt. 3, app. A, 1 AP 9 Joshi 167
173	Mānadeva III	— Āṣāḍha	—	Tana-bahal, Kathmandu	Viṣṇu pedestal	KSC p. 36 Joshi 165
174	—	182 Āṣāḍha	758	Su-bahal hiti, Patan	<i>Caitya</i>	<i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 8
175	—	187 Māgha	763	Su-bahal, Patan	<i>Jaladroni</i>	AS 9, p. 22 Joshi 168
176	—	194	770	Sitapaila	Rock	Gnoli Addenda A, 3 Joshi 169
177	—	207 Āṣāḍha	783	Hanuman Dhoka	<i>Jaladroni</i>	AS 5, p. 12 Joshi 172
178	—	242 Caitra	818	Bhimanani, Hadigaon	Pedestal of image*	<i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 9
179	Balirāja	250 Pratham- āṣāḍha	826	Dattedol, Motitar	<i>Jaladroni</i>	Joshi 173

APPENDIX IV-1 *Continued*

<i>Vajra- charya</i>	<i>Ruler</i>	<i>Śaka or Māna- deva Samvat</i>		<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Also published</i>
180	Baladeva	271	Vaiśākha	847	Changu Nārāyaṇa	Kārttikeya pedestal*	Gnoli 89 Joshi 161
181	—	—	—	—	Bahili-tol, Patan	<i>Jaladroni</i>	Gnoli 86 Joshi 158
182	—	—	—	—	Bhuvaneśvara, Paśupati	Column of linga shrine	AP 8 Joshi 170
183	—	144	—	720	Mangal Bazaar, Patan	Stele	IP 1, p. 56 Joshi 151
184	—	—	—	—	Mangal Bazaar, Patan	<i>Jaladroni</i>	AP 11 Joshi 175
185	—	—	—	—	Paśupati compound	Stele	KSC p. 36 Joshi 166
186	—	—	—	—	Sitapaila	Rock	Joshi 174
187	—	—	—	—	Bankali, Deopatan	Vanakālī (Cāmuṇḍā)	<i>Kailash</i> 1:2, inscr. 10
188	—	—	—	—	Pāñcadevala, Paśupati	Śivaliṅga	
189	—	—	—	—	Jumla	Miniature clay <i>caitya</i>	AP 10 Joshi 171
190	Mānadeva IV	301	Vaiśākha	877	Kaisher Library	Palm leaf ms.	<i>Himānī</i> 3:2, 21 AN p. 208

<i>Addenda</i>	<i>Published</i>	<i>Era</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Notes</i>
191	M. P. Khanal 1973: inscr. 37	—	—	Chobar		
192	H. R. Joshi 1973: inscr. 105	—	—		Stele	
193	G. Vajracharya 1976a: inscr. 1	—	—	New York	Bronze Buddha	Stylistically 7th c. (Slusser 1976)
194	G. Vajracharya 1976a: inscr. 2	513	691	Cleveland	Bronze Buddha	Slusser 1976

<i>Addenda Published</i>	<i>Era</i>	<i>A.D.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Notes</i>
195				D. Vajracharya and Shrestha 1976: document 1	
196			Hadigaon	bricks	Inscribed " <i>śri- mahāsamāntāṃśuvarmaṇaḥ</i> "

APPENDIX V

STHIROBHAVA-VĀKYA (Prayers Read at the Consecration of a House)

LITERALLY, "May-this-house-endure sentences," the *Sthirobhava-vākya* is a text of prayers, exhortations, and injunctions to be recited by the priest for his client (*jājamāna*) at the consecration ceremony (*paniṣṭha*) of a newly built house. The text has recently been published in pamphlet form in Newari by Shakya 1971 from a manuscript in the possession of Tirtha Raj, Bhimche-bahal, Patan. I am indebted to Messrs Boyd Michailovsky and G. Vajracharya for translating it. The work is of considerable significance in illuminating the importance of divinity in the construction and maintenance of a traditional Newar house. But it is equally revealing respecting the catholicity of worship in Nepal Mandala. For although the text is purportedly Buddhist, the Brahmanical, Vedic, and folk gods are fully as evident.

The initial third of the text is devoted to a repetition of the section of the *Svayambhū-purāna* that treats of the manifestation in the Kathmandu Valley of Svayambhū, the Primordial Buddha, and of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī's role as a Nepalese culture hero (see Chapter 10). After noting that for the establishment of Kathmandu, Mañjuśrī "created carpenters, bricklayers, masons, plasterers, roofers, wood-carvers, and other incarnations of Viśvakarmā," and that "wood, bricks, clay, stone, and plaster also were provided," the text then proceeds to the business at hand, the consecration of the newly constructed Newar house.

"O well-born son! Any man in Nepal, whether he be a philanthropist or not, should build a house as follows: assemble carpenters and brickmakers and other incarnations of Viśvakarmā as neces-

sary. Then, choosing an auspicious time, prepare and bake bricks. Have the auspiciously ordained foundation laying ceremony and lay the foundation, putting in a fish, a turtle, an elephant, a horse [that is, models thereof], and a golden lotus. Then build a magnificent house with the proper auspicious marks and proportions. If a man does this, I call him great.

"Thus if anyone builds the following [here is a detailed list of structures that are essentially]: monastery, temple, palace, chariot for the gods, house, rest house, fountain, pond or well, or if anyone makes a pavement of brick or stone, or makes a *caitya* of brick, stone, clay, or the mixture of eight metals, or makes an image of one of the various gods, then when it is finished, at the time of the ceremony of infusing life, the *homa* sacrifice and the ten ceremonies should be performed. [Then follow two rather inapposite Sanskrit verses.]

"O my client! You have built a house to live in; your house is finished. I call you great. O client, may your construction always remain firm. May all the gods protect it for as long as the gods live on Mount Meru, as long as the Ganges flows on this earth, and as long as the sun and the moon rise in the sky!

"O client, many lucky signs must be present and many rules of proportion must be observed when a house is built. I will tell you how many lucky signs have to be present when a house is built. First, the smoke of the brick-kiln goes up to heaven and the 330 million gods smell it and ask where it came from; the king of gods, Indra, tells them that it is the smell of smoke made on earth

by an ambitious man who is firing bricks to build a house to stay in; and the gods, hearing him, immediately give their blessing: 'Fortunate and upright man! May this house be well-favored; may it be durable; may it be without flaw; may it be a dwelling place of Lakṣmī; may the builder live long; may his heart's desire be fulfilled!' O client, that is why I call one who can build a house one who has accomplished a worthy goal, O well-born.

"Now, O well-born, I will recite the auspicious marks of the house. First, I regard the [nature of the] foundation as if the Serpent King, Śeṣa, supported it. The basement stones must be like bulls; the main pillars are Śiva; the capitals of the pillars are Pārvatī; the sleepers on the top of the walls are the Eight Bhairavas; the ceiling joists are the Eight Mother Goddesses. The threshold is the *vetāla*; the right-hand side of the doorframe is Siṃghinī, the left is Byāghinī [the *dākinīs* Siṃhavaktrā and Vyāghravaktrā]; the lintel is Caṇḍamahāroṣana; the two door leaves are Śiva-Śakti. The key to unlatch the door is Gaṇeśa; the bolt is Karmalekhā; the peg in the latch is Kāmeśvara, the latch chain is Vidhātā, the socket for the latch is Dharmalakṣmī, the lock Sthiralakṣmī, the key Mokṣalakṣmī. . . . The stairs are the Seven Sages, the trap doors over the stairs are Jayā and Vijayā. If there are three windows under the eaves they are Buddha, Dharma, and Saṃgha. If there are five windows under the eaves they are the Five Tathāgatas. The grille window [*tikijhyā*] is Vidhiharihara. The ridge of the roof is Vajrasattva. The ridge pole is Vairocana. The rafters are the Sixty-four Yoginis. The struts supporting the eaves are Garuḍa. The beam supporting the rafters is a Nāgarāja; the [?] is his queen. The [?] are the twenty-eight lunar mansions and the [?] are the twelve signs of the zodiac. The laths laid over the rafters under the tiles are clouds, the mud mortar is the sky, and the bricks are stars. The sleepers un-

der the left-hand door jamb are Candra, those under the right-hand jamb, Sūrya. The roof is the umbrella of the house. The ground floor is the underworld, the middle story is the world of mortals, the top story is heaven, and the *āgama* is *moṁṣa* [deliverance] for those who practice religion.

"O well-born! May your construction be durable with the concurrence of so many gods. Now I will tell you about establishing Gṛhalakṣmī in your house. The broom is Brāhmaṇī, the winnowing basket is Maheśvarī, the grindstone is Kaumārī and its stone roller, Vaiṣṇavī; the pestle is Vārāhī, the mortar is Indrāṇī, the big earthen water pot is Cāmuṇḍā; the long-necked drinking water vessel is Mahālakṣmī, the strong-room is Vasundharalakṣmī, the pint measure is a *yaṁṣa*, the gallon measure is Kubera, the cooking stove is Vajrayoginī, the roasting pan is Musānadevatā, the storage pot is Kālikā, the rice-cooking pot is Mahākāla, the pulse cooking pot is Kumāra, and the scale is Dharmarāja.

"These are the forms of Gṛhalakṣmī. To make your house durable you must follow the traditions and develop religious thoughts, improve your character, and perform the customary rites of the householder.

"If you want to know how long your house, with all the proper signs and proportions, should last, let it last as long as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, as long as seeds sprout in the earth, as long as water flows downward, and as long as stars twinkle in the sky.

"O well-born, may the merit of your good deed help you to attain the four goals of life, the seven kinds of well-being, the eight kinds of property, and rid you of the eight terrors. May you develop truly religious thoughts and may your mind be elevated to all the truths. May you have good fortune and happiness in all ten directions and at all three times [past, present, and future]. Good luck to the whole world."

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THERE ARE many Nepalese periodicals devoted exclusively to national history and culture. Many others of more general scope publish articles on these subjects. Most of those published between about 1950 and 1965 are in Nepali. A few include contributions in Sanskrit and English. Beginning about 1965, a number of English or multilanguage periodicals began to appear, including *Journal of Tribhuvan University* (1965), *Ancient Nepal* (1967), *Nepal Review* (1968), *Kailash* (1972), *Contributions to Nepalese Studies* (1974), and *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre* (1977). Only a few of these journals are familiar outside the country. Many of the earlier Nepali-language ones were short-lived; their issues tended to be sporadic, and publication discontinuous. Yet it is particularly these obscure periodicals of the fifties and sixties that contain the bulk of important research respecting the nation's past. They are supplemented by important contributions to *Gorkhā-patra*, the leading Nepali-language newspaper, and by numerous paperbound leaflets published by diverse committees, groups, concerns, and private persons. To facilitate using the following bibliography a descriptive list of the most important periodicals follows. It is preceded by a list of some of the groups by which they were published.

PUBLISHERS

Dharmādaya sabhā (Committee for the Development of Religion)
Himavatsaṃskṛti-sañcālaka-samiti (Committee for the Diffusion of Himalayan Culture)
Itihāsa-prakāśa-maṇḍala (History Publication Circle)

Itihāsa-prakāśa-saṃgha (History Publication Community)
Jagadambā prakāśana (Jagadambā Publications)
Nepālī bhāṣāprakāśinī samiti (Committee for Nepali Language Publication)
Nepāla-itihāsa-vikāsa-samiti (Committee for the Development of Nepalese History)
Nepāla-saṃskṛtika-pariṣad (Institute of Nepalese Culture)
Ratna Pustak Bhandar (The Jewel Bookstore)
Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala (The Correction Circle)
Yogapracāriṇī (Committee for Yoga Publicity)

PERIODICALS

Abhilekha-samgraha (Collected Inscriptions). A Nepali-language quarterly devoted to the publication of hitherto unpublished Nepalese inscriptions. Published in Kathmandu by Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala in twelve parts, from v.s. 2018 Vaiśākha through 2020 Māgha (April 1961-January 1964). Parts 1, 2, 5-12 are edited by eight members of the Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala; Part 3 by Gautamvajra Vajracharya and Mahesh Raj Pant; Part 4 by Nayanath Paudel. Most of the entries are collectively authored, and are listed in the bibliography under the name of the journal.

Aitihāsika-patrasamgraha (Collected Historical Papers). A collection of historical documents together with analysis and commentary. Published in Nepali in Kathmandu by the Nepāla-saṃskṛtika-pariṣad. Part 1, v.s. 2014 (1957), edited by Dhanavajra Vajracharya and Gyanmani Nepal, consists of letters from the Shah Period, dating from Prithvi Narayan to Girvan Yuddha; it also doubles as numbers 4 and 5 of *Nepāla-saṃskṛtika*

- pariṣad-patrikā*. Part 2, v.s. 2021 (1964), edited by Ramji Tewari and others, is devoted primarily to treaties and other documents of the Malla period.
- Ancient Nepal* (Prācīna Nepal). Journal of the Department of Archaeology of His Majesty's Government, Kathmandu. It is a quarterly beginning October 1967 and is numbered serially without volume numbers. It is largely in Nepali, but contains a few contributions in English.
- Contributions to Nepalese Studies*. A quarterly that began with volume 1, number 1 in 1974. It is published at Kirtipur by Tribhuvan University. Contributions are in Nepali and English.
- Himānī* (Snowdrift). A Nepali-language quarterly published by Nepālī sāhitya saṁsthāna in Kathmandu beginning v.s. 2019 to about 2027 (1961-1968). Its editors were Lain Singh Bangdel, Chudanath Bhattaraya, Satya Mohan Joshi, and Kedarman Vyathit.
- Himavatsamskṛti* (Himalayan Culture). A bilingual (largely Nepali, some Sanskrit) quarterly devoted to Himalayan culture and history. Published in Kathmandu by Himavatsamskṛti-sāñcālaka-samiti, its editors were Buddhisagar Parajuli and others. Publication ran from v.s. 2016 Āśvina through 2016 Phālguna (September 1959-February 1960), but it ceased to appear after three issues.
- Itihāsa-saṁśodhana* (History Correction). Nepali-language pamphlets published in Kathmandu by Saṁśodhana-maṇḍala. The series is chiefly devoted to the rectification of errors in the interpretation of Nepalese history by means of sound research supported by documentary proof. The pamphlets were issued irregularly from v.s. 2017 Āśvina through 2025 Pauṣa (September 1960-January 1969), and numbered serially from 51 through 68. The series represents a continuation of the first fifty papers, which were collected with other materials in book form, *Itihāsa-saṁśodhanaḥ pramāṇa-prameya*, edited by D. Vajracharya 1962, and often referred to as *ISPP*.
- Jayantī* (Birthday Anniversary). A Nepali-language monthly digest concerned with Nepalese language and literature, published by Kamala Pathika in Kathmandu since v.s. 2027 Jyeṣṭha (May-June 1970).
- Journal of Tribhuvan University*. A quarterly of general interest that began with volume 1, number 1 in 1965. Published by Tribhuvan University at Kathmandu and Kirtipur (the new campus). Contributions are in English and Nepali.
- Journal of the Nepal Research Centre*. Publication began in 1977 with volume 1, number 1 at Kathmandu under the editorship of Wolfgang Voight. Contributions are in English, Nepali, and other languages.
- Kailash*. A quarterly devoted to Himalayan studies published by Bibliotheca Himalayica under the editorship of H. Kuløy beginning 1972 with volume 1, number 1. Contributions are in English, Nepali, and Tibetan.
- Madhuparka* (Offering). A general digest in Nepali, beginning about 1969.
- Maryādā* (Social Customs). A general digest in Nepali, numbered serially, beginning about 1975.
- Nepal Review*. An English-language monthly published at Kathmandu by Voice of Nepal, edited by Tirtha Bahadur Shrestha. It began in 1968 with volume 1, number 1. Publication was suspended about 1970.
- Nepal-samskṛtika pariṣad-patrikā* (Journal of the Institute of Nepalese Culture). A quarterly devoted to the publication of articles on Nepalese and Indian culture. It was published in Kathmandu under the editorship of Ishwar Baral in two volumes of five numbers from v.s. 2009 to 2010 (1952-1953). Volume 1 contains number 1; volume 2, numbers 2-5, of which the last two parts double as Part 1 of *Aithāsiḥa-patrasaṁ-Gūṭhī*.
- Nepālī*. A quarterly concerning Nepalese culture, serially numbered and published from v.s. 2016 Kārtika (1959) in Patan by Madan Purskar Gūṭhī.
- Pragati* (Progress). A monthly literary journal edited by Narayan Baskota appearing irregularly in Kathmandu since the publication of volume 1 in v.s. 2010 (1953).
- Prapāta* (Waterfall). Publication began with volume 1, v.s. 2027 (1971).
- Pūrṇimā* (Full Moon). A Nepali-language quarterly of impeccable scholarship devoted exclusively to publishing the historical and cultural

research of Saṃśodhana-maṇḍala. It has been published continuously in Kathmandu beginning v.s. 2021 Vaiśākha (April 1964). Each volume (*varṣa*) is divided into four numbers (*aṅka*), but the issues are also numbered serially as *pūrṇaṅka* (completed number). Since users normally refer to the journal by *pūrṇaṅka*, this number follows the journal name in the bibliography entries. The first three volumes were issued under the name of the month in which they appeared, viz. Vaiśākha, Śrāvaṇa, Kārtika, and Māgha; subsequent volumes bear the names of the three months of the quarter.

Ramjham (Joy). A trimestral magazine published by the Press Secretariat of the Royal Palace beginning v.s. 2021 (1966), devoted primarily to activities concerning His Majesty, the royal family, and palace affairs. It is in Nepali but often includes English-language contributions.

Regmi Research Series. A mimeographed English-language monthly of stapled letter-size pages compiled for private study and research. It carries translations, usually abridged, of a variety of Nepali-language materials, including history and culture. Beginning with volume 1 of two numbers only, November and December 1969, it has been published continuously in Kathmandu by Regmi Research (Private) Ltd., under the editorship of Mahesh Chandra Regmi.

Samikṣa (Thorough Investigation). A weekly beginning 13 May 1960, edited and published by Madan Mani Dikshit.

Saṃskṛta-sandēśa (The Sanskrit Message). A monthly Sanskrit-language, pamphlet-like journal devoted particularly to the publication of Nepali inscriptions. It was published in Kathmandu under the editorship of Yogi Naraharinath, Buddhisagar Parajuli, and others in two volumes of eighteen numbers, from v.s. 2010 Vaiśākha through 2011 Caitra (April 1953-March 1954). Volume 1 contains twelve numbers printed in ten issues, the last of which contains three numbers; volume 2, in much larger format, contains six numbers printed in two issues of three numbers each.

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- 1961e "Valatolako abhilekha" (An Inscription from Vala-tol), part 2 (v.s. 2018 Śrāvaṇa), p. 13.
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