

# Inscriptional Evidence on the Preservation of Monuments in Nepal

By

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## 1. Introduction

Nepal is a rich store house of a fantastic ensemble of a large miscellany of monuments in the form of temples, palaces, stupas, chaitiyas, monasteries, water spouts enclosed by walls and comprehensively called dhunge dharas, cisterns for distribution of water to the public and called tute dharas, pillars surmounted by the figure of garuda or figures of kings and members of the royal families, besides residential houses of the common man. These have a distinct personality of their own, and a unified character despite the variations in features which the progress of time has imposed. They may not all be intact through the inexorable ravages of time. They are nevertheless considerably well preserved, thanks to the factors of climate and the paucity of external invasions and internal troubles alike. From time to time steps have been taken by private individuals, guilds or corporations and the kings to preserve, repair, enlarge or renovate the structures for the continuance of the functions for which they had been raised. These facts are recorded for posterity by the numberless inscriptions on stone slabs, wooden boards or brackets, copper plates, on terracotta figurines, on bronze images or on pedestals of

stone images or on pillars. The languages of these inscriptions have encompassed Prakrit, Sanskrit, Nepali, Newari, Maithili and Tibetan.

Though the inscriptions themselves are the records of the original constructions and periodical repairs, they form a category of monuments by themselves. In fact along with all the structural remains they have served to make Nepal, especially the valley of Kathmandu, an open air museum of the most unique variety in the world. To the same category belongs the large number of images or sculptures in stone, wood, clay, terracotta, copper, bronze or silver, which are associated with the monuments enumerated above. The decorative features of the monuments in the form of carvings on the wooden panels and brackets used in the structures, or murals or scroll work are no less important and interesting as the artistic heritage of Nepal.

But the ravages of time and nature and the susceptibility of the human mind to amnesia and its innate disposition to lethargy stand in the way of our self-perpetuation through the preservation of our ancient monuments. These forces have, therefore, to be consciously combated if the human heritage should have any claim on preservation. One of the earliest soldiers in the cause of the conse-

rvation of human heritage was king Nabonidus, the Chaldean king of Babylon, who ruled between 550 and 539 B. C. He opened up by excavation the base of the temple of Shamash at Sippar in Iraq, in the course of carrying out extensive repairs to the structure. To his pleasant surprise, he found the inscription engraved on stone of the initial construction of the temple by King Naramsin (circa 2291—2255 B. C.), son of Sargon I of Sumer. King Nabonidus had the facts of his own work engraved on the wall of the renovated temple.

The entire span of human history is replete with such instances of public undertakings of constructions and repairs of an extensively diverse miscellany of monuments. A good deal of this evidence has been thrown up by archaeological excavations as well as by the inscripational and literary records of the past. These have indicated to us the various processes employed, the materials used, the duration of time involved in the work, the principles of work enunciated and adopted, the particular text or canon followed and of the alterations and additions to the existing structures made from time to time. These evidences, though not always inherently apparent, have retained, in fragments, the account of the evolution and development of the styles of art and architecture. In our own time conservation of our ancient heritage by undertaking structural repairs in situ or preserving them with all the means at our command against the inexorable process of natural decay in museums is a conscious effort and is increasingly becoming a sophisticated and scientific technique of the specialist.

## 2. Archaeological and Inscrptional Evidence on the Preservation of Monuments

### (a) In India

The tradition of the preservation of ancient

monuments of all description is common to Nepal and India as also to the rest of the world. This arises out of various factors, though the desire for self-perpetuation of the donor amid the countless generations of posterity and the longing for religious merit have dominated them all.

Excavations have shown that the earliest people of the protohistoric people in India, namely, the Harappan settlers of Lothal in district Ahmadabad, Gujarat, have spared no pains to preserve their existence against the ravages of the floods in the adjoining river Bhogavo by raising the levels of the city as a safety device.<sup>2</sup>

Archaeology has indicated that the earliest settlers of the city of Hastinapura, in District Meerut, Uttar Pradesh were obliged to abandon their dwellings after they had been washed away by disastrous floods from the Ganga flowing nearby. Archaeological evidence, buttressed by literary evidence, has indicated again that the dwellers of Hastinapura then shifted to a place called Kausambi, on the banks of the Yamuna to the west of Allahabad.<sup>3</sup>

The discovery of the monastery of Ghoshitarama at Kausambi, as indicated by inscribed seals found associated with the structure in the course of excavation, has shown that the monastery was built at the time of Buddha, in keeping with the Buddhist tradition, and was kept in use throughout the subsequent centuries through sixteen successive phases of structural activity in the form of repairs and extensions.<sup>5</sup>

One of the earliest conservators in history, was king Soka himself. Not only did he help the cause of the propagation of Buddhism by sending out missionaries in

different directions, he also gave instructions, in practical pursuit of a good religious life, by having them engraved on rocks and pillars as his edicts. The purpose of his engraving the religious edicts were clearly indicated in the sixth rock edict<sup>6</sup> where he said that this was done so that they may last for a long time and that his successors may follow the instructions in the future for the welfare of all. He did it out of a sense of royal duty by his subjects, for his motto was the promotion of the welfare of his subjects, and no less out of a desire for getting rid of his own indebtedness to his subjects, as well as for their happiness in this life as well as in the other.

Asoka is also responsible for rendering historicity to the belief of the Buddhists in the existence of the previous Buddhas, by repairing and enlarging the stupa of Buddha Kanakamuni in the fifteenth year after his coronation (i. e. in 255 B., C.).<sup>7</sup> He has also preserved for posterity the record of the identification of the birth place of Buddha at Lumbini (Western Nepal) by raising a pillar at the spot and having it inscribed with the fact of having visited the sacred spot and worshipped there in the 21st year after his coronation (i. e., in 249 B. C.)<sup>8</sup>

That the tradition introduced by Asoka continued through the subsequent centuries is borne out by numerous inscriptional records. Kharavela, well known to posterity through his record of the Hathigumpha inscription describes himself in the record as conservator of all religious edifices,<sup>9</sup> apart from indicating the various works in this direction carried out by him.

But the most interesting account of continued repairs to a lake, which served generations of men through centuries, relate to the original bunding of Lake Sudarsana at the time of Chandragupta Maurya towards the end of the

4th century B. C and its repairs in the successive centuries, first during the reign of the Saka Satrap Rudradaman in A. D. 150<sup>10</sup> and again at the time of Skandagupta in . D. 456.<sup>11</sup>

### (b) in Nepal

In Nepal too, apart from the two records of Asoka referred to above, there are innumerable instances of repairs carried out to her diverse miscellany of monuments throughout the entire span of recorded history. Space would not permit a comprehensive treatment of this rather large evidence in this essay. The earliest known inscription in Nepal, other than the Asokan inscription at Nigali Sagar and Lumbini, is the Changu Narayan stone pillar inscription of king Manadeva and it is dated to the year 386, which works out to A. D. 464.<sup>12</sup> The entire evidence under consideration is, therefore, posterior to this date. One of the earliest inscriptions to record the repairs to a temple is the Patan Sundhara stone slab inscription of Amsuvarma dated in the year 34 (i. e. A. D. 629) giving the details of the repairs to a temple at the village Matin. The record incidentally tells us that the temple had been built of bricks (ishtaka) and were fitted with windows and doors of wood, indicating that the temple was in all probability of the so-called pagoda or devala style. Though, the temple was repaired apparently at the expense of the state exchequer, the king donated, in perpetuity, some land for its maintenance for a long time (dirghatarapaschadkalasausthitya nimittam).<sup>13</sup>

Likewise there are numerous records of the repairs carried out from time to time to the Pasupati temple (pl. I) at Deo Patan, the religious institution par excellence of the Hindu Kingdom of Nepal. It is of course unknown, despite the claims of later literature<sup>14</sup> for a hoary antiquity for its original construction in the times immemorial, when the temple was

first built. The earliest inscripational reference to its existence occurs in the Harigaon stone slab inscription of Amsuvarman of the year ३०.<sup>15</sup> The reference, however, is indirect as the Sri Mahasamanta Amsuvarman is described therein as grace y the feet of Lord Pasupati. This, however, can be interpreted as indicative of the temple having come into existence prior to the date of the record, i. e., A. D. 625.

An event of considerable importance associated with the year . D. 879, (<sup>16</sup>) must have happened so as to justify the introduction then of a new era in Nepal and designating it as the Pasupati Samvatsara. The author has tentatively suggested elsewhere (<sup>17</sup>) that the temple may have been rebuilt at this time and its style changed from that of a sikhara style to its present multi-roofed form.

The temple was subject to the ravages of the forces of Sultan Samsuddin Illyas of Bengal in the year AD 1349, when the image itself was shattered by the vandals into three bits. (<sup>18</sup>)

The temple and the image were restored by 1381 by Mahamantri Jayasimha Rama—var dhana. (<sup>19</sup>)

As to the antiquity of the temple of Pasupati going back to at least the fifth century, there is plenty of direct and indirect evidence. The Pasupati temple stone slab inscription (20) occurring on the pedestal of a linga standing opposite to the northern door of the temple describes installation of the linga (including presumably a temple) by one Jayavarman during the reign of Manadeva, in the year 413 (A. D. 491). The linga was designated by the permission of the king after the name of the donor as Jayeswara.

The inscription on the pedestal of a linga near the quadrangle of the Pasupati temple (20) raised by one lady called Abhiri, of the year 462, i. e., A. D. 540, would point to the prior existence of the temple of Pasupa and the importance of the nuclear area around which the smaller temples were built.

It is not clear if the temple of Pasupati underwent large damages again and had to be reconstructed de novo by king Mahendra Malla

The Pasupati temple stone slab inscription of king Parthivendra Malla of the year 799 N. S. (September 1679), describes the former as the creator of a jewel of a temple (prasadaratnam) to a deity who was the cause of the birth and existence of the universe. Unless this refers to the construction of the Tulaja Bhavani temple at Kathmandu this d point to the Pasupati temple indeed.

The Pasupati temple stone slab inscription <sup>22</sup> of the year 533 N. S. i. e., A. D. 1412, refers to the erection of a golden kalasa and flag serving jointly as the finial by King Jyotirmalla who was son of Dharmmalla and father of Yakshamalla. That the image in the temple had five faces is indicated by the words "Paramapasupatim pancha-vaktram swarupam... tam devam naumi nityam."

The Pasupati Stone inscription of the year 775 N. S. i. e., A. 654, describes the gift by King Pratapamalla of a golden finial to the temple of Pasupati. This would imply that the finial gifted by King Jyotirmalla more than 200 years ago must have been damaged during the interval so as to justify the need for a new finial. <sup>24</sup>

Pratapamalla is also credited with the construction of the Arya Ghat flanking the western

bank of the Bagmati abutting the eastern side of the premises of the temple of Pasupati<sup>१३</sup>.

The woodwork in the Pasupati temple having been eaten up termites the temple had to be reconstructed with the introduction of new woodwork during the reign of King Bhupalendra Malla. This is recorded in a *Thyasaphu*<sup>१४</sup> which describes the restoration work by the King in association with his mother, Riddhila-kshmi in the year A. D. 1696. The entire work took seven months to complete.

To King Prithvinarayan Shah<sup>१५</sup> is attributed the construction of the wooden bridge across the stream, Dhobi-Khola, to make it suitable for the people of Kathmandu to cross the river conveniently and offer worship at the feet of Lord Pasupati. Though it is not directly connected with the temple, such ancillary works anticipate measures of conservation adopted in modern times which often provide for the laying out of an approach path.

It was during the time of Rajendra Vikram Shah that extensive repairs were carried out to the steps of Aryaghat and the steps leading to the Guhyeswari temple and the resting places for the persons brought to the place on the eve of their death, by Jung Bahadur.

The white marble slabs employed on the floor of the temple of Pasupati were introduced by Ranoddip, during his Prime Ministership, towards the end of the nineteenth century.

The roofs of the temple of Pasupati were once again repaired with gilt copper plates, which has been existing from the times of Nripendra Malla, by Chandra Samsher Jung Bahadur Rana in 1925. It was at this time that the woodwork was painted in bright colour as a decorative-cum-protective measure.

Subsequently during the reign of the present King the temple proper and subsidiary shrines were repaired and cleaned. The woodwork was painted afresh. The western gate which serves as the main entrance was enlarged to its present size in the shape of a gopuram. The entrance gate on the eastern side at the head of the staircase leading from the Aryaghat was also enlarged to its present size.

The doors and woodworks of the temple proper were covered with ornamental silver work variously during the times of Rana Bahadur Shah and Girvan Yuddha Bikram Shah. The silver work of the southern gate of the temple proper is attributed to Gen. Bhimsen Thapa, Prime Minister, during the reigns of Rana Bahadur and Girvan Yuddha Bikram Shah. The fact is recorded in an inscription on the torana on the southern entrance to the temple.

These silver works<sup>(१६)</sup>, having suffered some damage in the course of years, were cleaned, repaired and reset in 1967, and some additional silver work was gifted by His Majesty the King. (Pl. I).

It will be clear to see that inscriptions and written records have preserved the accounts of the repairs, additions, and alterations carried out to the temple and the subsidiary shrines and structures forming the temple complex from the remotest times known to the present day.

It should be possible to write up a complete account of the construction and periodical repairs carried out to most other monuments of Nepal (Pl. II) on the basis of the information available in the inscriptions. But limitations of

space prevent a comprehensive treatment of the subject here.

### 3. Interrelationship between Nepal and India in the field

A comparative study of the inscription would indicate a striking similarity between the preservation in the two countries of Nepal and India. This is established also by the comparable motives of construction and repairs, the endowments made for the purpose of repairs and the curses pronounced upon those who tamper with the arrangements or endowments and the words used for repairs such as **Jirnodhara**, or **Samskara Karya** etc. The attendant aspects of repairs as borne out by the inscriptions are dealt with below. One of the earliest texts to deal with the subject of repairs is **Manusmriti** dated to the beginning of the Christian era. It is respected commonly by Nepal and India as a source of legal provisions. It prescribes that any one who causes damage to a bridge, flagstaff of a temple, or images etc. must carry out the repairs to the damaged parts at his own expense. This injunction anticipates the notices issued under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Acts of India and Nepal, providing for punishment in the form of a fine or imprisonment or both for those in any way damaging or disfiguring the protected monuments in the two countries.

### 4. The Purpose of Construction repairs of Monuments

#### A. In India

The Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela attributes the excavation of caves in the Udayagiri and Khandagiri hills near Bhubanesvara in Orissa for the shelter of monks.<sup>29</sup>

The Kanakhera stone slab inscription of the 13th regnal year of Sridharavarma (i. e. circa A. D. 279), refers to the excavation by the king of a well for the purpose of the welfare, prosperity, eternal life in heaven, piety and renown (30).

The Gunda stone slab inscription of Rudrasimha—1 of the year 103 (i. e. 181 A. D.) refers to the excavation of a tank and the binding of its embankments for the welfare and happiness of all the Public (31). Many more instances of such constructions and the purpose of construction in each case can be cited. The purpose of the construction of a temple, the excavation of a cave, tank or the erection of a mandapa and such other monuments was always for the use of the people and at the same time to promote the welfare and piety of the donor or his relations. Likewise the repairs to such institutions of public utility were similarly motivated.

#### B. In Nepal

In Nepal too temples, palaces, stupas and chaityas, watercourses (water conduits) or an image were set up for comparable purposes of use by the public and the welfare of the donor or his parents, children and other relatives.

The benefits expected from the construction and repairs to a temple are indicated in the **Pasupati** temple stone slab inscription of the year 462 (i. e. A. D. 540) referring to the erection of the temple of siva designated as Anuparamesvara. The purpose was the increase of the religious merits of the children and husband of the donating lady, named Abhiri as well as for their material pleasures, long life and freedom from illness (32).

That the motive of construction and repairs of a religious institution such as a temple was

not always the promotion of selfish interests is indicated by the benedictory lines in the (Bhaktapur Taumadhitol inscription of Jagajyotimalla, of the year 674, i. e. A. D. 1553. The lines pray for the health and welfars of all and sundry and prosperity of the land through timely rains (33) The temple of Agama Deva referred to in the inscription was constructed in the year 530 (i. e. A. D. 1409) and repaired in year 674 (i. e. A. D. 1553).

The purpose of the installation of an image of Vishnu or krishna in the case, is indicated by the Changu—Narayana stone inscription of the year 296 (i. e. A. D. 1175) of King Amrita. it was intended to promote the attainment of heaven by his brother Vijayadeva, and also for the eternal happiness of the people. There is also a reference to the vicarious purpose of such constructions contained in the inscriptions (34). The purpose of repairs on general is the same as that of the original construction.

The purpose of the excavation of a tank and the benefits accruing from it are indicated in the Dullu stone slab inscription of the year 1276 Saka Era, i. e. A. D. 1354, of Devavarma during the reign of Prithvimalla. The tank together with 5 chaityas was installed for use and welfare of all living creatures and for providing shelter and rest to weary travellers on their march (35)

The purpose of the repairs to Chaitya of Dharmadhatu Vagisvara at Nhol Vihara in the Dhalayacatol, Patan, is contained in the inscription associated with the Chaitya, of the year 481 (i. e. A. D. 1360). it prays for the attainment of Buddhahood and the welfare of all people (36).

The purpose of the construction (and naturally of repairs) of a temple dedicated in this case to Bhavani—Sankara in Bhaktapur is indicated in a gilt—plate fixed on the wall of the

entrance to the Taleju chok in the Durbar Square (Bhaktapur) of the year 788, i. e. A. D. 1667. The construction of the temple was intended to promote the long life, freedom from diseases, attainment of seven—fold royal welfare in this life and attainment of heaven in the other world. In general terms the inscription also states that whoever builds a temple of the gods with care attains enormous fame in keeping with his traditions and he resides after death in the heavens and is reborn on earth in cours of time as an emperor <sup>37</sup>

Many more instances of the exact purpose and benefits of the constructions and repairs of monuments can be cited. The purpose generally was as much utilitarian as to promote the welfare in this life as well as hereafter of the donor and his relatives, as well as the general prosperity of the people and subjects of kings and rulers.

#### 4- The Arrangements and provision of Repairs.

##### A. General

The construction of a temple, Chaitya or a monastery carries with it the responsibility for the long life of the institution as much for the conduct of ritual functions associated with worship etc, Such monuments as well as institutions of public utility such as wells or tanks have usually been raised by kings or rich donors. As the purpose of such constructions was generally to promote the all round welfare of all and sundry and also of the donor, the donors have usually taken care to provide endowments of land as a steady source of income for the conduct of the ritual functions and the maintenance and repairs of the structures concerned.

The inscriptions of Asoka have shown him as the repairer or restorer of ancient monuments. King Kharavela described himself as the

repairer of religious structures. The repairs were, therefore, carried out from time to time as an *ad hoc* undertaking under the orders of the king, out of the state funds. In the olden days there was no central or regular organization for the carrying out of repairs. Inscriptional evidences show diversely that such works were of ten carried out by guilds called variously as *Goshthi* or *panchalika* or villageas. some times the works were entrusted to a project officer.

### B. In India

There is considerable similarity in the practice of making endowments and arrangements for repairs between Nepal and India.

One of the earliest records of the endowment of an entire village for the purpose of the maintenance, preservation and expansion (i. e. addition or alteration) of the cave dwellings near Nasik in District Nesik, Maharashtra, is contained in the Nesik cave inscription of vashthiputra Pulumayi of the year 22 (i. e. A. D. 152) <sup>38</sup>. The grant of the caves to those designated as *Bhadrayanika* were to be administered by a guild or a corporate body (*nikaya*). The village so granted was rendered free from diverse taxes so that the entire income could be used for the purpose for which the grant was made.

The Sanchi stone inscription <sup>39</sup> of Chandragupta II of the year 93 (I. e. A. D. 412), refers to the purchase of an entire village or locality called *Isvaravasaka* and its transferrence by a gift to a corporate body called *Panchamandali* on behalf of the *Arya Samgha* residing in the *Kakanada—botamahavihara*, obviously for the purpose of the maintenance of the establishment, including its preservation and repairs. The land gift in question was accompanied by an outright gift of 25 dinaras in cash.

The Baigram copper plate inscription of the Gupta year 128 (i. e. A. D. 448) records the grant of land for offer of incense burning of lamp and collection of flowers for daily rituals besides repairs to the temple of *Govindaswami* (*Vishnu*) at *Panchanagari* <sup>40</sup>

The *Bhamodra—Mohata* copper—plate inscription of *Dronasimha* of the Gupta—*valabhi* year 183 (i. e. A. D. 502), found in the *Bhau-nagar* district of Gujarat, also refers to a similar endowment for the conduct of worship of *Viswadevas* with the offer of sacrifices and cooked rice and the offering of incense, lamp, oil and garlands, besides the repairs to the fallen of damaged temple. <sup>41</sup>

### C. In Nepal

In Nepal there are numerous records to indicate the arrangements and endowments made for the execution of repairs to monuments.

One of the earliest inscriptions in Nepal making an endowment for the maintenance of a public utility service institution and entrusting it to a guild or *Panchalika* is the *Balambu* Stone slab inscription of the year 55 (i. e. A. D. 645) during the reign of *Bhimarjuna deva* of the *Lichchhavi* dynasty. The inscription relates the installation of a *dhara* or water course (*jalapranali*) yielding cool and pure water at the *Jolpin* village and the endowment of land, rendered free from the obligation of the oil tax, and entrusting the grant as well as the responsibility for maintenance to the *Panchalikas* of the *Jolpin* village <sup>42</sup>

The record cited above echoes the arrangements for the repairs to the temple of *Anuparamesvara* in the premises of the *Pasupati* temple at *Kathmandu* (*Deo Patan*) in the year 462 (i. e. A. D. 540) <sup>43</sup>



The temples of Ladita Mahadeva, Surabhogesvara and Dakshinesvara were entrusted to the Adhahsala Panchalikas for maintenance (pratipalanays), as recorded in the stone slab inscription in the Ganesa temple in Deo Patan near the Pasupati temple. <sup>43</sup>

The Patan Sundhara stone slab inscription of the year 34 of Mahasamanta Amsuvarma (i. e. of the year A. D. 529) records the gift of land in perpetuity to the Panchalikas of Matin-grama for the maintenance and repairs of the temple called Matindevakulam after the due consecration of large-scale repairs carried out to the temple obviously under royal patronage and supervision. <sup>44</sup>

The Kathmandu Lagantole stone slab inscription of time of Siva Deva-II of the year 119 (i. e. A. D. 714) refers to the endowment in perpetuity of land for the maintenance of the Sivadesvara temple in Vaidyagrama. The land was rendered free of many obligatory dues and entrusted to the Pasupatacharyas who were devoted to the king. <sup>45</sup>

The Patan Valatole water-conduit inscription of the year 392 (i. e. A. D. 1271) engraved during the reign of a king called Rudra entrusted the preservation of the water-conduit to the corporate body (Goshthika) concerned with keeping the streets clean and gave three ropanis of land for this purpose. One of the immediate tasks of this corporate body was to erect a roof or cover of slabs over a support of four pillars. (46)

The Kathmandu Yetkhatol Siva temple inscription on a stone slab of the year 763 (i. e. A. D. 1642) describes the erection of a Siva temple called Purnesvara, named after Purnamalla, and the endowment of 62 ropanis of land by his son Bhimamalla, for the conduct of

several ritual functions associated with the institution, besides the carrying of contingent repairs to the damages of the temple. <sup>47</sup>

According to the Kathmandu Dhoka—bahal stone slab inscription of the 812 (i. e. A. D. 1691) of the time of King Bhupalendra Malla, the repairs to the Hemakra Mahavihara were stated to have been carried out according to established principles (yathasastroktapramana). <sup>48</sup> What these principles were, have not however, been specified. The procedure of repairs must, presumably, have followed the practice of new constructions.

The Patan Durbar Square stone slab inscription attached to the Manimandapa of the year 821 relates the account to the Manimandapa carried out by one Narahari, serving as a Project Officer at the behest of the King Jayayoganarendramalla in the year 821 (i. e. A. D. 1700). The repairs carried out were apparently in the form of a complete renovation as it was made to be nutanam <sup>49</sup> i. e. it was renovated,

The inscriptional records in general, including those cited above, do not generally indicate if the repairs brought about a complete change in style, material, size or outline. It can generally be inferred that jirnoddhara or pratisamskara actually meant restoration or reconstruction; but not merely the limited repairs to the affected part. This aspect of the matter will also be apparent from the processes of reconstruction or restoration adopted for prolonging the life of a religious or other utilitarian edifice (please see below).

It was not merely the structure that was restored from time to time. Sculptures were also replaced from time to time. The case of the two images of Vishnuvikrantamurti with an identical inscription of 389 (i. e. A. E. 467) <sup>50</sup> of the time of Manadeva would establish the

point. The earlier of the two, now displayed at the National Museum in Kathmandu, having worn out presumably necessitated the carving of a new figure. The stylistic difference between the two would indicate a time lag of some duration.

The case of the replacement of the linga and temple of Pasupati has been cited above<sup>51</sup>. The present image of Pasupati is stylistically conforming to the style prevalent at the time of its restoration. The Patan Sikubahi Uma Mahesvara inscription of the time of Babhruvarma<sup>52</sup> has brought out an interesting tradition of clay images in the earlier days. The proneness of clay to damage and destruction led to the adoption of the practice of raising images in stone for the sake of durability. In fact, the inscription actually refers to the replacement of the previously existing clay images with those of stone. It may be hazarded as a guess that the earlier images of clay were not probably hardened by being subjected to firing as this alone would have imparted some strength to them and prevented their earlier damage, which appears to have taken place owing to its inherent and intrinsic weakness.

The Tilganga specimen of the Vishnuvikrantamurti being at variance with the composition and details of the Lajimpat image would indicate that there was no great solicitude at the time for exact reproduction with a view to preserving the pristine form of the art. The purpose of restoration clearly was not the preservation of artistic style for its own sake but to serve primarily the utilitarian needs of worship. The same outlook must have influenced the reconstruction or restoration of monuments of other categories.

There are indeed quite a few records of the change of style introduced in a monument in the course of repairs.

The Patan Valakhu stone slab inscription in the premises of the Ganesa temple of the year 805 (i. e. A. D. 1684) states that the brick—built temple which was formerly of two storeys, has been given a third storey.<sup>53</sup>

The inscriptional records have preserved the contemporaneously current name of the Sikhara style of temple as the *grantha-kuta devala*. The Patan Narsimha temple inscription of the year 710 (i. e. A. D. 1589) describes the gift of the temple in the *grantha-kuta* style<sup>54</sup> and this is clearly the name of the *sikhara* style in which the temple stands to—day.

The Sankhu Bajrayogini temple, which was built in the year 775 (i. e. A. D. 1654) by Pratapamalla<sup>55</sup> was modified, by changing it into a three—roofed temple<sup>56</sup>, by Bhaskaramalla in the year 832 i. e. A. D. 1711: these records come very near to the log books usually maintained nowadays to keep a record of the repairs including changes if any, carried out any monument as a customary practice.

## Curse Upon Those Who Tamper With The Endowments A. General

*Manusuriti*, as we have observed, has enjoined that those who damage any temple or damage must restore it at his own expense.<sup>57</sup> The *Mahabharata* has pronounced a terrible curse<sup>58</sup> upon those who tamper with the endowment for the preservation of any temple or comparable structure. The curse is invoked with equal gusto, in both Indian and Nepalese inscriptions from very early times.

## B. In India

Sylvain Levi indicated that the curse occurs for the first time in a charter of King Hastia

of the year 156 Gupta Era, which works out to A. D. 475.<sup>39</sup> But the curse is found to occur in several earlier inscriptions as well.

The Sanchi stone inscription of the year 93 Gupta Era, i. e. A. D. 412, of Chandragupta II<sup>(40)</sup> bears a curse upon those who tamper with the endowment of the village of Isvaravāsaka to the Panchamandali for the use of the Aryasangha in these works.

**(Ta) detatpravrittanya uchchindya  
dyatsa go-brahma-hatyaya  
samyukto bdavet  
panchabhishchanantyaairiti.**

It means that whoever tampers with the endowment will incur the sin of having slain a cow and brahman and of having committed the five sins of matricide *matughato*, parricide *pitughato*, killing of an arhant *arhantaghatato* the shedding of the blood of Buddha (*lohitupado*) causing dissensions among the monks (*sanghabhedo*) and following other teachers (*annasathuddeso*).

The curse as contained in the Mahabharata occurs in the Dhanaidaha copper-plate inscription of the Gupta year 113, i. e. A. D. 432—33 of the time of Kumaragupta-I<sup>(41)</sup>. The words actually used are as follows:

[U] ktamecha bhagavata dvaipayanaena-I Svadattamparadattamva oy haret vasundharam/ [Savishthayam kriminbhutva Pitribhish saha pachyate// sashtim-varshasaani svarge modati (bhu) midah/ Akshepta chanumanta cha tanyeva narake vaset// [Bu] roadattam dvijatibhyo yatnadraksha yudhisthira/ Mahim (mahi) (matanchhreshtha) danachchhresyo anupatanam//

The text is an injunction upon Yudhisthira, the King of Pandavas, to protect the endowment of I and to brahmins, for the protection given to a gift is superior to the gift itself. The injunction was pronounced by the divine sage Dvaipayayana Vyasa, who also said that whoever tampers with the gift or endowment of land, whether given by himself or others; he becomes an insect in human faeces, and is cooked (in the cooking pot) along with his ancestors (in hell). On the contrary the giver of land enjoys bliss in heaven for sixty thousand years. Those who tamper with such gift or abet such an act suffers the same number years in hell.

The injunction with slight variations is found in several inscriptions of later times.

### C. In Nepal

One of the earliest inscriptions in Nepal to contain the curse mentioned above is the Changu Narayan inscription, of illegible date, of Sivadeva towards the end of the sixth century A. D.<sup>42</sup> The part dealing with the curse is given below.

“.....Bahubhirvvasudha datta rajabhi Sagaradibhish/ yasya yasya yada bhumistasya tasya tada phalam// Sasthim vanshasahasrani svarge modati bhumidah/ Akshepta chanumanta cha tavanti narak vaset// (Svada) ttam (pa) radattam va (y) o (haret) vasundharam// (sa vi) shtayam krimirbhutva pitribhish saha pachyate//

The similarity between the curse as contained in the Dhanaidaha copper plate inscription and that in the Chagu Narayan inscription is to be noted. The source in both cases is the Mahabharata, though the very slight modifications must be caused by local circumstances.

The practice of including a curse in the inscriptions was observed throughout the later times in Nepal. In this context it would be sufficient to cite a late instance of the year A. D. 1753. The Bhaktapur stone slab inscription of the year 854. N. S., i. e. A. D. 1753<sup>४४</sup> simply contains the following curse:

“Svadattamparadattamva yo haranti  
vasundharam / Sasthivarshasahasrani vish-  
thayam jayate krimi //

It simply means that one who tampers with an endowment of land is born (i. e. lives) as a worm for sixty thousand years.

In some of the inscriptions of the Malla kings the curse is pronounced in the Newari language<sup>४५</sup> and comprises a crore of cow slaughter (**koti gohaty**), a crore slaughter of Brahmins (**koti barmbahatya**), a crore of women slaughter (**koti strihatya**), a crore of child slaughter (**koti balahatya**) a crore of improper acts (**koti agnayagamana**) a crore of improper eating (**koti abhakshyabhakshana**), destruction of a crore of Siva—lingas (**koti Sivali-nga dhvamsana**), and that the destruction of the temple of Sri Sri Sri Paramesvari would amount to the destruction of a crore of horse sacrifices (**koti asvamedha yajnaadina sama-sta yajna yanga papa laka juro**).

The curse pronounced upon those who tamper with the endowment of property for the maintenance and preservation of religious institutions and structures only serves to emphasize the importance attached to the task of preservation of temples and such other religious monuments in Nepal throughout her history.

## 6. The Process of Construction and Repairs of Monduments

The processes or stages of the construction of the temples in Nepal and, by inference, of

structures in general can be inferred from several inscriptions of the medieval period.

The Lubhu Narayan temple stone slab inscription<sup>४६</sup> of the year 572 N. S. (i. e. A. D. 1451) states that the temple of Narayana on the spot was installed according to rites prescribed in the vedas. The first part to be constructed was the plinth and **sanctum sanctorum (padas-thapana)** and five days thereafter the image of Narayana was installed to the accompaniment of a sacrifice lasting for twenty four hours. Two months were taken to raise the superstructure or roof called **Chulika**. A part called **Konu** (in Newari) was then hoisted in its place. The **gajura** finial was the last item to be installed.

The Bhaktapur Taumaditol stone slab inscription<sup>४७</sup> of the year 674 i. e. A. D. 1553, describes the erection of the temple of Agama Devata according to the principles laid down in the Agamas. The first part to be raised were the **paduka** (the basal part of the sanctum) including the fitting in of the doors. This was followed by the installation of the **gajura** and **parasal**.

The Kirtipur Chilamdeo Chaitya stone slab inscription of the year 635, N. S., A. D. 1513, narrates the construction of the plinth followed ten days later by the installation of the gate or door (**dvarasthapaNa**)<sup>४८</sup>

The Kathmandu Otu Bahal stone slab inscription of the year 713, i. e. A. D. 1592, gives the most complete description of the stages of construction of a **vihara**.<sup>४९</sup> The preliminary functions associated with the eventual construction of a **vihara** according to this inscription, comprised the selection of land (**bhuparigrah-  
am**) and **Krodhagni puja** (worship of the fire god for his grace) the worship of the virgin goddess (**Kumari archana**), the invocation of protection

from demons (**Marichi raksha**), the examination and selection of wood, (**salya pariksha**), the request for land (**bhumiyachana**) the worship of 81 deities [**Ekasitikoshtha kostha devatapuja**], the sowing of barley [**yavarapanam**], the worship of Janguli [**Janguli-puia**] the sanctification of Kalasa [**Kalasadhivasana**] the installation of a pillar [**Kilakaropanam**], the measurements [**sutra Patanam**] fixed by strings, the examination of the site, [**vastu-Pariksha**] the examination of voids in the earth, the earth-work excavation [**blumi-khanda**], and the construction of the plinth & the base structure of the sanctum [**Pada sthapanam**] The construction of the basal part was followed by the formal and sanctified visit to the forest [**vanayatra**], the installation of doors pillars, windows and the wooden roof [**dvarasthapanam stambha-sthapanam, gavaksha-sthapanam sirodaru-sthapanam**]. The time taken for all these activities, associated with ritual worship and oblation at each stage was one year in case of the Vihara in question.

The images were installed in the vihara thereafter, along with the performance of installation sacrifices

The processes briefly mentioned in the inscriptions cited above indicate clearly the processes and stages of construction of any religious edifice in general in Nepal. These in their turn are indicative of the stages of repairs carried out to the monuments as and when required.

The Ananda Bahal copper plate inscription of the year 535 N. S., i. e. A. D. 1414, gives a description of the proper method of repairing a water conduit, called Alok Hiti. <sup>69</sup>

The Bhaktapur Thathubahil stone slab inscription <sup>70</sup> of the year 749 N. S., i. e., A. D. 1673, describes the steps undertaken in succession for the repairs to this vihara, in keeping with the principles laid down in the Sastras [**Sastroktavidhina**]. The splinters etc. of the dilapidated temple were first recovered from the ruins (**salyoddharadikam**). It was followed by the sanctification of the site [**bhumisobhana**]. Then came in succession the installation of the

plinth [**padasthapanam**], the hoisting in their places of doors [**dvaradi**] and beams [**dharanikadi**], all in keeping with established principles. The windows pillars and the wooden roofs [**gavakshasthambham samsthapyam sirodaru samantata**], came in succession and combined to complete the structure. Finally came the golden kalasa [**kanaka-kalasa**] on the summit [presumably] surmounted by the golden flagstaff on the finial.

Thus it may be observed that both the tasks of original construction in Nepal were taken very serious by the donors and were taken up in keeping with the established principles. Each stage of construction was accompanied by sacrificial ritual and sanctified by appropriate worship.

It may be noted that the basic material used in the construction of the monuments in Nepal was wood. It was used in the pillars, doors, windows, roof, beams, and tympanums [toranas], and the walls and plinths were built of bricks and occasionally of stone. The use of bricks is adduced as early as the 7th century A. D. in the Patan Sundhara stone slab inscription mentioned earlier.

The process of repairs or rather provision of facilities to the public and devotees sometimes included the construction of a bridge across an intervening stream standing in the way of the passage to the shrine, as we have noticed in the case of the Pasupati temple, on the approach road to which a bridge across the Dobikhola was built by king Prithvinarayana Shah.

There is a reference to the sale of land by king Nripendramalla to Kamalamayi Chitrakar of Majhapottole for the purpose of constructing a road leading to the chaitya of Swayambhunath <sup>71</sup> in a palm leaf manuscript of the year 796 N. S., i. e., A. D. 1675.

Some inscriptions have recorded the partial reconstruction or replacement part of an ancient structure. The Kathmandu Santighat chaitya (Naghaltole) stone slab inscription of the Narendramalla records the replacement of the central mast of the stupa <sup>72</sup>

Continued at next issue

- 1) Seton Lloyd, *Twin Rivers*, 1943, pp. 72—73.
- 2) *Indian Archaeology 1956—57-A Review*, P. 15.
- 3) B. B. Lal, "Excavation at Hastinapura and other Explorations", *Ancient India*, Nos. 10 and 11, PP. 14—15, Pargiter, *Dynastic History of the Kali Age* P. 5, N. R. Banerjee, *The Iron Age in India*, New Delhi, 1965, PP. 28—29.
- 4) G. R. Sharma, *Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology Kern Institute*, Leiden, 1948—53, PP. XLIV—XLV.
- 5) *Indian Archaeology, 1955—56—A Review* P. 20.
- 6) D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, 2nd edition, Calcutta, PP. 24—26
- 7) *Ibid.* op. cit, P. 68.
- 8) *Ibid.* op. cit, P. 67.
- 9) *Ibid* P. 221, Kharavela describes himself as Sarvadevayatana-Samskara-karaka.
- 10) *Ibid* PP. 175—180. The facts recorded in the Junagadh Rock inscription of Rudradaman of the year 72 (i. e. A. D. 150), states that the lake was originally excavated by the Rashtriya Pusyagupta during the governorship of the Greek Tushashpa under the rule of Chandragupta Maurya. It was damaged at the time of Rudradaman the Saka Kshatrapa of western India in A. D. 150 by heavy rainfall, disastrous winds and floods in the rivers Palasini, Suvarna and Sikata, and the bund which was 420 cubits long and accounted for a depth of 75 cubits was restored and rendered three times as strong it had been before. both in the length and breadth and made much more attractive to look at. The works were executed by Suvisakha the administrator (Amatya) of the region (Gujarat and Saurashtra), a Parthian in the employ of Rudradaman, within a short time after the damage, for the welfare of his subjects. He carried out these works out of his own funds and did not tax the subjects for it in the form of money or forced labour.
- 11) *Ibid* PP. 312—314. The bunds so strongly strengthened by Rudradaman in A. D. 150 were breached again by floods in the year 136 (A. D. 455), They were once again repaired in the course of two months by the governor of the region Chakrapalita, son of Parnadatta, under the Gupta emperor Skandagupta, in the year 137 (456), by the expenditure of an enormous amount of money. The breach had affected the bund to a length of 100 cubits and to a width of 68 cubits.  
  
It is interesting to note that the record of the repairs is described as the *Sundarsana-tataka Grantha Rachana* and anticipates the modern practice of maintaining a log book of additions, alterations and repairs to a monument.
- 12) R. Gnoli, *Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta Characters*, Rome, 1956; Part—I pp. 1—5.
- 13) *Ibid.* p. 53
- 14) *The Gopalarajavamsavali*, written in the 14th century, attributes the construction of the temple to an ancestor of Manadeva.
- 15) Gnoli, op. cit, p. 48. The existence of a Vishnu temple enshrining an image of

- hnu Vikrantamurti at Tilganga on the opposite bank of the Bagmati near the temple of Pasupati ( Gnoli, pp. 6-7 ) from A. D. 467, of a temple of Anuparamesvara in the premises of the Pasupati temple from A. D. 540 ( Gnoli, p. 23 ) and of the erection of a large number of a temples of Jayesvara. ( I bid, p. 11 ) dated A. D. 491, temples of Sumabhogesvara, ladita Mahesvara and Dakshinesvara, respectively, from the time of Amsuvarma ( year 39 or A. D. 634, vide Gnoli, I bid, p. 56 )
- would indicate the earlier date of the coming into existence of the Pasupati temple.
- 16) This era was founded by Raghavadeva and has been also tentatively held by some scholars to mark the deliverance from the galling yoke of the Tibetans over Nepal. The era was adopted later by the Malla Kings and came to be known as the **Nepala Samvatsara**.
- 17) "Some Aspects of the Temple Architecture of Nepal, sent to be published in the East and west, Rome.
- 18) The fact of the destruction of the Pasupati temple on its image or both by Shamsuddin Ilyas is indicated in the Limbahal stone slab inscription of the year 479, i. e. A. D. 1358 ( D. R. Regmi, *Medieval Nepal*, III, p. 19 ), which states that the cities of Nepal were reduced to ashes by the Muslim king Sultan Shamsuddin. The same evidence is also borne out by the Swayambhu Chaitya stone slab inscription of the year of the year 492 i. e. A. D. 1371 The latter records the date of the invasion as 470 or A. D. 1349 ( I bid, pp. 21-24 )  
The **Gopalaraja Vamsavali**, compiled during the reign of Jayasthitimalla, i. e., about 40 years after the devastating event, states that Lord pasupati was split into three ( purnima, No. 8, pp. 7 ).
- 19) Kathmandu Itambahal stone slab inscription of Jayasimha Ramavardhana of the year 1439 V. S. ( I. e. A. D. 1381 ).
- 20) The temple is called Anuparamesvara, R. Gnoli, *op. cit.*, No. XVI, p. 23.
- 21) Regmi, *Medieval Nepal*, part-IV, p. 182.
- 22) I bid, III, pp. 47-50.
- 23) Somnath Sharma, **Sudhar Karva Vivran**, 2013 V. S. p. 3.
- 24) Regni, *op. cit.*, IV, pp. 95-97
- 25) I bid, p. 4,
- 26) **Purnima**, year 1, No. 3, p. 43.
- 27) The following account is available in **Sudhar Karya Vivaran**, pp. 4-5.
- 28) The author was associated with these works as technical adviser.
- 29) D. C. Sircar, *op. cit.*, pp 217-18. The words in prakrit are as follows:  
**Terasame cha vare**  
**ShiPavate—vijaya—chake KumariPavata arhate ( hi ) parKhinasm ( si ) tehi Kayamisi diyaya**  
**yapujavakehi rajavitini chinavatani evsa ( se ) tani pujanurat—uva ( saga-kha ) ra—**  
**velasirina jivadeha ( sahi ) ka Praikhata.**
- 30) I bid., pp. 186-187
- 31) I bid., pp. 182-83. The words used are **vapi ( kha ) nita vandhapisascha sarva sattvanam hitasukharthamiti.**
- 32) R. Gnoli, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

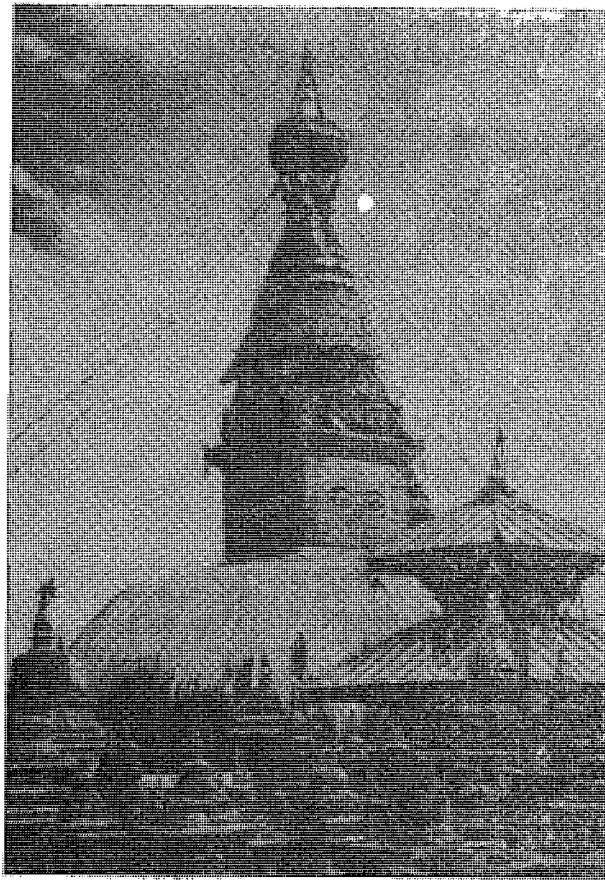
- 33) Regmi, *op. cit.*, IV, pp. 11—12.
- 34) *Abhilekha Samgraha*, No. 2, p. 13.
- 35) *Sanskrita Sandesa*, No. 11, p. 54
- 36) Hemraj Sakya and T. R. vaidya, *Medieval Nepal*, p. 64.
- 37) *Abhilekha Samgraha*, No. 7, p. 23.
- 38) Sircar, *op. cit.*, pp. 207—8
- 39) *I bid.*, p. 281, In foot note No. 7 on p 81, Sircar compares the panchamandali to a panchalika of the Nepalese inscriptions,
- 40) *I bid.*, p 356—57 The words used for repairs in the inscription are (kha) nda Phutta—Prtisamskaranaya. Baigram is the ancient name of Bogra in District Dinajpur, East Pakistan
- 41) *I bid.*, pp 428 The words used for repairs are devakulasya cha patitavisirna-pratisamskarana.
- 42) Gnoli, *op. cit.*, p 73
- 43) *I bid.*, p 23 please also see foot note No 20 above, and the text matter relating to the temple in question
- 44) *I bid.*, p 56
- 45) *I bid.*, p 53
- 46] *I bid.*, p 107 The relevant words used for the purpose are as follows:
- Yathayan gramah...svkaritasrisivadevesvaram bhattarakan nimitti ritya taddevakulankhandasbhutita samskarakaranaya vasa-pasupatacharedhyah pratipaditah.
- 47) *Abhilekha Samgraha*, No 2, p 13
- 48) Regmi, *op. cit.*, p IV, pp 79—80 The words used for the repairs are as follows; "Sivalaya bhagna Sphutita nirmana karayitum cha"
- 49) *I bid.*, p 217 The inscription is in mixed Sanskrit and Newari languages
- 50) *I bid.*, pp 234—35 This is an inscription indicatig the appointment of an intrmediary for the execution of the repairs
- 51) Gnoli, *op. cit.*, p 6 One of them, the worn out one was found at Iajimpat The other one, probably still shanding near its ancient location, is at Tilganga on the eastern bank of the Bagmati, to the opposite side of the temple of Pasupati
- 52) See foot note No 19 above and connected text matter
- 53) The inscription, together with a translation, has been published in the *purnima*, Vol 17, pp 76—79 The reference to the inscription in the context of the images of Uma—Mahesvara in *Ancient Nepal*, No. 4, pp 40—41 may also please be seen
- 54) Regmi, *op. cit.*, IV, pp 203
- 55) *purnima*, No 12, p 33
- 56) *Abahilekha Samgraha*, No 3, pp 11—14.
- 57) *Purnima*, No. 12, p 33 The information is contained in a *Thyasaphu*. please see also *purnima*, No. 16, p. 379.
- 58) *Manusmriti*, IX, 285.
- 59) *Mahabharata*, Anusasana Parva, 62, verse 3150.
- 60) Sylvain Levi, *le Nepal*, III, 1905.
- 61) Sircar. *op. cit.*, pp. 281—82, also foot



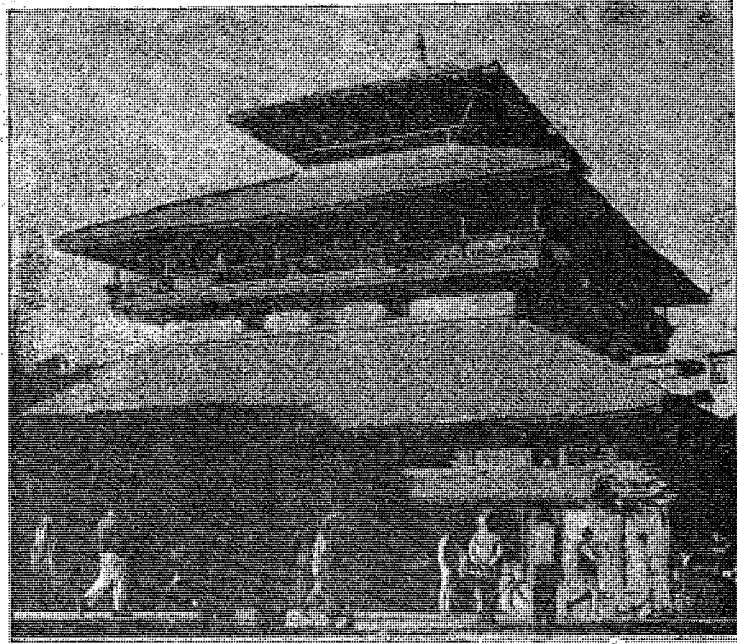
- (Note on p. 282, where the five sins have been explained.
- 62) *I bid.*, p. 289. Dhanaidaha is in the Rajshahi District of East Pakistan (in Bengal).
- 63) Gnoli, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
- 64) Regmi, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 296.
- 65) *I bid.*, p. 192-3, of the year 801, N. S., i. e. A. B. 1680.
- 66) *I bid.*, III, pp. 69-71.
- 67) *I bid.*, IV, p. 12.
- 68) *I bid.*, III, p. 102.
- 69) *I bid.*, IV, pp. 37.
- 70) Hemraj Sakya, *Medieval Nepal*, 1970, pp. 71-74.
- 71) *I bid.*, III, pp. 161-62.
- 72) Hemraj Sakya, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42.



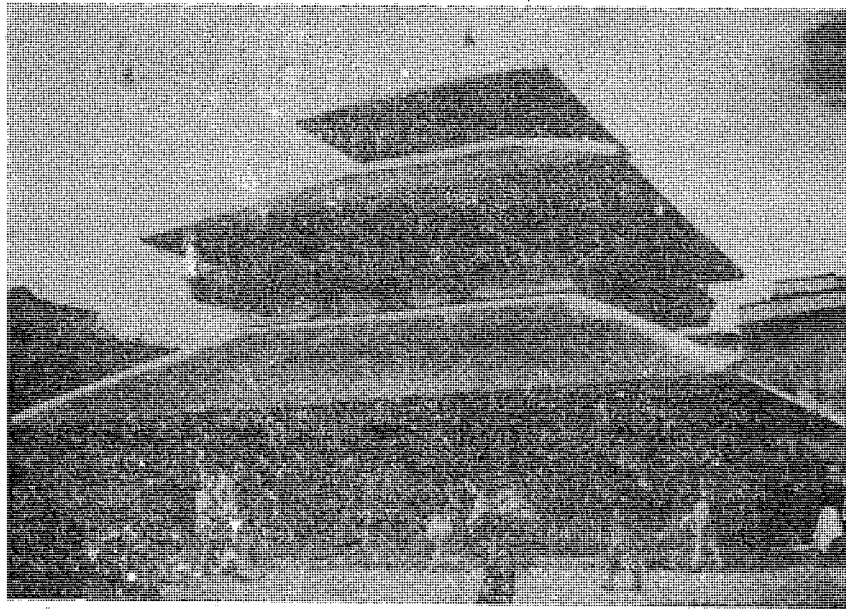
क, श्री पशुपतिमन्दिर, देवपत्तन, काठमाडौं । पेज ५२  
A, Pashupati temple Deopatan Kathmandu see pg. 52



ख, स्वयंभू स्तूप, काठमाडौं । पेज ५४  
B, Swayambhunath stupa, Kathmandu see pg. 54



क, काष्ठमण्डप, काठमाडौं, (मर्मतअघि) पेज ५६  
A, Kasthamandap. (Before conservation) see pg. 56



ख, काष्ठमण्डप, काठमाडौं, (मर्मतपछि) । पेज ५६  
B, Kasthamandap (After conservation) see pg. 56