

Lichchhavi Art Of Nepal

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CHAPTER I

A Short History Of The Lichchhavis Of Nepal

Except the Gopalraj Vamsavali none of the other chroniclers mentioned the Lichchhavi dynasty by name. Other chroniclers mention it only as the Surya-Vamsi and the Chandra-Vamsis. But it is known from the numerous epigraphical evidences that Nepal was ruled by the Lichchhavi dynasty of the solar race.

Due to the lack of valuable source-materials the history of Nepal before the Lichchhavi remains rather a dark period. According to Kirkpatrick, Lichchhavis began their rule over Nepal after defeating the Kiratas.

Kiratas should be the earliest inhabitants of Nepal. But their history we do not know much.

It is believed that the period of Nepalese history from the early years of the Christian era down to the end of the eight century was the Lichchhavi period (1). On the inscriptional grounds, the Lichchhavis are found to rule over Nepal from the fifth century A.D. down to the last quarter of the eighth century A.D. The history of Nepal before Manadeva is almost dark.

Changu pillar inscription and the Pashupati inscription of Jayadeva II contain the geneology of the Lichchhavi rulers and these indicate the long history of the predecessors of Manadeva, the first historical ruler of Nepal. From his time onward a regular history started.

Manadeva issued inscription for the first time in the history of Nepal. He issued the first Lichchhavi coin "Mananka", and built Manavihara to commemorate his name. Later on this became the seat of the Lichchhavi power. It is from this place we get the earliest relief (2).

We have fourteen inscriptions issued during his reign. His inscription is the Changu Narayana inscription dated samvat 386 (A. 464). According to which he is the son of Dharmadeva, grand son of Shankaradeva and the great grandson of Vrsadeva.

After the premature death of his father Manadeva became the ruler of Nepal in his young age under the guardianship of his queen mother, Rajyavati.

According to Changu Narayana inscription, Manadeva, taking the permission from his mother, marched towards the east and compelled the ruler of the east to surrender before him. Further he attacked Mallapuri in the west and suppressed with the help of his maternal uncle.

After the glorious victory he is said to have given alms to the Brahmanas, with his queen mother, Rajyavati (3).

Manadeva was not only a conqueror but also a great builder and a patron of art as evidenced by his palace, Managrha and the excellent images of Trivikram of Lazimpat and Tilganga. These images show his faith towards Vaisnavism as well as forms the art creation. Although he himself was an ardent worshipper of Vishnu he believed in the policy of toleration which is proved by the installation of Siva image by his queens and daughter. His wives seem to be Pashupat. According to H. N. Jha, this attitude towards religious belief was probably because of a warm democratic Lichchhavi blood of Vaisali that flew in his veins (4).

Inscriptions of Suryaghata and Lajimpat mention that Manadeva had at least three queens—Bhogini, Chief queen, Ksemasundari and Gunavati (5).

His last dated inscription is Samvat 327 (-40.505). Thus he ruled near about (464-505) forty-one (41) years. During this period he raised the super structure of the edifice of Lichchhavi empire of Nepal. He adopted the simple epithet like Nrpa (6) Rajasri (7) and Bhattarakamaharaja (8).

According to the Pasupati inscription of Jayadeva II Manadeva seems to have been succeeded by Mahideva. Most probably he ruled for a very short time.

After the passing away of Mahideva

Basantadeva becomes king. He assumes high sounding title like;— 'Paramdaivatabhattarakamaharajasri' in place of Rajsri and Nrpa, that has been used by his predecessors. (9) He was a great scholar, highly esteemed by the people due to the virtue of his learning, statesmanship, compassion, charity, virtues and courage. (10) The Guptas who were the masters of the territory stretching from Kosi to Gorakhpur were to accept the sovereignty of the Lichchhavi by Manadeva. (11) But they got opportunity to capture almost all the important posts of the Government during the peaceful reign of Vasantadeva. For example, Ravigupta was Sarvadandanayaka mahapratihara (12) Kramalila, Maharajamahasamanta (13) and his adviser and Bhavagupta was the pratihara (14) indicating the raising influence of the Guptas. He ruled for at least twenty-six years (i.e. from 428 to 454).

Vasantadeva was followed by Vamadeva. No details are found of him except one inscription (15) dated samvat 460 (A.D. 538).

After Vamanadeva Ramadeva ruled over the country. We have two inscriptions of him (16), one without date and other with the date samvat 469

The ruler to follow Ramadeva was Ganadeva. He is said to have issued the coin with the legend Gunarika. (17) He ruled over the country for about ten years 479-489- (=A.D. 557 to 567).

Vamanadeva, Ramadeva and Ganadeva adopted the title of Bhattarakamaharaja (18). It seems they were merely puppets in the hands of the Guptas (Paramdaivatasri by Sarvadandanayaka Bhaumagupta) instead of the long and high sounding epithet of Paramdaivatbappabhattarakamaharajasri padanudhyatah Srautanapadayada nadaksinayapun-

ya - pratapavikasiakirttirbhattaraka maharaja (19).

Sivadeva I and Amsuvarma

After Ganadeva Sivadeva I is found to have ruled over Nepal. We have sixteen inscriptions found upto now, with the date ranging from samvat 512 to 526 (=590 to 604) (20). He appointed Amsuvarma as Samanta or the chief and with his help Sivadeva I was able to defeat his adversaries (21).

Sivadeva I and Amsuvarman are found together in the inscriptions upto samvat 526 (22) and the old era continued upto samvat 535 (23).

However, we come to see all of a sudden the inscription connected with Amsuvarman with the date ranging from 30

In samvat 38, he drops his title of Mahasamanta and uses only Sri. (24) Lastly, his coins clearly indicate that he ultimately became the Maharajadhiraja (25).

It seems that Sivadeva I and Amsuvarma had a joint rule upto 526 or utmost upto 535 till the death of Shivadeva I. But from A.D. 535 onward Amsuvarma snatched the whole power. The coins issued by him, bearing the legend Maharajadhiraja clearly show that he had become a full fledged ruler of Nepal.

Even if Amsuvarman was not the legal ruler of Lichchhavi dynasty he never thought bad of the country and its people; rather he was always anxious for the welfare of the people. The words 'prajahitarthodyatasuddhetas' and 'Katham praja me sukhita bhaved' (26), in one of the inscriptions clearly shows his good intention towards the upliftment of the people. He is said to have made free his people from different kinds of taxation. He

revived the lost glory of the Lichchhavis and ambitious Guptas were driven out from the Government.

Amsuvarma who succeeded in establishing peace and order in the country, proved himself as the shrewdest politician and diplomat of his age (27). He initiated marriage ties between Nepal and the neighbouring rulers. According to H. N. Jha, even Yuan-Chwang had praised him for the soundness of his knowledge and sagacity of his spirit and statesmanship (28).

Though he was a great devotee of Siva he treated Buddhism equally.

It is difficult to say exactly the duration of his reign. His last available date is samvat 45

Though Udayadeva is mentioned as 'dudaka' and Yuvaraja in the inscription (29) of Amsuvarma he does not seem to have ascended the throne. In the inscription of Jayadeva II he is mentioned as Chhittishajjata (i.e. born of a king) and the father of Narendradeva (30). However, Dhruvadeva is found in the throne of Nepal after Amsuvarma. He was the younger brother of Udayadeva. On the other hand T'ang Annals (31) say that Udayadeva was deprived of his kingship by his younger brother. Later, his son, Narendradeva, recaptured it with the help of Tibet.

Dhruvadeva came to the throne instead of Udayadeva due to the machinations of the Guptas (32). He was completely overshadowed by them. He ruled at least two years as is evidenced by his inscriptions dated samvat 48 (33) and 49 (34).

Dhruvadeva was succeeded by Bhimarjunadeva. But he also had not better position

than his father. He was merely a puppet in the hand of Jisnugupta, his son. Vishnugupta followed the same practice of his father and Lichchhavi Maharaja Bhimarjunadeva was still a figurehead (35). He ruled at least ten years from samvat 55 to 65.

Narendradeva

Narendradeva, with the help of Tibet (36) restored the Lichchhavi rule and completely wiped out the supremacy of the Guptas.

Though Narendradeva was great devotee of Pashupatinath who fed and devoted to Pasupat Brahmanas and assumed the title of 'Paramamahesvara', he had also same reverence to Buddha who depicted 'dharmacakra', (Buddhist-wheel) in some of his inscriptions (37).

Like his predecessors, he was always ready to solve the problems of his subjects and his inscriptions mentioned the word 'Panchayatas' or Panchaalīs, (38).

He ruled from the famous Kailaskut Bhavan (39). He also led matrimonial alliances with the neighbouring countries. T'ang Annals (40) bear testimony to the magnificence of his court and country and all these speak of a high degree of material prosperity.

Sivadeva II succeeded the throne of his father, Narendradeva in samvat 103 (41). Though his first available inscription is dated samvat 103, he must have ruled after samvat 103 (42) which is the last available date of his father. The main achievement of his time is that he defeated the Tibetan ruler who had come to attack Nepalese territories (43).

Thus, by the time of Shivadeva II came to the throne, the consolidation of Nepal was complete and all vestiges of foreign wiped

out. He is also said to have re-introduced Saivism (44) and Sanskrit and restored the veneration of the cows and Brahman.

Jayadeva ascended the throne after the death of his father, Shivadeva II, probably in samvat 137. He mentioned good relations with the neighbouring rulers (45). He married Rajyavati, the daughter of Harshadeva, the ruler of Gauda. Jayadev himself was a great poet and well educated.

Sankardeva

Jayadeva II was succeeded by Sankardeva (46). Vijayadeva is found working as the dutaka. He was probably the last ruler of Lichchhavi dynasty (47) who ruled at least up to samvat 207.

Nepal, thereafter, enters into a dark period, which remains yet to be properly illuminated. This period marked either a revival of the Lichchhavis or the initiation of the Thakuri dynasty again. An event of some importance that took place towards the end of eighth century was the expedition of king Jayapida of Kashmir into the Himalayan region of Nepal, but it was repelled by king Aramudi (48).

According to some historians, Nanyadeva of Mithila ruled over Kathmandu valley.

But it is doubtful. Anyhow dark period continued upto circa 1200 A.D. when a new dynasty came to wield the central power in the valley of Nepal and called itself the Mallas beginning with the rule of Arimalla (A.D. 1200-1216)

CHAPTER II

The Religious Background of the Lichchhavi Art

When we talk of the art we talk about

some visible symbols which are either drawn or carved or painted in the shape of human beings, animals, flowers, birds and mythical figures on some materials like stone, metal cloth and paper. These painted themes could be either secular or religious.

The art which concerned the religions generally is interpreted through the aids of the visible motifs on idols. The images of the gods and goddesses are in themselves great works of art. With the help of the images found in those places, we can trace the rise and fall of different races and their religious attitude.

From the very beginning the art of Nepal served the religious needs of the people. In Nepal and especially in the Kathmandu valley, there Civilization grew up since the early centuries of the christian era contains, a varied and rich heritage of art has been preserved.

Kirkpatrick has rightly observed that "there are nearly as many temples as houses and as many idols as inhabitants, there not being a fountain, a river, or a hill within its limits that is not consecrated to one or other of the Hindu or Buddhist deities".

The Hindu and Buddhist religions were both widely spread and popular among the people of Nepal in the Lichchhavi period. There is no other fact to elaborate on religion here and until the emergence of the Lichchhavis. The inscriptions narrate the history of Lichchhavis and specially the history of the religion of the period in its diversified form mentioned by the presence of Saivite, Vaisnavite, Sakta and the Buddhist Sect (2)

Brahmanism

(a) Saivism

The Hindu Tradition records that this valley was a lake in the beginning and was occupied by Danasur, a great devotee of Lord Siva attesting the history of Saivism in the valley since the early times. In the time of the Gopala, the abhir and the Kiratas dynasties Siva was the presiding deity of the royal houses and worshipped in the phallic form like the Kirtesvara Linga mentioned by the Vamsavalis and the Puranas.

From the time of Manadeva Saivism became a stronger and more popular faith in the Kathmandu valley. One comes across many names of the Siva-lingas in the early Lichchhavi inscriptions. Some of these were Ratnasvara-Siva-linga, Vijaysvara-Siva-Linga, Manesvara Sive-Linga, Lalitmahesvara-Siva-Linga, etc. Those were erected and worshipped by the queens, daughter and the general public. Manadeva's two queens, Ksemasundari (3) and Gunavati (4) built Siva Linga. Again Vijayvati, daughter of Manadeva, constructed the Vijayesvara Siva-Linga (5). Although Manadeva was personally a Vaisnavite (6), he was catholic about other sects and he put no hindrance to his spouses. General people were also free to adopt any sect.

From the times of Amsuvarma we actually get name of the Saiva sects. Among them, the Pashupata sect gained ground (7). Pashupatas worshipped Siva and besmeared themselves with the ashes and were Jata-mukuta (8).

We find Amsuvarma adopting the title of Bhagavat Pasupatibhattaraka Padanugrihita (devoted to the feet of Lord Pashupati)

for the first time and after this the Lichchhavi and Thakuri kings adopt this title which lasts until the collapse of the Lichchhavi rule. Jayadeva II mentions in his inscriptions that all his ancestors were devotees of Siva (9). This shows that Saivism had become the national religion and the Pasupat pantheon as the main object of adoration. In the Lichchhavi period itself we have plenty of inscription of its different describing donations in the Pasupati temple by the Lichhavi rulers.

When we come to the icons of the Lichchhavi period we find that during this period the four-faced Siva-Linga was worshipped by the people.

The temple of Dhobichour and Deo-Patan which contain the Sivalinga were originally carried the four-faced Siva-Linga, but were replaced subsequently by a liter type. The four faces belong to Aghor, Taturush, Vamadeo and Sadyojata. Two of them are terrific in expression and two serene.

We also find the Uma-Mahesvara-Alingam murtis in plenty in this period. The Chhatrachandesvara and Harihar (a syncretic Sankarnarayana Swami) images were also worshipped during this period (10). Over most of the idols temples of Siva were constructed (11) as evidenced by the Balambu inscription of 109 and Lagan Tole inscription of 119 of Sivadeva II. The inscriptions write that Siva is a great deity and the creator, the preserver and the destroyer of the universe (12). The worship of the deity, people held, would bring them fortunes and salvation after death. Inspired by this notion we find Vatsadevi, the mother of Jayadeva, dedicating a beautiful lotus flower made Astadhatu (an alloy of eight metals). She

thought this would not only provide Punya (blessing) for her deceased husband (Sivadeva II) (13) but would brighten his (Sivadava) heaven also. The eight petals might have been symbolically taken for the eight forms of Pasupati (14), namely, Sarva, Bhavan, Isan, Rudra, Ugra, Bhima, Pasupati and Mahadeva (15). There were different sub-division of Pasupat, namely Mundasrnkhalika (16), Dana Pasupat (17), Vamsa-Pasupat (18), Somasidhyantin (19). Srikhalika (20) etc.

The cult of Lakulesh, the only incarnatory form of Siva, was worshipped during the Lichchhavi period as evidenced by the Chhatrachandesvara inscription of the time of Jisnugupta (21).

The prayers offered to Siva indicate that Siva was Ista Devata of the Saivites. He was the creator, the preserver and the destroyer and the giver of the pleasures, knowledge and enlightenment to the people (22). It is said that after the delusion all the things find their shelter in him. He is a venerable object of ascetics and the deities including Indra, the king of the gods. The Budhanilkantha inscription of Manadeva writes that one who abstains from His worship goes to the hell, rampant with the ghosts and evil spirits and there he suffers all sorts of agonies. The Sanga inscription of Amsuvarma mentions the god along with Gauri. Here the deity has been described as wearing a garland of the several heads. Because of this fact, J.C. Regmi associates this relief with the Munda-Srinkhalika cult of the Pashupatas (23). The deity is described here as wearing the garment of snake in the earlobes and wearing the skin of elephant (24). The Pashupati Chhatrachandesvara inscription of Jisnugupta describes Siva as a store-house of the virtues and the spiritual knowledge, the creator of the animate and inanimate

beings, and the destroyer of Kamadeva. Jayadeva II's Inscriptions of Pasupati calls him as possessing three eyes, master of the three-lotus, the possessor of three-Gunas, the destroyer of Tripuresvara, the holder of Trisula whose locks of hair are washed by the Gangas and who is worshipped by Indra. He appears here as the illuminator of Lankapuri and an object of honourable adoration of Danasur, who is perpetually praised by the four faced Brahma, Kirtikeya, Ravana and Vasukin. The deity is besmeared and naked is the subtle object which is inherent in all the created things of the universe, the bestower of benevolence and the master of the demons (25).

Thus, we find in the Lichchhavi period, Saivism was popular and existed in various sects. We have the terrific aspect of the deity and the peaceful aspect both conceived in the thoughts and created in the art forms for the sectarians. On the basis of Yoginitantra (PKS. P. 175) H. N. Jha mentions that 'great popularity of Saivism was mainly because discrimination of sex or caste of birth had no place in it (26).

The available Lichchhavi inscriptions mention fifteen Sivalingas and twenty four Siva temples (27). Here I would like to refer that with great stress that out of one hundred and fifty inscriptions forty-nine inscriptions emphasise the greatness of Saivism in the Lichchhavi period.

(b) VAISNAVISM

As regards Vaisnavism, this is also an ancient religion and perhaps practised along with Saivism in Nepal. If we consider the episode of the inundation of the valley then Vaisnavism had taken its origin in the valley very early since the early days of its inhabitation. The Gopals and the Abhiras we-

re the Yadavas and naturally followers of Vaisnavite cults.

We get the definite evidence of Vaisnavite religion again in the time of Manadeva. This king was a devotee of Visnu and had built a magnificent temple of his favourite Lord (Visnu) on the top of Dauladri hill which is known as Changu Narayana today (28)

Description of the inscription indicates that here the image of Visnu-Vikranta along with Laxmi was dedicated in the sanctum of the temple by Manadeva at the time of its construction. (29).

In the Lichchhavi period Visnu Vikranta aspect of Vaisnavism seems to be very favourite among the people of the Kathmandu valley. Because we find this aspect of the God executed on the orders of Manadeva himself with an inscriptional on the pedestal and placed in a temple built in Lajimpat and Tilganga etc. According to the inscription of Manadeva dated 389 he built this image for the attainment of the religions of the religious merits of his mother, Rajyavati [30].

An inscription of Vasantadeva dated 530 records about a Karana-puja (31) a tantric rite in the honour of Bhagavan Vedavyas who is also supposed to be an incarnation of Visnu. In the Anantalingesvara inscription of Narendradeva (32), we have mention of permanent donations to the temple of Lokapalashwamin. On the basis of Lele inscription it can be said that Sivadeva I believed in Vasudeva (33). Although Amsuvarma was a Saivite, he did not altogether ignore the Vaisnavite gods. In his inscription of Hadigaon he gives due donations to Daulasikharswain, Narasimhadeva, Bhubbukkika Jalsayanswamin which stands for Trivikram Narasimha and Budhanilkantha images (34).

The Bhairavadhoka inscription of Dhruvadeva and Jisnugupta (35) containing the prayers of Visnu and Laksmi indicated that this was Laksmi Narayana murti. An inscription of Kevalpur of the same king talks about Karana-puja of Narayanaswami.

Which shows that in his time Visnu was also worshipped by Tantric rites. Hence Tantricism existed during the Lichchhavi period also. An inscription of Bhimarjundeva (36) refers to an image of Visnu 'Jalasya' which indicates that the 'Yogasayana murti' described in Vaisankhagan Literature was also known to the Lichchhavi artists and devotees in this valley. The Vringesvar and Sonaguthi inscriptions (37) begin with the invocation to Visnu affirming that these temples also belonged to Him.

Thus, during the Lichchhavi period Vaisnavism was practiced by the people. His primordial and incarnatory forms enjoined in the texts of iconography were worshipped.

Visnu occurs as an ideal hero with Sri Vatsa on the broad chest as an embodiment of happiness and serenity and as an eternal being as mentioned by the inscription of Changu Narayana (38). He sometimes appears along with Laksmi in the act of alingan and this aspect of the deity was very pleasing to the devotees. The deity was thought as imparting happiness on the sectarians. The deity was especially worshipped in his Jalasaya form, but the Vyasa, Narasimbha, Balarama, Trivikram Vamana and Srugar forms were no less worshipped (39). The god is represented with Sankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma and their varied combination tried to depict the twenty four forms of Visnu as enjoined in the texts of iconography.

When we examine the pieces of art we find the images of Vishnu Vikranta, Visnu,

Visnu-boar and Narashimha incarnation from the sites like Changu Narayana, Lajimpat, Tilganga. In this period the Visnu-vi swarupa forms was also worshipped as is evidenced by the Changu Viswarupa image.

These are sixteen inscriptions of the Lichchhavi period pertaining to Vaisnavism and they refer about sixteen Vaisnav temples (40).

BUDDHISM

In we accept the testimony of the Buddhist Chronicles we will find that Kathmandu valley was a lake in the beginning and there was lotus flower in its centre identified with Adi-Buddha in the symbolic aspect. This lotus flower was worshipped by all the mortal Buddhas including Gautam Buddha, the last among them in the sixth century B. C. All these things indicates that only one thing that is Buddhism was prevalent in the Kathmandu valley since the pre-inhabitation days of the valley.

The Lichchhavi rule started in Nepal about the beginning of the Christian era. As their religion was Buddhism in Vaisali one has ample ground to believe that they were worshippers of Lord Buddha more than Siva or Vishnu. This fact is attested by the chronicles which mention about the building of a monastery at Chabahal (Charumati Vihara) by Charumati, daughter of Asoka. The reference of Mana-Vihara in the inscriptions of Manadeva is another proof of the popularity of Buddhism in the pre-Manadeva's time.

Since the rule of Manadeva until Jayadeva II we find various names of monasteries, the stupa, the Vikshusanghas and Buddhist idols Padmapani, Vajradhar and Vajrapani. The kings of Nepal during the Lichchhavi period were quite generous and they believed in the

policy of religious tolerance (41). This provided an equal opportunity for the practices of all the sects without any hatred.

Manadeva who had built the Mana-vihar was not a Buddhist. But we find him building the Manadeva vihar which is indicative of his religious toleration. Similarly, Vrshadeva who is supposed to be the founder of the Lichchhavi rule in Nepal has been described as a Buddhist devotee in the inscription of Jayadeva II (42) indicating that he was a Buddhist devotee. The Avalokiteshvar images of Lichchhavi period found at Lagan Tole, Brahma-Tole and Ban-hiti carry inscriptions at their base of A. D. 547 and 557. They mention about the Vajrayana Buddhism. There is mention of the Chaityas also along with the name of Akshobhya indicating that the Five Dhyani Buddha of Vajrayanisms were worshipped in Nepal during the Lichchhavi period (43). Here Manjusri is also enumerated and we know that Manjusri is a significant deity of Nepalese Buddhism, the founder valley, because he had drained the water of the valley by cutting the gorge in Chobahar with his sword.

The mention of Viharas with Lichchhavi inscriptions indicates that monastic institution had widely developed here during the Lichchhavi period. The association of the viharas with Manadeva in case of Manadeva-vihar (44), Sivadeva in case of Sivadeva-vihar (45) and Amsuvarma in case of Sriman-vihar (46), Guma-vihar (47), Kharjurika-vihar (48) and Madhyam vihar (49), indicate that there existed numerous viharas in Nepal in Lichchhavi period and they were supported by the donation by the kings (50).

According to Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsang (51) both, sects Mahayana and Hinayana, were widely spread. In the Sankhu inscription there we find the mentions of Mahasankhika (52).

In the Lichchhavi inscriptions there is the mention of eighteen Buddhist inscriptions and twenty Buddha-viharas (53). Thus it can be suggested that the condition of Buddhism was good in the period of Lichchhavis.

THE MINOR RELIGIONS

Beside the above mentioned religions the minor religions of Hinduism were also practiced in Nepal and we have enough archaeological documents to this effect.

1. The Sakta cult was identified in the image of goddess Durga and worshipped by the member of royal families and the general people equally. We find Vijayaswamini, wife of Manadeva, was a devotee of Bhagavati Vijaysri (54) and she installed an image of Devi Vijayaswamini or 'Palanchowk Bhagavati'. In the Hadigaon and Kumhale tole inscriptions of Bhadgaon of Amsuvarma we find the reference to the temples of goddess Sasthidevi (55). Again in the Parivarsahita Uma-mahesvara there was the custom of erecting an image of Bhagavati (56).

The cult of Saur or Sun-God was also popular in Nepal and it is known from an inscription of the time of Manadeva dedicated by Guhyamitra (perhaps in a temple).

In the Lele inscription there is reference of Indra Gaustika (57) which refers about worship of the the statue of Sun-God. All these speak of the popularity of the worship of Sun-God which may be rooted even before Lichchhavi period.

The cult of Harihara had also existed in Nepal as elucidated by an image of the Lichchhavi period containing an inscription in its

pedestal donated by Swami Vartha (58). As this is a conjoint image of Siva and Visnu this demonstrates the facts of religious syncretism which over-whelmed the Lichchhavi society. The deity has been described in the inscription as the greatest in the three worlds and the bestow of benevolence on the people and who is perpetually worshipped. It is said here that one who worships Hari-hara enjoys this earth and ultimately goes to the heaven. In the time of Amsuvarma the cult of Harihara was well organised. An image showing Siva and Parvati joining their hands indicates that Saivism and Vaisnavism were in a harmonious relationship in the Lichchhavi period.

The Bhandak inscription of Krishnaraja (59) is the first datable inscription of Hari-hara of India. But the conjoint form of the image of Hari and Hara is known from the Deopatan Tyangal Tole inscription of 567 (60).

After a detailed discussion of the religious background, we may conclude by saying that Nepal, especially the Kathmandu valley since the very dawn of her civilization contains a varied heritage of art and religions. All the religions with which the people are associated to-day have been found there during the Lichchhavi period.

Foot Notes

CHAPTER I

1. Regmi, Dr. D. R., *Ancient Nepal* (Calcutta 1960), p. 55
2. Sharma, Dr. P.R., "The Lichchhavi Sculptures" *Ramjham*, Vol. VII, No. 2, published by Principal Press Secretariat Royal Palace (Kathmandu)
- 3.
4. Jha, H.N., *The Lichchhavi* (Chowkhamba Publication) Vol. XXV.
5. Abhilekh Sangrah (Published by Samsodhana Mandala, Kath., Nepal). Pt. I, pp. 23-24, Lajimpat inscription, dated samvat 390, Lajimpat inscription, dated samvat 419 (Itihas Samsodhan Ko Pramana Prameya, p. original 245,265, respectively).
6. Gnoli, R., *Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta Characters*, pt. I (Text) Rome, 1956 insp. No. 8.
7. *Ibid*, Ins. Nos. 3, 6, and 7.
8. ISSP, p. original 265 (Patanchowk inscription, dated 426).
9. Jha, H. N., *op. cit.*, p. 137.
10. *Ibid*.
11. *Ibid*. p. 137
12. Gnoli, R., *op. cit.*, Ins. Nos. 14,15 (Patan and Balambu inscription)
13. Abhilekh., pt. V, pp. 13-14
14. *Ibid*.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 27
16. Regmi, J. C., *Lichchhavi Samskriti* (Ratan Pustak Bhandar, 2026 Vaisakh, p. 4
17. Jha, H.N., *op. cit.*, p. 139
18. Gnoli, R. N., *op. cit.*, Nos. 17, 19, 20 (Duragahiti Inscription)
19. *Ibid.*, Ins, Nos. 12 and 13.
20. Regmi, J. C., *op. cit.*, pp. 29-31
21. Jha, H. N., *op. cit.* p. 5
22. Abhilekh., *op. cit.*, pp. 29-31

23. JAS (Vol. I, No. 1, 1959), p. 47
24. The Pashupati Inscription
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List Of Abbreviation

Abhilekh	=	Abhilekh-Sangraha Pub. by Samsodhana Mandala, Kathmandu, Nepal,
Dhi	=	The Development of Hindu Iconography by J. N. Banerjee
EI	=	Epigraphia Indica
Gnoli	=	R. Gnoli's Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta Characters
Ins	=	Inscription
ISPP	=	Itihas Samsodhan ko Pramana Prameya
JAS	=	Journal of the Asiatic Society
JBORS	=	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society
JRAS	=	Journal of the Royal Asiatic society
Kirkpatrick	=	An Account of the Kingdom of Nepal by Kirkpatrick
PKS	=	Parasuramakalpasutra with Ramesvara's Commentary
Purnima	=	Purnima Published by Samsodhana Mandala, Kathmandu
Regmi	=	Ancient Nepal
Regmi	=	The Lichchhavi Samskriti
SS	=	Sanskrit Sandesh

To be continued