

A FRESH LOOK AT THE ORIGIN AND FORMS OF EARLY TEMPLES IN THE KATHMANDU VALLEY¹

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There is a considerable literature by now on the study of the temple architecture of Nepal (meaning primarily the temples of the Kathmandu Valley) (Bernier 1971; Sharma 1968,1973; Banerjee 1980; Slusser 1982; Tiwari:1988). In all these works (as well as in works not cited above), however, the treatment with regard to the origin of these temples is generally facile and based on assumptions, not suborted by any hard evidence. In accordance with these assumptions, the so-called "pagoda" temples of the Kathmandu Valley, in their present form, are fairly early in date, starting from the Licchavi period itself (c. 5th-8th century), if not earlier. The characteristic features of these "pagodas", made of wood, bricks and tiles, consist of their multiple roofs arranged in tiers, giving them an appearance of many storied structures.

These multi-tiered temples of Kathmandu Valley, at least in their outer appearance, look rather similar to those found over a wide geographical region, extending from India's Himachal Pradesh to the coastal temples of south Malabar, and further afield, as far away as Bali in Indonesia, and in China, Korea and Japan. Scholars have been led from this, to variously suggest the origin of the Nepalese storied temple from diverse sources, some ascribing it to China (Fergusson 1910; Brown 1959), others to India (Snellgrove 1961; Banerjee 1980)², and still others advocating their indigenous origin in Nepal itself (Regmi 1960; Bernier 1971; Sharma 1973; Tiwari 1988). The origin of these temples, therefore, remains a little clouded and under dispute. Their existence in Nepal from the earliest period of its history, however, is implicitly accepted by one and all with little much questioning.

I am of the view that some revision may be necessary in this bland assertion, taking into consideration the history and development of the temple architecture in the Indian subcontinent as a whole. My proposition may appear a little speculative at this stage. I do, however, strongly feel that there is far more consistency in this new line of reasoning. There are

some temples even today, around the Kathmandu Valley which, I believe, could actually be the surviving relics of their older architectural forms, and be examples of their lingering tradition. I will mention them a little later.

Before describing what I mean by these early forms, let us first see what is said with regard to the evolution of temples in India. The construction of temples in India started only from the early Gupta period (c. 3rd-4th century). This is claimed on the testimony of no less a person than Percy Brown, an authority on this subject. He writes:

In the art of building, the progressive movements of fundamental significance are discernible, one relating to the aesthetic character, and the other to structural procedure. (1959:47)

By one such movement, he referred to an artistic activity of great creativity and sensibility in image-making (sculptural art), under which images of Hindu and Buddhist deities were made in response to their new sectarian needs in an ever increasing number, and, by the other, pointed to the new techniques of building in stone masonry that came to be introduced in the Gupta period, bringing forth the existence of structures called the "house of god" for the first time, wherein images of such gods were duly installed. He further writes:

The conception of a deity naturally called for some habitation, and so structural shrine came into being. The various stages through which the embryo Hindu temple passed are common to the growth of such edifices, first a leafy bower, then a reed hut, and afterwards a cella of wood and brick." (*Ibid*: 47).

He also goes on to suggest that these early Brahmanical temples had flat roofs in the beginning, and the idea of a tower over them was a slow and gradual process to evolve. Their culmination came much later and became evident only in the more mature temples of Orissa made around Bhuvaneshvara, and in those of Khajuraho in Central India of the mediaeval periods, most pronouncedly.

Much of our present idea about the Brahmanical temples of the early Licchavi period, be they of Vaisnava, Saiva or Sakta denominations, rests on a conjecture largely, deriving from one or two brief references to them in the contemporary inscriptions, and from the accounts of the Chinese envoy in Nepal, Wang Hsien ts' e, between c. 643 and 657, preserved in the T'ang Annals of China (Levi 1905 I). In an inscription of

Saka 388 (c. 466) of the Licchavi period, mention is made of the installation of a *sivalingam* in a *prasada* (Vajracharya: 1973:31). Similarly, in another famous Trivikrama inscription issued by King Manadeva I of Saka 389 (c. 467) from Lazimpat and Tilaganga, the image of Visnu is described as housed in a pretty *bhavana* (Vajracharya: *Ibid.* 34-35). In either cases the words *prasada* and *bhavana*, obviously, suggest some kind of a temple to have been made there. But beyond that we have little means of knowing about other details, such as the style or architecture of these temples, nor anything regarding their size, dimension, or the manner of roofing over them. These two expressions were generic words to describe a temple – big or small. They have been in constant use in the Kathmandu Valley since the Licchavi period, which continued down to the late Malla period. They were, in no way technical, architectural terms, referring to any temple styles as such. So, in my opinion, the terms *prasada* and *bhavana* could have described anything ranging from an ordinary cella, a niche, a tree-shrine, a sanctified area defined by a fence, a wall, or an open space³ to a full-fledged temple built at a later date. It is my contention that at this early date these words most likely had referred to shrines built in more rudimentary forms in Nepal, by conforming to any of the first four types described above. The regular forms of temples in their multi-roofed or their *sikhara* versions followed only much later in the Kathmandu Valley, beginning from the mediaeval period onwards.

We should next examine here the use and popularity of the term *devakula* in the context of evolution of temples in the Kathmandu Valley. It is a word which, in my view, is most significant and germane to the idea of temple development in the Kathmandu Valley. The use of the word *devakula* is quite common in the Licchavi period. It is also seen used in the early mediaeval period one or two times. Although this word primarily described a temple or a shrine, at times its meaning could have a broader connotation, implying the deity residing in it, or referring to the people assigned to the service of the deity and to look after his temple. Under a landgrants and a land administration system that developed during this time in the Valley, different groups and communities of people were assigned a piece of land where they could reside, work and live off its income. They were usually groups belonging to one or the other of the religious sects. The *devakula panchalikas* was one such group receiving landgrants and the object of making these landgrants to them by the king or the ruler was to secure their services in the cause of the shrines or of the deities residing in them. Land to them was given under a system that was permanent in arrangement and remained inviolate for all times. This provided an enduring economic basis to pay the expenses that was necessary for carrying out the rituals and

maintenance work in these temples. The surplus income from the land would go to the sustenance of the members of the *devakula panchalikas* and be a source of livelihood for their family and kins. It was this practice which mainly became responsible for the emergence of distinct village communities in the Valley in the Licchavi period. Such village communities emerged everywhere centering around a deity, the practice of which, with some modifications, was continued in the mediaeval period and even later. The various Newar hamlets and settlements around the Kathmandu Valley today may be taken to be a true legacy in this *devakula* tradition. Such settlements have had invariably a principal shrine belonging to this or that deity in the midst of them (such shrines later on got transformed into the temples belonging to one or the other members of *astamatrika* goddesses), who were looked upon as their patron deity and their chief protector. An annual festival in honour of this deity was organized, that would become an occasion for celebration by the entire village. The idea of 'land for religious services' under a land endowment system became a pervasive religious/cultural/economic practice in the Kathmandu Valley from an early period on. This became quite an institution accepted and acknowledged at all levels, high and low, which popularly came to be known as the *guthi*. Under a *guthi* arrangement, a land would be donated by a donor (*danapati*) with a specific objective. Such a land was called the *guthi* land. The people who were entrusted with a temple work or with obligations to be carried out to a deity in accordance with the wishes of the donors, were called the *guthiyars*. The *guthi* system has long been in place and been firmly integrated into the Newar socio-religious and cultural practice. Even today, it stands like a bedrock to their distinctive way of life.

The origin and etymology of the later day Newari word *degala*, or *degah*, a popular term to designate a temple, is also quite relevant to explain here. Contrary to what people may generally like to believe, this word does not derive from the Sanskrit *devala*⁴, or *devalaya*, but, derives in all probability, from the earlier discussed *devakula*. I would propose the etymology of this word to be as follows: *Devakula* < *devakulika* < *dekula* < *deguda* or *degudi* < *degala* or *degah*. All these are terms which have been in actual use at different times in history, attested to by several sources. In several Licchavi inscriptions already cited, the word *devakula* finds frequently mentioned (Vajracharya:1973), viz., Sivaka *devakula* (*Ibid.* no. 22), Matin *devakula* (no.34), Sivagal *devakula* (no. 67), Bhringaresvara *devakula* (no. 140), and Putti Narayana *devakula* (no. 143). The name Ganadeva *devakula* (no. 190) appears in a document of c. 876 just a little before the start of the Nepala Samvat at the borderline of the Licchavi and the mediaeval period. *Devakula* is mentioned in an inscription as late as NS 226 (c.1106) on the pedestal of

a gilded bronze of Visnu, Laksmi and Garuda, offered to Changu Narayana, and now preserved in the temple store there. The relevant line of this inscription reads as follows:

bhagavadbhattāraka viṣṇu śrī garuḍa pratimeyaṃ pratiṣṭhāpya
śrī dolāsikharī bhattārakasya devakule praveśitā. (Khanal
1983:155).

The term *degah*, designating a temple in Newari, actually seems nothing but to be a derivative of the Licchavi *devakula*. From the mediaeval period onwards, all private and public landgrants or land donations system got gradually subsumed under a single system, popularly called the *guthi*. Many settlements and villages around the Kathmandu Valley even today have a *guthi* organized at an all-village level in which all original residents of the village will become members of it. This is known as the *tawa guthi* or big *guthi*. The organization of the annual village festival in honour of the main deity in the village is the responsibility of this *tawa guthi*. Such a practice can be seen to prevail at Panga near Kirtipur, as well as in other Newar settlements. An arrangement similar to this one is described by Hiroshi Ishii for the Visnudevi festival of Satungal in Kathmandu (Ishii: 1978). All this seems to suggest a continuation of the same practice more or less from the same *devakula* tradition described earlier. Like the head (*thakali*) of the *tawa guthi*, who has to see to the smallest details of the annual village festival, we see a *Kulapati* described in a Licchavi inscription dated in the time of King Narendradeva, vested with a similar role and responsibility during the worship to Lokapalāsvamin of Hamsagrihadraṅga, (Vajracharya: 1973: 485-89). The expression like *deghuri puja* mentioned in the *Gopalarajavamsavali* (compiled in the late 14th century)⁵ around the time of Jayasthiti Malla (c. 1382-95) provides the next important link to the concept of *devakula*. At this time this expression is used in the sense of a 'clan-god' worshipped by large, extended Newar families of the villages or settlements. The etymology of it too must be sought in the word *devakula*⁶ itself. It means that the *devakula* gods in the villages had risen to be the clan-gods of these families. So the Licchavi word *devakula* described not only a temple, but laid the basis for the ensuing temple practices and the religious/cultural lifestyle of the people of the Kathmandu Valley. This information is therefore relevant and necessary in any discourse concerned with temple architecture.

Like other expressions for a temple earlier, it must be remembered, however, that *devakula* too was no more than a generic term for it, and referred to no specific architectural type or style, nor anything relating to its

size. From a single instance in an inscription of Amsuvarma of c. 610 from Patan Sundhara we can gather one or two details of a *devakula* temple. For instance, it describes a *Matin devakula* in a ruined state and mentions the work of repair done on it, the relevant line of which reads as follows:

...*mātindevakulamardhavinipatiteṣṭakāpaṅkti vivarapraviṣṭa
nakulakulākulitamūṣikāsārtha dūravighatita niravaśeṣadvāra
kapāṭavātāyanādijrṇadā rusamghātam yatnataḥ pratisamskārya
tasya dirghatarapaścātkālasausthityanimittam...*(1973:339).

[...the brick walls of the temple of *Matin*, having half-fallen down, with holes rendered onto them by the scurrying hordes of mongooses and mice, with no traces left of its doorway(s) and window(s), the wood having been old [and rotten], it was repaired with efforts, so that it may continue to exist for a long time to come..." (my English rendering based on Dhanavajra's Nepali translation).]

But this detail tells us little about the exact type or the nature of architecture, nor about the temple size of *Matin*, except that it was made of bricks, and that it had door(s) or window(s) on it. It makes no other allusion whatsoever either to the type of the roof, nor about its roofing material, nor to the kind of the superstructure the temple had.

All this leads me to postulate that we should not look for large-sized temples with their multiple roofs and built on a series of pedestals in the Licchavi period yet, such as we would find them in the later Malla period commonly. More likely, these early temples had been far simpler in their construction and design, with a raised platform, open sky, or with a metal canopy supported on pillars hung over the main icon, a wall or an enclosure surrounding it, and with a single or several doorways, reached by a flight of steps. Such temples more likely had resembled pavilion-like *mandapas*, rather than resembling proper cellas with a closed *garbhagriha*, or a *sanctum sanctorum*. Open shrines of this type are not purely formed out of our imagination, since one can see several examples of them surviving as relics from the past in the temples of Guhyesvari and Kiratesvara at Pashupati, and in the Bhadrakali temple at Tundikhel, Kathmandu even to this day.

Changu Narayan and Pashupati are among the oldest and the most celebrated temples of Nepal. Kings from the Licchavi period down to the modern times have endowed them with riches and munificent gifts of land. But there is little to suggest that these temples at those sites had been big structures from the earliest times, such as we find them at present. Nor do

the inscriptions of the day talk about any large-sized temples to have stood there.

We should now turn to see what the Pashupati Inscription of Jayadeva II has to say with regard to the Pashupati temple. It is a long and important inscription, and historically very significant, too. It also furnishes a long genealogy of the Licchavi ancestors of King Jayadeva II. The inscription marked the occasion of offering a silver lotus, along with several dedicatory verses in Sanskrit composed in praise of Lord Pashupati, by the king, amidst a great function in the year c. 733. In my view verse no. 25 describes clearly the type of temple that had existed at that time at Pashupati. The verse is quoted in full below:

*Yeṣā bhāti kulācalaiḥ parivṛtā prāleyasamsargibhir /
vedīmeruṣileva kāñcanamayī devasya viśrāmbhūḥ //
śubhraiḥ prāntavikāśipaṅkajadalairityākalayyasvayaṃ /
raupyaṃ padmamācīkaratpasupateḥ pūjārthamatyujjvalam //*
(Vajracharya:1973:551).

[The resting “vedi” (plinth) of the god is like the golden stone of the mount Meru, and the large hills with snow that surround it, do look beautiful on it. In matching fitness [to it], this bright lotus bud of silver, set in the middle of [other] petals around it, was commissioned by the King (Jayadeva) himself in order to offer it to Lord Pashupati (my English rendering based on Dhanavajra’s Nepali translation).]

Dhanavajra has interpreted the words *kulācalaiḥ parivṛtā* to be a metaphor for the hills surrounding the Kathmandu Valley, and *vedīmeruṣilevakāñcanamayī devasya viśrāmbhūḥ*, to be the same for suggesting the Valley, saying that the whole of the Valley had thus been implied as Lord Pashupati’s abode. In my own opinion this is a bit being over-interpretative and a far-fetched translation of the verse. I think we should take the meaning of *kulācalaiḥ* and *meruṣileva* in a more figurative sense, the former being an allusion actually to the wall around the shrine, which was probably made or embossed with silver, and the latter referring to the platform (*vedi*) upon which the icon of Pashupati had stood, as made of or embossed with gilded metal. The next important thing we learn from this verse is the offering of a large silver lotus to Siva by the king, with smaller petals joined around it, offered by other family members. The lotus thus made was to be placed over the head of Pashupati. The relevant line of the inscription reads as follows:

Śrīvatsadevyā nṛpaterjananyā samamsamantātparivārapadmaih /
raupyam harasyoparipunḍarikam tadādaraih kārītamatyudāram //
(Vajracharya: *Ibid*: 552).

It does not become quite clear whether this silver lotus was suspended as a lotus lantern from the ceiling, or it merely looked like a parasol over the *lingam* of Pashupati. In any case, we are justified in deducing from the relevant lines of the inscription above that the shrine of Pashupati at this time had been a more open place. It had stood on a platform, was open to the sky, and had a wall to enclose it. The presence of one or more doorways on this wall can easily be imagined, of course.

Next, we should examine what the other oldest temple, that of Changu Narayana, has to tell us in this regard. King Manadēva I issued his famous Changu Pillar Inscription of c. 464 at this place, in which he has traced his short genealogy and described his military campaigns. Although the erection of the inscribed pillar must have either followed or preceded the worship to Visnu Dolasikharasvamin residing at this shrine, yet we get no clue in the inscription whatsoever to the type of temple--big or small-- existing here. The interior of the shrine-- its *sanctum sanctorum*-- where the main idol of Visnu astride his mount Garūda is kept, consists of an area marked off by four pillars of gilded metal with a canopy hung overhead. This area looks like a separate *mandapa* in the middle of the four walls of the temple. The donor of this *mandapa* was Jayaprakash Malla (Khanal:1983:84), the last Malla king of Kantipur. But what he had done was no more than merely to renovate an older *mandapa* in that place and replace it by a new one in the same form. The present temple of Changu Narayan has completely enveloped or entombed this *mandapa* inside its walls now. I am of the opinion that the area occupied by this *mandapa* is what had constituted the original temple of Changu Narayan. I would think or rather like to deduce that this temple too had been made in the form of an open *mandapa* standing in the middle of a large precinct. Khanal reports about two large, beautiful, over six-foot tall, pillars of gilded metal with carvings of lovely figures on them, now kept in the temple store, away from the public view, which he stylistically dates around the seventh century (Khanal: *Ibid*: pls.13-14). Stone pillars of early date abandoned from their original place are reported from different parts of the Kathmandu Valley which compel us to think about their possible use and press our argument further⁷. In essence, the evidence of the pillars at Changu and from other parts of the Valley, as well as the mini-shrines of stone dedicated to Siva, which are also a common sight in the Valley everywhere⁸, strongly suggest that early temples had been more open in form. The Pashupati temple also, on close inspection,

reveals the use of the same technique of construction by enveloping. The sanctum where the main *lingam* is housed consists of a separate inner chamber with the temple walls around it built at a later time. This inner chamber has a ceiling that is covered with silver sheets.

This kind of temple building by enveloping can be seen used in the case of several other leading temples of the Kathmandu Valley as well. Such temples came to be called the *tawa devala* (Vajracharya: 1975: 72). The big temple of Taleju, Degu Taleju and Jagannath in the Hanumandhoka palace area, all are built in this style. In all these cases, one may well be allowed to assume that they had more modest looks of an open shrine, standing at those spots originally⁹, and larger temples around them came to be built by donors only later on.

Early shrines thus were more open and built less like enclosed cellas. A hint of this nature may be gathered by looking at the many shrines built to Ganesa, the Matrika goddesses, and to Durga in the Kathmandu Valley also. Although such temples today may be boasting of their tiered roofs arranged in several storeys, they betray signs of their being more open at an earlier date. These shrines had probably consisted of nothing more than just a wall to the back, with the icon attached to it. Or, alternately, they were put into a hole dug in the ground, with a few plain stones inside represented as icons. The latter types are more usual to and found in the case of the shrines belonging to the Matrika goddesses.¹⁰ The actual shrine area had probably been no more elaborate than this. But wealthy donors of the later days driven by their new found religious zeal commissioned elaborate temples with multiple roofs to be erected over them. We can still recognise the back wall wherein the icon of the deity remains affixed as the important original part of these shrines. The three other sides enclosing the temple are usually supported on wooden pillars and screened by flimsy lattices in lieu of walls, and a doorway in front. The shrines of the Matrikas, as already said, are usually made in a hole into the ground.¹¹ Their shrines too had walls and roofs put up over them later on. The deities in them are always represented by aniconic stones and not by any anthropomorphic images.¹²

The gist of the discussion so far does not lie in denying the existence of temples -- even roofed temples -- altogether in the early period. Temples probably had single roofs made in the familiar hipped style over the cellas. The cellas were far from assuming their multi-tiered shapes of the later date. Alternately, shrines could have consisted of only shallow niches flanked by carved pilasters and a *torana*, with a *kirtimukha* arched over them. We see relief carvings of such shrines appearing on sculptures and votive chaityas made of stone. Another type of roof over these shrines could have been made with a low roof consisting of a few receding steps of stone just

enough to close the opening of the wall overhead. In any case, the early temples of the Kathmandu Valley were far from assuming their full stature and grandeur of a later date, whether in their multi-roofed forms or in their *sikhara* variety.

The accounts of the Chinese envoy to Nepal, Wang Hsien-ts'è, who was the head of the second and third Chinese missions to visit the courts of King Narendradeva (c. 643-679) between c. 643 and c. 657, preserved in the *T'ang Annals*, contain some curious passages relating, among other things, to the description of temples in the Kathmandu Valley of that time. In one place the envoy describes the temple or temples to lie "10 li to the south of the capital." In another instance, a structure of 'seven stories in the middle of the king's palace' is described (Levi 1905, I: 155-59; Slusser 1982, I: 162, 164; Regmi 1960:175-77). Both these accounts apparently seem to run counter to our postulation above and a little hard to reconcile with our contention regarding the early forms of the temples. Most scholars writing on the multiple-roofed temples of Nepal have been heavily influenced in their thinking by the evidence furnished by these Chinese accounts. In one description, Wang Hsien-ts'è writes:

To the south of the town, about 10 li away, is found an isolated hill covered with an extraordinary vegetation; the temples there are in many storeys that one would take for the crown of clouds... (Levi 1905, I: 58-59).

The next description of a structure in the capital goes like this:

In the capital of Nepal there is a structure which is more than 200 tch'eu tall and 80 pou (400 paces) in circumference. 10,000 men can find accommodation in it. It is divided in three terraces, each terrace divided into seven storeys. In the four pavilions, there are sculptures to marvel at. Precious stones and pearls decorate them. (Levi 1905, I: 159).

The above narration by the Chinese envoy cannot all be taken in its face value. Some of them surely read as fanciful and hyperbolic descriptions. Slusser has hinted at the possibility of exaggerations and discrepancies creeping in renderings of Wang Hsien-ts'è's accounts at various hands (Slusser 1982, I: 162, 164). If storied temples were so common already, why did the Chinese have to go 10 li outside the town to see them on a hill? In my own view, what he actually saw must have been a different kind of structure built on a hillside which he thought was a temple. His description

of the shape and sheer dimensions of the other structure in the capital is not easy to comprehend either. No such construction, or anything even remotely resembling it, has ever been known to exist in the building tradition of the Kathmandu Valley, then or now. What sort of a building it must have been which could accommodate as many as 10,000 people in it? It defies all our imagination. Slusser has published another version of the same passage, translated a little differently. It reads:

In the middle of the palace there is a tower 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 water-pipe, 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 dragons, gushes forth like a fountain." (1982, I:162).

What this implies has been worded by Levi himself: "After returning to his country, Wang Hiuen-ts'e published the memoirs of his journey around c. 665, which unfortunately has been lost. The rare passages many of which are preserved in quotations trace the wonders of [the travels in] Nepal and show with what attention the ambassador had visited the country." (1905, I:157). Slusser says that Wang Hiuen ts'e's passages are variously rendered at the hands of different translators. (Slusser 1982, I:164). In the background of this, placing too much reliance on the accounts of the Chinese, or on the accuracy of his details, may not be too helpful for our purpose, and should therefore be taken with caution.

Regardless of the Chinese testimony, a later date for the fully formed multi-roofed temples is cogent and must be adhered to. There is no precise date as to when these temples first began to be constructed. We can only draw inferences and make some approximations on the basis of some indirect and circumstantial references to them in the historical records in this connection. Going by them, a later origin theory still looks more plausible and consistent. No records earlier than the 11th century speak of the existence of large-sized temples in the Kathmandu Valley. The *Gopalarajavamsavali* gives accounts of some temples for the first time, furnishing some useful details, starting only from the 11th century¹³. According to it, King Sankaradeva (c.1069-1082), for example, built a temple to Samkaresvara at Nandisala (modern Naxal) and had a copper roof donated to it (folio 24a); King Sivadeva (c.1098-1126) donated a golden roof

to Pashupati temple (folio 24a); King Anandadeva (c.1147-1167) donated a copper roof to the Sivagla temple (folio 25a); King Somesaradeva (c.1178-1183) built a 'big temple at Yodyam and had it decorated with lovely wood carvings' (folio 25a); King Jayabhimadeva (c.1258-1271) donated a copper roof to the Changu Narayana (folio 26a); Princess Viramadevi donated a roof to the Indrakuta temple (Panauti Indresvara temple) in NS 414(c.1294), and her son Jayasaktideva (c. 1276-1315) donated a *dhvaja* to it (folio 26b-27a); and King Anantamalladeva (c.1274-1308) offered a golden roof, four golden horses at four corners, and a *dhvaja* to Pashupati temple (folio 27a). Inscriptional evidence to temple construction activity becomes more and more abundant and overwhelming, later on.¹⁴

The evidence gathered from the various texts relating to the building science (*vastusastra*) also seems to suggest a mediaeval date for the multi-roofed temples in the Kathmandu Valley. Slusser refers to a celebrated text of the *Kriyasamgraha-Pamjika* which, according to her, was in use in India around the 11th century. This text is mentioned in an inscription of NS 713 (c.1593) (Regmi 1966,IV:40) at Pimche-bahal in Kathmandu Wotu, in which it is said that this Buddhist *vihara* (Newari, *bahal*) at Pimche was built in accordance with the principles laid down in this treatise (Slusser 1982 I,130).¹⁵ A copy of this work is also kept in the National Archives in Kathmandu. Slusser also mentions the names of half a dozen other texts, all relating to buildings and its rituals (*Ibid*, f.n. 11), kept in the same Archives. Manavajra mentions about two other texts of this nature, viz., *Vastujyotisam* and *Netrajnanarnava* (Vajracharya 1970:242). From all this the burden of evidence seems weighted heavily in favour of a mediaeval date for the construction of these temples.

In the view of some scholars, none of the extant multi-roofed temples are actually older than the 14th century,¹⁶ while according to some others, they are even later in date, starting only from the 15th century. Some of the temples cited earlier by us had been made no doubt much before this late date. But, even in their case, they could have been rebuilt or renovated several times in the later centuries, since their first construction.

We should now proceed to give some details of these multi-roofed or multi-tiered temples of the Kathmandu Valley, and the form and shape in which we find them today. Generally, multi-roofed temples are made on a square plan,¹⁷ although quite a number of them are also made on a rectangular plan. These latter kinds are dedicated invariably either to the god Bhairava or to Bhimasena. Occasionally, temples are also made on an octagonal plan, in which case they are invariably dedicated to god Krishna.¹⁸ It is, however, the temples on square plans that are made in the highest number and may probably constitute their basic standard forms.¹⁹ This can

be surmised further from their pedestals at their base, also on square plan, upon which they stand, giving them their full height and their imposing appearance.²⁰ Pedestals are usual only in the case of square and not rectangular temples. On plan, the pedestals would appear like a series of concentric squares on the outer edge, with the *sanctum sanctorum*, that is, the chamber wherein the main idol of the deity is kept, forming its innermost core at the centre. Slusser writes:

...Square temple is a *mandala* in which the deity, "the Sovereign of the *Mandala* occupies the innermost mansion (*kutagara*), the centre of the sanctum (1982,I:142).

The temple is made up of three main parts or components (i) the plinth (s), (ii) the sanctum, and (iii) the superstructure. The sanctum or the cella, containing the idol of the principal deity, is naturally the temple's most critical and significant element. The two other components of it are only subsidiary, and help to enhance the architectural grandeur of the temple. The cella can contain anything inside as an icon, ranging from a stone image in an anthropomorphic form of the deity, to a phallic, a waterhole capped by a *kalasa* (water pot), a *purvakalasa* ("vase with foliage"), or just plain boulders, all worshipped as the representation of the deity. The temple building itself is no less aesthetically treated, covering it profusely with wood-carvings. Close to the temple are made other accessories in the surroundings. Wood-carving on it is done concentrating mainly on the pillars, doorways, windows, *toranas*, cornices and the struts. At the base of the temple is the *sanctum sanctorum* (*garbhagriha*), enclosed by a wall with one or several doorways on it. Outside the sanctum wall, the temple sometimes can have around it a running colonnade, providing a passage for circumambulation. The temple doorway is gained by a flight of steps cutting right across the middle of the pedestals, which is generally guarded by a pair of winged lions. The sanctum doorway consists of a single frame or a triple-frame opening, made on one or all four sides of the sanctum. The wood-carvings, for which these temples are so well-known, are found concentrating on the upper halves of the pillars, the lintels and jambs, the doorways and windows, the *torana*, cornices, and their struts. Such carvings consist of vegetal, floral and arabesque motifs, of human and animal figures, or have designs of other symbolic and auspicious significance, such as the *astamangalas* (the eight auspicious signs) (Deo 1968-69) common to both Hinduism and Vajrayana Buddhism. The struts are the most singular features of these multi-storied, multi-roofed temples, endowing them with their distinct personality. The strut carvings of female figures standing under the

bough of leaves seem to be inspired by and derived from the *salabhanjika* motif (adapted from the standing figure of a female holding onto the branch of a tree, reminiscent of Maya Devi, giving birth to the child Buddha at Lumbini gardens), originally. They have, however, been modified and elaborated since to include figures of the other divine or semi-divine beings pertaining to the family of the deity represented inside the temple (*parivara devatas*). The four corner struts, however, depart from this general rule and display on them carvings of identical, horse-like, but winged animals (*sardulas* or *sarabhas*), exuding a great deal of physical power and strength in their leaping postures. Arched over the lintel of the doorway is a semi-circular piece of wood which carries the distinct motif of the *Kirtimukha* or the "face of glory."²¹ At the centre of it, the *torana* carries a small figure of the deity represented inside. On the Indian temples, such a figure appears on the lintel head. A pair of *makara* heads are fashioned on two ends of the *torana* at the bottom.

As the Gupta imprint on the sculptural art of Nepal is so unmistakable, similarly, the many architectural features, motifs and decorations on its temples have not remained untouched by its influence. The ubiquitous motif of the *purnakalasa* to be found on all pillar carvings is proof enough to cite in support of this fact. This motif appears on the Nepali pillars towards the base, and not near their capitals. On the "*purnakalasa*" motif, Percy Brown writes in this way:

For the Gupta capital is the *purna kalasa*, "the bowl of plenty", typifying a renewed faith in water-nourishing plant life trailing from its brim, an allegory which has produced the "vase and flower" motif (1959:48).

In the same way, the arrangement of gradually recessing the jambs of the doorway(s) into its opening follows much in the manner of the Gupta temples, such as in the Deogarh temple of India. Door-jambs are also done like a bunch of small pilasters piled together. The cornice which goes round along the upper side of the sanctum wall, among other things, is made up of square-headed indentations, shaped as a row of animal heads (Sanskrit: *dharanika*; Newari: *dhalinkhwa*). This design probably originally derives from the projecting ends of rafters which were laid to support the floor of the upper storey of the temple. This feature too is a strong reminder of the Gupta legacy. In certain respects, these multi-storied temples today seem to copy forms of their wooden prototypes in bricks and terracotta. The example of it is forthcoming from the design of intersecting beams; now, in a stylised form, jutting out like protrusions from, the corners of the temple

wall over the cornice band. This element on the wall helps to form a broad band and to act as a base to rest for the slanting struts.

The sanctum wall from the base is vertically taken all the way up to the last storey of the temple, serving it like a central axis. As it rises up, this wall in each storey is made setting it slightly back from the one below it, the gap created thus being filled in by a device of horizontal rafters and mud. The roofs made of tiles, or of gilded metal sheets, are sloped down from here, tying one of their ends to the wall, and the other end hanging out, thus providing a good shed to the wall from the sun and rain. The setting back of the wall helped to reduce the size of the temple above and narrow its upper storeys in proportion. The multiple roofs are purely a matter of style, and serve no utilitarian purpose of real storeys. In instances where the upper floors are known to be in use, they have either a running balustrade around, or are screened with tall, full-sized lattices of wood in between the space of the struts. At Pashupatinath temple, the upper floor above the sanctum provides one such instance kept in active use of it in the form of a store or strong-room of the temple for safe-keeping of valuables made as offerings to the god, such as coins and precious metals. Such an arrangement can be seen to prevail in a number of other temples as well.

Finally, the temple terminates in a finial of metal (*gajura*). Manavajra in this regard writes:

The construction of a *gajura* looks like a neck. It is framed within an artistic metal triangle, over which is placed a parasol, kissing the sky (1970:252).

The neck mentioned by Manavajra is in the shape of an inverted bell. The finial is accompanied by one or two other elements additionally, such as a single or a double decked, fluted ringstone, called the *amalaka*, a waterpot (*kalasa*), an oval shaped lid over the waterpot (*manipuraka*), and an umbrella (*chhatra*). The mounting of the *kalasa* and the *chhatra* on the finial, and the suspension of a metal strip, called the *dhvaja* (banner), down from it to the level of the main temple doorway, has been among the crucial parts of the temple consecration rites:

To Kramrisch the tall towers of these temples along with their finials are of a high symbolic meaning. She writes:

The upward journey approaches its end the nearer it leads to the Central Pillar of the temple which emerges from the High *Vedi*, a straight passage in its vertical direction though not factually, right from the *garbhagriha* to its centre. Above the

crown and ring of the *Amalaka* there is no competition, only a meeting and concurrence from all directions in the point of the finial; it rises bud-shaped or in the likeness of a fruit (*matulunga*) from the vessel, the *Amrita* – *Kalasa* (*amarakaraka*) which makes immortal because “Visvakarma made the *Kalasa* from the different parts (*kala*) of each of the gods... So the substance of the *Kalasa*, which is gold, as a rule, contains the properties of each of the gods up in the deathless region, straight above the *Nidhi-Kalasa* in the foundation of the temple in which were placed the treasures (*nidhi*) of the earth... The finial (*Stupika*) with its point (*bindu*) above the *Kalasa*, above the *Amalaka* rises from the centre of the Central Shaft (*venu*)... This is the original function of the *Amalaka* as ring-stone or naturally holed stone, *Svayamatrixna*, the self-perforated “brick” (*istaka*) in the Vedic Agni... (1976,2:349-50).

Having described the principal features of these temples, we have to note, however, that there is no unanimity of opinion among scholars regarding the name by which they must be called. The early European writers popularized them with the name of ‘pagoda’, which to me is both inappropriate and misleading. Misleading because the “pagoda” name describes towers of all sorts, shapes and characters found in different and far-flung countries. Slusser prefers to call them as ‘Newar style’ (Slusser 1982), Bernier, as “Nepal Pagoda” (Bernier 1971), and Hutt as “Newar Pagoda” (Hutt 1994). In all cases, however, these terms are coined by the individual scholars, and, are, by no means, terms that local people have been calling them by either in the past or now. As far back as 1968, I suggested that these temples should be called “multi-storied” or “multi-roofed” temples (Sharma 1968:91), because local people during the Malla times have always called them by this term in Newari. The name “Nyatapola” literally means nothing but a temple in “five-storeys” in this language. Terms like “Na-tapola” and “Swa-tapola” are also in use in the late mediaeval inscriptions. Two such inscriptions are from Lalitpur, dated in NS 761 (Vajracharya 1999:81,85) There are other terms of a similar purport, like “ni-taja” or “swa-taja”, which also were in currency at this time. It would be erroneous, therefore, to use alien terms sounding incongruous to refer to them in their place.

Prominent and celebrated temples were not made as single and isolated structures. They were laid out in the middle of an open space or a spacious precincts, with or without a compound wall around, and, more often than

not, were dotted with a number of other temple accessories nearby. Among these, a *hiti* or a stone-fountain, a *jarhun* or a water-receptacle, a *pukhu* or a water-tank, useful for the purpose of ritual cleansing and for offering ablutions by the temple visitors are a common sight. Large gongs suspended from the twin-pillars which were sounded during the time of *puja* (worship) inside the temple are other such accessories. The architecture of the temple building and its surroundings were determined by the mode of their use on the part of the visitors. A large congregation or assembly of people was not a customary mode of worship in the Kathmandu Valley. People took their *puja* (worship) items (usually by women) in a tray from individual homes, and after offering them to the deity at the temple, they returned home. All they did at the shrine after the *puja* was to go round it once, twice or three times in circumambulation, for which the passage around the colonnade of the temple was used, or in the absence of it, was performed from the topmost pedestal. It is natural, therefore, that these temples should never come to have the parallels of the *sabha*, *bhoga* or *nritya mandapas* of the Indian temples, attached to them. In their place, other structures were considered far more essential to have and were built as accessories around them in their vicinity. These were the *patis*, the *phalincha* or the *sattal*, made just singly or in a cluster around them. It is in these *patis* or *sattals* that the visiting devotees rested awhile after their journey, laid out and arranged their *puja* items, and when the *puja* was over, sat down to eat their little snacks. Or, the *patis* were used as places for singing devotional hymns to the deity, mornings and evenings. The *patis* were also much used buildings during the time of the annual festival in honour of the deity in the temple (Sanskrit, *varsabandhana*; Newari, *bunsadhan*).

The possible source for the origin of the multiple roofs of these temples is a matter of speculation. The closest resemblance to this multiple-roof-idea derives from the shape of the ceremonial umbrella (*chhatra*)²². The slanted struts (*tunals*) supporting the roofs of these temples veritably resemble the braces of an umbrella. The nearest source of origin for these roofs should lie most probably in the several-tiered ringed parasols of wood (*chhatravali*), sticking out from the top of the Buddhist stupa or chaitya in the Kathmandu Valley, before their tapering spindle-shaped tower in thirteen stages or steps in the present times, came to replace them.

A parallel class of temples was also built in the Kathmandu Valley alongside the multi-roofed variety that in date was coeval with them. These temples have been locally known as the *granthakuta* temples²³ or *ratna devala*, the latter name possibly deriving from the shape of their tower, visualized in the oval shape of a gem (*ratna*)²⁴. In the mediaeval writings, such temples in North India are commonly known by the name of *Sikhara*.

Their distinctive feature in Nepal lies in their tapering tower, soaring high over the sanctum, and a porch in front, supported on pillars. These temples are usually made of stone, and, hence, they are also called "*lhon degah*" or "stone temple", locally. Their best example is furnished, no doubt, by the Patan Mangal Bazar Krishna Mandir built by King Siddhinarasimha Malla in c. 1637 (Vajracharya: 1999:74-78). This temple, however, has a running colonnade at its base, instead of a porch. Obviously, some elements from the other architectural style have been incorporated into it to give it a singular appearance. Regardless of the antiquity of these temples, the artisans and builders do not, however, seem to be too much at home or homogenized to deal with the stone used in the *lhon degahs* of the Kathmandu Valley, with the sole exception, which is that of the Patan Krishna Mandir.

I do not wish to describe these temples at a greater length here. However, before ending, I must not omit to make a brief mention of a stone temple standing in the precincts of the Pashupati temple in its south-west corner, which may actually be the earliest standing specimen of this kind of temple made in the North Indian *Sikhara* style found here. Judging from the artistic style of sculptures carved on its walls, the temple seems to be made around the 11th century. No other temple of this kind is reported from elsewhere in the Kathmandu Valley. The temple houses a small *sivalingam* of stone inside, but its lintel displays unusually an image of a four-armed seated Brahma (From top right hand, clockwise, he holds a rosary, a book, a water-pot and hand in a boon gesture). It faithfully replicates on a mini-scale the chief elements of temples made in the North Indian *Sikhara* style. It is a small, almost toy-sized temple, but in most other respects, it is complete with the standard features of a North-Indian temple. The temple measures²⁵ no taller than 12' in height and 9' in length. The rectangular portico measures 4'7" north-south and 2'7" east-west, and is just 4' tall. Similarly, the sanctum doorway is only 3' tall, and the sanctum itself has barely enough room to stand for two persons inside.

It has a moulded base, a middle wall (*jamgha*) above, broken in shallow folds of a *saptaratha* design, and its surface sculpted with figures. These consist of the eight guardian divinities (the *astadikpalas*) carved around the temple, and images of Lakulisa, Siva Nataraja and Ardhanarisvara placed in niches on its southern, western, and northern faces, respectively. Overhead, the niches are decorated with mini-chaitya windows as in the Buddhist rock-cut caves, which we find nowhere else in the whole of the Kathmandu Valley. The middle-wall in its upper reaches carries a frieze of *gandharva* couples, carrying garlands of flowers or trays in their hands. The temple in front (east side) is complete with a pillared porch. The pillars are fluted in

the middle and carved in multiple designs of which the prominent motif consists of the "vase and foliage". The capital of the pillars is made up of double brackets. The temple doorway is guarded by two four-armed standing images of Siva's look-alikes (Virabhadra?), and flanked further by images of Ganga and Yamuna. The upper reaches of the jamgha serves as the base of the roof or of the temple superstructure above. There is a further decorative panel, consisting of diapers, *astamangalas* and disfigured dwarfs up here. The three niches here are occupied by figures of Surya, Ganesa and Visnu on its southern, western and northern face, respectively. The roof at present is made up of a low, convex dome of stone and a finial of sorts, which, undoubtedly, is a later implantation. It is hard to guess now what sort of a superstructure or tower the temple originally might have carried, if it ever did. Most probably, it had been a low roof from the very beginning, consisting of no more than a few ascending steps of stones, enough to close in the gap of the roof above.

Notes

1. This article is dedicated to the memory of my revered Guru Sri Gokul Chandra Shastri, who was my teacher at Tri-Chandra College between 1953 and 1957. I gratefully recall here the kindness and affection with which he treated me even in personal life.
2. Banerjee traces the origin of the Nepali temples to the multi-terraced "eduka" style constructions in India (Banerjee:1980:107 ff.). But the eduka basically is a sepulchral monument, the walls of which have bones of the dead buried in them. The Nepali temples do not even remotely concern such practices, nor can be linked to it. Hence, this idea should be outright rejected.
3. Mary Slusser talks about the remarkable continuity in the diverse location and modes of shrines in the Kathmandu Valley even today. She writes: "Gods and goddesses... may be worshipped... in various places – in the home, the village, and the town, at the crossroads, by the wayside, at the riverbank or pond-side, 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." (Slusser 1982 I:128).
4. According to *Amarakosa*, this word describes a person who works as a paid priest in a temple (*Amarakosa*. Kanda II, Sudra Varga, verse 11). Kula Chandra Sharma Gautam (ed.) *Amarakosa*, Royal Nepal Academy, 1969. The Newari term *dyahla*, meaning a temple custodian, probably

- derives from it. Such a person is appointed from a low, sweeper's caste of Poda.
5. Dhanavajra Vajracharya and Kamal P. Malla (ed.). *The Gopalarajavamsavali*. Wiesbaden GMBH. 1985, pp. 37, 69.
 6. The vital link between *deghuri puja*, or its spelling variants, such as *degudi* and *deghudi*, or the modern *dīgu puja*, and our much familiar *devakula*, is provided by *devakulika*, a word that finds an entry in the *Dictionary of Indo-Aryan Languages* by R.L. Turner. He gives its meaning to be a 'mini-temple' (See Ralph L. Turner. *A Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages*. London, Oxford University Press. 1966, 373). The *devakulika* type of 'mini-temples' were made in Nepal Valley and have survived in the form of small, portable shrines carried in baskets suspended from the carrier's shoulders during the *dīgu puja* month (s) of April-May in the Kathmandu Valley.
 7. Many broken and mutilated, beautifully carved pillars of stone, lying isolated and removed from their original context, and believed to be of the Licchavi period, can be seen in the Kathmandu Valley everywhere. One regular and prominent motif on them is that of the *Purna kalasa*, or the "vase and foliage". Slusser has illustrated several examples of these Pillars (Slusser: 1982 II: pls. 289-0; 300, 302 and 310). I would like to think that all these pillars had once formed part of the simpler, pillar-borne open shrines of the Licchavi period.
 8. It may be well to keep in mind the shape and style of the mini-shrines of stone, housing *sivalingams* in them, found from all over the Kathmandu Valley. The *sivalingams* are installed on a plinth, with a roof of a heavy coping stone, held on by four stone pillars. Their shape reminds us of dolmens. Some of these shrines can be seen standing right in the precincts of the Pashupati temple. Slusser has reported some others from Lele, Deopatan and Banepa (Slusser: 1982, II: pls. 246-47; 251-52). These mini-shrines too could have been made corresponding to the form and style, particularly, those of early Siva temples, in the Kathmandu Valley.
 9. The Indresvar temple of Panauti and the Patan Charnarayan temple are also built in the *tawa-devala* style.
 10. The Matrika goddesses are mentioned from the Licchavi period itself (Vajracharya:1973: Insc. no.53). They attain immense popularity, however, only in the later mediaeval times. The Saptamatrikas, or the seven members of them to start with, have an eighth member added in Nepal at this time in the form of Mahalaksmi, after which they begin to be called the Astamatrikas. This eighth member was conceived in the form of the goddess Durga or Mahisamardini, i.e., the killer of the

buffalo demon. Under the new impact of the Sakta cult, the worship to the family of the eight goddesses, or the Astamatrikas, with their various names and forms, assumes much popularity. The Sakta and the Tantric cults shared not only a common mode of worship between them, they also made use of many common ritual items and ingredients. Both relied on a wide use of *mudra* (hand gestures), *mandala* (diagrams), *mamsa* (animal flesh) and *madya* (liqueur) during rituals. The Buddhist Tantric Vajrayana which was in its peak at this time introduced many female divinities, such as Vajrayogini, Nairatma, Tara, Hariti, Dharanis and so forth. The shrines of the female deities pertaining to either of these sects were worshipped alike by followers of both the sects without making much distinction. Popularly, Chamunda, a member of the Astamatrikas, was nicknamed *Ajima*, which means "grandmother". These goddesses were also regarded as divine protectors of towns and villages. The three towns of the Kathmandu Valley are encircled by a ring of their shrines.

11. It may be possible to speculate a little on why the temples of the Astamatrikas are usually made in a hole dug into the ground. Mother goddesses have been regarded as potent symbols of fecundity or fertility from the very beginning. This fertility idea perhaps linked them closely to the earth, the primary source of all plenty and productivity. It is therefore likely that their shrines are dug into the very womb of the earth. The Licchavi inscription mentioned above (f.n. 10) makes a curious reference to the idols of Matrikas made of earth, which having been ruined over time, were replaced with their stone counterparts by the donor. From this one can probably read a closer relationship of the Matrikas to the earth or the soil. Further, iconic representations of Matrika goddesses on stone are depicted in a heavy, buxom and earthy style reminiscent of the early Indian Yaksis, the divinities of trees and vegetation.
12. In a singular development of temple ritual practices and related services, not unconnected with the earlier *devakula* tradition, there were built a class of religious buildings, whose function was complementary to the main temple. These are the *dya chhen*. This latter class of building is built separately and located at some distance from the temple itself in an area (s) lived in by most of its *guthiyars*, that is, its temple caretakers. It is in this house that all ritual accoutrements of the temple needed at the time of the annual or twelve-yearly festival of the deity or deities are actually kept. A metal image of the main deity in its full anthropomorphic representation is kept in this house or in the house of the *thakali*. This is brought out, put on a chariot (occasionally, hand-

- carried), and taken round for worship by each individual house and by residents of the locality amidst a big fanfare, during the course of the festival.
13. According to Banerjee the earliest evidence to the existence of the multiple roofed temples comes from a painting of a ms. of the *Sivadharm Purana* of the 11th century (Banerjee:1980: 82).
 14. The Patan Kumbhesvara inscription of NS 512 (c.1392) describes the Siva temple in these words: "...a lovely temple was made with a *torana*; the ground of the temple was purified and encircled by a wall; it has four golden doorways set with gems..." This type of description of a Siva temple still echoes the early Licchavi style Siva temples, including that of Pashupati.
 15. *Evam vihāra samsthāpitārtham prathamatarām bhūparīkṣā, krodhāgnipūjā, kumārī arcanā, mārīci rakṣā, sālya parīkṣā, bhūmiyācanā, ekāsītikoṣṭhāstha devatā pūjā, yavakaropanam, jāngulīpūjā, kalāsādhivāsana, kilakālopanam, sutrapātana, vāstuparīkṣā, sandhiparīkṣā, bhūmikhaṇḍa, pādasthāpanaparyantānām yathā kryāsamgrahaśāstrotakarmaparipātena prthak prthak pūjahomādikam krtvā asminjāmbānandavanvihāram pādasamsthāpitam bhavatuḥ tadanantaram vanayā trādvārasthāpanam stambhasthāpanam gavāksasthāpanam śirodārusthāpanam paryantānām yathāvidhivat karmakrtvā varsaikena sampūrnam bhavatu/*
 16. Banerjee thinks that the oldest extant temple made in this style today is the temple of Patan Kumbhesvara of NS 512 (c. 1392).
 17. There is a temple whose plan looks unique. The Jayavagisvari temple at Deopatan, Kathmandu has transepts jutting out on the sides, giving it a cruciform plan. No other temple is known to use such a plan in its construction. Mention may also be made here of the plan of the Dattatreya temple of Bhaktapur, which is big and square in shape. But, curiously, it has a porch-like separate structure in double-stories used as an entrance and added in front, rare to see otherwise in this class of temples.
 18. The reason for it may lie in the life-story of Krishna which makes much significance out of the number eight. Krishna was the eighth child to be born to Devaki, and it was her eighth child who was prophesied to kill Kamsa, the demon.
 19. The measurements of some of the prominent temples made on square plans are: Nya-tapola, 27'6"; Panauti Indresvar, 30'; and Changu Narayan, 32'. Some of the larger constructions in this style are the Kasthamandapa, with 64' square and Degu Taleju with 93' square (Slusser: 1982; Tiwari: 1988; Vajracharya:1975).

20. The plinths or pedestals upon which these temples stand are also made on square plans which are broader in area than the plan of the cella. Their numbers can range from a single pedestal to as many as 9 sometimes. The personality that a pedestal bestows upon a temple can be immediately seen from two examples of the five-storied temples, one, in the case of the *Nya-tapola* at Bhaktapur, and the other, in the case of the Kumbhesvar temple at Patan. The *Nya-tapola* looks far more impressive and elegant in comparison. The pedestals of Maju deval and Kathmandu Taleju, nine in number each, present also the highest known number of pedestals so far, three times the number of their roofs.
21. Zimmer introduces the *Kirtimukha* as "a special emblem of Siva himself... then the 'face' began to be used indiscriminately on various parts of Hindu shrines as an auspicious device to ward off evil... with repetition, *Kirtimukha* became conventionalized and presently was combined with a pair of sea monsters (*makara*) that commonly serve the same function as himself...*Kirtimukha* serves primarily as an apotropaic demon-mask, a gruesome, awe-inspiring guardian of the threshold (Zimmer:1972;182).
22. Two temples with their circular towers and roofs, one, the temple of the Kotilingesvar at Pashupati, and the other, that of the Panchamukhi Hanuman at Hanumandhoka palace, are called the "*swata chhatra*" temples (Vajracharya:1975:97), directly drawing on the analogy of the umbrella with which they show a resemblance.
23. This name is also used to describe the mini forms of these temples mounted as finials over some multi-roofed temples.
24. Apart from the stone, these temples were also built of bricks and stucco. Slusser thinks that this term referred particularly to these temples made out of bricks. The term "ratna" or "gem", according to her, described the turrets or mini-towers that were shown clasping around the central tower (Slusser:1982,I:148).
25. Measurements given here are only approximate. The security guards of the Pashupati temple do not normally permit measurements of objects in its yard to be taken. So I had to make the best of the situation by doing it hurriedly, unnoticed and on the sly.

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