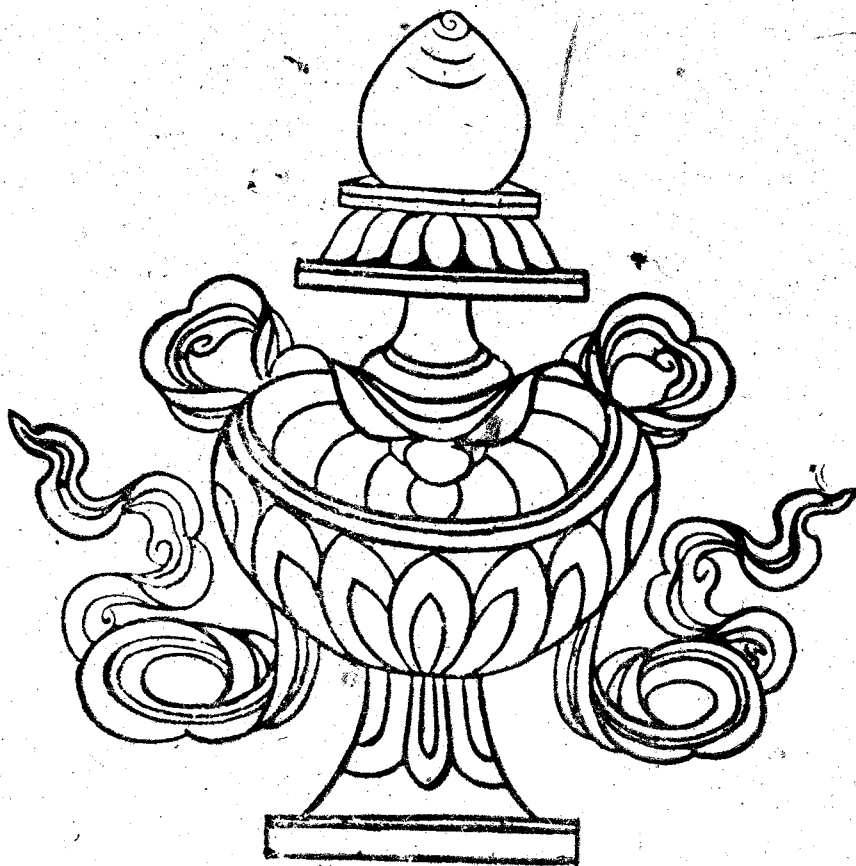


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LAW, LABOR AND THE ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY OF WOMEN IN NYINBA SOCIETY*

Nancy E. Levine

The distribution of rights over valued and productive resources is of significance in any society and is a key factor in the assignment of economic statuses to the society's members. Furthermore, the individual's economic circumstances may be expected to have a bearing on the other social statuses open to him or her. Writers on women have pointed to the connection between statuses held in one domain and the permissible range of statuses open to them in others, and some have taken this as evidence of a causal relationship between the relevant facts. It is not necessary, however, to adopt a deterministic stance in order to examine the ways in which economic statuses interact with the statuses pertaining to the domestic and politico-jural domains. Rather such a set of relationships may be characterized in terms of processes of reciprocal interaction; and it is this latter approach to the analysis of social structure which informs the discussion to follow.

* A special note of thanks is due to Tshewang B. Lama who has acted as my research assistant from 1973 until the present and whose own interest in the problems of law served to direct my attention to matters I might otherwise have overlooked. The research, carried out from June 1973 till June 1975, was funded by the National Science Foundation and National Institute of Mental Health whose support is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are also due to Tahir Ali and Lynn Bennett whose comments on this draft of the paper were particularly helpful.

In this paper the guiding focus and subject of major concern is the economic statuses held by women in Nyinba society. However, as we shall see, these economic considerations influence and are reflected in other aspects of social life, as is most pertinent here, in the distribution of statuses in the domestic and politico-jural domains.

The choice of this focus was guided directly by Nyinba women's own perceptions of the "problems of women" in their society. They place considerable emphasis on their economic disabilities, their restriction from inheritance and control over productive resources, and this is quite understandable. Property, especially land, is very highly valued in Nyinba society and the fact that women cannot own it places inescapable limitations on them. Thus women express grievances about this subject, and their readiness to formulate such grievances is very much in keeping with the forthrightness and independence with which women of Tibetan culture are so often credited (see, for example, Aziz 1978). These economic disabilities are tied in with and compounded by other problems, such as the insecurity of marriage in the early years and the lack of alternatives other than marriage for women in Nyinba society. The situation is made even more difficult by women's unfamiliarity with jural institutions, which is linked to their traditional separation from politico-jural affairs.

The paper will explore these interrelated problems. I shall introduce the topic by describing the local environment and economic adaptations, and shall outline relevant features of Nyinba social structure. Then I shall detail the complementary rights of men and women over property. Women's contributions to the household economy, their position within the household and their statuses within the larger community will be evaluated in light of current theories about the relationship between economic variables and women's overall position. In the

“final section, I shall examine the predicament of divorced women, cut off from household membership, propertyless, and unable to protect their own interests through the legal means open to them.

Land, Subsistence and Nyinba Social Structure

The Nyinba, a people who can be identified as Tibetan in language and culture, occupy a series of sheltered, southern valleys in a northern corner of Humla district, northwestern Nepal. They are fortunate in having fertile land located at a favorable angle to sunshine, though they are somewhat hindered by a scarcity of water sources for irrigation purposes. Intensive agricultural practices have enhanced the land's productivity and this has enabled the Nyinba to secure adequate food supplies and, consequently, a comfortable standard of living. In this regard, they present a striking contrast with the majority of far western peoples.

The Nyinba cultivate lands ranging from 8,800' to 11,600' in altitude. Crops include barley, bitter buckwheat, sweet buckwheat, wheat, amaranth, various types of millet, beans and lentils. These are supplemented by the produce of kitchen gardens: potatoes, turnips, radishes, cucumbers, pumpkins, squash, peas and corn. The bulk of the agricultural labor falls upon women, especially the more distasteful tasks such as fertilizing the fields with a mixture of hay, manure and human ordure. Women, and women alone, weed newly planted fields, as is necessary to obtain the greatest possible yields. Weeding is a backbreaking task and can absorb as much effort as the worker is willing to put into it. Men do the ploughing and sow the seed during brief periods in autumn and spring. In general people state that women are too weak to handle the oxen in

ploughing, but it is known for women without menfolk to do this and successfully as well. Both sexes work together at the busy harvest time. One can characterize the agricultural contributions of men as intensive, though intermittent, whereas women work continuously on the land during the agricultural season, that is, for at least half of the year.

Unlike many other Tibetan peoples resident in the Himalayas, the Nyinba keep few cattle. This is due to inadequate pasturelands, and people claim that if they could, they certainly would keep more. As things now stand, their few stock can be handled satisfactorily by retired men or youths of either sex. Cattle are valued, because they provide supplementary protein for an otherwise limited diet, and because excess milk products readily can be sold locally for cash.

The Nyinba are middlemen too, supplementing their agricultural income with profits gained from trade. Trading activities occupy the entire year, according to a fixed cycle, and include one person from each of the more prosperous households. The backbone of this trading cycle is the exchange of Tibetan and Indian salt for the grains produced in Nepal's middle hills. Nyinba men with their carrier goats and sheep travel back and forth from Tibet to Jumla and Bajura, as well as to Accham and the Indian border. Along with salt and grain, they carry manufactured commodities such as cotton cloth, shoes, combs, etc. The life of the trader is a hard one, and none but young men have sufficient stamina for the winter journeys south. In recent years, political changes have made this form of trade far less profitable (see Fürer-Haimendorf 1975: 264-5), and the people concerned predict its eventual end. But in the meantime it is the only means of acquiring the preferred grain, rice, and prestige goods for a community which is isolated from markets and able to afford luxuries such as these. If trade is valued more than is merited, as judged by "objective" appraisals of its

costs and relative contributions to the economy and if it is continued despite continually declining profits, it is for the reasons given above.

For purposes of discussion, Nyinba society can be described as "patriarchal". Various socially significant statuses relevant to the domains of kinship, economics, politics and ritual, are held only by men. The transmission of these statuses, characterized as descent, inheritance and succession, is through men alone. That is, membership in ranked clans is patrilineal, so that kinship through men has a double significance and is perceived to be more lasting than kinship through women. It is normative for sons rather than daughters to stay resident in their natal homes and to inherit the ancestral patrimony. As a result, men gain control over estates and the offices associated with them. Politico-jural offices are linked to household membership, ritual offices are linked to particular lineages.¹ But all pertain only to men.

It is the household which is the unit of primary social structural significance in Nyinba society. Households known as *trongba*, are loci of production and consumption. In native legal theory it is the household as a corporate group (see Fortes 1969: 292ff) which holds title to land, animals and other major forms of property.² The household is headed by men, and all of its property, or its estate and the associated offices, pass together from one generation of men to the next. The household has unambiguous rights and obligations to the village community, its identity is symbolized by its special set of guardian deities

1 These are the traditional offices of *mukhiya* or village headman, *t'alo* or tax-collector and *dangri*, priest to the local spirit medium.

2 To be precise, this is descriptive only of the landholding households and does not represent the circumstances of landless ex-slaves (discussed in Levine 1980).

which, in turn, bear a special relationship to village deities.

Households encompass one or more families and typically consist of parents, their children, children's spouses, grandchildren and occasionally great-grandchildren as well. As the marital norm in Nyinba society is fraternal polyandry, all the brothers in one generation share a single wife. There are cases in which facts of infertility or of a brother's preferences have prompted second marriages and thus there are families with two wives or even more. Since residence is normatively patri-virilocal, women come to reside in their husband's house and live under the jurisdiction of their parents-in-law.

All the brothers are counted as coparceners of the family estate. Just as they marry together, they remain together in one household, administering the estate jointly. Household partition is uncommon and is strongly disapproved of, being considered economically unsound and a breach of the ideal of fraternal solidarity. Although the brothers have equal rights in the household, the eldest is predominant and has the greatest authority in domestic affairs. By virtue of his leading role and dominance, he can be considered the household head, though he has no greater rights in the estate than any of his brothers. Elder brothers are obliged to act as administrators and coordinators of family affairs and they usually preside over family decision making. But if they wish to avoid partition, they dare not override their brothers' wishes. Men may consult their wives before they make decisions about the estate, but this is not obligatory, depending on variable, interpersonal considerations and the developmental stage of the marriage. When men reach the age of retirement, say at sixty years, they retire and pass the statuses of headship and coparcenership to their sons.

Although women have little more than influence over those decisions that concern external political or economic matters,

they do have some authority in internal household affairs. That authority is most evident in the disbursements of food within the home and in the fact that women have the final say in matters concerning the welfare of their children. The importance of these rights and obligations cannot be discounted. However they pertain only to married women in stable conjugal relationships.

When families lack male children, they can choose a daughter to remain resident in her natal home. The daughter then marries a man of her choice who comes to live with his in-laws. A matrilocally resident son-in-law or *magpa* technically is the successor to his wife's father's estate. However his rights can be challenged if not supported by written documents (unnecessary in the case of male heirs). Women who bring *magpa* would seem to have far greater influence in their homes than do their patri-virilocally married sisters, but nonetheless they are their husbands economic dependents. In a recent case, a *magpa* tried to force an allegedly adulterous wife from their home. People say that had she not been able to establish her innocence, he would have been entitled to do so.

As we have seen, Nyinba custom places control over property and external household affairs in the hands of men. Women never own land--the most valued and economically productive form of property. However they do have certain rights in the estates of their husbands and fathers and are acknowledged owners of special types of movable property. The nature and value of women's property will now be discussed.

Women and Property

Women are entitled to a grant of movable property from their father's estate upon their marriage. This property can be

considered a dowry and stands as a token of the woman's rights in the natal estate. It is the structural equivalent of the inheritance rights of men. Once she has received this property the woman is considered to have severed her membership in the natal household and to have abrogated rights to further support. The dowry, for which the Nyinba use the Nepali term *daijo*,³ consists of items such as brass dishes, drinking cups, water jugs, large copper pots, cooking ladles, knives and spoons, the iron grate used on the hearth and various agricultural implements: hoes, scythes and the like. The dowry comprises the kinds of tools a woman has to use in her everyday tasks, and it is said that the *daijo* contains a little bit or one each of the items of movable property from her natal home. Supplementing this are wedding gifts of plates, pots and so on from the woman's kin and fellow villagers. Wealthy parents are expected to favor their daughters with the gift of a domestic animal--a horse, yak or cowcrossbreed. Unfortunately not all women receive their due. When they elope secretly and against their parents' wishes, women forego the public celebrations at which their dowry is granted, and their parents and kin may choose to withhold it, temporarily or permanently.

Aside from the dowry of movable property, well-beloved daughters may be granted usufructuary rights in a small plot of land. The particular advantage of such a gift is that the woman can use its profits as she so desires. This category of property, known as *tragsi*, "marginal or adjunct land", is not considered an actual part of the dowry, but rather tends to be linked or identified with the second principal category of women's possessions, that of *kondze* or "valuables" (T. Lama 1979).

3 This is a Nepali term and refers to all types of property granted to a woman by her family, relatives and friends (Nepal Press Digest 1976a: 14).

Women's valuables chiefly consist of jewels: charmboxes of silver and gold, large turquoise earrings, necklaces of silver coins, amber, turquoise and coral. The accumulation of a store of valuables is begun by small girls. Doting fathers buy them these semiprecious stones and their mothers and grandmothers may dip into their own stores to augment the jewelry of a daughter or favorite granddaughter. Later on, husbands will add to the collection. The more acquisitive women make beer for sale or sell eggs--when the rare opportunity presents itself--to save up money for small trinkets. *Kondze* valuables differ from the other categories of exclusively female property by being appropriate to young and old, single and married women and by being publicly displayed. And it would seem that the usufructuary rights in a small plot of land are identified with these more ornamental valuables because land, like jewelry, is used for the woman's own benefit, and possibly also because younger women may use profits gained from such landholdings to buy themselves more jewelry.

The last and least important type of property controlled by women is money. When girls marry, everyone who attends the wedding is obliged to give a rupee or two to the new bride. As coin money was the only acceptable currency until recently, and since such coins were used in making rings, this form of property has come to be known as *dupser*, i.e., "rings". Even girls who elope will be given some *dupser* to do with what they like. But the store of cash never amounts to more than a few hundred rupees. (in 1974, 10.5 rupees was equivalent to one dollar).

Although the combined value of dowry, jewelry and cash may be comparatively great, its uses are limited. The major purpose of the items comprised is for display and/or for practical, day-to-day needs--items such as bronze dinner ware and gems--which are not themselves consumable. Nor would the sale of this property permit the purchase of anything but the

most marginal land, the commodity of greatest use-value in Humla.⁴ Thus even with the exceptional grant of a single domestic animal (the products of whose successful breeding accrue to the woman's marital household) or a small plot of land, women's property confers little, if any, profit and is inadequate to provide for their support. Irregardless, most women are very proud of their possessions and those of a more practical turn of mind do their best to add to their collection of valuables. Married women know which of the household stores came from their dowries and can point out the minute differences which distinguish their mother-in-law's dishes from their own.

If a married woman were to die young and childless, her parents would repossess the dowry as well as any other property given her at and prior to her marriage. They also would be expected to return her wedding gifts to the specific donors. Women who have lived out their married lives in particular households are thought to have become wholly incorporated in and identified with the household and so their dowry rightfully comes to be joined with other household property. But if a woman has no sons, she may choose to name one or more daughters as heirs to some of the more valuable items. Jewelry is often given away to daughters and daughter's daughters during the woman's lifetime--it is at her discretion. When women divorce, they take their dowries with them. However, as noted above, these items alone are inadequate to serve as the woman's sole source of support.

While some women marry late in life, relatively few never marry at all. By national law, a single woman is entitled to rights over property equal to that of her brothers after she

⁴ Good, fertile land is a rarity in Humla and accordingly, is very expensive. The entire dowry of a woman is worth no more than two fields of middling quality.

reaches the age of thirty-five. Nonetheless, women are not regarded as full coparceners with rights identical to male property holders. Their rights are limited, they cannot sell, grant or bequeath the land to others and they must remain unwed (Nepal Press Digest 1976a; see also the discussion in Bennett 1978). It is customary for unmarried Nyinba women to remain in their natal households, under the jurisdiction of first their fathers and later their brothers. This practice is in accord with local norms proscribing partitions, but it keeps the woman in a position of dependency and prevents her from enjoying even the limited control she is entitled to over her share of property.

Women are discouraged from staying home and remaining single. The Nyinba community looks down on unmarried women and labels them as unwanted and "left over". Thus there is considerable pressure to marry to prove one's worth. On top of this, the woman's family encourages her marriage for similar sorts of reasons: to avoid the disgrace of their daughter being labelled undesirable and also to preclude the possibility of out-of-wedlock pregnancies. Poorer households may worry about the burden of having an extra mouth to feed, and all mothers and fathers want to avoid the diminution of their sons' effective property shares. These pressures may cause parents to force less than promising marriages on their daughters. If and when problems arise, as they often do, the parents are not held liable. Once wed, a woman falls under the jurisdiction of her husbands and becomes their economic dependent. She loses the right to appeal to her parents for support, and they are not obliged to take her into their home again. This can produce all sorts of difficulties for divorced or separated women, women who lack any independent source of income and thus have no viable means of support. The fact of women's economic dependence and restriction from property ownership is not an uncommon phenomenon cross-culturally. In the following section I shall examine this problem and some of the reasons advanced to explain it.

homes. It is true enough that they make little contribution to the household economy and are a drain on its resources throughout their youth, and because of their need for a dowry. But no sooner have they begun to contribute in a substantial way to their families' support, than they are married off to another household.

The young girl who goes as a bride to another household has just begun to learn a woman's skills. And until she has proven herself by working hard, making the household prosperous, showing loyalty and fidelity to her husbands and, hopefully, producing sons who survive to adulthood, the wife is regarded as being of little account. Only with this and the passage of time does the woman's place in her husbands' home become truly secure.⁶ Thus one finds among the Nyinba, as elsewhere, that women are most honored when they are past their childbearing years.

The anthropological literature on women's studies has drawn attention to a possible correlation between the nature of women's economic contributions and the other statuses they hold in a society (Quinn 1977: 198-209; Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974: 11-12). Friedl, for one, has argued that:

the relative power of women is increased if women *both* contribute to subsistence *and also* have opportunities for extradomestic distribution and exchange of valued goods and services. In situations in which women either do not contribute to the food supply at all, or, while working hard and long at subsistence tasks, are not themselves, in their own right,

⁶ And a woman never feels secure, unless and until she is the only wife of her generation. The additional problems experienced by women in polygynous households deserves further attention, but this is beyond the scope of the present paper.

responsible for extradomestic distribution, their own personal autonomy and control over others is likely to be most limited (1975: 135).

As shown above, Nyinba women do work hard and are acknowledged to make a major contribution to subsistence. Men also work hard, although most of men's agricultural responsibilities and much of the herding season require only intermittent labor. The profits of the labor of men and women alike then become household property (with those few exceptions for women discussed in the previous section). And the property of the household is controlled by the co-parceners, in Nyinba custom, the men. Men determine the uses to which these profits are put and govern the extradomestic distribution of foodstuffs and so on at public ceremonies. Women, as is commonplace elsewhere, have control over the household's larder and the internal distribution of food, this being concordant with their primary symbolic association with the domestic domain.

In light of this and in view of Friedl's theory, we might expect to find that Nyinba women have little personal autonomy or control over others. However, because concepts like personal autonomy are not well-defined, it is difficult to employ them in interpretations of ethnographic data. This may have a bearing on the apparent ambiguity of the data, the fact that they appear neither to confirm nor deny the hypothesis. For while it can be said that in some regards Nyinba women have considerable freedom and power over others, there also are circumstances in which their freedom is circumscribed and they are relatively powerless. To illustrate this, a woman can marry whomever she pleases and end the marriage when she so desires, but while married, she is restricted from freely interacting with other men. (The same restrictions do not apply to men). Similarly it can be noted that women have control over the lives of their children and power over other household dependents, but

no more than influence over their husbands, brothers and fathers. As with the simplistic attempts to rank "women's status" as "low" or "high" in diverse cultures, such sweeping generalizations about the causes and attributes of women's social position are bound to founder when applied to the complex realities of social life. Women hold many different statuses and it is indeed difficult to condense and summarize these statuses, to evaluate the composite analytical construct and thereupon explain it by reference to one or more variables. Though causal factors may be difficult to isolate, there is no doubt that different statuses impinge on one another, so that Nyinba women's economic rights affect their domestic statuses and vice versa. And this is the topic to be considered in the final section of this paper.

Problems of Divorce and the Economic Insecurity of Women

The economic dependence of women on their husbands, fostered by their lack of independently held productive resources does not create any serious hardships--so long as a woman remains happily married. However, the success of a marriage is not assured for a number of years and it depends on the birth of children, especially sons. Women's comments on marriage suggest that they do not feel truly secure until their sons are grown and have assumed an active role in the running of the household.⁷ Prior to that time, the woman depends on her

⁷ The incidence of divorce does tend to decline with each succeeding year of marriage. One reason for this is that personal incompatibilities are either ironed out in the early years, or quickly provoke a divorce. Another reason is that the eventual birth of children usually helps to stabilize the marriage. Couples with children are less willing to divorce, because it would mean the separation of the child from one of its parents.

husbands' continued goodwill and on the maintenance of a satisfactory marital relationship. If the relationship deteriorates and comes to be severed, the consequences of limited property holdings all too clearly make themselves felt.

When marriages end, women have rights to no more than their dowry (*daijo*), their valuables (*kondze*), the clothes on their backs and any cash obtained through wedding gifts (*dupser*). Women who may have worked an entire season in their husbands' fields have no rights to even a portion of the harvest for which they are responsible. All the property which belonged to the estate prior to the marriage and any profits which accrued during the marriage remain with the husbands. Women are cut off from all sources of support, except in a very special set of circumstances, to be discussed below.

Although the Nyinba have recognized means to and quite commonly do terminate existing marriages, none of these means constitutes a divorce in the formal, legal sense. Marital dissolutions are carried out informally, according to customary practices, without reference to the statutes of the National Code and without recourse to expensive judicial proceedings. In the present, as in the past, women have three options or ways to end their marriages, and while it is true that such practices are not accorded legal recognition, they can be considered forms of customary divorce. Thus they will be termed modes of divorce in this paper. One may note that the Nyinba have no general term to describe such divorces, but neither do they have a term for marriage, which also always has been transacted informally in a legal sense. I shall now describe each of the three means for and typical scenarios in which women divorce their husbands.

1. Divorce Sought Voluntarily

When young girls marry, they experience rather overwhelming changes in their lives which some girls find to be intolerable. The transition is most difficult for the very young girl in an arranged marriage, and such a young bride may be allowed to return to her parents' home and to remain there for a period of months or years, until she reaches the age of sixteen or seventeen (a similar pattern is reported for the Limbu by Jones and Jones 1976). Parents will indulge their daughters until this time, but then they invariably begin pressuring them to resume their married lives. When girls continue to refuse to reside with their husbands, it is grounds for dissolving the marriage.

Women who initiate divorce in this rather passive manner never get any property settlement from their husbands, and in most cases, this is not cause for concern. The young and attractive girl is very likely to marry again, and within a short period of time. Although her reputation will have suffered somewhat, because of the negative public attention, there is no serious permanent disgrace attached to an early divorce. The parents of a young divorcee are not obliged to take her into the family again, but love and concern generally dominate over the fact that their jural responsibility for their daughter terminated upon her marriage. If the girl is older and less apt to remarry, parents must weigh the social and economic embarrassment of having to accommodate an unwanted woman for her entire life against very real emotional ties. These considerations may lead parents to withhold their support, or even to turn the daughter out of their home.

Women whose parents withhold support find themselves in serious straits, without sources of permanent shelter or food. I know of two women in this predicament, who have had to cope

with it for many years. The elder of the two travels from place to place, doing odd jobs for her temporary employers. The other has taken up residence in one village. She lives in an abandoned barn and supports herself on the proceeds of occasional labor. I do not know what caused these women to leave their husbands. But the case of Sonam (like all proper names in this paper, a pseudonym) serves to illustrate the kinds of pressures that can force a woman into such a position:

Sonam is a young woman known for her kindness, generosity and competence in women's work. Although she is from a prestigious family as well, she was unable to marry until she was nearly thirty. A large, unattractive goiter and a distracting speech impediment had lessened her marriageability. Finally, with her parents' encouragement, she decided to accept a proposal of marriage as the third wife of three brothers.⁸ The rationale for this third marriage was that the first wife who was fatally ill had never borne living sons and the pregnancies of the second wife all had resulted in stillbirths.

Shortly after Sonam was married, the equable and sympathetic first wife died. The second wife assumed the role of mistress of the household and then became pregnant. Two months later Sonam conceived, in due course, they were both delivered of sons. After she had born a child, the second wife became very conscious of her superior position and began to take advantage of her authority. Her own child was thin and sickly and this made her very jealous of Sonam's son's robust good health. So not only did she budget household resources for medicine for her child, but also began keeping the better food and denying meat and butter to Sonam. Sonam naturally complained to her husbands, but they either were unwilling

8 This is a case of polygynous polyandry or conjoint marriage. Though statistically rare, conjoint marriage is in accord with the Nyinba practice of both polygyny and polyandry.

or unable to intervene successfully.

In anger and sorrow, Sonam took her son, packed up her possessions and returned to her parents. They let her stay with them a while, but soon ordered her to her marital home. She then began to 'visit' relatives, but finally the invitations ran out. Although she publicly stated that she wanted a divorce, when it came to the point of facing poverty and homelessness, she returned to her husbands. Conversations with her reveal that her decision to return was not a final one and she may leave again.

I suspect that if Sonam had remained childless, her wealthy parents would have been willing to take her in again, despite her age. She too would have been more determined to secure the divorce. But once a child is born, divorce becomes more complicated, because the child's welfare is at stake as well. And for a divorced mother, remarriage is highly improbable.

2. Divorce Through Adultery

Economic factors and social pressures discourage women from remaining single. They are encouraged to get married and to stay married: the single woman is ill thought of and the single divorcee is both ostracized and poor. Because of this, those women whose marriages are unsatisfactory may prefer not to initiate divorces. Most women would rather wait until an opportunity for another marriage presents itself, so that they can go directly from one marriage to the next.

Women who are contemplating divorce may actively seek out potential suitors. They can flirt with marriageable men, go to courtship dances, and thus indicate their availability. Once a man has proposed and been accepted, an elopement will be arranged. It must take place at night in great secrecy. Elopement with a married woman is considered "wife-stealing" and is bound to

provoke serious quarrels between the parties concerned, i.e., the former and prospective husbands, as well as all their kin.⁹ Since it involves cohabitation and thus an implied sexual relationship between the woman and a man other than her legal husband, elopement technically constitutes an act of adultery. A man whose wife is adulterous is entitled to seek an annulment of the marriage, and any man whose wife has left him in such a fashion finds himself publicly humiliated, so that he is unlikely to want her home again. In addition, adultery with a married woman is a crime and subject to heavy penalties. The guilty parties either must be imprisoned or have to face a heavy fine. The punishment chosen is at the discretion of the former husband, and most husbands seek redress through the fine, which customarily has been and still is paid to them as compensation. This compensation is known locally as the *jari* (Nep. "adultery") payment and consists primarily of cash and valuable commodities such as domestic animals, blankets, large pots and so on. It is thought that *jari* is a custom derived from Nepalese rather than indigenous or Tibetan traditions. This, however, is immaterial to the injured husbands who wish to use whatever means available to salve their pride.

Divorce-elopements are strenuously disapproved of by the average Nyinba man and woman--in principle and in particular cases. Yet they are quite common, and at least half of the households in the Nyinba village on which my data are most complete have had to pay *jari* for one or another of their

⁹ In households with several brothers, all are polled before any such action is taken. However it is customary for only one man to participate in the actual elopement. In the event of serious opposition from the former husbands, the eloping couple hides until the furore dies down. Meanwhile the brothers who were not directly involved in the elopement try to settle the matter as expeditiously as possible.

in-married wives. The disapproval falls upon the couple who eloped and mars their reputation. Eventually the matter is "forgotten", but this takes from ten to thirty years or even more, depending on the various circumstances involved (i.e., the status of the households, the intensity of the resultant quarrels, the size of the *jari* payment etc.). But the negative repercussions are not so great as to outweigh the pressures for divorce-elopements. The latter include the fact that women are obliged to get married and are expected to stay married, the existence of a custom which provides a means of going directly from one marriage to the next, the romanticism that surrounds such escapades, wherein lovers surmount all obstacles to their marriage, and the difficulties women experience when they take their divorces into their own hands. It is also pertinent that men do not find the *jari* payment too onerous: it costs less than an elaborate wedding. Irregardless, though it fits in well with present-day Nyinba social realities, the institution of divorce-elopements and *jari* payments is the source of considerable social disruption.

3. Divorce with Maintenance

Thus far I have described divorces which result in inevitable social and economic penalties for women and which can carry certain penalties for their new husbands as well. In none of these cases is the divorced woman entitled to any further support from her husbands. Rana (1978) and Bennett (1978) have pointed out that it is when women do not adhere to the norms of proper marital behavior that they may be divorced summarily, against their will and without redress. Thus their economic security depends on their moral rectitude. The same standards are not incumbent on men. But if a man mistreats his wife, it is cause for divorce. In these circumstances and these circumstances alone, the woman has a claim to postmarital support.

The National Code specifies that a woman who is blameless (innocent of such misconduct as adultery) and who is mistreated by her husbands may sue for a legal divorce. Such a divorce entitles her to support by her husbands' estate for five years, or until she remarries. As noted above, the Nyinba do not secure legal divorces for a variety of reasons. For one thing, divorce proceedings are expensive and apt to be time-consuming. For another, they involve dealings with government offices and courts. The problems of dealing with the national judicial system are far greater for women than for men. Knowledge of the provisions of the National Code is confined to a handful of Nyinba men who are literate in Nepali; women neither have access to information about their legal rights, nor do they have the requisite experience for dealing with officials. Women's only recourse is to obtain the support of their kinsmen when their rights are violated; and, fortunately, it is not unknown for kinsmen to defend women against abusive husbands.

While Nyinba individuals do not seek legal divorces, some women have, with the help of particularly powerful kinsmen, been able to obtain what corresponds to a legal separation from their husbands. The community reaction to such separations has been to regard them as equivalent to divorces. For this reason, I shall describe this mode of ending a marriage as separation-divorce. It may be suggested that various Nyinba have chosen to pursue this sort of option because it accords more with their traditions than does a legal divorce and because it is a highly effective way for a man angered at his sister's or daughter's mistreatment to strike back at the latter's husband. Certainly, as we shall see, it is financially more advantageous for women than is legal divorce.

The National Code states that a woman who:
is denied maintenance by her parents-in-law
and/or her husband and is expelled from the
house, or is frequently beaten up and harassed,

or whose husband has brought or taken another woman as wife, shall be entitled to obtain her share of the property from her husband's share ... (Nepal Press Digest 1976a: 28).

The problem is that few women have been able to avail themselves of this legal option. A woman not only needs powerful male supporters who are familiar with the national legal system, but also must be the sort of person who is able to carry out a prolonged suit. That is, she must be patient, determined and clever--a strategist at heart. Then too she must be willing to defy social disapproval of both her ongoing divorce and the controversy surrounding it, which she instigated and for which she is considered at fault, during the proceedings and after the decision as well.

By law, men cannot force their wives out of their homes and in practice, they rarely do so. Instead they try to convince their wives to leave--by the simple expedient of making them miserable. Rarely do they have to resort to violence or to the denial of food or clothing. A man simply will snub or insult the woman, or flaunt his infidelities. When this occurs, the wife, especially if she is attractive and childless, may begin looking elsewhere. But some men do mistreat their wives, thereby providing them with grounds for a separation-divorce. Many women fail to take advantage of their right to a dissolution of the marriage with support, due to the factors discussed above and for another, very cogent reason. That is the fear that the courts will not be sympathetic to a woman and decide in her favor. We will see to what extent these fears are justified.

I know of only three cases in which a woman tried to obtain a separation-divorce by virtue of her mistreatment at the hands of her husbands. The first case took place two generations ago and was settled by traditional Nyinba judicial procedures which involved decisions reached in councils of village

leaders. Through the help of her politically powerful brothers, the woman won her suit and obtained control over a share of her husbands' property. After this, she openly carried on an adulterous relationship with a married man and bore him three children. Nonetheless the property was not reclaimed by her husbands; today it is held by the grandchildren of her lover. However this case seems to have been exceptionable, certainly it is remembered as such, and as far as I know, nothing like it took place again until recent years. Then in 1975, a young woman whose husband was trying to force her out of the house took the case to court and won rights over a share of her husbands' lands. I believe that the woman was aided by men who were powerful in the village and known to local officials. I also heard it said that she might remarry. This case and the one preceding suggest that the Nyinba regard legally constituted separations as the equivalent of divorce.

In a third case, decided recently, a woman tried to obtain a separation-divorce, but her petition was denied by the courts. Still, it was not a wholly useless effort: the courts, in trying to reconcile the spouses, demanded an assurance of better treatment for the wife. The case is an interesting one, because it is illustrative of the sorts of marital tensions which tend to result in divorce in Nyinba society. Since I know the circumstances in some detail, I can recount them here:

Yeshi, now in her mid-thirties, is attractive and considered highly competent in all manner of work. Born of a prominent family, she married three brothers from a wealthy household at an early age. She bore her husbands a son who died in infancy and then a daughter who is now in her early teens. Following upon this second childbirth, she became seriously ill and almost died. She has not been able to conceive since that time.

After some years, her husbands decided to take a second wife, as is customary when the

first wife is sterile. Yeshe opposed this, saying that their daughter could wed matrilocally and the *magpa* or son-in-law would be able to serve as successor to the estate. Quite naturally, she did not wish to accommodate herself to a co-wife. But the men were adamant--they wanted a son.

In due course, a second wife was wed and installed in the home. Yeshe continued to protest against this, and as a result, her relationship with her husbands deteriorated. The eldest began to beat her, so she left the house and took refuge in a barn nearby, in order to see her daughter daily. She said that it was her intention to convince her daughter never to wed, to avoid the possibility of a bad marriage and so that she could live independently, with property of her own.

Finally, Yeshe decided to sue for a separation-divorce. This was denied, but the fact of her mistreatment was acknowledged. As a result, the husbands were forced to sign a statement assuring Yeshe of continued residence, support and good treatment in their home.

I do not know why the courts rejected Yeshe's petition for divorce. Perhaps she was unable to bring sufficient evidence on her own behalf, or the court might have seen her opposition to her three husbands' second wife as unjustifiable. Perhaps it was a lack of influential supporters to argue on her behalf. In any event, Yeshe was granted substantial protection by the law, and, reportedly, this has led to a more tolerable marital situation for her.

One might expect that the positive results of Yeshe's suit and the outcome of the separation divorce granted in 1975 would encourage women in unsatisfactory marriages to seek to end them by legal means -- either through the formal separations which the Nyinba treat as divorce or by the less advantageous divorces granted by the courts. Whether women will begin to take advantage of their rights remains to be seen. I have

summarized the various reasons that women have avoided the courts in the past and have continued to rely on forms of informal divorce that are decidedly unfavorable to them. These reasons include lack of knowledge or misinformation about the law and the legal process. This ignorance can be remedied, but in the meantime, it is the basis of very real misgivings. Another factor is the social pressure against women taking such an action and thereby focusing public attention on themselves, as has been discussed above. Related to this is the inability of most women to convince their kinsmen to help them deal with the courts--and it would seem that such assistance is a prerequisite for success--or even to provide their support in the face of social disapproval. But an even stronger force against change may lie in the general Nyinba opposition to divorce with continued support for women which, in turn, is based in facts of Nyinba social structure.

The idea that women are entitled to property settlements if mistreated by their husbands does not seem to be regarded by many Nyinba as fitting or truly warranted; people seem to feel that the woman who has won property shares in this fashion has received more than she deserved. This may lie behind the social disapproval, the perpetuation of continued ignorance and the absence of support for women who have the right to seek this form of separation or divorce. However ultimately, these attitudes of reluctance towards use of the law would seem to be related to the lack of fit between local traditions and the statutes of the modern legal code.

In a previous section I discussed the importance of households in Nyinba social structure and the emphasis placed on maintaining household properties intact from generation to generation. The disapproval of partition is couched in both moral and pragmatic idioms, as accordant with a principle of social structure that impinges on norms of kinship, the local

economy and political organization as well. Thus we find that separate marriages by coparceners are discouraged, so as to lessen the threat of partition. Similarly, unmarried sisters are disallowed from moving off by themselves, even if the division of property would be only temporary. In light of this it is not surprising that men would try to avoid sharing property with a wife they do not like. And the acrimony involved in divorce is usually so great that, if given a choice, most men would try to avoid the financial burden of continued support of an ex-wife. Of course, it is men who control traditional judicial proceedings within the Nyinba community and who are able to deal with the courts of the national system. This explains why the custom of divorce by elopement, disapproved though it may be, is still the commonest means of ending a marriage. Such divorces may be productive of community discord, but they do not run counter to basic social structural principles.

This dilemma may well be a contributory factor to the generally disruptive character of Nyinba divorce in the present day. There is no one acceptable or easy way for a woman to obtain a divorce and no means which--from the standpoint of reputation and financial security--is satisfactory. Moving off alone invites impoverishment, elopement invites censure and the suit for property is a radical, difficult step. A complicating factor of great significance in this matter is women's lack of productive property and their resultant dependence on men for their economic security. The situation is such that a woman may spend her life working for a "corporation" from which she can be severed readily, without recompense and without any recourse, even if she is technically not at fault. There is no easy solution to this dilemma of women's rights to fair treatment, their rights to the fruits of their labor and the contradiction posed to this by a society based on the

perpetuation of undivided estates controlled by men. Although continued maintenance of divorced wives as legislated by the National Code would seem to be a satisfactory solution to the problem, the fact that a husband need not maintain his ex-wife for more than five years means that legal divorce offers women security for only a limited period of time. This would be problematic in a society where older women find it difficult to remarry. Still this might be regarded by Nyinba women as preferable to the scandal of a divorce-elopement of divorce without any sort of support and thus one would hope that in the future legal divorces become more readily available to people like the Nyinba.

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THARUS OF DANG: THE PEOPLE AND THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

Drone P. Rajaure

Introduction

The Tharus are one of the indigenous tribal peoples scattered all along the southern foot-hills of the Himalayas. The greater part of their population resides in Nepal, although some Tharus are also scattered in the adjacent Indian districts of Champaran, Gorakhpur, Basti, Gonda and Nainital. In Nepal, the total population of the Tharus, according to the 1971 census, is 495,881.

There are several endogamous sub-groups of Tharus, such as Rana, Katharia, Dangaura, Kochila and Mech. This work will concentrate on the Tharus of Dang, dealing mainly with the Dangaura Tharus living in the terai of the Far-Western Development Region of Nepal.

Village Organization

A Tharu village consists of several families living in a compact social unit which benefits them both socially and economically. Several families within this unit are related to each other by affinal and consanguineal relationships, while all are linked with each other at least by religious and economic ties. Villages generally range from four or five to thirty or more houses. Some Tharu villages in Dang which have been affected by the mass-migration of Tharus to the far-western terai districts have been abandoned.

In a Tharu village the duty of maintaining good relations among villagers, as well as conducting the village's affairs, falls on the *mahaton* (village chief). A *mahaton* is elected by the *gardhurryās* (Tharu household chiefs) from among themselves; however there is one rare case of a Brahmin Jeewaraj Acharya of Lahlaura village in Dang who was once elected *mahaton* of his village. A *gardhurryā* coming from an influential and numerous family with a proper knowledge of priestly craft has a better chance of being elected as a *mahaton* than others. A *mahaton* is elected, but once elected, the office becomes hereditary, unless a particular incumbent is considered a misfit. The assembly of the *gardhurryās* (*khel*) can remove an unsuccessful *mahaton*. An existing *mahaton*'s family can also retire from this office in case of any imminent movement of the family or any severe economic crisis in the family brought about by unforeseen circumstances or a shortage of manpower available for village affairs.

The election of a new *mahaton* is very simple. All the *gardhurryās* assemble in the existing *mahaton*'s house or in an open space. A few aged and experienced *gardhurryās* propose a name for the *mahaton*-to-be, a name which they have previously selected in earlier informal gatherings like a feast, a ceremony, a dance or a construction work. During the election day there is some light discussion concerning the proposed name but usually there is no opposition and all of them recognize the proposed person unanimously as their new *mahaton*.

A *khel* is composed of all the *gardhurryās* of the village. Any other man of the family (household) can be a representative in the *khel* in lieu of the concerned *gardhurryā* if the *gardhurryā* cannot be present at the time. The chief male member of the household is appointed as a *gardhurryā* by other male members of the household. This is determined mainly on the principle of patrilineal descent but experience and age seniority are also

important factors. Usually the post of *gardhurryā* also becomes hereditary until the household splits or a particular incumbent proves to be a misfit.

The role of the *mahaton* in the *khel* is like that of a chairman and a judge who, keeping others' views in mind, gives the final communal decision. Whenever the *mahaton* wants to summon a *khel* he informs all the *gardhurryās* a few hours or some days earlier, depending on how important the business is. Any villager can carry this message from the *mahaton* to the *gardhurryās*. There is no servant or peon paid for that purpose. During my field studies the *khels* which I observed were held for arranging voluntary services concerned with some social or religious performances like a marriage, death, or *barkā puajā* and sometimes in connection with dramatic performances done on behalf of the village.¹

The word *mahaton* seems to be derived from the Persian '*Mokaddam*', later on reshaped as a Sanskrit word '*mahatam*' which means great, superior, or chief. *Mokaddam* was a village level functionary in charge of settlement operations and the allotment of uncultivated lands in the villages during the Moghul rule in India. In the 18th and early 19th centuries there were *mokaddams* appointed in Chitawan District and a few eastern Terai districts of Nepal also.

The earliest mention of the word *mahatam* in Nepal so far is in the A.D. 1336 (1258 Shake *Sambat*) copper plate inscription of King Punya Malla in the Karnali region. In this copper plate

1 *Barkā puajā* is the greatest religious ceremony performed by every household or extended family. All male-line cousins of the concerned household or family within seven generations also take part in this performance. Several animals and fowls are sacrificed. It is performed usually every ten to twelve years, according to the advice of the priest of the household.

the King gives some administrative orders to some of his officials of Dang including the *mahatams*. But except for the information that the *mahatams* were some of the principal officials (along with *adai*, *adhikāri* and *mahar*, also mentioned on the plate), no further details are given in the plate regarding their status or administrative powers.

Though there are some instances of official appointments of *mokaddams* in some villages of Chitawan and Eastern Terai, none so far are known for Dang Deokhuri District. Probably the unofficially appointed *mahatons* were doing village-level administrative jobs except for the business of land settlement and the collection of the revenues for which Zemindars (functionaries responsible for revenue collection) and Patwaris (village-level functionaries in the Terai districts who maintained land and revenue records) were appointed, and also gave them full assistance to perform their work well, regarding the revenue collections. According to information collected in the field, the *mahaton* used to play a significant role inside the village. During Rana rule he was the *de facto* link between the administration and the people. There were Zemindars and Chaudharis. But they had very little time left to look after a particular village in detail.² Hence the *mahaton* was the first person responsible for keeping the administration informed of each and every activity inside the village.

A *mahaton* in Dang Deokhuri has today the following traditional obligations:

- A. *He is a senior priest:* He is the principal executant of the village-level religious performances. He

² Chaudhari is a functionary working as a co-ordinator between several Zemindars and Chaudharis as well as a semi-government administrator in a Praganna, an administrative unit composed of several villages.

himself, or any other male member of his family, paints the *astimki* on a *dehri* in his house where all the women and girls from the village gather to celebrate *astimki* festival on *astami* or *janmastami*, the birthday of Lord Krishna. The *mahaton* himself, sometimes aided by a still more senior *desbandhyā* priest, performs several rites to appease various spirits and divinities so that they will not damage the crops, kill or trouble the inhabitants and their domestic animals and poultry. Though each household of the village supplies its share for village festivals and worship and assists financially in the supply of chickens, pigs, liquor and (if needed) vegetables, oil, ghee, and flour, certain expenses are born by the *mahaton's* family.

- B. *He is an administrator:* He is the person who organizes the villagers who participate in public works for the welfare of either the community or a particular household. In case of food shortage or man-power shortage during the agricultural season, he helps the person concerned and makes arrangements to deal with the problem.
- C. *He is a judge:* During quarrels between Tharus in the village, he is the first person to be approached. Though usually minor cases are judged by him, he may try to settle major conflicts too. He is empowered to impose fines on cattle-owners who let their animals stray during the crop-season and in the case of other minor offences such as playing instruments during certain prohibited periods of the year (such violations do not occur often), causing bodily hurt to others, insulting a person, and cases concerned with abduction.

Here are two examples from Sukhrwar villages:

- i. In December 1966, during a fight between a Tharu woman and an old Brahmin woman, the former knocked down the other, breaking one of her teeth. The *mahaton* fined the offender (the Tharu woman) Rs fifteen and handed it over to the Brahmin woman.
- ii. In May 1971, during a fight in the street between two male buffaloes, a bullock passed by and was accidentally crushed between the two buffaloes. The case went to the *mahaton* who asked the two owners of the fighting buffaloes to pay 25 percent each of the original price of the bullock.

In return for the services rendered to the village, the *mahaton* is compensated by voluntary services and gifts on several occasions from the villagers. Twice a year (during the sowing and the harvest of paddy) the villagers give him labour free of charge. On these occasions the *mahaton* has to supply the labourers with three meals daily.

During the time of sowing or cultivation of paddy, for each *hal* (the amount of land ploughed by a pair of bullocks in one morning) of land cultivated by a household in the village, the household has to offer one plough team to plough for a *mahaton's* family. A large household cultivating eight or ten *hals* for itself thus has to supply eight or ten plough teams. The plougher has to plough one full day having a break of about two hours at midday. One female worker from the plougher's family has to work in the same area for one afternoon. The ploughman ploughs the field in the morning and after the midday meal (*mār*) repairs the weather-worn terrace-bunds; in the late afternoon and evening he does the *loor* type of ploughing (mud ploughing or smooth ploughing with sufficient water in the terrace). The woman is engaged in the *loor phijnā* (levelling of the mud-ploughed terrace by hands) task. The

service offered during this period is called *buini begāri* (service granted for sowing). The next period of such service, known as *katauni begāri*, comes during the harvest of paddy. Then one member per *hal*-cultivating household has to give two full days' work of which one day is spent in cutting the paddy and one more day later on in carrying the dried paddy to the *khenwā* or *khalihān*.

Recent Changes and Some Consequences

According to my informants, the *mahaton* used to play a significant role in the village. His post was so prestigious that the word '*mahaton*' was later on used as a surname by several backward communities like the Tharus of Chitawan, Kailali, or the Koiri caste of central Terai.

Today, the *mahaton* has been stripped of much of his earlier power and position. Officially the village-level judicial power has shifted to the *pradhan pancha* (chairman of a village or town *panchayat* elected by the villagers) and the *mahaton's* position as a real village-chief has been challenged by the *pancha-sadasya* (ward representative in a village or town *panchayat*). If either the *pradhan pancha* or an *upa-pradhan pancha* is selected from his village, the *mahaton* remains subservient to them.

But the Tharu villagers still respect the *mahaton* as he is the person responsible for the performance of the village-level religious performances. For the common villager, he is the only person to approach for getting help from the community in circumstances like the roofing of a house or the rebuilding after a fire or in case of delays in sowing or harvesting of a crop. The *mahaton* is still the leading figure in the village-level construction projects, undertaken traditionally by the village itself. Tharus have much more faith in him than in the

pradhan pancha or the *pancha sadasya* for a *mahaton* is always a Tharu, while a *pradhan pancha* or *pancha sadasya* may not be. A Tharu, they feel, understands better the problems of other Tharus.

Their social, economic and educational backwardness, the effects of the old civil code (*muluki ain*), the behaviour of the landlords, merchants, and local officials have all combined to induce a sense of tribal inferiority among the Tharus who lack faith in administrators and officials. Therefore, whenever there is a conflict between Tharus, the *mahatons* of the concerned villages (sometimes, if necessary, with the help of other Tharu notables) settle the problem. If the conflict occurs between a Tharu and a non-Tharu both persons involved, at the request of the Tharu, appear before the *mahaton*. If the non-Tharu does not agree to abide by the decision of the *mahaton*, the case goes up to the *pradhan pancha* where the Tharu tries hard to get the case settled, though the decision may be less favourable to him than what it would have been if he had the capacity to put the case before a higher court or office. The Tharu does not dare to go higher, unless the case is very serious or associated with a large amount of property. A Tharu attending the court or office with his sense of tribal inferiority, thinks that his non-Tharu opponent (who is most probably a native speaker of Nepali the official language) may influence the official or the judge since both share a common culture and language. Moreover it is easier for a non-Tharu to become literate and educated. So the Tharu is suspicious that the decision in the long run will not be in his favour.

A Tharu, again, does not have much faith in the present judicial procedure, which seems quite lengthy to him. According to him it is quite useless to attend the court or pass through several channels during the procedure and very often

is a waste of time. The amount of time spent going many times to the different offices, waiting there and then returning home, just to attend the *tārikh* (date, for an official appointment), hampers a Tharu's household routine very much, and this is particularly so during the cultivation period, as it may severely affect the yield of the crops.

A Case Study

In a small village, neighbouring Sukhrwar, a Brahmin family and a Tharu family have their farms side by side. The farm of the Brahmin is lower in elevation than that of the Tharu. Each year the Brahmin family digs some inches of the soil at the bottom of the fence that forms the boundary between the properties, thus moving the fence a bit further and adding the space of a few more inches to their own farm. Finally the patience of the Tharu family was exhausted and the young headman of the Tharu family asked the Brahmin family to stop doing this. The Brahmin family remained quiet for some weeks but then started doing this again. The Tharu went and complained to the *mahaton* about it but the Brahmin family was notorious for such activities in the village and did not comply. The Tharu went to some noble high-caste men in the village but none of them dared to say anything against the notorious Brahmin family for it was in a position to upset the balance of village politics. While all this was happening, a weak and old bull belonging to the Tharu family entered the farm of the Brahmin through a break in the fence. The bull died there and thus caused great trouble. The Brahmin family became furious. Some of its members went to the Tharu family and asked them to pay compensation for the 'damage' done to the crops inside their farm. The Tharu family begged pardon but said that the bull had been weak and had done practically no harm except for gnawing some grass near the fence and that they were unable to pay any compensation. Thereupon a member

of the Brahmin family picked up a pot from the Tharu kitchen and all the Brahmins returned home with the pot, saying that it would be held until the Tharu family supplied them with three loads of fire wood, At first the Tharu family thought this was a joke and did not take it seriously, believing that one day the vessel would be returned. But this did not happen. The Tharus went to the *mahaton* but the *mahaton* could not help since he was unable to execute his decision due to the lack of any official power or recognition behind him. Then the poor Tharu went to the high caste landlords to plead his cause but once again he was unable to get justice as none of them took any interest in this for the reason already mentioned, namely that Brahmin family could upset the political balance in that small village. The headman of the Tharu family did not dare to go to the *pradhan pancha* for several reasons. He did not want to waste at least two or three days in the office waiting for him to arrive and then investigate the case for a further few more days before giving any judgement. All he wants is a prompt judgement within the village, so that his farm-routine might not be disturbed. The Tharu family does not know what can be done in this respect. It is waiting anxiously to get mercy from the Brahmin family; however this seems unlikely. Four or five years have passed and the pot is still held by the Brahmin family.

The above example does not seek to minimize the importance of the *mahaton*. Generally such cases occur when there is conflict between a Tharu and a non-Tharu; otherwise, for example in case of a conflict between Tharus themselves, they very often agree with the *mahaton's* ruling since none of them is likely to carry the case further, for the reasons already mentioned.

Groups and Clans

Tharus as a whole are divided into several endogamous

groups such as the Rana, Katharai, Dangaura (the name given by other Tharus as well as other ethnic groups to the Tharus of Dang or immigrants of Dang origin in far-western Terai districts), Chitawania, Kochila and Morangia. Each endogamous group has developed a slightly different dialect and life-style.

Notions concerning the clan system among the Tharus, Dangauras as well as others, are vague. They do not have any proper Tharu word for clan. When a Tharu wants to know another Tharu's clan name, he simply asks "*kā (kām) tharu hoitho?*" meaning "what (type of) Tharu are you?". Sometimes they use terms like *thahar* or *pad* (borrowed from Nepali) but only a few Tharus understand these terms. In the Tharu context, males belonging to a particular clan are the descendants of one particular ancestor, who may be either a shaman, a ghost, a spirit or a totem. The clan is exogamous and patrilineal. Its distinctions are important on two occasions: 1. when fixing wedding arrangements and 2. at any religious-shamanistic performance.

The Tharus of Dang Deokhuri as well as the Dangauras (recent immigrant Tharus or descendants of previous immigrant Tharus to far-western Terai districts from Dang Deokhuri) can first of all be classified collectively under one term Dangaura or Dangaha (a term preferred by the Tharus of Dang to distinguish them from other endogamous Tharu groups). This endogamous Dangaura Tharu group can be further divided into three sub-groups which are:

- A. Gharguruwa sub-group,
- B. Barin sub-group and
- C. The sub-group of 'in-betweens'.

The Gharguruwa sub-group is the sub-group of priests while Barin is the sub-group of laymen. Both of these two

sub-groups are complementary to each other. There is, however, a third sub-group which can be called the sub-group of 'in-between'. Tharus do not have any name or word for this sub-group. This sub-group neither obtains any priestly service from any household of Gharguruwa sub-group nor does any household of Barin sub-group ask for any such kind of service from this (the 'in-between') sub-group. No man can change his sub-group status at will. Yet, this sub-group distinction has no hierarchical significance at all. It creates no status gap among these three sub-groups who inter-dine, intermarry and mix freely without having any kind of claims for sub-group superiority.

The above sub-groups are further divided into several clans and in, a few cases, into sub-clans also.

(A) *Clans and Sub-Clans in the Gharguruwa Sub-Group*

1. DAHIT. According to a legend Dahits are ex-Ahirs (milkman caste). *Dahi* (curd of yogurt) was the main dish served to the people during the *pat lena* (integration) ceremony for converting the Ahir ancestors into Tharu caste and so they were called Dahit. The household deity manipulated by this clan for priestly craft is Bherrwa (further details will be given below). Dahits are divided into four sub-clans which are as follows:

- a. KHAS DAHIT (the real Dahit).
- b. GADDAGGYA DAHIT (Dahits with a burnt buttock).
According to a legend they are descendants of a Dahit whose buttock was burnt in an accident.
- c. KAJPUJWA DAHIT (Dahits offering *kaj*).
Kaj is the soured scum of boiled rice. According to tradition, this sub-clan offers some soured rice scum to its deities during the Dasya festival.
- d. GANGWA DAHIT: No legend or story is known about the origin of this sub-clan name.

2. SUKHRORYA GURRWA: Members of this clan are supposed to be the descendants of a great priest and shaman of Sukhrwar who was known as Sukhrorya Gurrwa (priest-shaman of Sukhrwar). There are eight large households representing this clan in Sukhrwar village. The members of this clan are in the majority (40%) within the village. This clan too has Bherrwa as its household deity but in a slightly different model known as Sukhrorya Bherrwa (see illustration No. 1).

3. KATKATWA: The household deity of this clan is Madua. Little is known about the origin of this clan.

4. PACHAL DANGYA or RAJI: People of this clan claim to be the descendants of some Rajis (another ethnic group of Western Nepal) who were integrated or converted into Tharus. Their household deity is Jagarnatthya, who is also worshipped by Rajis.³

(B) *Clans and Sub-Clans in the Barin Sub-Group*

There are several clans, a few having their sub-clans too in this sub-group.

1. GAMMWA.

2. NAMMWA: According to a belief, because of a shortage of other animal victims their ancestors offered a *nammwa* or *nampucchi* (long tail, slang for a cat) to the deities; since then they have been called NAMMWA.

3. JINGUNI.

4. BHALUGUNI.

5. KOTALWAN.

3 Johan Reinhard; personal communication.

6. MAGARATHEN (descendants of a man belonging to the Magar ethnic group).
7. GHAT CWAR (stealer of a cow-bell). According to the common belief, the household deity of this clan once stole a cow-bell from another clan. Since then the deity, as well as the clan of its followers, is named GHAT CWAR.
8. CILRAHAWA.
9. KHON.
10. GHECKATWA (throat-cutter). The explanation given for this name is that the household chief of this clan cut the throat of a chicken before going into trance during the Dasya ritual performance.
11. BASGODRYA.
12. BABHAN or BAMAN (Brahmin). People of this clan claim to be the descendants of a Brahmin converted into a Tharu.
13. KHARAGYA or DHAKEHAR. The household deity of this clan is Kharagi (probably derived from the Sanskrit word *kharga* meaning a sword or dagger). This female deity is supposed to be holding a sword in one hand and a small drum (*dhak*) in another. The name of this clan is based on the words *kharga* (sword) and *dhak* (drum).
14. CWAKHA DOM (the clean *Doms*). *Doms* are untouchables in the Hindu caste hierarchy but these Tharu *Doms* are not untouchable, they are *cwākhā* (sacred or clean). Little is known about the origin of this clan.
15. RAJATTEWA.
16. TERRA.
17. KOTAURYA.
18. AHIR (milk-man). The descendants claim that their ancestors were the Ahirs (milk-man caste).

19. OKHARRYA MAHATAN. Members of this clan suppose themselves to be the descendants of a renowned *mahatan* of Okhra village in Dang valley.

20. BHAGWARYA MAHATAN. As above, except that this lineage traces itself to a renowned *mahatan* of Bhagwar village in Dang valley.

21. KARRYA KARANGAWAN.

22. KARRYA BHAMKYAN. Very little is known about these two (nos. 21 and 22) clan names, except that the last word in the name indicates the two villages Karanga and Bhamki, both in Dang.

23. PANSAGGA or LAL DARIA. *Lal dari* literally means a red pole. In fact it is a pole from which the bridal palanquin is suspended. It is believed that the people in this clan are the descendants of slaves who were the only people employed to carry bridal palanquins in Nepal.

24. DHAMLAHAWAS.

25. ULTAHAWAS. Literally the word *ultahawa* means "doing the reverse". This clan is unique among the Tharus for its house-plan. The plan of their house is the reverse of the normal. If you imagine uplifting a whole Tharu house from the ground and putting it down again in the same place, except that the north-south ends of the house are turned around, this gives an idea of a ULTAHAWA house plan. There are four sub-clans in this clan:

- a. BAUKHAHI ULTAHAWA. They believe that once a *baukhā* (wind) blew and put their ancestor's house in the reverse position.
- b. BAKHARRYA ULTAHAWA. They keep all their deities inside a Bakhari (a matting enclosure).
- c. GHANTAHI ULTAHAWA. They keep one small bell (*ghant*) enshrined in their divinity-room.

- d. KAWA ULTAHAWA. During the Dasya ritual performance, the household chief of this sub-clan mounts the roof of his house and cries as a *Kawa* (crow) before going into trance.

C. *Clans in the Sub-Group of the 'In-betweens'*

There are very few clans in this sub-group. I was able to collect only two clan names in this sub-group which are as follows:

1. DHAIRAHAWA. Their household deity is Satehria who is also worshipped by the Dhamlahawa (see No. 24 above). Some of the shamans in this clan perform *rath lausari* craft (not necessarily done by renowned shamans). Further explanation of *rath lausari* will be found below. Some of the households in Lokhwar village of Dang belong to this clan.
2. BABHAN or BAMAN. According to legend, the people of this clan are the descendants of a Brahmin.

The above list of clans is not complete. This list enumerates only those names which were collected by me in Dang valley during my field study. Still more clan names can be collected in further investigations. However, as far I know, there are fewer chances to find further clan names in Char-guruwa and the 'in-between' sub-group than in the Barin group which abounds in such names.

As seen above some clans are named after a real or imaginary ancestor (Sukhrorya Gurrwa, Bagwarya Mahtan, Okharrya Mahatan), others after his caste or ethnic group of real or supposed descent (Ahir, Babhan, Magrahthen etc.), the deity of the family (Kharagya) or a particular way of life (the Utlahawas, their house-plan being the reverse of a common Tharu house) or because of a particular way of performing certain rituals

(Kajpujwa Dahit, Gheckatwa, Kawa Ultahawa etc.). According to the information collected in my field studies, the clan names resembling the name of a caste or an ethnic group originated due to the integration of persons from other castes or ethnic groups into Tharu society or 'caste',⁴ either by marriage, by a special ceremony arranged to accept (*pāt lenā*) outsiders into the group or caste. Informants in Rautgaon and Baibang villages of Hekuli Panchayat maintained that when in the old days the forested Dang valley was being opened for agriculture, some Tharu nobles like Mohlal and Raghunath (ancestors of some of the Tharu families of Dhanaura and Baibang villages) were granted certain rights (by royal decrees) to assimilate or adopt (*pāt lenā*) people into Tharu society. In those days there was a shortage of manpower for farmwork since normally no person, other than a Tharu, dared to stay in that malarial valley. Persons who "became" Tharus, according to the informants, were encouraged to clear and cultivate some of the forest land in their vicinity. Thus an immigrant from outside, of whatever caste or ethnic background, once converted and settled there became a bonafide Tharu by deed as well as by 'caste', preserving the remembrance of his original caste or ethnic identity in his Tharu clan name.

In Sukhrwar village, there are altogether eleven clans (from the three sub-groups) represented by twenty-three households. These are as follows:

A. Clan from Gharguruwa sub-group

1. SUKHRORRYA GURRWA (eight households).

B. Clans from Barin sub-group

⁴ 'Caste' is the literal translation of the Nepali word *jāt*, which is used in the Muluki Ain 2012 B.S. (1955) in referring to the Tharus as a group.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. CHATCWAR | (three households). |
| 2. NAMMWA | (two households). |
| 3. GHECKATWA | (two households). |
| 4. BHALUGUNI | (two households). |
| 5. KARRYA BHAMKYAN | (one household). |
| 6. CILRAHAWA | (one household). |
| 7. KARRYA KARANGAWAN | (one household). |
| 8. BHAGWARYA MAHTAN | (one household). |
| 9. LOTAURYA or NAMKOHLYA | (one household). |

C. Clans in the 'in-between' sub-group

- | | |
|----------|------------------|
| 1. BAMAN | (one household). |
|----------|------------------|

People of Sukhrorya Gurrwa, Ghatcwar and Gheckatwa clan are supposed to be the earliest settlers in Sukhrwar village. All these three clans have had matrimonial relations with each other. The rest of the above clans immigrated a little later from other villages, when some of their relatives in Sukhrwar village persuaded them to join them. The Baman, Cilrahawa, Karrya Karangawan and one of the Checkatwa households (that of Kalesu) are comparatively very recent (eight to twelve years ago) immigrants to this village.

The Ghargurwa and Barin System

The word *ghargurwa* is derived from *ghar* (meaning a house) and *guru* (a Sanskrit word meaning a teacher). *Guru* in other communities usually refers to a Brahmin priest or a teacher, which is distinct from a shaman. However among Tharus this distinction is not made. In fact, a man cannot become a priest unless he knows a bit of shamanistic craft; for shamanism is an integral part of Tharu religious life. Each household, no matter of what clan, has one man as *gurwā* (priest-shaman) from among its members who is also usually the household chief. His job is to look after the religious affairs (of a minor nature) of

the house as well as to cure some minor health complications; yet there is one sub-group of clans which supplies the professional *guruwās* known as *gharguruwās*. Each *Barin* clan household needs their services on several occasions. A *gharguruwā* serves as a priest during any major household ceremony in his layman's (*barin*) family. During ill health or any kind of trouble that comes to a member of the layman's family or to his animals and poultry, or in case of any kind of harm to property the reasons for which cannot be known, the *gharguruwā* has to discover the cause (which will be found to be, generally, an unfed or ill-fed spirit or divinity) and to root it out by sacrificing some animal (a goat, a sheep or a pig) or fowl (a chicken).

The most striking characteristic of this priest-layman relationship among Tharus is that, unlike the orthodox Hindus, they are not so free to select or change their priests (*gharguruwā*) since traditionally, different *Barin* lineages are associated with certain lineages of *Gharguruwa*. Yet, there is no hard and fast rule or guide-line controlling such a relationship. A *Barin* family traditionally gets priestly services from a particular *Gharguruwa* family; even if its members migrate or settle elsewhere they will be served by the same family or the same lineage or at least from the same clan of *Gharguruwa*. In case of migrations or new settlements, efforts are made to continue the same relationship but sometimes this is impossible and so a search will be made for the same clan of *Gharguruwa* in the neighbourhood to fill the gap. I observed in the field that such traditional relationships are maintained within a distance of a one or two days walk. When the distance stretches beyond that, a cousin of the original *Gharguruwa* family or a man from the same clan is sought out and appointed.

Each year on the *pancami* (fifth) day of the *Dasya* festival (falling in the bright fortnight in October), a man from every

barin family goes to his *gharguruwā* to bring *dhoop* and *ban*; while going, he carries some gift for the Gharguruwa family. This gift consists of four or five bunches of maize cobs, some seasonal vegetables like pumpkin, egg-plant gourd and green chillies accompanied by a small jar of special liquor (especially distilled for the occasion). The *dhoop* and *bān* which he brings home is preserved, to be used at several religious and shamanistic performances to be held during the period until the next *Dasya*. Several persons going to and returning from their *gharguruwās* passed me on that day. Some of the Barins had come from Sunar area (Banke District) while others were from Deokhuri valley. Some from the easternmost part of Dang valley were going to the remote western part while a few others were coming from Deokhuri valley.

During any marriage ceremony the *gharguruwā* must be invited. Without his presence or that of another *guruwā* from the same lineage, the ceremony cannot be fully performed. On such occasions, his role is to keep the family's household deities quiet and pleased. He is the person who lights the fire in the holy oven in which the special dishes of *cuni* and *barrya* are fried in mustard oil. The mustard oil has already been purified by the *gharguruwā* who recites certain Mantras and turns a finger-size bunch of *kush* (*Poa cynosuroides*) and *doob* (*Cynodon dactylon*) grass into it.

Twice a year during the *cait puni* (bright fortnight in April) and the *kātiki puni* (bright fortnight in November), the *gharguruwā* performs *rath lausari*. Sometimes, if the *gharguruwā* is not free, any other *guruwā* (from a Gharguruwa group clan or from a clan belonging to the 'in between' group), can perform *rath lausari*.

If someone becomes ill suddenly, or if anything harmful happens to a man or his family, his animals or his property,

the *gharguruwā* is called. He examines the rice-grains (about a quarter handfull) brought out and given to him by the suffering person or the house chief. The *gharguruwā* keeps it in his hand for a few minutes reciting certain Mantras while moving a lighted oil lamp (hanging inside a twine supporter from his hand) moving it slowly to-and-fro in front of him. In this way he finds out the cause and identifies the spirit, ghost, or witch responsible for the mischief. Such an act of diagnosis is called *pāti baithnā*. The *gharguruwā* usually determines that the trouble has been caused either by a previously unknown spirit which is seeking to be worshiped and fed or by a known deity or spirit which has been neglected. In the latter case the family may have forgotten to worship the deity or spirit during certain annual festivals or the family may have promised a special offering to the spirit during some time of misfortune⁵ or an suspicious occasion⁶ and then forgotten to keep their promise. According to the cause of the trouble rites are performed, if it costs less money and labour. Otherwise promises are made for the implementation, on the nearest convenient occasion.

In case of clans under Gharguruwa and the 'in-between' sub-groups they produce their own *dhoop* and *ban*. Usually they get their patients cured through the *guruwā* within their own family or clan. Sometimes they may call some other *guruwā* from any other clan, if they consider him to be more experienced (*barā sipār guruwā*). The work of such traditional diagnosis and cure, can also be done by other *guruwās* from any clan or sub-group, though the Gharguruwa group clans are supposed to be the professional clans for this craft.

5 For instance illness or death of a member of the family or any harm or damage to the pets or to the property.

6 For instance a marriage or the birth of a child after a long period of barrenness.

The *gharguruwā* house, having the largest number of its *barin* client houses in my sample village, was the house of the Mahaton Mohanlal, which had to serve 30 houses of which the most remote was within six or seven hours walk. The cousins of Mohanlal (already separated and living in the same village) were also serving in the same way to other *barins*. After the death of the *gharguruwā* or any of the *barins* or in case of separations in any of the two (*gharguruwā* and *barin*) families, their descendants and cousins may compromise in choosing a man as their *gharguruwā* or vice versa.

In return for his services the *gharguruwā* is paid back with a hindleg and the head of the sacrificed animal (pig, goat or sheep) plus one rupee in cash in addition to food and drinks whenever he performs any rite in his *barin*'s family. Whenever the *barin* wants to send for the *gharguruwā* for his services, the person going to call him must carry one little jar of holy liquor, and some vegetables or fruit, as a gift for the *gharguruwā* family.

In cases of shortage of labour, the *barin*'s family assists the *gharguruwā*'s family in agricultural work such as ploughing, sowing, or threshing. During any financial problem, they help their *gharguruwā* by giving loans. The *gharguruwā* may also help his *barin*, in the reverse situation. Gharguruwas also play a prominent role in solving disputes in their *barins* families. As they enjoy a respected position and also command the faith of their *barins*, their decisions are well accepted by the *barin* families. In rare cases, situations may happen to the contrary also, as in 1958 A.D. a *gharguruwā* (of another village) had abducted a woman from his *barin*'s family in Sukhrwar. The result was that the *barin* family dismissed the *gharguruwā* and appointed a cousin of the same person (already separated from the same *gharguruwā* family) as a new *gharguruwā*.

Family Life

Most of the Tharus live in joint families. This is of help to them in many ways, primarily in providing man-power for their every-day farming, and gives them the benefit of skilled, specialized labour. Some supervise grazing or looking after domestic animals (cows, buffaloes or sheep), others plough, dig or drive the pack animals, while others again look after the domestic and religious affairs of the house.

In Sukhrwar village there are only four nuclear families out of 23. One of these four nuclear families belongs to a recent immigrant who moved here with his family a few years ago after separating from his joint family living in another village. One house belongs to a person who separated from his extended family within the village. The other two houses belong to persons who, when other members of the previous joint family migrated to the far western Terai or moved to other villages in Dang, remained with their immediate families in the village. In 19 out of 23 households, either both or one of the grandparents are living with their sons, unmarried daughters and grandchildren in the same house.

The richer houses in Sukhrwar village are the larger joint family houses. Each house needs at least one cowherd, one shepherd, one grass-cutter, many ploughmen, and others to manage the affairs of the whole family. Women and girls contribute farm labour, like cutting the crops and transporting them to the threshing area or to the house for storage, collecting cow-dung or fire-wood for fuel, and pounding and grinding grains. If the family is small, it can neither breed cattle, sheep nor goats, nor can the members plough much land. Such families are short of bulls, seeds and labour. An ordinary farmer or tenant can hardly afford all these things. Thus the few men (one or two) living in a nuclear family can cultivate

only very little land and thus have small yields. During the non-cultivation period too, there is very little time for individuals of nuclear families to do other seasonal out-door jobs or business, in addition to their regular domestic responsibilities.

The above reasons explain why the Tharus prefer to live within a large family. During my stay among the Tharus, I realized that the lure of a better salary or better facilities would not motivate a Tharu to leave his kinfolk. Tharus do not go far from home. They do not like to go to other non-Tharu areas of Nepal. They rarely go to the hills or to any non-Tharu areas for more than a couple of days. No Tharu goes to Lahur.⁷ Military service which attracts a lot of other Nepalese, does not attract these people.

Inside the village, the adults are busy with their out-door farming jobs, young children are busy playing with their old grandparents. All children in the joint family get equal care. Whenever any special dish is prepared in the house, all members of the joint family, without distinction of age or sex, get an equal share of it. Even the babies are given their shares, although their share is consumed by their nursing mothers. Beating or scolding very young children is rare. Some of the Tharu parents complained to me that as their children were beaten at school, they stopped sending them to school. All men and women except the very old and the very young get up early in the morning to begin their work. Women

7 Derived from the name 'Lahore' which is a city in Pakistan. Before the partition of India, the British rulers had one recruiting centre there; many Nepalese went there to join the British army. Later on the expression '*lahur janu*' (to go to Lahur) became the popular idiom for foreign military service, and later for any kind of work outside Nepal.

grind or pound grain while men go to plough, cut or thresh the crops, or go to the forest to bring fire-wood. One of the old ladies, or the junior-most daughter-in-law does the cooking. If the family is quite large and needs a large quantity of food prepared, one more lady helps the cook. Boys and girls either cut grass and look after the cattle or help their seniors. During the day, some boys look after the grazing cattle, buffaloes or sheep and goats; others cut grass while the girls also sometimes guard grazing animals or collect dried cow-dung on the pastures.

Traditionally the house chief is exempted from ploughing and his wife from pounding, if possible. Tharu women have their own personality. They are not mere shadows of their husbands, as they are in a Hindu society. Their interests and suggestions are also considered when making any household decision. A husband tries to keep his wife happy and satisfied, otherwise she might take another husband or run away to her parents. The newly married wives, who are more sentimental and emotional have a greater tendency to do thus.

Relations among the house-wives in a Tharu family, are generally speaking better in comparison to Brahman-Chetri families, Relations between a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law/s are usually cordial and peaceful. A mother-in-law does not misbehave or do injustice to her daughter-in-law, for she fears that in retaliation the same treatment will be meted out to her own daughter or whatever other girl from her own household was given in exchange for the daughter-in-law. Moreover, in joint Tharu families, there is often more than one daughter-in-law/s in a house. So, it is not so easy for a mother-in-law to dominate or be unfair to a daughter-in-law. Again, making a daughter-in-law unhappy, results not only in driving her away but her husband also and he is one of the most important earning members of the family. An unhappy

daughter-in-law might convince her husband to move away or split off from the family; this means a severe blow to an agrarian Tharu family.

Relations between daughter-in-law/s too, are quite cardinal. The Tharu family context leaves very little scope for tensions among them. According to the Tharu concept of property, each member of the family, is a co-owner of the property. So its income and resources, too, must be group, utilised for the equal welfare of all members. All persons of the same age-group, same sex and same status in the family hierarchy, get the same care and an equal share of any family privilege. For example, they will get the same quality and same number of clothes or the same number of shoes. In case of anything expensive, efforts are made up to buy that item for each person annually. Similarly, all persons, of the same sex and age group have to devote the same amount of labour or time to the family. The ill or the physically handicapped are exceptions. Most of the family income is spent on food and maintenance of the family.

A social relationship is called *sohri*. Among the Tharus, there are three types of social relationships: (i) A relationship which is the consequence of marriage ties is called *māmāorik sohri* (relationship from the maternal uncle's side) or *sasurāarak sohri* (relationship from the wife's parents, side) (ii) A relationship by blood or a consanguineal relationship, is called *gotyār sohri*. (iii) *Mit-sohri* is a relationship of ritual friendship established between two males or two females, most often belonging to different castes or different ethnic groups, whether having the same marital status or not.

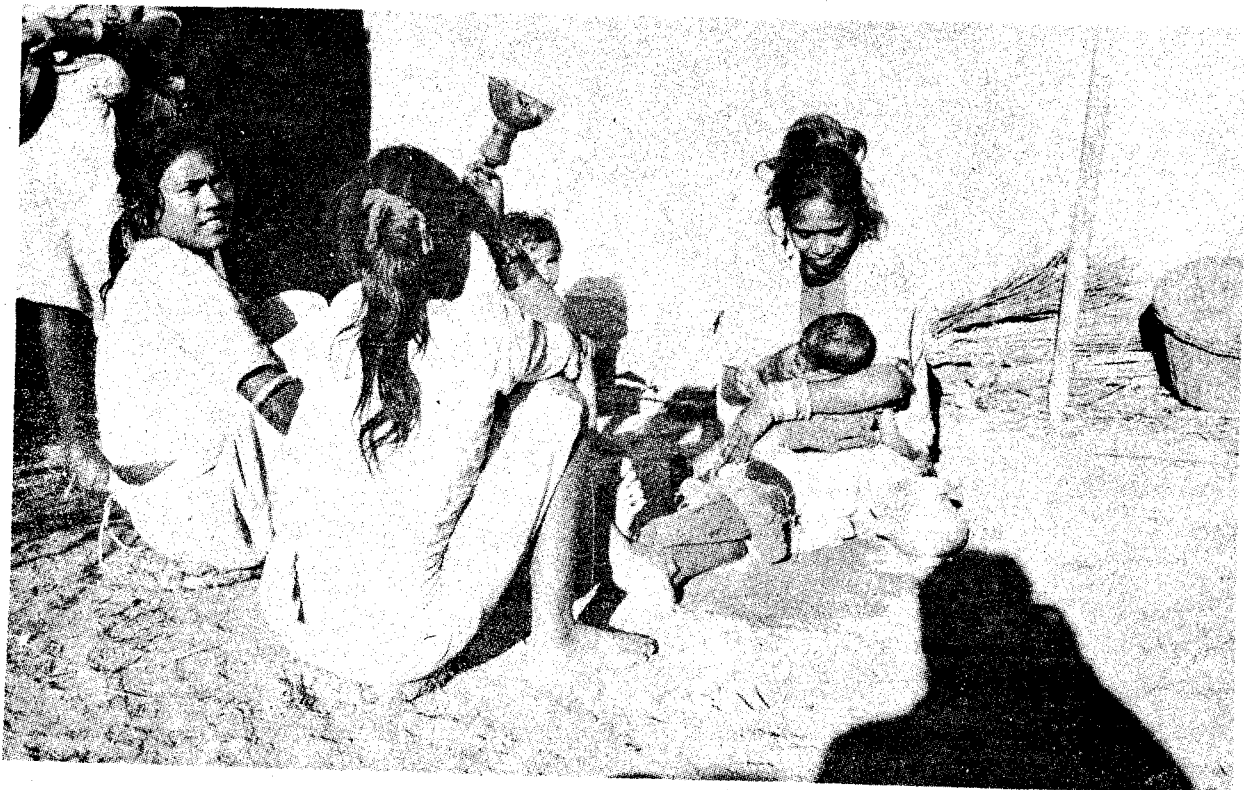
The relationship of *mit-sohri* strengthens the friendship or increases the sense of co-operation between two families. Sometimes, when an old rivalry or enmity is to be ended by

mutual compromise, the parties or families arrange for making such a relationship between two of their members one from each group or party. Some families do this to raise their social status in their locality. Nobody readily dares to challenge or appose such families who are linked by ritual friendship and therefore stronger. This relationship can be easily established between any two males or two females of whatever caste or ethnic group.

In Sukhrwar village one such relationship was established between the daughter of the village *mahaton* (a Tharu) and the wife of Navaraj (one of the Brahmin landowners) in 1965 when a mutual compromise was established between the land owners and the tenants (Tharus) after a long conflict concerning tenancy rights. Both of the parties, when tired and wearied by the long judicial procedure, came to a compromise.



Tharu Beauties



Women at Leisure



Paddy Harvest



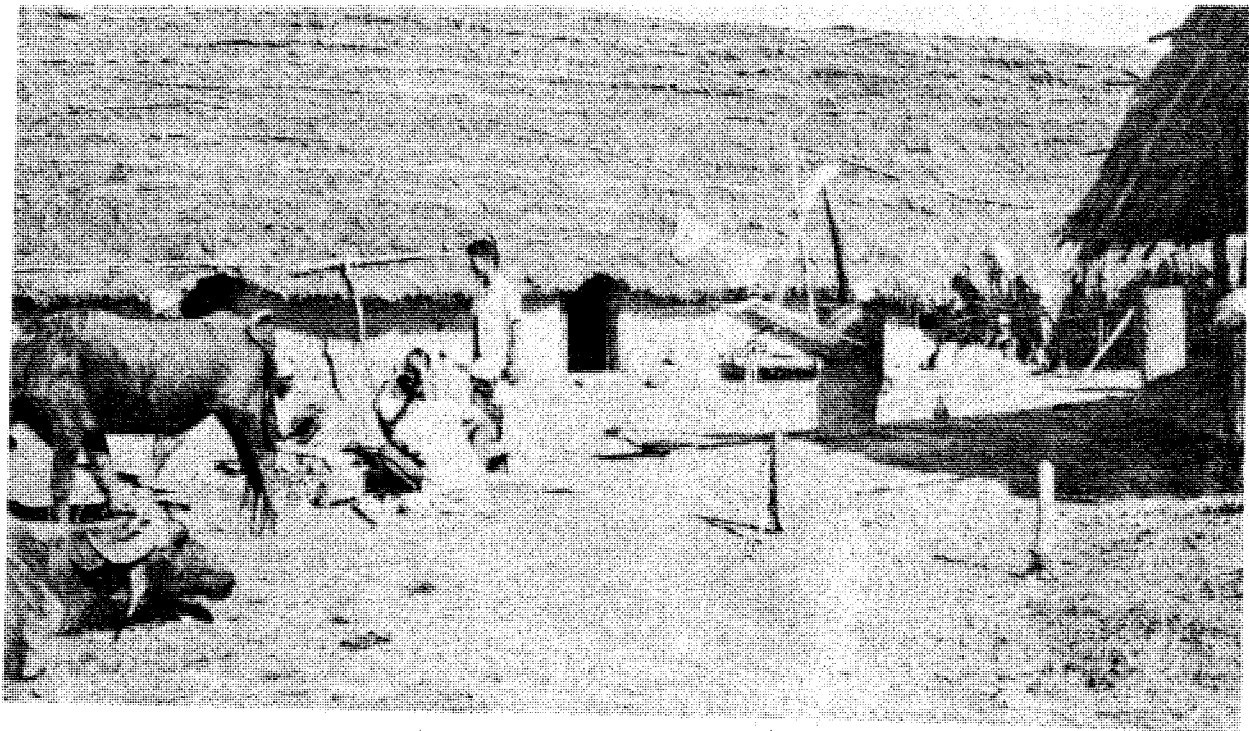
Dasya Festival Dance



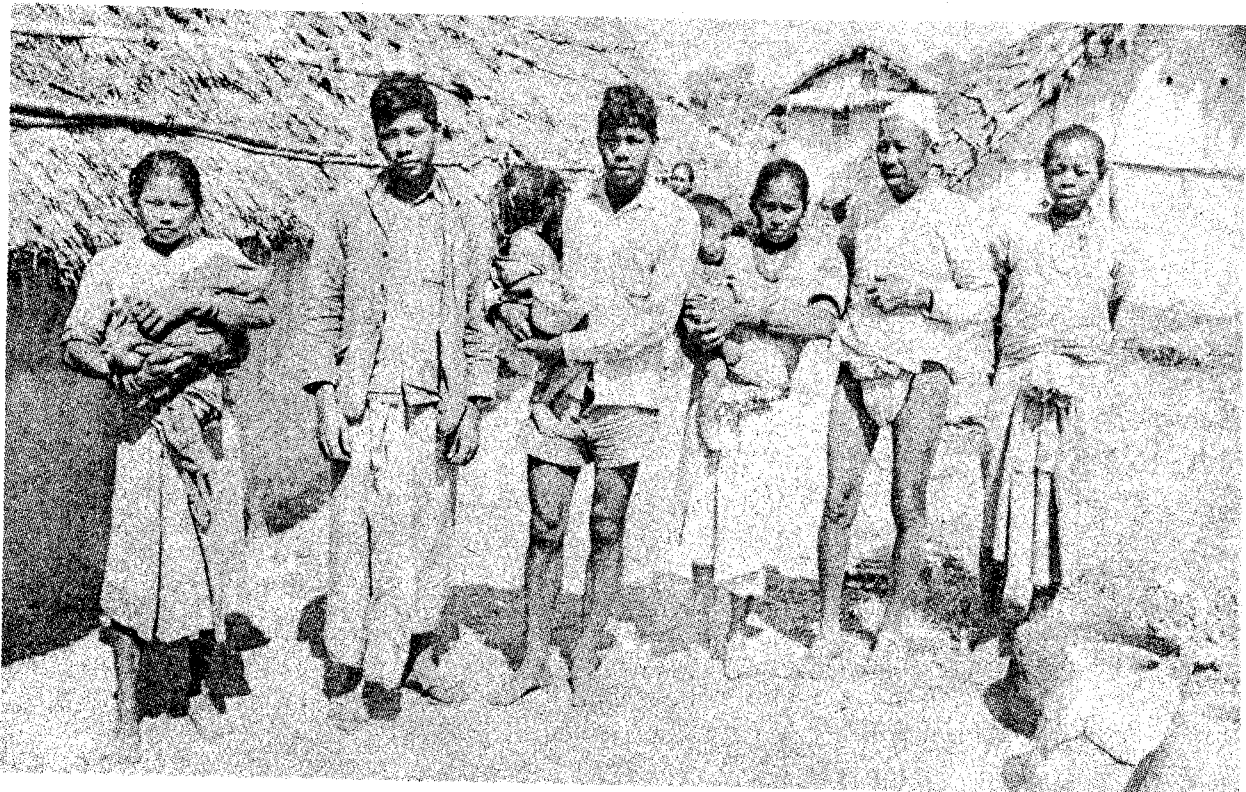
Sukhrwar Village--View from the North



Tharu Boys Returning Home from School



A Courtyard Scene



A Tharu Family (Note the alien influence in the dress of two of the men)

A BUDDHIST GUIDE TO THE POWER PLACES OF THE KATHMANDU VALLEY

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Introduction

The entire Kathmandu Valley is a sacred place for Buddhists, Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavas alike. The followers of each of these paths relate legends that associate the early human Buddhas, Śiva (Paśupati) or Viṣṇu with the prehistorical Valley. Geographically, geomantically and aesthetically this fertile lake-drained valley with a temperate climate, nestling in the sub-Himalayas, has always been a paradise for reclusive contemplatives, and sometimes martial refugees, from the Indian plains. Over the centuries the devout though practical indigenous people of the Valley and their more fanatical Indian co-religionists have created an incomparably rich legacy of religious art and architecture, legend and parable, at innumerable power spots within this vast holy place (*upachandoha*). The Newari artisans of the Malla period (13th-18th century) who created most of the stone and wooden environment at these power places were barely inferior in skill and conception to their Licchavi predecessors (5th-10th centuries), and rarely flagging in creative imagination the castes of artisans have sustained for 1500 years a height of achievement in religious art that Europe attained only during the Renaissance and China during the T'ang dynasty.

The apparent laxity or indifference of contemporary temple officiants (*deo-pālas*) should not blind the observer to the profound significance of the holy places and the dominant part that they play in the lives of the people. And if Buddhists and Hindus, Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavas, seem to regard the power places and images of each other's sects as equally sacred this is not through ignorance but a real empathy for the unity of the intrinsic noumenal reality and an unusual human tolerance of other men's beliefs. Thus the same stone image (Buṛa Nīlakaṇṭha, for example,) will be worshipped by a Buddhist as Lokeśwara, by a Śaivite as Mahādeva and by a Vaiṣṇava as Viṣṇu.

For the Tibetans, not only has the Valley been a destination of pilgrims but also a source of example, inspiration and knowledge since the 7th century. The first Tibetan Buddhist king, Srong-btsan sGam-po, married a Nepali princess, Bhṛkutī, who took the trappings of her Buddhist culture to Lhasa together with a crew of artisans. A Nepali named Śīla Mañju taught the King the Buddhist doctrine and initiated a long and eminent lineage of Nepali scholars who taught the *dharma* in Tibet. In the 8th century Nepal played an important role in the early spreading of the doctrine in Tibet. Perhaps King Khri-srong lDe-btsan's roving ambassador, sBa gSal-s nang, who came to the Valley to invite the Indian Bodhisattva Śāntarakṣita to Central Tibet to build the first Tibetan *vihāra* at Samye, can be called the first Tibetan pilgrim to Nepal. A few years later the same king's messengers came to Pharping to invite Tibet's Great Guru Padmasambhava (herein called Guru Padma or simply Padma) to succeed where Śāntarakṣita had failed. One of Guru Padma's most eminent disciples, sNubs Sangs-rgyas Ye-she, came to Kathmandu to study with the Nepali 'king' Vasudhara and the Indian *ācārya* Dharmabodhi at a *vihāra* on the site of the present Maru Sattal in Durbar Square, Kathmandu, before returning to Samye to found the *rdzogs-pa anuyoga* lineage of the Old School, the *rNying-ma-pa* school.

But it was in the latter period of propagation of the doctrine in Tibet (*phyi-dar*), beginning in the latter part of the 10th century and lasting for the next 200 years, that Tibet accumulated an enormous cultural and religious debt to Nepal. A stream of scholars and *yogins* arrived from the Land of the Snows in search of texts and instruction from such Nepali adepts as Pham-thing-pa and Ye-yang-pa, and from visiting Indian masters like Atulyavajra, Naropa, Śavara, and Vāgīśvara-kirti. The heinous destruction of the great monastic academies of the fragmented Pāla empire - Nālandā, Vikramaśīla, Jagaddala and Uddaṇḍapura - at the end of the 12th century and the beginning of the 13th had the positive result of throwing a large number of monkish and scholarly refugees into the arms of knowledge hungry Tibetans in their sphere of activity in Nepal. But this was after Marpa the Translator had made his succession of visits here, towards the end of the process of distilling the essential *vajrayāna* doctrine and transporting it over the high Himalayas to be transmitted by the *bKa'-brgyud-pa* and *Sa-skyapa* lineages.

With an intolerant Muslim ascendancy on the plains making the heat only a secondary obstacle to devout Tibetan pilgrims wishing to gain merit at the Magadhan shrines blessed by Śākyamuni Buddha, Nepal became the most important place of pilgrimage for Tibetans outside their own frontiers. The centuries old Buddhist institutions of Chābāhil Cārumatī Vihāra, which is believed to have been founded by Aśoka's daughter Cārumatī, Paśupati itself, one of the 24 *śākta pīṭhas* where the *liṅgam* is worshipped as Sambara, and the sites of Śankhu Bajra Joginī and Pharping Nārāyaṇa Sthān (Yanglesho), which are associated with Guru Padma, these were of great account, but by the beginning of the Malla period (13th century) Swayambhunāth had achieved priority for all Buddhists. As early as 1041 Atīśa could give pilgrimage to the Swayambhu

Dharmadhatu Vāgīśvara Maṇḍala as an excuse to leave the Vikramaśīla academy and reach striking distance of Tibet. As the Turks on the Indian plains gave way to their more tolerant Mogul successors the trickle of zealous Tibetan *yogins* visiting the broken Buddhist power places of Magadha would have increased to a steady flow. In the 18th century we know that many 'Grand Lamas' made the pilgrimage, the 12th Karmapa not the least of them. There was little difference in the length of travel from Central Tibet to Southern Bihar by the direct route through Shigatse, Chumbi and Sikkim and the routes via the Kathmandu Valley through Tingri, Kodari and Śankhu or through Kyirong and Triśūli, which were important towns on the main route from Western Tibet to India. Before the Gorkhāli confrontation with Tibet in the 18th century the links between the *bKa'-brgyud-pa* hierachs and the Valley are attested by the restoration of temples undertaken by these wealthy pilgrims. With the decline of Newari Buddhism in the last 200 years, after the Gorkhāli conquest, it has been the Tibetans whose greater ardour has kept the light of faith burning at the Buddhist power places throughout the Valley; and particularly since 1959 and the Chinese invasion of Tibet, Tibetan faith and wealth have invigorated religious activity at Boudha, Swayambhu, Namo Buddha, Katiśimbhu and Pharping.

To our present advantage the Tibetans have a literary genre that assists pilgrims in their peregrinations throughout the sphere of their activity--Tibet, North India, Western China and Nepal. Like tourist handbooks, guides (*gnas-yig*) and 'chronicles' (*dkar-chag*, which could be more accurately translated as 'register' or 'index') inform the pilgrim of major shrines where merit can be gained and spiritual sustenance secured, and they may give indication of the legends and historical background associated with the power places. The earliest guide to Nepal of which we are aware was written by mNga'-ris Pan-chen who is most

likely *the* mNga-'ris Pan-chen, Padma dBang-rgyal rDo-rje (1487-1543). But although the 18th and 19th century *pandits* Chos-kyi Nyi-ma and bLa-ma bTsan-po were familiar with it, it may no longer be extant, depriving us of an early 16th century Tibetan impression of the Valley.

This present work is based on *The Kathmandu Valley Guide* (*Bal-yul gnas-yig*) of Ngag-dbang rDo-rje, printed in 1774. This guide is a list of 50 power places of the Valley with brief accounts of each shrine and indications of the legends associated with each place. Herein, under each of the 50 heads has been added references from other guides and from chronicles, biographies and other miscellaneous sources. According to the colophon of *The Kathmandu Valley Guide*, Ngag-dbang rDo-rje was a Newari *bhikṣu* living in the Kimdol Vihāra, to the south of Swayambhu, and the printing was done in a wood-horse year. A peculiar feature of the *Guide* is that after the Tibetan name of each power place a phrase is added in transliterated *pahāri* language, the mountain language of the Gorkhālis, giving the Newar name of the shrine according to the Hindu view. Although *pahāri* was known in the Valley prior to the conquest we infer that the text was written after the Gorkhāli invasion of 1768; this *terminus a quo* of the *Guide's* origin is affirmed by the inclusion of Basantapur Kumārī Bāhāl which was built by the last of the Malla kings, Jaya Prakāś Malla. Since bLa-ma bTsan-po used the *Guide* to compile his *World Geography* in 1820, the wood-horse year in which the text was printed must be 1774. It is remarkable however that only six years after the Gorkhāli conquest the author should have such faith in the continued usage of the Gorkhāli language.

Ngag-dbang rDo-rje had an intimate knowledge of the Valley. He makes only one error of fact, and that is in locating the Tilopa and Naropa Caves at Ārje Ghāt, the ghāt immediately below the Paśupati shrine, rather than at Sūrje Ghāt 100 yards upstream. Otherwise, there is some confusion caused by his

reliance upon the popular tradition based on the *Gośṛṅga-vyākaraṇa-sūtra*. This tradition reverses the locations of Vipaświ's Stūpa and Śākyamuni's Stūpa, naming Nāgārjuna Hill as Ri gLang-ru (Gośṛṅga Parvata), when according to both the *Swayambhu Purāṇa* and common sense, the Buddha Śākyamuni preached at Parbatsthān on Mañjuśrī Hill and Vipaświ Buddha took his seat beside the primordial lake on Nāgārjuna Hill. Fortunately, however, the author relies on his observation and his Newari heritage rather than the prophecies which identify Nepal with Khotan. Ngag-dbang rDo-rje was probably a *bKa'-brgyud-pa* initiate since he resided in the *viḥāra* associated with that school. But because he gives Guru Padmasambhava the epithet 'Second Buddha' (*Sangs-rgyas gnyis-pa*) on two occasions (in the entries for the Asura Cave and Maru Sattal) we must assume he had strong *rNying-ma* leanings; perhaps he had been ordained by the 6th Drukpa Rimpoche (of the *rNying-ma* influenced '*Brug-pa bKa'-brgyud* school) who spent some time in the Valley and in Kimdol Vihāra during the second half of the 18th c.

It is mere coincidence that the author of the oldest of our three main sources, the *Swayambhu Chronicles* (*Bal-yul mehod-rten 'phags-pa shing-kun dang de'i gnas gzhan-rnams-kyi dkar-chag*), has the same name as the author of *The Kathmandu Valley Guide*. This Ngag-dbang rDo-rje was from Nas-yul, Barley Valley, which could be anywhere in the Himalas above 8000'. He was an initiate of the *bKa'-brgyud-pa* School and a disciple of rJe Rang-rig-ras-pa, who restored both the Boudha and Swayambhu Stūpas and had the *Swayambhu Chronicles* written by his disciple to commemorate the restoration of Swayambhunāth and to record whatever he knew of the Stūpa's history and the other major shrines of the Valley. He was a contemporary of Pārthivendra Malla who reigned from 1680-1688, but the restoration of the Stūpa was not completed, or at least the consecration was not performed, until 1694. Thus we date this text at the end of the 17th c.

Perhaps Rang-rig-ras-pa, who according to Boudha's Chini Lama, was the 5th tulku of his line, hailing from Khams in Tibet, had been cremated and his relics interred in the largest of 31 the small *stūpas* to the east of Boudha by this time.

The text consists of 10 folios. Khams-sprul Chos-kyi Nyi-ma considered it a compilation of old Tibetan stories and by implication unreliable. Unfortunately the extant wood-blocks of this text, the same that Turrel Wylie transliterated in Appendix B of his *Tibetan Religious Geography of Nepal*, appear to have been carved by an illiterate neophyte doing his first bit of carving, as the text is hopelessly corrupt; words and phrases are misplaced or omitted and sometimes it appears that entire sentences have been rearranged. An older copy of this important text is needed before it can be edited definitively.

However, the work is interesting because it draws heavily upon the *Gośrṅga-vyākaraṇa-sūtra*, and one source of the Tibetans' misguided beliefs about Swayambhu and Nāgārjuna Hill is uncovered. The *Gośrṅga-vyākaraṇa-sūtra* is a 'late' *sūtra*; it consists of a prophetic discourse of Śākyamuni begun in Vaiśālī and continued in Khotan (Li-yul). The prophecies concern the founding of Khotan after the draining of a vast lake (the Lake-River Goma); the evolution of a great Buddhist civilisation focussed upon the Goma Salagandha Stūpa; and advice to the hosts that accompanied the Buddha as to how they should conduct themselves when they were reborn in Khotan etc. (*vide* Appendix I). The quotations in the *Swayambhu Chronicles* supposedly taken from the *Sūtra* have been distorted to serve the purpose of identification of Li-yul with Nepal. However, there certainly are similarities between the legends of the *Swayambhu Purāna* and the prophecies contained in the *Sūtra* that make such an identification possible, and since all sentient beings have benefitted from the sanctity that Swayambhu and

the Valley in general have acquired from this misidentification, and since the alternative set of legends (the Mañjuśrī Cycle) concerning the origin of the valley civilisation contained in the *Swayambhu Purāṇa* are of late and equally dubious origin, there is every reason to stress the similarities that support the thesis that Li-yul is Nepal, and accept the gentle priestcraft that introduced the *Gośrṅga-vyākaraṇa-sūtra* to the generations of Tibetan pilgrims to Nepal. The prophecies of the *Mañjuśrī-mūlatantra*, another of the *Chronicles'* sources (which is not available to me), were interpreted by the Tibetans as Tibetan historical prophecy; 'Gos Lotsawa, who wrote the *Blue Annals*, took the historical prophecies of this *tantra* to concern the history of Tibet rather than that of Nepal when they were more capable of a Nepali interpretation. But again there is no vice in such misinterpretation except the subversion of history; and since one of history's functions is to give meaning to, and thereby boost confidence in, the present through reference to the past, if an efficacious version of the past, however distorted, is sanctified as the Buddha's Word, history's purpose may be served. (*Vide* Thomas, F.W., *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents Concerning Chinese Turkestan*, for a discussion of the Nepal-Khotan confusion)

The most significant guide to Nepal is the Fourth Khams-sprul Rimpoche's *Chronicles of the Kathmandu Valley Power Place, the Paradise of Upachandoha: the Nectar of the Snowland's Ear* (*Yul-chen-po nye-ba'i tshandoha bal-po'i gnas-kyi dkar-chag gangs-can rna-ba'i bdud-rtsi*). The name *upachandoha*, used to designate the whole of the Valley, denotes a category of *pīṭhasthāna* employed in the listing of the 24 great power places of the Deva and Dākinī in the *Sambara* and *Hevajra-tantras*. Its etymology is obscure. On folio 13a of the *Kailash* edition of the text, Khams-sprul Rimpoche says "The Kathmandu Valley itself is renowned as the paradise of *upachandoha*, and the self-sprung symbols which are the heart

of it are the two symbols known as Paśupati and Guhyaśwarī" (*Bal-po yul 'di'-nyid kyang yul-chen-po nye-ba'i-tshandohar grags-pa'i snying-po rten rang-byung ni pashupati dang guhyaswari zhes-po'i rten 'di' gnyis yin*). The *Upachandohas* ('nearby'-*chandohas*) of the *Hevajra-tantra* are Kalinga, Suvarṇadvīpa and Kokarṇa. In the *Sambara-tantra* Grhadeva (Paśupati) is mentioned as a 'meeting place' ('*du-ba*) not an *upachandoha*. The original significance of these categories has been lost, unless it is contained in an unknown tantric commentary, and it is apparent that the names of the categories of *pīṭhasthānas* can be used interchangeably. These categories also refer to classes of psychic nerves (*rtsa, nāḍī*); thus, although the patterns (*maṇḍalas*) of psychic nerves' focal points retain significance, the classes of their external references have lost meaning. Regarding the date of this text, since the author does not mention the Gorkhālis, we must assume that it was written before 1768 and after Khams-sprul Rimpoche was mature; thus we can date it between 1755 and 1768. It was hand written, and it had not been printed until very recently (*Kailash* III (2), 1975).

Khams-sprul Chos-kyi Nyi-ma (1730-1780) was a student of Ka-thog Rig-'dzin-chen-po Tshe-dbang Nor-bu (1698-1755) and Situ Pan-chen (Chos-kyi 'Byung-gnas). He was evidently a learned man. He writes in a complex colloquial style that does not lend itself to facile translation. He seems to have been well-read in his subject, and although it is evident that he has not visited every power place that he mentions, his information is generally reliable with a few unaccountable exceptions. However, he concerns himself with historicity -- a nightmare flaw! -- and his scepticism seems unduly severe and pedantic. He strives to untangle the threads of conflicting belief and extricate himself from the web of ungrounded legend, and he sometimes succeeds. But one may question his motivation. Conflicting beliefs in the minds of different individuals cause no problem for the individuals

themselves; the problem is fabricated by the analytical scholar, comparing and evaluating, searching for an illusive *objective* truth. 'True' and 'false' seem inappropriate labels to apply to beliefs that lead to different individuals worshipping the same image in different ways and calling it by different names. Why question beliefs that induce disparate castes, creeds and races to worship in the same temple? A valuable social function is served by non-sectarian practices and there is no aesthetic virtue in homogeneity. Tolerance and flexibility is one aspect of the Newari religious genius. And concerning legend, variety is the spice; and it should be axiomatic for mythologists that legend or belief should be evaluated, if it is to be evaluated at all, not as to its historicity, its internal coherence, or its moral content, but simply as to its efficacy. If the odd belief that A-Kham (Mīnanāth) projected U-Kham (Macchendranāth) as an iridescent insect ('bu) clarifies their father-son relationship, then let it stand. And if belief in the prophecies of the *Gośringa--vyākaraṇa-sūtra* induces a man to do pilgrimage to Nāgārjuna's peak, then it is a valid belief. However, despite some prejudice in Chos-kyi Nyi-ma's appraisals, since there is a great deal more of value in Chos-kyi Nyi-ma's *Chronicles* than is relevant to the scope of the present work, we hope that Professor A.W. Macdonald's promise to publish an annotated translation will be fulfilled in the near future. (Professor Macdonald's French translation is forthcoming in *Taoist and Tantric Studies*; ed. M. Strickman, Berkeley.)

The concept of bLa-ma bTsan-po (sMin-grol Nomu. Khan, 1789-1838) that induced him to write his *World Geography* ('Dzam-gling rgyas-bshad) in Peking in 1820 was incredibly ambitious for an untravelled Tibetan in xenophobic China. Insofar as he attempted to present fact rather than myth, legend and belief, as geography his work is of dubious value; it was virtually impossible to obtain correct information about Nepal, for

example, while living at the other end of Asia. However, bLa-ma bTsan-po's chapter on Nepal underlines certain important names and places and his breadth of learning gives us several significant bibliographic references.

The Kathmandu Valley Guide and the *Swayambhu Chronicles* are transliterated in the appendices of *A Tibetan Religious Geography of Nepal*, an edited edition and translation of the Nepali Chapter of Lama bTsan-po's *World Geography* by Turrell Wylie. Unfortunately neither the *Guide* nor the *Chronicles* were edited by him; and neither of these texts are easily available in manuscript form in Kathmandu.

The principal source of Newari legend which *The Kathmandu Valley Guide*, Chos-kyi Nyi-ma's *Chronicles* and our oral sources depend upon is the *Swayambhu Purāṇa*. This *Purāṇa* claims to have
 11 been delivered as a sermon by Śākyamuni Buddha at Parbatsthān on Mañjuśrī Hill, but scholars believe that it was written in the reign of Yakṣa Malla at the beginning of the 15th c. soon after Kathmandu became a separate city state, and that the oldest extant copy is of the late 15th c. The corpus of myth and legend that it embodies must have been circulating orally for perhaps generations previous to its first written form, a form that gave popular legend the sanctity of the Buddha's Word. The first seven chapters of the *Purāṇa* describe the legends associated with the seven incarnate Buddhas (*manusi buddhas*): Vipaświ, Sikhi, Viśvabhu, Krakucchanda, Kanakamuni, Kāśyapa and Śākyamuni. The first six of these Buddhas are assigned two to each of the pre-historical *yugas*, the *kṛitayuga* (*satyayuga*) *tretāyuga* and *dvāparayuga*, while Śākyamuni is the Buddha of the historical *kaliyuga*. But the chief character in the cosmic drama of the foundation of Nepali civilisation is Mañjuśrī who appears from his Five-Peaked Mountain home (Wu t'ai shan) in China at the time of Viśvabhu in the *kṛitayuga*. Appearing magically with his two consorts, Mañjuśrī drained

the primordial lake that filled the Valley (see map), a lake which was a Nāga abode (Nāg Hrād, Nāgavāsahrada), built a city and installed a government, introduced agriculture, and above all he made the Swayambhu Stūpa accessible to worship by man. This Mañjuśrī cycle of legends was the principal contribution of the *Swayambhu Purāṇa* to scriptural literature. It is now believed that the Mañjuśrī legends came from China via central Asia and Khotan. The *Swayambhu Purāṇa* "has been constructed in comparatively recent times on legends concerning Khotan"... "The cult of Mañjuśrī will invariably be localised on a mountain chain composed of five mountains surrounding a lake" (Macdonald, *Newar Art* pp. 51 & 60). If indeed Khotan was the origin of the Mañjuśrī legends, the tradition must have arrived in Nepal centuries before Yakṣa Malla, as Buddhist Khotan was destroyed in the 8th c. Mañjuśrī became highly popular in Nepal after the *Purāṇa* was written down, and reached his height of popularity in the 18th c.; but these days it is rare to find a fully functional Mañjuśrī temple.

The *Swayambhu Purāṇa* introduces the Swayambhu Stūpa as an image of *Adibuddha*: first, Vipaświ Buddha throws a lotus seed into the primordial lake, and it blossoms as a thousand petalled (*utpala*) lotus; then a *stūpa* in *jyotirūpa* (light-form), shining like a 1000 suns, appears on the lotus; Mañjuśrī covers the lotus's roots and builds a hill for the lotus to rest upon; finally, Śāntikar Ācārya, the first of Nepal's *vajrācāryas*, (and living, therefore, between the 7th and 9th centuries when *vajrayāna* was introduced into Nepal) covers the flame with a stone *stūpa* (c/f Paśupati, No. 35). '*Adibuddha*' refers to the same level of existential reality as '*dharmadhātu*'. Regarding the name Swayambhu, perhaps the authors of the *Purāṇa* were familiar with the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha*: "When nothing else was, Śambu was: that is, the Self-existent Buddha Swayambhu, and as he was before all, he is also called Adibuddha" (Regmi, *Medieval Nepal*, Pt. 1, p. 567). Later, the Swayambhu Hill, which

took a different name in each *yuga*, was called Gośṛṅga Parvata, indicating, perhaps, the influence of the earlier *Gośṛṅga-vyākaraṇa-sūtra*. The *Swayambhu Purāna* is undoubtedly a masterpiece of mythological literature; recently Mana Bajracarya, with Warren Smith as editor, has paraphrased in translation the first few chapters of one of its many recensions in *The Mythological History of the Nepal Valley from the Swayambhu Purāna* (Kathmandu, 1978).

The other significant sources of Newari Buddhist legend and history are the *vaṃśāvalis*. The earliest, the *Gopālarājā-vaṃśāvali* was written in the 13th c. by a Śaivite, so that lack of Buddhist mythological history proves nothing. Later *vaṃśāvalis*, which are essentially political chronicles or annotated lists of kings, give variant versions of the *Purāna's* mythology. Wright's *History of Nepal*, translated in the British Residency in Kathmandu by Newari and Indian pundits in the 1870s, is a late Buddhist recension (ca. 1800) and of dubious historiographical value.

This present work had its genesis in the suggestion that Tibetan texts have much information to offer the Nepali historian. Since Nepali history seems to be compiled from fragments -- colophons (sometimes incomplete), stone inscriptions (sometimes broken), and conflicting and mythical chronicles (sometimes unintelligible) -- and since innumerable Tibetan scholars have visited Nepal over the centuries, many of whom wrote autobiographies or had biographies written of them, it is possible that extremely valuable historical data from Tibetan sources could form the basis of a complete history. But generally speaking the sources employed here are not the stuff out of which such a history could be written. Many legends do not add up to a single historical fact. And although the guides, chronicles and biographies provide many pointers, clues and bases for research, the nature of the

biographies, in particular, being essentially metaphysical, there is little concrete fact to grasp. After the guides and chronicles, principally, I have drawn from *gter-ma* literature. *gTer-mas*, the 'revealed texts' of the *rNying-ma* School, are not highly regarded for their historicity. Briefly and simplistically, if a *yogin* meditates in the ground that Guru Padma and Jo-mo mTsho-rgyal blessed, then entering into the universal plenum of omniscience (into the *ākāś*), the secrets of the past and future are revealed in the form of *Ḍākinī* cypher (*mKha'-gro brda'-yig*), which is a concise mystical language that is interpreted in modes suited to the needs of specific individuals or communities at the appropriate time. Such an explanation of the origin of *gter-mas* is far more effective in inspiring faith in the written word in the minds of followers of the *rNying-ma* School than knowledge that an author has a *dge-shes* or *rab-byams-pa* degree from an eminent monastic academy, and because the explicit function of all *gter-mas* is to effect a psychotherapeutic transformation of the mind of the reader, such faith is imperative. But that kind of language makes the western scholar intractably sceptical, and he will tend to dismiss out of hand the historical content of the *gter-mas*.

However, although the history in the *Shel-brag-ma* and the *Zangs-gling-ma* (two of the early *gter-mas* treating the life of Guru Padma) should be treated with discriminating circumspection, it should not be dismissed. *Śankhu*, for example, is mentioned thrice in the *Shel-brag-ma*, and if only because there is no reason for Ugyen gLing-pa, the *gter-ston* 'Treasure Finder', to have fabricated Guru Padma's visit there in the 8th century, we should give his evidence historical credence, although, perhaps, we should take as allegory the story of the *yoginī* he discovered there being suckled by monkeys. The *Swayambhu Chronicles* is full of historical data, but unfortunately the state of the text renders it virtually unusable. We have not been able to identify the King gSer-gyi Go-cha (Suvarṇa

Varman?) who plays an important role in Swayambhu's history. And regarding Chos-kyi Nyi-ma's account of the Tibetan beliefs about Tondikhel Bajrabār (*Bod-thang mgon-po*), while D.R. Regmi, the noted Nepali historian and patriot, doubts that a Nepali princess ever went to Tibet in the 7th century (Regmi p. 349 ff.), the Tibetans go so far as to say that the Emperor Srong-btsan sGam-po's ambassadors camped on Tondhikel maidan to await the Nepali King Amśuvarman's delivery of his daughter. Incidentally, one of the earliest historical references in the *Guide* is to Bal-mo bza' Khri-btsun (Bhr̥kutī), Amśuvarman's daughter, whose loom is reputed to be kept in the Śankhu Bajra Joginī Bāhāl.

There are a few recurrent words in the translations that merit special attention. *Bal-yul* (Wool-Land: Nepal) presents no problem. It has always denoted only Kathmandu Valley to the Tibetans just as 'Nepāl' has always done to the people of other valleys and the Terai, although today outsiders infer the modern political unit that is the Gorkhāli empire; thus 'Kathmandu Valley' is the precise translation although herein 'Nepal' has been used occasionally. But '*Bal-po*' (an inhabitant of the Kathmandu Valley) raises difficulties. In general it has been translated as 'Newar' because the Newars have been the principal inhabitants of the Valley during the past millenium; and when speaking of the Valley people, a pre-19th century Tibetan writer would not be referring to the Bhotiya tribes, to the Terai people, and certainly not to the Gorkhālis. In the 8th century the process of miscegenation of the Tibeto-Burman Kirātas and aboriginal inhabitants with the caste Āryans and Dravidians, Licchavis and other groups, was not complete; and insofar as Newari society was as yet unformed, we cannot say that Guru Padma's disciples, Śākya Dema, Vasudeva, Jilajipha, Kun-nas-ku-bzhi, *et al*, were Newars.

'Power Place' is an interpretative translation of the word *gnas*, which in ordinary parlance means 'residence', 'place', 'abode', etc.; *gnas* is also the Tibetan equivalent of both the *sthān* and *pīṭha* of Newari, and of the Sanskrit *pīṭhasthān*. To the Newars, *sthān* indicates a temple residence of a deity, and *pīṭha* indicates any open Devī shrine. In India, the 51 *pīṭhas* are the places where the parts of the body of Śiva's dead wife, Satī, fell, and 'pīṭha' is still used to indicate one of these specific śākta-sthāns, the residence of the Devī. The adjective 'power' is a more appropriate word to describe 'place' than 'sacred' or 'holy', as it implies the dynamic quality that is almost palpable at many Nepali shrines, rather than the passive quality of sanctity and holiness which, particularly at the *devī* and *yoginī* shrines, is conspicuous by its absence.

Regarding the structure of each of the 50 entries in this guide, the heading is the local Nepali place name. The first, italicised paragraph is always a translation of the *Bal-yul gnas-yig* (vide Wylie's *Appendix A*): the Tibetan name of the place is given first, followed by the transliterated Newari name, which has often been corrupted unrecognisably; the translation of these names, or a corrected version, is given in brackets where appropriate. Then succeeding paragraphs, translated from original sources indicated by bracketed abbreviations, elucidate the first paragraph or add further information. The paragraphs in quotes are straight translations, or as straight as I can make them with fluency as the priority and with corrupt manuscripts as a serious impediment. A paragraph concluding with an abbreviation and not enclosed in quotes indicates a paraphrased translation, any addition being bracketed. My comment upon the original source material follows the translation or paraphrase of original sources. Paraphrased translation within these paragraphs of commentary is indicated by an abbreviation before the period. Incorporated into this commentary is information that I received orally from local

informants, both Tibetan and Newari. But material from Newari sources, both literary and oral, has only been included to elucidate points raised in the Tibetan manuscripts, or to fill major gaps in the information provided by the Tibetan sources. Thus I have not attempted to present the Newari viewpoint and I have only picked with discriminate parsimony at the vast wealth of Newari legend. The educated Śākya and Bajrācāryas each have a different book to write about any major power place. Hemrāj Śākya, for instance, has emptied his mind of material on Swayambhu in a recently published 800 page Newari tome (Hemrāj Śākya, *Śrīsvayambhū Mahacaitya*; Swayambhū Vikās Maṇḍal, 1098 NS, Kathmandu). No amount of cynical hyperbole can obscure the Newari religious genius manifest in the depth, breadth, variety and variation in the oral tradition.

Finally I must excuse some peculiarities in spelling. Each Tibetan source has its own orthography for proper names transliterated into Tibetan. As a rule I corrected the original spelling of proper names, with the exception of some Newari place names found mostly at the beginning of each entry from the *Guide*; thus any aberrant spelling or diacritical mark indicates an intentional representation of a manuscript's original orthographical form. And secondly, since there is no standard spelling for Newari place names (Chābāhil, for instance, can be spelt Chābāhil, Chāvel, Chābhil or even Chāwel) I have used the phonetic form with which I am familiar. Diacritical marks on Newari names have been added only tentatively.

I would like to thank all those who assisted me with this work, particularly Ānandamuni Bajrācārya and Hemrāj Śākya for much of the oral tradition related herein; Ian Alsop and Hubert Decler for use of their libraries and for their advice; Jim Goodman for the excellent photography; and Professor A.W. Macdonald and Father John Locke for their advice and encouragement.

If a scholar equipped with a knowledge of both Tibetan and Newari can utilise the fragmentary material of this work to produce a comprehensive guide to the power-places of the Kathmandu Valley, that will be the best possible result of this effort. In the meantime if this guide can help the layman discover the background of the places he visits on pilgrimage its purpose is served.

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Appendix II: Maṇḍala Pilgrimage Itinerary

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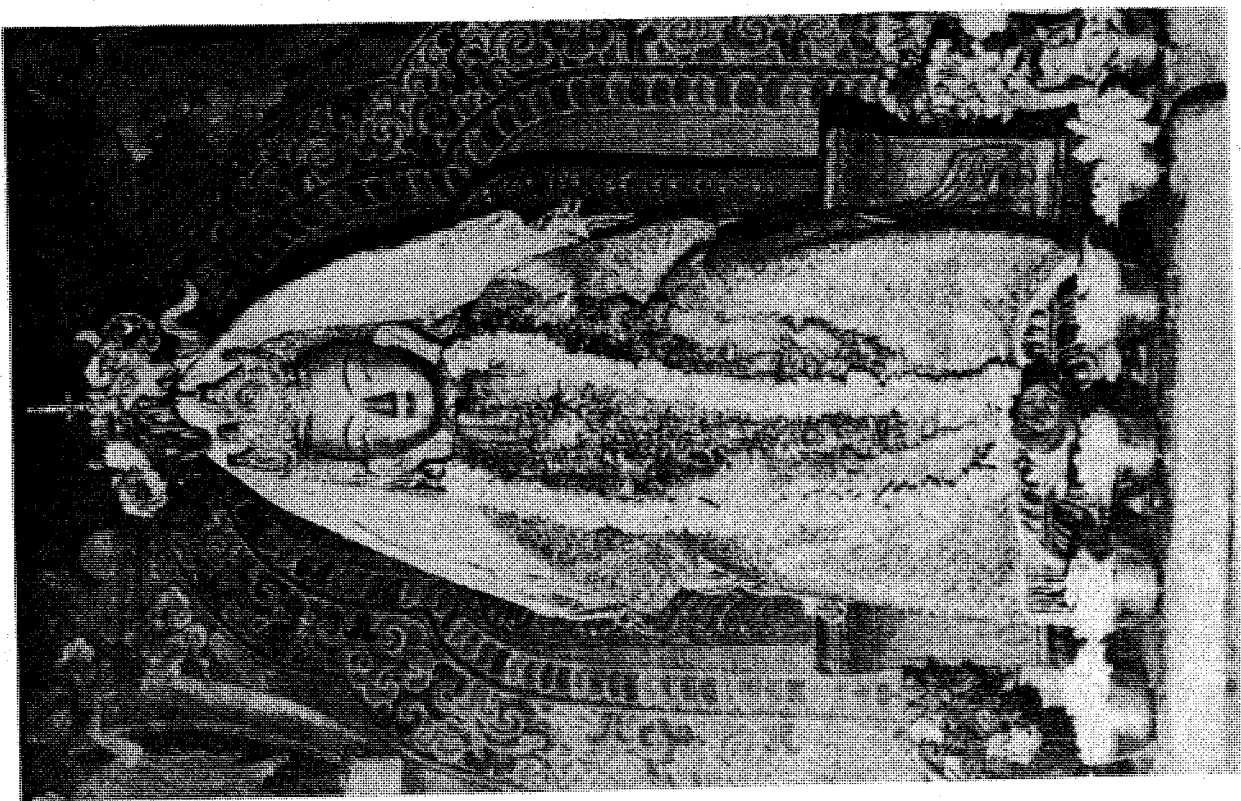
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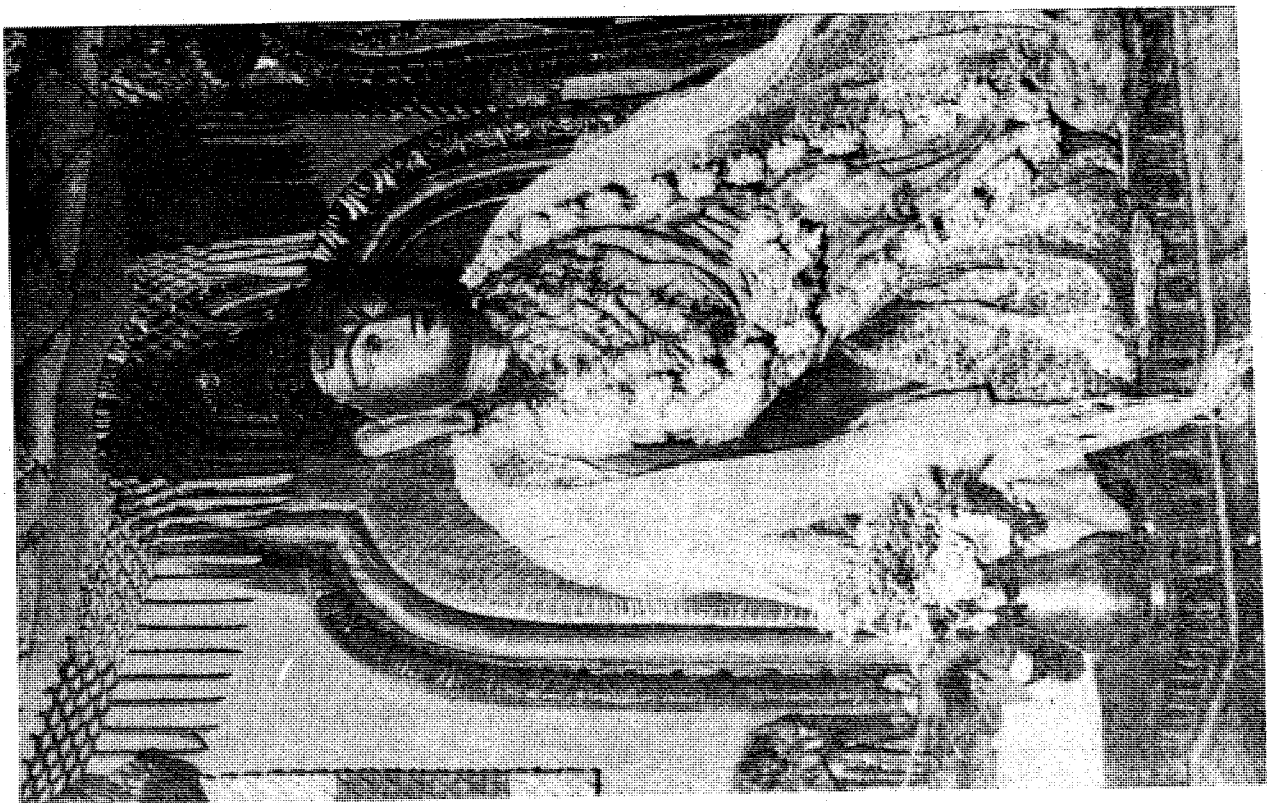
N.B: Numerals in brackets refer to numbers of the entries in the text.

ABBREVIATIONS

- SK *Shing-kun dkar-chag (The Swayambhu Chronicles)* by Nas-lung Ngag-dbang rDo-rje.
- CN Chos-kyi Nyi-ma: *Bal-po'i gnas-kyi dkar-chag.*
- LT bLa-ma bTsan-po: *'Dzam-gling rgyas-bshad*; tr. T. Wylie (*A Tibetan Religious Geography of Nepal*).
- BA *Blue Annals*; tr. G. Roerich.
- CL Orgyan mChog-'gyur gLing-pa: *gter-ston of Orgyan mnam-thar dpag-bsam ljong-shing*; tr. K. Dowman (*The Legend of the Great Stūpa*).
- DS Dharmaswamin: *Chag-lotsawa mnam-thar*; tr. G. Roerich (*The Biography of Dharmaswamin*).
- DW Douglas and White: *Karmapa, the Black Hat Lama of Tibet.*
- JL John Locke: *Karunāmāyā.*
- MA Michael Allen: *The Cult of Kumārī.*
- MG *Mila mGur-bum*; tr. G.C. Chang (*The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa*).
- NO Nyi-ma 'Od-zer: *gter-ston of Guru mnam-thar zangs-gling-ma.*
- SZ Śākya bzang-po: *gter-ston of Bya-rung kha-shor lo-rgyus*; tr. K. Dowman (*The Legend of the Great Stūpa*).
- TND sTag-sham Nus-ldan rDo-rje: *gter-ston of mTsho-rgyal mnam-thar.*
- TM gTsang-myon: *Mila mnam-thar*; tr. L. Lhalungpa (*The Life of Milarepa*).
- UL Urgyan gLing-pa: *gter-ston of Padma bka'-thang shel-brag-ma*; tr. G-C Toussaint (*Le Dit de Padma*).
- Wright Daniel Wright: *History of Nepal.*
- Wylie Turrell Wylie: *A Tibetan Religious Geography of Nepal.*
- Regmi D.R. Regmi: *Ancient Nepal.*
- AC Alaka Chattopadhyaya: *Atiśa and Tibet*, Delhi 1981.



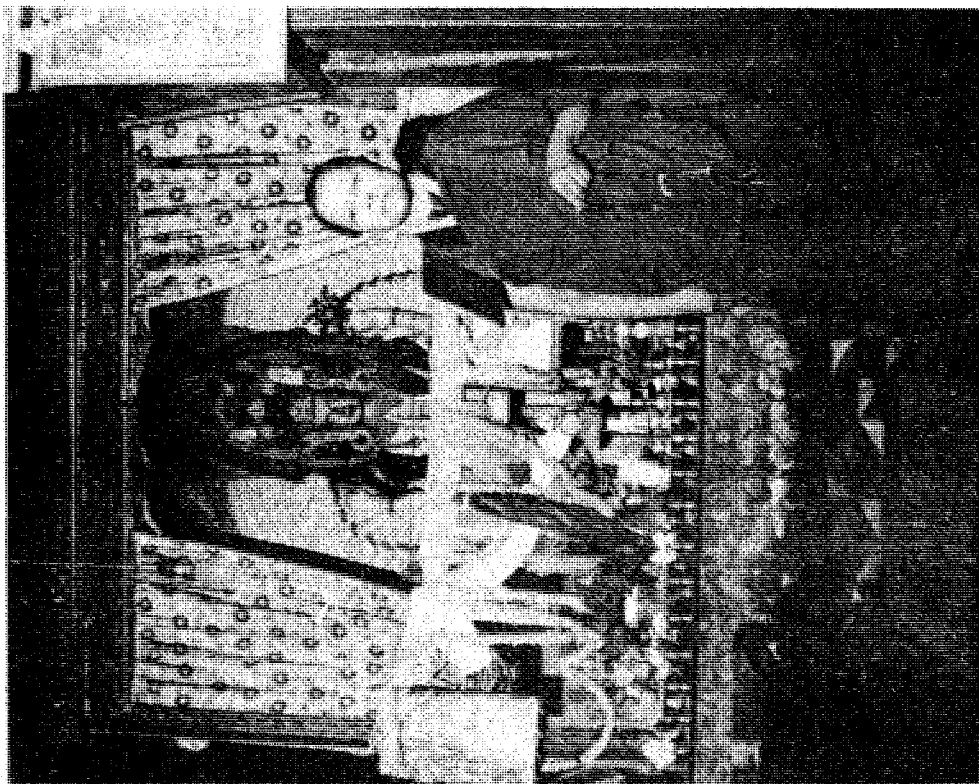
Maitreya Bodhisattva



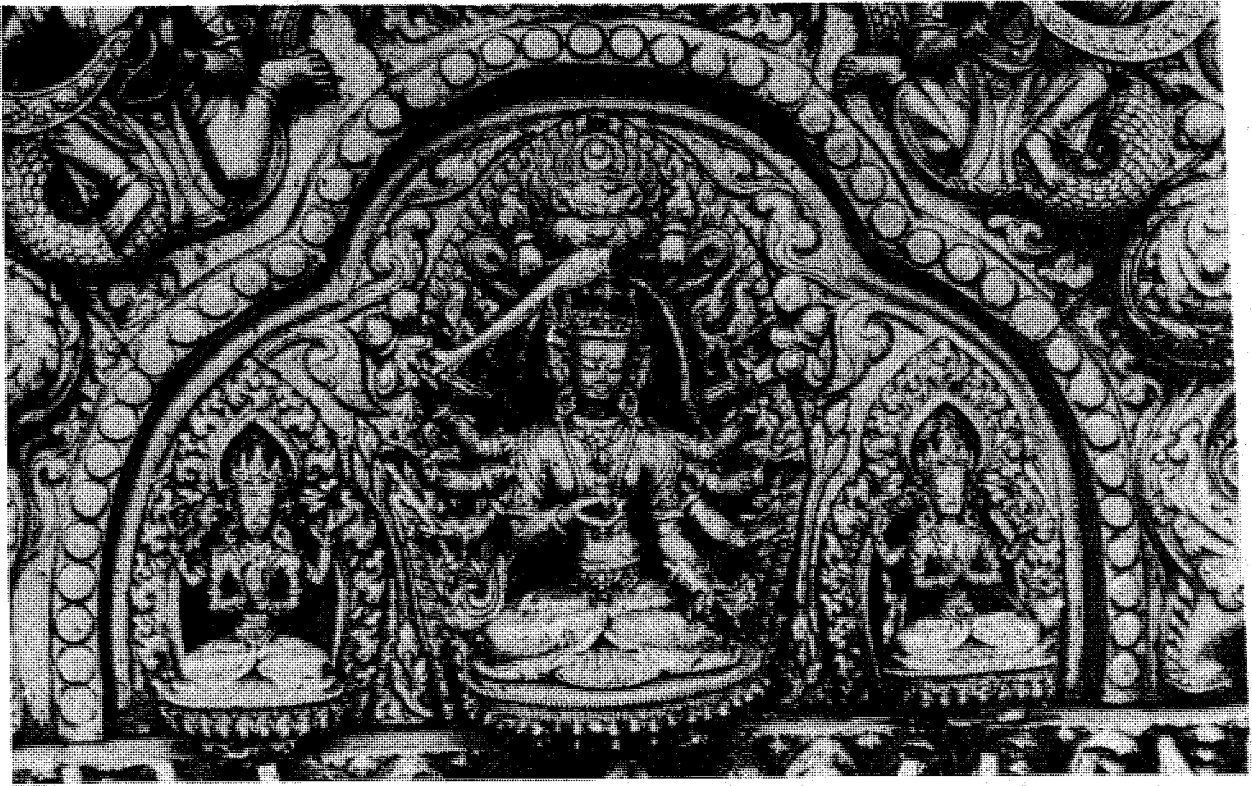
Munindra, Śākyamuni Buddha



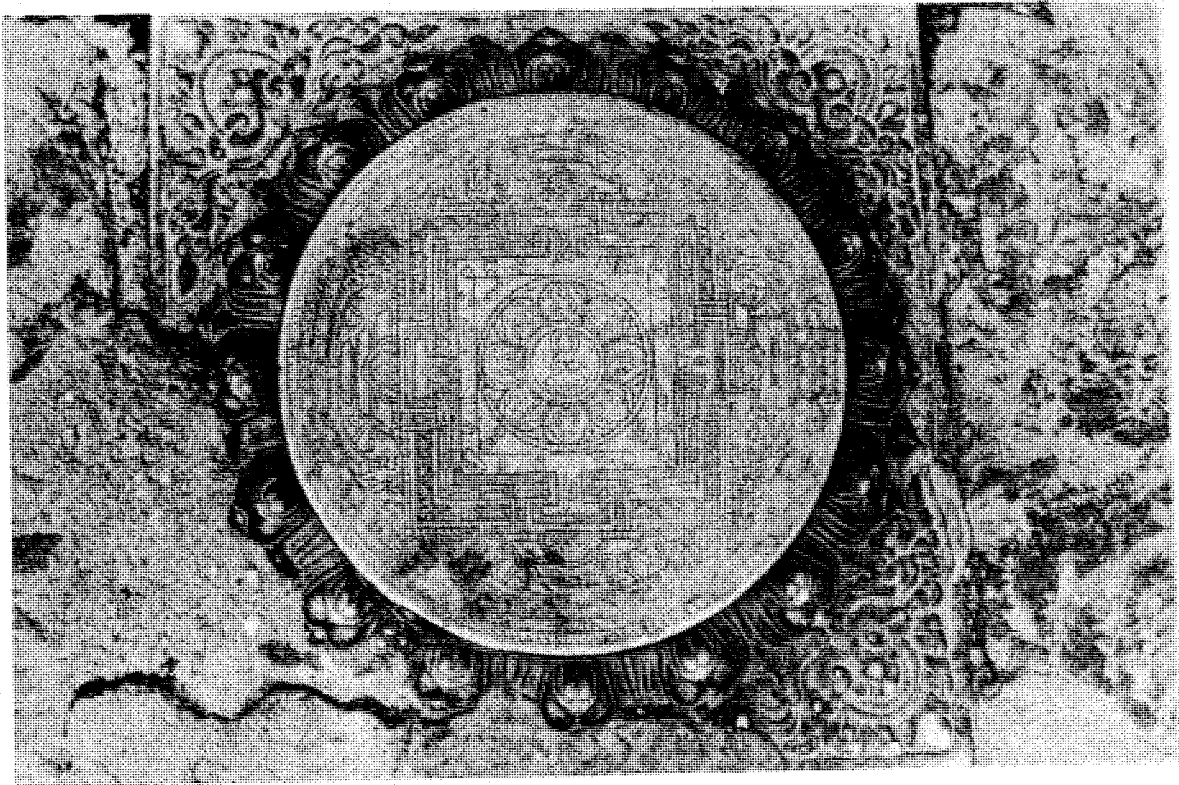
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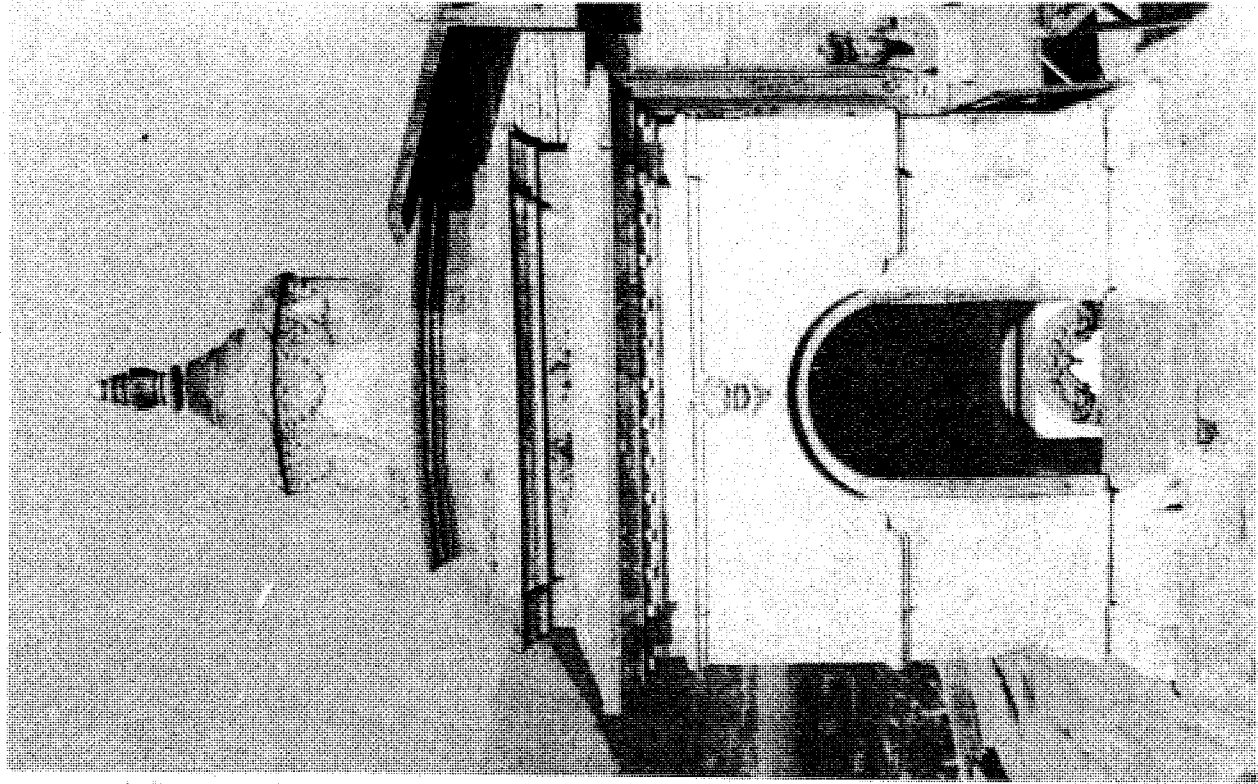
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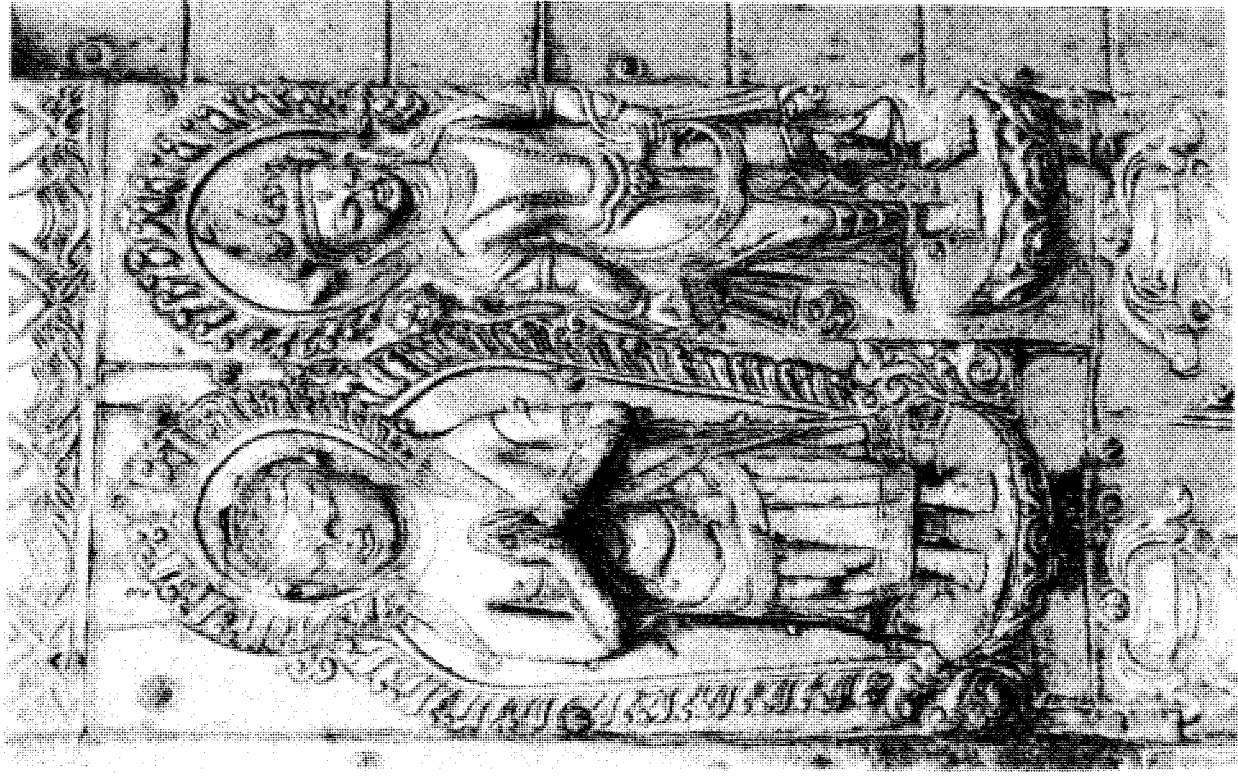
Dharmacakra Mahamañjuśrī with Varadā and Mokṣadā



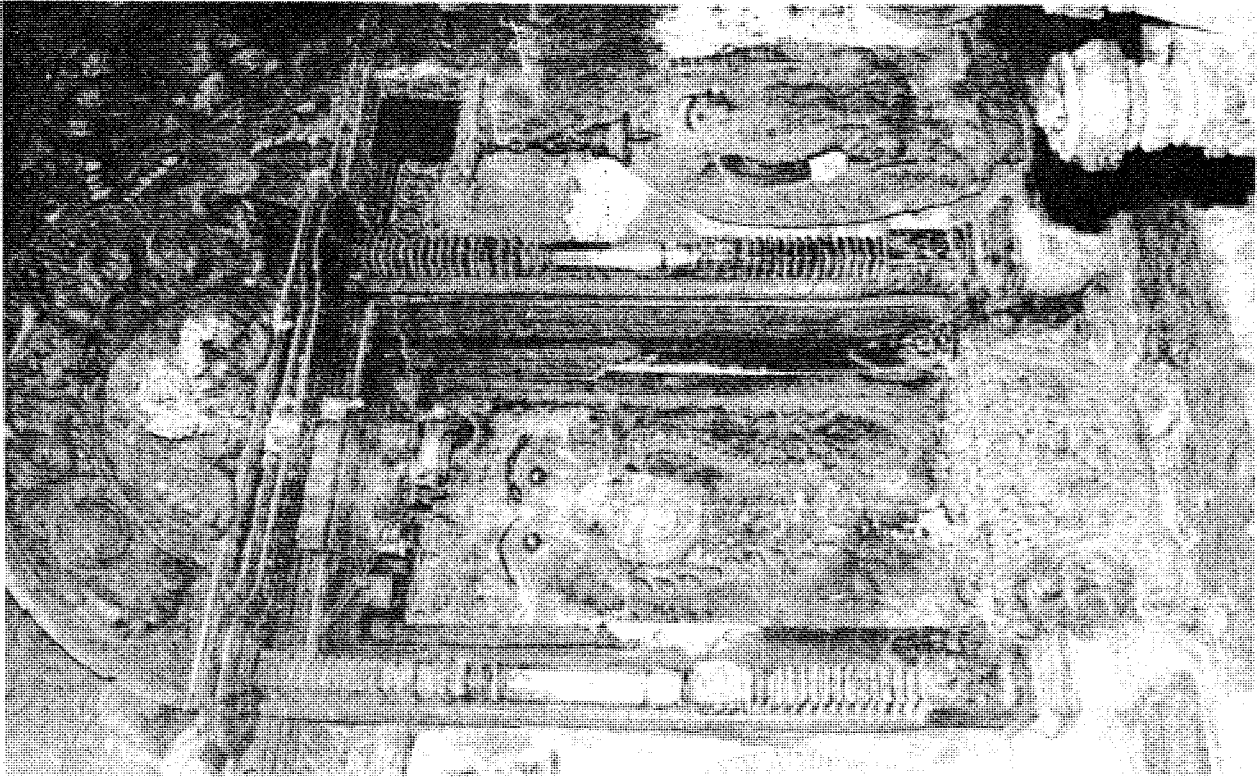
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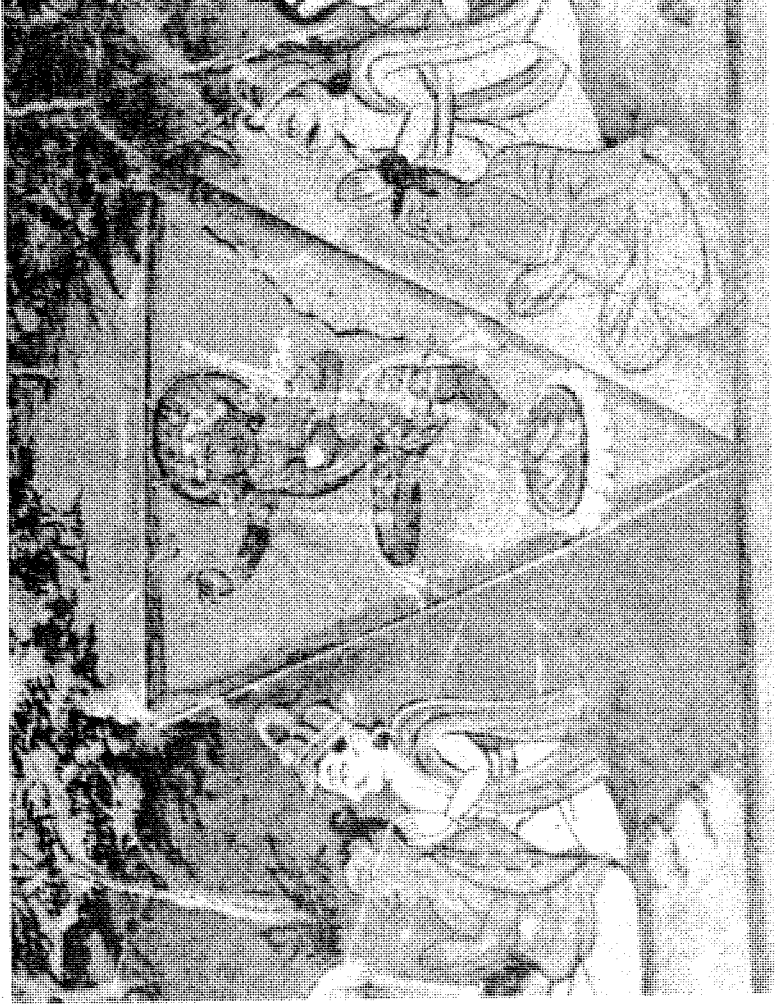
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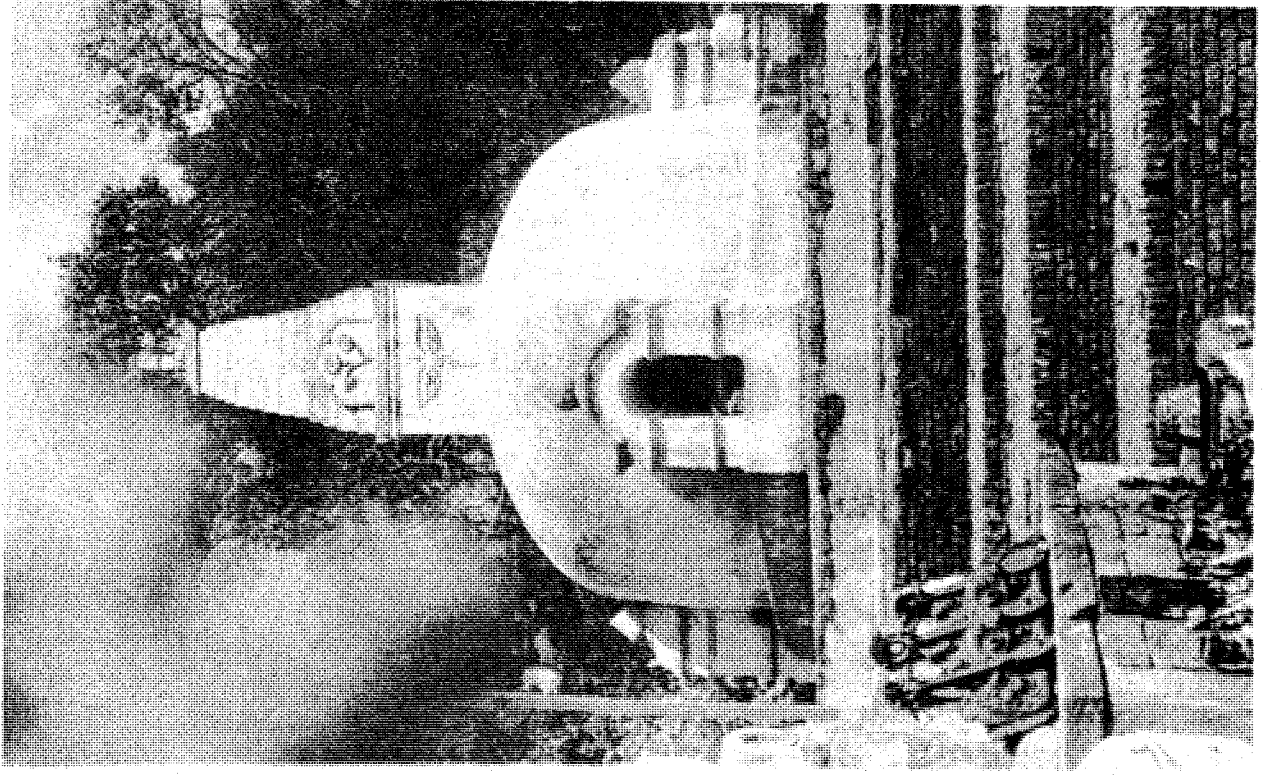
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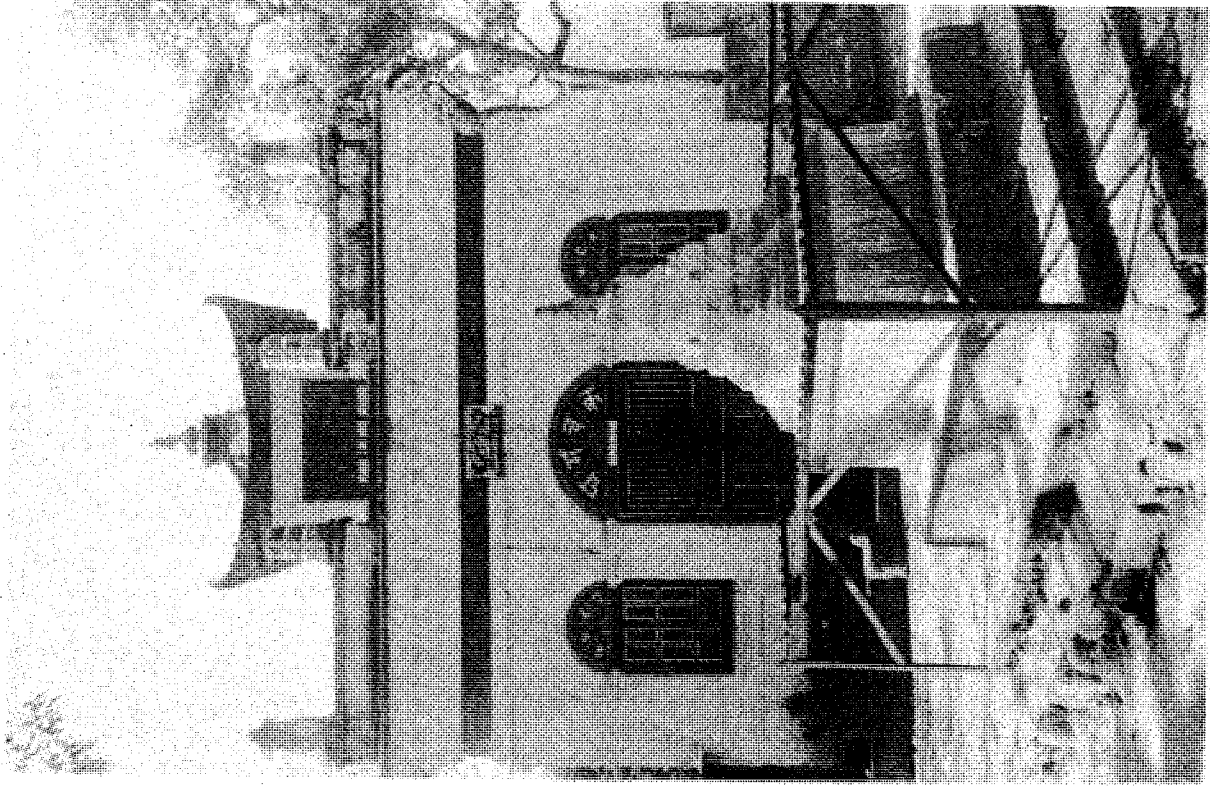
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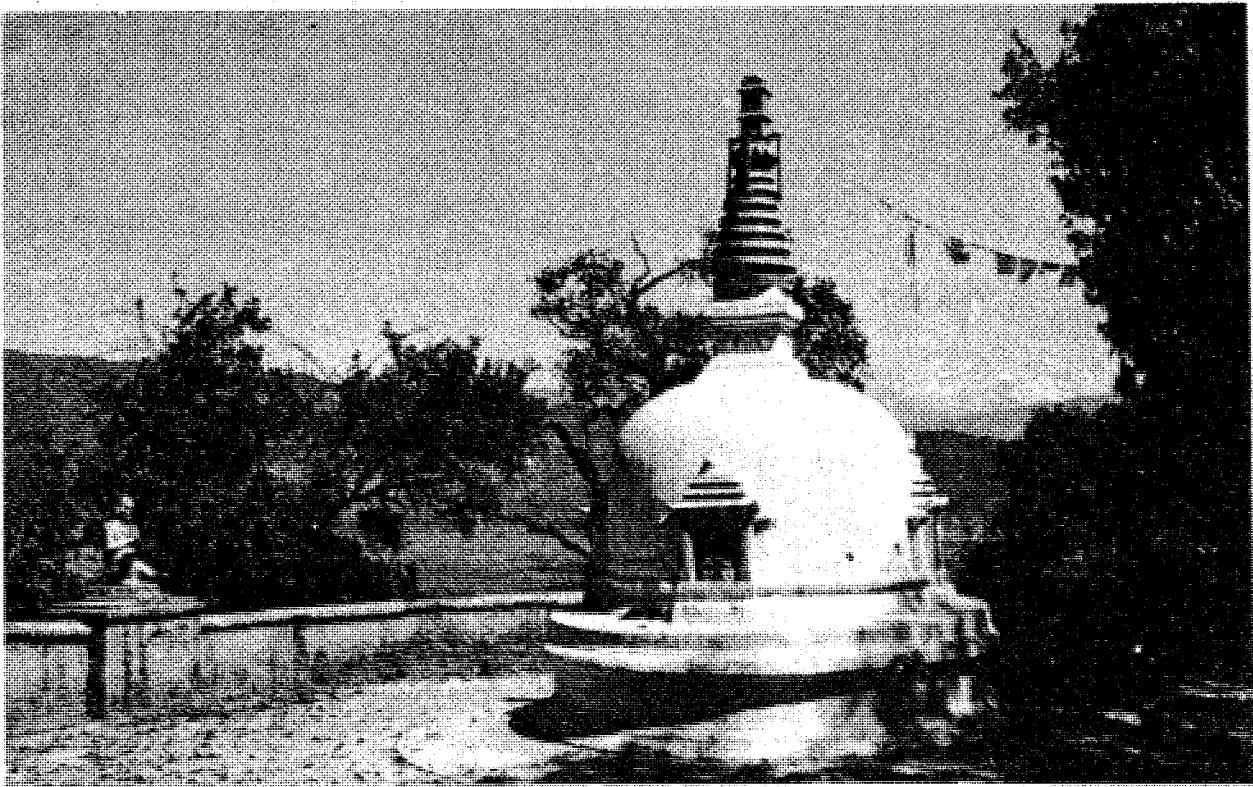
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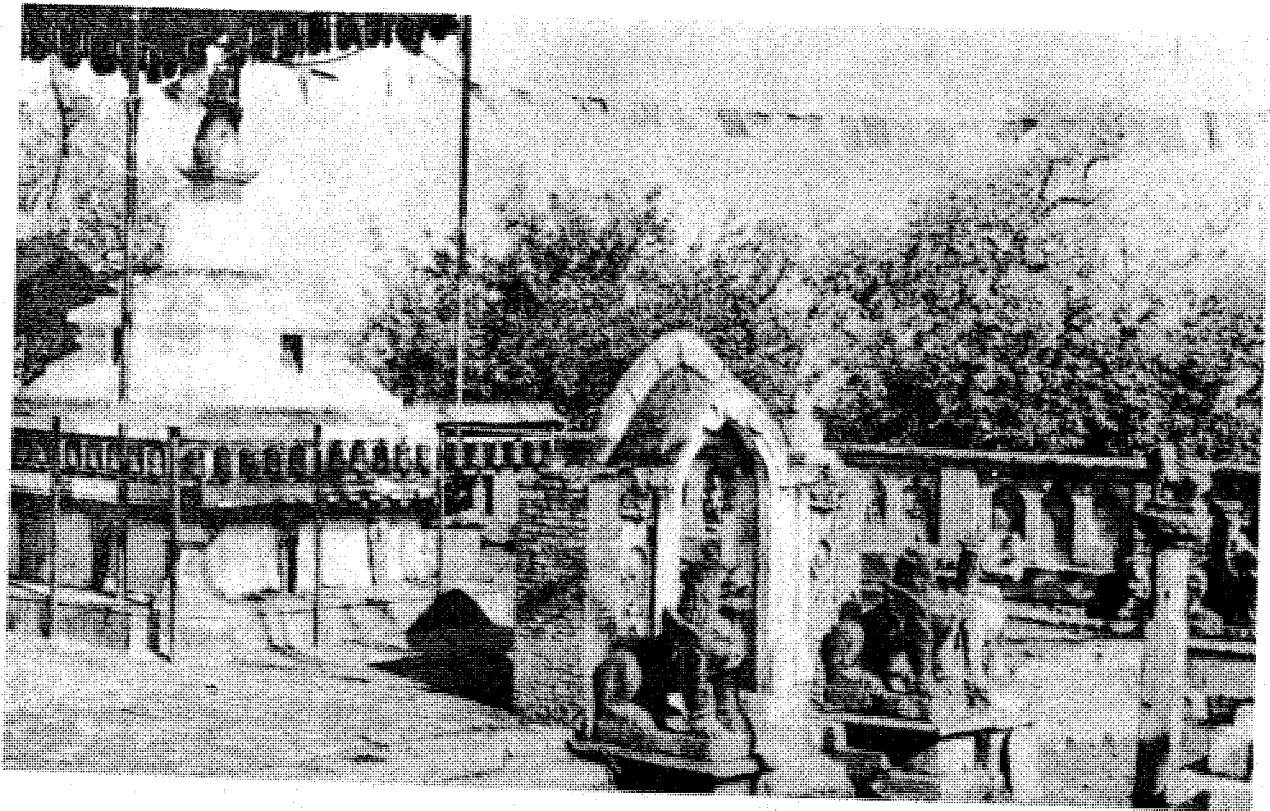
Kāśyapa Stūpa



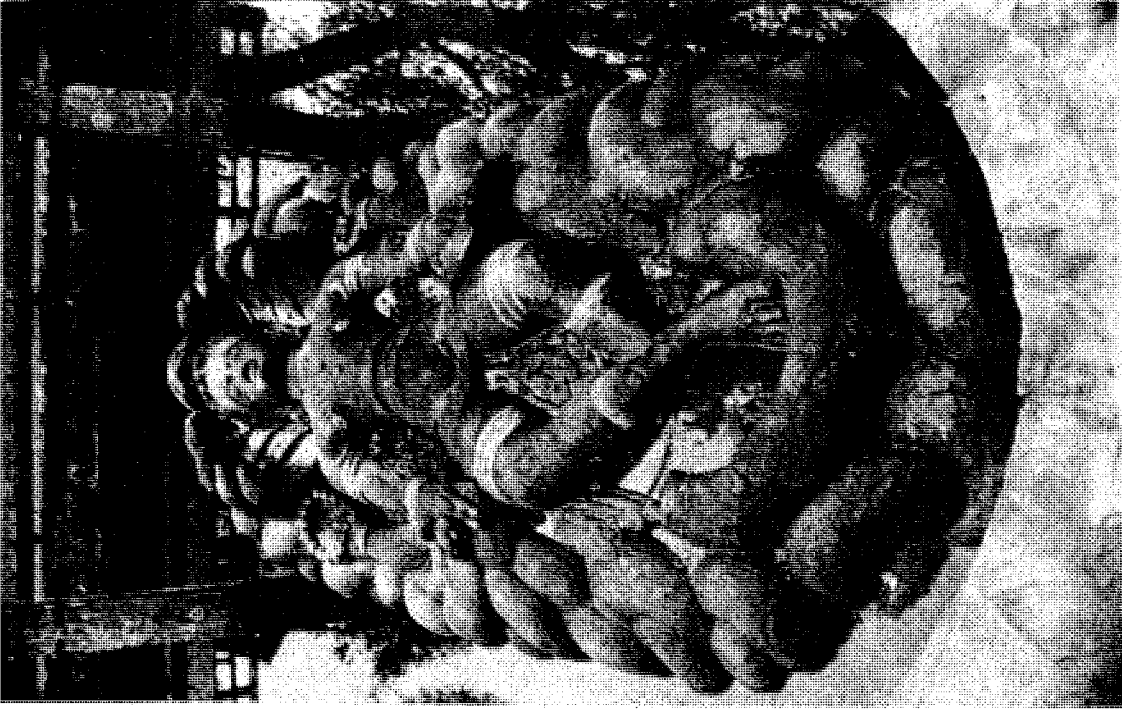
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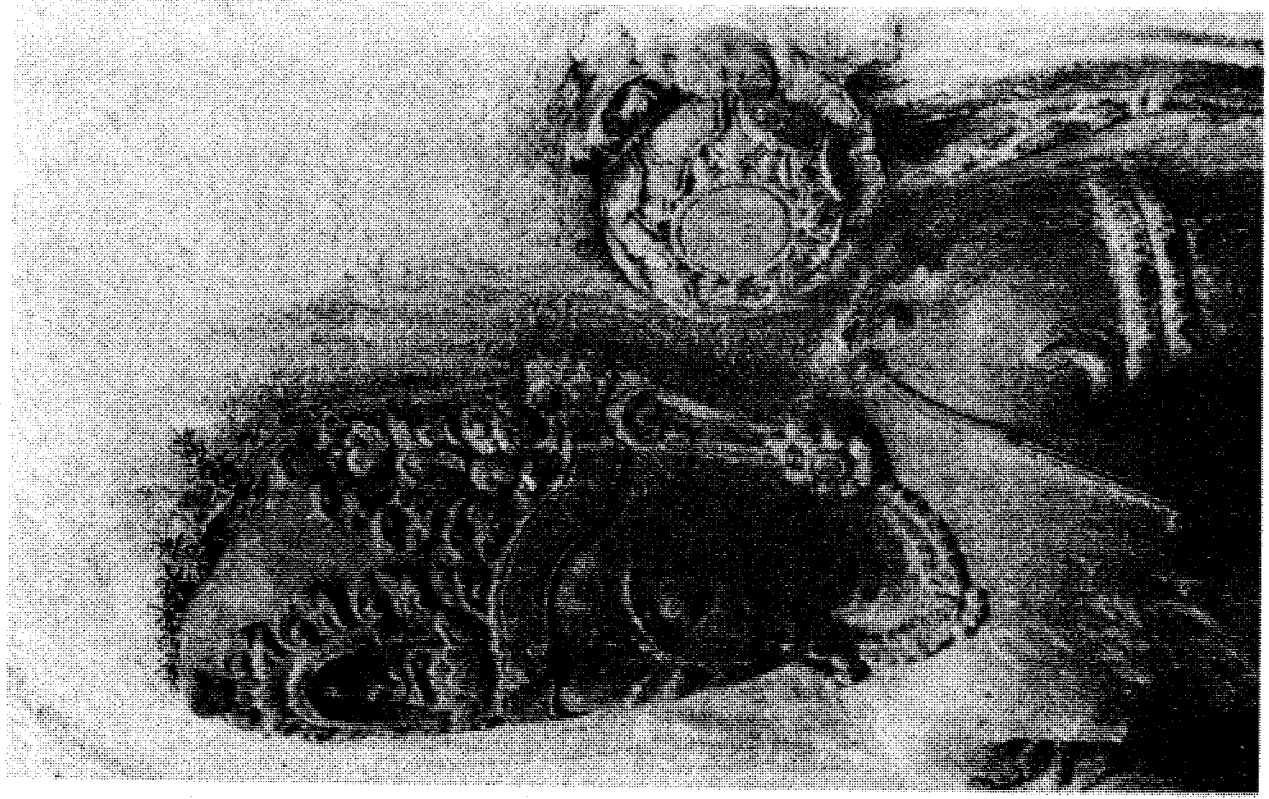
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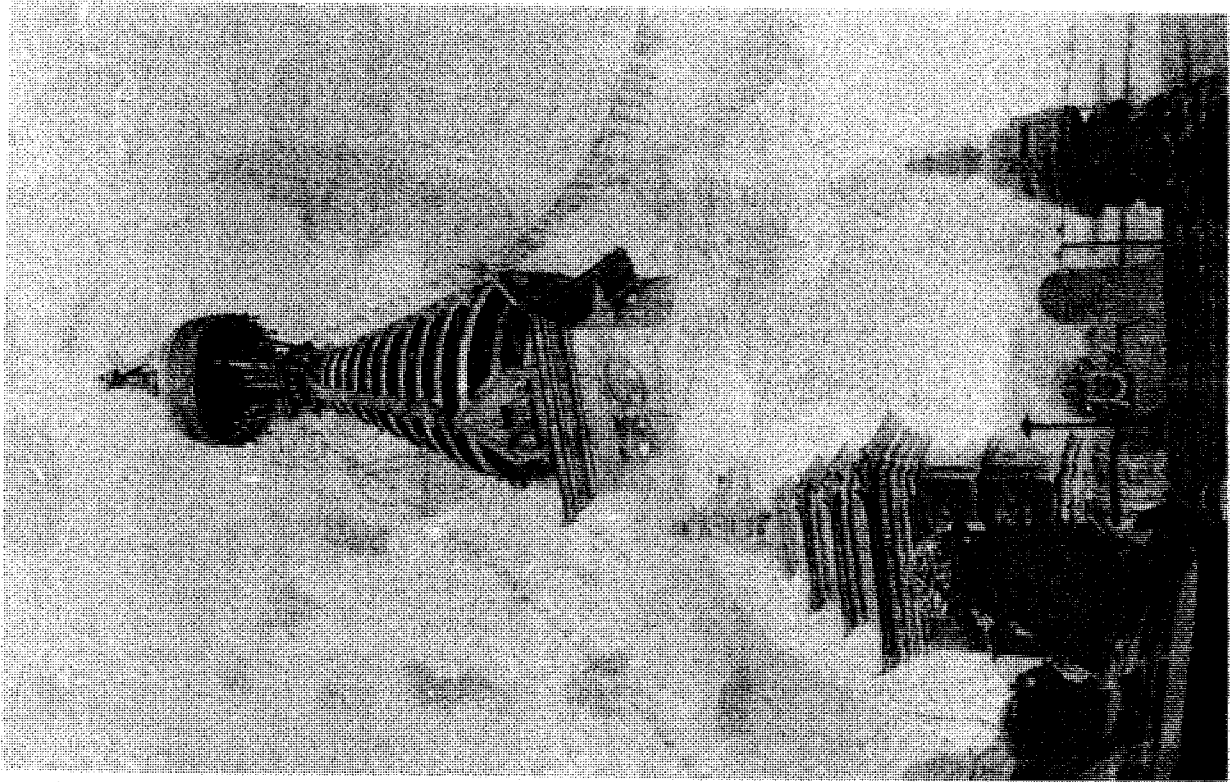
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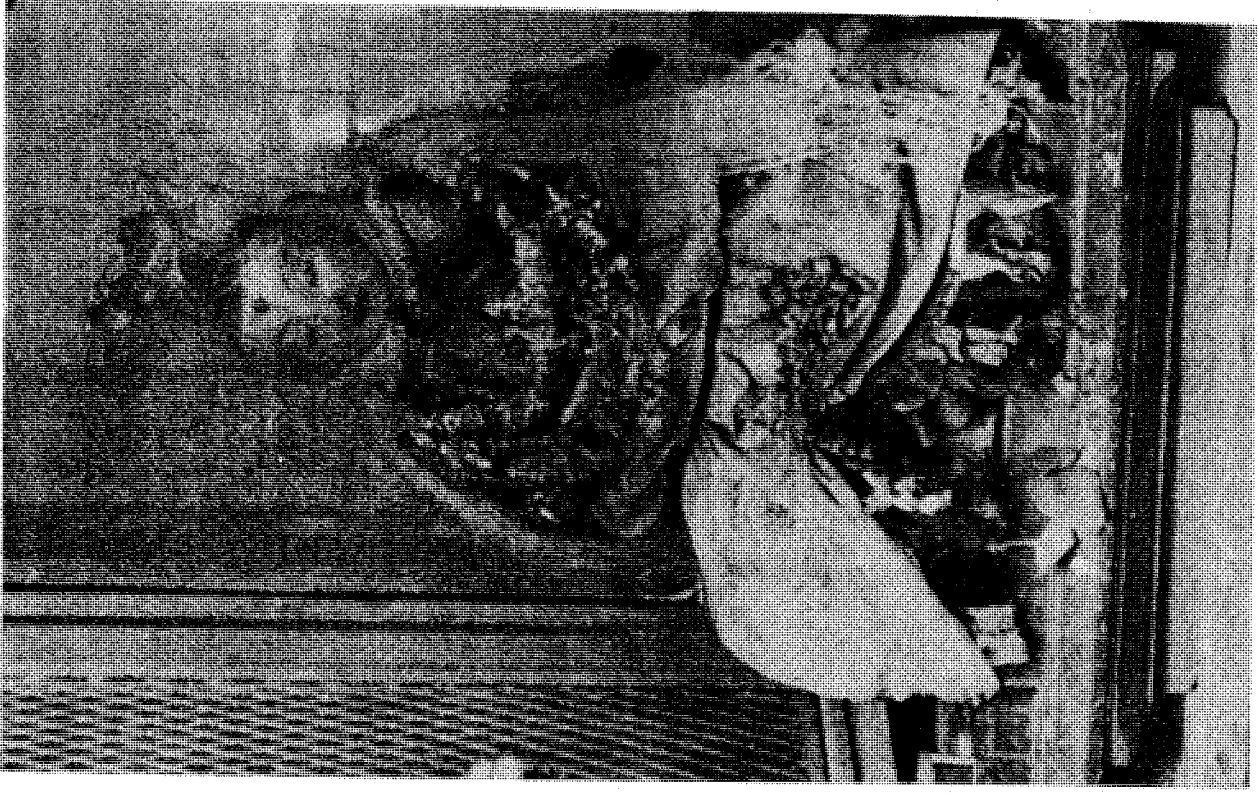
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Padmapāṇi Bodhisattva



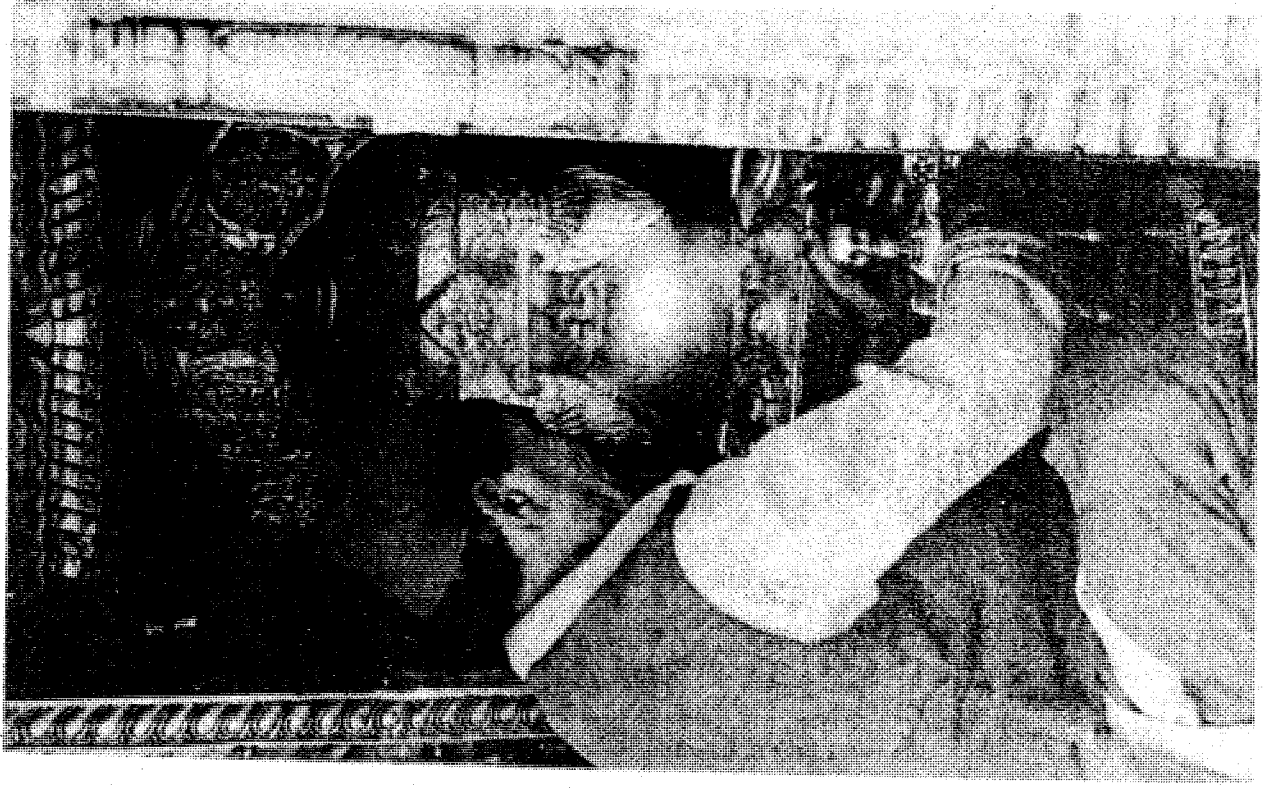
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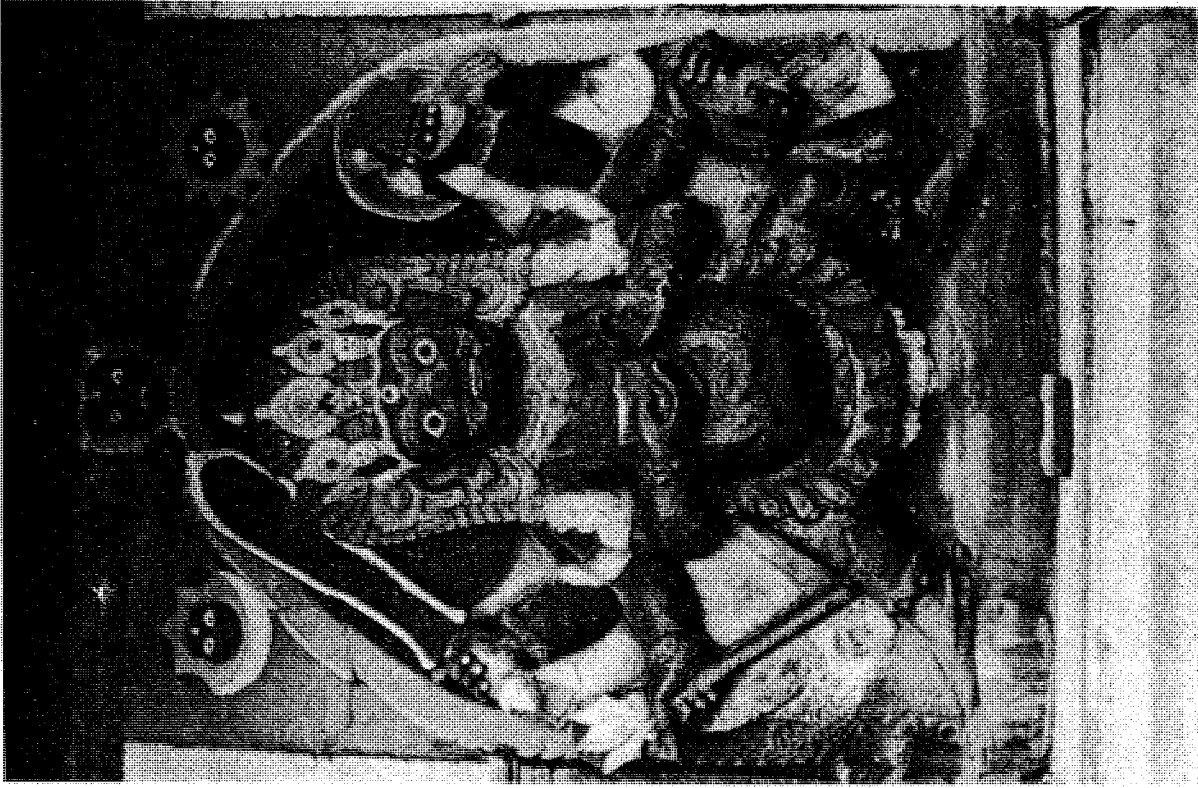
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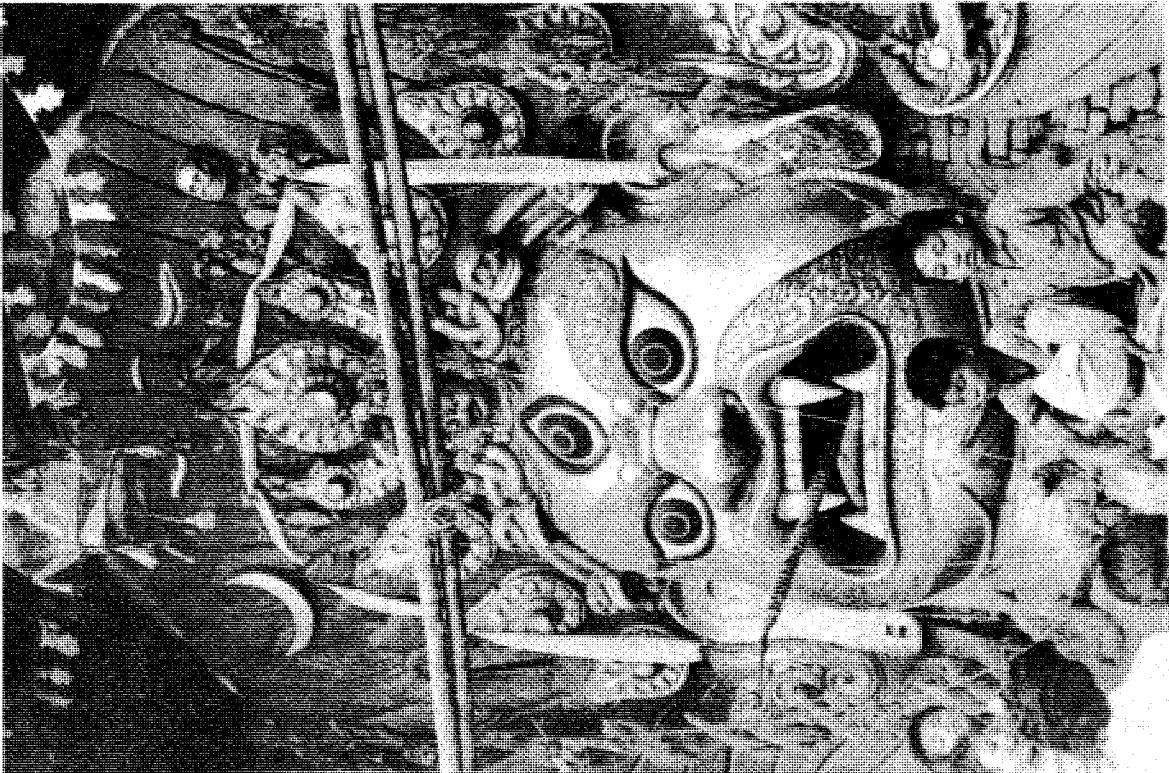
Lakṣmīkaḷaṣ, Annapūrṇa Temple



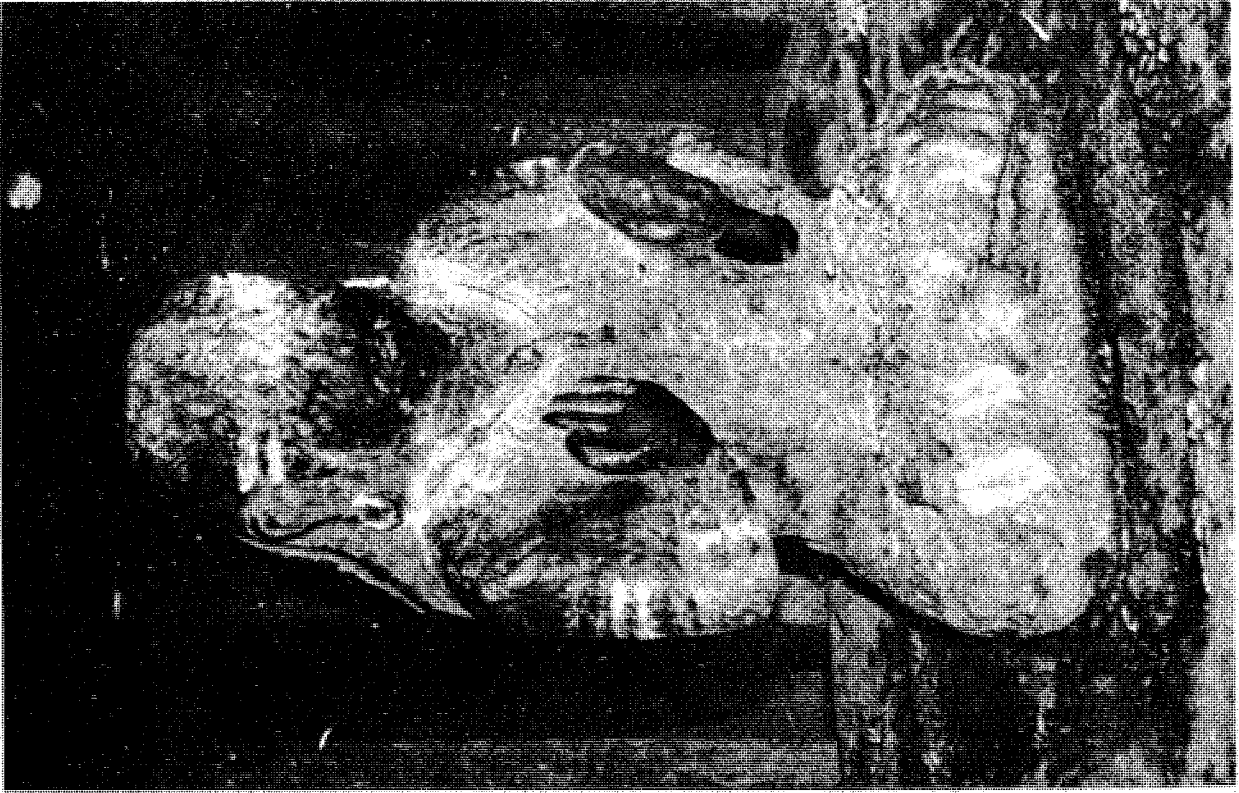
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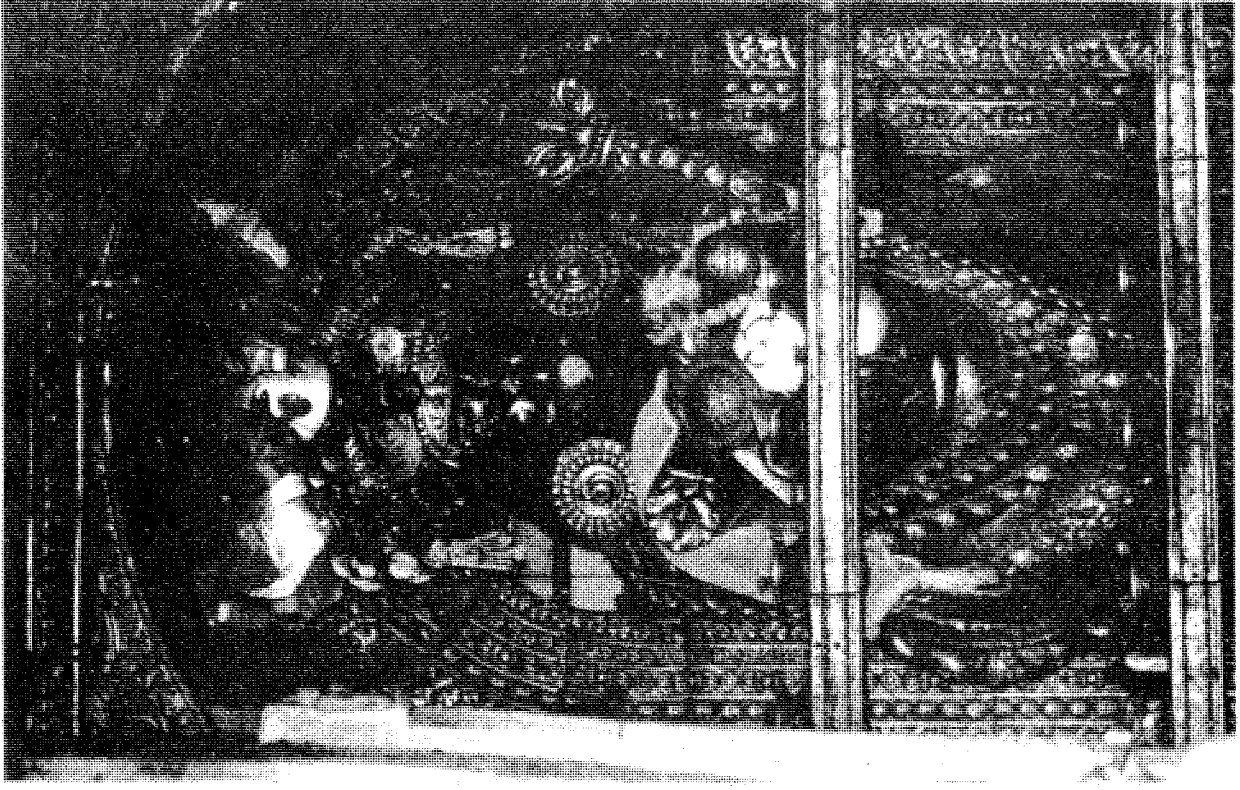
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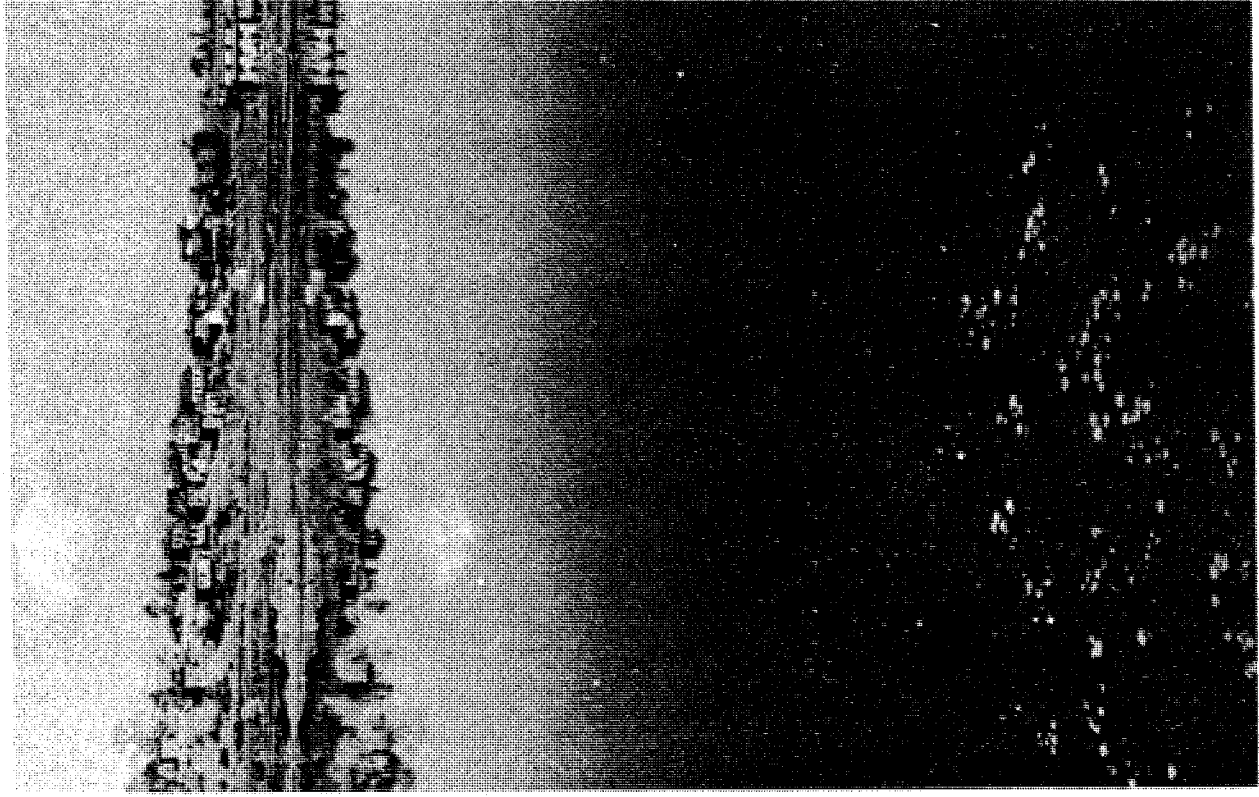
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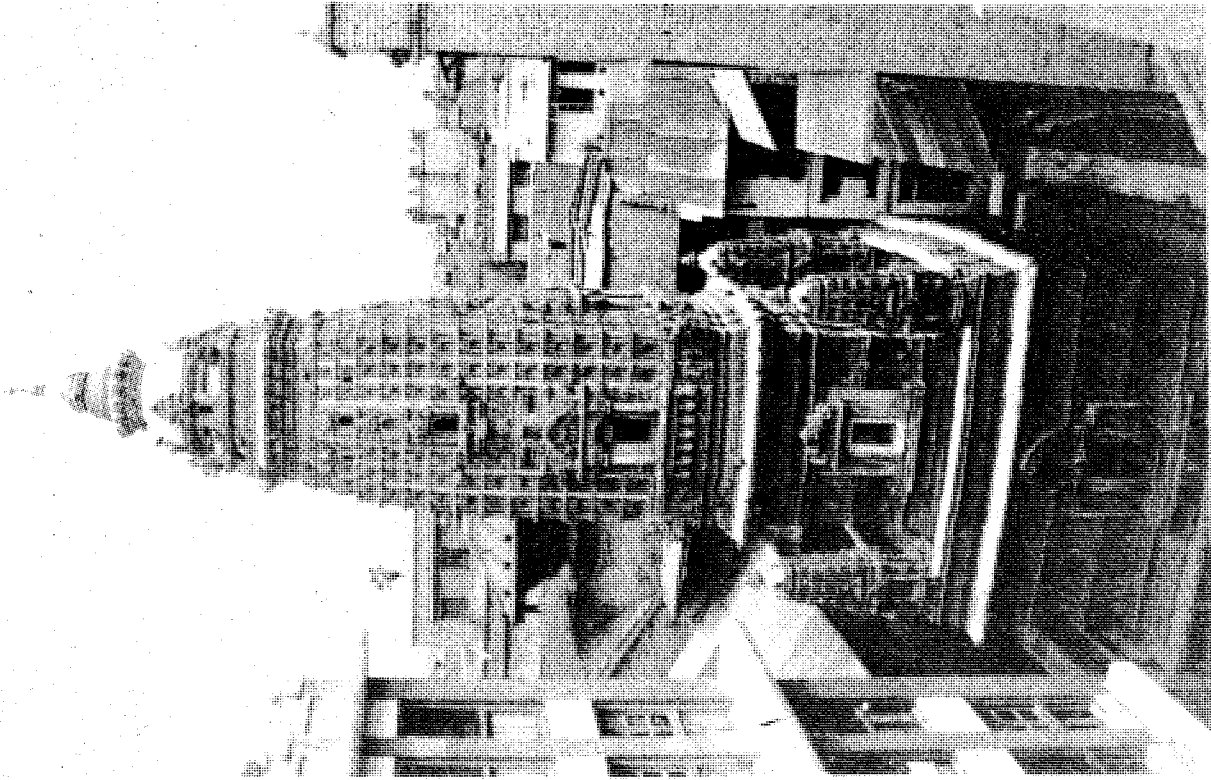
Gorakhnāth



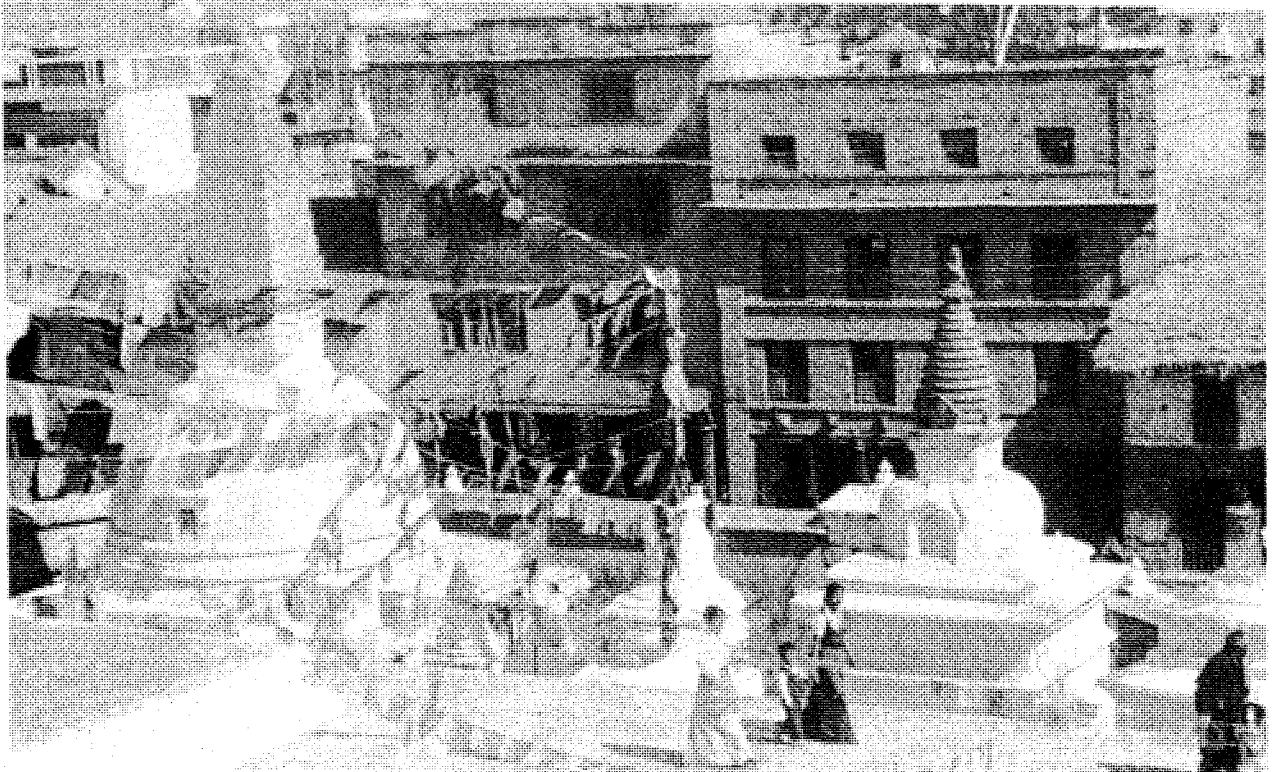
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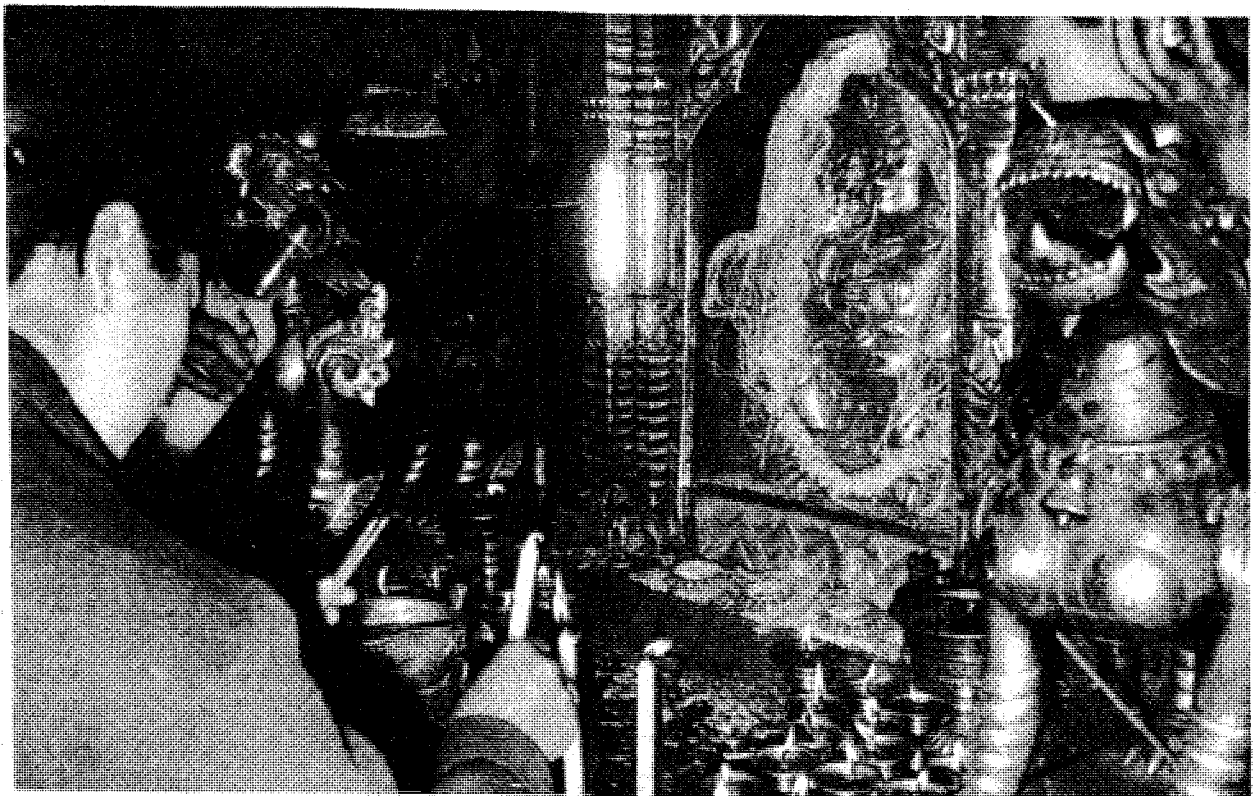
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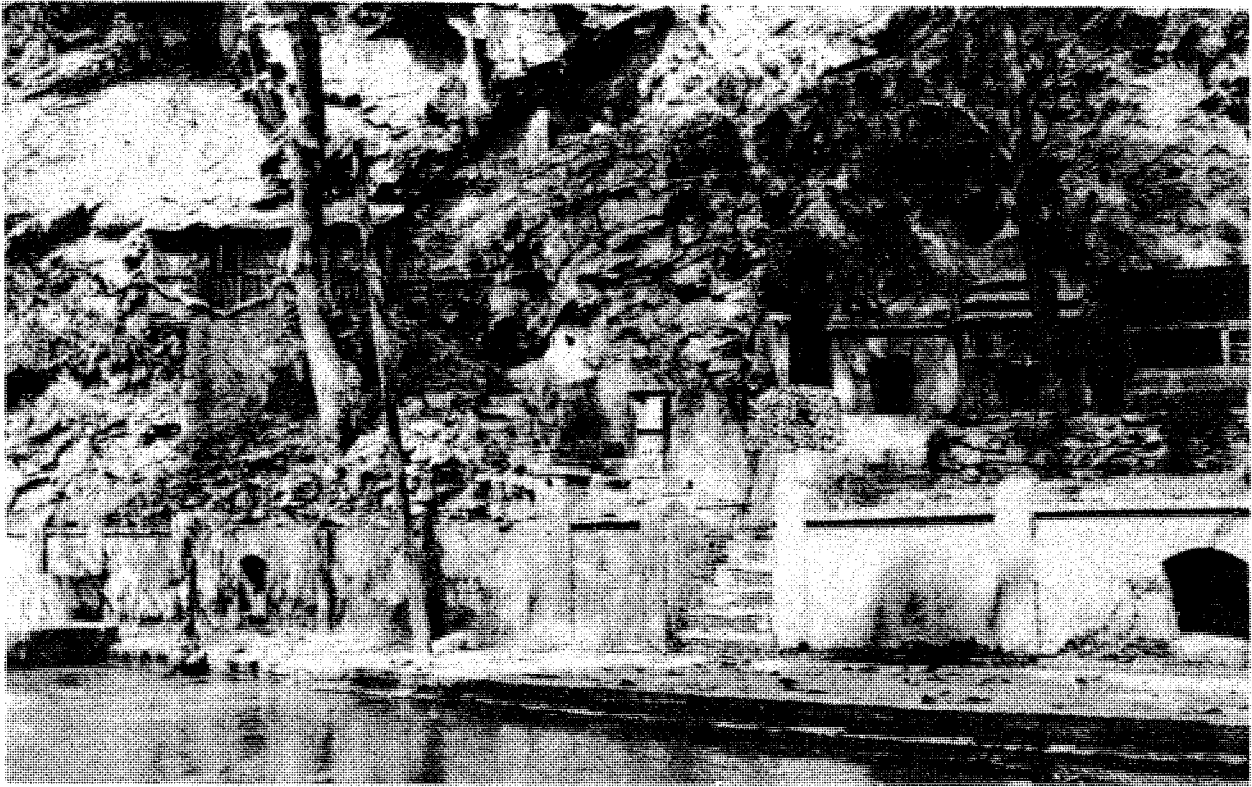
Mahaboudha Temple



Rang-Rig-Ras-Pa's Reliquary Stūpa



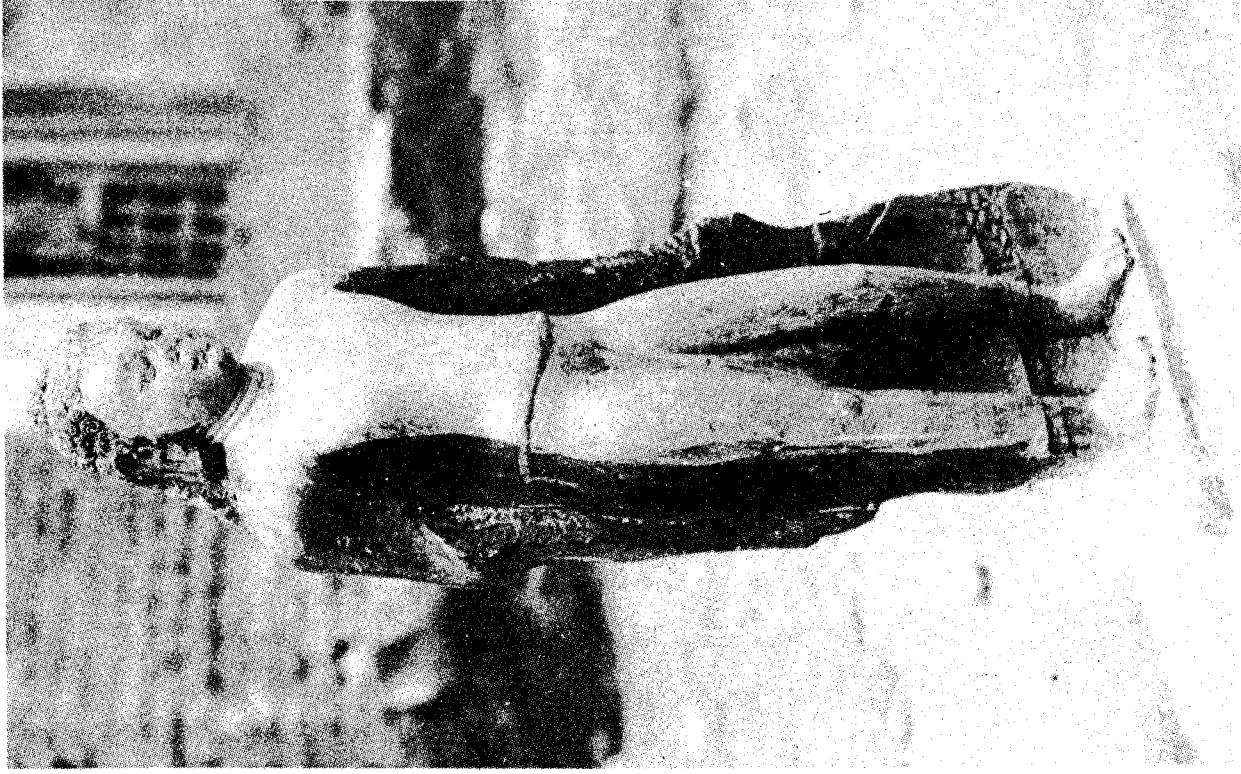
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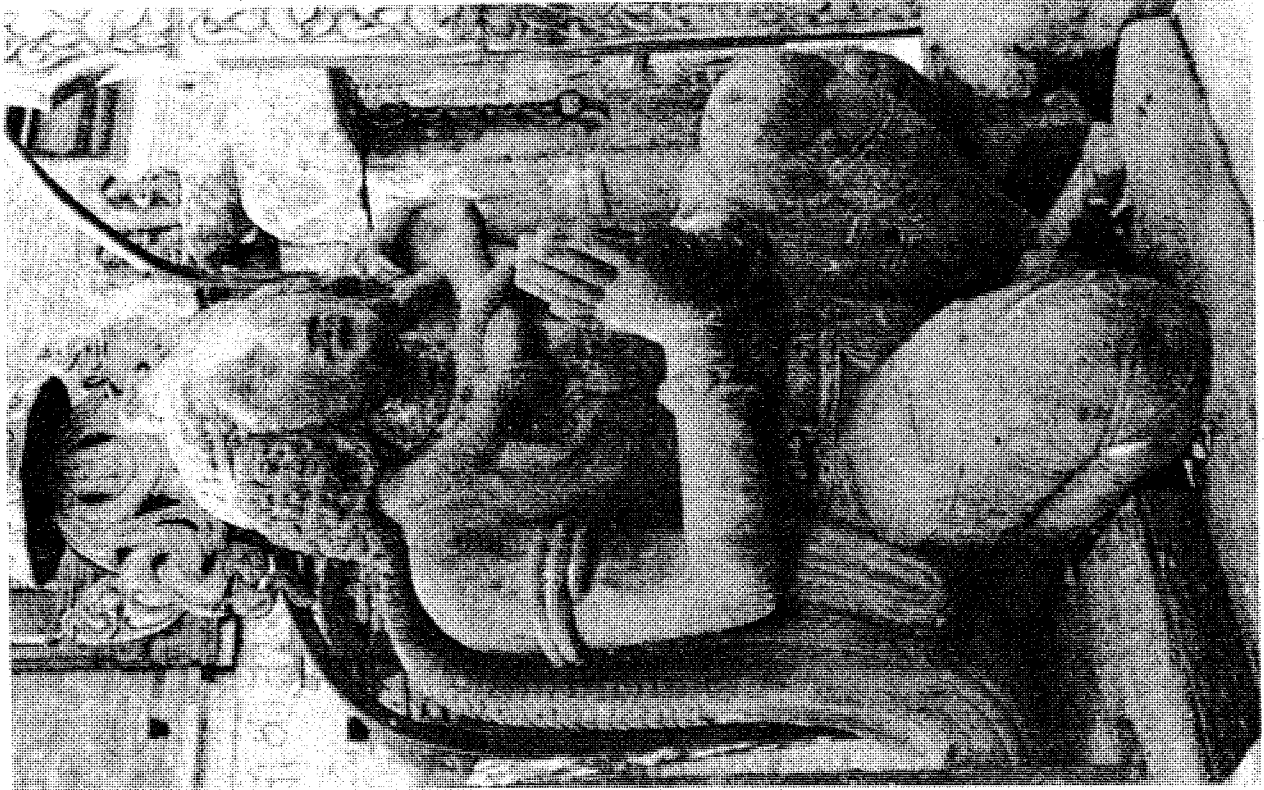
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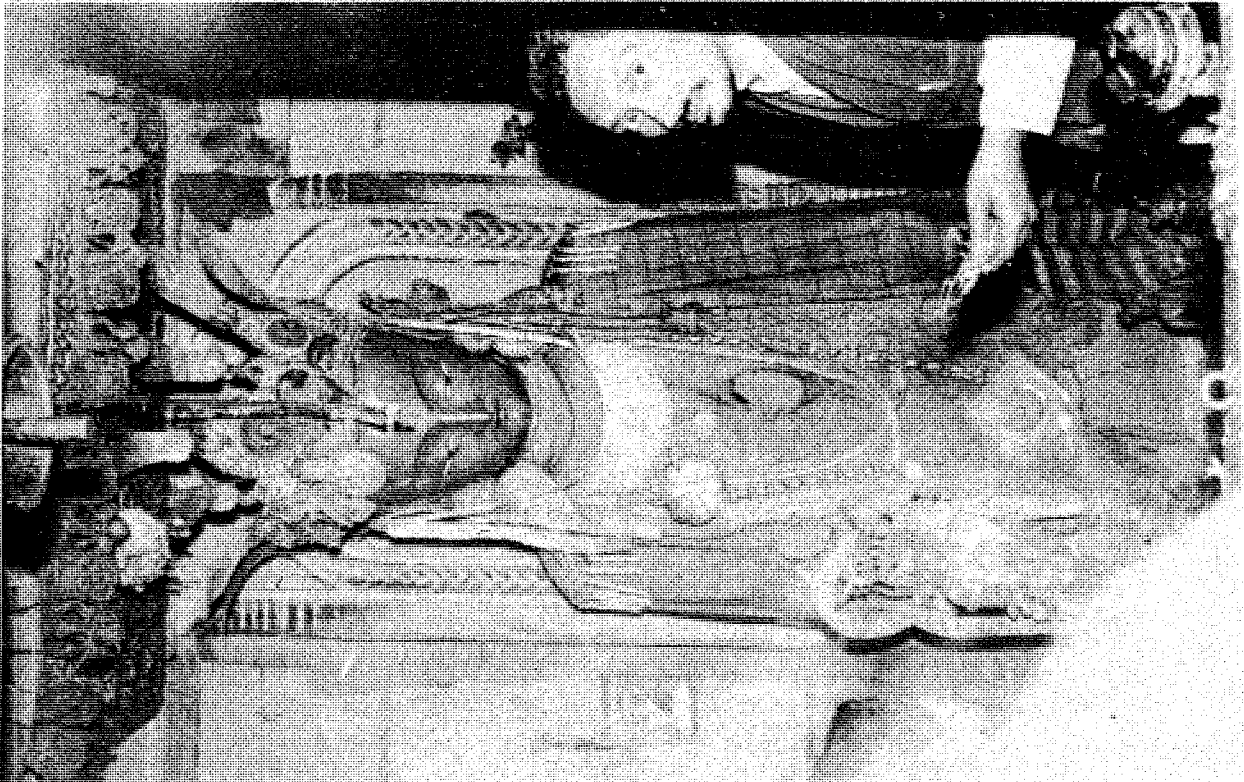
The Chābāhīl Buddha



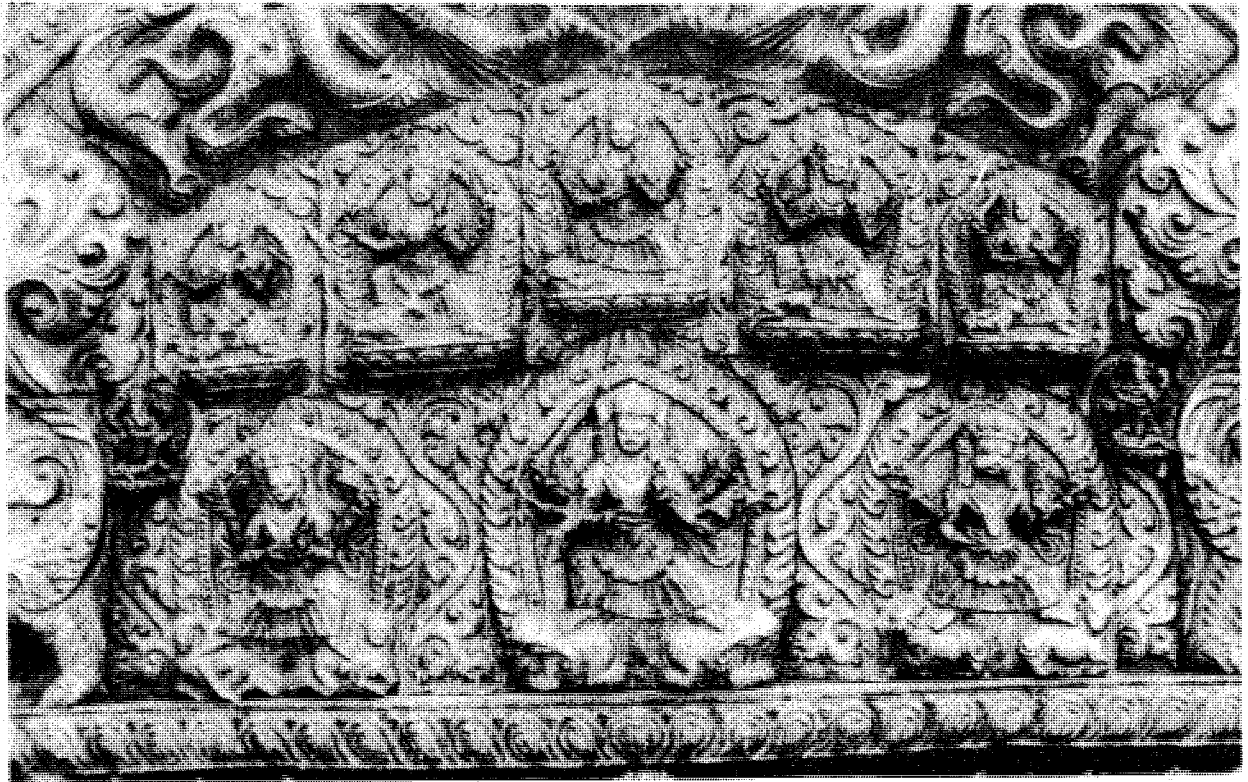
Garuḍa with face of King Manadeva



Boy as Cow



Dīpaṅkara Buddha



Aṣṭamātrkā



Bhairab

A BUDDHIST GUIDE TO THE POWER PLACES OF THE
KATHMANDU VALLEY

*Precious symbols of the Minds of the Conquering Buddhas of the Ten
Directions,*

Swayambhunāth, Boudhnāth and Namo Buddha,

We pray to you from the innermost depths of our hearts.

With an all-embracing relationship with these three supreme symbols,

All adversity, troubles and obstacles are removed,

All our wishes are actually fulfilled,

And ultimately we cross the ocean of saṃsāra with all other beings.

By the grace of these three stūpas may we attain the level of the

Four Buddha Modes.

*This is a guide for all pilgrims to the Valley of Kathmandu, for
both the eminent and the lowly.*

1. KIMDOL VIHĀRA

*When you travel the road to India (from Tibet) you will first come
to the Vulture Peak Monastery (Bya-rgod phung-po-ri'i dgon-pa,
Gridhrakūṭa Vihāra. You can honour the chief image of the*

*1 monastery, Munindra, visit the Avalokiteśvara fasting room (smyung-
2,3 gnas lha-khang) on the first floor, the Maitreya Temple on the
north side, and other images in the neighbourhood, the chief of which
is the image of the Buddha in parinirvāṇa posture.*

*"In the neighbourhood of (Ri-bo 'Bigs-byed) is a hill
called Vulture Peak, and it is said that this is the place
where a thousand Buddhas of the bhadrakalpa first generated
enlightened mind, and where the woman Jadzima (Bya-rdzi-ma),
who built the stūpa at Boudha, attained Buddhahood." (LT)*

"To the south-west of Swayambhu is Vulture Peak..... Then 21,000 *ārhats* from Vulture Peak took earth and deposited it beneath the dome of the Stūpa." (SK) Previously the Swayambhu Stūpa had been resting upon a wooden axis pole and four stone pillars founded on the Valley floor. But the *Swayambhu Purāna* has a different idea (*vide* Mañjuśrī Hill).

The Tibetans call the Kimdo Hill, south of Swayambhu, Vulture Peak, which is the name of the hill in India where Śākyamuni delivered the *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras*. The Newars call it Kimdo which means 'Heap of Rice' ('bras-spungs) in Newari. (CN)

In front of the gate of the Vihāra, which is considered pre-eminent in Kathmandu (i.e. in the 18th c.), is a sacred 4 bodhi tree (*bodhivṛkṣa*). Many Lamas have stayed in this Vihāra, amongst them the (13th) Karmapa, the (10th) Zhamarpa, (the 6th) Drukpa Rimpoche, (the 8th) Situ, (Ka-thog) Rig-'dzin-chen-po, and others. (CN)

All these Lamas visiting Nepal and staying in Kimdol Vihāra were contemporaries of Chos-kyi Nyi-ma. The 10th Zhamarpa (1742-92), who made the disastrous treaty with King Rana Bahādur Shāh in 1789, after Tibetan forces had been worsted on the border, and then was forced to remain in exile after his monasteries had been seized, his Hat buried and the Zhamarpa line declared defunct, assisted in the major reconstruction of Swayambhu with the 13th Karmapa (1733-1797) and their teacher, the *rNying-ma-pa* Ka-thog Rig-'dzin-chen-po Tse-dbang Nor-bu (1698-1755). This major repair work on the *garbhapīta*, (the Stūpa's bowl) and also on the environs of the Stūpa, was finished in 1750. The 8th Situ (1700-1774), who had come to Nepal much earlier in the century (ca. 1723) with his own generation of young

tulkus on adventurous pilgrimage (the 12th Karmapa, 1703-32, and the 8th Zhamarpa, 1695-1732, who had been born in Yol-mo), was known as Kun-mkhyen Situ or Situ Pan-chen. He stayed on in the Valley and later returned again, gaining a reputation amongst Śaivites and Buddhists alike as a great debator and scholar who translated a short version of the *Swayambhu Purāna*, amongst other Sanskrit works, into Tibetan. Like Ka-thog-pa, he was a Guru of the younger visitors. The 13th Karmapa, bDud-'dul rDo-rje, was received with honour and elephants by Jaya Prakāś Malla (reigned 1722-1768), just as Jagajjaya Malla (reigned 1722-36) had received his young predecessor who, according to his biography, was feted and given a week's royal hospitality, perhaps in return for saving Nepal by magic from the plague and drought which caused many deaths in 1723. In Namō Buddha he was received, again with elephants, by the King of Bhaktapur, Ranajit Malla. In the preceding century the 6th Zhamarpa (1564-1630) had

8 patronised the construction of four golden altars in the four cardinal directions of the Swayambhu Stūpa. An inscription of Śivasimha commemorates the consecration in 1614. We do not know where these earlier visitors stayed, but we do know of Rang-rig-ras-pa's association with the Vihāra in the latter 17th century, and also of the writer of the *Swayambhu Chronicles*' residence there, and it appears that Kimdol Vihāra was virtually a *bKa'-brgyud-pa* establishment in the 17th and 18th centuries. A thorough reading of the biographies of all these *bKa'-brgyud* Lamas and of Ka-thog Rig-'dzin-chen-po would prove most revealing.

(Vide DW.)

1 Śākyamuni Buddha is the principal image in the ground floor shrine-room of Kimdol Vihāra. In the first floor shrine-room, where the abbess of the nunnery presides, is

- 3 an image of 1000 armed Avalokiteśvara (Mahakarunika).
 2 Maitreya is the main image in the *nani-bāhāl* immediately to the north, and a little further down the hill to the north is the temple containing the *parinirvāṇa* Buddha image.

2. SWAYAMBHU STŪPA

'Phags-pa shing-kun (Sublime Trees): *Swayambu* (Self-sprung): near *Kindol* (sKyim-grol = 'Liberating Draught') is *Swayambhu*. On top of a jewel lotus blessed by the Buddha *Vipaświ* (gNam-par-gzigs), the *Jina Vajradhara* spontaneously arose from the Pure Land of *Akanisṭha* as a great sacred Tree of Life (mChod-sdong chen-po - a Bodhi Tree or *stūpa*) called *Jñāna Gaṇḍola Swayambhu* (The Self-Sprung Temple of Wisdom) which brings spiritual release by sight of it, hearing of it, reflecting upon it, or touching it. Look into the *Newari* chronicles called the *Swayambhu Purāṇa* for extensive details on the arising of thirteen billion times more merit (for practising mantra etc.) in this place than in other great power places, and other interesting topics.

SK relates fragments of the prophecies made by Śākyamuni in the *Gośṛṅga-vyākaraṇa-sūtra* (gLang-ru lung-bstan-gyi mdo) concerning the origin of the *stūpa* *Goma Salagandha*, which is usually confounded with the *Swayambhu Stūpa* by Tibetans of today. As with the *Mañjuśrī-mūlatantra*, the Tibetans have interpreted prophecies concerning another country to concern themselves. "When the Buddha was living in *Vaiśālī* he prophesied in this manner to Śāriputra and Ānanda: 'Hereafter, a town called *Kuśala* (dGe-ba), or *Li-yul*, will arise on the frontiers of India. In the *Gomadeva Lake* is the *Ox-horn Prophecy Mountain* (*Gośṛṅga Vyākaraṇa Parvata*), and in the *Gomadeva Lake* the *Goma Salagandha Stūpa* will arise. In the middle of the lake will be a thousand petalled lotus, and in the centre of the lotus will be an image of Śākyamuni, while on the

petals will be a thousand Bodhisattvas of the Tenth Grade.' Then Śāriputra, the chief of the Buddha's retinue, asked him, 'What will be the cause of such an eventuality?' And the Buddha replied, 'The cause will be the thousand emanations consequent upon my *parinirvāṇa*.'" (SK)

The sceptical Lama bTsan-po says, "It is generally believed that (the Swayambhu Stūpa) is the Goma Salagandha Stūpa that is mentioned in the *Gośṅga-vyākaraṇa-sūtra* (The Ox-Horn Prophecy Sūtra), and that it enshrines the relics of Kāśyapa; but since Goma Salagandha is in Khotan (Li-yul) and the relics of Kāśyapa are in India, it is difficult to believe these stories. However, the Stūpa gives immense blessings." (LT) Chos-kyi Nyi-ma is even more scathing about such Tibetan beliefs.

Concerning the origin of the Tibetan name *Shing-kun* for Swayambhu: "Then after 21,000 *ār hats* from Vulture Peak had taken earth and piled it beneath the dome of the Stūpa, Nāgārjuna cut off his hair and scattered it about, praying, 'May all kinds of trees grow on this sublime Stūpa!' And after many species of tree had grown tall around the Stūpa, it became known as 'Sublime Trees' ('Phags-pa Shing-kun)." (SK) But it is most likely that since the Stūpa arose spontaneously at the time of the Buddha Sikhi (gTsub-gtor-can) and became known as Swayambhu (Self-Sprung), and that since the old Newar rendering was *Sihmangu*, currently *Singgu* (i.e. in the 18th c), the Tibetan *Shing-kun* is a corruption of the Newari name. (CN)

SK describes the Stūpa like this: "Beneath the Stūpa of Swayambhu is a palace of the Nāgas. Above that is a live turtle, and upon the back of the turtle stands the Tree of Life axis (*tshogs-shing*) which is 7 fathoms (42') in circumference at its root and 42 fathoms (252') in height. In the western lattice of the axis are the self-manifest 5,408 gods. In the cardinal directions are one Magadha measure of the relics of

the *jina* Śākyamuni. The skin of the King Suvarṇavarman (gSer-gyi Go-cha), upon which is depicted the *maṇḍala* of Samvara and the 62 gods, is to be found therein. It is said that the outer, inner and secret fields of synchronicity can be devined therefrom....." (SK)

"When the Buddha (Śākyamuni) was alive King Suvarṇavarman (gSer-gyi Go-cha) was (the Stūpa's) patron." (SK) No king with a name resembling this can be found in the lists of the Newari chronicles. Perhaps the name is derived from the *Mañjuśrī-mūlatantra*.

There appear to be more references to the Swayambhu Stūpa than to any other power place in the Valley in the annals of all Tibetan sects but the *rNying-ma-pa*. For instance, regarding the annals of the lineage of Ma-gcig Zha-ma, this great *yoginī*'s brother 'Khong-bu-pa (1069-1144), one of many Tibetan scholar-*yogins* to come to Nepal during the *phyi-dar*, the second spreading of the doctrine, took instruction from Pham-thing-pa, Ye-rang-pa (the Patan Man) and the Bengali Atulyavajra, who were Nepal's finest teachers of that day. He had his mortal remains brought to Nepal with those of his sister by his son, Khang-gsar-pa, who had them consecrated by his Guru Jayasena. This Khang-gsar-pa had "the parasol hoisted above the Swayambhu *caitya* on numerous occasions" and "gathered about him many *yoginīs* and ascetic *yogins* who were residents of Swayambhu, and performed *gaṇacakras* on many occasions." (BA) The Śaivites were flourishing at this time, and like the great translator Rwa-lo, the Tibetans fought many magical battles with them, although, according to the Tibetan chronicles, the Buddhists were inevitably victorious. (BA) Atīśa used a pilgrimage to Swayambhu as an excuse to leave Vikramaśīla Monastery in Bengal and escape his students, who would rather that he stay, so that he could run across the border to Tibet and expiate his jealousy of the monastic tradition by reforming and purifying Tibetan monasticism.

The Abbot Atīśa had given his ex-Guru, the *yogin* Maitripa, a room at his monastery of Vikramaśīla, and later was astonished to discover that Maitripa had been performing *pūjā* with meat and wine within the monastery's confines. Atīśa asked him to leave, whereupon with a sniff Maitripa took up his bed and walked off through a wall. Later, Atīśa apologised to Maitripa who told him that the way to expiate his sin was to go to Tibet and reform Tibetan monasticism. (But see AC p.134.)

Our basic guide describes the origin of the Stūpa very simply and concisely. Adapting the metaphor of the *Swayambhu Purāna*, Ngag-dbang rDo-rje mentions Buddha Vipāświ who threw the seed of the original thousand-petalled lotus into Lake Nāg Hrad during the *satya* or *kṛitya-yuga*, and he mentions the jewel, the ruby (*padmarāga*), that was at the centre of the lotus, diffusing the great light that pervaded the world. The *jina* Vajradhara is the anthropomorphic representation of the *dharmadhatu* that is self-arisen and self-existent. He arises as the Stūpa out of Akaniṣṭha ('Og-min), the pure-land of the *dharmakāya*, the *dharmadhatu* as paradise here and now. The Bodhi Tree, the Tree of Life, the Stūpa, these are all symbolic variations upon the same theme. The *gaṇḍola* is the form of the *stūpa* and wisdom (*jñāna*, *ye-shes*) is its nature.

The Tibetan sources give some historical clues concerning the foundation and history of restoration of the Stūpa. If we accept Śāntikar Ācārya as the actual builder of the concrete Stūpa and accept SK's assertion that Aṃśuvarman was Śāntikar's contemporary, since Aṃśuvarman reigned between 576 and 615 the *Stūpa* dates from the early 7th century. But because Śāntikar is associated with the establishment of the *vajrayāna* this date assumes a very early arrival of Tantra in Nepal. There is only 1 early inscription at Swayambhu, and we have only incidental literary evidence that the Stūpa was worshipped by countless devotees from all over the Buddhist world, among

them some of the most famous names in Buddhist history -- Nāgārjuna, Śānti Deva, Naropa, Vāgīśvarakīrti, Śavari, Jālandharipā, Padmasambhava et al.

Undoubtedly between the 7th and 14th centuries the structure was restored many times, as earthquakes assure that no building in the Valley can survive for even a century without attention, but the first evidence of restoration informs us that the damage just repaired was not caused by nature but by man. An inscription records the ravages of the Muslim Shams Ud-din's armies in 1349 and that the principal patron of the repair work was a certain minister, Śaktimalla Bhalloka. We identify him as the 'Ba'-ro (Bhalloka ← Bhallo ← Bharo ← 'Ba'-ro, which was an honorific title) of SK. He was assisted by governor (*dpon-chen*) Śākya-bzang-po, who was perhaps a scion of the 'Khon of Sa-skya, a Tibetan scholar (dbU-gTsang dGe-shes) and Lama dbU-pa. The 'axis' of the stupa was replaced at this time. Then in 1505 in another major restoration, which Yolmo-pa Śākya bZang-po patronised, the wheel and pinnacle were placed on top by gTsang-sMyon, the crazy yogin Sangs-rgyas rGyal-mtshan from West Tibet. The 6th Zhamarpa had the four gilt shrines placed at the cardinal directions in 1614. Rang-rig-ras-pa had a new pinnacle (gañjira) erected during the reign of Pārthivendra Malla, the consecration taking place in 1694. The next major restoration was consecrated in 1750, probably in the wake of an earthquake, as the extensive restoration included the environs of the Stūpa. Ka-thog Rig-'dzin-chen-po, the 13th Karmapa and Situ Pan-chen were the patrons of this restoration. The Tibetan inscription on the pillar on the S.E. side of the Stūpa commemorates this event. SK would mention only names that have meaning for the writer's Tibetan readers and we should not assume that the Stūpa has been kept in repair through the devotion and wealth of the Tibetans alone. Both Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavas, kings and

commoners, have paid homage to the Stūpa down the centuries, and we can be certain that without a king's permission and support nothing could have been achieved. I have no data on the history of the Stūpa since 1750 except to note that in the past decade attempts to shore up the eastern flank of the hill have failed, and unless the most recent undertaking involving the demolition of the buildings on the south side succeeds, after 13 centuries the Self-Sprung Temple of Wisdom is likely to fall victim to the accelerating pace of the *kaliyuga*.

A story of Padma Sambhava at Swayambhunāth related in Dudjom Rimpoche's *Yid-kyi mun sel* tells how the greatest of exorcists transfixed the Lord of the Earth sPrul-lto-nag-po with a *phur-ba*, and how seven bats and a stone image of gShin-rje-nag-po flew there as protectors. It is said that this image is still worshipped although sunk into the ground (p. 40).

3. SHANTIPUR

'Od-zer Go-cha (Aṃśuvarman): Śāntipuri: within the confines of the path which encircles the sacred area of Swayambhu are one hundred temples. In the (temple called Śāntipuri) Mañjuhoṣa's emanation, the Dharmarāja Aṃśuvarman ('Od-zer Go-cha), met Vajrasattva's emanation, the Ācārya Śāntikar, who had obtained the Body of Immortality. Herein is the maṇḍala drawn in the heart-blood of the Eight Great Nāgas. Further, here is a temple-palace of Mahādeva and Gaṇapati.

There was once a king of Gauḍa (in Bihar), an emanation of Vajrasattva called King Pracanda Deva, who decided to make pilgrimage, and leaving his kingdom in the hands of his son, Śakti Deva, having arrived at

Swayambhu and taking ordination there, he began the ascetic practices of Vajrasattva. His religious name was Śānti Śrī (Zhi-ba'i dpal, Śāntikar). In order to protect the Dharmadhatu 6 Vāgīśvara Swayambhu Stūpa (*chos-dbyings gsung-gi dbang-phyug rang-byung mehod-rten*) he covered it with earth and produced the form of a *stūpa*. Also, as an indication of Mañjudeva's power, he 16 built a *stūpa* at the place where the Bodhisattva had sat for so long. Thereafter it was called Mañjuśrī's Stūpa. Then he built the five shrines of Śāntipuri (Ākāśapuri), Agnipuri, 7 Nāgapuri, Vasupuri and Vāyupuri. In a year of great misfortune, after no rain had fallen for seven years, the King Guṇakāmadeva entered Śāntipur and met the Ācārya Śānti Śrī, begging him to make rain. Śānti Śrī propitiated the Nāgas, summoning them with *mantra*, and forced them to bring rain. Opposed to this Newari account is the false Tibetan belief that Nāgārjuna was the *siddha* who propitiated the Nāgas to make rain. (CN)

The Newari chronicles speak of a King Guṇakāmadeva who entered the inner sanctum of Śāntipur to meet Śāntikar to make rain. Guṇakāmadeva is said to have been a puppet of Aṃśuvarman, an interloper who seized power at the beginning of the 7th century and became the greatest of the Nepali Kings of the Licchavi era (Regmi p. 161 ff.). The Guṇakāmadeva of the chronicles is a king of the *dvāpara-yuga*. An historical Guṇakāmadeva reigned between 987-990, but if Śāntikar was his contemporary the Ācārya could not have established Tantra in the Valley; the 9th c. is the latest that Tantra arrived here.

There was another, later, king who entered Śāntipur to make rain. He was Jaya Pratāp Malla (reigned 1641-1674), 9 whose inscription upon a stele outside the inner door of Śāntipur proclaims that he entered in 1658 to bring out into the sunlight the Nāga Maṇḍala drawn in the blood of the Eight

Nāga Kings, together with the *Mahamegha-sūtra*, in order to bring rain. The King caused a map to be drawn describing his peregrinations beneath Śāntipur. The map shows four levels to the temple. On the ground floor are six empty rooms into which "His Majesty, King of Kings, Lord of Poets, Jaya Pratāp Malla Deva entered with *pūjā* materials, a fish, black soya beans and cow's milk". There is no indication of a way down to the first subterranean level, and no way out of the room into which he entered on that level except a small niche in the wall. However, in the central room of the first floor he found the *Mahasambara-tantra*, a painting in a copper cylinder, two swords and the Śūnyakaru Yantra, and here he discovered the presence of Śrī Śrī Śrī Mahasambara himself. All the other rooms on this level were empty. The King proceeded alone, since "the *gubarjus* (priests) would not go further as they could not see the way", through a stone door and down into the second subterranean level. In the first room "bats as large as kites or hawks came to kill the light". In the second room "ghosts, flesh-eating spirits and hungry ghosts came to beg. If you are unable to pacify them they clutch at you". In the third room, "if you cannot pacify the snakes by pouring out milk, they chase and bind you. Having pacified them you can walk on their bodies". In the central room the "the King met Śāntikar Ācārya, who had become a *siddha*, sitting in *samādhi*. He was alive with no flesh on his body. He gave the King instruction, and here the King found the *mandala*, written in the Nāga King's blood, which he took out to make rain". In the next room he sat and meditated and "all things were shown unto him". In the last room was "a hole through which the water of a fathomless lake could be seen (at a third subterranean level). The waters splash and ripple and the wind blows." The King was below for three hours, and his entourage waited impatiently and in fear for their King who dared to go where no priest dared. Tigers roared and the earth writhed, but finally the King returned and the rains came.

The harvest of 1658 was plentiful. (The original map is in private hands)

"In Śāntapuri there is an entrance to three tunnels: a tunnel to Swayambhu Stūpa; a tunnel to the Nāga Realm; and a tunnel to the realm of obstructive spirits (*bgegs*). At present there is a six foot square stone covering the entrance. The sixteen volumes of the *Prajñāpāramitāmā* written upon lapis lazuli paper with ink of gold from the Jambu River brought from the Nāga Realm by Nāgārjuna is to be found in the Thang Baidhari of Kathmandu (Thamel Bāhāl)." (SK) A volume of this 'original' *Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* is now to be found in the Thamel Bāhāl (q.v).

"Nāgārjuna was custodian and King Aṃśuvarman was patron.... Śāntapuri was Nāgārjuna's place of mediation.... In each of the four cardinal directions of Swayambhu is a treasure trove. These treasure troves were hidden by Nāgārjuna for the future restoration of the Stūpa.... On the eastern flank of the (Vindhyā Mountain) is Nāgārjuna's meditation cave and the spring he brough forth." (SK) Nāgārjuna ('Conqueror of the Nāgas') may have been an epithet of Śāntikar Ācārya, who is not mentioned in the *Swayambhu Chronicles*; or Śāntikar Ācārya may have been a title of Nāgārjuna when he was custodian. The Nāgārjuna associated with Śāntipur may or may not be the same *siddha* who died in his cave on the hill named after him.

"Śāntapuri, or Zhi-ba'i grong, is so called because the Vajrācārya Śānti Deva (God of Peace) called down the god of space (Ākāśa) and pacified him, and when he remained calm and quiet this place was known as Śāntapuri. The Śāntapuri temple was founded during the lifetime of the Ācārya Ngag-dbang-grags-pa (Vāgīśvarakirti), this being the power place where the Ācārya attained Rainbow Body and where he remains until this day. The temple has two lower levels, and I have heard that in the deepest of the levels is an image and *mandala* of Śrī Kālacakra....

In the environs of Swayambhu many ordinary men have seen what appears to be a stalking tiger who appears out of nowhere and who does no harm to any creature until it vanishes into nothingness; this is generally believed to be Ācārya Ngag-dbang-grags-pa revealing his apparitional form..... It is said that in one of the *Swayambhu Purāṇas*, either the extensive one or the version of middle length, is Ācārya Ngag-dbang-grags-pa's biography and other fragments concerning his life. However, this Ācārya is numbered amongst the Six Doorkeepers, the Sages of Magadha. Later, at the end of his life, he attained Rainbow Body and still remains here in (Śāntipur) until this day." (CN)

It is unfortunate that CN is poorly informed about Śāntipur, because we are led to doubt his information concerning Vāgīśvarakīrti. Śāntipur is, of course, Ākāśapur, (Space-ville). CN is alone in believing that the deity of the secret shrine (the *āgama-chē*, usually located on the first floor of the pagoda temples of the *vihāras*) is Kālacakra. This is one of the Valley's principal residences of Cakrasambhara. And Śānti-deva is not mentioned in any other source as having visited Nepal. Vāgīśvarakīrti's identity is problematic. Pham-thing-pa's personal name was Vāgīśvarakīrti, and his title was 'Indian', probably indicating that he spent much time on the Plains; he was a master of the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* and the *Cakrasambhara-tantra*; he lived in the 11th century; his Gurus were Naropa and Śavari dBang-phyug (amongst others). But did he live in Śāntipur? We agree with 'Gos Lotsawa that this second Vāgīśvarakīrti was quite distinct from Pham-thing-pa. The Ācārya of Śāntipur is the lineage holder of the *Ṣaḍāṅgayoga* (*sbyor drug*) of the *Guhyasamāja*, the six *rDzogs-rim* practices which lead, not to the Rainbow Body of the *rNying-mapas*, but immortality in a state of suspended animation, all outflows extinct. His predecessor in the lineage was Śākyadhvāja, and his successor was Ratnakīrti, also of the

11th century. The Newars believe that Śāntikar Ācārya has remained immured in Śāntipur since earliest tantric times. Is it possible that Śāntikar Ācārya was a title of the principal *vajrācārya* of the oldest *guṭhi* (circle of initiates) in the Valley?

There is no shrine of Mahādeva or Gaṇapati in the Swayambhu area, but some Hindus will worship the deity of Śāntipur as Mahādeva.

4. MAÑJUŚRĪ/SARASWATĪ HILL

'Jam-dbyangs bzhugs-khri (Mañjughoṣa's Throne): *Saraswasti Sthan: at the first, when the Kathmandu Valley was still a lake, Ārya Mañjuśrī and his two consorts, arriving in the Valley and failing to see (how human beings could worship the Stūpa in the middle of the lake), drained the waters in three days, and thereafter took their seat upon this spot. (This last line is hopelessly corrupt in the Tibetan)* *The relics of Mañjughoṣa and his two consorts, which remained after their spiritual return to the Five Peaked Mountain in China, are* 16 *enshrined in a magnificent stūpa there. (This line is also a reconstruction)*

At the time of the Buddha Viśvabhu (the third of the six Buddhas preceding Śākyamuni) Ārya Mañjuśrī's emanation Vajrācārya Mañjudeva, who was endowed with the five extraordinary powers, came to Nepal from the Five Peaked Mountain in China 5 together with Varadā (mChog-sbyin-ma), an emanation of Kesinī (sKra-can-ma), and Mokṣadā (gZugs-thar-sbyin-ma), an emanation of Upakesinī (Nye-ba'i sKra-can-ma), in order to see the Swayambhu Dharmadhatu Stūpa. Seeing that beings without supernormal powers were unable to worship the *stūpa* in the middle of the lake, he cut a gorge and drained the waters in four days, only a small lake remaining. Then through the

Great Master's magical power the lotus, which was the sacred base of the attainment of the Swayambhu Stūpa, was transformed into the *stūpa* we know today. At the time of the Buddha Kanakamuni (gSer-thub, the fifth of the seven) the great scholar Dharma Śrī Mitra (Chos-dpal bshes-gnyen), lacking knowledge of the Twelve Syllables (?) and on his way from Vikramaśīla to Mañjuśrī's Five Peaked Mountain for knowledge, found Mañjuśrī himself in the form of Vajrācārya Mañjudeva and received initiation into the *Maṇḍala of Dharmadhatu Vāgīśvarī* as the Swayambhu Stūpa itself. At the time of the Buddha Kāśyapa ('Od-srung, the sixth Buddha), Mañjudeva, having accomplished his aim in the form of a *vajrācārya*, took the body of a god and vanished into the sky like a flash of lightning, and returned to the Five Peaked Mountain..... Śānta Śrī built a *stūpa* to mark the spot where he had sat. (CN)

Mañjuśrī Sthān is the western of the twin peaks of the Swayambhu Hill.

5. VIPAŚWI'S STŪPA

mGo-shing prabhat ko cirba (The Gośṅga Parvata Stūpa): where the first of the Seven Buddhas (Vipaświ) had his throne, today a *stūpa* has been erected. In a new monastery in front of this *stūpa* you can see an image of Munindra, the principal image (of five).

Our text locates the Vipaświ Stūpa in front of the Dharmacakra Monastery on the north-east side of Mañjuśrī Sthān. The Newars believe that it was Śākyamuni who sat and taught at this spot, which they call Parbatsthān, and that the *stūpa* on the peak of Nāgārjuna Hill is Vipaświ's Stūpa. This is certainly more rational; but the geography of Li-yul was such that Śākyamuni sat on Gośṅga Parbat and contemplated the Stūpa Goma Salagandha from a considerable distance (*vide*

Appendix I). This mis-identification and the mis-naming of Nāgārjuna Hill as Ri gLang-ru are both derived from the Gosṛṅga Vyākaraṇa Sūtra.

The *Swayambhu Purāṇa* tells us that when the Buddha Vipāświ came to the Valley he took his seat upon the hill west of the Lake Nag Hrad, the hill which is now called Jamacho or Nāgārjuna, and that from that place he threw a lotus seed into the lake, the seed that would eventually grow into the thousand petalled lotus upon which the flame of the Swayambhu Dharmadhatu would appear. He foresaw at that time that in the *dvāpara-yuga* the hill of the Swayambhu Maṇḍala would be called Gośṛṅga Parvata (Ri glang-ru), the Ox-Horn Mountain.

6. NĀGĀRJUNA HILL

Ri glang-ru lung-bstan (Ox-Horn Prophecy Mountain): Nāgārjuna: on top of this mountain, today, a stūpa has been built to mark the throne of the Buddha. The Mountain is called Nāgārjuna because Nāgārjuna's cave-residence is found there.

Again following the *Gośṛṅga-vyākaraṇa-sūtra* our text identifies the *stūpa* on Nāgārjuna Hill as Śākyamuni's Throne marker, rather than Vipāświ's Stūpa. The other sources (SK, CN, LT) call the mountain Ri-bo 'Bigs-byed (Vindhya), but also identify the *stūpa* as Śākyamuni's Throne marker.

"About half a day's journey north of Kathmandu is the Vindhya Mountain." (LT)

"To the north-west of Swayambhu, on the peak of the Vindhya Mountain is the throne of the teacher (Śākyamuni) and the thrones of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. On the eastern flank of the mountain is Nāgārjuna's meditation cave and the spring he brought forth. Very close on the north side are

the *stūpas* of Śākyamuni's father, Sudhodāna (Sras-gtsang), and his mother, Mayadevī (sGyu-ma Lha-mdzes). On the eastern side of the peak is the place of the Buddha Madhye (Mahe, the Buffalo Buddha). Here is the soil which Halumanyju (Hanuman), the Monkey King, brought from Vulture Peak (?). There are five *stūpas* here. Today there is a Tibetan charnal ground here." (SK) "In accordance with the prophecy of the Bhagavān (given at Vaiśālī), at the Lake Gomadeva on the frontier of India, Śāriputra and Ānanda (Vaiśrāvaṇa in the original *Sūtra*) arising from their thrones, raised their staffs in the air and the lake drained away. Gaṇapati drained the small amount remaining and then vanished into a rock, and this rock, similar in shape to an elephant, is even now to be seen in the vicinity of the Bungadeo Temple in Patan." (SK) The *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* also reports that the Buddha Śākyamuni's favorite disciple, Ānanda, visited the Valley (*vide* Regmi p. 279). Maudgalyāyana's visit is mentioned in several legends (*vide infra*).

The Vindhya Mountain is called Jamacho in Newari. In front of the Buddha's Throne on the peak is a local cremation ground. In the middle of dense forest beneath the Throne of Śākyamuni is the cave of Nāgārjuna in which are stone images of Nāgārjuna and Śākyamuni. Nearby are the tracks of the Mahe Buddha (the Buffalo Buddha). Also nearby is the cave of Ācārya Vasubandhu. The two *stūpas* said to be the reliquaries of the father and mother of the Buddha are found on the face of the hill behind (the Bālāju) Nīlakaṇṭha. (CN)

"Nāgārjunapād had made a cave on the Jāt Mātroccha mountain (Jamacho), where he had placed an image of Akshōbhya Buddha, to worship Swayambhū. As the water filled the valley (during the Nāgas' attempt to reclaim it from man), it rose up to the navel of this image, whereupon Nāgārjun caught the Nāg that was playing in the water and making it rise, and

confined him in the cave. Whatever water is required in this cave is supplied by this Nāg to the present day, and for this reason the Nāg is called Jalpūrit ('Making Full of Water'). This Nāgārjunapād Āchārya made an earthen chaitya, and composed or compiled many *tantra śāstras*, and discovered many gods. He died in the cave. The mountain then became known as Nāgārjun, and it is considered very sacred. People who are anxious to gain salvation leave orders with their relatives to send their skull-bone (the 'frontal-bone') to this mountain, where it is thrown high in the air, then buried, and a chaitya built over it." (Wright, p. 96)

There are innumerable caves on the flanks of Nāgārjuna Hill. Nāgārjuna's Cave still survives high up on the eastern side in a gully. Water flows out of the cave in the monsoon. Images of Nāgārjuna and Akṣōbhya are within. I have not located the Vasubandhu Cave. Nāgārjuna's Cave is known to some Tibetans as the cave of Guru Rimpoche (Lakṣmī Gūpha, with its new image of Nāgārjuna, being considered as Nāgārjuna's cave). On the north side of the eastern spur, which runs to Bālāju, above Raniban Village, is the cave of Bhagavān Buddha. Inside at the back is a seemingly new image of Śākyamuni in *bhūmi-sparśa-mudrā*, a broken image of Bajrabīr Mahakāla and a stone inscription. Outside is a broken figure in *lalita-mudrā*, probably a form of Tārā. There are two empty caves further up the spur. On the north side of the spur is Lakṣmī Gūpha. Inside a steeped chamber within the cave entrance is a relatively new image of Amoghasiddhi or Nāgārjuna. During the monsoon of 1980 a large boulder fell from the roof and broke an old image of Vajra Yoginī now still visible behind the boulder. Two tunnels barely large enough to allow the passage of a crawling adult lead off from the cavern. One twists and turns for 150' before ending at a figure of the Buddha. The other is equally as long and leads to a chamber with an image

of Lakṣmī. She is visited in times of dire need of wealth. Rumours of caves on Nāgārjuna abound. There is reputed to be a cave on this same spur containing a twelve foot high crystal Buddha accessible by rope down a 40' pit and through a narrow tunnel. Further exploration of these caves is needed.

"Nearby the (Nāgārjuna Cave) is a cave said by the Tibetans to be the cave of the Buffalo Buddha (*Mahe sangs-rgyas shul*), which all pilgrims go to see. I asked the Newars the story of the Buffalo Buddha: a long time ago when Ācārya Nāgārjuna was living in his cave, an idiot buffalo herdsman from Kathmandu became possessed by faith in the Master, and came to him frequently offering curds, milk, etc. Once when he asked Nagarjuna to come to town, the Master refused, saying, "If you are able to meditate upon perfect reality, sit down here." So he did as he was told, but obsessed by his work of guarding buffaloes he could think of nothing but buffaloes. "Visualise yourself as a buffalo." instructed the Ācārya. So he meditated in what today is called the Cave of the Buffalo Buddha, and after a while he actually became a buffalo. His horns struck the rock above him and the holes which today are known as his horn-prints appeared. Then Nāgārjuna told him to contemplate his body in its natural state of total relaxation. Meditating accordingly, his body became as before and his senses became sharp and alert, so he was given initiation and precepts. After he had accomplished the aim of his meditation, it is said that he shot through the roof of the cave and went straight to the Dākinī's Paradise (*mKha'-spyod*). At this power place the horn-prints and the cave with the hole in its roof are clearly visible." (CN)

In style and content this story of the Buffalo Buddha is reminiscent of Abhayadana Śrī's *Legends of the Eighty Four Mahasiddhas*, which recount the *mahamudrā sādhanas* of the Indian *siddhas*. Many of the *siddhas* were simple folk, artisans and

labourers whose habit patterns (*bag-chags*) prevented them from meditating on Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and were given creative visualisation (*bskyed-rim*) of their habitual tasks. Then after the visualisation had become actualised they would be instructed to dissolve their perfect image in the fulfilment process (*rdzogs-rim*) of identification with their original nature (*gnas-lugs* or *chos-nyid*) until they attained *mahamudrā-siddhi* and a transubstantiated body in *mKha'-spyod*. The thief, Nāgabodhi, for instance, was instructed by Nāgārjuna to visualise a red horn of avarice protruding from his forehead. When the pain became very severe, he was instructed to meditate upon Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and he quickly gained release.

7. KĀŚYAPA'S STŪPA

- 13 *The reliquary-stūpa of the Perfected Buddha Kāśyapa lies at the distance of an arrow's flight from Sarasvastī Sthān. A secret entrance to the path*
 14 *to the Nāga Realm (Sa-spyod), a naturally formed stone image of a Nāga, Ācārya Nāgārjuna's reliquary-stūpa, and reliquary-stūpas of other saints are to be found in the vicinity.*

SK indicates that the Kāśyapa whose *stūpa* this is, was the Buddha's disciple, the first Zen Patriarch, rather than his Buddha predecessor: "After the Buddha Śākyamuni's *parinirvāṇa*, Kāśyapa was custodian (of the Swayambhu Stūpa). Thereafter, Kāśyapa attained *parinirvāṇa*, and to the west of
 12 Swayambhu are the *stūpas* of both Kāśyapa and Vasubandhu." (SK)

Relics of Kāśyapa Buddha are said to be enshrined in Boudhnath (SZ), in Katiśimbhu (q.v.), in Swayambhunāth itself (LT & SK), in India (LT) and in this *stūpa* on Mañjuśrī Hill.

Vasubandhu, the younger brother of Asaṅga, came to Nepal with a thousand disciples after he had finished his work in India (towards the end of the 5th century). Once when he saw

a householder ploughing the fields clothed in religious robes, feeling most disconsolate he recited the *dhāraṇī* of Uṣṇīśavijaya backwards three times and passed out of his body. His disciples built his *stūpa* at that spot. (CN)

"In each of the cardinal directions of Swayambhu is a treasure trove hidden by the Master Nāgārjuna for the later restoration of the Stūpa.... (When the axis of the Swayambhu Stūpa broke) the King Pārthivendra Malla (reigned 1680-1688) received a communication from Gaṇeś and in front of the Kāśyapa Stūpa he discovered gold treasure." (SK)

Kāśyapa's Stūpa is on the north side of Mañjuśrī Hill.

- 14 Here also is an image of Bāsuki, or Bālasuki Nāgārāj, in rough painted stone. Bāsuki's stone is believed to cover an entrance to the Nāga Realm (*sa-spyod?*). There are no other
- 12 *stūpas* in this compound. Vasubandhu's Stūpa is identified by some as the large *stūpa* on the saddle between the Swayambhu and Mañjuśrī Hills (Pulan Swayambhu). In the courtyard on top of the Mañjuśrī Hill and further east down to the saddle are many unidentified *stūpas*. The relics of Bhāvaviveka (early 6th century?), the dialectician, are believed to be enshrined hereabouts. The Newars, apparently, have no legend concerning the mortal remains of Nāgārjuna, although he died in his cave on Nāgārjuna Hill (Wright p. 96).

8. BIDJEŚWORĪ

rDo-rje mal-'byor-ma (Vajra Yoginī): *Bijeśwari Sthan* (Vidhyeśvarī): *on the banks of the river* (Biṣnumatī) just below Swayambhu is a group of four Yoginīs who spontaneously arose from *mKha'-spyod*.

The Bāhāl of Bidjeśworī (the Newari form of Vidhyeśvarī) is in the centre of the extremely powerful and power-bestowing *Varahī* cremation ground above which vultures hover during the

day and in which jackals howl at night. The chief image in the temple of the Bāhāl is Devī Bhagawānī Vidhyadharī Viramante (?) (rJe-btsun bcom-ldan-'das rig-pa-'dzin-ma rnam-par-rtsen-ma), the Divine Pleasure-Giving Knowledge Holder. She is in a flying position, her right leg bent up at the knee behind her, and her left leg pulled up high against her breast with her left arm, which presents a thousand petalled lotus to her nose. Her right arm is outflung behind her holding a *vajra* above the sole of her right foot. She holds a *khatvāṅga* (trident) in the crook of her arm while it rests on her left shoulder. The image is of vast power in bestowing blessings. She is the heart SAMAYA of Maitripa who carried this symbol of his samādhi in *sūnyatā* from India. On her right side is Uddhapāda Vārāhī (Phag-mo gnam-zhabs-ma, Foot-in-the-Sky Vārāhī); one foot is extended to Brahmāloka (high in the sky), while the other treads furiously down upon a golden Maheśvara. She holds the same emblems as Vidhyeśvarī. On her left side is the Two Headed Vajra Vārāhī (rDo-rje Phag-mo zhal-gnyis-ma); this is the well-known form of Vajra Vārāhī. These three images are eighteen inches high. To the left of these is Vajra Yoginī Naro Khecarī (rDo-rje rNal-'byor-ma Na-ro mKha'-spyod-ma) in the form of Cakreśvarī ('Khor-lo'i dbang-phyug-ma, the Consort of Mahasambara) as a twelve year old virgin. (CN)

Chos-kyi Nyi-ma's above description is precise but for the unaccountable description of Vidhyeśvarī's emblems as thousand petalled lotus and *vajra*. In this temple and in the standard iconography she carries skull-cup (*kapāla*) and curved-bladed knife (*kartikā*, *gri-gu*); perhaps the Fourth Khams-sprul Rimpoche practised a unique *sādhana* that employs the symbols he describes. The Vārāhī cremation ground is none other than
 15 Ramadoli (*vide* Karnadīp). The four Ḍākinīs are associated with the *Cakrasambara-tantra*, which is probably the *tantra* most commonly practised by the Newars, besides being the principal

yi-dam of the *bKa'-brgyud-pas*. At some time several centuries ago, a separate *tantra* concerning these four *Ḍākinīs* must have been revealed. However, this *tantra* is highly secret and little is known about it outside the caste initiates of *Sambara guṭhis* (the covens of *tantrikas*). *Vidhyeśvarī* is also known as *Ākāś Yoginī*; *Uddhapāda Vārāhī* is *Pham-thing Yoginī* or *Indra Yoginī* or 'The Indian Pham-thing's *Vārāhī Khecarī*' (CN); *Naro Khachoma* is, of course, *Naropa's Ḍākinī*. *mKha'-spyod* is the *Ḍākinī's Paradise*, and synonymous with '*Ḍākinī*' is *Khecarī*, meaning 'Sky-Dancer'.

9. KARNADĪP CREMATION GROUND

- 15 *Dur-khrod Rāmadoli: Karabir Mamān (Kālavīra Śmarśāna):* at the confluence of the *Bishṇumatī* and *Bhagwatī* Rivers is the temple of *Bhagawānī*, who is both demanding and dutiful, and a naturally formed stone image of *Mahāmāyā*.

"In the lower west of the town (of Kathmandu) is an image of the *rGyal-po sku lgnā (pañcamurtirājā* or *pañcakāyarājā)* made from *jhekshi* and called 'The Obstacle Remover'. Besides it is the *Ramadoli Cremation Ground*." (SK)

Contrary to the *gNas-yig* and SK, CN locates *Ramadoli* between *Kathmandu* and *Patan*. In his day (18th c.) it was used by *Newars* who called it *Ramadoli*. We must assume an error on his part. He calls *Karnadīp* the *Vārāhī Cremation Ground (vide Bidjeśworī)*. The name *Ramadoli* is unknown to contemporary *Newars*, who may recognise the name *Kārabīr Mamān* but who use the name *Karnadīp*. It is located just south of the confluence of the *Bhagawatī* stream and the *Biṣṇumatī*, below the *Bidjeśworī Bāhāl*. *Bhagawānī* or *Bhagawatī* is a powerful form of *Durgā*, known locally as *Swōbar Bhagawatī*, and known to the *Tibetans* as *Ekajāṭī*. *Mahāmāyā* is an epithet of *Durgā* as the *Mother*

Goddess who is the Creatrix, the Universal Illusion, and the Nemesis and Destroyer. The Pañcakāyarājā made from *jhekshi(?)* is most probably a *stūpa* representing the Five Buddhas. Judging from CN's terrific description of the Ramadoli Cremation Ground, that has such an important place in the mythology of the Tibetan's Nepal, it has undergone a radical transformation since the 18th century. Today the Newars cremate their dead on both sides of the river, and for both Buddhist Newars and Tibetans it is the most important cremation ground in Kathmandu; but it is no longer a more fearful place for the *sādhaka* to meditate than any other cremation ground.

In 1096 Ma-gcig Zha-ma, 'the sole eye of the practitioners on the path of sexual *tantra*', presented her niece and gold to Dam-pa Sangs-rgyas in return for curing her sexual ailments. Dampa took the niece to Ramadoli where many monks and *siddhācāryas* were living. (BA) Obviously Ramadoli was a hive of tantric practice.

In the 15th century, the *Mahapaṇḍita* Vanaratna, 'the last of the *paṇḍitas*', was cremated at Ramadoli. He had taught many Tibetan disciples many different doctrines, including the *Kālacakra-tantra* in which he was a realised master. He lived in Śāntipur Temple on Swayambhu Hill and in the Gopicandra Hermitage (in Patan). (BA)

10. *BURĀNĪLAKANṬHA*

- 17 *kLu-gan-rkyaḷ* (Supine Nāga): *Nārāyana Sthan: Burānilakanta* (The
18 Old Blue-Throat): *the supine image of Viṣṇu at the base of Ox-Horn Mountain (Nāgārjuna Hill) was made at a later date by the hand of man, while that on the road to Bāgdwār is said to be naturally formed. It is the figure of Viṣṇurāj (Khyab-'jug).*

Here is a stone image of Viṣṇu Deva bathing, lying supine in Nāga Śeṣa's bathing pond. (CN)

Lama bTsan-po's description of the Gausain Thān Mahādēva fits the Buṛa Nīlakaṇṭha Viṣṇu: "Where the stream widens into a pond there is a stone image of a man formed naturally in the rock. It is sky blue in colour and its face is covered with a saffron shawl. It appears to be sleeping on its back (protected by) the hoods of a nine-headed cobra." (LT)

"The Rāja (Jaya Pratāp Malla, reigned 1641-1684) had a dream in which he was told by Budhā Nīlakaṇṭha that he or any of his descendants or successors who went to visit Nīlakaṇṭha would die. Hence, from that time, no Rāja ever visits Budhā Nīlakaṇṭha." (Wright p. 215)

Wright's chronicles tell how Śiva's throat gained a patch (*kaṇṭha*) of blue (*nīla*): "Oh Mahārāj, in the Satya Yuga the thirty three crores of gods, *dēvatās*, and *daityas*, churned the ocean, and first of all there came out the Uchchaisravā, which Indra took, saying that it was his luck. After the horse came out Lakshmī, whom Vishṇu took. Then came out the Kālakūta poison, and began to destroy the world. The thirty-three crores of *dēvatās* began to pray to Mahādēva, who alone was able to destroy the power of the poison. Mahādēva, being easily propitiated, appeared, and asked what they wanted from him. They replied that the Kālakūta poison was destroying the world and themselves, and they sought protection, and implored it with joined hands and tears in their eyes. Mahādēva said that he would instantly destroy its power; and so saying, he put it into his mouth, but, instead of swallowing it, he kept it in his throat, which became blue from the effects of the poison, and hence Mahādēva is named Nīla Kaṇṭha. Feeling now very hot he went close to the snowy range of mountains, but the cold there was not sufficient to

cool him. He then struck his triśūl into the mountain, from which sprung three streams of water, and he lay himself down and let the water fall on his head. There (in the Gosain Kund Lake, north of the Kathmandu Valley) lies Sadāśiva, who takes away the sins of man, and exempts him from rebirth." (Wright, p. 165)

It is widely believed that the water of both the Budhā (Old Budha in Sanskrit, Bura in Newar) Nīlakaṇṭha and Bāla (Young) Nīlakaṇṭha (at Bālāju) springs originate at Gosainkund. Although contemporary legend has it that King Jaya Pratāp Malla had the Bālāju image made after his dream, like the larger Budhā Nīlakaṇṭha it may well be 7th c. Licchavi.

18 The Bālāju image is composite Viṣṇu/Śiva: the standard iconography of Jalaśayana Viṣṇu (Submarine Viṣṇu) is modified to put Śiva's rosary and water-pot in his two upper hands. We have no legend explaining Viṣṇu's association with the Nīlakaṇṭha story. The Buddhist Newars worship the image as Nīlakaṇṭha Lokeśwara, and a false etymology makes Budhā Nīlakaṇṭha mean Buddha Nīlakaṇṭha (P. Pal, *Vaiṣṇava Iconology in Nepal*, p. 17).

11. THAMEL BĀHĀL, VIKRAMAŚĪLA MAHAVIHĀRA

The Prajñāpāramitā in One Hundred Thousand Slokas (Sher-phyin bum) lies in Thamel Bāhāl. The sacred manuscript text written in gold which Ārya Nāgārjuna brought from the Nāga Realm is to be found in the Bāhāl Temple.

"The sixteen volume *Prajñāpāramitā* written upon paper of lapis lazuli with ink of gold from the 'Dzam-bu River and brought by Nāgārjuna from the Nāga Realm is to be found in the Thang Baidhari of Kathmandu." (SK)

The temple of Stham Vihāra was founded by Jowo Atīśa; *Pandit* Bibhuti Candra lived and taught there; and Śavari

dbang-phyug taught there. Pan-chen Nags-rin (Vanaratna) also stayed there for some time. (CN)

"Also in Nepal is the Tham Vihāra, called the First Vihāra or the Upper Vihāra. Every evening a light glowed upon a *stūpa* (in this vihāra), and when Jowo Atīśa saw it he asked everyone what it was but received no information until an old woman told him that it was the red powder of the *maṇḍala* constructed by the Buddha Kāśyapa. Jowo Atīśa erected a temple in which to worship the *stūpa*. In front of this *stūpa* is a golden image of Śākyamuni called Lord Abhayadana. Indians call this place the Dharmadhatu Vihāra." (DS, folio 6b).

Atīśa visited the Valley in 1041, and although he was certainly responsible for establishing the Tham Vihāra as a centre of reformed monasticism in a tantric climate, it is certain that there was some foundation there in preceding centuries. Dharmaswamin visited Nepal in the 13th century. For his Tibetan monks Atīśa later evoked this *vihāra* as a model of discipline and study. Throughout the centuries a strong link has been maintained with the Tibetan reformed schools, their pilgrims using the Vihāra as a resting place. It seems that the *dGe-lugs-pa* school had the same relationship with Tham Vihāra as the *bKa'-brgyud-pas* with the Kimdol Vihāra. However, of the plethora of names - Thang Baidhari, Stham Vihāra, Tham Vihāra, Vikramaśīla Mahavihāra, and Thamel Bāhāl - which have been used to describe this supposedly same Vihāra, only the last two are known to the Newars of today, and more research is necessary before we can definitely identify Thamel Bāhāl with Atīśa's *vihāra*.

12. *KATISĪMBHU*

19 *Sa-lhag rdo-lhag mchod-rten: Katishimbu* (The Small Swayambhunāth): *it is said that the stūpa of Katishimbu was constructed with the earth and stones remaining from the Swayambhu Stūpa, and it is also said that it spontaneously arose through the power of an Indian siddha. The hair of Śāriputra's head is believed to be enshrined therein.*

"There is also a *stūpa* (in Kathmandu) said to contain the turban of Ārya Śāriputra." (LT)

"In front of the (old) Kathmandu Palace is a gilt copper *stūpa*, the largest of many in Kathmandu, containing the turban of Śāriputra and the relics of Kāśyapa." (SK)

Katiśimbhu stands in Sighabāhā, about half a mile north of the old palace. Its dome is of concrete and its superstructure gilt copper in the same design as Swayambhu Stūpa. The meaning of its Tibetan name would presumably indicate that it was built at the same time as the Swayambhu Stūpa, i.e. at the time of Śāntikar Ācārya, who was a contemporary of Aṃśuvarman if we trust the *Swayambhu Chronicles* (*vide* Śāntipur) and assume that the Guṇakāmadeva who is associated with Śāntipur is the same as the early 7th century king. Thus we could date Swayambhu and Katiśimbhu as 7th century constructions. SK tells us that in the late 17th century Katiśimbhu was the 20 largest *stūpa* in Kathmandu. Magnificent Licchavi stone statues attest to the very early glory of Katiśimbhu.

13. *ANNAPŪRNĀ*

23 *Nor-bum* (Vase of Wealth): *Lachamikalasa* (Lakṣmī Kalaśa): *in the middle of Asantole Market is a naturally formed stone vase covered in silver in a pagoda temple. Nearby is a temple of Gaṇapati.*

Annapūrṇā is a form of Lakṣmī, the Consort of Viṣṇu, and the goddess of wealth and prosperity. A pot or pitcher (kalāśa) is often found as a representation and symbol of the Devī in her temples. The Annapūrṇā Temple is, perhaps, the most sacred and efficacious of Lakṣmī's shrines in the Valley.

14. JANA BĀHĀL - THE WHITE MACCHENDRANĀTH

Jo-bo 'dzam-gling dkar-mo (po?) (The White Lord of Jambudvīpa):

21 *Jana Bhāl: this image of Avalokiteśvara arose from Buddhafields blessed with the power of speech. It is also referred to as Machindharanāth (Seto Matsyendranāth).*

"The White Lord Jamali (Jo-bo 'Ja'-ma-li dkar-po) is one of the Five Exalted Brothers ('Phags-pa mched lnga), and the divine essence of these five Brother divinities is Avalokiteśvara. The two Brothers who reside in Patan (A-Kham and U-Kham) are red in colour while this one is white, so some believe that he is Mañjuḥṣa, which is erroneous." (CN)

"In Kathmandu is the Sandalwood Well (Chandan-gyi khron-chu) out of which the Four Exalted Brothers were born, the White Jamali and Bod-thang mgon-po." (SK)

The 14th-15th c. Tibetan chronicle *rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long* (folio 40bff.), presumably based on the *Mani bKa'-bum* account, relates the origin of the Four Exalted Brothers: The Emperor Srong-btsan sGam-po (7th c.) sent a priest to Nepal to bring back an image of Avalokiteśvara. In a forest on the edge of the Valley the priest discovered a sandalwood tree that was being nurtured with the milk of a buffalo. This magical tree commanded the priest to cut it down, and then four images appeared out of it: 'Phags-pa Wa-ti, 'Phags-pa U-Gang, 'Phags-pa Jamali, and 'Kaśyapāṇi' Buddha (Kharsapana Lokeśvara?). The priest took the first to Mang-yul (Kyirong),

the second to Yam-bu (Kathmandu, though U-Gang is in Patan), the third to the border (Kojarnāth?), and the fourth to Lhasa.

In the traditional Tibetan accounts the Four Exalted Brothers are associated with the Emperor Srong-btsan sGam-po who is credited with bringing the cult of Avalokiteśvara to Tibet, but there appear to be varying opinions as to the identification of the fourth Brother. The three upon which all sources can be made to agree are 'Phags-pa U-Gang in Patan, 'Phags-pa Wa-ti in Kyirong and the Lhasa Lokeśvara in the Potala. The fourth Brother, 'Phags-pa Jamali, is located both in Kojarnāth near Taklakot, N.E. of Almora in Tibet (*vide* Wylie n. 20), and in Kathmandu in Jana Bāhāl. CN counts five Brothers by adding A-Gang (q.v.) in Patan. The Lama of Kojarnāth avers that the fourth Brother is the Kathmandu Jamali (Wylie n. 20). The local Newari legends associate King Guṇakāmadeva with the origins of the Jamali cult, and one king of that name was a contemporary of King Aṃśuvarman and the Emperor Srong-btsan sGam-po. Furthermore, the Newari legends mention that Jamali was stolen by 'a Magala King from the west'. The western Mallas ruled over Kojarnāth from the 10th to the 13th centuries and it is possible that Jamali was taken hostage by a Malla King and later reclaimed by the Valley people - the *vamśāvalis* mention other cases of images being stolen by invading Tibetans. Jamali appears again in Kathmandu in Yakṣa Malla's time (1428-1480), when he was found in a well (or in a field) in Jamal, which is the area south of the present royal palace. It was probably in Yakṣa Malla's time that Jamali was taken from its Jamal location and placed in its present position in Jana Bāhāl (Kanaka Caitya Mahavihāra) near Indra Chowk. (*Vide* JL p. 147 ff.)

The plastered image in the free-standing Jana Bāhāl Temple is of Padmapāṇi Lokeśvara, white in colour, about 4' high. He wears the Bodhisattva crown and ornaments, and the

figure of Amitābha is painted in the centre of his *jata*. On his right and left are the White and Green Tārās. The *kwāpa-deo* (principal deity of the Bāhāl) is Aksobhya. The Newars call Jamali 'Jama Deo' or 'Karunāmāyā Lokeśwara'. To the Hindus this deity is the patron saint of the Valley, Seto Matsyendranāth. He is given suitable honour by the entire town in Kathmandu's greatest *khat* festival. An interesting feature of the Jana Bāhāl temple is the glass-framed paintings of Avalokiteśvara's 108 forms hung below the first floor of the pagoda temple. (*Vide* JL)

15. THE ITUM BĀHĀL TALKING TĀRĀ

22 *sGrol-dkar* (White Tārā): *Sheto Tārā*: she is located in Itum Bāhāl. She is said to have flown there from Tibet and is called the Talking Tārā.

This White Tārā is found in a side courtyard (*nani bāhāl*) of the vast Itum Bāhāl, which is north of the old palace. Itum Bāhāl is one of Kathmandu's oldest bāhāls. It is associated with the cannibal demon Guru Mapa and a certain Keśandra who traded with him (*Vide* Wright, p. 169). The name Mahāsantasvetadharmacakratārā is enscribed on the temple wall.

16. THE MAKHANTOLE STONE ARROW

Sang-rgyas rdo-mda' (The Buddha's Stone Arrow): *rMa-khan tol ko sa trag ko dhung ga* (the stone satrag(?) of Makhantol).

"In the middle of the town of Kathmandu there is a stone arrow thrown from the top of the Vindhyā Mountain by the Bhagavān, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana that has remained there until this day." (SK)

According to the Newar tradition, Mañjuśrī shot three arrows from the peak of Nāgārjuna to determine the depth of the lake that filled the Valley. One landed in Chābāhil where it wounded a Nāga, who after Mañjuśrī's successful ministrations became Gaṇapati's vehicle at Chābāhil Gaṇeṣṭhān, healing sick supplicants; one landed in Asantole; the third landed in Makhantole where it is visible in a shallow hole on the western side of the road beside the lion guarding the entrance to the square from the Indra Chowk side. Another local Newar informant believed that the arrow had been shot by a Buddha in Lhasa.

17. *KĀLA BHAIRAB*

- 25 *mGon-po phyag-drug-pa (Six-Armed Mahākāla): Kāla Bhairab: this is located in front of Hanuman Doka. Behind this image within a lattice screen of red wood which is part of the palace wall, (and which is*
 26 *built upon) a long straight stone, is a likeness of Mahākāla's face fashioned by the hand of the Lord Karmapa.*

Bhairab, as in this Hanuman Doka image, holds the skull-bowl (*kapāla*) in the right hand while his left hand shows the *vyākhyāna-mudrā* (holding ring finger to thumb). Mahākāla holds the skull-bowl in his left hand and the knife-lid (*karpatra*) in his right. Nepalis come to Bhairab to swear oaths, for if a lie is told in his presence the victim will die vomiting blood. At the Desai festival hundreds of buffaloes are sacrificed to Kāla Bhairab. 'The head of Mahākāla' is known to Nepalis as Bhairab's head, and no connection with Karmapa is known. Pratāp Malla (reigned 1641-1674), Kathmandu's great beautifier, the hero of Śāntipur, claims in one of his numerous inscriptions to have built Kāla Bhairab. However, Mahākāla is the principal protector of the Karmapas.

18. THE GREAT BELL

Dril-chen; ṭhulo ghanti: near the great bell is a large drum.

Located on the west side of the old palace is the great bell, and nearby in a covered, three-walled shed is a pair of large kettle drums.

19. KUMĀRĪ'S PALACE

mKha'-'gro-ma'i pho-brang (The Dākinī's Palace): Kumari Bhāl: to the south of the (old) palace resides a virgin who is a living Dākinī. Go there rendering prostration and offering and solicit the omens of her speech.

The Kumārī is worshipped as a living emanation of Taleju Bhawānī, a form of Durgā and the patron goddess of the Valley's kings. Her palace in Basantapur was built by Jaya Prakāś Malla, the last of the Malla kings, who initiated royal worship of the Virgin. The Gorkhāli Shāha kings continued her worship, and this virgin, pre-pubescent girl may be considered the only human being superior in status to the king. After she bleeds in any way, she is replaced. She then marries into the Śākya caste as any other Śākya maiden. She is known as the Rāj Kumārī, the Royal Virgin. Insofar as Hindus identify Tārā as an aspect of Durgā as in the *daśamahavidhyā*, the Kumārī is sometimes referred to as Tārā. The Bhaktapur Taleju is sometimes confounded with Tārā. Buddhists worship Kumārī as Vajra Yoginī, whose image is found in the inner temple of Kumārī Bāhāl. As the śakti of the virgin youth Kumāra, the son of Śiva, also known as Skandha and Karttikeya, Kumārī is identified with the *mātrkā* Kumārī. (Vide MA.)

20. *MARU SATTAL*

Mahaguru Sang-rgyas gnyis-pa'i bzhugs-khri (The Throne of the Second Buddha, the Mahaguru Padmasambhava, Gūru Padma): *Maru satal ko asan* (The Maru Sattal Seat of Meditation): *this temple was constructed out of a single tree trunk. Inside is an amazing bean-stalk*
 27 *pillar, an image in the likeness of Guru Gorakhnāth, and four images of Gaṇapati.*

In the centre of the ground floor of this large pagoda temple cum rest-house is the image of Gorakhnāth with long hair, large ear-rings, his left arm resting upon a stick, and sitting in *padmāsan* - the archetypal *kaṇphaṭa yogin*. In the corners of the inner forum are the four Gaṇapatis -- Sūrya Vināyaka, Karya Vināyaka, Jal Vināyaka and Aśoka Vināyaka. Perhaps the 'bean-stalk pillar' refers to the several thin 20' high pillars that support the upper floors of the pavilion; otherwise, it must refer to something that has vanished in the last 150 years. The present structure is a *maṇḍapa* or *sattal* called *Kāṣṭhamaṇḍapa* because, according to the Newar legend, it was constructed from a single tree trunk; the year was 1143, before the Malla ascendancy, and the mainspring in its construction was a Śaivite *siddha* called *Lōpipāda*. It is among the oldest structures in the country and the largest of its type. *Maṇḍapa* is best translated as 'pavillion' since its floors are open and raised on pillars, and it functions as a rest-house, temple and village hall. A *sattal* has virtually the same functions, but it is usually partly enclosed and without a shrine. This *maṇḍapa-sattal* has three floors, the ground floor being used as a community meeting place with the shrine of Gorakhnāth in the centre, and the second and third floors were employed by the *nāth ākara* as living space for itinerent *yogins* until the government evicted them in 1966 when the *maṇḍapa* was fully restored for the umpteenth time. Literary evidence exists that the site was

occupied by a religious foundation in the 11th century, during the time of Gorakhnāth, and if indeed this is the E Vihāra of the Tibetans' tradition a Buddhist *vihāra* occupied the site at least as long ago as the 8th century. The *mandapa* was given to the *nāth ākāra* in the 14th century and has remained in its hands ever since. (Vide Mary Slussor, "Two Nepalese Medieval Buildings", *Artibus Asiae* Vol XXXVI 3.)

"The E Vihāra Temple, known as the Kathmandu Valley E Vihāra (*Bal-yul E-yi gtsug-lag-khang*), is the place referred to in the *bKa'-thang gter-mas* where the Great Master Padmasambhava taught the Newari girl, Kusali, stories about hell." (CN) I have been unable to discover this reference in the biographical *bKa'-thang-yigs*.

"The Great Saint of Uḍḍiyāna spent three lunar months in Nepal./ After granting great benefactions to the Nepali Vasudhara and many others in Nepal,/ He hid a treasure in the monastery of E Kara. Then in the grotto of Yanglesho (q.v.), in that of the Asura (q.v.) and other grottoes,/ In the monastery of Shanku (q.v.) and other Nepali monasteries,/ At the crag called Mighty Soil and other places round about, he hid 1000 other treasures." (UL p. 365) "gTsug-lag dPal-dge will reveal the treasure of the E Vihāra." (UL p. 621)

Ye-she mTsho-rgyal, Guru Padma's Consort, visited Kathmandu Valley in the 8th century soon after Guru Padma had passed through on his way to Tibet and had encountered Vasudhara. She was accompanied by her recently purchased partner in *yoga* called Sa-le, an Indian slave owned by a Bhaktapur household. She met Vasudhara in the E Vihāra. (TND)

The *rdzogs-pa anuyoga* lineage began with King Dza, who received instruction from Vajrapāṇi (gSang-ba'i bdag-pa) himself, and it descended through the Indian *siddhas*: Indrabodhi, Kukurāja,

dGa'-rab rDo-rje, Prabahasti, Śākyamitra, Dhanarakṣita, Humkāra and bDe-ba gSal-mdzad. The latter had four disciples of whom two were gTsug-lag dPal-dge and Vasudhara. Both of these taught Sangs-rgyas Ye-shes of gNubs who was the progenitor of the Tibetan lineage. The *gter-ston* of E Vihāra, gTsug-tag dPal-dge, must have been a later incarnation of the *anuyoga* lineage holder who himself studied in Nepal and knew the E Vihāra, he followed soon after the first *gter-ston* Sangs-rgyas bLa-ma, who lived in the 11th century. Vasudhara is referred to as 'King of Nepal'; but he was more likely to have been a renunciate feudatory prince, or simply a *Kṣatriya*. His Gurus were Guru Padma, Dhanarakṣita and Che-btsan-skyes of Gilgit (Bruša). Vasudhara must have been an outstanding scholar-*yogin* of his time (8th c.), and the E Vihāra an important centre of *vajrayāna* when the new cult of *tantra* was still the prerogative of visiting Indian *siddhas* and a few Nepali *yogins*. (*Vide* Dudjom Rimpoche's *Chos-'byung*, folio 56a ff.)

This Vasudhara may well be the same Newar who visited Tibet during Khri-srong lDe-btsan's reign, at the same time as Vimalamitra, Buddhagupta, Kāmalaśīla, *et al.*, to assist in the work of translation and in the instruction of the Tibetan neophytes. However, no Nepali is counted amongst the 25 *paṇḍitas* invited to Tibet from the Indian sub-continent by Khri-srong lDe-btsan.

Gorakhnāth is known in Tibet from the *Legends of the Eighty Four Mahasiddhas* (*Grub-thob brgyad-bcu tsa bzhi'i lo-rgyus*), a translation into Tibetan of the *Paṇḍit* Abhayadana Śrī's stories of the *siddhas*. Gorakhnāth was a cow-herd who was called upon by the *siddha* Jālandhara to tend an unfortunate prince who had had his legs cut off and who had been left to die in the jungle. Gorakhnāth performed this task with devotion and assiduity for 12 years, and this practice of selfless service being the equivalent of preliminary purificatory yogic *sādhana*,

after he had received instruction from his Guru Jālandhara he soon attained mundane *siddhi*. However, he never attained *mahamudrā-siddhi*, the acme of Buddhahood attained by 82 of the 84 *mahasiddhas*. He achieved immortality, and was exhorted to spend his days in the conversion of sentient beings, with the rider that he should not teach those who were not prepared or karmically matured. Thus this legend agrees with the common belief amongst Indians that Gorakhnāth is still alive, like other great *siddhas* who achieved immortality during the flowering of *tantra* between the 9th and 12th centuries, and that he is still teaching in the Himalayas to those fortunate beings whose *karma* is ripe and have eyes to see him.

21. TONDIKHEL BAJRABĪR MAHĀKĀLA

- 28 *Bod-thang mgon-po: Mahākāla: in Tongtikhel is a particularly sacred, naturally formed stone image of Mahākāla.*

"Some say that the Bod-thang mgon-po is naturally formed. Others believe that he was constructed by the very hands of the Great Master Nāgārjuna, that Nāgārjuna made 108 images of Mahākāla and that amongst the protectors he appointed to guard the great power places such as Vajrāsana (Bodh Gaya), this was the one he appointed to protect the Swayambhu Stūpa. However he was formed, this amazing image possessed of superior powers of conferring grace is a climactic attainment. This protector of the Innate (*sahajā*), this Root Protector, is made of black stone. He has one face and two hands holding a skull-cup (*kapāla*) of blood and a curved-bladed knife (*kartikā*) at his heart. He carries a trident (*kaṭvāṅga*) on his shoulder, and he stands with his feet together evenly placed on a corpse. A long time ago, an invading army of Muslims came to this Valley, and although they began to destroy this image they were unable to complete his destruction, and in this land

of Nepal the Muslim doctrines never made any inroads. However, there was slight damage done to the image at that time, to some parts of the corpse, to Mahākāla's body and to the tip of his nose.... This image previously sat on the top of the Phullado Hill (Pulchowk) close to Patan, and because it came flying through the sky (to this spot) it became known as 'the arrival in Tibetan Fields' (*Bod thang-du phebs*). Concerning the name Bod-thang (Tibetan Fields), the site of the temple was the spot to which the King Aṃśuvarman sent his daughter, Bhṛkutī (Bal-mo bza' khri-btsun); the Tibetan messengers, some ministers of the Dharmarāj Srong-btsan sGam-po and others, waited for her there: thus 'Tibetan Fields'." (CN).

The Red Annals, a 14c. historical work based on highly regarded Chinese originated sources, reports that Aṃśuvarman (Od-gser Go-cha) gave Srong-btsan sGam-po his daughter Bhṛkutī in marriage, and that the image of Buddha called Jo-bo Mi-skyod rDo-rje and a sandalwood statue were given as dowry. The Nepali image of Jo-bo was housed in the so-called Lhasa Cathedral (*sDeb-ther dmar-po* f. 16b).

The detailed account of the manner in which Bhṛkutī was procured from Aṃśuvarman found in the 12th chapter of the important history *rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long* (15 c.) is based on the legendary account of the *gter-ma Mani bka'-bum* (or an older source common to both). The Emperor sends his minister mGar-ba to Nepal with a large force of cavalry (rTa-dmang=Tamang). He finds Aṃśuvarman in Bhaktapur (Kho-khom). Having presented 5 square gold coins and a suit of armour inlaid with turquoise the minister makes his request. Aṃśuvarman is at first scornful but upon the receipt of correct answers to his three questions, which the Emperor had anticipated, regarding the moral law, temples and mineral wealth of Tibet, and threatened by Tibetan military invasion, Aṃśuvarman accedes to mGar-ba's request. Bhṛkutī takes an image of Mi-skyod rDo-rje (Kāśyapa

Buddha), a *dharmacakra*, a turquoise begging bowl and a sandal-wood image of Tārā to Tibet as dowry. In Lhasa she is responsible for the construction of the Potala palace and the Ra-sa 'phrul-snang temple on the site of a drained lake. Many other temples in Tibet are attributed to her. It is noteworthy that Nepali craftsmen cast and carved images in Lhasa at this time, and that the Nepali Śīla Mañju was amongst the scholars that the Emperor invited to Tibet.

Regarding the Tibetan legends of Aṃśuvarman's daughter, Bhr̥kutī, marrying King Srong-btsan sGam-po of Tibet, Nepali and some western historians are incredulous. Some difficulties of chronology support their scepticism; but the *Mani bka'-bum* was almost certainly based on a much earlier, authoritative text. If the early date for Srong-btsan's birth, 569, is rejected, and we assume that he was born in the now generally accepted year 617, Bhr̥kutī must have been born the daughter of Aṃśuvarman's old age between 617 and the year of his death, 620/21, to be a suitable 16 year old bride for the Tibetan king. This is consistent with the 634/5 date (*vide rGyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me'-long* f. 46b) given as the time of Bhr̥kutī's arrival in Tibet (she founded the Potala palace in 635), and the texts' unanimous assertion that she married the king before her rival, the Chinese princess Wencheng Kongjo, arrived in 642. It has been suggested that Bhr̥kutī was the sister of Narendradeva, the great Licchavi king of Nepal (*vide Macdonald, Newar Art* p. 19, and also Regmi p. 186). Narendradeva was placed on the throne by Srong-btsan's invading Tibetan forces who in 642 defeated and killed Jīṣṇugupta (*vide Gedun Choephel, The White Annals*, p. 65), an Indian Avir King who had conquered the country in the wake of Aṃśuvarman's death. If Bhr̥kutī had come from Narendradeva, obviously she would not have been Aṃśuvarman's daughter and she could not have arrived in 634/5 or before the Chinese princess; however, it would have been highly expedient politically for Narendradeva to have given

a wife to Srong-btsan, the scourge of Central Asia. The only difficulty of accepting that Bhr̥kutī was Aṃśuvarman's daughter and that she arrived in Tibet in 634/5 is that Aṃśuvarman was not alive to negotiate the marriage settlement. A son of Aṃśuvarman ruled for a time during the troubled and undocumented period after his father's death, and he may provide the answer. But until more evidence is available there is no good reason to reject the evidence of so many Tibetan legends and deny Bhr̥kutī's Tibetan marriage.

According to an inscription found on Swayambhu Hill set up to commemorate the restoration of the Stūpa, in the year 1349 Nepal was invaded by an army of iconoclastic Muslims led by the Sultan Shams Ud-din of Bengal. On its short tour of spoilage, rape and plunder, this army burnt the *vihāra* town of Patan, the principal town of the Valley, broke the Paśupati *liṅgam* into four pieces and seriously damaged Swayambhunāth.

22. BĀGDWĀR

Sangs-rgyas 'khor-ba-'jig-gi gnas (The Power Place of the Buddha Krakucchanda): *Bāgdwār*: at this place the Buddha brought forth water from a rock with his index finger. It is called (Bāgdwār because the rock from which the water flows) is shaped like a bhaga (vagina).

This entry refers to a story from the Swayambhu Purāṇa: in the *tretāyuga*, the fourth Buddha, Krakucchanda, appeared on earth and came to Nepal to pay homage to Guhjeśworī, the Swayambhu Dharmadhatu and Mañjuśrī's Throne. He then went to Śankha Parvata (Śivapuri) to preach the *āryasatya*, the sublime truth, and many people came to hear him, all of them requesting to be ordained and initiated. Since there was no water on Śankha Parvata, Krakucchanda created a spring through the power of his voice, and this stream was called the Bāgmatī

(*Vak-matī* = stream of word or *mantra*). Its waters have the power to cure leprosy and to wash away sin. Krakucchanda gave Bāgmatī the freedom to flow where she would, and ordained that wherever another stream entered hers there should be a sacred bathing place and a spot where the Nāgas would be propitiated (a *tīrtha*). Then wherever the hair of Krakucchanda's disciples fell a spring sprung forth, springs which combined to form the Kesavatī (the Biṣṇumatī), the second major river of the Valley.

Bāgdwār is located on the north side of Śivapuri Hill. The Bāgmatī flows east to break through the ridge bounding the Valley on the north side at Sundarijal. The power places where ritual bathing is regularly performed along its course are Gokarṇa, Guhjeśworī, Gaurī Ghāt, Paśupati, Saṅkhamul, the confluence of Bāgmatī and Biṣṇumatī, and at Chobar. The twelve *tīrthas* of the twelve Nāgārājas are also located at confluences along the Bāgmatī and Viṣṇumatī; but the Nāgas are sadly neglected these days. Besides the etymology of *Bal-po gnas-yig* and that of the *Swayambhu Purāna* there is a third definition of Bāgdwār: because the water flows out through a gargoyle shaped like a tiger's mouth, Bāgdwār means 'Tiger-Gate'. Thus we have a triad of definitions: tantric, mahayanic and animistic.

23. THE GOLDEN TEMPLE OF PATAN

Ye-rang shakya-thub-pa (Patan Śākyamuni): *Shākyamuni Buddha*: there is a wonderful temple in the Bāhāl of Shākyamuni Buddha.

The Vihāra of Śākyamuni Buddha is known as Hiranyavarna Mahavihāra (The Golden Temple) in Sanskrit and Kwabāhāl in Newari. The *Kwāpā-deo* (principal image) is Śākyamuni Buddha arrayed in *Sambhogakāya* ornaments.

24. MAHABOUDHA OF PATAN

29 *Ye-rang sangs-rgyas stong sku* (The Thousand Buddhas of Patan):
Mahabuddha: this is an attractive stūpa made of stone and mud.

Stūpa here refers to the Indian style of temple which has a tower or *stūpa* (*gaṇḍola*) above the shrine. The Mahaboudha Temple in Oku Bāhāl "is a replica of Vajrāsan (LT)". It was built in the 17th century (1601) by a certain Abhayarāja. Contemporary descendants of Abhayarāja belong to the Śākya caste.

"Concerning the Vajrāsan *gaṇḍola* structure (of Mahaboudha), an ancestor of the contemporary (i.e. 18th c.) *Pandit* Ramānanda, a Brahmin, in order to increase his power and wealth, actually went to the Holy Land of Vajrāsan (Bodh Gaya), and after he returned from his pilgrimage he built a replica of the Vajrāsan *gaṇḍola* (*dri gtsang khang*). The blessed stone image of Buddha brought from Vajrāsan itself resides here in the mode of enlightenment (*byang-chub-sems-po*)." (CN)

25. MĪNANĀTH AND MACCHENDRANĀTH OF PATAN

Ye-rang A-khang U-khang: Minanāth and Machindharanāth: there is an amazing story of Nṛtyanāth's (Gar-gyi dbang-phyug's) *emanation* (of Bungha Deo).

"In Nepal is the sublime Bu-kham temple in which is an image of Avalokiteśvara, naturally formed in sandalwood, as a five year old boy, red in colour. This sublime Bu-kham is well known in India while in Tibet the Sublime Swayambhunāth is extolled." (DS, folio 6a).

U-khang, Bhu-kham or 'Bu-kham is known as Bunga Deo or Karunāmāyā to the Newars; and also as Lokeśwara and Karu-juju (LT). To the Nepali Hindus he is known as Rāto

Matsyendranāth, the Guru of Gorakhnāth and the patron *siddha* of the Valley. His original residence is Bungamatī (hence Bungadeo), but for six months of the year he lives in Tabhāl in Patan. His image is of roughly hewn wood, 3' high, with detachable arms, a standing figure covered with clay, and painted red annually. His *ratha* festival is one of the most significant *jātrās* of the year. (*Vide* JL) Both A-kham and Bu-kham belong to the family of the Five Exalted Brothers (*Jo-bo mched lnga*), both being forms of Avalokiteśvara (CN) (*vide* Jana Bāhāl). The *Mani bka'-bum* dates the Four Exalted Brothers as 7th c. images.

"Some Tibetan chronicles, based on Newari oral legend, say that Bu-kham is actually 'Bu-kham ('bu = insect) since this Jowo was born from light emanating from the heart of A-kham in the form of an insect." (CN) This legend probably indicates the greater antiquity of the A-kham cult, a supposition supported by Newari legend and the fact that Mīnanāth is Macchendranāth's Guru. A-kham is Padma Nṛtyanāth, who takes central place in the *torāṇa* above the main door of the temple, and he is Jatādhari Lokeśvara indicating Avalokiteśvara as a *siddha*. His image is a small red Padmapāṇi Lokeśvara, standing with his right hand in *varaḍa-mudrā* and his left hand holding a white lotus (*vide* JL).

Mīnanāth, like Gorakhnāth, is known to the Tibetans from Abhayadana Śrī's *Legends of the Eighty Four Mahasiddhas*. Mīnanāth was a Bengali fisherman who hooked a fish at the end of his line that was too heavy to handle. The fish pulled him into the ocean and swallowed him, and he lived in the fish's belly for twelve years. One day the fish swam close to Mahādeva who had settled himself at the bottom of the ocean in order to teach Umā, his Consort, a secret *dharma*. Mīnanāth overheard the instruction. Soon after the fish was caught and the *sādhaka* liberated from its belly. Mīna found that he had

gained *siddhi*, but like Gorakhnāth the ultimate realisation of *mahamudrā* escaped him.

There is a Nepali cycle of legends that treats the relationship between the three great Gurus of the Valley (Mīna, Gorakṣa or Gorakhnāth, and Macchendranāth) which is a lore unto itself. In the Indian tradition of the *siddhas*, Macchendranāth or Matsyendranāth can be identified with either Luipā, the fish-gut eater, or Mīnanāth. Unfortunately we do not have any authoritative biographical data that could form a framework for a coherent story based on the legends provided by the different Indian, Tibetan and Nepali cultural traditions.

26. LAKE TAUDĀH

- 30 *mTsho ral-gri* (Knife Lake): *Ta'uda*: when the Kathmandu Valley was drained, the water remaining settled in this lake. *Pal-rgyal* (King Pala?) set out for the Nāga realm from here.

Lake Taudāh is the residence of the Nāgārāj Karkoṭaka.
(CN)

The ancient name of this lake was Mādhāra (Kun-'dzin); in CN's time the Newars called it Dhanādaha (Gift-Lake) and the Tibetans Ral-gri (Knife-Lake); today it is called Taudāh (Great Lake). It is one mile south of the Chobar gorge on a broad terrace considerably above the river level. It is strange that earthquakes have not emptied it. The local belief is that the wealth of Karkoṭaka and his Nāgas lies concealed within the lake, which is of profound depth. It is said that the Rana overlords of the last century attempted to drain this lake to gain its treasure and were foiled only by its vast depth.

The story of Karkoṭaka and the Baid (Vēda = doctor) describes the Nāgārāj's palace. Karkoṭaka in the guise of a Brahmin sought help from a Baid to heal his wife's affliction of the eye. The Baid agreed to lend his assistance and accompanied the Nāga to Taudāh. "The pond was so deep, and the water so black, that it was frightful to look at. It was shaded by trees, large fish played in it, and it was covered with waterfowl. The Nāg told the Baid to shut his eyes, and in a moment he jumped with him into the water and they arrived at the Durbar of Nāg-rāj in Pātālpurī. The walls of the palace were of gold, the windows of diamond, the rafters and beams of sapphires, the pillars of topaz adorned with rubies. The darkness of the subterranean palace was dispelled by the light of large jewels in the heads of the Nāgas. They entered the palace, and saw the Nāginī, sitting on a throne studded with jewels of several sorts, shaded by three umbrellas of white diamonds, one above the other, and surrounded by beautiful Nāginīs. Karkoṭak, assuming his proper form, took the Baid by the hand, and gave him a seat near the throne." The Baid cured the Nāgarājā's wife's eye disease and was suitably rewarded, but before he left the palace he promised that his descendants would be equally good eye doctors. (Wright p. 179.)

27. YANGLESHO

Yang-le-shod: Seg Nārāyana Sthan: on the road to Pharping is the great power place where the Second Buddha Mahaguru subdued gods, spirits and demons.

"Yanglesho in the Kathmandu Valley is the power place of the Great Master Padma 'Byung-gnas (Padma Sambhava), and the name of this place is blown on the wind to all, to the wise and the ignorant in the valleys of Tibet, the Land of Snow Mountains. And since the Buddhists of Nepal accept this as

the power place of the Uḍḍiyāna *vajrācārya* Padmākara, they are in agreement with the Tibetans. The Hindus believe that this is the residence of Śeṣa Nārāyaṇa, both the Nāga 'Remainder' (kLu lhag-ma-can) and Viṣṇu. However, the *Gubarjus* have only this legendary indication of the place which relates to the Buddhist ethos: "when the Great Master Padma 'Byung-gnas himself was sitting at this place in *samādhi*, through the Nāga's magical devices a plethora of venomous snakes appeared, hanging down from above; disturbed by this temptation, the Guru, with a fixed gaze, struck the Nāga on the crown of his head with a *vajrakīla* (*rdo-rje phur-bu*) and turned the menacing serpents into stone. Even today on the crag (overhanging the temple) many serpentine shapes are to be seen struggling downwards. From the trace of the *kīla* on the crown of the head of the central snake, water emerges at certain auspicious moments. The Hindus have many legends, supposedly edifying, which I have listened to with reservations in my mind; amongst the stories of Paraśuram, dGra-sta(?) Rāmaṇa (=Vāmaṇa?) one (or two?) of the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu, the emergence of water from the trace of the *kīla* is said to be the emergence (of milk?) from the cow which gives milk eternally," and so on....."The Great Master Padma 'Byung-gnas, having previously practised various ascetic *yogas* in cremation grounds, took to wandering, and at that time he received initiation from Vajra Vārāhī, attaining the Knowledge Holder of Spiritual Maturity (*rnam-par-smin-pa'i rig-'dzin*) and gaining victory over the 'devil of corporeality'. At the cave of Marātika (Heileshe, east of Okaldunga and south of Mt. Everest) he attained the Knowledge Holder of Immortality (*tshe-la dbang-ba'i rig-'dzin*), gaining victory over the devil 'Lord of Death'. At Yanglesho he attained the Mahamudrā Knowledge Holder (*phyag-chen rig-'dzin*), gaining victory over the 'devil of emotivity'. At Vajrāsan (Bodha Gaya) he attained the Knowledge Holder of Spontaneity (*lhun-gyi-grub-pa'i rig-'dzin*), gaining victory over the 'godling devil'. Amongst

these four Knowledge Holder attainments the mastery of Mahamudrā is the ultimate, unsurpassable, supreme attainment, and since the Guru achieved it in Yanglesho, this place is of equal significance to Vajrāsan (where Śākyamuni attained enlightenment) for the Guhyamantra rNying-ma-pa school." (CN)

In Guru Padma's biographical *bKa'-thangs* it is not made clear exactly how he divided his practice between the cave at Yanglesho and the Asura Cave; but it may be inferred that his *mahamudrā* practice is associated with the former, and the practice of Yang-dag and Phur-ba with the latter. This is an adaptation of the 5th chapter of the *bKa'-thang zangs-gling-ma*, a revealed text (*gter-ma*) of Nyang-ral Nyi-ma 'Od-zer (1124-1192 A.D.), which describes Guru Padma's accomplishment of the Mahamudrā Knowledge Holder, by means of Yang-dag and Phur-ba combined, at Yanglesho: "Then the Guru thought to himself, 'Although I have attained the Knowledge Holder of Immortality, there is no advantage unless I attain the Mahamudrā Knowledge Holder.' So he came to the meditation cave at Yanglesho between India and the Kathmandu Valley, to the Tree of Generosity that never withers in winter. Here he captivated a highly qualified *yoginī*, called Śākyā Devī (Śākyā bDe-mo), and began his practice with the *Maṇḍala of Glorious Yang-dag's Nine Lamps*. Obstacles immediately arose. The Nāgas, Rākṣasas and Sky-Demons conspired to cause a three year drought and famine in Nepal, Tibet and India, and plague struck both men and cattle. The appearance of Death provoked Guru Padma to the realisation that he must destroy the power of those demons if he was to attain *mahamudrā*, and giving an ounce of gold dust to his Nepali disciples Jila Jisad and Kun-la ku-bzhi, he sent a plea to his *paṇḍita* Gurus in India to send the means to achieve the subjection of the obstructing spirits. He was instructed to apply to Prabhahasti, which he did, and he received the text of the *Phur-ba Vitotama*, which two men could barely carry. Immediately upon the appearance of the text in

Yanglesho, the ocean threw up gifts, the earth was suddenly fertile and clouds gathered in the sky. Rain fell upon the parched soil and simultaneously shoots, leaves, buds and fruit matured. By eating this fruit both men and cattle were cured of disease and the Kingdom was filled with happiness and laughter. At this time, Guru Padma had a vision of the retinues of both Yang-dag and Phur-ba. Attaining identity with Yang-dag he gained great *siddhi*, but obstacles arose too; then upon rDo-rje Phur-ba's entourage's manifestation all obstacles disappeared. Then practising their combined rites (*Yang-dag phur-ba 'brel-ba*) he attained Supreme *mahamudrā-siddhi*. Through that night, at evening, at midnight and before dawn, various spirits came to him offering their life-essence, and he bound them all to pledges to serve as rDo-rje Phur-ba's Logos Protectors (*bKa'-srung*). The Four bSe-mo Sisters, the Four Sho-na-ma Sisters, the Four Remati Sisters and the families of the Four *bSe-yi skyes-bu*, the Four Iron Beings (*lCags-kyi skyes-bu*), and the Four Conch Beings (*Dung-gi skyes-bu*) were all bound in this way. Thus Guru Padma overwhelmed the arrogant spirits of the Maṇḍala of Divine Form; he brought all sound and vibration of the Maṇḍala of Mantra under his control; and every mental construct and thought, and all of the five poisons, were rendered void as they arose into the Maṇḍala of the True Nature of Mind, into the reality of indeterminate, non-conceptual purity. In the plenum of innate purity he entered the Unchangeable Mind of Mahamudrā."

Another account tells of how Ting-lo-smān of the north, sTag-smān-zor-bar-gdong and Byang-phug bsTan-ma-bcu-gnyis sent a storm down upon Guru Rimpoche while he was staying at Yanglesho, paralysing his entourage with cold. The Guru pointed his fingers in *mudrā* of threat and a firestorm emanating from his fingers raged around the snow and shale mountains

where the gods dwelt. Then they all came to him offering him their lives. (Dudjom Rimpoche, *Yid-kyi mun sel*, p. 44a)

If you look through the lattice at the side of the Hindu Temple (underneath the hanging serpentine forms) you can see the golden image of the Nāga Śeṣa, Śeṣa Nārāyaṇ. This temple is forbidden to non-Hindus and zealously guarded. Outside the door (to the right of the temple and to the left of the Guru Rimpoche Cave) is a stone image of Viṣṇu's *avatār* Balarāma (Stobs-ldan). (CN)

Since CN's time the golden image of Śeṣa has disappeared and the temple is anything but well-guarded. The image of Śeṣa Nārāyaṇ (Newari: Seg Nārāyaṇ) is a wreath garlanded stone painted fire-engine red to the right of the central image of Nārāyaṇ. Śeṣa is 'The Remainder' of the cosmic ocean after Viṣṇu has created the universe. He is identical to Viṣṇu. Upon the dissolution of the universe he becomes Ananta, the Endless, upon which Viṣṇu reclines at the end of his 'day'. Here the Nāga is elevated to symbolise all Life Force, or the element water in its cosmic context where as the source of life it is pre-eminent. To the right of the temple are two stone friezes of Viṣṇu's *avatārs*, Balarāma and Viṣṇu Vikrānta (Vāmaṇa). In Guru Rimpoche's Cave the Guru's hand holes and head print can be seen in the roof. This cave is usually occupied by a *yogin* associated with Guru Sangye Dorje's retreat centre which is just to the north.

Ye-she mTsho-rgyal visited Śākya De-ma (Śākya Devī), Jilajipha (Jilaji-sad), and others at Yanglesho and Asura during her first visit to Nepal (ca. 780-90). Śākya Dema was Guru Padma's mystic partner. (TND) Her mother died at childbirth and she was left at the cremation ground after the cremation of her mother. She was reared by monkeys until Guru Padma discovered her and took her from Śankhu to Yanglesho to practise the Yang-dag and Phur-ba meditation rites. (UL) When

mTsho-rgyal met her she was a fully matured *yoginī* in her own right and passed on the precepts which she had received. (TND)

28. PHARPING BAJRA JOGINĪ

Pham-thing rDo-rje rNal-'byor-ma: Pharping Bajra Jogini: this image of Vajra Yoginī is the embodiment of pure awareness (jñāna, ye-shes), and is a speaking Yoginī. She is an image of the heart-vision of Pham-thing-pa and others.

"In the vicinity of Yanglesho is the Speaking Vārāhī of the Indian Pham-thing-pa." (SK)

"Close to the village of the Indian Pham-thing in a temple is an image of Vajra Yoginī. This is Indra Khecarī who defeats all opposition. However, her colour needs to be white while this image is red. Drukpa Rimpoche (the 6th 'Brug-chen) told me that although this image was made at the time of Pham-thing-pa it was restored and reconsecrated by a Buddhist *Vajrācārya* at a later date." (CN)

Pham-thing Yoginī, Uddhapāda Yoginī, Indra Yoginī, or Nīl Tārā (to the Hindus), call her what you will, is red in colour with one foot firmly planted upon Maheśvara on the ground, while the other is raised straight into the sky pulled up by her left arm which presents a skull-cup to her mouth; a *khaṭvāṅga* (a trident protruding from a skull on a stick) rests on her shoulder; and in her right hand she holds a hooked knife (*gri-gug, kartikā*) slightly away from her side. To her right and left are Bāghinī and Singhinī, the Tiger and Lion Headed *yoginīs*. Another three images with identical iconography are found in the N.E. corner of the same first floor of the Bāhāl.

CN believed that the Nāgārāj Śeṣa's epithet *Phanathinggu*, 'the Nine Hooded Cobra' had been corrupted into Pham-thing,

which was then (i.e. 18th c.) the name of the village or district, and that 'Indian' Pham-thing-pa took his name from his birthplace. Presumably, 'Pham-thing' has been corrupted into 'Pharping' according to this theory. (But Regmi gives 'Phanappi' as the medieval name of the village.) We can speculate that Pham-thing-pa gained his epithet 'Indian' from Indian ancestry or, more likely, from a prolonged sojourn in India itself. Or perhaps the Tibetans made no distinction between India and Nepal and called him Indian Pham-thing-pa to distinguish him from Tibetans, because Pham-thing could be a Tibetan name. This great *yogin* of the *Guhyasamāja*, *Sambara* and *Hevajra* traditions was the spiritual son of Naropa who may have spent some time in the Kathmandu Valley.

Pham-thing-pa lived in the 11th century and was renowned as one of the great teachers of his day. He studied under Naropa for 9 years, receiving the transmission of the *Sambara* and *Hevajra-tantras* amongst others. His brother Dus-'khor-ba studied under Naropa for 5 years and his youngest brother Thang-chung-pa was also a practising *tantrika*. (BA) Roerich adds that Pham-thing-pa was also known as *Vāgīśvarakīrti* (Ngag-gi dbang-phyug grags-pa); that his remains are said to be preserved at Lo-chia-t'un in Kan-su where he died on his return from the Five Peaked Mountain Paradise of Mañjuśrī (Wut'ai shan); and that pilgrims visit the village of Phambi (Pharping) near Kathmandu where descendants of Pham-thing-pa live.

29. ASURA CAVE

Asura-yi brag-phug: Gorshanātha Gūphā (Gorakhnāth's Cave): in the upper meditation cave of Yanglesho, *rDo-rje Phur-ba* (Vajrakīlaya) destroyed obstacles and obstructing spirits (in the meditation of Guru Padma) who gained mahamudrā-siddhi there. This place possesses the blessings of supreme Buddha Speech.

"In the upper meditation cave of Yanglesho I began the process of becoming aware of Glorious Yang-dag Heruka in order to obtain the relative powers and the ultimate compassion of *mahamudrā*. But the suffering of the people of India and Nepal became such an obstacle to the consummation of my meditation that I begged my Gurus for the means to allay the people's suffering. The text of the *Phur-ba Vitotama* was sent me. Immediately after it arrived in Nepal the obstacles to my *sādhana*'s progress were removed, and I attained the relative and ultimate compassion of *mahamudrā*." (CL) This record of Guru Padma's practice in Yanglesho is a virtual precis of the *Zangs-gling-ma* description (*vide* Yanglesho). It seems most likely that Guru Padma performed his *mahamudrā* retreat in the Asura Cave, the Upper Cave of Meditation of Yanglesho, as the lower cave near Śeṣa Nārāyaṇ Sthān appears geomantically ill-placed for a prolonged retreat, it being entirely shaded by the crags above it and trees around it, and very damp, facing north, never receiving the light of the sun. However, although the texts are ambiguous and in conflict, it should not be dismissed that he practised in the lower cave.

"This is the place where (Guru Padma) accepted the pledges of the Twelve bStan-ma to protect Tibet: with regard to the Tantric rites of the rNying-ma School, on the occasion of protecting the essence of the teaching, /In coming hither from India/ Or going hence from Nepal,/ In the Asura Cave /The Master Padma 'Byung-gnas/ And gLang-chen dPal-gyi Seng-ge/ Upon the *yantra* Throne of the Ten Spheres (*zhing-chen snol-pa'i gdan*)/ An offering of 'red water' (blood) was prepared / And the *vajra* was turned in the hand;/ The secret initiatory name was uttered / And they (the demons) were absorbed in the level of Vajradhara." Thus the description in ritual terms of the subjection of spirits, which Guru Padma performed not only in Yanglesho but in all parts of Tibet before beginning the building of Samye and attempting to convert the Bon-po Shamans

to the Buddhist *dharma*. "This is also the place where in the past many of the greatest of *siddhas* coming to and from India, Nepal and Tibet on foot would celebrate the *Gaṇacakra* rites and other *pūjās*." (CN)

The name of the spirits called Phur-srung (Phur-ba Protectors), subjugated by Guru Padma at Asura, is significant in its implication that the *phur-ba* was an important local spiritual force. (Dudjom Rimpoche, *Yid-kyi mun-sel*, p. 40b)

"I have heard Drukpa Rimpoche (the 6th 'Brug-chen) say that in the eye of a Knowledge Holder there is an entrance to the path which leads to the realm of the Asuras (anti-gods) from here, so that (by a *yogin* entering their realm) the Suras and Asuras can be converted." (CN)

"The Hindus have made this place into a power place of Viṣṇu; but inside the small cave shaped like a lion there is no image or symbol (of the god) whatsoever. However, outside the door is a horizontal stone, and carved in that stone are the complete set of Viṣṇu's symbols, his footprints, his *cakra* and sword etc." (CN)

In the Asura cave are images of Guru Padma, Yang-dag Heruka and rDo-rje Phur-ba. In the rock above your head as you enter is a bulge seemingly about to split open: the story has it that quite recently a *yogin* was on the point of discovering one of the many Hidden Treasures (*gter-ma*) concealed by Guru Padma in the Asura Cave, when realising that the time was not auspicious for the disclosure of this secret, he broke his meditation, and the rock, which was about to break and give up its treasure, regained its intractability.

Outside, to the left of the entrance, is the handprint of Gorakhnāth; and, likewise, the footprints in the rock in front of the entrance are said by some to be those of Gorakhnāth.

At some distance below the cave is a *pīṭha* of Gaṇeś where the Remover of Obstacles can be seen struggling to free himself from the rock, while to his right is a small, exquisite self manifest image of Tārā. In the cliff behind the cave the magical mineral *jong-zhi* can be found. This semi-crystallised form of calcium is employed in *rasayāna yogins'* alchemical, dietary *sādhana*, & also by naturopathic and ayurvedic healers.

30. DAKṢIN KĀLĪ

Lha-mo nag-mo (Mahākālī): *Dhakina Kāli*: this fearful cremation ground is close to Pharping. The practitioner of 'Severence' (gcod) will certainly find his ambiance here.

"To the south-west of the town of Patan, not far from Thankot, there is a terrifying, predatory image of Ma-gcig 'dod-khams bdag-mo (Kāmalokeśvarī, The One Mother, Queen of the Sensual Realm) called Dakṣiṇa Kālī." (LT)

Dakṣiṇ Kālī is the 'Southern Kālī'. There are four principal Kālīs in the Valley according to the classical Hindu lists: Vatsala, Mahākālī, Dakṣiṇ Kālī and Guyhakālī. Dakṣiṇ Kālī is patroness of the village of Pharping, but the most popular object of blood sacrifice in the entire Valley. The main shrine by the river is forbidden to non-Hindus; on the hillside above it is the site of a *dhūni* and the temple in which Tibetans pay homage.

31. KATOWA

Dang-po chu-bshar-ba'i gnas (the place of the first gorge): *Kaṭowa*: south of Pharping is the place where Mañjughoṣa caused the water (of the original lake) to drain away.

The Kaṭowa gorge is where the River Bāgmatī breaks through the Śivalik range, a range rising to 8000' that separates Kathmandu Valley from India and is responsible for its cultural isolation and moderate monsoon.

32. THE BOUDHNĀTH STŪPA

mChod-rten bya-rung-kha-shor (Chorten Jarung Khashor): Bahuda: a long time ago Jadzimo (Bya-rdzi-mo) and her four sons built this stūpa with money saved from their wages. When the stūpa was consecrated 100 million Buddhas dissolved into it, and it has the glory of being filled with their sacred relics (ring-bsrel). Whatever prayer is offered to it is fulfilled, and if you meditate upon your personal deity (yi-dam) here, at the time of your death you will be reborn in *Sukhāvātī*. Here is the cremation ground Spontaneously Amassed (Lhun-grub brtsegs-pa), one of the Eight Great Cremation Grounds.

The Tibetans call the Boudhnāth Stūpa simply Chorten, The Stūpa, or Chorten Chempo, the Great Stūpa, or Jarung Khashor. This last name refers to the legend of its origin, which is related in the *Padma bKa'-thang* and also, at much greater length, in a *gter-ma* discovered by Rig-'dzin Yol-mo-pa Śākya-bzang-ṅo in 1518. This revealed text, called *The Legend of the Great Stūpa* (*mChod-rten-chen-po bya-rung kha-shor-gyi lo-rgyus*), tells the story of the whore who wounded the pride of the wealthy and powerful by building a magnificent monument to the Buddha with, of course, the king's permission. When the jealous lords petitioned the king to have the Stūpa demolished, the king replied that 'once authority to build has been given it cannot be rescinded', which is the implied meaning of 'Jarung Khashor' (*bya-rung kha-shor*). But the story is related in Samye by Guru Padma who is asked by King Khri-Srong lDe-btsan to tell him and the other disciples what the fruit of the aspiration of the builders of the Jarung Khashor Stūpa was. And by relating the prayers of the benefactor Jadzima's sons, the past rebirths of the principal actors in the drama of spreading the Doctrine in Tibet - Guru Padma, the King, Śāntarakṣita and sBa gSal-s nang - is described. When these four meet in Nepal and Tibet, their encounters are described as reunions. Two chapters in the

gter-ma are devoted to prophecy, predictions concerning Tibet in general and the Great Stūpa in particular. Guru Padma foresees the ruin of the Stūpa and its restoration by a tulku who fulfils certain spiritual qualifications. According to CN this tulku is none other than Śākya - bzang-po himself who in the 16th century discovered the Stūpa in ruins and undertook to restore it to its original state of glory. In 1505 he contributed wealth for the restoration of Swayambhu (SK). Again, according to CN, it was Śākya-bzang-po's third reincarnation, the *gTer-ston* *bsTan-'dzin* Nor-bu who propagated the doctrine he propounded in his first existence as a realised emanation of Guru Padma, that the Stūpa was attached to the Spontaneously Amassed cremation ground, one of the Eight Great Cremation Grounds.

"It is written that (Jarung Khashor) is one of the eight *stūpas* built at the Eight Great Cremation Grounds of the Eight 39 Ma-mo (the Eight Mother Goddesses = *aṣṭamātrīkā*) of Kāla Bhairava's retinue when long ago Bhairava was vanquished by Cakrasambara... Not far from the Stūpa is a cremation ground lake called Nāga Talāpa; on the banks of that is a cremation ground tree; very close to the Stūpa is a cremation ground fire, that has remained alight for ever and a day, called Agamātha; and ordinary people have seen clouds of *Ḍākinīs* from time to time in the vicinity of the Stūpa. For these and other reasons this is described as a cremation ground *stūpa*." (LT)

Possibly, the tree mentioned above is the *bodhivṛkṣa*, the peepal tree, outside the main gate of Guhjeśworī. Upstream from here is a broad lake bed to the north of the Bāgmatī. The fire, Agamātha, is perhaps the eternal fire of Śankhu Bajra Joginī.

"In the Spontaneously Amassed Cremation ground in Nepal dwells the blood-sucking serpent-witch Kaśmalī. Surrounding the *stūpa* are funereal birds, sepulchral creatures, a cremation

ground, ghouls brandishing skeletons, and creatures of the tombs. A flashing cloud of airy regions lifts heaps of men, fire, skins and pulverised organs; a Yakṣa vomits tigers, wolves and other wild beasts. Here Padma subdues the eight classes of demons, reduces the three worlds, subjugates the three domains, and turns the wheel of *dharma* for five years. Here he is known as Seng-ge sgra-sgrogs, He Who Teaches With A Lion's Roar." (Adapted from UL p. 176 ff.)

"We definitely accept that the Protectress who is at the front side (the north side of the Stūpa) is Puṣkā, red and gold, sucking up entrails and devouring them, and that she is one of the Eight Ma-mo of this power place." (CN)

- 32 The Ma-mo (*mātrkā*) Puṣkā or Kaśmalī (UL), known also as Pukāsī, is to be found in the shrine opposite the residence and shrine room of the Abbot of Boudha, the Chini Lama. She squats with a corpse on her knees devouring its intestines. She is treated with great respect by her devotees, most of whom are Bhotiyas, Tamangs and Tibetans, and therefore initiated into the Maṇḍala of the Eight Ma-mo attendant upon the Cremation Ground. By the Newars she is known by the generic name Ajimā (grandmother), a name applied particularly to the *aṣṭamātrkā* but also to other fierce goddesses. Some Newars identify her with Hārītimā, a demoness who inflicted smallpox upon children until converted by Śākyamuni preaching
- 12 the significance of Swayambhu at Puran Swayambhu (Vasubandhu's Stūpa). Thereafter she fulfilled her vow to remain within her shrines that were located close to the Buddha's temples, and so long as she was propitiated she would refrain from inflicting disease. In Swayambhu, and likewise in Katiśimbhu, she appears in her usual form of a benign mother with children on her knees. The Hindus call her Sitalā. Cāmundā is the *aṣṭamātrkā* of the Hindus who is depicted devouring a corpse's guts. Whatever her name this goddess is a force to propitiate to prevent

her malicious devices infecting one rather than to coerce and employ her *siddhi*. Regmi agrees that the Boudhnāth Stūpa, otherwise called Khāsti, has been associated with Bhotiyas from a very early time. He suggests that the name Khāsti is derived from Khāsā, a town near Kyirong inside Tibet (Regmi, D.R., *Medieval Nepal*, Pt.1, p. 571). We know that in the 17th-19th centuries the Tibetan government had some jurisdiction over the Stūpa and that it has been, and is still, worshipped principally by Tamangs, Gurungs and other Bhotiyas. When the 13th Karmaṇa visited Nepal in 1723 he first paid homage to Boudhnāth. The 6th Zhamarpa also went first to Boudha in his 1614 visit.

The Newars also call the Boudha Stūpa Khās or Khāsti, and their story of the Stūpa's origin is quite different from that of the Tibetans. The implication of *The Legend of the Great Stupa* is that the Stūpa had been built many generations before the birth of Guru Padma, Khri-Srong lDe-btsan and the others, in the *dvāpara-yuga* at the time of Kāśyapa, since his relics are enshrined therein, but there is no more specific intimation of its birth date. The Newari story fixes the century of its foundation, the 6th century, because it was the great King Mānadeva, the military conqueror and patron of the arts, whose deeds are recorded on the Chaṅgu Nārāyaṇ pillar, who built it. Mānadeva, one of the greatest Licchavi Kings, died in 505 A.D. (Regmi).

During the reign of Vikramajit, the Nārāyaṇa Hiti, the fountain opposite the old gate of the new palace, ran dry, and a drought struck the land. The King consulted his astrologers, and was informed that the gods required the death of a virtuous man, such propitiation being the only means to end the drought. The King searched his kingdom but discovered that only he and his son qualified as victims. The old king decided that he himself must die, and instructed his son to decapitate with

one stroke the shrouded form that he found lying beside the Nārāyaṇa Hiti on a certain moonless night. The son, Mānadeva, obeyed his father's command, and was horrified to see the head of his own father fly up from the corpse and away in the direction of Śankhu. The parricide found his father's head at the Bajra Joginī Temple, where the Dākinī told him that the only way to expiate his sin was to let fly a cock, and wherever the bird landed he should build a reliquary *stūpa* for his father's remains. The cock alighted at Boudha. Some say that the Great Stūpa itself is Mānadeva's penitential monument; others that the largest of the five *stūpas* to the east of the Great Stūpa is Vikramajit's reliquary.

- 31 "On the east side of (Jarung Khasor) is a *stūpa* enshrining the relics of Rang-rig-ras-pa." (SK) Rang-rig-ras-pa was a highly respected Lama of the *bKa'-brgyud-pa* school who lived in the 17th century. The Chini Lama believes that he was a Khams-pa, the 5th and last of his line of incarnations and that his remains were interred in the largest of the *stūpas* on the east side. Chini Lama had a vision of Rang-rig-ras-pa who instructed him in tantric practice. The Chini Lama also believes that the second largest of the *stūpas* to the east is the reliquary of rTogs-ldan Śākya Śrī, the famous Lama active in western Tibet during the last century, who restored the Boudha Stūpa at one time. Śākya Śrī was the Guru of the late Abu Rimpoche's teacher.

33. CHĀBĀHIL STŪPA

Sa-lhag rdo-lhag-gi mehod-rten (The *stūpa* of Earth and Stone Remnants): *Cabhel ko cāyite: this stūpa was constructed from the gloriously consecrated earth and stone remnants of the Boudha Stūpa.*

The Chābāhil Stūpa is of great antiquity. The Newar tradition asserts that it was built by the Mauryan Emperor

Dharma Aśoka's daughter, Cārumatī, who stayed behind to marry a local prince when Aśoka visited the Valley in the 3rd century B.C. Cārumatī's husband, Devapāla, is credited with building Deopatan. A very early Licchavi inscription attests 36 to the age of the site and an early Licchavi standing Buddha and a later Padmapāṇi Lokeśvara are important monuments to exquisite Licchavi craftsmanship. The name Mañju Bāhāl indicates that in centuries past a Bāhāl existed around the Stūpa; today the Stūpa area is known as Bhagawān Thān. To the west of the Stūpa is the Cārumatī Vihāra of which Dīpaṅkara Buddha is the *kwāpā-deo*. Regmi calls the Stūpa Dhañju Caitya, perhaps a misreading of 'Mañju' (Regmi, D.R. *Medieval Nepal*; p. 564).

34. GUHJEŚWORĪ

Phag-mo mngal-chu (Vārāhī's Womb-Fluid): *Guhyashwari* (Mistress of the Secret): *the Stupa of Self-Sprung Wisdom, Swayambhu, appeared upon the pollen bed of a flower growing from the womb of Vajra Vārāhī; and because here is the root of Swayambhu, which is beautified by so many kinds of trees, this root is said to be the umbilical cord which nurtures Kathmandu. Beside (the Temple of Guhjeśworī) flows the Bāgmatī, one of the four great rivers (of the Valley), the auspicious waters of which purify all sin and obscuration.*

"Near Paśupati is a symbol of Umā called Guhjeśwarī where there is also a spring which has the taste and smell of *chung* (fermented grain liquor)." (LT).

In the central shrine of the temple complex are two circular wells with rims slightly raised above the floor. The larger and shallower well is employed in rites of worship as the symbol of Umā, the *yoni*, while the other well, supposedly 30' deep, and smaller in diameter, is the receptacle of *chung*, *arak* and red powdered water (blood or a substitute)

offered in worship. A spring overflows onto the temple floor from this well, an outflow that is considered to be the sexual nectar of the *Yoginī*-Goddess herself.

"On the banks of the *Vākmatī* (*Bāgmatī*), the *gSung-ldan-ma*, is *Guhyaśvarī* (Sanskrit), which means the Secret Goddess, (*gSang-ba'i dbang-phyug*, where 'Secret' means 'Private' as in 'Private parts'), a sound that has been corrupted so that both Indians and Nepalis pronounce it *Gutiśvarī* (The Rectum Goddess or Hidden Goddess), and thus the Tibetan's say '*Vārāhī*'s Womb-Fluid' (*Phag-mo mngal-chu*)." (CN)

These days the Nepalis pronounce it *Guhjeśworī*. The ambiguity of the name is compounded by the Hindu legend of *Satī*: it was the anus or rectum (*gūda*) of *Satī*'s corpse that fell here while *Śiva* was flying around the sub-continent insane with grief, allowing parts of the decomposing corpse of his beloved wife to fall at the 51 *Śākta pīṭhasthānas*. However, it is clear that at *Guhjeśworī* the Buddhists worship the 'lotus' as a symbol of *Vajra Vārāhī*, red in colour, the Consort 10 of *Cakrasambara*, or as *Nairātma* (*bDag-med-ma*), blue in colour, the Consort of *Hevajra*. *Guhjeśworī* is also the Bird Headed *Ḍākinī* (*vide Paśupati*). In the *tantra* and iconography of the Four *Ḍākinīs* as found in *Bidjeśworī Bāhāl*, *Guhjeśworī* is the Two Headed *Vajra Vārāhī*. The Hindus worship the *yoni* as the symbol of *Umā* and *Parvatī*, the Consort of *Śiva* and *Bhairav*. *Karmācārya Śreṣṭha* priests are the custodians of the shrine and strictly enforce the exclusion of non-Hindus.

The lotus seed thrown by *Vipaświ* Buddha from *Nāgārjuna* Hill fell at this spot, and from that seed bloomed the vast lotus upon which the magical flame of the *Swayambhu Dharmadhatu* shone forth. After the lake was drained, *Mañjuśrī*, inspecting the lake bottom, discovered the root of this lotus, and having received a visitation of *Guhyeśvarī*, he built the first shrine

to her in the form of a triangular *yantra*. Then he covered the root, and taking earth and stone from Guhjeśworī he made the first support for the Swayambhu Lotus (*Swayambhu Purāna*).

35. PAŚUPATI

Lha-chen dbang-phyug-gi gnas (The Power Place of Lhachen Wongchuk-Mahādeva Iśvara): *Paśupati Sthan*: Mahādeva came from the realm of the gods (Kailāś) and established this residence called Gu-lang (by the Tibetans). A bull manifest in stone can be found there, and nearby is the path to hell and other marvels.

"In the middle of the town of Gu-lang is Paśupati, the Lord of the Beasts, a self-manifest *lingam* of Maheśvara with four faces within an extremely beautiful pagoda style temple full of all kinds of offerings. To one side of the temple is an iron *triśūl* as high as a two-storied house. Since blood sacrifice is made to both Gutiśwarī and Paśupati, they are both very terrible gods. It is said that long ago the *siddha* Jālandharipā (Gorakhnāth's Guru) revealing his psychic energy, burst the Paśupati *lingam* apart through magical means. Unquestionably that was supposed to have occurred here, but I do not know whether the *lingam* is actually cracked or broken because it is covered and obscured by many ornaments and one is not permitted to go close to it. However, making the necessary enquiries as to whether the Paśupati *lingam* is the original self-manifest symbol or a substitute, nowadays some people will say that the Siddha's curse destroyed it long ago and that at a certain time it was put into a wooden Buddhist *stūpa*, so that, covered up, it was preserved. Whatever happened, this power place is immensely famous, and each year at a certain time of a certain month (Mārg kṛṣṇa 13) a very large number of Indian people congregate to perform worship (on Mahaśivarātri). This custom is still very much alive." (CN)

"East of Kathmandu and between Kathmandu and Bhaktapur is the village of Debapatan (Deopatan) and this place is numbered among the Twenty Four Great Power Places as the northern spoke of the Wheel of Buddha Body (*sKu'i dkyil-'khor*) called Grihadebada (Gṛhadeva), or, as it is more widely known from the *Śrī Hevajra-maharājātāntra*, Naipāla. The Paśupatiśwara *lingam*, which is raised as a symbol for worship of Mahādeva, who is protector of the land of the Nepalis, is called Gu-lang by the Tibetans." (LT)

In the *Cakrasambhara-tantra* and in the *kLong-chen sNying-thig* tradition Gṛhadeva is listed amongst the 24 *pīṭhasthānas* as the external reference symbolic of the anus, or the anal nerve, in the *Yogin's* identification with the *Dākinī*, and as the northern spoke of the Wheel of the Buddha's Body. *Satī's* anus or rectum landed at *Guhjeśworī*.

CN affirms that the essential mark of a great power place is a spontaneously arisen *lingam* and *yoni* (*svayambhu lingam* and *yoni*), and since both Paśupati and *Guhjeśworī* possess these self-manifest symbols, like *Ti-se* (*Kailāś*) and *Pretapuri Tsāritra* (*Tsa-ri*) in Tibet, they are indeed the heart of the paradise *upachandoha* (*yul-chen-po nye-ba'i tshandoha*) that is the Kathmandu Valley (*vide* Intro.). However, CN continues, while the exotericists understand the gross symbolism of the *lingam* and *yoni* as the passive and active symbols of power, and worship them as Mahādeva and *Umā* (or *Parvatī*) and are their slaves, the esotericists understand the ultimate nature of the symbols and worship that as *Śrī Cakrasambhara* and *Vajra Vārāhī* in indissoluble union (*yab-yum*) and so control Mahādeva and *Umā* (this is a nice non-sectarian interpretation, as surely the *Nāth yogins*, for instance, are esotericists). The Buddhist *tantrika* who takes refuge in the symbol rather than its absolute reality breaks his *SAMAYA*. Thus *Guhjeśworī* must be realised to be either the *Vagīna* of *Vajra Vārāhī* or the

Dākinī Queen, the Bird-Headed Yoginī (one of Cakrasambara's protecting *yoginīs*) who is the spirit of the earth, a dance of thoroughly enjoyable material illusion, accompanied by her vast retinue (*sa-la spyod-pa'i dpa'mo'i dbang-phyug bya-gdong-ma 'khor grangs-med-pa*). In mythological terminology, in the distant past, long long ago, Caṇḍa Bhairav and Umā projected themselves as their *liṅgam* and *yoni* symbols into the 24 *pīṭhasthānas*. Later, Glorious Heruka Yab-yum, Cakrasambara and Vajra Vārāhī, with their boundless retinue arrived at these power places and vanquished the god and goddess, blessing the *liṅgam* and *yoni* as themselves. (CN) In metaphysical terminology, the fundamental, dualistic principles of existence, *Śiva-śakti*, passive and active, male and female, are dominated and controlled by the realisation of the essential Emptiness (*Śūnyatā*) of all phenomena, and in the consequent unitary reality, passivity becomes skilful means (*upāya*) and activity becomes insight (*prajñā*) - compassion (Heruka) and wisdom (Vārāhī) coincident (*yuganaddha*). In historical terms, to infer from this passage that Śaivism preceded Buddhism into Tantra (it probably did not) would be an overly simplistic interpretation. But the ancient orthodox Śaivite and the Śākta cults were in existence when the *siddhas* popularised the *Sambara* and other Buddhist *tantras*. Thus the *Sambara sādḥaka* would utilise the already existing facilities at the 24 (or 108) power places (*pīṭhasthānas*). Further, we may surmise that the geomantic qualities of these *pīṭhas* had marked them from time immemorial as foci for all hues and persuasions of rishis, *yogins* and contemplatives, the majority of whom were not Buddhist monks.

In answer to Chos-kyi Nyi-ma's question as to whether the present Paśupati *liṅgam* is the original image or the one broken by Jālandharipā (whose name derives from the *pīṭha* of Jālandhara, Mandi, H.P., India), an inscription at Paśupati records the consecration of a new image to replace that broken

into three parts by the Muslims in their 14th c. invasion (*vide* Regmi, D.R. *Medieval Nepal Pt.1*, p. 316). Regmi also claims that the original 3rd century *lingam* lies amidst ruins close to the sanctuary. I have been unable to confirm this.

Chos-kyi Nyi-ma uses the name Gu-lang to describe the village of Deopatan which surrounds the Paśupati shrine and which was built by the Emperor Dharma Aśoka's son-in-law. Others call Paśupatināth himself Gu-lang. In Tibet Gu-lang was a deity who blessed women with conception, a boon often begged of Paśupati by local women.

The four faced *lingam* (*caturmukha-lingam*) is said to suppress Siva's *jyotir-lingam*, the endless pillar of fire Śiva projected so that in the contest between Viṣṇu and Brahmā to find the height and depth of it, Brahmā could falsely claim that he had reached the top, thus proving himself unworthy of worship. As proof of the tolerance in Newari religion, the four faces of the *caturmukha-lingam* of Paśupatināth are generally believed to represent Śiva, Sūrya, Viṣṇu and Buddha. Orthodox Brahmins, however, believe that the four faces represent the four *vedas*.

The path to hell is said by local people to begin at a door in the cliff between Ārje Ghāt and Sūrje Ghāt, or on the flank of the hill Kailāś Parbat near a *sādhu's kuti* (meditation hut) where a spiral stairway descends to a brick wall. Overly zealous Buddhists say that it exists only in the minds of *ātmavādins*.

36. TILOPA AND NAROPA'S CAVES

33 *Telopa'i phug-pa*: Ārje Ghat Gaṇeshsthan (Ārya Ghāt): here (Mañjuḥoṣa) cut a third gorge. Later it became known for Telopa and Naropa's Cave.

Two hundred yards up river from Paśupatināth, on Sūrje Ghāt (Sūrya Ghāt), are the two *siddhas'* caves, amongst others, carved out of the living rock. The river cuts through a ridge that would have contained a lake spreading east beyond Śankhu.

Ārje Ghāt is immediately below the Paśupati Shrine; this is the *ghāt* upon which the Kings of Nepal, Paśupatināth's principal votaries, are cremated. Gaṇesthān is a few yards down stream and enshrines seven images of Gaṇapati.

37. CHOBAR GORGE

Cowar: the second gorge was cut at Chobar on the road to Taudah Lake.

On the west side of the gorge are several meditation caves. An enclosed overhang forms a *kuti* where Gorakhnāth himself (or one of his lineage) is reputed to have meditated. Rwa Lotsawa is also said to have meditated in one of these caves. Behind the caves is a labyrinth of tunnels that penetrate to an underground lake. There are no images within. One of the tunnels that are now bricked up leads up to the Adhināth Temple of Karunāmāyā/Macchendranāth in the Co Bāhāl of Chobar Village high on the ridge. Gaṇeś dug it after he had been omitted from a meeting of the gods at the Bāhāl. Leaving his Jalavināyaka residence at the south end of the gorge, he arrived enraged at the centre of the convocation and demanded an explanation of the slight.

Rwa Lotsawa rDo-rje grags-pa (Rwa-lo) was one of the luminaries of the *phyi-dar*, the later spreading of the *dharma* in Tibet. He came to Nepal to receive initiation from 'Ba'-ro (probably Bharo, an honorific title) who gave him the Vajra Vārāhī and Vajra Bhairava transmissions. 'Ba'-ro lived in the Nyi-ma stong (Thousand Suns) Vihāra in Patan. Rwa-lo defeated the heaviest of 300 Hindu *yogins* at Swayambhu; and he did *pūjā*

and meditation at Yanglesho, Jarungkhashor, Godavari, Tsha-ba tsha-shod (Gung-thang), Namō Buddha, Maṇicūṛa and Swayambhu. This was in the 11th century. (*Rwa-lotsawa rnam-thar*.)

38. GOKARṆA

The fourth gorge was cut at Gokarṇa on the road to Yolmo and one league from the Boudha Stūpa.

39. CHEMCHOK HERUKA

Che-mchog Heruka (The Supreme Sovereign Heruka): Bisorup: this image is found at Gu-lang (Paśupati).

Viśorūp is enshrined in a temple courtyard two hundred yards east of the Śivapuri Kailāś complex on the hill between Paśupati and Guhjeśworī. The central image is of Viṣṇu Viśvarūpa; but since Viśvarūpa is taken by Buddhists to express the universal, manifest, inchoate form of divinity, the deity is conceived of in various ways. Thus the Tibetans worship this image as Che-mchog, and some Bhutanese as the Thousand Armed Avalokiteśvara (*Thugs-rje-chen-po dug lnga rang-grol*). Che-mchog is one of Guru Padma's *sGrubs-pa bKa'-brgyad* Deities.

"To the south of Boudhnāth is... Orgyen's Throne and his *sādhana* spring." (SK) The exact location of the Lhun-grub brtsegs-pa Cremation Ground where Guru Padma of Orgyen was transmogrified into Senge sGra-sgrogs is not known. CN mentions a cremation ground tree with an image of Gorakhnāth in its vicinity; this could possibly be the tree near the *nāth yogins'* *ākāra* in Śivapuri Kailāś, or, alternatively, the tree outside the entrance to Guhjeśworī. Both these trees are close to the Che-mchog Temple. It is likely that the Che-mchog shrine is Orgyen's Throne.

40. MANICŪRA STHĀN

Grub-thob brgyad-cu'i gnas (The Power Place of the Eighty Siddhas):
Maṇicutā sthān: the place where the righteous king Maṇicūṛa (gTsug-na
 Nor-bu) made a gift of his jewel, and the power place of the Eighty
 Siddhas, is called Maṇilinga, the jewel that was sawed off (from his
 head). You will see many bathers in the river.

"To the north of Śankhu is a place blessed by the Eighty
 Siddhas." (SK)

"I have heard that in the neighbourhood of Śankhu is a
 cave of the Eighty Four Mahasiddhas, and images etc." (LT)

"On the top of the mountain behind (Śankhu Bajra Joginī)
 is what is known as Maṇilinga. The name of the mountain is
 'Jewel Pile' (Nor-bu brtsegs-pa'i ri, Maṇicūr Dāra), and long
 ago on this peak the Bodhisattva Maṇicūḍa (Nor-bu'i gtsug),
 after sitting in *samādhi* for a very long time, cut off his
 jewelline *jata* (the protuberance that emerges from a Buddha's
 fontanelle at enlightenment) on one occasion; this offering
 turned into stone, and it is now called Maṇilinga (Jewel
 Phallus). Further, not far away from the Maṇilinga is a
 waterfall called Maṇiloḥa (Bloody Jewel), because blood which
 poured forth from the Bodhisattva's crown when he performed
 his great act of generosity mingled with the waters there."
 (CN)

There is no single cave here in which the 84 Mahasiddhas
 gathered; there are four or five caves located between the top
 of the Maṇicūṛa Dāra and Śankhu Bajra Joginī in which, over
 the centuries, many *siddhas* both Tibetan and Indian practised
 their meditation. The cave of Nāgārjuna, close to Bajra
 Joginī, contains an image of the Master. Śankarācārya, the
 arch rival of Dharmakīrti, lived in a cave here, and CN claims
 to have heard many stories about his stay from Indians; the

Nepalis also have many legends of his association with Nepal, and particularly Śankhu. There is a Ye-she mTsho-rgyal Cave near Bajra Joginī, but Śankhu is not mentioned in mTsho-rgyal's biography. In Peking, Lama bTsan-po was informed that there was a cave of Pha Dam-pa Sangs-rgyas, wherein the saint had left his hand and foot prints and where there was an image of him, located near Camkhu, which could be either Chaṅgu Nārāyaṇ or Śankhu. No doubt at least 84 *siddhas* have practised their meditation in this area.

The legend of the Buddha Śākyamuni's previous rebirth as King Maṅicūḍa is told in the Newari text *Maṅicūḍavadānoddhṛta*, which is probably based on the account of Kṣemendra in the Sanskrit *Bodhisattvavadānakalpalata*. The King Maṅicūḍa was born into the royal family of Sāketa (Ayodhyā in N. India) and after he assumed the throne he became the model Bodhisattva monarch. Indra, to test him, transformed himself into a Rākṣasa and demanded that the King feed him. Scorning human food the Rākṣasa insisted upon the King's flesh, which Maṅicūḍa gave him without stint. Later on he gave his beautiful and loving wife and her son to a *ṛṣi* who begged them in order to offer them to his Guru as the fee for learning. Then Maṅicūḍa abandoned the world, and was carried by two *pratyekabuddhas* to the Himalayas where he began practice of *yoga* and meditation. But still dissatisfied, wishing to attain enlightenment, the King sought an opportunity to give his body as an ultimate gesture in his practice of generosity. When five Brahmins appeared and asked for the jewel in his head to take to their plague-afflicted country, so that the water in which it was bathed could cure the diseased, Maṅicūḍa felt himself most fortunate and instructed the Brahmins to cut out the jewel. The stone on which the King's head was cut open was covered with blood, and the stream into which the blood flowed was called Maṅirohini. Indra healed the King's wounds with the remedy *sahjivāni*, the *ṛṣis* paid him homage, and a jewel twice

as bright as the one he had given away appeared in his head. After his body had been restored to its previous wholeness, his queen and son arrived at his mountain fastness to beg him to return to his kingdom, and upon the advice of the *pratyekabuddhas* he again took up the reins of government. (*Vide* Siegfried Lienhard, *Manicūdavadānoddhṛta*: Stockholm, 1963).

41. ŚANKHU BAJRA JOGINĪ

gSangs-gu kya (?) rnal-'byor-ma: Sakhu Bajra Jogini: with the radiance of mKha'-spyod remaining (mKha'-spyod gdongs bzhugs), here is an extraordinary, sublime image of Yoginī, and an eternal flame.

"Just off the road from gNya'-nang to the Kathmandu Valley is a village called Śankhu Bajra Ḍākinī, which is known to the Hindus as Śankhu Nārāyaṇī, where there is an image of the venerable Vajra Ḍākinī which gives extraordinarily powerful blessings." (LT)

"The chief symbol of this power place is the Goddess Ugratārā, or Ekajatī, inside a pagoda temple with a gilt copper roof. She is red in colour with one face and four arms, two of which hold a skull-cup (kapāla) and knife (kar-patra) at her heart, and the remaining two hold a sword (khadga) and an *utpala* lotus. In the upper temple is an identical image of Ugratārā in bell metal, in which her left leg is outstretched (in *pratyālīdha* ?); to the left and right of her is a hollow copper vessel and the head of Bintirāja.... In the upper temple is the loom of the Nepali Princess Bhṛkutī... In another room is a stone Swayambhu Stūpa. I know neither the builder nor the dates of these artefacts. Both Buddhists and Hindus have their separate *tantras* and *sādhana*s of Ugratārā. She is accounted as a superior goddess of wisdom (*Shes-rab-kyi lha*). The Hindus perform blood sacrifice to her. There is reputed to be an eternal fire and an eternal spring here." (CN)

"In the Kathmandu Valley Padma Sambhava did pilgrimage to Śankhu where he met Śākya Devī and took her to Yanglesho (p. 315).. Vairotsana, leaving Tibet after his *dharma* was slandered, stopped in Nepal and offered a golden icon to the monastery of Śankhu (p. 454).. In the monastery of Śankhu and other Nepali monasteries... and other places round about, (Guru Padma) hid one thousand other treasures (p. 365)." (UL) According to the Newari tradition, the Śankhu Bajra Joginī is the elder of the four sister *yoginīs* of the Valley - Śankhu Khaḍga Joginī, Guhjeśworī, Pham-thing Joginī and Bidjeśworī. Since she is associated with Maṇicūḍa (q.v.) she is called Maṇi Joginī; since she holds a blue *utpala* lotus in her left hand she is called Nīl Tārā (?); since the sword is her distinctive emblem, she is popularly known as Khaḍga Joginī; though she is of serene mien she is Ugratārā, Tārā in angry mood, according to the Buddhist *tantra*; because her iconography is commensurate with the Goddess Protectresses and she is a form of Durgā (Śankhu Nārāyaṇī: Nārāyaṇī is a name of the *mātrkā* Vaiṣṇavī or Viṣṇuśaktī, the Consort of Viṣṇu, i.e. Durgā), CN calls her Ekajatī. The Hindus also count her amongst the *Daśamahavidhyā* (the ten aspects of the Mother Goddess's wisdom) where she is worshipped as the personification of spiritual hunger. But the Hindu tradition acknowledges that she was originally a Buddhist deity, and even today a Hindu Guru will direct his *chela* to practise ritual meditation according to the Buddhist liturgy.

When Śankarācārya, or one of his ardent disciples, was living in Śankhu, there was conflict with the followers of the Buddhas' path. Ugratārā's necklace of skulls (*muṇḍamālā*) is composed of the heads of Śankarācārya's Brahmin followers. The sword that she carries was borrowed from her younger sister, Guhjeśworī, (where did Guhjeśworī keep this sword?), in fulfilment of Śankarācārya's petition after he had been humbled by her for arrogantly upturning a *swayambhu stūpa* to

demonstrate his power to his Brahmin followers. The blood in her *kapāla* is the blood of Brahmā collected when she severed his head at the behest of a reluctant Mahādev after Brahmā had lost his contest with Viṣṇu to discover the height and depth of Śiva's *jyotir liṅgam*.

In both the upper and lower temples, Yoginī is flanked by Bāghinī and Siṅghinī, the Tiger and Lion-headed *yoginīs*. In the same upper room in the upper temple is a solid bronze standing Buddha and a standing Lokeśwar. Below this shrine room is a small room containing a *swayambhu stūpa* flanked by a Buddha's head, which is known as the head of Vikramajit (or Vṛsadeva) who is CN's Bintirāja, the parricide Mānadeva's father (*vide* Boudhnāth), and an upturned frying-pan to which is attached an irrational moral legend. The casting of the bronze figures is reputed to be of outstanding quality (*vide* Slussor, *Kathmandu*).

Indisputably, Śankhu Bajra Joginī is one of the Valley's oldest shrines. There is the 5th c. association with Mānadeva; an Aṃśuvarman inscription of the 7th c. mentions a Gum Vihāra which may be identified with the Gvam Vihāra of Bajra Joginī (Regmi p. 278); Urgyan gLing-pa's *Padma bKa'-thang* mentions Śankhu thrice in the history of the 8th c.; Śankarācārya may have visited in the 9th c. However, there is a mystery associated with Bajra Joginī herself. Tārā was originally a Buddhist deity, but in her Śankhu form the Gvam Vihāra Licchavi Buddhist bronze casters would never have worshipped her. If we discount the legend associated with Śankarācārya (see above), it would seem possible that a long time before the present temple was built by Rāja Pratap Malla in 1655 the site was usurped by Hindu priests who established the Devī as the chief image (*kwāpā-deo*) for worship and instituted blood sacrifice to her. A *devī pīṭha* is an unlikely site for the establishment of a *hinayāna vihāra* and

blood sacrifice is never performed for Buddhist *yoginīs*. Today, Buddhist Newar priests again attend the temple, and blood is shed at the Bhairabī *pīṭha* below. If the name Bajra Joginī has a Buddhist provenance, and a Buddhist goddess was in power in the 9th c., unlikely it is that she was Ugratārā; perhaps she was a different deity, such as Naro Khecarī (Naropa's *Dākinī*), who of the four *yoginī*'s associated with the *Cakrasambara tantra*, is the only one without a sthan of her own. More research into this very interesting shrine is necessary.

42. CAṄGU NĀRAYĀN

Khyung rang-byon (The Self-Manifest Garuḍa): *Cangu Nārāyana than*: this Garuḍa is generally believed to have grown out of Ārya Nāgārjuna's rosary. It is highly praised for the relief of Nāga related diseases.

"At Chaṅgu (Chang-khung) there is a self-manifest Garuḍa holding a Nāga before it." (SK)

"In the middle of a large town (*grong-khyer*) that in Newari is called Cang-khung and by the Tibetans corrupted to Sa-'go is a self-manifest Garuḍa. The story concerning the emergence of this Garuḍa from Nāgārjuna's rosary is well known in Tibet." The legend known to Indians and Nepalis is that this Garuḍa (*mKha'-lding*), the vehicle of Viṣṇu, is self-manifest from a gigantic ruby (*Padmarāga*), and its name is Garuḍa Nārāyaṇ, or the 'Garuḍa Self-Manifest from a Jewel'. Furthermore, in summertime here, a real Garuḍa appears from gathering rainclouds and picks a Nāga out of the Śaṅkhadaha lake below), and anyone can see the Garuḍa devour the Nāga. At this time, in the temple, the image of Garuḍa perspires, and many people come here to moisten scarves with the exuding perspiration to gain protection from the ravages of Nāga spirits. It is said that last year (i.e. some time in the middle of the 18th century) when an invading army was threatening the Valley,

the image of Garuḍa Nārāyaṇ was taken to the King's palace in Kathmandu and a replica set up in its place. Anyhow, the present image is of gilt copper. (CN)

Leprosy is the most dangerous disease inflicted by the Nāgas; also abscesses, consumption, ulcers, itch, sores and swelling of the limbs, and all diseases related to excessive indulgence, or lack of the element water.

Caṅgu Nārāyaṇ is located between the Śankhu road and Bhaktapur. It is one of the oldest sites in the Valley. A pillar inscription of Mānadeva (dated 464) records his 5th century exploits.

The Garuḍa, or the replica that is held to be so sacred, is found within the central temple. Another Garuḍa, with hands held in prayer, found in front of the temple, is believed to have the face of Mānadeva and is certainly of great antiquity. Some of the Valley's best sculpture is to be found at Caṅgu Nārāyaṇ.

43. BHAKTAPUR DĪPAṆKARA

Kho-khom sangs-rgyas mar-me-mdzad: Bhadgha'um Dīpaṅkara: in Bhaktapur you will see many images of Dīpaṅkara and the Five Buddha Aspects (rigs-lnga) etc.

There are five Dīpaṅkara Brothers in Bhaktapur: in Jhaurbhai (Maṅgala Dharmadvīpa Vihāra), in Tadhunchen Bāhāl 37 (Caturvarna Mahavihāra), in Kothubhai, in Tatubhai (Sayakirti Mahavihāra), and the principal of the five that Tibetans are in the habit of visiting is called Ajudyo and is found in the Adibuddha Vihāra in Kwatandau. During Gunla on Pañchadan the five Dīpaṅkaras visit Laska Deo (*vide* Bhaktapur Lokeśwara), their younger sister (*bahini*), and present her with a *tola* of gold.

44. BHAKTAPUR TALKING TĀRĀ

sGrol-ma gsung-byon (Talking Tārā): Bolne Tārā: this is the Talking Tārā who told the King of Bhaktapur to invite the venerable Milarepa to the city. It is found in the palace.

"In Bhaktapur is the Talking Tārā (sGrol-ma gsung-byung-ma), exceedingly great in blessings." (SK)

The Taleju Temple complex in Bhaktapur Palace is closed to non-Hindus, and a mystery surrounds the nature of the images within. It is evident, however, that it was not the Taleju image that was brought from Ayodhyā in 1323 by Hara Singha Deva fleeing from the Muslim Tuklak Shah who spoke to the Bhaktapur King in the late 11th or early 12th centuries. Yet this Taleju image subsequently became the protecting Deity of Bhaktapur and later of all Nepali Kings, and is believed to take pride of place in the *āgama-che* (the secret shrine) of the palace temple complex. I have heard it said that there is an image of Green Tārā in this *āgama-che*, and if this is true then this must be the older deity who spoke of Milarepa. The most likely king to have sent an invitation to Milarepa is Hāsadeva (ca. 1090-1097), or perhaps Śivadeva (ca. 1101-1123) or Singhadeva (ca. 1111-1121), the last two kings ruling concurrently.

According to local informants there are other Talking Tārās in Bhaktapur.

45. BHAKTAPUR ŚĀKYAMUNI

Shakya thub mgon: Bhagawān: this image is to be found in the Śākyamuni Vihāra in Bhaktapur.

The Bhaktapur Śākyamuni visited by Tibetans is to be found in Jhaurbhai (Maṅgala Dharmadvīpa Vihāra) in Golinādhitol.

The central image (*kwāpā-deo*) is Śākyaṃuni in *dhyanamudrā*. One of the five Dīpaṅkaras also resides here.

46. BHAKTAPUR LOKEŚWARA

sPyan-ras-gzigs: Lokeshwara thān: this is in Bhaktapur.

The principal Bhaktapur Lokeśwara is Laska Deo, otherwise known as Annapūrṇā Lokeśwara, who is to be found in the Marilāchen Temple of Itachentole. He is an image of Padmapāṇi Avalokiteśvara, and is also known as Rāto Matsyendranāth like his brother in Patan.

47. NYISHANG KURTI

gNye-shang kurti: Bāgishwari Saraswasti Sthan: this is a mile and a half from the long guest house, and is the place where the venerable Milarepa meditated.

"At Nyishang Gurta in Mon, (Milarepa) met Repa the Hunter (Khyi-ras-pa). It was he who spread the renown of the Master in Nepal. Prompted by a message from the Goddess Tārā the King of Bhaktapur (Kho-khom) honoured the Master." (TM p. 150).

In *The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa* two chapters relate stories of Tibet's Great Yogi in Nyishang. Milarepa is meditating in a cave on the Nyi-shang Gurda Mountain when a deer appears and drops exhausted at Mila's feet. Immediately afterwards the hunting dog that had been chasing it appears and also lies down in peace and contentment. Finally, the hunter arrives and shoots an arrow at the Master, which he deflects. The hunter (Khyi-ra-pa) is converted by Milarepa and given the name Khyi-ras-pa (Chirepa). This vignette is illustrated in the popular *thang-ka* showing Milarepa sitting

in front of his cave with his hand to his ear, surrounded by deer, dog and hunter. The second story finds Mila meditating in the same cave, the Gurdaya Cave ('the cave of Nyishang on the Gadaya Mountain in Mon'), where he is physically abused by local hunters. Unable to break his *samādhi*, though they throw him into a river gorge, their contempt changes to devotion and respect. Mila's fame reaches the ear of the King of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur who prompted by the Talking Tārā invites him to the palace. The Master declines the King's invitation with a homily on the virtues of the ascetic life. (MG Ch. 26 & 27 p. 275 ff.)

"In gNyi-shang kurti is the residence of rJe-btsun bZhad-pa rDo-rje, and here Khyi-ra-pa mGon-po rDo-rje was converted and became his disciple. The footprints of a deer are to be found clearly marked in a rock. The fame of rJe-btsun-chen-po's name spread widely in Nepal where he is known as Hāsa Vajra, and in a detailed biography, unknown to me, are his famous songs and utterances, some of which are translated into Sanskrit and sung. To the Newars this power place is known as Vāgīśvarī." (CN)

'The long guest house' remains unidentified. Nyishang Kurti and the nearby Saraswatī Sthān are to the east of Bhaktapur one mile off the road to Nāgārkot. Both the *Songs* and the *Biography* locate it in Mon; there is no contradiction here as Mon can mean the entire cis-Himalayas, but usually if the Kathmandu Valley is indicated then Bal-yul is specified. 'Kurti' may be a corruption of Gurta or Gurda or Gurdaya-ri, but as we have no indication as to this mountain's location that is immaterial. We do know, however, that gNye-bshang means 'intestine' and is the name of the Marśyandi Kola river valley, the land of Nyeshang, where there is a Milarepa cave that is the Manangpa's most sacred power place. There is a cave in Yol-mo, which is close to the Nepal-Tibet border, as

mentioned in the *Songs*, that is also associated with these stories of Mila; and Yol-mo is close enough to the Valley for the King to hear of a well-known *yogin* meditating there. Nevertheless, we will plump for the Bhaktapur Nyishang Kurti being the authentic Milarepa cave. To add slight weight to that decision, Khyi-ra-*pa* means not only 'hunter' but also a member of the Kirāti tribe (*vide* Chandra Das, *Tibetan-English Dictionary* p. 100), a people that dominated the Valley from their city south-east of Bhaktapur and east of Panauti in the pre-Licchavi era and thereafter became scattered throughout the Valley and the area to the east of it. Although Hāsa Vajra is less well-known than the Indian *siddhas*, even today his songs are said to be known by some *vajrācāryas*.

48. CANDIŚWARĪ

40 *Ekajatī: Caṅṭiśhwari: this shrine is in visual range of Banepā. Ekajatī and Devī Candikā have one essence.*

Caṅḍeśvarī or Caṅḍikā is a form of Durgā or Gaurī, the Consort of Śiva; she is one of the *aṣṭamātrkā* and the *navadurgā*. A composite form of Durgā, she is young, beautiful, seductive yet angry, depicted with various numbers of arms to destroy her demonic offspring, the Asuras, and particularly the buffalo demon, Mahiṣāsura. As the slayer of the buffalo demon she is called Mahiṣāsuramardini. Her temple is located a mile north east of Banepa.

49. NAMO BUDDHA

sTag-mo lus-sbyin (Takmo Lujin, Tigress Body-Gift): *Namo Buddha* (Homage to the Buddha!): *at this power place the King Mahasattva (sNyings-stobs chen-po) gave his body to a tigress. His reliquary-stūpa remained underground until the Bhagavān (Śākyamuni) clapped his hands, and miraculously the stūpa spontaneously appeared.*

"At a place as much as a day's walk to the east of Bhaktapur is a *stūpa* that is said to enshrine the remains of the Tathāgata Śākyamuni when on the Path of Learning he gave his body to a tigress." (LT)

"We need to examine more deeply the validity of stag-mo lus-sbyin's claim to be the actual place that is mentioned in the *Jātaka* Stories (the ancient legends of Śākyamuni's previous births). If we are to believe in popular fable, the *stūpa* here enshrines the bones and hair of the Bodhisattva who, when practising the deeds of a Bodhisattva (the Six Pāramitās, giving, etc.), was moved to such pity at seeing a tigress ravaged by hunger about to devour a small boy, who she had been stalking, that he sacrificed his body to her. In this place there is such fear of the tiger that the people will not utter the real name of the *stūpa*, and since to speak the name of the Buddha is to be free from fear, and since the notions of the Hindus and Buddhists are the same, the Nepalis call this place Namō Buddhaya! If you ask for directions to the Stūpa, the local people will not understand you if you ask for Takmo Lujin; you must ask for Namō Buddhaya." (CN)

Namō Buddha is one of the principal places of pilgrimage for the Tibetans south of the Himalas. The Newars pay it little attention, but the Bhotiyas worship there in large numbers during the pilgrimage season. LT states categorically that this is not the *stūpa* relating to the story of the Buddha's sacrifice of his body as told in the *gSer-'od dam-pa'i mdo*, the *Suvarṇaprabhasottama Sūtra* (J. Nobel, *Das Goldglanz Sūtra*, Erster Band, Leiden 1944).

50. RISHIŚWARA

Chu-mig byang-chub-la (The Spring of Wisdom): *Rishiswara*: *this*

spring is on the path to India. Upon auspicious days of worship in the first month of the year, you can see a naturally formed image of the Guru in a rock.

"At a place one days march to the south-west is the Spring of the Ambrosia of Wisdom (*Chu-mig byang-chub bdud-rtsi*). (SK)

This power place is a short walk from the main Kathmandu-Raxaul road close to the top of the watershed ridge of the Śivaliks.

In the Vulture Peak Monastery (Bya-rgod phung-po'i dgon-pa) of Kimdol (sKyim-grol), the Newari Bhikṣu Vagindra Bajra or Ngag-dbang rDo-rje nas (?) printed these new blocks (of the Guide to the Power Places of Nepal, Bal-yul gnas-yig) on the auspicious 14th day of the month of Saga Dawa in the wood-horse year (1774 A.D.).

SARVA MAṄGALAM

APPENDIX I

SYNOPSIS OF THE *GOŚRĪṄGA VYĀKARAṆA*
SŪTRA

Ārya Gośrīṅga Vyākaraṇa Mahayāna Sūtra: 'Phags-pa glang-ru lung-bstan zhes-bya-ba theg-pa chen-po'i mdo.

Homage to the Bhagavān Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta !

"Thus have I heard at one time: the god of gods, the Buddha Śākyamuni, after three innumerable kalpas, through the maturation of his accumulated merit, attained complete and perfect Buddhahood. After he had evolved the beings who assembled in other areas of the lands of Jambudvīpa, in the palace of Muni Maharishi in the vicinity of Vaiśālī, (Bodhisattvas, Śravakas, Nāgas, Rākṣasas, Gandharvas, Kinaras, Kings and their subjects) on one occasion gathered. Then at that time, the god of gods, Śākyamuni Buddha, visualised the land of Kuśāla (dGe-ba) in a future time and brought that vision into reality. Then he addressed the vast assembly, 'Noble Sons, in the north, on the banks of the River Goma, which is near the Ri glang-ru (The Ox-Horn Mountain) is what is known as the Muni Maharishi Palace, the Stūpa Goma Salagandha. Verily, in that place there is essential work to be done, and the time is propitious to go there.' Then, at that time, the god of gods the Buddha Śākyamuni and his vast retinue, arose into the sky.... and departed for the Ox-Horn Mountain."

Arriving in Khotan on the Ox-Horn mountain, the Buddha looks north and sees a vast lake stretching into the distance. Then taking his throne on Ox-Horn Mountain he looks west and sees the Buddha's palace, the Goma Salagandha Stūpa. The Buddha, the Bodhisattvas and ārhats then bless the Land of

Khotan and pray for the establishment of many monasteries, a rich land, a religious people etc., praying to be reborn there in the future to fulfil their own wishes.

"Then in an instant, from within the great lake, 350 lotuses arose, and on top of each lotus was an effulgent image of a Buddha and Bodhisattva." The Buddha explains that in the future a vihāra will be established wherever one of these lotuses bloomed.

In answer to the question of who will establish this paradise, the Buddha predicts that a Chinese King will have 1001 sons, all of whom will leave home and establish kingdoms. The youngest son will be sent by his father to Khotan to establish a righteous government in that land. The country will be populated by Indians from the west.

Most of the Sūtra is concerned with the Buddha's predictions of the vicissitudes of the *dharma* in Khotan, its rise and fall, the importance of the Goma Salagandha Stūpa and the Kāśyapa Stūpa and of the *Gośrīṅga Vyākaraṇa Sūtra* as a panacea for all misfortune, war, poverty, famine, etc. And, also, a large portion is concerned with directions for the religious life, and how the country will be protected from outside threat, from the Chinese and Tibetan armies.

Then at the end, "The Buddha spoke to Śāriputra and Vaiśrāvana, 'Noble sons, you both go and empty this great lake. Draining it into the River Gyi-sho in the north, do not harm any living creature existing in the water, and reveal the area of this land.' Then Maḥāśravaka Śāriputra and Vaiśrāvana, having asked permission to leave, through their magical power they set out in the sky for the Mountain Sha-ri (Flesh Mountain). Śāriputra wielding a monk's staff and Vaiśrāvana wielding a spear, half (*phyed-stam?*) of the mountain was moved and deposited in the east, so that a vast

dried up lake bed was created, the lake together with the living creatures existing in it draining into the Gyi-sho River. In this way Khotan was revealed together with the Goma Salagandha Stūpa and the Ox-Horn Mountain."

The Sūtra ends with the divine hosts again blessing the land and its future inhabitants, and finally, praising the Buddha.

APPENDIX II

ITINERARY FOR MAṆḌALA PILGRIMAGE

The Tibetans are fond of the circular pilgrimage starting at Swayambhu and then going east and around the Valley in a clockwise direction. This itinerary is based on the first part of CN's *dKar-chag*.

Swayambhunāth ('Phags-pa shing-kun): Mahākāla (*dGon-po'i sku*) and the Buddhas (*De bzhin-gshegs-pa'i rdo-sku*) on the eastern stairway; the gilt vajra at the top (*gSer-gyi rdo-rje*), the Swayambhu Stūpa (*Chos-kyi dbyings gsung-gi dbang phyug-gi dkyil-'khor*).

Bidjeśworī: the Karnadīp Cremation Ground (*Ramadoli, Phag-mo dur-khrod*); and the Bidjeśworī Bāhāl's Four Yoginīs.

Kathmandu: Jana Bāhāl (*Jo-bo 'Ja' ma li dkar-po*); Tondhikel Bajrabīr (*Bod-thang mgon po*); Thamel Bāhāl (*sTham Vihāra'i gtsug-lag-khang*); the stūpa built by Aśoka (*rGyal-po Mya-ngan-med-kyi mehod-rten* - in private hands); the Maru Sattal (*E Vihāra, the Kāṣṭhamandapa Temple*).

Chābāhil Stūpa (*Sa-lhag rdo-lhag gi mehod-rten*).

Paśupati (*Gu-lang*); Visorup (*Che-mchog*); Guhjeśworī (*Phag-mo mngal-chu*).

Boudhnāth (*Bya-rung kha-shor*).

Caṅgu Nārāyaṇ (*Khyung rang-byung*).

Śankhu: Bajra Joginī (*rDo-rje rnal-'byor-ma'i sku = Ugratārā*), the Swayambhu Stūpa (*Rang-'byung mehod-rten*), Vikramajit's Head (*rGyal-po'i dbu*), the Frying Pan (*Zangs-kha sbubs*), the Eternal Flame (*bSkal-pa'i me*), the Eternal Spring (*bSkal-pa'i chu*); Maṇilinga, Maṇiloḥa, the Caves of the Eighty Four Siddhas (*Grub-thob brgyad-cu tsa bzhi'i gzims-phug*), Nāgārjuna's Meditation Cave and Image (*kLu-sgrub-kyi sgrub-khang*).

Bhagavānī Sarasvatī Sthān (*gNye-shang Kurti*), Cave and Deer's footprints.

Bhaktapur: The Royal Palace and Taleju Temple (*Kho-khom-gyi grong-kher rgyal-po'i pho-brang*), the Talking Tārā (*sGrol-ma gsung-byung-ma - Bolne Tārā*).

Banepa: Candeśwarī (*Ekajatī*).

Namo Buddha: Takmo Lujin (*Byang-chub-sems-dpa' stag-mo lus-sbyin*).

Patan (Ye-rang): Bungha Deo - Rāto Matsyendranath (*U-Kham*): Mīnanāth (*A-kham*); Mahaboudha (*rDo-rje gdan-gyi gandola'i bkod-pa*); Gopicandra Bāhāl (*Gopicandra gtsug-lag-khang*), images of Vajradhara and Tārā (*rDor-rje Chang dang sGrol-ma'i sku*); Golden Temple, Hiranyavarna Mahavihāra (*Sākyamuni gtsug-lag-khang*).

Chobar: Gorakhnāth's Cave: (*Rwa-lo'i sgrub-phug*); Adināth Temple in Cho Bāhāl (*Chobar Lokeśwara*).

Yanglesho: Guru Padma's Cave (*Sangs-rgyas gnyis-pa'i sgrub-phug*), Nāga Śeṣa's Temple (*kLu Lhag-ma'i lha-khang*); Pham-thing Bajra Joginī Temple (*rGya-gar Pham-thing rDo-rje rnal-'byor-ma'i gtsug-lag-khang*); the Asura Cave (*Asura'i brag-phug*) and the Yang-dag and Phur-ba images (*Yang-dag dang Phur-ba'i rdo-sku*).

Lake Taudāh and the Black-White Lakes (*Danādaha dang mtsho dkar-nag ni klu-rgyal Karkota gnas rnams*).

Daḥṣin Kālī (*'Dod-khams-bdag-mo*).

Kimdol Bāhāl (*Bya-rgod phung-po ri'i gtsug-lag-khang*): The Bodhi Tree (*Shing-sdong-chen-po*), and on the first floor of the Temple the Fasting Room (*sMyung-gnas lha-khang*) and on the ground floor, Munindra (*Sakya thub-pa*).

Nāgārjuna (*Ri-bo 'Bigs-byed*): The Buddha's Throne (*Sangs-rgyas-kyi bhugs-khri*); Nāgārjuna's Cave (*kLu-sgrub-kyi sgrub-phug*); Vasubandhu's Cave (*dByig-gnyen-gyi sgrub-phug*); Lakṣmī Gūpha; The Buffalo Buddha's Cave and hornprints (*Mahe Sangs-rgyas shul*).

Buraṇīlakaṇṭha (*kLu-gan-rgyal Khyab-'jug nyal-ba'i rdo-sku*).

Śivapuri: the source of the Biṣṇumatī (*sKra-can-ma*); and the Bāgmatī (*gSung-ldan-ma*) at Bāgdwār.

Then returning to Gośṛṅga Parbat (*Ri glang-ru*): Mañjuśrī Sthān (*'Jam-dpal bhugs-khri*) and Mañjuśrī's Stūpa (*'Jam-dpal mehod-rten*); Kāśyapa's Stūpa (*'Od-srung mehod-rten*); Vasubandhu's Stūpa (*dByig-gnyen mChod-rten*); and Vipaswi's Stūpa (*rNam-par-gzigs-kyi mehod-rten*). And again to Swayambhunāth: Sāntapuri and Sānta Śrī's four elemental temples, Vāyupuri, Nāgapuri, Agnipuri and Basupuri.

Thus all the major shrines in the Valley are visited. Such a pilgrimage should take two weeks on foot.

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BOOK REVIEW

András Höfer: Tamang Ritual Texts I, Preliminary Studies in the Folk-Religion of an Ethnic Minority in Nepal, Wiesbaden 1981, Franz Steiner Verlag, Beiträge zur Südasiens-Forschung, Südasiens Institut Universität Heidelberg vol. 65.

This is András Höfer's second book. While the first one, wide in scope, glanced at all Nepalese castes and ethnic groups in regard to their respective hierarchical positions within the State, as mirrored in the first Legal Code, the Muluki Ain of 1854,¹ this second book, narrowly focused, deals with just one of the ethnic minorities, the Tamang, the largest hill tribe in Nepal. The book opens up new territory, and the means by which this is accomplished, are novel too. The new territory explored in Höfer's study are the ritual recitals, predominantly non-Buddhist and non-Hindu in nature, of the various Tamang religious officiants. The new approach by which the author acquaints the reader with this hitherto untouched territory, may be coined as *philological ethnography*. To employ the philologist's magnifying glass (as traditionally handled by the Sanskritist, Tibetologist, Sinologist) and to use it in an anthropological perspective, is of course not altogether new. To drop just a few names as a reminder of precursors: Berthold Laufer and Marcel Granet, whose vast knowledge in things and words Chinese combined well with a qualified sociological intuition; Joseph Rock, who knew the Na Khi people probably as well as the Na Khi ritual texts he studied and which he collected

1 The Caste Hierarchy and the State of Nepal: A Study of the Muluki Ain of 1854. *Khumbu Himal*, Universitätsverlag Wagner, Innsbruck 1979, reviewed in the previous no of *Kailash* by P.R. Sharma.

in the thousands, (I assume Rock's works inspired Höfer's own textual arrangements); and R.J. Held, who undertook a kind of fieldwork in a text, the Mahābhārata, previously reserved to exegesists or amateurs; or Rolf A. Stein, who washed the grains of the Tibetan word in etymological waters until they turned into golden nuggets of cultural significance; or, in the intermediary generation, A.W. Macdonald, to whom Höfer's book is jointly dedicated, together with Ser Bahadur Mamba Tamang, the author's main informant. What is new in Höfer's fusion of anthropology and philological approach, is the stress on ethnography. Whereas most of the scholars named above entered the realm of anthropology through a textual analysis of the word, Höfer reverses the route: he comes to the text via ethnography.

This is so in a purely temporal sense, a diachronical necessity. For when the author set out to study the Western Tamang in three villages between the Trisuli and the Ankhū Khola rivers along the old track from Kathmandu to Gorkha - in 1969, 71-72 and 74, - the texts he dug up for his book, did not exist as (written) texts. He had to establish them first from his own tapes. For all the "texts" he deals with belong to the oral tradition. And there was not much chance of being philological about them, until he had learnt the Tamang language - not yet taught in Wisconsin - on location. In short, he had to *be* with the Tamang (that is what the highly strategic term *fieldwork* really means: to be with the people one studies), before he could unravel them through their unrecorded oral literature.

What then are these Tamang ritual texts about and on what ground can their presentation be termed philological ethnography? The present volume I, implying that there will be a volume II, which will concentrate, I guess, on shamanistic ritual matter, contains five texts: a) a text on an

exorcistic ritual called the *nàkhle mán* and performed by a Tamang ritual specialist, the *lambu*. As the name implies, (*nàkhle*, derived from Nepali *nānglo* = round bamboo tray) this ritual is performed on such a bamboo tray inside the client's house, in honour of a class of supernatural beings, the *mán*. Höfer claims that this class of spirits has no equivalent in the Tibetan language (what about the *mangma*, a class of witches?), but can instead be associated with the Limbu *man* ('divine spirits'), the Lepcha *mun* ('devils') and the Gurung *mōh* ('spirits, ghosts'). It may be added that the exorcistic healers of the Lohrung Rai who, like the *lambu* and the *bombo* of the Tamang, go on ritual journeys during their séances, are called *mangpa*, i.e. 'the ones that deal with the mang'. And the class of ghosts in Western Nepal, (for instance among the Magar), called *mān*, who can poison food and crops with the evil eye, may perhaps belong to the same group of supernaturals that haunt the Himalayan peoples beyond the ethnic borders.

Höfer informs us about all the occasions on which the *nàkhle mán* ceremony is performed, for instance when the crops are damaged, when people or cattle of a household are ill, or at certain fixed dates related to the agricultural cycle. And he gives us an introductory picture of the ceremony's structure, inherent in the ritual text. The text is the longest of the five (270 lines) and so is, accordingly, its commentary.

b) The second text, established from a staged performance for the ethnographer - only the first and the last are taken from life - the *piksu mán*, is addressed to a union of two supernaturals, a ghost of a powerful ritual specialist killed by a leopard during a hunt, and a *cen*-demon. It is about 50 lines long. As in the other texts, the ritual arrangement is depicted by the author in schematic drawings. And the tools and materials used in the rite, such as leafplates, wooden forks for raw eggs, white and black *torma* figures, incense-

stones, etc. are described and their symbolical signification is elucidated.

c) The third text and its ritual - the *cen bra* - deals with another union of supernatural trouble-makers, which, this time, affect the cattle only and can be appeased prophylactically on the fixed dates of Kartik or Mangsir fullmoon nights. It is the shortest, only 19 lines long.

d) The fourth text is addressed to a trinity of hunting spirits (*kirba ḍakpo sòm*); to four mythical orphans; to various Nepalese divinities, which, therefore, are spoken to in Nepali; and to the gods of the soil, the *syibda nèda*, or *sime-bhume* in Nepali parlance. The ceremony, for which the text is meant, precedes a hunt. Hunting amongst the Tamang has gradually declined over the last centuries and the text is a reminder of days past, when the ancestors went, accompanied by dogs and equipped with bows and arrows, on long hunting expeditions, especially those ancestors of the Waiba clan, who still today maintain a special association to hunting, as can be deduced from an annual mock-hunt performed by the members of this particular clan. The text for the hunting ceremony as presented by the author, is 110 lines long, although it has been pointed out that in reality the text is longer. How much has been omitted in the presentation, is not told.

e) The fifth and last of the texts is addressed to a clan-god, that of the Mamba-clan. It is one hundred lines long. The clan-god, appearing under two names, *Jyañjyen Marbo Raḅujyet* and *Jyañjyen Marbo Ḍabla Ma: bon*, is associated with the ideal North; and the performer of the ritual faces, during his recital, towards this ideal North, whereas his back is directed to the 'lower' south. This may be a hint to the northern (e.g. Tibetan) origin of the Tamang as an ethnic group, a fact, which in Höfer's book gains new, unquestionable evidence. It

may also be related to the notion, shared for instance by the Northern Magar, that North and South are dichotomies to express a series of antithetic qualities: up/down - good/bad - healthy/unhealthy - familiar/foreign.

With the exception of the fifth text all the other ritual recitals presented by Höfer share one common feature of considerable interest, and it is worthwhile to comment on it in passing. All these texts contain at one point or other an enumeration of place-names, which are both mythological and geographical. This enumeration of place-names, *rirap* in Tamang, has been equated with the famous "ritual journeys" of the ecstatic medico-religious practitioners. And indeed, in some of them it is these officiants who do the trip in their minds. Thus, in Höfer's first text a *lambu* - religious officiant goes on a long ritual journey, starting from the village of his recital, Cautārā, northward to Ganesh Himāl, proceeding through the Ankhu-, Marsyāñdi-, Kāli Gaṇḍaki- and Seti Gaṇḍaki-rivers south to Pālpā/Tānsen, touching some localities in India, then turning north again, passing through the Trisuli- and Bhoṭe Kosi-valleys via Rasua to Kyirong into West Central Tibet, and finally going east through Tsang and Ü, ending, as in most large scale ceremonies, in Samye (T Uiseme), the founding place of Tibetan monastic Buddhism, a place closely related to Padmasambhava, who is claimed as a patron of the Tamang, and a place to which the genesis of Tamang ethnic history is associated. This ritual journey of the *lambu* officiant lists about 280 different place names, and it is regrettable that Höfer did not show enough obtrusiveness to reproduce them all, even though it may never be possible to verify just half of them. Nor does he attempt to show us this important mythical trip on a map, which he does - beneficially - with the *rirap* journeys of the other texts.

In one of the *rirap* (of text 4) it becomes evident that these

ritual journeys are de facto not reserved to the shaman or ritual specialist - some are also undertaken by supernatural beings, spirits or divinities, those that are presently invoked. Here, in the text of the hunting ritual, it is the god of the soil that starts the journey and after reaching his alleged birthplace hands his traveller's walking stick over to a warrior god of the mountains, *dabla*. For the interest of the comparatist it may be noted in parenthesis that the same is the case with the ritual journeys in the epic chants of the Kham speaking Magar shamans; here these journeys are called *ri sadumne* = 'enumerating the rivers'. Some of them are undertaken by the magical healer himself, some by a helping spirit, the Wild Boar, others again by the mythical First Witches, the Nine Sisters. In all these cases, however, the actual geographical environment is exploited for transcendental purposes: the Uerbau is modelled after the Basis, - Marx would have been delighted.

The five ritual texts assembled in Hofer's book all follow the same pattern of presentation. First, a short introduction is given, dealing with the circumstances of their performance and the ceremonial activities surrounding them; then follows the text, cut up into small portions. Each portion consists of three sectors: transliteration into Latin script with readable diacritics of the oral portions of the recital; translation of the given portion into English; etymological commentary on the vocabulary used in the text. It is this etymological commentary, - mainly derivations from the Tibetan - that makes Hofer's book a trailblazing piece of philological ethnography. Although those commentaries, fragmentary as they may be, look more like sections of an experimental dictionary or glossary, they help to establish the diachronical perspective of the tradition followed in the texts.

The texts are preceded by a 40-page introduction into Tamang religious culture, starting as it were with a glimpse at the history of this ethnic group. A section on the classification of supernatural beings is followed by a classification of the main religious officiants, such as the *lama* (the Nyingmapa Lamaist priest); the *bombo* (the shaman); the *lambu* (the non-extatic exorcist); the *yulgi pombo* or *mukhiya* ("leader of the region", responsible for the gods of the soil); and the Hindu-type *pujari*. The introduction ends with some remarks on the texts, their individualistic performance and their standard form.

The bibliography at the end of the book is more or less up-to-date, except for recent publications on the Tamang. Thus, three Ph-D. theses are missing, those of D.H. Holmberg: *Lama, Shaman and Lambu in Tamang Religious Practice*, Cornell 1980; of L. Peters: *Shamanism among the Tamang of Nepal: Folkcuring and Psychotherapy*, UCLA, 1978; and of P. Weisbecker: *Le Bonpo Tamang, une forme de chamanisme himalayen*, Nancy 1978, plus an additional article by L. Peters: *Shamanism and Medicine in Developing Nepal*, in: *Contr. to Nep. Studies*, VI, 2, 27-44. Moreover, in one instance an article by P. Kvaerne is quoted, but one searches in vain for it in the bibliography. Besides such shortcomings, which one may put aside as Freudian slips, *Tamang Ritual Texts I* is an important piece of work. It makes the reader curious for the second volume and, if planned, for a conclusive study, a more total vision of Tamang religious identity, where philology is no more queen, but a mere miner for the possible wealth of anthropological description.

In addition to the mentioned hand-drawings, which are of ethnographic rather than of aesthetic value, the book is illustrated with 14 half page bw photographs. Two of them are good pictures (4 and 8). One of them (9) shows the *lambu* performing the ritual of text no 1, the *nākhli mān* ceremony.

The careful observer will recognize, behind the officiant, the shining silver of a Zarges aluminium box, the silent witness for more than two decades of ethnography in the Nepal Himalayas.

Michael Oppitz

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