

# Lichchhavi Art Of Nepal

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(CONTINUED)

## CHAPTER III

### SCULPTURAL STUDY

The art in Nepal reached its zenith in the Lichchhavi period. Lichchhavi sculptures are mainly represented by many stone icons of Vishnu, his diverse forms and incarnations; the Uma-Maheshvara panels, images of the Buddha and the Avalokitesvara Padmapani and Vajrapani. Some of these are made of copper bronze, but in a few cases only. For instance, Tara or Gauri (copper, 7th century) (1) Devi (copper, 7th century) (2) Vajrapani (Guilt copper, 7th century) (3) Buddha Maitreya (copper, 7th-8th century) (4) Nimbate figure and Attendant (copper plate 8th century) (5) Garuda Bronze (7th-9th century) (6) Uma-Mahesvara (Bronze, 8th-9th century) (7).

The early art does not seem to have sprung from an early established local school, but produced under the influence of the Ikshavaku, Gupta schools and the Pala school in different periods. The sculptural art of the Lichchhavis is comparable with similar works from India carried out during golden age of Gupta dynasty.

As Stella Kramrisch writes, 'It is Newar who created the art of Nepal, in close touch with that of India, preserving the traditions while evolving their own in relative seclusion of the mountains and separateness of their race'.

Though the art of Nepal owes its origin to India, the local artists gave it different effects from those of the Gupta sculptures, but the faces of the icons reflect a native style.

We can study the sculptures of the Lichchhavi period on the basis of style and chronology.

The Lichchhavi sculptures contain a magnificent grandeur in their representation. R.N. Pandey mentions that the ornately elaborate hair style, proportionate limbs, plastic and mobile body, slenderness of waist, moderately exaggerated hips, restrained ornaments, not too plump breasts and decorated and diaphanous drapery are some of the typical characteristics of the Lichchhavi sculpture (8).

## (a) STYLE

## (i) Head-dress

The head-dresses played an important role in making the images beautiful, especially in reflecting the charms and personality of the face.

Much attention was paid by the Lichchhavi artists in the execution of the head-dresses of their images. Most of the deities represented during this period are the Hindu and Buddhist ones. Among the Hindu deities Vishnu, Lakshmi, Siva-Parvati, Garuda Maya-devi and Krsna in the child form are found. In the Buddhist icons the figures of standing Buddha, Padmapati, Avalokitesvara and Tara are available. Taking into consideration the head-dress of these images we find that either the crowns are put on their heads or there is matted lock of hair. In case of the female the hair is thrown on the back or on the sides and beautiful curls touch on the shoulders. The Garuda figures have a mail of coat with a bun in the centre. The Buddha figure shows a shaven head with a protuberance in the middle. Then there are individual variations also as we find the representations of the smaller divinities or the figures of different panel-

The earliest image of the Lichchhavi period is of Trivikran Vaman Visnu dated 467 A. D. (Pasupati, pl. No. III, fig. 2), because the face is defaced and the head gear is not very clearly noticeable. But it looks as if the crown was an inverted basket type having a flap in the front and there are reminiscences to such flaps on the lateral sides. Then there is fan like decoration with incised designs. But as regards the designs on it, it is not manifest in the relief.

The Vishnu of Changu Narayana (pl. No. III, fig. 3), which is about three hundred years later has pointed crown having the facade

expanded and is executed with floral designs. In the Visvarupa form of Changu Narayana (pl. No. IV, fig. no. 4), there are two panels, one in the shape of the colossal form. The Seshsayi form containing the same type of crown as we find in the Visnu Vikranta relief of the temple. But from this we can notice big rayed star carved out on the lateral wings of the crown. About the fore-head it is executed with circles and incisions that give the semblances of huge diamond embedded in the front. The hair of Balrama (9) is actually tied in a bun with a fillet like that of South Indian Bronzes.

The head-dress of Siva is always shown in the shape of matted lock, ajata. The National Museum Uma-sahita-mahesvara murti dated 8th-9th century A. D. (pl. No. VII, fig. 1) shows the hair in the centre on the top and piled high in characteristic style of an ascetic and then wrapped in seven horizontal coils and then tied with a band of cloth which shows three vertical lines in the front. There is indication of another knotted braide with the hair incised on the sides we notice the flower suspended. A crescent on the left and a skull on the right also appears.

There are three important S ivite panels at Kathsimbhu executed in the lines of Kumarsambhav. In these one belongs to 'Siva in the disguise of a young Brahmachari before Parvati (10.) In this his hair has been shown falling on the shoulders with short curls at their ends. In case of the 'Siva and Parvati with infant kumar, celebrating his birth (11) their hair is thrown on the back and there is evidence of combing also. We find curls here also specially above the right shoulders. In the armour relief of Siva and Parvati (12), the hair is again thrown on the back and there are four-wams raised in the centre. They fall on the right ear in the intersecting curls which enhances the gran-

deur of his face to a great extent. The comb marks are visible here also.

The Pasupa'i Buddha (half buried, pl. No. IX? FIG. no G.), shows short curls hairs with a protuberance (Ushanisha). This protuberance shows four horizontal disc of beaded-lins. The head is constricted and the ushanisha becomes slender as it goes to the top.

The Dhuaka Baha padmapani (pl. no X, fig. no. 2), figure shows three-peaked crown with a big diamond in the central pit within the floral frame-work. At the base of this crown there is three string bands of which the central one shows the head mark.

Utmost care was taken in the representation of female hair dress during the Lichchhavi period. In Visnu Vikranta murti of Pasupati (Pl. No. III fig. no, 2) the consort of Bali shows an ornate head decoration. The same women in case of Changunarayana Vishnu Vikranta image (pl. No. III, fig. 3) is shown with a bulbous braid and there is a band of studded jewels tied at the base of this braid. Some curls of the head, sensitively follicate in the periphery of the forehead. In the Uma-mahesvara relief as in Archaeological garden image (pl. no. VIII, fig. no. 1) the goddess executed with a big bun of incised line and a crown on the forehead with flops above the ear.

In the case of Mara's Temptation (pl. no. XI, fig. no. 1) of museum daughter of Kama shows a mayurpriksa (feather of pea-cock) tied on the forehead. The Camunda of this sculpture shows her hair carved like the burning flame in the vertical fashion.

In case of Katesimbhu relief Parvati and her friend (Parvati in penance as Aparna (pl. No. VII, fig. 2) are shown as in the Brahmachari panel of the same group (13) that is their hairs fall from the mang (the line running

above the forehead where vermillion is taken after marriage) on the sides and reach upto the shoulders in the curly fashion.

Laxmi, (Padmahasta) of Museum (pl. No. XI, fig. no. 3), shows an elaborate head-dress. The hairs are tied on the right above the ear like the wet cloth tied after squeezing the water from it. Above the forehead we noticed the execution of triangular peak carved with floral designs. The design stand with mayurpriksa and diamond type. The hair band and a few curls which hang on the forehead like the leaves are also seen.

The Yamuna figure of Pasupati (pl. No. XII, fig no. 1) has unique type of head-dress mostly marked with beaded designs. The shape of the crown with round pendant is similar to one worn by Visnu Visnarupa image (pl. No. IV, fig. No. 4) and few curls hang on the forehead.

#### (ii) Ear-Ornaments

The ear ornaments on the images of the deities and the mortal beings is a very old tradition. The terracotta figurines and the stone images of the cultures belonging to the proto-historic period also attest to this fact. In the realm of Hindu and Buddhist sculptures and fine arts we find their ornaments very vividly and exuberantly portrayed. This being the fact and the Lichchhavi sculptures being Hindu and Buddhist they executed their art on the imitation of the Indo-Gangetic plastic styles, have been beautified by the ear ornaments in the tradition of the former relief.

The earliest sculpture belong to Lichchhavi period is of Visnu Vikranta dated in A. D. 467. In this relief (pl. No. 111), fig. no. 2) and the Vishnu Vikranta of Lajimpat (pl. No. III, fig. no. 1) both the faces are worn out but we can

still see the pendants of ear-ornaments hanging from the perforated lobes.

The Brahma image of Pasupati (pl. no. V, fig. no. 1), which has been dated to the fourth century by Krsnamurti (14) shows perforated lobes with ornaments in all the faces.

In case of Siva and Parvati relief Siva has the snake ear-ornament which is eye-shaped and executed with floral design and centre looks embedded with gem. The Laxmi (Padmahasta) of Museum (pl. no. XI, fig. no. 3) has a rosette shaped ear-ornament as we find in one of the daughters of Kama in Mara's Temptation (pl. No. XI, fig. no. 1) But the other daughter puts on the lotus shaped ear-ornaments. The Camunda of the same panel contains a circuit kept one upon the another in the vertical fashion.

In the relief of amourisity (pl. No. VII, fig. no. 4) Siva puts on a eight petalled lotus flower hang by a stem from the lobes. The blossom of the lotus is represented by a big circle in the centre. In the Nagal Kumar Sambhav relic (15), he wears lotus buds. This design became common later on and is found in the seventh century Tara also (16).

The Vaisnavite images of 8th and 9th centuries have been decorated with various types of ear-ornaments. The Visnu Vikranta of Changu (pl. no. III, fig. no. 3), contains the ear-ornaments executed with bead designs. In case of Rahu in right ear this ornament exists but in the left the ear-ornament is quite peculiar.

The Yamuna (pl. no. XII, fig. no. 1) and the Mangla Gauri (Bachchhatesvari) panels of Pasupati (pl. no. XII, fig. no. 2) also show eight petalled lotus shaped ornaments like the Parvati's lotus shaped ornaments of Siva and Parvati with infant Kumar celebrating his birth (pl. no. VII, fig. no. 3). But they are crude

and marked by heaviness whereas in the former they are beautifully shaped.

Of the three reliefs of Padmapani coming from Dhuaka Baha (pl. X, fig. no. 2) Yampi Baha (pl. no. X, fig. no. 3) and Ghatavihar Kathesimbhu (pl. X, fig. no. 1) the Dhuaka Baha Padmapani contains the ear-ornaments as we see it in the Changu Narayana relief of late Lichchhavi period. But this image is an earlier specimen. The Siga Baha Avalokitesvara's (pl. X, fig. no. 1) ear-ornament is like the ear-ornament of the right ear of Laxmi (Padmahasta) while the Avalokitesvara and the devotees of Yampi Baha (pl. no. X, fig. no. 3) relief contain the ear-ornament is shown with a discoidal ring. The centre shows big gem.

### (iii) Necklace

Like the ear-ornaments necklaces were given to both the male and female figures of the Lichchhavi sculptures.

The Vishnu Vikranta of Pashupati (pl. No. III, fig. no. 2) and Lajimpat (pl. no. III, fig. no. 1), both contain the necklaces. But they are worn out and their details instinct from the garments. But we can see the broad strip in the crescentric form running from the base of the neck. It seems that it was executed with floral designs and a gem in the centre on the chest. All the males and females of these reliefs wore necklaces. But nothing is seen clearly in the panels. The wife of Bali shows a big gem held in string between the breasts.

In the Kumar Sambhav relief in the carving of the 'Siva' and Parvati with infant Kumar, celebrating his birth 'relief' (pl. no. VII, fig. no. 3) all the figures have been shown with necklaces. In each case it consists of two rings of gems. At the place of pendant we find four petals of lotuses filled with the gems. The Brahmachari (1), Siva in the disguise of a

young Brahmachari before Parvati, puts on a thick band of SUTRA with a massive circular pendant on the chest.

Of the three Padmapani reliefs the first one Dhuaka Baha (pl. no. X, fig. no. 2), shows a heavy necklace executed with bead designs. The third one Srighata Vihara (pl. no. X, fig. no. 1), is not very different from it. The only difference that exists here is its thinness and short locket hanging in the centre

The Brahma and Parvati reliefs (pl. no. V, fig. no. 1, pl. No. XII, fig. no. 2) of Pashupati show a thin band of bead string on the back neck. It is short and close to the neck. The central portion of jewel is embedded with numerous gems in the shape of rosette.

The Uma-Mahesvara relief of Museum (pl. No VII, fig. no. 1) shows a necklace which has formed a triangular shape in the front with sinuous outlines on the sides. This fact exists in the necklaces of both the portraiture vividly. The Garuda relief whether from Changu Narayana (pl. no. VI, fig. no. 2) Hadigaon (pl. no. VI, fig. no. 3) or Boston (19) show a snake tied around on the neck.

The Yamuna (pl. No. XII, fig. no. 1) and Mangla Gauri (pl. no. XII, fig. no. 2) both have one type of necklaces. Both show a big gem closely tied with gem studded strings which encircles round the neck.

#### (iv) Armlets (Keyur)

The armlet is a common feature in the Lichchhavi sculpture. Pasupati (pl. no. 111, fig. no. 2) possess heavy armlet which tightly bind the arms of the deity. In the front at base it shows a circle with which rays shoot. The circle perhaps stand for diamond and rays for its light. We find this design in all the armlets executing in his eight arms. The Lajimpat

Vishnu Vikranta image (pl. no. III, fig. no. 1) is exceptionally worn out and its Keyur are not visible in the arms. The Vishnu Vikranta of Changu (pl. no. III fig. no. 3) is decorated with Keyur in the arms which consist of three horizontal lines with two rows of small balls. In the frontal there is a semi-circle above this and its centre has been decorated with diamond design. It has been border with floral motif.

In case of Budhanilkantha Vishnu image here the place of Keyur has been taken by Bhojadanda. The Garuda of Changu Narayana (pl. No VI, fig. no. 2) has nagis for his armbandi.

As regards the Saivite images of the period the Keyur exists in them also. The armlets of Siva and Parvati in case of Naghantole Uma-mahesvar murti (20) are simple that is an elliptical portion is executed below the armpits in the facade and tied on the back with the unitary straps.

Of the four five Kumar Sambhav relief of Katesimbhu only in one that is Siva and Parvati with infant Kumar, celebrating Kumar's birth (pl. no. V'I, fig. no. 3) to Siva this ornament is given and it is of Bhojadanda type.

The Buddha statues generally portray without ornaments. That is why we do not find the Sayambhu, or Pashupati Buddhas. But the Avalokitesvaras and female figures have these ornaments. The Yampi Baha Avalokitesvara (pl. no. X, fig. no. 3) has a thick band running around the arm with a triangular pendant in the bottom of facade and above the band we can notice a huge diamond with the floral designs.

The Mayadevi's armlet (pl. no. 11, fig. no. 3) is in shape of thick and heavy metallic ornament carved with triangles. The space of triangle is filled with balls. In the bottom we see semi-circular making the cup designs.

The armlet of Laxmi Padmahasta (pl. no. xi, fig. no. 3) shows a big diamond in the centre and floral execution in the periphery. The Yamuna's armlet (pl. no. XII, fig. no. 1) is in the shape of Bhojadanda. But the upper part has been flourished into floral execution between the Bhojadanda and the shoulder.

#### (v) Yajnopavita

The Yajnopavita or the sacred thread was worn by males and females both in ancient times and after upto this ceremony that a student started his education in those days. The Yajnopavita in case of a male runs from the left shoulder upto the right thigh and it is known as Yajnopavita. In case of the female it is just opposite of the male; i. e., it emerges from right shoulder and hangs on the left thigh and is called the upaviti.

There is no trace of Yajnopavita in the Vishnu Vikranta image, Garuda of the time of Manadeva and Garuda of the time of Amsuvarma. In case of the Varaha image from Dhumbarah (pl. no. V, fig. no. 3) we find this in single broad line seen running from the left shoulder and reaches upto the upper thigh of the right leg. But it does not divide the bust into two halves. Actually from the shoulder it comes parallel to the outline of his chest and belly on the left and then from the waist-band it twists on the right thigh on the facade through pelvic and vanishes after showing semi crescentic form at the place where his right arm placed on the hip. In case of sleeping Vishnu in Visvarupa (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 4) and Garuda san Vishnu (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 2) it does not extend upto the lower thigh.

In case of Uma-Maheshvara images this Yajnopavita exists on the body of Siva only. In the Uma-Maheshvara murti of Museum (pl. no. VIII, fig. no. 1) the god shows his sacred thread of thin outline running from the left

shoulder and terminating at the base of the right thigh. The Yajnopavita of Uma-Maheshvara relief (21) emerges from between the ear ornaments and the shoulder and is terminated at the base of right thigh. In the Siva in the disguise of young Brahmachari before Parvati image relief (22) Parvati has been shown putting on this upaviti. It has four thick bands and runs in a broad strip on the bust; it covers the left breast.

There was no tradition of giving this Yajnopavita to the Buddha images. But in case of Avalokitesvaras this has frequently shown. The Dhuaka Baha Bodhisattava (pl. no. X, fig. no. 2) has his sacred thread in a single thin line and it vanishes in the carvings of the dhoti below the waist band. In case of the Yampi Baha (pl. no. X, fig. no. 4) the figure shows a long Yajnopavita which is almost straight between the left shoulder and the cloth band tying the hips. In the facade on this band it loosely hangs and from the inside it passes down to the knee of right leg. In the portion of bust it almost runs from the peripheral outline of the body.

The only image which shows the ornament in its fullest reality is of Brahma from Pashupati (pl. no. V, fig. no. 1) dated to 4th century by Y. G. Krsnamurti (23). Here it is in three lines and runs as we find it worn by people today. The other Brahma of the site also has Yajnopavita but it is not clearly marked as in the previous image.

#### (vi) Bangles and Anklets

Bangles and anklets regularly appear on the images of the Lichchhavi period.

In the Vishnu Vikranta image, (pl. no. III, fig. no. 2) the bangles are given in all the eight hands. But there is no trace of anklets here. In Vishnu's hands, the bangles consist of a

thick metallic sheet wrapped at the bases of palms. The other figures of this relief also have put on the bangles and anklets both. In the images of Changu Narayana belonging to this period we do not see the bangles but there is no trace of anklets in the main figure. The anklets are seen in the legs of Bali's wife. They are very artistically executed. As regards the bangles of these images they are thinner than the Vishnu Vikranta image of Pasupati and this shows knots also. Bali's wife and a female figure standing on lotus (Laxmi) put on very heavy bangles which covers about half of the lower arms above the palms. In Vishnu Sridhar (pl. no. VI, fig. no. 1) and Yogasana Vishnu also the bangles are executed as in the Vishnu Vikranta image. But there is no trace of anklets

In the 'Parvati in penance as Aparna' relief from Nagal tole (pl. no. VII, fig. no. 2) neither she wears the bangles nor her friend. In the Siva in the disguise of a young Brahmachari before Parvati (24) the hands of Parvati are mutilated and there is no trace of anklets in the legs. Brahmachari has a very heavy bangle and it is of a rounded shape. In the 'Siva and Parvati in armour, (pl. VII, fig. no. 4) Siva has neither bangles nor any anklets. Parvati has just the bangles and the central head is executed with floral design.

As regards the Buddhist images, there is no trace of bangles or anklets in case of the Buddha images. But in the Bodhisattva images the bangles exist. In the Dhuaka Baba (pl. no. IX, fig. no. 2) this ornament is shown like small beads. The Yampi Baba Bodhisattava is (pl. no. X, fig. no. 3) has floral execution on it and Siga Baba Bodhisattava (pl. no. X, fig. no. 1) has a solid band only.

In the Mayadevi's wrist (pl. no. 11, fig. no. 2) there is a very broad bangles covering the

half of the lower ornaments and it has been executed with criss-cross lines creating small squares with ball like elevation in between. At the base of palm there is a line of bead design also. Her anklets is of the type worn by a tharu lady in the Tarai region of Nepal i. e. it is in the shape of a Kada.

Yamuna's hand (pl. no. XII, fig. no. 1) is broken from the wrist but the left hand shows four lines representing perhaps four bangles. There is floral ornamentation also in the front above this ornament. The best anklet belonging to Lichchhavi period is found in this image. The anklets consist of a single broad band of metal executed with intricate floral design, as in the waistband and this has exceptionally illuminated the pedestal.

#### (b) COSTUME

##### DHOTI

One of the most distinctive features of the Lichchhavi sculptures is their 'dhoti', the long cloth. The dhoti appears on the sculptures from the very beginning. It is shown worn by the deities covering the thighs covering one end hanging between the legs in an artistic fashion. The dhoti is always tied with a waistband on the upper portion of the hips of these figures. The body of this costume is shown with horizontal bands. Which appears in the oblique form on the thighs.

The Pasupati Vishnu Vikranta murti (pl. no. III, fig. no. 2) shows a thick dhoti and its body decorated with horizontal line curving his sturdy thighs. It is held by a waistband carved with oblique lines below the navel. The end of dhoti after tightly incircling the right thigh emerges from the back and again takes a circle on the right side from the front and goes to the back to fall on the head of Bali,

who had granted three steps on the lord Vishnu. The border of the dhoti is clearly seen falling above the head of Bali.

The Lajimpat Trivikram image (pl. no. III, fig. no. 1) has a very faint trace of dhoti and only its end is seen falling on the right thigh in a fan shaped manner. It is executed with horizontal lines in bold relief. In case of the sculptures of Changu Narayana belonging to Trivikram Vishnu (pl. no. III, fig. no. 3) Vishnu Sridhar (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 3), Vishnu as Seshsayi and Visnurupa (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 4), Garudasana Vishnu (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 2) all of them show fine dhotis tightly wrapped round the leg and fold (*muja*) in the front is shown falling up to the knees in the artistic manner. Then there is a vertically incised flap as we see in the case of the Lajimpat image. Here below the right knee of the deity is a female pouring down some fruits from a 'Thali' like utensil. Here we can see the *anchal* of her saree hanging from the back in a slanting manner and covering the 'left breast'. This has been shown falling upto the ankle of left leg in case of the Bali. The dhoti of Anantasayi in the Visvarupa (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 4) shows the same features. But here the borders are not so ornate as in case of Vamana murti. The Sridhar image of the site (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 3) shows a little crudeness in the execution of dhoti. But its end between the thighs falling upto the feet are very artistic. Garuda shows the same features. But Laxmi's '*muja*' and '*anchal*', both are simple in appearance.

The Saivite images exist during this period either in the shape of the Siva—linga or the Uma—Mahesvara relief like those of Katheshimhu area. As regards their dhotis they are similar to the dhoti carvings of the Vaisnavite male and female panels that we have seen above.

The only difference we find in the case of the 'Parvati in penance at Aparna' (pl. no. VII.

fig. no. 2) is that Parvati and her friends wear sarees very low below their hips (as some of the modern lady do). The bodies of their sarees show the flower of four petals. We see this in their upper garments also. The Brahmachari Siva in the disguise of a young Brahmachari before Parvati (25) have also been shown wearing a dhoti which is short. It contains a thin border of parallel lines and shows a beautiful end folds. In this case there is no waistband. But a thick of dhoti itself is serving as waistband. The saree of Parvati in this sculpture is tied with Kush rope as waistband. Here her saree shows beautiful flowers at places on the thighs within the broad horizontal band executed with short balls. Here the '*muja*' artistically runs parallel to the flashy left thigh of the goddess, the ends over the knee are of a foliated form.

The Buddhist sculptures of the period are far less in number as compared to the Vaisnavite ones. In case of the Buddha images of the period which comes from Soyambhu we see them wearing the long Sanghati (long saffron coloured costume of the Buddhists hanging from the shoulder) and their hems have been held by the left raised arm. The Pashupati Buddha (pl. no. fig. no. ) has a finer Sanghati on his body. The Avalokitesvaras and their devotees represented in the bottom of the Dhuaka Baha, Yampi Baha and Siga Baha show their dhotis represented uniformly, i. e. they are incised with horizontal lines and tied with waistband at the base of the hips. Further there are foliated tails falling up to the ankles between the legs and we see another tail emerge from the waistband on their left sides and terminate in foliated forms. In front with the folded palms are the female devotees sitting on their left sides. Then there is a cloth running in three bands. In case of Siga Baha (pl. no. X, fig. no. 1) it is shown in four bands. They tie the bulging hips to make them slender and

this has straightened the flexious. These have been held by left arms and from here the stems of lotus flower proceed on the top:

The Nativity scene of Buddha (pl. no. 11, fig. no. 3) shows Mayadevi putting on a simple saree with wavy lines on the tight and ordinary folds between the legs.

The dhoti of Laxmi Padmahasta of Museum (pl. No. XI, fig. no. 3) shows shrinks on the thigh and the 'muja' from the waistband, falls down to the ankles. The circle of the saree's spread below the ankle has been marked with vertical lines which indicate the fold which generally emerges in case of fine sarees. The same features in little crude form we see in Yamuna figure of Pashupati (pl. no. XII, no. 1) Here the anchal extends on the back in stress form and has created a ripple in the bottom because of the intervention of the left form placed on the left thighs:

#### (ii) Katibandha (Waistband)

The waistband is often found in the sculptures. Generally it holds the lower garment tied from the portion of the hips.

Trivikram Vishnu image has a thick waist band incised with thin oblique lines and tied at the back of the navel. Its end is seen below the right arm pit in the shape of fan.

Trivikram Vishnu image of Changu Narayana (pl. no. III, fig. no. 1) has its Katibandha of three lines executed with a big lotus in the region of pelvic. The same type of waistband is seen in case of man we see holding his legs planted on the earth. The most remarkable in this relief of the waistband of Laxmi and the wife of Bali. These consist of three bands, each executed with a small bead in its string: The front shows a beautiful flower. In the Sridhar image (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 4) the waist-

band of Sridhar, Garuda and Laxmi, all have double lines of Chain design with eight petalled flower in the centre below navel. The 'muja' of their dhotis fall from this place only.

As regards the Saivite images we have waistbands in them as in the Vaisnavite images.

The 'Siva Parivar' of Patan shows Siva and Parvati, both wearing this ornament and in both case it has a line of beads in the centre running horizontally. The Parvati's waistband, because it has gone loose, has shrunk on the side of the right hip and there can be seen a pendant. In Parvati's penance as Aparna (pl. no. VIII, fig. no. 2) Parvati has waistband of six lines with knots at places and perhaps tied below the navel as in other specimens.

As regards the Buddha images, in case of the representation of Lord Buddha, the waistband does not exist, at the place of this ornament there is a deep incised line only.

The Yampi Baha (pl. no. X, fig. no. 3) specimen of the deity has a very thick band with a lotus carved in front.

Mayadevi's waistband (pl. no. 11, fig. no. 3) takes its origin from the waistband of Laxmi and Bali's wife in the Changu Vishnu Vikranta image. But at the place of the hocks in the front where it joins the two ends it is not so artistic as in the previous specimen.

The Laxmi Padmahasta of Museum (pl. no. XI, fig. no. 3) has a four stringed beaded waistband with a lotus flower above the pelvic. Here the petals and the blossoms both are shown emerge, not sunken.

Yamuna's waistband is quite unique. Because it contains lotus as within the beaded borders and ornate flower with square execu-

tion at the place of its blossom on the lower belly.

(iii) Udarbandha and scarf

We do not find Udarbandha in the Lichchhavi sculptures except in Vishnu images.

Vishnu Vikranta of Pashupati (pl. no. fig. no. ?) has used a Udarbandha tassel and knot at the waist left wide in Vishnu Vikranta of Lajimpat (pl. no. III, fig. no. 1), Tilganga (pl. no. 14, fig. no. 2) the sash tied round the waist-knots and its loop suspending over the thighs. The scarf and Udarbandha of Jalasayana Vishnu (pl. no. VI, fig. no. 1) falls across the thighs in a loop.

(C) Asana

The Vaisnavite sculptures of Lichchhavi period are mostly represented in a standing fashion. Trivikram Vishnu from Pashupati (pl. no. III, fig. no. 2) Lajimpat (pl. no. III, fig. no. 1) Vishnu Sridhar (pl. No. IV, fig. no. 3) Trivikram of Changu (pl. no. III, fig. no. 3) all are in a standing fashion;

Even the secondary figures of these reliefs are shown in the standing or in an inclining fashion. Only Garuda is found seated during this period and his seats on his knees and toes:

There is one Varah image at Hadigaon (pl. no. VI, fig. no. 3) shown seated on Pamasana. The Vishnu of Changu is astride the back of Garudamount—Garudasana (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 2).

As regards the Saivite images in case of Umamahesvara relief from Nepal (26), Hadigaon (pl. no. VI, fig. no. 4) and from National Museum (pl. No. VII, fig. no. 1) we see him sitting in Sukhasana in which the left leg rests on the seat and the right one dangles below on the

carved mountain pedestal. In case of Hadigaon relief we have four figures in Padmasana in meditation and one in Sukhasana (Ardharyarikasana).

The Kumarsambhava relief of Kathesimbhu have no traditional asanas. They are peculiarly seated in different fashions. In Parvati in penance as Aparna (pl. no. VII, fig. no. 2) Parvati has been shown seated which resembles Pralambha padasana posture. Her attendant is facing her below a tree sitting on haunches with the bent knees near the feet of the goddess. In 'Siva in the disguise of a young Brahmachari before Parvati'. Parvati is sitting on haunches with legs apart and her bent knees indicate that she had turned her face away from the abusive language about Siva spoken by the Brahmachari.

Mangla Gauri of Pashupati (pl. no. XII, fig. no. 2) is shown seated on Ardhapanyankasana. In this her left leg is bent as in Padmasana on the lotus seat and the dangling right rests on a small lotus flower carved on the base of the pedestal on the right flank.

(D) Ayudhas and Mudras

Ayudhas and mudras are seen in the Hindu and Buddhist sculptures from the time of the Lichchhavi with definite limbs and iconographic features—came into existence. There are sculptures with more than one arm and they are lashed with different types of objects which indicate some feelings of the deity which he wants to express on his followers when he is pleased. Thus we find sometimes the hands held in Varada or Abhayan, which means giving something to the devotees—boon or protection.

The ayudhas are of different types. Some of the ayudhas indicate the great power of deity

and the other show the great proficiency of lord in the art of learning, music and dancing and some indicate his victorious qualities. Sometimes there are ayudhas and objects in the hands which indicate the great serenity the god is possessed of and some are indicative of great horrors.

The Vishnu Vikranta image of Pashupati (pl. no. III, fig. no. 2) has eight arms and holds different ayudhas and objects like shield club, discus, etc., which show his great power of his eternal kingship.

After eight century A. D. when Vishnu is represented as Yogasana (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 2) or Sridhar (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 3) or as Kewal (as Boston) Vishnu (27) he is shown with couch, shell, shield and discus and lotus flower in his hands. The club and discus stand for his might, the couch shell for the idealism and the lotus flower for the purity and this is what, e.g., power idealism and purity a devotee wants to seek from his gods.

In Varah image (pl. no. V, fig. no. 3) we find the boar faced deity with two arms only. Here he does not hold any special objects in his hand but his very act of subduing the king of snake was a source of inspiration to his benefactors. In the Changu Trivikram murti (pl. no. III, fig. no. 3) we find a sword also in one of the right hands of the god. This weapon is found in one of the main right arms of Visvarupa form (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 4) also. This attribute is indicative of great power only.

As regards the Saivite images in case of the Siva—lingas we find four faces. The expression of the faces might vary but in their short hands each cases are shown a water vessel Kamandalu and a rosary (Pashupati, Deopatan) In the Uma—Mahesvara relief the deity is shown holding the varadmudra, trident, the garland of rosary and either the left

breast or the waist or below the breast of the goddess. As regards goddess, who seats on the left thigh of the deity with her face turned towards the god keeps her left arm on the left bent knee while the right hand possesses the base of the left thigh of the god.

Of the five Kumarsambhav panels of Katesimbhu 'Siva in the disguise of a young Brahmachari before Parvati (28) shows Siva holding a flower in his right hand. In the sculpture of Siva and Parvati in amour (pl. no. VII, fig. no. 4) Siva holds Abhayamudra in the right hand while the left one is empty. His consort here holds a cloth which has been thrown and wavers on her face and back and in her right hand she is holding a snake.

As regards the hand gestures of Buddhist divinities during the Lichchhavi period they are quite simple. The figures from Soyambhu (pl. no. IX, fig. no. 1), Pashupati (pl. no. IX, fig. no. 4) and one in the possession of Mr. K. P. Bhandari in Putalisadak, all display varadmudra in their right hands and hold the hem of Sanghati in their left hands near the left arm pit.

The Dhuaka Baha (pl. no. X, fig. no. 2) Bodhisattva holds the varadmudra in his right palm and his Katistha left hand carries a lotus flower by its stem.

The Garuda from Hadigaon (pl. no. VI, fig. no. 3) and Changu Narayana (pl. no. VI, fig. no. 2) are seated either on the capital of a pillar or on the ground with folded palms in the hand. This mudra always stands for dedication and devotion.

The Brahma of Pashupati (pl. no. V, fig. no. 1) has three faces and only two of his arms are carved in the sculpture. In these arms he holds the Yaksamala and Kamandalu; both

are indicative of his qualities of meditation and asterties.

The Manglagauri scene of Pashupati (pl. no. XII, fig no. 2) is slightly defaced but the attributes of her right hands are not so difficult to recognise. These are varad, the bell, the sword, the discuss, the blue lotus flower, the shield, the manuscript and the lotus flower in the hand held by stem resting on the left thigh. These attributes indicate that she not only possessed great power but had serenity and learning also.

#### (E) Facial Expression

The Lichchhavi art starts in the fifth century A. D. with Mandeva. The history before this is hidden in the well of darkness. By the fifth century the School of Mathura and Sarnath had started reaching here and influencing images which were highly conducive to Dhyana yoga essential items for the spiritual manifestation. As the Lichchhavi sculptures derived their inspiration from the Gupta art of Northern India here also we find the reliefs imbued with the spirit of dhyana yoga. The heaviness of the faces had dwindled from the third century A. D. itself and in the fourth century they possess a natural serenity. Because of the high ? under the poetic development of Sanskrit literature these were brought in the realm of art. The artists have tried to give a sober countenance to the faces as enjoined in the Classical Sanskrit works. Nose, mouth, eyes, cheeks etc. were drawn from actual objects and the native was portrayed in the icons. Therefore we see in this period the nose likely parrot's beak, the eye lashes curved like a highly drawn bow, the eyes like the restless fishes, the lips red like the bimbafal. It is in the light of these facts that we have to analyse the facial expression available in the case of the female figures. As regards the male one

they are imbued with different expression. Sometimes they are serene, sometimes robust and sometimes the faces look quite pensive and meditative.

The Brahma sculpture of sixth century (pl.no. V, fig. no. 2) although executed with open eye and slightly fleshy lips but its cheek of different faces been so artistically slopes toward the chin that it had led a meditative import in the face. The same fact is attested by eye-lashes also. The face of the Siva in the relief of the pilgrims in the mountain as Stella called it (28), (Banerjee identified with the worship by the divine couple after the birth of Skanda) (29) is exceptionally devotional. The Uma—Mahesvara images of this period always show Siva in meditation with drooping eye-lids. In case of other deities of this relief we find them either of merry-making and play.

We have a few Buddha or Bodhisattva figures of this period and these are very sensitively portrayed. The 7th century Padmapani of Dhuaka Baba (pl. no. X, fig. no. 1.0 2) has highly meditative eyes and the face on the white is so built that it reflects the trips of Dhyana yoga in all its totality. The Siga Baba Bodhisattva (pl. no. X, fig. no. 1) executed about a century later has the same cheerfulness and spirituality but the degrees are less. The Yampi Baba Bodhisattvas (pl. no. X. fig. no. 3) stands in between the above mentioned Bodhisattvas. It has been portrayed with great skill and its face reflects a sober serenity environment.

Utmost care was taken in the facial expression of female sculptures not because in the classical phase a beautiful figure of a deity should be must there but because a lady is itself an embodiment of beauty and foster of romance in the world. The classical works prescribe that a woman's face should be like the moons or the waist should be slender like lions

and hips heavy and legs should very artistically emerged from them to the bottom and yet they should be light and rhythmic. If we see the faces of sculptures in case of females they are really like the face of moon with simplitudes of nature imbibed in them. The Parvati idol of Pashupati carved out in the body of a Siva linga (pl. no. XI, fig. no. 2) is a quite sensitive and filled with a highten religions for bearers. Sensitively dropped eye-lids and drawn eye-brows and cheerful smile indicate that she is absorbed in some great question and the answer is in her hand. The plastic carving of cheeks and nose a bun of hair on the head further add to the grace of female sculptures. Taking the plastic dictions into consideration I can boldly say that the theme of the 'Parvati's penance as Aparna' (pl. no. VII, fig. no. 2) was executed immediately after the above mentioned Parvati's head on Siva-linga. Although here the face is completely mutilated but the right-hand held in Vitarka mudra speaks of an arguing face with great determination in the mind.

The daughters of Mara in the relief of Mara's Temptation (pl. no. XI, fig. no. 1) are highly equipped after the failure in the task of alluring the exalted saints. Hence they look very thoughtful.

The Yamuna (pl. no. XII, fig. no. 1) and Mangla Gauri (pl. no. XII, fig. no. 2) images of Pashupati show a decline in the plasticity. These are marked with heaviness which overwhelmed the realm of sculptures in the whole of Indo-Pak subcontinent.

Now the eyes have opened slightly, the cheek have turned fleshy and the chin does look supple and artistic and there is a marked ridge between the cheeks and base of noses from the side. Still their facial expression is

not of a completely different tradition as we find in the stereotyped medieval reliefs.

#### (F) Modelling

The nature or the best aspects of different animates and inanimates these were copied down in the human limbs during this period by the priest artists. When we see the sculpture of Lichchhavi period we are reminded of thoughtfulness, grace and idealism, including the amoursity of life which have been copied down with great elan in the art of the Lichchhavi period in Nepal. As I referred above the faces of the Lichchhavi period in the reliefs are quite sensitively executed which gave the glimpses of the living human face. The arms from the shoulder fall so artistically that they always rendered a charm in the relief. The flexions are so developed in case of the standing figures that they produce a linear rhythm on the sides. Their hand's gestures, their crowns, the nimbus, the ornaments, the transparent garments, the seats, the ayudhas are all beautifully executed by the artist. The medium sized and slender carvings of the males and females shown in perpetual youth are indicative of a developed plastic tradition.

When we see the Lichchhavi sculpture we find that they have been mostly executed in basalt. The images were chiselled, smoothened and burnished perhaps with a coat of iron dust and so on. The limbs of the deities are so beautifully executed that not even in a single specimen we find a chiselled mark. This has brought forth a Lichchhavi sculpture to a type of classical modelling. The limbs have been so artistically drawn that the sculptures give the semblances of the living humans.

In the Kathesimbhu reliefs we find very supple carving of the limbs. They are so beautifully modelled that no real artisticity is rampant from anywhere. The modelling of the

hairs thrown on the back in the curly fashion and the execution of the mountains both are quite charming

The Varah sculpture (pl. no. V, fig. no. 3) is modelled divinitive but the artist has filled unprecedent warmth and elan in his sturdy limbs. The execution of boar face and the retrogate Vasuki holding the left leg of the deity are lively modelled.

The Padmapani and Laxmi Padmahasta figures of this period now standing in Ghata-vihar (pl. no. X, fig. no. 2) and in the National Museum (pl. no. XI, fig. no. 3) both possessed a sensitive modellion with their contemplative faces and flexions. The crown and braide of Laxmi both are nicely modelled; the necklace and the lotus flower held in the hand are not less chanting and sensitive. A sensuous flexion of her waist could even be visualised even in the stone. The sunken navel and bulging hip-bone and bana-shape thighs are too quite sensitively modelled. In the whole this Laxmi carving of Vishnu relief wrongly described as Tara by the scholars of the past is an exalted piece of modelling tradition which the Lichchhavi practised in the past.

We have a few Garuda sculptures which are characterised with profound heaviness and its rough body is indicatice of his coat of armour which presvpose to wear.

The modellings of the garments is always in the transparent; hence the limbs above the hips in case of male and female look bare. But this is not a fact. For this visibility we should appreciate and thank Lichchhavi artists for the tradition of Lichchhavi societies in which such a developed feature in the life and art had eqisted.

#### (G) Stele

The sculptures of the Lichchhavi period have been executed either in the standing or seated fashion without any stele or stele with them. Because these sculptures are carved within the stele they show the perforations in some cases. But most of them have no such perforations. The steles are made in the elliptical shapes containing arches on their tops, terminated with pointed executions on the apexes. In the centre of the stele the cult deity is executed as engaged in some action or meditation and he may be surrounded with a host of other male and female deities in different fertures and posses. The periphery of the stele are either carved with flames or the floral designs and in case of a few pieces there are inscriptions also on the pedestals, provide some details about the idols and dancers of panel.

The Vishnu Vikranta of Pashupati image (pl. no. III, fig. no. 2) is carved with n the stele and as stated above a short inscriptions in its base. Its periphery must have shown some designs but nothing is now extant. The Trivikram image of Changu Narayana (pl. no. III, fig. no. 3) shows perforation in the centre around the limbs of the main deity and the bottom is executed with a frieze of schematic flower within rectangular horizons. The leaves of the flowers are carved on four angles and the blossom in the centre is surrounded with small dots along the periphery. The lateral flames of the stele are plain and filled up with other images of the mythology. The arch on the top is constricted. There are sun and moon represented by round symbols and their rays and beams are executed by simple incision. Then there are horn like carved lives carved in topsyturvy which stands for cloud in the sky. The top shows the garland holding Uidyadharas flying amidst the clouds in emanciated elans. The Visvarupa image of the site (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 4) again shows perforations. Its

length is more than its breadth unlike other steles of the place. Because of the large number of carved figures in this relief we find no other ornamentation in this specimen. The Garudasana Vishnu's stele (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 2) is peculiar. Here the whole background of the stone is executed with the stretched feather of Garuda.

The stones of the Uma—Mahesvar murtis are alike, e. g., each of them shows the carvings of mountains. But perforation do not exist in them.

The steles of the Buddha figures of Soyambhu (pl. no. IX, fig. no. 1, pl. no. II, fig. no. 2) and Pashupati (pl. no. IX, fig. no. 4) show plain backgrounds and floral designs in the periphery. In each case there are huge elliptical steles:

The steles of Bodhisattvas are simple: The stele of Yampi Baha (pl. no. X, fig. no. 3), is perforated and carved with beautiful floral designs. In the extreme periphery there is again a band of the flames as we see in most of the early medieval sculptures of the valley.

We have plenty of sculptures without the stele in the background as in Dhumbarah (pl. no. V, fig. no. 3), Laxmi (pl. no. XI, fig. no. 3), Brahma (pl. no. V, fig. nos. 1, 2), Garuda (pl. no. VI, fig. no. 2, 3) images etc.

#### (H) Aureole or Nimbus

Aureole or nimbus is called the Prabha—Mandala or Sirascakra. An aureole is given only to the cult deities or to some great religious teachers or reformers when portrayed in the sculptures either in the metal or stone or wood are painted in the Kalash. Aureole is a sign of physical or intellectual or philosophi-

cal excellence. This being the case we find the aureole in a large number of sculptures of the deity executed by the Lichchhavi artists during the fifth and tenth century A. D.

The aureole of the Trivikram image of Changu Narayana (pl. No. III, fig. no. 3) is round and in its periphery it has strips of small dots and rising flames. The Vishnu visuarupa (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 4) possesses no Prabhama—ndala at all and the Seshsayi form in the bottom shows a canopy of seven-snakehoods. The Sridhar image (pl. no. IV, fig. no. 3) contains the aureole not only in case of the deity but behind the head of flanking Laxmi and Garuda. Here also we see the same designs as in the image. But they are not so artistic. The most striking aureole is of Dhumbarah (pl. no. V, fig. no. 3). It is massive. It is like a heavy rubber ring with a specious halo in the centre and carved with straight lines at intervals.

In the realm of Saivite sculptures we find the aureoles in case of the Uma—Mahesvaralingan murti of Lagan only (30). Here the aureole is elliptical and shows perforation in the centre. Its periphery is carved with the balls and flames.

As Buddha was a great man, a great teacher and a great reformer having immense knowledge and a developed mind, he was given the place of a very prominent deity in Buddhism. When he is represented in icons he is always shown with aureole.

The Soyambhu Buddhas (pl. no. XI, fig. no. 1, pl. no. II, fig. no. 2) have elliptical aureole which shows the flames in one case and the floral designs in other. The Pashupati Buddha (pl. no. IX, fig. no. 4) contains the latter type.

Among three Bodhisattvas only the Yampi Baha Bodhisattva (pl. no. X, fig. no. 3) has an aureole showing a strip of balls and flames in the border and an elevated line instead of miniature balls.

The aureole of Laxmi Padmahata of Museum (pl. no. XI, fig. no.) is almost circular but the flames here are executed artistically.

## Foot Notes

### CHAPTER III

- 1) Kramrish, Stella, *The Art of Nepal* (New York, 1864), fig. No. 3, p. 56
- 2) *Ibid.*, Fig. No. 4, p. 57
- 3) *Ibid.*, Fig. No. 5, p. 58
- 4) *Ibid.*, Fig. No. 6, p. 59
- 5) *Ibid.*, Fig. No. 7, p. 60
- 6) *Ibid.*, Fig. No. 8, p. 129
- 7) *Ibid.*, Fig. No. 9, p. 61
- 8) *Ibid.*, p. 16
- 9) Pandey, R. N., *A Brief Survey of the Nepalese Art Forms* (Kathmandu, 1968), pp. 20-21
- 10) Pal, Pratyapaditya, *Vaisnav Iconology in Nepal* (Calcutta March 1970), p. 91
- 11) Banerjee, N. R., *Parvati's Penance as Revealed by the Eloquent Stone of Nepal* (*Ancient Nepal*, No. 2, January, 1968), pl. VI A
- 12) *Ibid.*, pl. No. VII B
- 13) *Ibid.*, pl. No. VIII A
- 14) *Ibid.*, pl. VI, A.
- 15) Krishnamurti, Y. G., *King Mahendra of Nepal, A Biography*, (Bombay), p. 87
- 16) Banerjee, N. R., *op-cit.*, pl. VI. A
- 17) Kramrisch, Stella., *op-cit.*, fig. No. 3, p. 56
- 18) Banerjee, N. R., *op. cit.*, pl. No. VI A
- 19) Kramrisch, Stella., *op. cit.*, Fig No. 8, p. 129
- 20) *Ibid.*, pl. IX, p. 41
- 21) *Ibid.*, Fig. No. 9, p. 62
- 22) Banerjee, N. R., *op. cit.*, pl. No. VI. A.
- 23) Krishnamurti, Y. G., *op. cit.*, p.
- 24) Banerjee, N. R., *op. cit.* pl. no. IX, p. 41
- 25) *Ibid.*
- 26) Kramrisch, Stella., *op. cit.* pl. no. IX, p. 41
- 27) *Ibid.*, pl. no. 10, p. 65
- 28) *Ibid.* pl. no. III, p. 22
- 29) Banerjee, N. R. *op. cit.*, pl. no. VII B.
- 30) Kramrisch, Stella, *op. cit.* pl. no. IX, p. 41

(To be Continued)