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NEPALESE SACRED SPACE IN PREMODERN AND EARLY MODERN HINDU-BUDDHIST CONTEXT: ONE OF INDIA'S *DESA* AND INDEPENDENT *PUNYA BHUMI*

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A paper is dedicated to the question pertaining to the sacred space by the Buddhists in premodern and early modern Nepal. Medieval Nepal saw the rise of new ideas, expressed by the Svayambhu Purana that proclaimed total independence of the Nepal mandala (the Nepal valley) from the Indian sacred landscape as well as a self-sufficient character and independence of Nepalese Buddhist tradition. This paper studies the main narratives of the Svayambhu myth using a wide range of sources, with a particular focus on text documents and visual sources (religious art, etc.). The paper also studies, how the sacred geography of Nepal influenced the identity of the Nepalese in the context of competing for the coexistence of Buddhism and Hinduism. The Svayambhu myth (15th c.) in fact represents another (new) system of understanding the landscape of the country of Nepal (Nepal mandala/Nepal des), which almost ignores India as the Motherland of Buddhism. However, in reality, the Nepalese understanding of their country as a self-sufficient Buddhist mandala, as a blessed Buddhist land (bodhisattva bhumi and punya bhumi) was the reinvention of the local tradition, both in the vision of the space and as a tradition of Buddhist line. It was legitimized through the very idea of Buddhahood, which revealed itself in a form of Adi Buddha. Adi Buddha manifested in the form of light and dharmadhatu, later transformed into a stupa – the main stupa of the country (Svayambu caitya). But behind this "radical" reinterpretation of the sacred space, still there was a place for understanding of the Nepal mandala as a part of India. Furthermore, a pan-Indian model was at the very base of the Nepalese system of rendering sacred landscapes, as it was rooted in the Cakrasamvara mandala and Vajrayogini tradition (as A. Rospatt shows). This paradoxical contradiction in a Nepalese paradigm of the sacred geographical landscape is one of the main themes of this paper. The author argues that two different systems pertaining to space overlapped and were coexisting in many ways in a compromising manner.

Keywords: Buddhism, identity, metageographical revolution, Nepal, pilgrimage, sacred space, Svayambhu caitya, Svayambhu Purana

The premodern sacred space: The Nepalese and South Asian context

In premodern and early modern Nepal the understanding of sacred space (and space itself) formed in the notions close to that of India. Nepal (before the formation of the contemporary state of Nepal under the Shah kings in 18th c. that a Nepal Valley) constituted traditional and ritual realm of *des*/*desa* or *mandala* as it is found in a wider South Asian context. The base for that process was the switch in post Gupta period when India saw the rose of the regional identity with the traditional regions/countries evolving as a special des. Every *desa* was "built", "materialized" in space (also mentally) as a diminished model of the universe.

India in those traditional concepts of space was interpreted as a "macrocosm", consisting of many smaller "countries" (lands, regions), microcosms in the sacred and spatial,

social and political sense (although the "sacred-geographical" accent here occupies a central place). The boundaries of such a sacred-political territory often were defined by certain temples (usually 4 or 8 temples or more), located outside the cardinal points. These "microcosms" were organized according to the principles of the "big" desa/mandala: their ritual boundaries were determined by temples, and at the center the space of desa/mandala was marked by the main temple of the "country". Often such a country/traditional region was (in simplified model) inhabited by a people who had much in common, as representatives of the common "folk region": they spoke the same language, shared common traditions and customs; they also shared their ancestral rights and way of life (*des dharma*), which were inherited from their ancestors. Not exclusively, but a traditional region/country of des could be under the rule of a single monarch. The inhabitants of a des also often had a dominating cult of a regional deity which often won a royal patronage and occupied a special place in the regional pantheon and local religious landscape. Often also a pan-Indian model[1] of constructing a sacred landscape was transplanted on the territory of a particular territory (*des*). The "centre" of "the country" usually had a temple of the main (dynastic) deity, which, as a rule, was located in the capital, often in the compounds of the palace complex [Vanina 2007, *58–63*].

In that sense Nepal was not exclusion [von Rospatt 2009; Burghart 1984]. British officer, Scotsman F. Hamilton, who served on the British mission to Kathmand at the beginning of 19th century, notes that these sacred boundaries of Nepal desa were traditionally defined by four temples: Bhimesvara temple in the east, Natesvar in the south, Kalesvar temple guarded the boundaries of the sacred land in the west, and Nilkantha in the north [Hamilton 1819, *192*]. These temples outlined the boundaries of the sacred-political concept of "Nepal Desa". The centre, in the Hindu interpretation which was of special role at the court of Nepalese kings, was set in the capital, in the Temple of the royal tutelary goddess Taleju (also pertained as Durga by Hindus and as a form of Vajradevi for Buddhists; the royal Kumari, the patron of kings of Nepal, embodied that deity).

The polysemantic concept of mandala was crucial for attaining and understanding of space (religious, but also profane, including political and social dimensions); space was constructed in the South Asia and in the regions under influence of Indian civilization using mandala as a model. Nepal, of course, also shared that attitude. D. Bangdel notices, when speaking of the Nepalese traditions of pilgrimage: "The mandala paradigm thus functions as an element in the construction of both pilgrimage and landscape" [Bangdel 2010, *63*]. So mandala as a model of the universe was an attested premodern vehicle of constructing and 'attaining' of a space of a country for Buddhists and Hindus in and outside India[2]. Mandala importance was especially present in Esoteric Buddhism. Different practices of Esoteric Buddhism were helping in the "attaining" of the sacred space and in religious practice in the whole [Tucci 1961; Beguin 1993; Ten Grotenhuis 1999][3].

The country of Nepal or *Nepal mandala/Nepal des* (how it was often called in religious texts, chronicles and documents) in the medieval texts is set as a part of *Bharat* (India) and *Jambudvipa*. Both Hindu and Buddhist traditions continued to flourish here under the extensive royal patronage also in medieval period after the crisis and demise of Buddhism in India. The coexisting of two dharmic religions with confluence with the local pre-Buddhist cults marked the local sacred space: many of the places of power were shared by Hindus and Buddhists. Religious, ideological, political impulses got from India were one of the prominent flows that drove the Nepalese socio-religious culture and traditions. The presence in Nepal of many outstanding Indian teachers, scholars and artists at least their deep influence on local Buddhism after the destruction of famous Vikramasila and Nalanda monasteries could be just an example. Nepal, with the country's highly sanskritisized Indic culture, without any doubts, represents a South Asian cultural region, although with some strong local "Himalayan" peculiarities [Slusser 1982].

But at the same time *Nepal des* (or *Nepal mandala*) was a land of special holiness and purity for both Buddhists and Hindus in its own right. According to ancient and mediaeval

religious Nepalese texts, Nepal mandala is a "sacred land" or "blessed land" (*punya bhumi*) [von Rospatt 2009; Gellner 1986, *123*]. It is also compared to *bodhisattva bhumi*, the land where enlightened beings, bodhisattvas, reside. F. Hamilton speaks of 56 "sacred lands" existed in the Subcontinent; and Nepal was one of these sacred, ritually pure *desa* (countries) within India [Hamilton 1819, *192*]. So here Nepal is set as a traditional microspace in a bigger sacred space of India (*Bharat*). The last statement does not annihilate the fact that in a consciousness of a premodern Indians the country was pertained nor as a "foreign", as well it would be wrong to say the Nepalese in medieval/early modern period didn't have a strong sense of a regional or even "proto national" identity and didn't intentioned to feel their space as a separate entity (in political, but also, as we will see in religious understanding). What also differ Nepal from India of course, is that the Himalayan country was apart from the processes of cultural, religious and political change in the neighbouring India in the Middle Ages and later. India was ruled for centuries by the Muslim dynasties and then – by the British. Nepal avoided such an intrusion from Muslim rulers and colonization by the British; the country preserved its Indic social structure and traditions, often linked or compared with Indian medieval socio-religious and cultural shape; one of such uninterrupted traditions was (and still is) a living line of Mahayana Buddhism[4], which coexisted with Hindu since early times.

By 15th c., as *Svayambhu Purana* and *Gunakarandavyuha* texts[5] (both of definitely Nepalese origin) show, an understanding of Nepal as a living mandala filled with sacred places (*tirtha* and *pitha*)[6], had already formed [Bangdel 2010, *64*; Tuladhar-Douglas 2006; von Rospatt 2009]. On one hand Nepal mandala was associated with esoteric *Cakrasamvara mandala* as early as 10th c. (as A. Sanderson states) [von Rospatt 2009, *67*]. *Cakrasamvara mandala* defines the space as 24 segments – according to the segments of this type of the Vajrayana mandala. It has a central part occupied by an esoteric form of a deity *Cakrasamvara* (or his forms) in union with *Vajravarahi*/*Vajrayogini* (or her forms). Thus Cakrasamvara mandala was projected on Nepalese territory: different parts of the country corresponded to the segments with presiding deities of the mandala. Nepal, both at the mystical level and at the "material" level, at the level of phenomena, was a special sacred space for Nepalese – the mandala, with its segments, internal concentric circles, centers – *pitha* and *tirtha* – superimposed on holy places. *Cakrasamvara mandala*, with its 24 holy pithas and 4 Yogi temples, the mighty tantric devi mandala (they are *Vajrayogini*, *Khadgayogini*, *Guhyesvari*, *Akasayogini*) shaped the Nepalese sacred space [Slusser 1982, *7*; Bangdel 2010, *54–65*; von Rospatt 2009, *66–67*; Shakya 2009]. According to Nepalese traditions in general the space of the country revealed also12 Tirtha, 8 Vitaraga (8 Bodhisattvas or Passionless one), 4 sacred rivers, 4 yogini pitha. This were (and still are) the main pilgrimage centers, located at different parts of the Nepal Valley (the Kathmandu Valley). The *Svayambhu Purana* (*SP*) too pays a special respect to sacred places which to be visited by a pilgrim: they were 8 Vitargas (or *8 Passionless ones* and also called *8 bodhisattvas*) and 12 tirthas [Svayambhu Purāṇa].

On the other hand, Nepal's sacred geography was defined by the Svayambhu myth, based on the mentioned the *SP* text. Despite the peaceful coexisting with *Cakrasamvara* model, this one had some differences. Around 1400[7] the Svayambhu myth's ideas formed the image of Nepal as the Buddhist *blessed land* (*punya bhumi*) or *bodhisattva bhumi*, appeared independently from India and Indian Mahyana tradition: the Nepal mandala was proclaimed an independent Buddhist country were the very principle of Buddhahood self-manifested in a stupa of Svayambhu, central temple of Nepal. That change in understanding of Nepalese religious landscape happened in the time of loss of the Buddhist Motherland in North India and the need to rethink the position of Nepal and Nepalese Buddhist tradition. This understanding of Nepal shapes the variety of texts, practices and traditions which denied Nepal's "place" among other mandalas within India itself, and proclaimed Nepal's full independence as a sacred space. The idea of self-sufficient,

"self-arisen" (*svayambhu*) and independent space of Nepal helped the Nepalese Buddhist tradition to restate itself and legitimate itself in the new circumstances inside Nepal. In the process of such transformations the social and political issues played not the last role. The very origin of the country of Nepal, in geographical sense, on physical scale, since premodern times is also a part of this narrative. The populating of the country, appearing of cities, of a Nepalese king etc. is also explained in the *SP*.

Reinventing a sacred Buddhist landscape within Nepal mandala: The Svayambhu myth

So according to the *Svayambhu Purana* the Nepalese Buddhist tradition appeared independently from India and even the historical Buddha Sakyamuni [Svayambhu Purāṇa][8]. Buddhist idea of Buddhahood and the tradition of prehistoric Buddhas (Buddhas of the Previous age), who came before Sakyamuni Buddha, in Nepalese texts joined their forces to *proclaim* and *legitimize* that *independence* of *Nepal mandala* as a Buddhist holy land. It is also represented as a self-sufficient space. Buddhist cosmogony of medieval text of *Svayambhu Purana* (15th c.) is a kind of Nepalese mythical history of Buddhism in Nepal and the country [Svayambhu Purāṇa]. Thus *SP* funds the vary base for an understanding of Buddhist history (through myth, of course) by the inhabitants of the Nepal Valley, the Newars, and shaped their "religious consciousness"[9] (as A. Rospatt points out) [von Rospatt 2019, *165–166*]. It is even possible to say, that the *Svayambu Purana* drew a special nepalocentric world of Buddhism [von Rospatt 2009]. That re-understanding of Nepal's Sacred geography and a place of a country in a broader Buddhist tradition was as much deep and touched so many sides of life of Nepalese Buddhists and coincided with important social and political changes among Nepalese sangha, so W. Tuladhar-Douglas even coined that just after 15th[10] the truly Nepalese form of Buddhism was born [see: Tuladhar-Douglas 2006]. The *SP* too pays a special attention to sacred places which to be visited by a pilgrim: they were 8 Vaitargas and 12 tirthas [Svayambhu Purāṇa].

Nepal mandala as term also had political connotations (as has this concept of mandala in premodern tantric context): from chronicles it is clear that Nepal mandala was understood also as a "kingdom of Nepal" in some cases. The very formation of the landscape of mandala, how it was organized in real space was not static but an active process which was engaged with the political control and the royal power. At least this responds to the process of the early formative stage of how the esoteric mandala in Vajrayana was projected on a real territory. That is a feature of Esoteric Buddhism as R. Davidson points out and is likely also the case of Nepal too [Davidson 2002; von Rospatt 2009, *63–66*, *74*]. Although the kings of Nepal were usually Hindu[11] and the court rituals and cults were Hindu too, they still were also the kings of Buddhists. The monarchy had that "Buddhist side", despite the role played by Brahmans[12] at the court – ideally the ruler of *Nepal mandala* was a paradigmatic Hindu *rajadhiraja* and *cakravartin*, a Buddhist universal monarch[13]. Sacred geography was an important to monarchy in its ability to legitimize the ruler, as it was also seen in India [see: Kulke 1993]. In Nepal the King was obliged to serve the main deities of his realm, including Buddhist. He did it through rituals and gifts (*dana*) [Burghart 1987; Toffin 2008]. That activity, as a part of royal *rajadharma*, revealed special relations between the king, deities and his Buddhist servants. So the kings, Malla princes, and even the pro Hindu conservatives as Shah kings or their Rana prime-ministers (who ruled Nepal in 1846–1951), worshiped near the main stupa *Svayambhu*, and were adherents of *Avalokitesvara* (*Karunamaya*)[14]; kings participated in bodhisattva's festivals annually. The Kings of *Nepal mandala* since Malla dynasty had special relations with the living goddess Kumari[15] (who was considered Vajradevi by Buddhists and Taleju, Durga or a form of Kali by Hindus): without her blessings monarch could not rule [Lewis, Bajracharya 2016]. The sacred *Nepal mandala* was so important for the king in the sphere of ritual power and ideology that even after the unification of Nepal under the

Shah dynasty, *Nepal mandala* (the Kathmandu Valley) in some sense was the primal area for the king, his central realm until the mid. 19th c., as J. Whelpton points out [Whelpton 2005, *56*]. The Nepal valley was "ritually significant core territory" for the king.

Thus, the *SP*, among other things, pulls out "the emergence of a proto-national consciousness", at least in its premodern form. The *SP* is a text which uses a very idea of Buddhahood, spontaneously revealed, as well as the presence of Buddhas of the Past to legitimate the Nepalese Buddhist tradition. Stupa Svayambhu is an ontological source of Nepalese Buddhism and the centre of cosmic space – (macrocosm of) Nepal mandala. The *SP* also traces the influence of tantric ideas, especially in revealing the central role of the goddess Khaganana/Guhyesvari as an embodiment of the female aspect of Buddhahood, wisdom (*prajna*), and the "Mother of all buddhas".

The *SP* combines the autochthonous myth and ideas/narratives with such of pan-Buddhist origin, like *avadanas*, etc. They are also inserted into the text. But even then, they came through a regional adaptation, and reflect a strong influence of Nepalese practices and environment, and traditions. Some researchers coined those narratives and their reworking "Nepalisation". Behind the Svayambu (*Svayambhu Bhagavan*) as *Adi Buddha*, a primordial Buddha, from which other buddhas and bodhisattvas emerge, and the tantric goddess Guhyesvari, also the hero of the *SP*, we can see pre-Buddhist deities included under the fold of Buddhism, as A. Rospatt writes [von Rospatt 2009].

One can draw parallels with premodern Japan. In medieval Japan, the re-understanding of the place of the country pulled "the emergence of a proto-national consciousness" (in the words of L. Dolce) [Dolce 2007] and the use of special Buddhist doctrines helped to state the symbolic centrality of Japan as a "divine country" (Buddha-land). And to attain that aim of rethinking the space of a country it needed to put new ideological developments into the Buddhist framework. That situation has many similarities with the Nepalese Buddhists rethinking the place of the country in that sense. 15th c. *SP* brought some kind of premodern "metageographical" revolution to Nepal.

According to the *SP* in ancient times one on the place of Nepal a big lake existed. Nagas lived there. The Buddha of the past, *Vipasyin* (Nepalese variant of his name – Vipasvin) heard of place of a unique sanctity and went on pilgrimage there. Vipasvin threw a seed of a lotus in the waters of the lake. And when a lotus flower grew from a seed, apon a blossom a *caitya* (*dharmadhatu*) revealed itself spreading a light. Dharmadhatu consisted of a crystal (*sphatikamaya*) and had a form of light (*jyotirupa*) [History of Nepal… 1877, *77–78*; Svayambhu Purāṇa]. That was an embodiment of Adi Buddha, a primordial Buddha which emerged in a form of light spontaneously and in his own right. It manifested as self arisen/self – existing (*svayambhu*) caitya and since ancient times was famous for its sanctity and power [von Rospatt 1999, *132*; 2009; Bangdel 2010]. Likewise the 5 Buddhas (5 Tathagata) appeared in a form of 5 rays. The root of the lotus flower was associated with goddess *Guhyesvari* (or in earlier variants of the narrative with *Khaganana*). The Svayambhu myth as well as texts shows that the goddess Khaganana/Guhyesvari is a "*Mother of all Buddhas*" and is equated with *Prajnaparamita*.

Later all the Buddhas of the past visited the self-manifested caitya to pay their respect and accept darsan from Svayambhu Adi Buddha. One day a bodhisattva of wisdom Manjusri left his abbot on mount Wutaishan in China and came to Svayambhu. He drained the lake by cutting the hills with his sword. He peopled the country, gave them agriculture and other knowledge. At the beginning of Kali yuga the self-arisen (*svayambhu*) caitya was covered with stupa by the legendary Nepalese Buddhist teacher Santisri (Santikar in other versions of the *SP*) to save the light of Svayambhu from evils of that "dark" and dangerous age, *Kaliyuga*.

During next centuries sages and gods, pilgrims and great teachers visited Svayambhu to pay homage to Svayambhu Bhagavan, as Svayambhu caitya is also styled in one of the versions of the *SP* (in A. Rospatt's interpretation – in fact a "deity of Svayambhu")

[von Rospatt 1999, *132*]. *Gautama Buddha*, known for Nepalese as *Sakya Simha* ("the Lion of Sakyas") admitted the holiness of Svayambhu caitya, and also came with his pupils and monks and gods to be blessed by Svayambhu. Buddha meditated and preached near Svayambhu caitya.

The other parts of the *SP* are based on some of the *avadana* (*Manicuda avadana*, for example); others are dedicated to Asoka and his teacher Upagupta as well as Nepalese king Jinasri and monk Jayasri; another story tells also about pandit Dharmasrimitra from famous Vikramasila vihara; he seeks to understand 12 syllables of the mantra of Namasangiti and meets Manjusri who gives his teachings to Dharmasrimitra. The last story is an old narrative (8th c.) inserted into a plot of the *SP* [von Rospatt 2019, *167*].

As popular text the *SP* was re written many times since it prominence (15th c.). Later also an adaptations of the *SP* in *Nepal Bhasa* (Newari) appeared. Tibetans were also familiar with the text and some Tibetan translations were done [von Rospatt 2009; 2019]. But the text was not known well in other countries, except Nepal and Tibet. Stories from the *SP* became also the part of oral lore of Nepal. Many folk songs are based on the stories from the *SP* just confirm that the *SP* had reached a huge amount of Nepalese [Lienhard 1984]. As the *SP* gained great popularity in medieval and early modern Nepal, it's natural that its narratives appeared also in a visual form – in art, first of all, paintings [see: Rospatt 2014]. One of the old Nepalese traditions, surviving to this day, is to hang a big (few meters) horizontal cloth banners depicting well known Buddhist stories on the inner walls of the courtyards of the monasteries (*baha*, *bahi*). The banners were often dedicated to *jatakas* and *avadanas*, and of course, to the narratives from the Svayambhu myth[16]. The 19th c. Patan scroll from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA), analyzed by A. von Rospatt in his recent paper [von Rospatt 2019] is of special interest. The scroll is divided in a few chapters, depicting different scenes of the *SP*. On one of the sectors of the painting we see the Lord Buddha at the Jetavana Monastery in India where he gives teachings to the monks led by Ananda. Gods are also here to listen to the Buddha's sermon. Bodhisattva Maitreya, the Future Buddha is also depicted in a veneration pose. Among the gods, four-headed Brahma is quite recognizable. Sakya Simha asks monks and gods to go with him to Nepal to take *darshan* of the Svayambhu caitya [von Rospatt 2019, *172*]. In one of the previous parts of Patan scroll the monk Jayasri gives teachings to King Jinasri[17], who is identified as a bodhisattva [von Rospatt 2019, *171*]. Teacher Upagupta, of course, in his speech teaches the emperor Ashoka in his capital, Pataliputra, about the *SP*. To listen to the *SP* – that is the most virtuous act as explained by Upagupta to his emperor [von Rospatt 2019, *170–171*].

The *SP* in some way is a text where pilgrimage is a central feature. Also the Buddhas of the previous age do go into pilgrimage to Svayambhu. Buddha Sakyamuni also comes with pupils and other followers to venerate the sacred caitya and Adi Buddha Svayambhu and other divinities. In fact, that's a sort of "pilgrim's map" on the main sacred Buddhist sites: 12 tirthas and 8 vitaragas are depicted in the text as a great "places of power" for all Buddhists. Pilgrimage as a practice reveals itself in the premodern times – used by the Buddhas before Sakyamuni; the first of the Buddhas of the Previous age went in a *tirtha jatra* when Nepal was still a lake. The visiting of tirthas and pithas (pilgrimage in Nepalese tradition is called *tirtha jatra* or *purva seva*) during pilgrimage could be a way in which the space of a country was also realized, attained both on phenomenological level and on "otherworld" level by premodern Nepalese [see more: Bangdel 2010; Bubriski, Dowman 1995; typologically close case of India: see: Glushkova 2008]. Speaking of *12 tirthas* D. Bangdel admits: "During the pilgrimage worship, the sacred history and significance of each site is recited at each *tirtha*, with the Valley's sanctified landscape thus reaffirmed" [Bangdel 2010, *64*].

The text of the *SP* sanctifies the Nepal mandala in different ways. Nepal is also likened to *Sukhavati*, a Buddhist Heaven, where Buddha *Amitabha* preside. All who practice in

Nepal have a very special, favourable position to get teachings of Amitabha and other bodhisattvas and have no obstacles in practicing and learning Dharma [von Rospatt 2009, *58–59*]. Nepal stays a unique, "pure" realm even in the epoch of Kaliyuga, as it is *punyabhumi* [Svayambhu Purāṇa; see also: von Rospatt 2009, *63–65*]. That is why Nepal is a place where *bodhicitta* appears.

As it was mentioned before, one of the inventions of the authors of the Svayambhu myth was to seek the legitimation of the tradition inside the idea of enlightenment and Buddhahood itself. In the *SP* the idea of Buddhahood is identified with Adi Buddha, supreme buddha, the source of other buddhas and bodhisattvas, and is personified with Svayambhu caitya. In this assertion of its religious identity, seeing the roots of the tradition "without reference" to the founder of Buddhism, to the Buddha, is hidden a feature that distinguishes Nepal among other examples of the creation of a sacred Buddhist space outside India [von Rospatt 2009]. Koichi Shinohara writes about these processes in other countries where Buddhism was also spread: in particular, on Chinese soil, where it was important to "build" the sacred space holding the "presence" of the Teacher or other bodhisattvas. The cult of Buddhist relics, relics associated with famous teachers or the Buddha himself played an important role in the process of re-locating of the sacred landscape to another country [Shinohara 2003, *68–107*]. But Nepalese didn't need such "tools" and arguments to proclaim *Nepal mandala* as *punyabhumi* and a centre of a Buddhist cosmic universe. The Buddha himself, as we have seen, attended Svayambhu on a pilgrimage (according to Svayambhu myth), honouring the holiness of the place; the embodiment of the very idea of Buddahood is a strong argument in self legitimizing (after all, the stupa, according to Nepalese myths, arose "independently" from the Buddha in the days long before the birth of the Teacher!) [History of Nepal… 1877].

If we take a look on the stupa of Svayambhu as a historical and architectural monument, it is modelled as the majority of Nepalese stupas, on a *Dharmadhatu vagisvara mandala*[18]. Architecturally it has 5 Buddhas laid in the mandala, as they reside in dharmadhatu mandala: 4 Tathagatas are placed according the 4 directions with Vairocana at the centre of stupa. So the 4 shrines of tathagatas are set on the cardinal directions of the stupa; they all have their sanctuaries according to the 4 directions. Ritually the stupa of Svayambhu is also treated like dharmadhatu caitya [von Rospatt 1999, *125–135*]. But at the same time the notion of a stupa Svayambhu is quite different: it sacred not because 5 Buddhas are laid into it when caitya was consecrated (as it is with other Nepalese stupas; see Nils Gutschow more about the installing of Nepalese caitya and its symbolism in Nepaleses Buddhism [Gutschow 1997]) but rather as an independent self-arisen phenomenon/deity identified with Adi Buddha. In this case Svayambhu stupa is an outstanding example of caitya in Nepalese tradition. Thus, caitya is not a reliquary or an example of standard Vajrayana stupa but legitimizes itself through the idea of Buddhahood [von Rospatt 1999]. That understanding underlines an importance and uniqueness of *Svayambhu caitya* as an *ontological source* of Buddhism and *independence* of Nepalese Buddhist tradition.

The role of Svayambhu caitya in the *SP* cannot be overestimated. But despite its special place reflected in rituals and teachings of Newar Buddhism until today, the governing role in the *SP* is occupied by a tantric goddess.

Different versions of the *SP* speak of *Khaganana* ("The Bird-faces goddess") as such female esoteric deity. Later *Khaganana* was "substituted" (but not totally) by *Guhyesvari* ("secret goddess")[19]. Khaganana/Guhyesvari is styled as "the one mother" (*eka mata*). She is embodiment of *prajna*, the female principle of Buddhahood. Khaganana/Guhyesvari according to the *SP* generates all spheres of dharmic reality; she is the "begetter of all tathagatas" (*sarvatathagatanam janani*) and all beings and gods originate in the goddess too. At the same time Guhyesvari has a form of Prajnaparamita (*prajnaparamitarupi*) as a long version of the *SP* shows [von Rospatt 2009, *67–68*]. And then, quite expectedly,

according to Mahayana/Vajrayana concepts the goddess is called *sunyarupini*, empty in a form (in the form of sunyata, emptiness). Such rethinking of the supreme goddess, as Khaganana/Guhyesvari is placed in the *SP*, is in one line with the idea of emptiness (*sunyata*) expressed in Prajnaparamita sutras, in *Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita* and others [Westerhoff 2018]. The concept of emptiness, so crucial in Mahayana philosophy and addressing to the highest wisdom and mystical intuition and understanding came through certain transformations, esp. in Esoteric Buddhism [Davidson 2002; Bangdel 1999]. Tantric "logic" demanded the centering on the female bodhisattva, embodying the very heart of the mystical knowledge, "the perfection of wisdom". Recalling the Svayambhu myth, Khaganana/Guhyesvari is linked with the roots of the lotus, on which a *dharmadhatu* (so a *caitya*) in the form of self-arisen light manifested. Khaganana/Guhyesvari thus has a role of the supreme female deity from which all buddhas and gods originate[20]. And even the supreme Buddhist Absolute of Adi Buddha, in some way, is not an exception.

The *SP* does not "locate" the goddess Khaganana/Guhyesvari just in the bounds of the narrow sectarian religious affiliation. Of course, for Buddhists, she is prajna and sunyarupini, the Mother of buddhas, but the *SP* goes ahead and declares the importance of the goddess in other religious traditions. Khaganana/Guhyesvari thus becomes a supreme deity for Hindus (Saiva, Brahmana and Vaisnava adherents) as well as for Buddhists [von Rospatt 2009, *66–69*].

The sacred geography of Nepal and Hindu-Buddhist discourse

Such a multivalent identity of the primal goddess *Guhyesvari* shows a perspective of peaceful coexistence with different religious movements of Nepal mandala. At the same time, it could be even interpreted in an inclusivist manner: the idea that under the fold of Buddhism there was a place for other traditions [Ruegg 2008]. At the same time and ability to coexist with different religious traditions, first of all with Hindu, is visible in such passages[21].

Relations between Buddhism and Hinduism in premodern and early modern Nepal were not cloudless. In addition to the hidden rivalry, in the more restrained tones of "competing syncretism" (in the words of J. Toffin [Toffin 2008]), there was a place for more open controversy. Particularly, in one of the versions of the Svayambhu Purana, some tirthas (holy places) were not advised to visit because of their association with Shiva – Buddhist pandits were much stricter on Shaiva cult and its adherents[22]. Such a compromise attitude expressed above in some variants of the *SP* changed with critics or even hostile comments[23].

It was the polemics, not violence, that served as a helping method there. Hindus had other weapons to oppose and reaffirm their positions – in the 16th c. Brahmans recorded Nepalamahatmya and Himavatkhanda [Lewis, Bajracharya 2016, 106–109]. Nepalamahatmya claimed Nepal was created by Hindu gods, with strong Shaiva and partially Vaishnava associations. It is also a medieval sacred geographical "treatise", like the *SP*. But *Nepalamahatmya* does mention also Buddhist deities and sacred places of Nepalese Buddhism as well. For such a controversy, a tested scheme of "inclusivism" was used: the "ontological acceptance of other deities as subordinate" to the higher reality of Shiva and Hindu gods [Lewis, Bajracharya 2016, *106–107*]. The competition in the sphere of sacred geography between the *SP* and *Nepalamahatmya* had much deeper and more vibrant sound (including social and political etc.) in a premodern epoch. In different ways sangha and Brahmans also appealed to the king and the Nepalese elite: they showed different alternative explanations of the origin of Nepal as an independent sacred mandala. One shouldn't forget that traditional sacred geographical ideas legitimated the power of the monarch and influenced a common sense of regional identity (to the extent it is possible to speak of it in a premodern/medieval society). The *SP's* role as an informant for the inhabitants of the Nepal Valley of their country's history and origin, despite being

mythical, was taken so seriously, so that not surprising that the Buddhist pandits included the stories from the *SP* in the texts of Nepalese chronicles, where this myth coexist with the facts like deeds of the kings, etc. (as an example see [History of Nepal… 1877]). But at the same time, the *SP* provoked an important shift in the premodern proto-national identity formation process. It also defended and stressed the Buddhist identity of the Nepalese.

Hindus, of course, postulated that buddhas and bodhisattvas exist as subordinate in the higher and primary reality of Shiva. Therefore, in general, *Nepalamahatmya* advises honoring the Buddha and visiting holy places like the Vajrayogini Temple (Gum Vihara) in Sankhu or the Avalokitesvara pagoda temple (*Karunamaya* also known in Nepal as *Macchhendranath*) in Lalitpur and, of course, Svayambhu caitya. However, the Buddhist tradition was to be perceived in these texts as a "subsidiary", important, but "in its place" in the system of beliefs were the Hindu understanding and the Hindu great god (Shiva) dominate. Thus Buddhist deities are subordinate to the reality generated by Shiva and his consort.

Of course, Buddhists, on the contrary, believed that the highest reality was Buddhist, and all Hindu deities were in samsara. They can help on the path to enlightenment, but the Buddha and the bodhisattvas actually lead to liberation. The existence of Hindu deities, therefore, is conditioned, while Buddhist bodhisattvas are the part of, true reality, associated with the Buddhist absolute Adi Buddha, and the sphere of dharma (*dharmadhatu*), tathata, and emptiness (shunyata). The last one, as we have stated before, represents an important idea of Mahayana: shunyata "has no form", like prajnaparamita, "perfect wisdom"/"perfection of wisdom", which, according to the texts, cannot be grasped. "Not surprisingly that a central female deity, an embodiment of the female principle of Buddhahood in Nepalese tradition, Khaganana or Guhyesvari is equated with *Prajnaparamita* and called 'the Mother of all Buddhas' " [Rospatt 2009, *69*].

But other versions, as well as Nepalese religious tradition in general, demonstrate a more moderate and compromising spirit. The *Svayambhu Purana* includes Hindu power places in the web of places to be visited by a pious Buddhist pilgrim: they are often Shaiva tirthas [von Rospatt 2009, *75*], while *Nepalmahatmya* orders to venerate the Buddhist shrines like the temples of Svayambhu and Karunamaya (Avalokitesvara) [Brinkhaus 1980]. 8 sacred centers, 8 Vitaraga of the *SP*, important places of power for Nepalese Buddhists, had (and have now) a strong association also with Shaiva cult and Shiva himself. The *SP* (middle length version) allows visiting these places, of course, but it even states that their worship would bring a practitioner to the "abode of Shiva" (*Sivalaya*) [von Rospatt 2009, *69*].

It is worth to "cite" another source informing us about the interdependence of shrines and the parallelism of cults, a unique pilgrimage map to Lake Gosainkund, from 18th c. This map is kept in the Philadelphia Museum of Art (Pilgrimage to Gosainkund). This pilgrim's map also tells us a lot about the Nepalese's perception of "own space" and the "outer" space and how that space could be reshaped. Gosainkund is revered by both Hindus and Buddhists, for whom the shrine embodies Avalokitesvara. The map depicts numerous scenes of the daily life of Nepalese and the nature that surrounds them, recognizable today; one can see artistically represented landscapes of the cities of Kathmandu and Lalitpur with city temples. In particular, the shrines on the pilgrim's path include both Hindu and Buddhist places of power [see: Bangdel 2010]. These are the Shaiva tirtha, as well as the Svayambhu stupa. And at the beginning of the pilgrim's journey, according to an old map, an every pilgrim meets the temple of Avalokitesvara in Bungamati: Karunamaya's shikhara temple is placed in the left corner of the Nepalese pilgrimage map.

Thus, pluralistic attire wasn't the only thing expressed by some texts. However, the interaction of the two traditions, in my opinion, was much more complicated. It is worth

mentioning here the idea developed by D. S. Ruegg: the idea that both Hinduism and Buddhism came together through a common basis, like Indian religions (symbiosis). This background, called the common substrate (or substrate theory), makes it possible to look at the problem of the coexistence of Buddhism and Hinduism not only in the categories of struggle for dominance, inclusivism, where one of the traditions was included as subordinate (lower tradition to higher, lower dharma or *marga* to higher dharma or *marga*)[24], but also in the concepts of symbiosis, creative interaction of both religions. The contrast between *laukika* and *lokattara* ("lower level" and "higher level"), worldly and sacred – this list of oppositions can be continued in both Buddhist and Hindu thought. It can also be perceived as a "transformation" (in the esoteric sense, when one level gradually turns under the influence of another) of interrelated, syncretic phenomena, ideas, and deities with a common origin. Thus, depicted, for example, on a Tibetan thangka or Nepali *paubha* as well in sculpture a "hostile" and "defeated" Hindu deity on which a Buddha, bodhisattva, or *dharmapala* stands, cannot always be perceived purely directly, as conquered, and conquest and as an antagonism between Buddhism and Hinduism, – as D. S. Ruegg summaries [Ruegg 2008]. Similarly, the hierarchy in this meeting of the two levels of *laukika* and *lokattara* also sometimes seems softer – in any case it does not seem unambiguous, as does this Hindu-Buddhist "dialectical struggle" itself. Interestingly, art historians have written about a similar understanding of the interaction between Buddhist and Hindu deities. Both ideas and concepts of A. Sanderson (a strong Saiva *inclusivist* attitude in relations with Buddhism) [Sanderson 1995; 2001] and D. Ruegg [Ruegg 2008] could be used here (see: [Bautze-Picron 2016; Linrothe 1990]).

Thus Nepalese "religious geography" in the Middle Ages and Early modern time was (and still is today) characterised by overlapping of Buddhist and Hindu holy places. This "construction" of common places of power on the "sacred map" also brought two different Indic traditions closer and undoubtedly was a symbolic feature of Nepal's religious life for centuries.

A. Rospatt thinks that the "milder" passages, incorporating Hindu traditions, were the sign of the need to adapt in a Hindu surrounding. That is true, of course. The key point was that the royal cult was in the hands of Brahmans and the kings and princes of Nepal had pro Hindu orientation. It is interesting to mention here the interpretation of D. Bangdel. D. Bangdel argues that the main places of power usually had pre-Buddhist origin, and were incorporated by both religious traditions and valued by both Buddhists and Hindus [Bangdel 2010, *63*; 2002]. They share these places and they could not be understood just according to Buddhism or Hinduism and their teachings. Goddess Khaganana, as we have discussed above demonstrates an idea that she as a primordial and primal deity stand behind any sectarian distinctions. She is beyond that limits[25]. Of course, another reason to lighten the possible conflicts with Hindu was a need to coexist and that softened the polemics. Some kind of religious tolerance was another feature of Nepalese religious life of the epoch. This doesn't annihilate the presence of conflict (thought usually in polemical or in rituals, so in peaceful form) as H. Brinkhaus and A. Rospatt demonstrate, but it looks that the tendency to find a compromise was dominating[26]. The last feature, partially favoured by the rulers, could give a peaceful impulse in the society. So it looks that the both overlapping traditions, Buddhist and Hindu, needed to tolerate each other and adapt, but the royal pro-Hindu orientation slowly but surely also influenced the situation. Anyway, despite the Brahmanical court cult, the king himself could not ignore the Buddhist arguments as well as their understanding of the origin of the country and mapping of the sacred space of Nepal mandala; the king also was linked with Buddhist traditions as a ruler of Nepal des. *Buddhamargi* (Buddhists) consisted a great part of the population of the Nepal mandala during Mallas and Shah kings, and the *SP* was pious and inventive in finding tools to defend the *Buddha Dharma* in Nepal.

An adaptation and Nepalization of Buddhist narratives: The Nepalese case

Buddhism is widely known for its flexibility, was able to change in every society where it was planted. Local peculiarities were absorbed or carefully adapted by the Buddhist tradition. Pan-Buddhist ideas and traditions when on a new ground, where often reworked, adapted by the local sangha and "nationalized". The Newar Buddhists were not different. The part of the canonical Buddhist texts, especially popular among the laity and sangha (*vratakantha*, *jataka* and *avadana*) also passed through such an adaptation. They were rethought "in Nepalese way" [Lewis 2000]. Therefore, the popular avadanas (stories about Buddhist heroes and bodhisattvas) could be an example of reworking and reshaping of the original Buddhist source. In *Simhalasarthabahu Avadana* we recognize the main hero as Nepalese Buddhist merchant (from the Uray caste). Transferred to the Himalayan landscape and geographical realities, the plot is re interpreted: a huge sea "becomes" the Brahmaputra River and a dangerous path to distant lands (overseas) transformes itself into the way to Tibet through dangerous hill roads and high-mountain passes [Lewis 2015]. In the original plot of *Simhalasarthabahu Avadana* the merchant is protected by Avalokitesvara during a trip to Sinhala Dvipa (likely an island of Sri Lanka). The story even was incorporated in to the text of Nepalese chronicle due to popularity [see: History of Nepal… 1877, *86–87*]. The popularity of this avadana has a pan-Himalayan character, as T. Lewis writes: the echoes of the "presence" of it could be found in different parts of the Himalayan region, in local legends, traditions, temples, etc. The hero of avadana, a brave trader, is revered by the Nepalese as a bodhisattva[27] [Lewis 2015, *247–248*].

Dipankara Buddha, one of the buddhas of the Previous age (buddhas of the Past), whose cult is very popular in Nepal until today, unlike other Himalayan regions. Dipankara has gained his special prominence since Malla times (1200–1769) as a protector of traders and patron of alms giving. Dipankara is said to be a bodhisattva, the last before Sakyamuni, who predicted the birth of Siddhartha Gautama, future Buddha. As G. V. Vajracharya points out, the story of Dipankara Buddha in Nepalese tradition is similar with *Simhalasarthabahu Avadana*. Dipankara Buddha was once also a saviour and patron of seamen, marine travellers and traders [Vajracharya 2016, *103–106*]. He even could create islands to save sailors during shipwreck etc. The famous Nepalese manuscript of *Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita Sutra* (1015), stored in Cambridge Library, shows Dipankara in such a role depicted on a miniature [Vajracharya 2016, *103–106*]. In the manuscript Dipankara Buddha walks on a see; two small ships, sea creatures and a figure of a demon surround him[28]. Though later Dipankra's story was redacted and adapted to Nepalese needs. Nepalese also believe Dipankara visited Nepal in ancient times. While in Nepal, Dipankara also gave his teaching to a king: Buddha showed the true Buddhist generosity in alms giving practice. On a *paubha* art of Dipankara Buddha from the Rubin Museum of Art (1853) bodhisattva features in a role traditional for late medieval/early modern Nepal[29]. Dipankara's figure is central on a painting; his hands are in protective gesture (*abhaya mudra*); bodhisattvas and other Buddhist heroes are also present, but the biggest part of a space is occupied by the festival depicted (it might be *Samyak*, a Nepalese festival of ideal Buddhist alms giving) and many figures of Nepalese engaged in the holiday also found on the painting. Just above Dipankara Buddha Svayambhu caitya on a hill is set[30]. The donator with his family is painted at the lower register of the composition. Paubha mentions the name of the donator, who commissioned the painting: that's Bhajuvantasimha Tuladhar. The second name of the donator definitely reveals his caste (*tuladhar*) – he is one of the merchant high Buddhist group (part of *Uray* caste) of Kathmandu. Tuladhars were known as influential and reach inhabitants of Kathmandu who traded in Tibet and as generous Buddhist devotees. Not to be a surprise that a representative of a Buddhist merchant community wanted to pay his respect to his patron bodhisattva. It is hard to imagine "more Nepalese" narrative of this paubha. Here we find a "nepalisized"

Dipankara Buddha's cult, with all social and religious connotations within sangha in a wider sense: the buddha himself, a popular alms giving festival, a vibrant merchant devotee (who is a donator of paubha), and the main stupa of Nepal, the source of the Nepalese Buddhist tradition also depicted on the painting.

The *SP* also came through that process of Nepalization. As H. Brinkhaus notes, the early versions of the *SP* and later, studied by him, show the growing attitude of that changes in the text [Brinkhaus 1993]. At least we speak of a few stresses, appearing in the texts; though we have a different picture at the end, in later versions, where Nepalocentic pattern totally rules. Thus, scenes dedicated to the story of pandit Dharmasrimitra of Vikramasila and Manjusri from the *SP* plot specially concentrate on Nepal as place of the narrative (thought, the story features China, Vikramasila vihara in India, and finally, Nepal). Nepalese chronicle preserves that accent on Nepalization of the narrative about Manjusri and pandit; the text of the chronicle even explains the Sanskrit name of the monastery in Kathmandu, *Tham Bahi* (Vikramasila Mahavihara) due to a link of the place with those events [History of Nepal… 1877].

We have seen which forms an adaptation of the Mahayana ideas and narratives, traditions could obtain on Nepalese material. These "adaptations" to the local specifics in the whole, sound in unison with the analogical phenomena from other countries of Asia where Buddhism was present. What differs the ideas of the *SP* from the different models of adaptation – is that it combines an adaptation (of course, such models could be very broad) and "invention" of the roots of the local Buddhist tradition in a new myth, which in fact strongly ignores India as motherland of Buddhism.

An old (pan-Indian) and a new (Svayambhu) system of Nepalese sacred space construction: coexisting, balancing, and overlapping

The primal role of Khaganana/Guhyesvari in the *SP* reflects the perspective of the esoteric/tantric tradition of *Yoginitantra* and *Cakrasamvara-Vajravarahi* (*Vajrayogini*). The tantric tradition in a wider context too places the goddess/sakti/prajna at the centre [von Rospatt 2009, *68–69*]. In fact, Nepal according to that tantric "logic" is a unique universe which was created by the goddess Khaganana or Guhyesvari [von Rospatt 2009, *69–71*]. According to the *SP*, as we have shown before, the roots of the lotus flower, on which Svayambhu (*dharmadhatu*) spontaneously appeared in a form of light (*svyambhu jyotirupa*) is associated with Khaganana/Guhyesvari, underlining her importance as "Mother of all tathagatas". And this idea in the *SP*, if we look closer, reveals a contradiction between Cakrasamvara Vajravarahi (Vajrayogini) tradition and Nepalosentric and independent line of Svayambhu myth in constructing the sacred landscape, as A. Rospatt points out [von Rospatt 2009, *68–69*]. The Vajrayogini tantric tradition of rendering a pan-Indian model of sacred space as 24 segment mandala (of Cakrasamvara and his consort) is known in Nepal and is a pattern for the construction of a mandala on a landscape too. Identification of the space with the Cakrasamvara mandala could be linked with the recreation of an Indian-modeled landscape within the bounds of any country or region. It is also a way to make the country on which a Cakrasamvara mandala is projected a sacred land. It is in fact one of the methods of sanctifying the space of any country based on Indian model. Thus, Cakrasamvara with 24 segments is used in Tibet as such a model. But in the case of Nepal in fact two systems of constructing of *mandala* coexist. The *SP* does mention Cakrasamvara mandala as form of Nepal, but the narrative of Svayambhu myth doesn't go further. Svayambhu myth upholds 8 vitaragas (or 8 passionless bodhisattvas) and 12 tirthas instead of 24 tirthas of Cakrasamvara-Vajrayogini [von Rospatt 2009, *68–73*]. These sacred spheres of two patterns partially overlap, but rather they seem to parallel two different ideas and principles. The strong link to Khaganana in the line with Vajrayougini and Youginitantra tradition, unlike the idea of Svayambhu, incapsulates Nepal rather into pan-Indian context, as A. Rospatt argues[31].

Thus Khaganana[32] is reigning in the "Himalaya", segment of Cakrasamvara, which is called *upacchandoha* and *sudurjaya bodhisattvabhumi* in Cakrasamvara Vajrayogini line. Behind "Himalaya" we should read "Nepal", the place were goddess presides in a sacred mandala. The "silent" ignoring by Svayambhu myth this coexisting of different patterns/systems inside one narrative may seem paradoxical. But Nepalese medieval pandits just used the tradition of Yoginitantras as a base, even if they didn't directly show that. Then the later ideas of Nepalocentric *Svayambhu* were set just using the background, on which the Nepalese and Indian Mahayana had developed in a previous period. The authors of the Svayambhu myth may use that base just as a "soil", if we say symbolically, on which a new tree to be planted.

A. Rospatt drives our attention to a tradition of reading of *samkalpa* – a text and a ritual, performed as a part of very basic ritual practice by Nepalese Buddhists also today [von Rospatt 2009, *74–75*]. D. Bangdel also cites the part of the samkalpa text [Bangdel 2010]. It enumerates the sacred places of Nepal mandala, places where a ritual is performed. *Samkalpa* (which in present form has different forms in Lalitpur and Kathmandu, thought also has common features too, important here) appeals to Vajrayogini tantric tradition, which calls Nepal[33] as *upacchandoha pitha*; at the same time, it mentions Svayambhu stupa/Svayambhu hill as a central sacred topos; Guhyesvari/Khaganana is also mentioned. Although, the presence of Svayambhu as a marker of the premodern methageographical revolution doesn't change the fact that the *samkalpa* text links Nepal to sacred landscape of India. *Samkalpa* sees Nepal as a part of Bharata, Jambudvipa and Aryavarta. A. Rospatt explains it as a "conservative nature of ritual acts" [von Rospatt 2009, *76*]. But it is interesting to trace this sacred topographical and ideological overlapping also in other sources too. Even if it is hard to speculate that such a contradictive phenomenon goes much deeper and could be a characteristical feature of Nepalese identity and social, religious, or ideological sphere, it derives a further study as having parallels to a wider range of socioreligious practices through Nepalese history.

One of such examples of coexisting of both systems of rendering of the sacred space, in my suggestion, is a monastery of *Gum Baha* (Gum Vihara) in Sankhu[34], in North-East part of Nepal Valley. That source which could provide us with information that at least helps to try to clarify the problem is an iconography and architecture of the two Nepalese style pagodas of the monastery in Sankhu.

Gum Baha is one of the oldest existing Buddhist monasteries in the Himalayas, according to J. Locke. Its foundation predates most of the viharas we know today and goes back to the 2nd c. [Locke 1985; Shrestha 2012; Dowman, Bubriski 1995, *57–60*]. The complex of the vihara includes also, except two pagodas mentioned above, a group of *caityas* from different periods and a Rana times house for pilgrims; a *hiti* (water tank); ancient stone carving of deities etc. But what occupies our view is the pair of temples. One, three storied pagoda, which dominates the vihara complex, is dedicated to the tantric goddess Vajrayogini.

The three-tiered Vajrayogini pagoda is erected on a high platform. The entrance to the temple is guarded by two lions (*simha*). This pagoda has only one portal, which has a copper-gilded, fine-crafted tympanum (*torana*). In the centre of the torana is Ugratara, Vajrayogini, or Khadgayogini. Although Vajrayogini here is in her wrathful form, her posture (*pratyalidha*) is more restrained (not as expressive as some other wrathful deities), and the movements are smooth [Dowman, Bubriski 1995, *57–60*]. According to the English scholar K. Dowman, the iconography of the goddess Vajrayogini from the tympanum of the temple is rare, non-standard and does not correspond to her other canonical images on *paubha* painting, and in the Tibetan tradition – thangkas, where she is always depicted red [Dowman, Bubriski 1995, *57*; Sharma 1996, *268–270*; Bangdel 2010; 1999; also see more on Vajrayogini: English 2002]. Vajrayogini is one of the 4 main tantric goddesses of the Nepal mandala, the female embodiment of Buddhahood. So Vajrayogini represents

one of the yogini piths, as great pilgrimage sight and power place of the Cakrasamvara mandala and Vajrayogini tradition [Bangdel 2010, *66–67*]. The tantric goddess, as considered to be the patron of royal power and defender of the state, enjoyed donations from many kings. She was also very popular among Hindus, as W. Kirkpatrick one of the first westerners in Nepal, also mentions [Kirkpatrick 1811].

The second pagoda is smaller – only two-storied. It is dedicated to *Svayambhu caitya*, and symbolizes the self-originated wisdom of the Buddha (in my interpretation). Inside, it has a miniature copy of the Svayambhu stupa [Bangdel 2010, *5*; Dowman, Bubriski 1995, *24–29*; von Rospatt 2009] but of a special type. In fact, that is a part of the natural rock, which was transformed into a dome of the *caitya*, and then metal *harmika* was added (likely in Malla (1200–1769) times) [Dowman, Bubriski 1995, *57–60*; von Rospatt 2009]. This two-tiered pagoda, in my interpretation, is honouring Svayamba caitya and the self-manifested wisdom, Adi Buddha, revealed in dharmadhatu. The temple is also known as Jogesvara and was built, together with the pagoda of Vajrayogini, in 1655, in the reign of Pratap Malla (1641–1674), prince of Kathmandu [Dowman, Bubriski 1995, *57–61*; Shrestha 2012].

The temple has four portals. At the base of every Nepalese temple is a mandala, a sacred diagram with a sacred centre and sectors, as M. Slasser writes about it [Slusser 1982, *145*]. Therefore, these portals are oriented to 4 sides of the world and emphasize that at the heart of the pagoda is the mandala of a deity looking in all directions. All portals (doorways) are made of wood, and have richly decorated toranas. Only the western torana, which is according to Nepalese tradition, depicts the main deity of the temple, is made of metal and covered with gold.

The main entrance (western) of the pagoda has metal (copper) covered with gilded images. Main torana depicts the 12-handed *Amitabha*, on a throne with peacocks, his vahana. Amitabha sits on a lotus flower, has a sword and other attributes. On the sides, it is surrounded by two personages, whom K. Dowman identified as two Shadaksari Avalokitesvara bodhisattvas [Dowman, Bubriski 1995, *57–60*]. The framing, the edges of the torana are also covered with magnificent floral ornaments and motifs. Here, also on the sides, there are *makaras*, mythological creatures. Atop, *nagas* are depicted (here they are represented as female deities with snake tails and with a hood formed from the heads of several cobras). Above, crowning the torana, one can see the flying *Garuda* – the mythical king of birds, the traditional companion of Vishnu [Dowman, Bubriski 1995, *57*; Sharma 1996, *275–281*]. On the door frame, slightly below the Amitabha, the one can also see a small image of Manjushri Namasamgiti (as defined by K. Dowman).

The other three toranas of the temple are wooden. They depict (in my interpretation) the rest of *Panca Buddhas* in their tantric, wrathful forms: *Amoghasiddhi*, on the throne with Garuda (northern torana); *Akshobhya*, whose throne is supported by 2 elephants (east); *Ratnasambhava* (southern torana; throne with 2 horses – vahanas of Ratnasambhava).

D. Bangdel sees the main deities of the portals of the pagoda as goddesses of *Panca raksa*, great protectors in Nepalese Buddhism. They represent the wisdom perceived in this context of the Gum Vihara complex as feminine manifestations of five Buddhas and as Enlightened Buddhas at the same time, the researcher notes [Bangdel 1999, *130*]. Mary Slasser, supported by N. Gutschow, also believed that relief images are not Buddhas, but tantric goddesses Panca raksa. M. Slusser "read" the image on the toranas of the western portal of the pagoda (*Jogesvara*) as Mahamayuri, and the temple itself, accordingly, considered as being dedicated to this goddess [Slusser 1982, *278*; Gutschow 1997, *96–98*]. It is likely that Vajrayogini, both the yogini itself and the vihara of Gum Baha, has a connection with another powerful goddess – *Hariti* (*Harati*), whose temples are located near the stupas of *Svayambhu* and *Boudnath* (*Khasti caitya*). That link is in fact also revealed by A. Rospatt. At least we can hypothetically state that they both play the role of tantric

female sanctuary near a mail one (a stupa) [von Rospatt 2009, *42–60*]. Such esoteric Buddhist connections are traced by Gerd Mavissen too. In particular, he analyzes in detail the iconography of the Hariti pagoda near the Svayambhu stupa, the *Panca raksa* from toranas of Hariti temple. G. Mavissen[35] concludes that on the portals of the two-tiered pagoda from Gum Baha we deal with the goddesses of the Pancha raksha group. The western metal cast tympanum houses *Mahamantranusarini*, one of the *Panca raksa*. The vahanas of *Panca Raksa* are similar with Panca Buddha, but the attributes of the rare tantric forms of the Buddhas are problematic. The character description giving in Sadhanamala text does not provide enough information to identify these Tantric forms of deities as exactly the goddesses of the *Panca raksa* group [Sadhanamala 1928].

K. Dowman identifies a buddha on the western tympanum of the pagoda as Amitabha [see: Dowman, Bubriski 1995]. He considers the characters from the other 3 tympanum portals to be female manifestations of *panca buddha* (the goddesses Mamaki, Lochana and others). However, why exactly he thinks so, K. Dowman does not give an explanation. J. Locke also thinks that the main deity of the pagoda, depicted on a metal western torana is Amitabha Buddha [Locke 1985].

In my opinion, K. Dowman and J. Locke interpretation of the central deity of *Svayambhu caitya*/*Jogesvara temple* with stupa inside is worth holding. The tympanum of the western portal depicts *Amitabha*, respectively, this is indicated by the spatial orientation (to the west) and his vahana (peacock); therefore, the temple is dedicated specifically to Amitabha. Amitabha here is presented in a 12-handed tantric peaceful form (unlike other wrathful deities of 3 other toranas). The character has three faces, clothes and bodhisattva jewelry; buddha sits, crossing his legs, on a lotus flower resting on a throne decorated with the image of a peacock, his vahana. The main hands are folded in a gesture of turning the wheel of doctrine (*dharmachakraprvartana mudra*), two other lower hands holding the vessel (*kalasa*); additional right hands: gesture of giving (*varada mudra*), trident (?), vajra, sword. Additional left hands: arcane, bow, bell (*ghanta*), flower.

To sum, the temple with stupa (Svayambu) replica inside has a *dharmadhatu vagisvara mandala* in its base, just like Svayambhu caitya. The presence of 5 Buddhas on the cardinal directions attest this as well as stupa kept inside the temple. So the temple has a strong association with Svayambhu stupa and the *SP* ideas.

Gum Baha as monastery itself and its pagodas – in the form in which it was formed in the 17th c. – is the metaphor of the Svayambhu myth. In that sense, it is the "realization" in the architecture of ideas and images of the myth of the creation of the Nepal mandala according to *Svayambu Purana*. The Pagoda of Jogesvara of course symbolizes Svayambhu stupa.

The tantric goddess *Hariti*, whose pagoda is near the stupa of Svayambhu is the goddess-protector against smallpox, protectress of children and women. Her smaller temple could also be found near the Boudnath stupa (Khasti caitya). So here we see the presence of a female (Hariti) near the male (a stupa; Svayambhu or Boudnath) shrines in a Buddhist complexes. In Gum Baha itself, which could be interpreted as the allusion to the *Svayambhu Purana* myth, not incidentally we see the stupa inside the pagoda. In that case it "replaces" Svayambhu caitya, which acts as a male sanctuary and the temple of Vajrayogini "represents" Guhyesvari and a female (*prajna*) sanctuary in Gum Baha monastic complex. Thus, it is a tantric female sanctuary accompanying the male. Together the two shrines also could be interpreted as male and female fundamental principles of Vajrayana: method and wisdom. The *Panca Buddha* (Panca Tathagata) could appear on toranas as a heroes of the myth: they revealed themselves in the form of 5 colours during the creation of Nepal, as well other characters – *nagas* who lived in the waters of an ancient lake before Manjusri came[36] [von Rospatt 2009, *47–48*]. Amitabha, the ruling deity of *Sukhavati*, who is depicted on a torana of a Jogesvara temple, appears, possibly, also

to reveal the ideas of the *SP*. Thus it comes clear if we try to remember that the text compares the Nepal mandala to the realm of Amitabha as a special sacred space, suitable for practice and meditation.

In this context, it is worth to mention another likely textual symbolic basis of the vihara's iconography – *Manisaila Avadana* [Shrestha 2012, *117*]. *Manisaila Avadana* is the local "lake draining" legend from Sankhu, very similar to the Svayambhu myth. Although the special role is given in the avadana to a tantric female goddess, *Vajrayogini*. *Vajrayogini*, instead of *Manjusri* creates the small valley of Sankhu[37].

The temple of *Vajrayogini* is dominating in the viharaas a shrine of a central deity, according to the tantric notions of the cult of female buddhas as a source of divine knowledge. Thus the understanding of Vajrayogini as the main shrine of Gum Baha (we can remember that she could be also a divine "sister" of Guhyesvari) is in the line with the Yogini Tantra and Vajrayogini tradition. The second two-storied pagoda of Svayambhu caitya with its strong links and with *SP* ideas coexists in one space with Vajrayogini, representing the logic of managing of a sacred space. Thus, if my interpretation is correct (of course it stays discussional) Gum Baha is an example of mixing of the narratives and ideas of the *SP* and Yogini Tantra in the ways in which a sacred space is constructed in Nepal. Likely, we see here a compromise between the two systems: they are peacefully coexisting. The organization of Gum Baha as a sacred space reveals that.

The "paradoxes" of Nepalese premodern identity and the Svayambhu Purana ideas

Such a phenomenon when different and contradictive ideas coexist could even be a base for formation of identity (or identities) in premodern Nepal. One might call it "paradoxical", although we can find numerous examples from the Nepalese social history; it is even possible to argue that a try to unite different sources for identity in one room was so deeply inclined in the tradition and local situation. And sacred geography, as it was noted below, was one of the strong factors influencing the formation of medieval identity. In premodern Nepal the question of identity was also shaped by the caste and caste belonging, as Nepal was and is a caste society [Gellner 1986, *138*]. It is generally believed that the caste hierarchy in Nepal mandala was codified by the king Jayasthiti Malla (1382–1395), who united Nepal mandala under his rule in 14 century after a period of disintegration and weak royal power [Nepalavamsavali 1985].

The Nepalese Buddhist could be another example. Nepalese sangha, *bajracharyas* and *sakyas* constitute two subgroups of the high Buddhist caste (*bare*). We do not know exactly when this reality crystallized in a social field and after a long period of formation and evolution from Buddhist *bhiksus* to Mahayana married householder-monks (whom they are), but interesting to note what W. Kirkpatrick wrote about the Buddhist priestly group at the end of 18th c. (1793). He called them "a sort of separatists from the Newars" [Kirkpatrick 1811, *183–184*]. Of course that could be explained by the force of caste identity and caste limits which were of course present; but more likely the sangha occupied a very special place under the fold of Newar/Nepalese early modern identity. In that context we can remember the myth of the origin of the *Sakyas*. According to it, Nepalese Sakyas are descendants of the "Kin of a Buddha" or "people of Buddha": they migrated to the hills leading by Ananda in the time of hardships and repression which bhiksus and Sakyas faced in India. That is also attested in *Mulasarvastivada Vinaya* (in one of its redactions, done, possibly in Nepal) [see: Gellner 1989]. The family names of Sakyas also had some transformations. They also used *Sakyabhiksu* and *Sakyavamsa*, accept just simply *Sakya*. The first stresses the monk identity (*bhiksu*) but also traces the link with the people of Buddha. The second – reveals an importance of the origin from Sakyas, no monks directly mentioned [Gellner 1989]. Of course, the link with India as a Motherland of Buddha's teaching was a part of legitimating and social status tool. It survives until

this day. It would be not an exaggeration to say that Sakyas identity linking them with Buddhist Motherland in India was popular among pandits, in the circles of which the "metageographical" transformation of Svayambhu myth with its Nepalocentrism was formed and popularized. Although the last is not fully an example of "paradoxes" of Nepalese/Newar identity, but it sounds symbolically (if we remember how Nepalese combined the Indian background and the local autochthonous features of their culture).

Other groups in medieval/early modern Nepal also saw their roots in India as a social argument to appeal for high status. The Malla kings stated that they were *Karnatakavamsa*, so originating from Karnataka in India, not in Nepal. The dynasty of Shah kings also traced their ancestors to India [Whelpton 2005]. That was also similar situation if we take a few other *chetri* (*Kshatriya*) groups and aristocracy. The Kshatriya origin as an argument for a hight status was a very "useful" tool. E. Vanina perfectly shows how the Rajput origin in South Asia was a kind of "ideal" Kshatriya model; the rules of honour as a "mental program" of Rajputi was the standard for the noble, truly Kshatriya warrior. The "confirmation" of the Rajput origin was so important to be 'found': the successful leaders of regions outside Rajputana, who, incidentally, had no Kshatriyan ancestry, were seeking it (as it was with Maratha leader Shivaji) [Vanina 2007]. Similarly, Jang Bahadur Kunwar Rana, a Nepali prime minister in the middle of the 19th century also "found" his Rajput ancestry in ancient genealogies [Toffin 2008]. That list of other groups could be continued.

The distance with India and self-sufficiency of Nepalese traditions and of pertaining of self and the space of the country (*Nepala mandala*) was not as deep as one might expect. The religious topography of the sacred space of Nepal was formed by pre-Buddhist ideas, transformed then by the Svayambhu myth. Pilgrimage and pilgrimage sights played, as the *SP* accounts, an important role not just in Buddhism but for society, generating also bounds of identity. At the same time, Nepalese, as other peoples of Asia, were familiar with the practice of relocating of sacred sights from within on their own territory [von Rospatt 1999, *140*]. Nepalese space and its great places of power (*tirthas* and *pithas*) was also a model for such relocations. Buddhists of Tibetan tradition always respected the Nepalese Buddhist places of power [Wylie 1970]. Since Tibetan pilgrim Dharmasvamin in 13th c. it was clear that Tibetans were numerous at Svayambhu caitya [Roerich 1959]. *Khasti caitya* or *Boudhant stupa*, which they called Jarung Khashar, was of primary importance for Tibetan Buddhists [Czaya 2015; Charleux 2019]. Because of stupa's sanctity the "representations" of Boudnath appeared in a few places in Mongolia. Tibetans also used small replicas of Boudnath, which was kept in Tibetan monasteries or at home [Czaya 2015, *91*].

The famous *Mahabodhi* temple in *Bodh Gaya*, the place commemorating the Enlightment of the Teacher, became the architectural model for copies built in some of the Buddhist countries, among which were Thailand, China and Mongolia [Czaya 2015, *91–92*]. Nepal also has such a minor replica – Nepalese *Mahabodhi* or *Sakya Simha temple* is one of the most important sights in Lalitpur. It was built at the end of 16th c. by Nepalese Buddhist pandit Jivaraj, who was born in Bodh Gaya. Interestingly, that in the chronicle Jivaraj is shown as well opened to the Buddhist connections also outside Nepal: his relations with "the Lamas of the North" (from Tibet) and Indian associations are visible [History of Nepal… 1877, *208*][38]. The son of Jivaraj, "the great Pandit of Mahabodhi" named Jayamuni also pertained the links with India. In search for Buddhist texts he went to Benares (Kasi), which was one of the centers of intellectual life of North India in 17th c. [History of Nepal… 1877, *208*; see: Glushkova 2008]; he studied in the City of Light (as Benares is called); and after coming back Jayamuni became a great Buddhist scholar of his time in Nepal [Formigatti 2016]. What is quite clear is that by the time of the temple construction (1585) the Nepalese territory was pertained as an independent sacred space, as the *SP* declares. This relocating of the Mahabodhi, which architecturally is close to the

original (also in *sikhara* style, not Nepalese pagoda temple) is a case mentioned above, which was also known to Nepalese, but still it looks untypical. If we remember how Tibetans held the Indian line of their own tradition, Indian teachers and sacred space even after the times of demise of Buddhism in India, the Nepalese usually look more moderate in such questions. Thus the story of two great Pandits from Lalitpur reveals that the Indian sacred landscape was still important. An example of Mahabodhi of Lalitpur and its builder's family shows how diverse and intense were Buddhist links and how the understanding of the lived space and sacred space of Nepal mandala could be broader and still flexible and changing (to some extant).

Conclusions

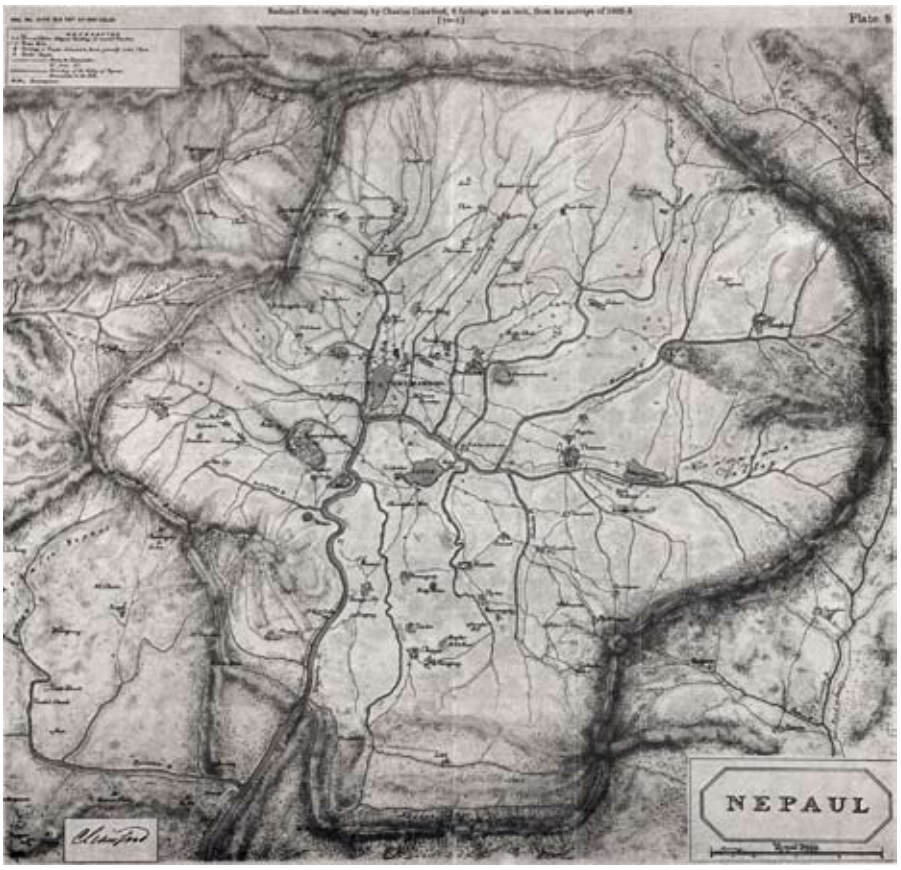
Nepal as Nepal mandala faced some kind of "premodern metageographical revolution" around the 15th c. with the rise of the *Svayambhu Purana* and its narratives. According to *Svayambhu Purana* Nepal was proclaimed an independent Buddhist land. The understanding of sacred space in Nepal perceived a long process of negotiating between Buddhist, Hindu, and old pre-Buddhist traditions and ideas, which was also crucial in markering of the sacred mandala of Nepal.

According to Buddhists of the Malla and Shah era, after the medieval "metageographical" rethinking of the space, Nepal mandala was taken as primary Buddhist *punya ksetra*, the blessed land; the Buddhists of Nepal held the position, as O. Rospatt writes, of "*Nepalicentrism*". Thus Buddhism in Nepal and the country itself emerged almost simultaneously (and completely independently of India). Nepal mandala was settled by Manjushri, who came from China to carry out his mission. As a sacred centre, premodern Nepalese saw the Stupa of Svayambhu, the country's main stupa, as a centre of universe. A special role was also played by the goddess Guhyesvari associated with Prajnaparamita, the mother of all buddhas. The last reveals also tantric influences.

Nepal mandala was perceived as space (both at the cosmic level and at the level of phenomena, in real geography), organized in the form of *Cakrasamvara mandala*, which was associated with the ideas and texts of the Buddhist Yogini tantra and the traditions of Cakrasamvara Vajrayogini. These ideas have pan-Indian origin and likely were spread before Svayambhu myth gained its popularity in the 15th century. Therefore, sacred and geographical representations were based on Yogini tantra, which was "conceived" in a pan-Indian way. That contradiction in fact was carefully and masterly hidden. It is likely that the way in which the premodern Nepalese rendered and constructed the sacred space of the country was rather a compromise between the *old* pan-Indian model and a *new*, independent Svayambhu model. Both patterns were used.

ILLUSTRATIONS

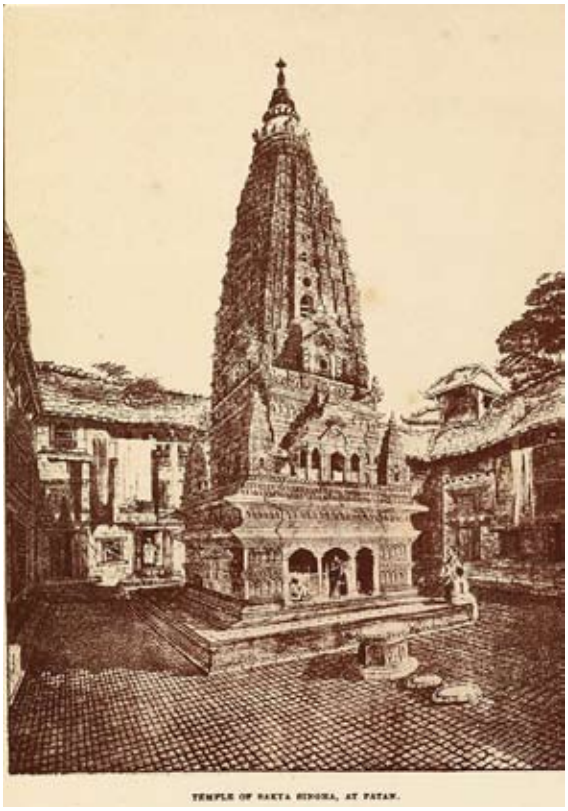
Ill 1. Pilgrimage to Gosainkund. Pilgrimage through the Kathmandu Valley, Sites encountered on the way to the holy lake that is home to the Hindu god Shiva and the Buddhist savior Avalokitesvara. Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. Malla Dynasty (1200–1769), c. 1800, unknown Nepalese artist, colors on cloth, 33 inches x 14 feet 3 1/2 inches (83.8 x 435.6 cm). The Philadelphia Museum of Art. Purchased with the Stella Kramrisch Fund, 2000. Accession Number: 2000-7-3



Ill 2. Map of Nepaul (The Nepal Valley), 1802[39]

Ill 3. Temple of Adi Buddha at Svayambhu, Henry Ambrose Oldfield (1822–1871), c. 1850–1863 [Oldfield 1880]

Ill 4. Dipamkara Buddha, Nepal, 1853, pigments on cloth, dimension:
44 1/2 x 34 5/8 x 2 1/4 in. (113 x 87.9 x 5.7 cm).
Rubin Museum of Art, Gift of the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation. Object: F1997.17.23



Ill 5. Temple of Sakya Simha, H. A. Oldfield, 1850s [Oldfield 1880, 1, *272*]

Ill 6. "Corner of Temple of Maha-Buddha at Patun", H. A. Oldfield, 1850s[40]

Ill 7. Amitabha. Torana of the Svayambhu temple, Gum Baha, Sankhu, 1650s. Photo by R. Sakya

[1] More India centered model of understanding space, where Bharata is represented as a big mandala including other smaller segments of sacred space. Here I borough a term from A. Rospatt [Rospatt 2009].

[2] Of course, that was not the rule. Despite an importance of mandalas in Japanese Esoteric Buddhism – a feature inherited from Indian Vajrayana – mapping of Japan in medieval period was done with the use of the form of sacred symbols and objects, rather than mandala. For example, the territory of the country was understood as a *vajra* [Dolce 2007, *288–312*].

[3] Ukrainian Tibetologist O. Ohnyeva (Ogneva) underlines the symbolism of the mandala and Buddhist visualization practices: "Monks, contemplating the mandala, imagine it in the form of a three-dimensional palace. The characters inhabiting the mandala are embodiments of certain philosophical concepts, religious dogmas and serve as models. The purpose of the mandala... is to help transform the ordinary state of mind into an enlightened one" [Ohnyeva 2012, *229*].

[4] Here we speak of the Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism of the Nepal Valley, also known as Newar Buddhism.

[5] *Svayambhu Purana* is a text dedicated to the origin myth of the country of Nepal and Nepalese Buddhist tradition is one of the most crucial for Newar Buddhism; Although the earliest manuscript of the *SP* goes back to 16th c., A. Rospatt shows on the basis of a complex analysis, that the text was formed in the 15th c [Rospatt 2009; 2019]. Of course, the dating of the text is a problem, but most of the researchers agree with the 15 c. as date when the *SP* was fixed in a text [Lewis, Bajracharyau 2016; Bangdel 2010]. As W. Tuladhar-Douglas argues, *Gunakarandavyuha*

Sutra is a Nepalese text, the result of the 15th c. reshaping of a famous *Karandavyuha*, an important Mahayana text dedicated to bodhisattva of mercy *Avalokitesvara* [Tuladhar-Douglas 2006]. So it is possible to argue that these texts were formed in Nepal and reflect Nepalese realities.

[6] *Tirtha* and *pitha* – sacred places in Hinduism; tirthas (a "pond" or "crossing place") often have association with water and a link with sakti; Pithas are also often a Natural sights transformed into shrines in Nepalese Buddhist tradition both terms are used to denote important shrines, places of pilgrimage, the main points of the Nepalese sacred geography [see: Bangdel 2010]. The term *ksetra*, also used in Nepalese Buddhist sources, is related to tirtha; *ksetra* is another name for a sacred (but also prophane) space [Jacobsen 2013, *140–148*].

[7] A. von Rospatt argues that the *SP* formed during the 14th –15th c. The earliest text of *SP* could be attributed to 15th c. [von Rospatt 2009].

[8] Here I use romanized text of the *SP* published by Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon [Svayambhu Purāṇa].

[9] That is why the stories from the *Svayambhu Purana* were incorporated into the Nepalese Budddhist chronicle of kings, known as the History of Nepal [History of Nepal… 1877]. So expectedly, the chronicle begins with foundational myth of the country how it is depicted in the Svayambhu Purana.

[10] At least by that time the text of Nepalese provenance as *Gunakarandavyuha* and the *SP* already formed and began their "functioning" in Nepal [Tuladhar-Douglas 2006; Bangdel 2010]. On the dating of the *SP* see: [von Rospatt 2009].

[11] That's true about almost all rulers of the dynasties of premodern and early modern Nepal: Licchavi (4th –9th c.) Thakuri (9th c.–12th c.), Malla (1200–1769) and Shah (after 1769) kings [see: Petech 1984; Whelpton 2005; Lewis and Bajracharya 2016]. There were just a few exceptions.

[12] The role of Brahmans in the courtly culture and royal rituals, interestingly, was strong also in such Buddhist kingdoms as Burma or Siam in medieval/premodern period.

[13] In particular, during the coronation (here we take the ritual dating from late Shah kings, because little is known about Malla coronations), this "duality of meanings" is revealed: there is a wheel (*cakra*) that simultaneously symbolizes the disk of Vishnu and the Buddhist Dharma Cakra; the golden throne of the King of Nepal has a back formed from several cobras that have risen, so that when the monarch sits, they, towering over his head, seem to be defending the lord [see: Chaulagain 2003, *94*]. That's also could be understood as an allusion to Vishnu and Buddha.

[14] Also known as *Macchendranath* in Nepal. The most popular forms of Karunamaya are: Red Avalokitesvara of Lalitpur and the White Avalokitesvara of Kathmandu. Monasteries where the temples of bodhisattva are situated always were favored by royal donations. Karunamaya played an important role for the state to such extant, that the fate of a king was vested on bodhisattva [Owens 1989]. If Karunamaya was displeased that could bring a severe consequences for the king himself. It would be not a mistake to provide a parallel between the chariot festival of Karunamaya and his cult in Nepal and the cult of Jagannath in Puri, India in a sense of special relations of the king and his sacred patron [Kulke 1993].

[15] It is possible say that the origin of the cult of Kumari was strongly linked with Vajrayana (although in Nepalese syncretic situation the sectarian identification of a cult, practice or deity is sometimes complicated thing). Kumaris (before 1769 also raj Kumaris of Malla principalities of Lalitpur and Bhaktapur) as well as the Raj Kumari of Kathmandu under Shah kings – all live in traditional Buddhist viharas, at least a special form of vihara [Locke 1985]. Kumaris, likely, had Vajrayanic origin and their cult is much older. Except the royal Kumaris of the Malla princes (Kantipur, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur) existed also regional Kumaris (worshiped by the region of city, twah/tole) [see: Allen 1976]. One of such examples is a Kumari of Tham Bahi in Thamel, Kathmandu, still worshiped in that Nepalese vihara.

[16] One of the oldest banners with the paintings from the *SP* is the 17th century artifact from Cleveland Museum of Art (Temple Banner with Pilgrimage Sites and Scenes from the Svayambhu-purana (Ancient Text of the Primordial Buddha), available at: https://archive.org/details/clevelandart-1954.788-temple-banner-with-p (accessed September 2, 2022)).

[17] The dharmic king, bodhisattva and defender of Buddha's teachings are an exemplified representation here, which was definitely addressed to the kings of Nepal. This image of a king is based on *Asoka model* – that is an ideal for Nepalese sangha. Interesting that the narrative also has a Nepalese ideal ruler and compassionate being – king Jinasri. Insertion of that legendary king of Nepal, who respected the light of Svayambhu and Adi Buddha, was also a sign of Nepalisation of

the narratives [see: Tuladhar-Douglas 2006]. All just and wise kings in Nepalese chronicle (as well as prominent sages and pandits and teachers) always paid their respect to Svayambhu [History of Nepal… 1877; The Gopalarajavamsavali 1985; Nepalavamsavali 1985].

[18] Or its extension form of *Vajradhatu mandala*, as a Vajrayana phenomenon of a stupa [see also: von Rospatt 1999; Bangdel 1999; Gutschow 1997].

[19] That is why in the chronicle, compiled in 19th c. we see just the name of Guhyesvari in the narratives "extracted" by the author of the chronicle from the *SP* [History of Nepal… 1877, *77–79*]. The relations of this two powerful tantric goddesses as well as other is a question which needs clarification; such female deities often feature like "sisters", could "represent" each other etc.; or at least they all represent the *sakti* or *prajna* principle and, depending on each context, show a precise link between them.

[20] The role of a tantric goddess as (*prajna*/*sakti*) is the case very similar with the sakti in Hindu tantrism. In Kashmiri Saivism even that the great god Shiva is just a "lifeless body" without his Sakti. Only the "mystic" Sakti generates Shiva's power and makes him awakened (in a spiritual sense too) [see more: Sanderson 1986; 1995; 2001].

[21] For Nepal, such an overlapping was not accidental also because for centuries, Buddhism and Hinduism, specifically Shaivism, coexisted, mutually influenced and adapted to each other. In each period of contact between the two traditions, they "acted" differently, resorting to one approach or another: adopting experiences, religious images, and metaphysical "simpler" ideas of both religions and their deities and cults (hence several "parallel" or "common" deities in Vajrayana and Shaiva lines in Nepal, etc.). That helped in creating a non-conflict space for peaceful competition. J. Toffin, a French cultural anthropologist and historian, calls this interaction "competing syncretism", which we believe is quite possible in the Nepalese historical and socioreligious context to be used, at least in some cases [Toffin 2008, *145–180*; see also: Gellner 2012, *319–336*]. Symbiosis could be possible to use here [Ruegg 2008].

[22] H. Brinkhaus drive an attention to that fact: text do not recommend or even prohibits Buddhists to worship Shiva because such an act could bring bad karma and cause a reborn in Hell/Low Worlds etc [Brinkhaus 1980].

[23] On *paubha* from Rubin Museum of Art dedicated to *Cakrasamvara mandala* (1822), in the form of which *Nepal mandala* was understood in sacred geographical terms, not only buddhas and bodhisattvas, dharmapalas and other deities are depicted. We also see a few *sivalingas*, the symbols of Shiva [Bangdel 2010, *68*].

[24] A. Sanderson holds a point of view that Saiva cult rather enforced the process on including and subordination of Buddhism; A. Sanderson also states, grounding on tantric texts, that Hindu tradition influenced Buddhist tantra in many ways. But it looks that both religions used the strategy of inclusivism and influenced each other.

[25] Just like the highest wisdom, *Prajnaparamita*, which could not be fixed or "substantialized" according to Mahayana philosophy [Westerhoff 2018].

[26] More or less from both sides: Nepalmahatmya also pays respect to Buddhist shrines. But such passages like "to worship Buddha is to worship Shiva" or so should be understood also as a try to include another tradition. Anyway we should not idealize the mode of tolerance in premodern Nepalese context [see: Lewis, Bajracharya 2016, *101–112*].

[27] His cult is still popular in *Tham Bahi* (*Vikramashila Mahavihara*), old Nepalese monastery in Kathmandu, where also a festival dedicated to the brave trader-bohisattva is held [Locke 1985].

[28] See the Cambridge manuscript there: https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-01643/42 (accessed September 2, 2022).

[29] https://collection.rubinmuseum.org/objects/1289/dipamkara-buddha?ctx=413ea8ed41f36bc1241837f5048189bd2182ec5f&idx=8 (accessed September 2, 2022).

[30] *Samyak* in Kathmandu usually takes place also there, at the Svayambhu stupa complex [Lewis 1995].

[31] "Thus, in contrast to Svayambhū myth, which centers Buddhism in Nepal independently from India, the *Svayambhūpurāṇa* in this context constitutes the sanctity of Nepal by drawing on the pan-Indian tradition…" [von Rospatt 2009, *66*].

[32] Interestingly, that in a pan-Indian mandala of Cakrasamvara Khaganana holds not central, but a peripheral zone of the sacred diagram. Likely, due to her as a part of the mandala, we see bird faced goddess, Khaganana (?) on a 17th c. Nepalese paubha from Philadelphia Museum of Art ("Chakrasamvara and Vajravarahi with Attendants, Mahasiddhas, Ganesha, and Donors", in

Philadelphia Museum of Art, available at: https://philamuseum.org/collection/object/70762 (accessed September 2, 2022)). Likely he Nepalese tantric context made Khaganana more important.

[33] In Vajrayogini tradition (which has pan-Indian context) Nepal as a sacred space is styled as *Upacchandoha pitha* [Rospatt 2009]. That is also called *Himalaya* and is a seat of goddess *Khaganana*.

[34] Due to popularity of the shrine of the Vajrayogini the monastery is often called also Vajrayogini.

[35] However, he refrains from definitive generalizations and recognizes the issue of identifying the characters of Gum Baha, namely the monument we are considering, as debatable.

[36] Nagas are venerated by both Buddhists and Hindu in Nepal Valley. The cult of *nagas* is of course not just Nepalese feature, but a pan-Buddhist; the famous Mahayana thinker Nagarjuna got from *nagas* the text of *Prajnaparamita* during his underwater trip [Westerhoff 2018].

[37] Unfortunately, the further study of that "side" of the identity of Gum Baha was left aside by the author.

[38] This example once more helps to reconstruct the ties which were active in 16th–17th c. in Buddhist Himalayas and beyond. But when Jivaraj explained how the temple of Mahhabodhi was built to a lama from Sikkim, he got *dana* from the lama; this money Nepalese pandit used for decoration of the chariot of Avalokitesvara, used during the great festival of Karunamaya in Nepal. In that sense pandit shows still his strong Nepalese background.

[39] https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/56/Nepaul_valley_map_1802.jpg (accessed July 2, 2022).

[40] https://www.facebook.com/GurkhaAntiques/photos/a.347479238717222/1969880059810457/ (accessed July 2, 2022).

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Непальський сакральний простір у домодерний та ранньомодерний період в індуїстсько-буддійському контексті: одна із земель деш Індії і незалежна благословенна країна пунья бгумі

Стаття присвячена питанню священного простору в буддійських уявленнях у домодерному та ранньомодерному Непалі (Непальській долині). Середньовічний Непал у XV ст. увійшов в особливий період, коли у Сваямбгу Пурані були висловлені нові ідеї щодо повної незалежності *Непал мандали* від індійського священного простору. Відтоді непальська буддійська традиція заявляла про свою самодостатність і незалежність. Автор аналізує основні наративи міфу про Сваямбгу зі зверненням до широкого кола джерел, концентруючись на тексті і на візуальних джерелах (релігійне мистецтво тощо). Також у статті досліджується, яким чином сакральна географія Непалу і пов'язані з нею уявлення та ідеї вплинули на ідентичність непальців. Особливу увагу приділено питанню змін ідей та наративів в умовах конкурентного співіснування буддизму та індуїзму. Міф про Сваямбгу (XV ст.) насправді представляє нову систему розуміння і конструювання сакрального простору країни Непал (Непал мандала/Непал деш), яка майже ігнорує Індію як батьківщину буддизму. Цікаво, що непальське розуміння своєї країни як окремого незалежного простору, як благословенної буддійської землі (бодгісаттва бгумі і пунья бгумі) було наслідком цілого процесу інтелектуальної еволюції місцевої традиції (як у ментальному осягненні простору, так і в питанні легітимізації власної буддійської лінії). Власне, традиція непальського буддизму легітимізувала себе через саму ідею буддовості, виявлену в буддійському Абсолюті, в Аді Будді. Аді Будда виник у вигляді світла і дгармадгату, пізніше трансформувався в ступу – Сваямбгу, головну ступу країни. Але за цим "радикальним" переосмисленням священного простору все ж знайшлося місце для розуміння непальської мандали як частини Індії. Треба зазначити, що паніндійська модель була в самій основі непальської системи уявлень про сакральний ландшафт, оскільки вона сягала корінням мандали Чакрасамвара та традиції Ваджрайогіні (як про це влучно пише О. Роспатт). Ця парадоксальна суперечність у непальській парадигмі сакрального географічного ландшафту є однією з головних тем статті, й автор припускає, що насправді дві різні системи сприйняття простору перетиналися і багато в чому співіснували. Навіть більше, вони часом знаходили компроміс.

Ключові слова: буддизм, ідентичність, метагеографічна революція, Непал, паломництво, сакральний простір, Сваямбгу Пурана, Сваямбгу чайтья

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