

Notes and News

The inauguration of the National Archives of Nepal by H. M. the King has provided us at once with an opportunity and occasion to launch upon the venture of a journal. Its purpose primarily is to publish the results of academic research carried out by the Department of Archaeology in the different fields of pre-history and field archaeology, museums, archives, manuscripts, epigraphy, numismatics, art and architecture, in relation to the ancient history and culture of Nepal, besides various technical aspects of our work. The idea is to bring forth the hitherto unpublished and rare data and place them before the world of scholars for their information and consideration.

The journal is, however, open to all scientific workers in the field and has had, of necessity, to be made bilingual, to serve as much the requirements of the Nepalese people, as of others outside, for to-day any country is but a constituent part of a large 'One World'. It shall therefore be our endeavour to give in all suitable cases of the articles, a full translation, as the case may be, or at least a summary of the main points, where a fuller treatment is neither possible nor necessary, either in Nepalese or English, for the benefit of all.

The new discoveries in any field of activity entrusted to the Department would be published in the journal, as well as

interpretative articles thereupon as soon as possible after their discovery. Reports of excavations and explorations carried out by the Department would also be published in it with full documentation.

It is hoped that the journal, though primarily meant to serve as a bulletin of the Department of Archaeology, would provide the Nepalese scholars in particular and workers no Nepalese Culture from outside Nepal in general with a forum, and thus fill a long-felt want. It is hoped, therefore, that it will serve particularly as an incentive to serious research in the country. We hope to be able hereafter to bring out four issues in the course of a year, namely in Vaisakh (April-May), Sravan (July-August), Kartik (Oct.-Nov.) and Magh (January-February), respectively, depending upon the availability and value of the contributions, which would be open to all scholars in general.

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At the beginning of the financial year 1966-67 (2023-2024 Vikram Samvat), the Department was provided by the Indian Co-operation Mission with an Archaeological Adviser, in the person of Dr. N. R. Banerjee, a senior officer of the Archaeological Survey of India. Shortly after his appointment, early in the summer of last year (1966) a quick survey of the Kathmandu valley was followed by an excavation at Dhum Varahi, a Lichchhavi site on the outskirts of Kathmandu, and later, during the following

winter and early summer of the current year, at Tilaurakot, tentatively identified with Kapilavastu, near Taulihawa, in the Terai.

The year witnessed the laying of the foundation of the Archaeological Garden in Lalitpur and the Mahendra Samgrahalaya in the premises of the Nepal Museum, the inauguration of the Woodworks Museum at Bhaktapur, the transference of some stone inscriptions and sculptures from the Bir Pustakalaya to the Nepal Museum and the acquisition of a set of over three hundred coins by the Department of Archaeology.

Apart from the listing of the historical documents in the possession of Government Departments, some documents of value were collected from the Mechi Anchal in Eastern Nepal.

A few manuscripts were also collected for the Manuscripts Section of the Rashtriya Abhilekhalaya, by the Bir Pustakalaya, from Pokhara. Among them special mention may be made of a 'Sachitra Chandi'

A drive to collect inscriptions or their rubbings has met with success.

An event of considerable importance and interest, obviously of popularity, during the year was the organization of an exhibition of Nepalese art in Europe. It was first held in Paris (France) in October-November 1967, and thereafter in quick succession at Essen (W. Germany), The Hague (Netherlands), Mechelen (Belgium) and is now in Arhus (Denmark). At the same time a catalogue of the exhibition, entitled *Nepalese Art*, including an 'Introduction' was published early in October '66. The exhibitions at Paris and the Hague were inaugurated by the gracious hands of

His Majesty the King.

For the first time a comprehensively representative exhibition of Nepal's art and archaeology illustrated with photographic enlargements and objects including excavated antiquities from Banjarahi, Kudan, Paisia, and Lumbini; Tilaurakot, Hadigaon, Lajimpat, Dhumvarahi was organized at the Exhibition grounds at Kathmandu on the occasion of the birthday of His Majesty the King, in June 1967.

We have published three books, namely 'Bauddha Suchi Patra', 'Bauddha Tantra Suchi' and 'Puspachintamani' during the year. Three others, namely, 'Lipi Prakasa', 'Bhasha Vamsavali' and 'Pratishtha-Lakshana' are in the press.

We have also undertaken extensive conservation works on our ancient monuments, and the most important ones comprising the Kashthamandapa, at Kathmandu, the Ganesa temple at Chobhar, the Rudrayani temple at Khokana, the Bhimsena, Kumbhesvara, Matsyendranatha, Krishna (Gabahal), Chandesvari, Taleju and Degutale temples and the Mulchowk, at Lalitpur, the Bagh Bhairava temple at Kirtipur, the Buddha Nilkantha image and its surroundings at Budha Nilkantha, minor structures at the Pasupati temple at Deopatan and the Bhimsena temple at Bhaktapur have so far received considerable measure of attention, and repairs, except those at the Kashthamandapa, Kumbhesvara, Gabahal Krishna, Chandesvar and Chobhar Ganesa temples have, been carried out through the agency of the Guthi Jirnnoddhara tatha-Nirman Samiti, of the Guthi Samsathan, under the Chairmanship of the Director of the Department of Archaeology.

These works have followed and established the principles of archaeological conservation in Nepal.

Archaeological Chemistry too has made humble beginnings in Nepal during the current year. Following closely upon the completion of the chemical treatment of the murals at the palace of Bhupatindra Malla at Bhaktapur, undertaken by the Department with the help of a Chemist from the Archaeological Survey of India, provided by the Indian Co-operation Mission, towards the beginning of the year, the murals at Kumari Ghar, which had been obscured by the accumulation of dust and smoke for over two centuries have been fully exposed by Nepalese Chemists and fixed by chemical treatment.

One of the most exciting of the scenes brought thus to light is a full-size view of Jaya Prakasha Malla in warlike attire and regalia.

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I am fully conscious of the blemishes of the journal. A good part of them has to be attributed to the extremely short period of less than a month devoted to seeing it through the press.

I avail myself of the opportunity to express my gratitude to my colleagues, particularly to Dr. Banerjee, who has throughout been associated with all aspects of our work, for their ungrudging co-operation and sharing of my responsibility in the matter, as also to the presses who have readily undertaken and accomplished the work in spite of the brief notice.

R. J. Thapa

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