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# Restoration of 17<sup>th</sup> century Royal Residence in Patan, Nepal– some issues and challenges.

## Abstract

Architecture can be seen as an idealised cultural field as well as the actual physical environment both as form and trace of life. But our effort of restoration has most the time found to be limited on preserving on the physical forms of the building and its parts without giving much attention to the event and the people associated with that building. This paper aims to explore the possibility of that intangible aspect while preparing a proposal for restoration of one of the least cared section of a royal building of 17<sup>th</sup> century of Kathmandu valley Nepal.

## Introduction

### Background



The country of Nepal is located geographically between two great civilization of India and China (fig-1) where two major religions Hinduism and Buddhism was originated and developed to their fullest. The country itself is blessed by the birth of Lord Buddha in its soil. Its capital Kathmandu was used to serve as a transitional stay for many travelers including spiritual leaders, scholars, merchants etc who were traveling in an ancient trade route of India and Tibet. Due to the mild weather and splendid natural beauties of the Kathmandu valley many of them were either extended their stay or even reside there

*Fig,1*

*Nepal- location map*

permanently. Then it became a place for a great cultural melting point. Its unique arts and architecture may be the result of their cultural fusion. The Kathmandu valley which is limited about 25 km in both north- south and east –west direction. The physical description of Kathmandu valley encompasses the complex of historic buildings and temples which strikingly illustrate their impact both individually and in combination. They are basically uniform, yet visibly distinguishable dwelling units through their groupings, location and degrees of tasteful embellishment reflects the unity, hierarchical structure and complexity of their inhabitants. All three principle cities of Kathmandu valley; Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Patan were three independent states till the middle of 18<sup>th</sup> century. A physical feature common to all three of them could be taken as their central space which is popularly known as- the Durbar Square. Patan Durbar square is one of them (fig.-2). Stretching between two parallel roads it is an ensemble of more than 30 monuments. The palace complex with the temples dedicated to the king's own clan goddess together with pond, water spouts garden etc in one side and the group of temples dedicated to the male gods, votive pillars, big bell, public rest houses etc to the other side facing each other. The earliest element of the square is found to be the stone water spout which is called *manihiti*. The inscriptional evidence of the spout mentions its date of construction as 570 AD. The square also incorporates the open spaces upon which number of street converges. And all of them are forming an outstanding urban space. The Palace square of Patan has been able to draw the attention of many national and international scholars and also been praised by them most enthusiastically. To name few of them 17<sup>th</sup> century poet Kunu Sharma writes as "Isn't it like a piece of heaven". Similarly in of the a very influential king like Siddhinarasimha 1928 Landon made a following remarks "The durbar square in Patan probably remains the most picturesque collection of buildings that has ever been set up in so small space by the piety and the pride of of the a very influential king like Siddhinarasimha oriental man". Prof. Edward F. Sekler of Harvard University has compared Patan Durbar square with San Marco Square in term of beauty, richness and attraction. The area has been placed on the International World Heritage list as a protected monument zone by UNESCO since 1979 AD. Among those three major Durbar squares of the Kathmandu valley it is contained in a smallest area which is stretching about 160 meters in its longest direction. All those monuments are of great beauty, artistic richness, geometrical qualities. Although the square has a history of more than 1500 years it had largely taken the present form during the reign of King Siddhinarasimha Malla in 17<sup>th</sup> century. The proposed case, Sundari chowk was his residence and it is one of the most important element of the palace complex (fig.-3).



Fig-2

View of Patan DurbarSquare



Fig-3

View of Sundarichowk

The Sundari Chowk, which means literally the “beautiful courtyard” is situated strategically at the public square forming a southern edge of the Palace complex. The palace complex of Patan or the Patan Durbar is formed by three principle courtyards Manikeshav Narayan Chowk, Mul Chowk and the Sundari Chowk which was built over a period of about 100 years. The Sundari Chowk was constructed by the king Siddhinarasimha as an extension of the palace complex for the purpose of his residence. But the king who is so responsible for the arts and architecture of the country had quite an unusual but very interesting life style of his own. He had a long life of 104 years, which is perhaps the longest in the history of kings in Nepal. In his long life he had three distinct phases; the king, the sage and the *sanyashi*. Since his third stage i.e. *sanyashi* was the stage in which he had completely relinquished his worldly affairs and went away from the society, nothing had been known so far except his death. He served the nation as a king for 41 years (1619-1660 AD). Then he placed his son Srinivas Malla into the thorn and stayed in the palace for a period over 20 years leading a life of a sage. He was a man of religious disposition. He is known for the favorite of the Lord Krishna, the master of yoga, the chief of poets, the relinquisher of the world and ultimately the jivan- mukta (having obtained salvation while still on earth). It is the building where an extraordinary king had spent most of his time both as a king and the sage. So, any effort for the restoration of this building demands the study of the life history of the king and his process of revitalizing the city square.

Referring the history back, it was in the year of 1619 AD when the king of Kathmandu had declared his two grand sons as the king of two independent kingdoms of Kathmandu and Patan. Till then Patan was ruled by the king of Kathmandu. The Siddhinarasimha, the younger one became the king of Patan at a very young age of 13. His mother was the second wife of his father and she was from Patan. For the people of Patan his emergence as a king provided double happiness first their kingdom became the independent from Kathmandu and the secondly he was the son from the lady of their own soil. The young Siddhinarasimha was groomed as a king by his mother Lalmati under the guidance and teaching of the Royal priest Bishwanath Rajopadhaya.

For the young king in his early days, there must have been a tremendous support and exceptions of people in one side and the weaker economy of the state to the other. Among many other challenges as *Daniel Wright* mentioned in his book *History of Nepal* that the city was depopulated and there were also not enough carpenters available in the country. (*Daniel Wright- History of Nepal- page 238, 234*). But the situation does not confirm the statement of Mary Slusser as she writes “ Siddhinarasimha came to the throne as a youth, must at first have accepted the palace as it was, for until twenty

years after his coronation do we learn of any new building activity in the palace”. The historical evidences rather support the intense activities in the rebuilding process of palace square since the beginning of his throne. Their activities were not only limited to the construction but to create a conducive environment for the development of the arts and architecture. He induced many merchants to reside in Patan. He started the trade relationship to Bhot (Tibet). As *Daniel Wright* mentioned “Seeing that there were not carpenters enough in the town, he made *Bandyas* take up the trade, and assigned *guthis* to the give them a feast on certain day of every year. *Siddhinarasimha* made many other rules and peopled the town, which contained 24,000 houses”. In fact, we can find the restless involvement of the king *Siddhinarasimha* in developing the Durbar Square from his early stage to the final days of his stay in the country. Many of those structures which were constructed during his period have their in- situ inscriptions. On the basis of those inscriptions and other available evidences like historical notes like unpublished *thyasaphu* , I have tried to create a chronology of the important events and the structures associated with his life.

As mentioned earlier, his early initiative can be referred to *Daniel Wright* in his book “ *History of Nepal*”. In chapter VII he describes the history of the kings of Patan, in particular of *Raja Siddhinarasimha*. According to him the king enlarged the durbar of *Lalitpur* in NS 740 (1620 AD). He then consecrated an image of *Taleju* by the advice of his guru *Biswanathoupadhyaya*. So, their early efforts seem to be improving both physical and spiritual environments in the prevailing situation. If we considered the date it was just next year of his coronation when he must have been at the age of fourteen. It is difficult for us to understand influence the young king but still if we considered of his later projects, we can imagine something exceptional in aptitude of this king towards the built environment. All his efforts were found to be consistently directing towards the improvement of spiritual and physical environment in a complementary way.

The temple of *Visvesvara* is an earliest surviving structure that *King Siddhinarasimha Malla* has built in 1627 AD when he was at the age 21 (fig.-4).

In 1637 AD, ten years after the construction of the temple of *Visvesvara* the king constructed another temple dedicating to the lord *Krishna* (fig.-5). By then the king must have been an age of 31 years. The temple can also be taken as an expression of fully grown up person as well as the king. As a person he was well known for the devotee of lord *Krishna*. But in the same time he had not lost the faith on the *Lord Shiva*. That dualism of him has found to be ingeniously addressed with the concept of multi shrined temple. Which means it is



Fig-4, source:author

View of temple of *Visvesvara*



Fig-5, source:author

View of *Krishna* temple



Fig-6, source:author  
View of Degutale temple

the shrine where we can find the image of Lord Krishna in one level and that of Shiva in another level.

In NS 761 (1641 AD), the king builds the temple of Degutale to please his clan goddess Parvati (fig.-6). According to the inscription, it was grand a temple of five tiered roof and pinnacle of the jilted gold. The temple was destroyed by fire in his son's reign. The present temple is the structure of the post earthquake restoration after 1934.

Another architectural masterpiece of Patan Durbar square is palace of the king Siddhinarasimha himself which is popularly known as Sundarichowk. The real date of construction of Sundari chowk is still unknown. Many writers have referred the date NS 767 (1646/47 AD) which was mentioned by Mary Slusser in her book Nepal Mandala. There is an another opinion about the date of construction of Sundari chowk as 1627 AD is found in an unpublished report for UNESCO by Prof. Tiwari and Prof. Bjonness. In the report, their argument is mainly based on Mary Slusser's statement (1982) which is further substantiated by referring Korn (1972) and Sanday (1992). It seems to be logical if we accept that the palace was built by the king in the same year of the birth of his son Srinivas which is NS 747 Kartika (1627 AD). But if we tried to analyse the building in context the given date also can not be convincing. At first, the given date is just seven years after the coronation the king Siddhinarasimha and there was some evidence of not being the enough carpenters at that time. In that short span of time, it is hard to believe to construct the building of such a high level of craftsmanship and artistic richness. Secondly, from the location of the building it does seem to be just an additional building in the site it is rather shifting of the whole cosmological centre of the city from one end to the other. Similarly, the building through its iconography indicates the expression of so much of the personal believes of the king himself. So, it appears too early to achieve all those for a king who was hardly at an age of 21 years and had experience of abut 7 years in ruling. Thirdly, 1627AD was also the year of the construction of the temple of Visvesvara which is also taken as an expression of his deep faith in Saivism. But there are many images of lord Krishana in the façade of the building providing the clear indication of the king being his devotee. Which in fact had happened much afterwards and found to be expressed more explicitly in Krishna Temple in 1637AD. In conclusion, the date of construction of Sundarichowk as mentioned by Mary Slusser appears to be too late whereas that of Prof Tiwari, Prof. Bjonness, W.G. Corn, J. Sanday is too early. But it is certain that it was constructed within the period of 1627 to 1647 AD. In my view, if we consider some of the iconographic details of the building which may provide some clues. Among them, the images of lord Krishna in different parts of the building such as at the centre of the door head, prominent corner window at first floor, ground floor of external east- façade all of them

suggest that by this period the king must have been a strong devotee of lord Krishna. Although all the icons have not been able to identified but still the images of *Pancha – Pandavas* can be clearly identified at the door-head of south east corner of internal façade. Those are the theme from Hindu's epic story of *Mahabharata*. As mentioned above all these themes are expressed extensively in Krishna temple (1637 AD). Similarly, use of carved *Shivalingam* in a frieze can found in Sundarichowk and in Krishna temple. Furthermore, a faded fresco-painting of Krishna temple at internal southern wall of the building can also indicate the significance and the personal attachment of the king Siddhinarasimha towards that temple. So, it will be more logical to assume the construction of Sundarichowk in same period of the construction Krishna temple (1637 AD).

In the year 767 NS (1647), the king had added few more elements in his palace complex. One was the sunken water spout which is called *Tushahiti*(fig.-7) in the inner court and the other was the water spout, lotus pond and the flower garden in Bhandarkhal which is just outside of the Sundarichowk. The pond was constructed together with the water spouts for some additional function of providing the drainage to those spouts. Unlike his earlier structures they are smaller in scale and look like more of a landscape elements. But if we go through their images and inscriptions, they were for the purpose of spiritual needs rather the physical pleasure. The sunken water spout is of oval shape in plan and surrounded by protective serpents. The central spout is supporting the gilt images of Laxmi and Narayana mounted on Garuda. The surrounding wall is filled with exceptionally well carved images of different god and goddess on stone and gilt metal. There are 97 images which belong to Hindusm, Buddhism and mostly based on tantric tradition. It gives an indication of his activities orienting more towards the spiritual end by that time in which he was in his early fortes.

In the year NS 769 (1649 AD) he made rather an unusual element in the garden area of Bhandarkhal. The element was called a *Bhugol-mandap*. It was an element which according to him used to represent the celestial bodies. Since, *Bhugol-mandap* does not exist these days we do not know what exactly would that look like. But the king in his latter inscription has once mentioned of not allowing any one to sit on that *Bhugol*. It gives an indication that it was flat and something which could be seated on. The sudden shift by the king from an intense meditation and tantric practice to the contemplation on celestial bodies may due to the sad demise of his wife Bhanumati.

In summary, Sundari Chowk was a palace building destined for the residence of a very capable but a complex nature of a king Siddhinarasimha in 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was constructed somehow at the middle of sixteen thirties. From his early stage the king Siddhinarasimha is found to be engaged in improving the physical

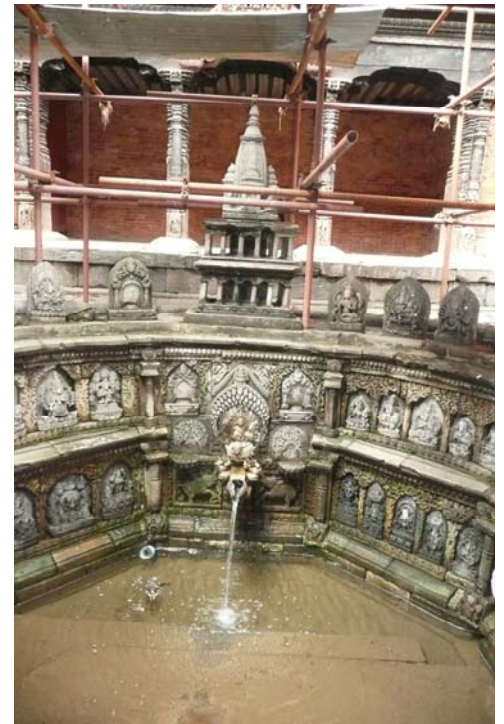


Fig-7. Source;author  
View of Sunken water spout

and spiritual environment in a harmonic way. Although the construction of this palace was one of his effort of improving the physical environment but he himself being a very religious person there was enough attention found to be given to cater his spiritual needs. And with his increasing inclination toward the spirituality he was found to be adding and making the adjustment in and around his palace of Sundari chowk. The sunken water spout, lotus pond, flower gardens were the examples of those elements for facilitating his spiritual acts. As mentioned earlier, he officially handed over the crown to his son in 1660 AD. But he did not leave the palace for another 20 years by involving himself in an intense practice of *tantra* and meditation and other rituals. But the process of revitalizing the Durbar square as initiated by him was given the continuation by his son, grandsons till the middle of 18<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1768 AD the king from the middle highland state of Gorkha conquered the Kathmandu Valley in his process of uniting several states to a single country. The new king of Nepal made Kathmandu as the capital and the palace complex of Kathmandu as his residence. With the development of new political scenario might have put other two palace of Patan and Bhaktapur in shadow. Although it was not intended that way but ultimately it helped to save these palaces of Patan and Bhaktapur from being changed and altered drastically as it was happened with the Kathmandu Durbar. The construction of the nine storied palace by the new king in the palace complex of Kathmandu could be taken as such example. Then at the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century, new ruling class appeared who ruled the country for 104 years. With their special relationship with Britain they built their palaces based on European model rather than the local. Those white stucco palaces by the virtue of their nature they were built on open agricultural land. It created a big change in the landscape of the Kathmandu Valley but still did not affect the inner city core including those old palaces. So for many years, those palaces remained without the proper use and their decay was mostly due to the natural causes. The earthquake was one of such natural cause which had destroyed many historic buildings. Historically the valley has suffered from many earthquakes in which the earthquake of 1934 was the last one which caused a major devastation in the valley (ref.-8). It not only destroyed buildings and monuments it created huge number of human casualties including great numbers of the traditional craftsmen. The Sundarichowk is considered to the least effected by that but still did not remained untouched. It created a damage in its north and south wing partially and most of its part of the east wing. It was then restored under the huge constrains of budget and the craftsmen. The evidences show that the damaged portion of the north and the east walls and the entire roof structure were reconstructed during the period. In 1951 the country of Nepal undergone a big political change

from the family autocratic rule to the democratic system under monarchy. In 1956 the government introduced the “ Ancient Monument Act” and made the Department of Archeology mainly responsible to manage the historic structures. The palace was then subjected to repair twice during the coronation of king Mahendra in 1956 his son king Birendra in 1972. With the rise of democracy when Nepal is opened to the rest of the world its historic town and their structures drew the attention of large international communities. As a result UNESCO declared seven monument sites which include four religious sites of temples and stupas and three palace complex squares in Kathmandu valley. As mentioned earlier the palace square of Patan is one of them. In 1982 The Nippon Institute Technology Japan made a photogrametric survey of this palace complex. Under different time period this palace complex was given to use for different government institutions. Unfortunately, the Sundarichowk was used by many institutions of the government including Land revenue department, school, District office of Police etc. In 1995/96 the government of Nepal closed it for any use and made a detailed documentation with help of UNESCO/ Japan Trust Fund. It was the period when the restoration of the other end of the palace complex, the Manikeshev Narayanchowk for its adaptive use of art museum was undergoing. The documentation team in the author was also a part of made some valuable contribution by investigating the earth filled room at the south east corner, and the hidden door and a passage in between the adjoining palace court of the Mulchowk. In 2006 there was a big political change which created the end 268 years old monarchy and made a country a republic state. The country is still in transition and in process of making new constitution. The palace building of Sundarichowk is also in transition of doing further study and in situ restoration work. The responsibility has given to Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT), an international non government organization which has been involved in preservation of monuments in the country for nearly two decades. After the restoration the government of Nepal wants to make adaptive use the building in museum as they did in the earlier part of the palace complex.

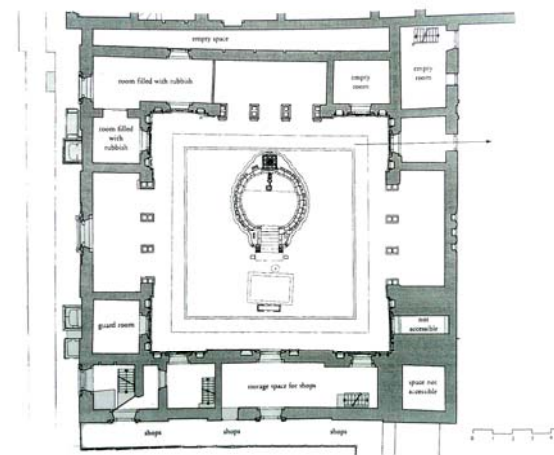
**The object as such; function, size, material status.**

**General Description:**

The royal building of Sundarichowk is a three storied structure with a courtyard at its center. It is a quadrangle having the staircase at each corner with the exception of two at the south west and none at its north west (fig.-9).The site investigation specially with the study of the position of the joists reveals the fact that in the north west segment where there is no stairs now shows the position of the staiscase before. Where as one of the staircase at its south west segment is a latter addition made by the shop keeper who is currently occupying the ground floor to use the first floor too. Which means the building was



*Fig-8, source: book, Patan Durbar Square after 1934 earthquake.*



*Fig-9, source: KVPT Ground Floor Plan*





*Fig-10, source:KVPT  
View from the courtyard*



*Fig-11 source:author.  
Photo East Façade after restoration  
of 1934 earthquakeside the  
courtyard*

planned to have the stairs at its all four corners. Each of them is having a separate entrance from the courtyard and each stair is leading one wing of the quadrangle. The each side of the palace is measured as 19.6 meter from outside and 12.6 meter from inside. It is basically a load bearing brick wall construction with cleverly used timber frames and ties inside the brick wall. Thick wall is of high quality glossy veneer bricks on external face rubble-filled at the center and well burnt structural bricks inside constructed in a composite way. The mortar used is mud with specially prepared water sealant at outer face of the wall. The interior walls are plaster with mud. Its low pitched heap roof is covered with Indian Manglore tiles which was as mentioned earlier an intervention of post earthquake restoration. There is an abundant use of richly carved timber in doors, windows, posts, lintels. The central window which faces the public square has a rare ivory works inlayed into its carved timber surface. The niches, door heads and side projections, the supporting the roof over hangs are filled iconographies. The central court is nicely paved with thick stones. As a special feature there is a sunken stone water spout which is popularly known as royal bath into the courtyard. The water spout is surrounded by exceptionally carved stone and the metal sculptures depicting different god and goddess of Hindu and Buddhist pantheons. The building is considered to be finest example of 17<sup>th</sup> century royal building of Nepal. It is well known for its nice proportion and beautifully composed facades both internally and externally in two facades which are facing towards the public square.

At present, the building is in a critical condition of stability in its parts. Its tile roof is with leaking with the threat of collapsing the roof structure. The face veneer bricks in many parts are bulging outwards. The ground and the first floor of the southern wing has been encroached by the shopkeepers. The building is in a desperate need of conservation to stabilize its parts and make it able to withstand against the force of earthquake which always has been a major threat to these historic buildings.

There is a great deal of works to be done but my current proposal is focussed on the eastern wing of the quadrangle. As mentioned earlier it was rebuilt after the earthquake of 1934. There are number of things which could be noted in this part. First of all, the east elevation which is facing the garden is contrasting sharply with the rest of the building in term of the use of materials and details, the facade composition, roof slope and overhangs. Its thick walls in south east corner which breaks the symmetry is also my particular interest to investigate them further. Although it is comparatively newer part but physically it is quite vulnerable. The ground level at this façade is about 60 cm higher than the internal floor level. So, the ground floor wall is highly affected by damp. The roof is leaking and some of its parts is at the verge of collapse. The windows are without the shutters.

## Analysis

One of the challenge in the restoration of Sundarichowk is how to respond properly to its external façade of the eastern quadrangle which was restored after the earthquake of 1934 AD. There are basically two opinions first is in favour of retaining the façade as it is since has already got its own age value. The second opinion is in favour of developing new façade which will be more compatible with the rest. But my arguement is for making the analysis of the eastern part as a whole not just the eastern façade. And it should be done in a holistic way which means the physical remains along with archieval records and the lifestyle of the king as well. Because if we refered back to the fundamental of architecture which can be seen as an idealised cultural field as well as the actual physical environment both as form and trace of life. But our effort of restoration has most the time found to be limited on preserving on the physical forms of the building and its parts without giving any attention in revealing and preserving the traces of life into that building.

As it is mentioned earlier this building was designed and constructed for a king who was specially renowned for his distinct way of life. Besides, he had used this building for more than 40 years leading his two sharply contrasting phase of life as king and as a sage. So, a careful study of this building and its parts may reveal many valuable insight of a king who was so responsible for developing an extraordinary city and the architecture of his time. In this sense the building may serve as a great source of knowledge. Regarding the restoration of the east block the followings three units are taken in consideration for the analysis;

**Unit1-** The south East Corner. As mentioned in methodology the analysis is made by developing an understanding of the knowledge of the past through the examination and interpretation of the evidences.

**Evidence -The physical remains of the palace;** The main observation made are the abnormally thick partition walls, a raised platform below debris filled and burnt bricks at the north west corner, a passage like narrow space between two thick walls having two small hole one at the floor and next at the wall.

**Text- Ancient knowledge of Hindu architecture;** Since it was a palace for the Hindu if compare floor plan to the ancient text of architecture – the Vastusastra its reference could be traced in three area the position of the temple at north corner the building, open space at the centre, and the only survaving image of the god Indra is at correct position of south west corner (fig.-12,13). This gives the evidence that they have used the diagram of Vastupurusa Mandala,

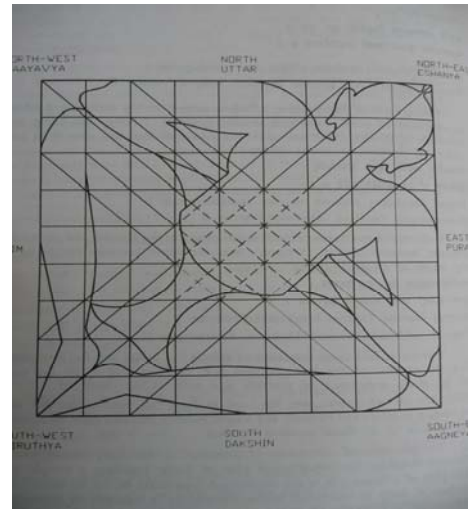


Fig-12, source: book  
Diagram of Vastupurusa,cosmic man.

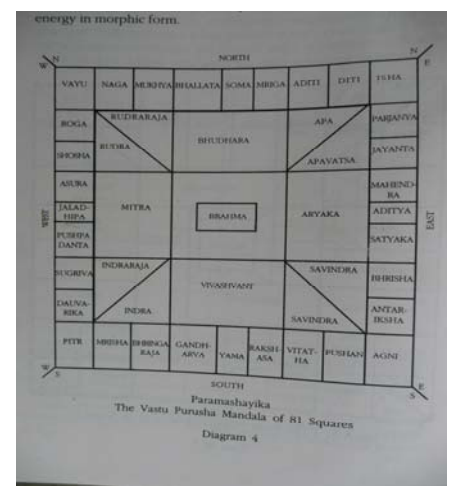


Fig-13, source: book  
9-square mandala representating Vastupurusa,cosmic man.

which is a cosmic man representing the universe. Then if it is so the south east corner belong to the god of fire. It indicates that the space may be dedicated for fire related activity of the king.

**The context - the life style of the king;** While studying his life style what we could find is that in a process of attending liberation he had tried every possible path in practice. Sometime it used to be turn out in a unusual behaviour while performing those practices One of such of unusual behaviour was performing meditation without wearing clothes by sitting on a stone in freezing winter time and staying in front of fire in summer time. If we tried to relate this activity in term of space within the palace is not known so far. But with this study we can indicate the possibility of those area. There is still a stone in the courtyard which could be easily guessed to be his mediating seat for the winter. But for the summer which was rather complicated we did not have any hint so far on the basis study we can construct the reality as ;

On south east corner of the palace, a abandoned space filled with clay and debris in its investigation in the side there found to be two room surrounded by thick walls around and the north wall was blackened its bricks are over burnt (fig.-14). This space in Vastupurasa mandala falls under *Agni*, the god of fire. Those two rooms may be the most possible spaces where the used to meditate under intense heat created by fire during the summer time. Being filled with clay and abandoned for long it still retains originality in some parts.

With this invention what we can is that an abandoned corner becomes the most important space having an intangible values. It has got a historic value, cultural, ritual and even the story telling values which are mainly associated with the life style of the king who had made a remarkable contribution in the field of architecture and planning of Patan during its medieval period and it is still being praised for their beauty. So, this is the area has great potential and should definitely be taken care making any restoration proposal.

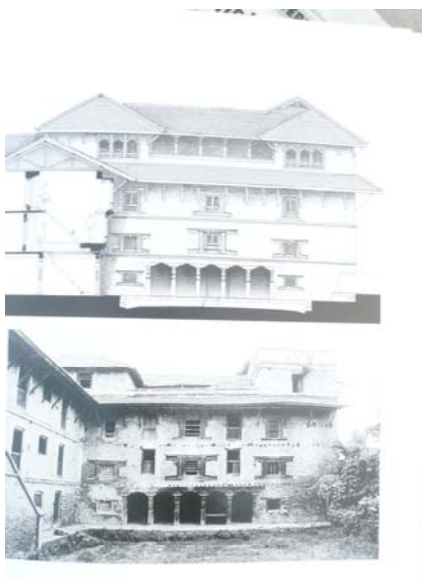
#### **Unit 2- Interpretation of myth.**

There are many myths associated with king Siddhinarasimha Malla one such myth was one day while he was sitting in his house he a group goddess were leaving his place the he asked his tantric advisor to stop them his power. Like in earlier case if we tried to relate it with in space we could imagine what could be the place where he was sitting when he the goddess were running out. According to the location of his palace there are three side open two to the public area and one towards the east where he had developed nice flower garden, ponds, beautiful water spouts etc. So, it must naturally be in the east side but this side offers the view only in its second floor. But we can not relate this myth with the current position of the windows opening towards the garden.



*Fig-14 source:author.*

*Photo showing remains of burnt brick in earth filled room*



*Fig-14, source: book*

*Photo-evidence of colonated bay in top floor in the same palacecomplex.*

**Evidences- Pencil sketch of 18844 and oil painting 1854 AD;** Most of the paintings and photographs available of this building are facing towards the public square and nothing from the back . But interestingly there are two photographs of late 19<sup>th</sup> century sketch and painting from the collection of Hudgson collection of Royal Asiatic Society(fig.-15), and British library London are published by KVPT in their report. The pencil sketch made about 10 years earlier than the painting both of them do have a colonated bay at the centre of the second floor. Both of them provide the evidence of being a small open terrace facing toward the garden. The similar example of colonated bay can also be found in northern part of the same palace complex (fig.-14). So, the small terrace at the second floor may be the best conjectured space where the king must have sit whether that was the real event or dream or even the hallucination. They may be helpful for the conjecture of the elevation facing the garden. It will have a great mythic or a story telling value.



Fig-15, source:KVPT. Old Sketch(1844AD)Hodgson collection,Royal Asiatic Sociatic Society,UK

## Proposal

The proposal is basically for the restoration of the eastern section of the quadrangle which was largely damaged by the earthquake of 1934 AD and reconstructed under extreme economic constrains. It is prepared under the basis of site investigations, artist’s sketch, painting and photo graphic evidence and some popular legends. Where ever the conjecture have been made like in second floor and the south east corner of the ground floor reversible materials and local technology will be applied. It will also be helpful in supporting the traditional craftsmen along with their materials and technology. The main aspect of the restoration can be summarised as below;

- i. The south east corner of the ground floor will be done in-situ preservation and made visible to the visitors.
- ii. The first floor since nothing known about it will remain as it is from outside as an important layer of history reminding the disastrous earthquake of 1934 AD. However a viewing gallery could be made inside sothat the viewers can observe two two pits in which the king is presumed to be used for meditation and fire rituals.
- iii. The second floor is the conjecture based on the 19<sup>th</sup> century painting and the pencil sketch (fig.-15) However certain adjustment has been made to maintain the symmetry as relationship with the rest of the floor(fig.-16,17). Its colonnaded bay will not only provide the best view of the garden but also be a great story telling space.
- iv. In the east external façade no change will be made except lowering the ground level (fig.-16,17) to its original level by exposing the old paving. Similarly, on the basis of old paintings and the sketch a skirt roof at first floor roof and

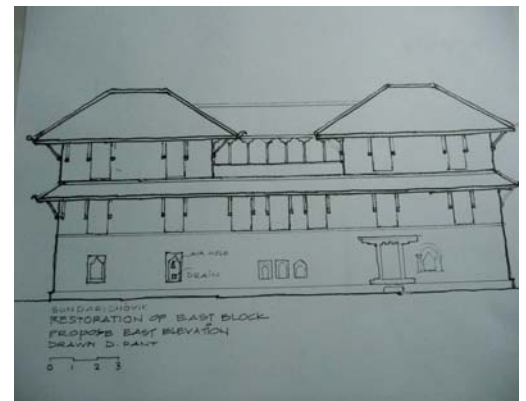


Fig-16, source: Author, Conjectural East elevation by the author.

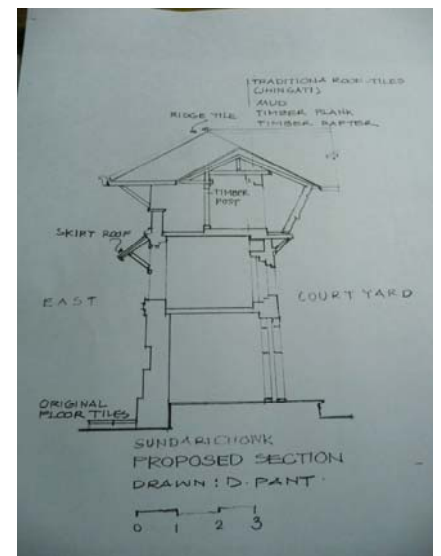


Fig-17, source: Author, Conjectural East west sectionproposed by the author.

- two pavilion like structures having a timber colonnade space overlooking the garden has been introduced.
- v. Overall roof is proposed to change in its traditional, materials and technology on the basis an old photo.

All new additions will be made with the materials like bricks, mud as mortar and timber by following the traditional methods of onstruction so that they could be reversed when needed. The shape and size of hose materials will be replicated from the existing samples. And all of them will be properly marked with the dates on them so that they will not creat any confusion in history in future.

## Method

The main objective of the research is to develop an understanding of the knowledge of the past through the examination and interpretation of the evidences. These evidences are in the form of physical remains, recorded data, inscriptions, pictures, artifacts and other socio cultural values and believe. Since the proposed research is basically to construct reality by interpreting and constructing available evidences piece by piece. So, the basic framework of inquiry as constructivism and interpretivism.

### Results/Current Status of the Work

The proposal was discussed with program director Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) who is undertaking job of restoration of Patan Durbar square. We are agreed to work out different options and the discussion will be taken in a much larger forum to reach some consensus among different stake holders.

## Discussion & Conclusions

For a city which has got a history of more than two thousand years last four hundred years is not that long. But still there are so much difficulties in finding the information of the a very influential king like Siddhinarasimha. Even the informations which were received were some times rather mystic. So basically what I did was tranguating all informations as far as possible through different sources and tried to put them in order while preparing the life history and chronology of works of the king. Sundari chowk is being closed for last 15 years so the access to the site was very difficult. Due to the generous support of KVPT it was made possible.

In conclusion, the study of even a single quadrangle of the building shows its potential of being a good source of knowledge. A knowledge for architects, artists, iconographers, historians and for

many others who are medieval arts, architecture and unique culture of an ethnic group called Newars of Kathmandu Valley. The current proposal of Department of Archeology, the Government Of Nepal for making an adaptive use of this building as an extension of art museum which is in my opinion is not the appropriate one. In my view, this building should be declared as a museum in itself dedicating to King Siddhinarasimha Malla. The museum along with its artistic and architectural significance will serve as a fine center for studying an extraordinary king like Siddhinarasimha Malla and many facts, stories and myth associated with his life. But the provision of the limited number of entry should be the must in order to insure the longevity of the building.

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## Appendix 1