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## **THE NEPALESE KORA SWORD FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE LVIV HISTORICAL MUSEUM: TO THE QUESTION OF DATING AND ORIGIN OF THE OBJECT**

**Key words:** Nepal, kora sword, Himalayan weapons, Religious symbols, Buddhism, Lviv, Lviv Historical Museum.

The kora sword in the Lviv Historical Museum collection is a unique and rare artefact in Ukraine. However, the sword almost did not attract the attention of researchers. Koras are usually associated with Nepalese soldiers, the Gurkha troops/ That is not groundless – this kind of weapon was actively used in the times of the Gurkha wars and the unification of Nepal under the leadership of the Shah dynasty in the 1750s–1760s. The sword itself has cultural and religious significance in Indian / South Asian tradition – it is a sword of true Indian warrior, a true raja and a weapon of tantric Buddhist and Hindu deities. So, it is important to investigate the religious symbolism of the sword in Buddhism, and in this context the place of kora sword had in the religious practices and ideology of the Nepalese (as well as their neighbours) in pre-modern and early modern times. Often kora swords had images of the eye, lotus, or other religious symbols linked to Buddhist and Hindu Tantric ideas. The sword from the Lviv Historical Museum collection has the image of a solar sign.

It is possible to speak about a few main types of kora swords and their iconography. Basing on a comparison with existing objects from the museum and private art collections around the world, the author draws conclusions about the typification of kora swords. Thus it enables to reveal the type to which the sword from Lviv belongs. The analysis of the iconography of kora from Lviv Historical Museum including the images on the blade, the features and texture of the metalwork etc, also helps to date this Himalayan weapon

and the region of its origin. So it looks quite likely that the sword from Lviv is from 19 c., not 18 c., as it is attributed in the Museum.

The question of history of the Himalayan weapon in the museum, the circumstances of the arrival of the kora sword to the collection of the Lviv Historical Museum requires further research. Museum documents only confirm the arrival of the sword in 1940 from the Museum of Jan III, where it was kept as a deposit. There are reasons to say that the kora sword could be associated with a group of prominent Polish Orientalists who worked in Lviv in 1920–1930s. The author puts forward a hypothesis about the possible connection of the Nepalese sword with Professor Stefan Stasiak, an Indologist from Lviv University: the sword could have been brought by S. Stasiak from a trip to India in 1930s. Another hypothesis links the possibility of the sword to come to Lviv with the Polish alpinist expedition to the West Himalayas (to Nanda Devi East) in summer 1939. There first of all Jakub Bujak, a prominent alpinist from Lviv, is worth mentioning.

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## **ІНСТИТУТ РУКОПISУ НБУВ: ПАМ'ЯТКИ ПИСЕМНОСТІ СХІДНОГО ПОХОДЖЕННЯ (БУРЯТІЯ, ІНДІЯ, КАЛМІКІЯ, КИТАЙ, ТИБЕТ)**

**Ключові слова:** тибетський буддизм, книжкова колекція, Калмикія, санскрит, православні священики, санскрит, Ян Потоцький.

Складовою фонду пам'яток писемності східного походження в Інституті рукопису НБУВ (Ф. 74. Колекція східних рукописів 70 од. зб., XIII – кінець XIX ст.), поміж інших, є невелике зібрання (20 одиниць зберігання), різноманітне за своїм складом. Виокремлення цієї групи пам'яток – як друкованих (ксилографічних), так і рукописних – обумовлено її конструктивними особливостями, пов'язаними із двома книжковими традиціями – індійською (горизонтальною) і китайською (вертикальною) – з їхніми різними типами писемності, специфікою писального