

Samuel Beal²¹² takes the Licchavis or Vajjis to be a branch of the 'Yue-Chi' forgetting that the latter came to India in the first century B.C. while the Licchavis were a highly civilized and prosperous people in the sixth century B.C.

In the opinion of J.P. Hewitt, there are "very strong indications that the Vajjians, who were certainly the earliest settlers in the country, were of Kolarian race who had lived there long before the arrival of the Dravidians and Āryans". The learned writer ignores the existence of the pre-Vajjian Āryan dynasty of rulers at Vaiśālī.²¹³

V.A. Smith²¹⁴ found similarities between the customs of the Tibetans and those of the Licchavis in the practice of the exposure of the dead and also in judicial procedure. And hence he came to the conclusion that the Licchavis, the ruling tribe or clan in Vṛjī country of which Vaiśālī was the capital, was really a Tibetan (or Mongolian) tribe which settled in the plains during the prehistoric times. The view has been criticised by B.C Law, K.P Jayaswal, H.C. Raychaudhuri and others on the following grounds²¹⁵:

- (1) The custom of the disposal of the dead was prevalent among the Vedic Āryans from whom the Licchavis were descended ;
- (2) In the case of Tibet we have only three courts as against the seven tribunals of the Licchavis; further we know very little about the relative antiquity of the Tibetan procedure which might very well have been suggested by the system expounded in the Aṭṭhakathā.

S.C. Vidyābhūṣaṇa²¹⁶ suggests a Persian origin for the Licchavis holding that the name Licchavi (*Nicchavi* of Manu, X.22) was derived from the Persian city of *Nisibis*. There is very little in Vidyābhūṣaṇa's surmise except a fancied resemblance between the names *Nicchivi* and *Nisibis*. Inscriptions of the Achaemenids are silent about any Persian settlement in the Eastern India in the sixth or fifth century B.C. The Licchavi people were more interested in *Yakṣa caityas* and the teaching of Mahāvīra and the Buddha than in the deities and Prophets of Iran.²¹⁷

The Licchavis have been invariably represented as kṣatriyas in ancient Indian literature. As the Mahāparinibbāṇa-Sutta