



The impacts of Modernization on the traditional Sakawa Sili festival in the Rai Kirat community of Nepal: A case study of the Rai community



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Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in Indigenous Studies
Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education
Norway
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DEDICATED TO ALL THE RAI KIRATI PEOPLE.

To be aware of your past means to be strong for your future.

Acknowledgment.

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Sincerely,

Dik Bahadur Rai

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Abstract.

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the different aspects of the Sakawa Sili indigenous festival where the Sili dance is performed. Modernization and rituals theories are deeply observed to analyze my research questions. The main leading questions are: what is the importance of Sakawa Sili festival in Rai community? How it is celebrated? How is this festival affected by modernization and globalization? How do younger generations understand this festival? And how does this festival help to revitalizing the Rai's culture? These questions will be addressed in this study based on research collected during fieldwork.

Basically this traditional indigenous festival is a celebration of praying to the Goddess of nature for good crops and protection from the natural calamities. Its meanings lie in the movements of bodies and how the dancers respond. Viewer can feel its music, sounds, shapes and directions. Every movement has its own senses while performing the dance. This study focused on how these movements are influenced by modernization and globalization. It is visible during the festival period that participants move their body in different ways like fast, slow and mixed. However, the important thing is that it is a way of motions that is found in Kirati land from more than thousands years.

Several questions are raised to question the knowledge about the festival such as history, origin, importance and its rituals values. Mainly in order to answers my research questions, several tools and techniques were implemented. Through qualitative data my research questions will be observed and the impacts of modernization in the festival will be analyzed. How the impacts of modernization and globalization could positively and negatively affect the ritual will also be observed from this thesis. Important aspects like its origin, types, importance, rituals values and cultural revitalization are also analyzed in this study.

The study examines the impacts of modernization and the complex relationship with globalization. Research closely observed its impacts on the Sakawa Sili festival in multiple ways. This thesis also discusses the fundamental questions about rights of indigenous people, questions of self-determination, indigenous identity and power. However, this study focuses on the impacts of modernization on the festival and

examines the impacts on cultural and rituals values in Rai Kirati indigenous community in Nepal.

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CHAPTER ONE

1: Introduction.

The main purpose of this chapter is to focus on the research methodology used in my study. This section presents brief overviews of the thesis and provides the reader the important aspects of this study such as the research questions, theoretical overview, and the main focus of the study.

1.1 Main focus of the study

The aims of this study are to focus on the cultural aspects of the Rai Kirati indigenous community of Nepal, a community that has its own cultural, identity and way of life. Mostly Rai people traditionally inhabited the eastern part of Nepal. This study also tries to explore various knowledge and characteristics of particular the Kirati community, and the effects of modernization on traditional Sili dance in modern time. Sakela is the name of the festival and Sili is the name of traditional dance, which is performed in the festival (Sakela, 2012).

According to the Kirati holy book 'Mundhum',¹ the year is divided into two phases, Ubhauri and Udhauli. Ubhauri is in the Baisakh (April/May) and Udhauli is in Mangsir (Nov/Dec). In this month the festival is celebrated. Sakela Udhauli is the harvest season, and it is a way of giving thanks to nature for providing good harvest. Sakela Ubhauri is also called Bhumi puja (Land worship) and is taken as worship for good farming and plantation. Basically this festival is the celebration of praying to the Goddess of nature for good crops and protection from the natural calamities. In this traditional festival everybody dances with the sounds of different drumbeats and rhythms of music. Ways of worshipping nature are reflected in this dance while it is performed. Along with cymbals, drums and different traditional instruments the dances are usually performed twice a year. The dancers sometimes mimic the agricultural acts.

¹ Mundhum is the ancient religious scripture and folk literature of the Kirati people of Nepal. Mundhum means 'the power of great strength' in the Kirati language. It covers many aspects of the Kirati culture, customs and traditions. It teaches many things such as treat all things with respect, show gratitude to mother earth, Mother Nature and the ancestors.

The studies also focus on the impacts of the modernization in negative and positive ways.

For examples, the negative impacts include the loss of culture, customs and moral values. Among its positive impacts is that people are becoming more conscious toward saving the traditional values of the Kirati culture. The study tries to explore cultural, religious and traditional aspects of Sili dance. To analyzing the topic modernization and rituals theories will be used to address and discuss.

1.2 General background of the study.

In Nepal the term 'Janajati' is used to signify various nationalities, indigenous people, tribal peoples, native peoples, aboriginals and first settlers. The constitution of Nepal (2006) defines Nepal as a multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic nation. as Additionally, NEFIN (Nepal federation of indigenous nationalities) also defines indigenous people as referring these terms such as 'Janajatis, and 'Mulbasi'² that means indigenous people are original inhabitants or native peoples. In addition the word 'janajati' signifies the nationalities, indigenous peoples, tribal peoples, native peoples and first settlers. Both recognized and unrecognized there are fifty-nine indigenous groups in Nepal. Though we have diversity in our culture the participation of indigenous people in government level are less when it comes to the right to self-determination, rights to equal representation, self-government rights and cultural rights. It seems we all are fighting or struggling for our identity politics, ethnic discrimination, disempowerment, cultural destruction and economic marginalization (Subba Chaitanya, 2009:2).

Among 59 indigenous groups of Nepal, the Rai Kirati people are one of the indigenous nationalities who have their own language, cultural and traditional. In history it was

² Adibasi janajatis were identified the indigenous nationalities of Nepal, which groups have their own mother tongue and traditional culture. Most important things is it does not fall under Hindu hierarchical caste structure. Janajatis are spread in every part of the country, there categorization are Mountain Himalaya -18,Hills -23,Inner Terai – 7,Terai – 11.The main characteristics of Janajatis are as fellows. Having we feeling, written and oral history, traditional homeland or geographical area, own civilization and has had no decisive role in the politics and government of modern Nepal.

written that Rai Kirati people were first Mulbasi (Original inhabitants or native people) of Nepal who ruled the Nepal many years. According to the census of (2001) there are six lakhs (six hundred thousand) thirty-five thousand one hundred fifty-one Rai Kirati people in Nepal (635,135). Among them there are 22 languages, cast and sub-casts that are all diverse in their different settlements. Although the Rai's represent one community it is a surprise that these people speak numerous languages amongst themselves. And, these numerous languages have been categorized as separate languages of the same Rai community. This is the only community in Nepal that speaks over approximately 30 languages as its mother tongue. The Sakela Sili festival plays a vital role to unite the Rai people in one place. It helps to share common identity, traditional Kirati culture, language and festival. Seeking better opportunity, these people have migrated all over the world. But in the festival time all Rai Kirati people gather in one place to celebrate the festival. The festival can be seen as an example of an imagined community (Leonenko, 2008:7) that helps to bring Rai Kirati people to one place together. According to Benedict Anderson a nation is constructed by the socially imagined community, so this Sakela Sili festival can create a sense of nationalism and cultural revitalization too.

No one knows exactly which age or time period this Sakewa Sili festival started. However it first was mention that it was started over 1348 years ago. (Chandra Kumar, 2007:1-2). To research this traditional dance Sakela Sili we first have to know its meaning and its origin, why it is called Sakela Sili? To know its real meaning it is not enough to analyze its outer part but it is important to interpret its inner meaning. For example, why are these dances performed in different ways and how are they associated with traditional values? One of my informants said this dance can be demonstrated in four ways. First its meanings lie in nature's activities for example acting just like rivers, trees, Sun and Moon. The second type of Sili can be only performed by the Kirati priest Nakcho. Nakcho moves their bodies like they do in war and in the same way as a hunter. The Name of the third type of movement is Sumdsili where a viewer can feel, see and observe the acting of movements like how Kirati people used to act in agriculture activities. The fourth way the dancing is symbolized is how we purify and feel our soul. In this way dancer act in the same way as making life beautiful and wonderful. So to

analyze and interpret my research questions and to know its hidden meanings, these ways of dancing could be important part of my thesis.

Kirati people believe in their holy book Mundhum and practice their religion according to that. Mundhum is an oral tradition, which is passed on from generation to generation. Mundhum teaches the Rai people many things like that the earth is our mother and we have to care for her. We should only take from the earth what is needed and nothing more, be truthful and honest at all times. In every type of traditional rituals the performers are mostly Rai Kirati people using traditional natural things. It also shows that these people are nature worshiper. For example still today in the Rai people's houses everybody keeps three stones in separate places for worship. They took these stones as their God Suminma and Paruhang for that Sila (Stone) as well as their origin God, universe, ancestors and well-wisher.

To respect nature, the Rai people worship their God twice a year in the name of the Sakela Sili festival, wishing for good crops, good harvesting and a good future for all creatures. Another important dimension of the festival is to meet relatives and to return home if we are far from our home. In the festival everybody wears a traditional Rai Kirati dress. Adults can take it as a perfect time to choose their couples for marriage, and it is also taken as the best time to start new things to do. It is believed or taken that after celebrating the Sekewa festival people start to harvest and plant their crops because it is believed that after the festival the land's power of fertilizer will be increased. (Balakacha Nirdosh, 1992, 8-24).

However, though there are many different ways of performing this dance, its meaning also lies elsewhere. The Sakala with its dancing can be compared to the Hake dance in the Maori community in New Zealand, the Bush and Corroboree dance in Australia, or the Sun Dance in America and Canada. In addition the Sili festival gives a sense of the Sami festival of Riddu Riddu in Norway as well.

This study also tries to address the modernization effects on Sili in this traditional dance. Nobody can ignore that there is a big clash between indigenous knowledge and scientific knowledge. The modern world is hugely changed through development in communication, transportation, satellites TV channels, internet and cell phones. Using

these electronic goods, it has both impacts on any traditional way of life. These studies also try to dig out the impacts of modernization in the traditional Sili dance.

The modern world is like a global village, for indigenous communities are affected by Westernization in the clothes we wear, food that we eat and the culture that we adopted as fashion is the result of modernization. If we looked seriously at the Sili traditional dance we can find lots of changes due to modernization. Younger generations are adopting Western fashion such as Western music, dance, clothes and ornaments etc. rather than traditional cultural dress. We can find that these things are now used in the Sakela Sili festival too. Modern Western musical instruments are replacing traditional instruments that were used during the ancestors' period. In the Sili dance, lots of traditional ways of dancing have already disappeared and new ways are emerging. There might be many contributing factors but never-the-less all young generations are really interested in our culture, language and Kirti religion too.

1.3 Research questions and objectives of the study.

'The main purpose of this study is to investigate different aspects of the Sili traditional indigenous dance. The study has the following objectives:

- What is the importance of the Sili dance in the Rai cultural community?
- How it is celebrated? Its characteristics, significance, current trend and its external links.
- How are the younger generations celebrating this traditional Sakawa festival?
- What are the impacts of the modernization?

1.4 Methodologies employed.

No method is better or superior to others. However, it depends on how we can justify which methods we are adopting in our research. According to Silverman, *'yet any good researcher knows that the choice of method that is appropriate to what you are trying to find out.'* (Silverman David, 2005:6). There are many ways of doing research in any particular field. To research is to search again, to take another more careful look and to find out more in regard to the focus of a particular topic. Therefore in this study through qualitative methods my research questions will be analyzed as a carefully, critical and thorough seeking of facts.

We cannot predetermine which methods we are adopting in our research. In this study a qualitative approach will be applied. For analysis, the research questions various methods, ways, tools and techniques were implemented for the study. Interviews, observation, focus groups, discussion and primary and secondary data collection are the sources of interpretation of research questions. The research is mainly based on the link between anthropological and historical orientations. In a way of systematic and depth study, this research will search for investigation and interpretation to discover or find out valuable facts which would be useful for further application or utilization for those who are interested in research on the Sakawa Sili traditional indigenous people's festival in the Rai Kirati community.

1.4.1 Interviews, Conversations, Focus group discussion and participation observation.

In any type of qualitative research area interviews are widely employed. To find out the answers of research questions both types of interviews were applied. In this study also semi-structured and unstructured interviews were in used. All my informants are related to the Kirat Rai cultural community. They are the responsible persons of Yayoka, which is the Kirat Rai cultural community. They all are involved as inside members of the Kirat Rai cultural community and have had different experiences working in this field. I took the permission before I mentioned their names in this study.

Ganesh Rai is a well-known photo journalist as well as chairperson of Yayoka. In the way of interviews he shared his experiences while he participated in the Sakawa Sili festival. I asked him about the impacts of modernization on the festival. He explained his answer like this: modernization does not mean only negative impacts but it has positive impacts too. Awareness of the culture meant younger generations started to wear traditional Kirati dresses in his experience in the festival. In his journalist career he has captured many pictures highlighting the positive impacts of modernization.

Jaya Kumar Rai is a teacher, researcher and cultural leader. With him I talked about ways of the dance and he informed me that there are four ways of dancing. He informed me now-a-days, impacts of modernization are starting to be visible in the festival. Especially he focused on electronic instruments, which help to modernize the festival. Western music and drums shapes the festival in modernized ways.

Mr. Chandra Kumar hatuwali Rai is a well-known writer in the field of Kirati Rai culture. He has published many books, which deal with Rai culture and mostly the Sakawa Sili festival. I asked him the same questions the impacts of modernization. His answers are more focused on ways dancing is changing in position. His opinion about modernization is that younger generations are starting to create new forms of dancing which is from their own ways.

Natra mani Rai is also one of my informants. He has had a long career in the field of Kirati cultural. By profession he is a researcher, teacher and community cultural leader. He has both views on modernization impacts in Sakawa festival. Additionally he suggested that I look at its impacts in both positive and negative ways.

Due to the time period participant observation was not possible. However I have had many experiences having participated in this festival before in different places in Kathmandu. The secondary sources for example, CD, VCD, journals and articles were collected to support the observation of Rai kirati cultural practices. All my informants provided me secondary data, which they have. The interviews were done in the university, in school, in the Kirati temples, in the NEFIN office, in the Yayoka central office and newspapers publication office.

In the way of semi-structured and unstructured interviews, I asked lots of questions to my informants based on the research questions. I started my interviews as a simple conversation and further tried to develop the questions, which I set before having the interviews. To define the unstructured interviewer writer Bryman defines the researcher as using at most an aide-memoire as a brief set of prompts to him or herself to deal with a certain range of topics (Bryman, 2008:438). So in the unstructured interview, there are no questions or set number of how many questions you should ask for your informants, it just like the conversation. Therefore writer Bryman emphasized the words by quoting Burgess and he writes 'unstructured interviewing tends to be very similar in character to a conversation, (Burgess 1984 in Bryman 2001). So, in a way of taking interviews I also feel that it's just like a random questioning to get the answers.

I tried to apply both interviews methods in my interviews section. In addition I tried to follow the method of a semi-structured interview. Before following this method I set questions according to my research questions. According to Bryman, 'the researcher has

a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered, often referred to as an interview guide, but the interviewee has a great deal of leeway in how to replay. (Baryman, 2008:438). In my interview process I also had similar problems that the interview's questions were not exactly following what was mentioned in the schedule. But I tried to follow a script, which I wrote in a certain extent. I focused particularly on the issues which I raised in my research questions.

To analyze, interpret and to record I took photographs, fieldwork notes, maps; their emails address and contact numbers if it is necessary while writing my thesis. The most important things are from all my informants because I collected lots of information and data, which is most useful to interpret and to analyze my research questions.

The focus group interview is also applied during the fieldwork research. The focus group technique is a method of interviewing that involves more than one, usually at least four interviewees. The best part of this method is that in a short period of time we can get relevant data from our informants. It save the time and traveling cost at once. There is evidence that, although they tend to be shorter than comparable face-to-face focus groups, they can generate a considerable amount of relevant data for the researcher. (Reid 2005 in Baryman 2008). Additionally ' the focus group contains elements of two methods the group interview, in which several people discuss a number of topics and what has been involved in a particular situation.' (Merton 1956 in Baryman 2008). Baryman suggested that in group discussion there are more possibility to find out new things that are relevant to interpretation of the data. People can know more about relevant issues, because involving more numbers it is more possibility to find out more new things in group discussion.

These types of method were used several times in my fieldwork research too. I had success applying this method at the Rai Kirat cultural community office in Yayokha. Discussion was held in the Yayokkha central office where members of the cultural community were taken for the participation in the discussion. Aim of the discussion was to find out the answer according to the research questions. Discussions also tried to investigate the different aspects of Sili dance and its impact on modernization as well as what is the importance of Sili dance in the Rai cultural community? How it is celebrated? Its characters, significance and current trend. Additionally its traditional values were discussed in the focus group.

1.4.2 Data collection tools and techniques.

In a way of research lots of tools and techniques were used to gather the data.

Photography, Diary and making notes were highly encouraged in my research. I have not used any digital recorder during interviews. To build the strength of memory most of my time I used the Diary and photograph. Because I feel that it can help to memorized what happened in the past while taking interviews or observations. In a fast-paced hour it is fruitful to take notes and photographs to restore our memory. According to Ditton, *'it may be necessary, therefore, to develop strategies of taking small amounts of time out, though hopefully without generation the anxieties.'* (Ditton 1977 in Baryman 2008:516). It is true that it helped to reduce our time and worry while in collection the data. Most of time I also took a diary and photograph to collect the data. In the period of focus group discussion, interview and observations of particular places and areas I applied this method in my fieldwork too. It helps to interpret and analyze the data of what we have recollection of in our fieldwork. It is the best way to keep our memory in fresh condition.

Another important tool is photography, it might be a main source of data and it has various roles with relation to social research. Lots of meanings can be seen in images of photographic and its underlying reality. I prefer to take a digital camera in my fieldwork research, to support, analyze or interpret the data through pictures. Pictures were taken in Rai Kirati cultural museums, temples and my informants while in interview. All these pictures could be vital sources to understand Rai Kirati cultural and to analyze the hidden meanings which lie on these photos.

1.4.3 Sources of Secondary data.

Secondary analysis entails the analysis of data that others have collected, but as this simple scenario suggests, this need not necessarily be the case. (Baryman, 2008:29). In my case also, many books, journals, newspapers, CDs, and VCDs were collected for analysis and to interpret my thesis topic. All books and journals were written by anthropologists, and they have long experiences in their particular fields. Besides that other documents were collected from the university's library, Yayoka central office and NEFIN office. I also collected books which were written by international authors that is

“Festival of Nepal,” by Mary m, “People of Nepal,” by Dor Bahadur bista (1976). Besides that “Sakala great festival of Kirati people,” by Chandra Kumar Rai (2007). “Kirat mudhuam and Kirat bada,” by Imam Singh chamjung (1961). Others include “Sakala one identity,” by Nirdosh balakacha (1992). “Kirat’s cultural and religion” by Tanka Bahadur Rai and “Kirat cultural” by Mukarum Rajan. Each and every books deals with Kirati culture, religion and civilization from history to present.

1.4.4 Challenges and difficulties in collection the data.

Any type of research demands researcher’s contributions, efforts and justification in certain research area. As the challenges part of my fieldwork research I have not taken any interviews from elder people from my own Rai culture community because of short time period, financial difficulties and safety. To research in the main Rai settlement through many factors it is difficult. The main problem is transportation. The Rai Kirati community is so diverse in their settlement too. Their ways of speaking languages, culture and customs are different according to their sub-cast. I had to take almost all of my interviews in Kathmandu where I found my informants to collect the data. Most of my informants were related to the Rai Kirat cultural community. They have long experiences and careers in this field for example, chairperson of the Kirat Rai community, researcher on the Sakawa Sili festival, journalist, teacher and professor.

Kirat Pradesh (Kirat’s state) which is traditionally inhabited by Rais is called Manjh Kirat, (Middle kirat). The Rai settlements are spread along the valley slopes of the Dudh Kosi and Arun rivers. Most Rai settlements lie at altitudes of three to six thousand feet above sea level (Bista, 1976:35). But, it is hard to reach there because of various factors such as financial problems, long distance journey and short period of time.

Another problem is that for some who know a lot about Kirati culture and issues they have already migrated to seek better opportunity and some have passed away. (Rai Tanka, 2003:10-15). In my case though I am from this same Rai Kirati community but for a long period of time my parents migrated from that origin place Khotang towards Illam that lies in the Far East part of Nepal. That could be part of challenges to be there in Khotang and collect the data. Khotang is consider as a remote district of Nepal. It is only possible to reach after taking flights from Kathmandu and walking for few days to reach the Rai Kirati community. It is impossible to do research in such short periods of time. Another challenge is that even if I can reach them, most Rai Kirati communities speak

their own mother tongue Kirati language which I am not familiar with. Although the Rais represent one community, they speak numerous languages among themselves. This is the only community in Nepal that speaks over 30 languages as its mother tongue.

Diversity is another problem while doing my fieldwork. Within one Rai community ways of celebrating the Sakawa Sili festival are different. Meanings and the ways of performing are also different with each other. It is very hard to stick to one group to research the Sakawa Sili festival in Rai community. Migration and the gap between generations are also visible problems while conducting my fieldwork because younger generations are less interested in Rai's traditional culture. And, most of Rai Kirati people migrated to the capital city of Kathmandu where I mostly took my interviews with my informants. Another difficulty is I cannot take any interviews with participants in the Sili festival because I did my fieldwork research in August, but the festival celebration months are September and April. It could be more interesting to take interviews of those who are participants in the Sakawa Sili festival, to collect their views towards the festival and to analyze how the festival plays a vital role in the Rai Kirati community in terms of identity, cultural and languages. Nevertheless I had previously participated in the festival many times in Kathmandu.

1.5 My role being an insider and outside researcher.

According to writer Spradley, "We see some of what goes on around us, we experience our own movements, we move through a sequence of activities as subjects, as the ones engaging in the activities. In short, we are insider." (Spradley, 1980:56). Being an insider researcher this definition somehow matches my fieldwork experiences. It is easier for me to experience, feel and to engage in my own community to collect the data. But because of many factors some time I had the experience of being an outsider too. Language problems also made me an outsider as well as I am not from origin place of Rai Kirati settlement areas.

Though I know more or less about my cultural community, it is hard to research how people's lifestyle was shaped by myth, ritual and religion. Being a part of the Rai indigenous cast, I have an experience from participating in our festival and rituals many times. But I never feel nor had an experience to know and to research deeply upon it, because I take it as our formality to participate. I never had any experiences where I

asked about Rai Kirati traditional values, rituals and festivals with the Rai's Kirati priest Nakcho. Behind that there are many reasons which I can describe as follows:

In Rai Kirati religion there are many sub-casts, and they have different ways of celebrating their festivals as well as several ways of doing rituals. As far as I am concerned, still today we are doing the same rituals which we did from our ancestor period. I only observed how our priest Nakcho worshiped, but I do not know how it is performed and what the actual ways of worshipping our Gods is. So this study is really fruitful to understand my own cultural community, how ritual and festival are celebrated in the Rai Kirati culture. In my fieldwork my role is almost one of being an insider. My experienced gained shows that there are lots of advantages to be an insider researcher because somehow we are familiar with our own culture, religion, languages and community. Plus it is easy to search and collect the secondary and primary data collection too.

1.6 Theoretical Discussions and Literature Review.

Modernization and rituals theories will be applied to analyze my research questions. To dismantle any types of discourse theory plays a vital role. In this theoretical part this research study tries to focus on modernization theory, how the modern knowledge displaces the traditional knowledge and how the modernization shaped the traditional living ways of life will be addressed.

1.6.1 Modernization.

Modernization theory will apply on the Rai Kirati traditional dance that we called Sili. Critically these theories will observe its impacts on Rai's traditional culture, religion, language and identity. The study also compares and contrasts between modernity, tradition, cultural and ritual perspective in the Rai Kirati community. In any traditional society measuring the impact of modernization is possible with many approaches. It brings the clash between traditional values versus modern development.

According to writer Østerud, '*At a more abstract level modernization means, for short, emancipation and adaptability*' (Østerud, 1993:37). In a developing nation just like Nepal, people freely adopt or experience the impacts of modernization in different ways for example, changing their personality, occupation, lifestyle and traditional values. While comparing modernization impacts on the Rai Kirati traditional culture mostly

young generations are adopting Western fashion through Western media, technology and the internet. Through the influence of western cultural younger generations especially are starting to forget their own mother tongue. Parents are also interested in teaching their children in English boarding schools so that it would be easy to get access to different fields in their future career. It is visible part of every day life in Rai Kirati cultural. How it brings the equality in the Kirati society will also be interpreted for example between rich and poor in the Rai community. Those who had jobs in the British army were consider a rich person and that makes younger generations attracted to the British armed forces. It is one indicator of how British culture has influenced Rai's young generations. It is one example of how traditional Kirati society turns towards the modern, which helps to make the society equal through different factors like education, economics and standard of living.

Modern Nepal was introduced after the territorial unification of Nepal by King Prithvinarayan Shah in 1769 (Bhattachan, 2003:4). After the unification by the Hindu King gradually indigenous nationalities lost their independence as well as their language, religion, culture and indigenous knowledge too. As a result the country was introduced to the modern language that is Nepali. The ruler started to impose one religion, one language and culture. That is the turning point of how the country began to modernize, by imposing Nepali language in all the state's policy. It could be compared to the political form of modernization, where writer Østerud called it as a state building (Østerud, 1993:37).

To develop, any traditional society has to change. So it led the traditional society towards the modern development process through different factors such as economic growth, modern technology and scientific development. It can also bring equality to the society. To measure the level of modernization first we have to look what types of changes that occur in traditional values and how it is displaced through the modernization. Let's look for example at how the Rai Kirat community was changed through modernization, how it brings the society in to inequality in ways that should be analyzed.

Modernization seems to be an unavoidable and undeniable factor in any traditional society. It cannot only be analysis through its negative impacts, but it has its positive impacts too. In the context of the Rai Kirati community its impacts could be measured in

different ways. For example, media and technology is the strongest influencing factor, which attracted the Kirti youth towards the Westerns fashion and Western culture. Advanced communication, media, television and internet are the largest factors modernizing the Kirati youth. We can see in the period of the Sakawa Sili festival how youth are participating while having Western fashion instead of Rai traditional dress. Influence of the Western culture is very high in younger generations like they were attracted with Western music like pop, rock, jazz and hip hop. If we deeply analyze in festival time, Western musical instruments were frequently used for sound productions.

Youth are mostly interested in learning Western languages, Western music and Western dances comparing to traditional Kirati Sili dance. Not only this, but Western culture have influenced traditional Kirti foods and their day-to-day way of living too. According to Grimen, "One compares a society with its past, or with other societies, in order to find out what is viable or defensible and what is not in social, cultural and intellectual development" (Grimen, 1993:197). It thus helps to indicate the changes in the society while comparing its traditional values and modern values. This theory can be applied in wide variety fields like economy, technology, culture and politics. In my research also through modernization theory Rai Kirti society will be critically observed regarding its past and present situation.

At present there are two schools of thought emerging in this field, one thought emphasizes the overwhelming economic and political forces that drive cultural change. This school predicts the decline of traditional values and their replacement with the modern values. The other school of thought emphasizes the persistence of traditional values despite economic and political changes. This school of thought assumes that values are relatively independent of economic conditions (Inglehart and Baker, 2000:20).

Modernization is highly taken as a Western process. But non-Western societies are not the only ones who have abandoned their traditional cultures. In the last half of the century other countries from East Asia like Japan have had a development in a name of modernization. Japan led the world in automobile manufacturing, consumer electronics and enjoys the world's highest of life expectancy. Industrialization and economic development is the main measurement of Japanese's modernization that shaped the world in new ways of development. The term modernization also refers to a way of

seeing the world in different ways, for example a conventional way of doing or seeing the things in custom, habit, cultural and religion. The term also refers to the distinction between new and old, tradition and modern. To apply modernization theory in the Rai Kirati traditional culture many definition will be applied to compare and contrast the Rai community in various ways like in terms of culture, language, religion and ethnic identity.

1.6.2 The Sili dance as ritual.

“The language of ritual is action itself. Ritual does what words alone cannot” (Paden William, 1998:98).

To analyze the Kirati Rai’s traditional rituals, ritual theory will be applied in this research study. In any traditional indigenous cultural society myth and ritual play a vital role to practice the religion. Myth does not stand by itself but is tied to ritual. To practice the rituals people continue to do what their ancestors did before.

According to writer William ritual is defined as “*Behavior marked by prescribed rules*” (Paden, 1988:94). Always it is done through prescribed rules, which have existed for a long period of time in any type of society. Though it displays different types of images, behavior and mimicking acting, it is done by the ritual’s rules. In Rai’s indigenous society also in the Sakawa Sili festival we can see lots of traditional rituals performed by our priest Nakcho. In ritual practices every types of behavior, images, movement and positions have its own ritualistic meaning. For example, fasting, prayer and purifications are the forms of rituals conducted by the priest. The general feature of every type of rituals is the form of expression and form of display.

In Rai’s culture it is performed through making different shrines as well in Sakawa Sili festival. The meaning of its rituals lie in its performance, which is visible and whose actions create more meanings than words. For examples, while performing the Sakawa Sili dance at once it brings lots of meanings, which we cannot always describe with words. Most of the time its meanings lie in how it is expressed or how it is symbolized. It is done at a particular time or ritualistic periods. It could be certain prayers, mantras and songs. It is done together by acting or by symbolic objects. For examples, in mourning rituals spreading water, oil or animals blood may be part of the purification.

In Rai culture too spreading chicken's blood on a particular shrine before starting the festival purifies the priest. Additionally yeast water purifies the shrine.

It is done for a certain time and certain period. It is done by acting or by symbolic objects. It is just as instrumental in creating new forms of life and relationships (ibid). It helps to build new forms of life as well as it helps to save and promote the particular religious, language and culture through celebration and festivals such as the Sakawa Sili in the Rai community. In different ways, celebrating dances, feasts and campfires are rituals in certain communities. It does not take place always at fixed times but it depends on events. Not only in the planting and harvesting period but it also in birth, marriage and death. According to writer William, "*Ritual profoundly shapes and expresses how we exist in time*" (William, 1988:120). It is the form of language, which has had its own traditional ways of expression which cannot be said effectively in any other medium.

In ritualistic point of views in the Rai community there are still many rituals and myths that existed in modern period too. For examples dreams, death, soul, natures, sun and moon was taken as the root of the myths which we see in their rituals practices. Sakawa Sili rituals can bring the individual towards the society, which he is a member. Catherine Bell calls it strengthen and bond attaching nature (Bell, 1997:50). It's also a form of expression through symbolic actions that express the sociological truths and cosmological terms (ibid). In the Rai Kirati community too multiple rituals were performed to practice the religion or to develop the culture in various ways. Multiple rituals like purification, festivals, sacrifice and worships are the forms of rituals.

Chapter Two: Some important aspects of Rai Kirati people.

2.1 Introduction:

This chapter focuses on the context of the Kirati people in terms of history, culture, social, political and religious identity. Apart from that I will try to mention the rituals that are found in the Rai Kirati community such as life passage rituals related to birth, death, and marriage and so on. Further, the recent political, social, demographical and indigenous identity politics will be covered.

2.2 History of Kirati people: As an indigenous community of Nepal.

In the history of Nepal, first recorded, though still legendary, history began with the Kirat dynasty that arrived first in the Kathmandu valley and ruled over it. The first King of this dynasty was Elam, also known as Yalambar, who was referenced in the great Hindi epic Mahabharata. According to the first historian of Nepal, Baburam Acharya, the Kirati people came to Nepal in about 700BC and ruled over it. The first king of this Kirati dynasty was Yalambar. In the history of Nepal this Kirati period was taken as a very significant one because it was taken as the longest period that extended from pre historic to historic period. In the ancient Hindu scriptures, Nepal is referred to the 'Kirat Desh' or 'the land of Kirats'.

All together there were 29 kings of the Kirati dynasty who ruled over Nepal for about 1225 years. It is mentioned in history that they ruled Nepal from about 900BC to 300AD (Upreti 1994:15). On the basis of the Puranas and other ancient religious texts, it is presumed that the Kirati dynasty was ruled in Nepal after Gopal and Mahipal. The first king of this dynasty was Yalambar, who defeated Bhuvan Singh; the last one was Ahir dynasty who established the Kirat rule in Nepal. He extended his kingdom as far as the Tista river in the east and the Trishuli in the West. The Kirati people were the aborigines of the northeastern Himalayas. They were short, had robust bodies, broad checks, flat noses and dark eyes. They were well trained in the art of warfare and were consider as very skillful archers (ibid).

Before the unification of Nepal, the part of 'Kirat Pradesh, used to be called Manjh-Kirant that is 'Middle Kirant. It is the land that is traditionally inhabited by the Rai kirati people. Following the unification of the Kingdom of Nepal, Rais were given rights of Kipat autonomy and ownership of the land in 'Majh Kirant. It's assumed that the place is spread along the valley slopes of the Dudh Koshi and Arun rivers which is big rivers among seven big rivers in Nepal. Pallo Kirant (Far Kirant) and Manjh Kirant (Middle Kirant) is the main territory of present day Kirati people. In these areas Kirati people lived thousands of years ago. Manjh Kirant was broken up into five districts: Solu Khumbu, Okhaldhunga, Khotang, Bhojpur and Udaipur. It is also said that Rais occupied a much larger area than where they are found today. On Lalmohar (Certificates affixed with the red seal) during the period of King Rajendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev mentions that the parts of Solu Khumbu District and its pasture land also belonged to the Rai community, which is presently occupied by the Sherpa people (Bista,1967:35).

In the present political scenario lots of debates have been started concerning who is the actual Kirati people of Nepal. Debate about questions of identity and the legitimacy about identity among the various ethnic groups in Nepal. Kirati is the old Sanskrit word that is related to two main meanings. The first one can be understood as 'highlanders, a meaning referring to the form of Shiva (God of mountains) and another one is tribal people. There are lots of terms about Kirat that is used in the old texts such as Mahabharata, Ramayana and Purana (Hindi great epics). In old records about the history of Nepal, numerous terms describe the Kirati such as "The first inhabitants of Nepal were Kirat" as well as "one of the oldest civilizations in the world" (Schlemmer, 2004:126).

In the period of the Kirat dynasty in Nepal there was no social or gender discrimination as in the caste system. Women were not subordinated to their husbands; it seems that Kirati have been practicing democratic socialism as their political system (Mukarung Subha, 2009). Being brave, a strong sense of community and solidarity were important and practiced through their religion 'Mudhum'. Questions can be raised for example as to how they could form the brilliant civilization, how they practiced their rules and how they managed to become a small group of tribes far away in the mountains? But it was declared many times written in history that, when the Kirati kings ruled the Kathmandu valley Mudhum was unique and true. But after the Hindus arrived they declared the war

upon Kirati people. They destroyed everything, everything was divided and many people were killed. They displaced the Kirati people (ibid: 127).

According to Kirati myths, in ancient time Kirati people used to cultivate cotton wools through special insects called 'Karata'. From this word kirati was derived. In an ancient period the Greek people are also familiar to kirati people. They called Kirati people as a 'kidaya'. In the present time there is a debate about Kirati people and where they actually came from in Nepal, but never the less the word Kirati was mentioned as a brave and strong people in great Hindi epics. As another example of word 'Kiraya,' Kirat has its origin in the Kirati language meaning 'Kiraya' or strong animals such as lion and tiger. That way Kirati people consider themselves as like tigers or lions (Rai, 2000:27). In addition, in any Kirati community flags bear the symbols of animals such as lions and tigers. In the Kirati holy book 'Mudhum' it is mentioned that the word Kirati also correlations with purification. That means at that time Kirati people were considered as a pure soul who lived in the Kilasa Mountain.

To prove the age of Kirati civilization in Nepal we can find numerous ancient arts and sculptures in the Kathmandu valley. For example, near the temple of Pashupatinath we can see the oldest statue called 'Birupakcha'. This famous stone art was made in the age of the Kirati dynasty. Not only this statue but also lots of stone arts were spread all around the temple. And, it is proved that in this Kirati civilization lot of arts, culture, education and business was developed. Before the Licchavi dynasty, the Kathmandu valley was ruled by the Kirat dynasty. Comparing these two periods, the development rate was high in the Kirati period because the Kirat dynasty was in rule before the Licchavi dynasty. To give social justice, the words such as kuthar, kul, sol and suli was developed in Kirati age. From these words we can assume that the age of Kirati dynasty was the golden age of Nepal.

If we deeply analyze the ancient history of Nepal, we find that the ancient people were the Kirati people. It is also said that before a thousand years ago these people came to Nepal as tribe people. In the age of the 4th century the Licchavi arrived in Nepal, and they started ruling the Nepal by destroying Kirat age through war. But never-the-less we can assume that the Kirati age was consider as a golden age of Nepal. According to the historian Bal Chandra sharma, from the age of Kirati dynasty, Nepal was developed with moral, economic, social and cultural aspects of life.

Talking about its indigenous identity, among 59 indigenous groups of Nepal, the Rai Kirati people are the one who have their own distinct cultural and ethnic identity. Lots of problems have to be addressed by the government such as cultural identity, equal religious parties, representation in political levels and administration level. Through the name of federal government, the whole development processes are the main issues of present Nepal.

The Sakela dance is popular in the Rai kirati community. Sharing of newly harvested foods in Nwagi are the main task of the festival. It seems that the Rai cast is not a tribe but a collectivity of various linguistic, cultural and social subgroupings because within this caste, various clans and sub-clans were found. Writer Lee wrote “jati Rai uti kura” or there are as many languages as there are Rais (Lee,2005:10). Beside Nepal, these casts were found in other districts outside the country as in India and other foreign countries. The population of Rais, according to the national census of 2001, is 635,151.

In the 21st century there are lots of debates about Kirati people, concerning where they are from and where is the actual place of these people? These are the big issues in the context of the origin. There is much evidence that often gets confused; some evidence says that the Kirati people are very ancient tribes of Nepal. According to Father Geseph, he defines the word kirati as a hilly areas people of Nepal. Especially Rai and Limbu caste are known as a Kiart (Hang, 1998:5).

There are many theories concerning the Kirati ethnic origins. Some used to say that their ancestors came from Tibet. There is a general assumption also that people who are considered as an indigenous groups of Nepal have faces similar to Mongolian ,Chinese or Tibetan faces. Thus, people often guess that these people are probably from these places. However, these people are considered as the ancient people of Nepal. The Limbus and Rai are almost considered as a Kirati people of Nepal; Limbus settlements are in the far eastern part and Rai are in the Middle Eastern hills areas. The word Kirat also is found in the Sanskrit language, an ancient language found all over the world. The word exists since from 3rd or 4th century (Rai, 2007:25).

2.3 Geographical settlement patterns of Rai Kirti community past and present.

In present time we find diverse settlements of Rai Kirati people all over the world. But the traditional land of the Rai's belongs to Solukhumbu. From the historical period of time these Rai people used to live in Majh or Middle Kirat to the east of the Likhu River and the west of the Arun River. At the present, their settlements are in the districts of Bhojhpur, Okhaldhunga, Udayapur, Khotang, Solukhumbu, Sakhawasabha, and Illam and there are also some diaspora Rai Kirati people living outside Nepal. We can find them in Darjeeling, Sikkim, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Bhutan too (Lee B, 2005:9). In history it was mentioned that around the 4th and 5th century these people lived for a long period of time in Kathmandu valley, the present capital of Nepal. After the unification of New Nepal by King Prithivirajya Shah mentioned in the *lalmohar* (certificates affixed with the red seal) that parts of "Kirant Pradesh" should belong to Kirati people that normally called the Kipat system (Besta, 1976:35)

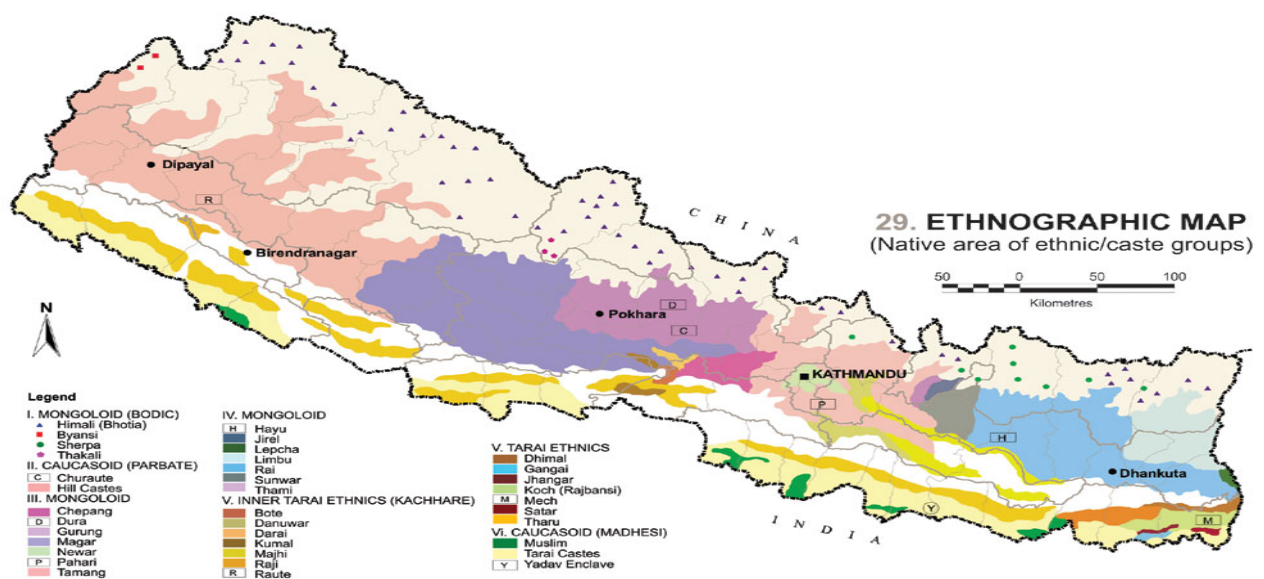


(Picture of Kirat autonomous state. Meanings of different colors are the different settlement areas of the Rai Kirati people in Nepal. In the Machhi, Koshi and Sargarmatha Zones are the traditional geographical areas where Rai people mostly found).

Kipat is a word which is not only in the mind of Kirati people but also in their hearts. Kipat is the land ownership or land tenure system of the Rai people. Forbes writes, "Kipat was the locus of considerable competition over contemporary claims to

resources, a symbol expressing the past glory of their ancestors. Kipat was part of the narrative that links the Rai to their past and to the lands on which that past has unfolded.’ (Forbes, 1894:42).

Kipat, symbolically and legally marked the point of intersection between local and national systems of governance. As a system of land tenure with specific rights and regulations attached up on it. The system is taken as symbol expressing the past glory of ancestors, which was unique in Nepal.



Source: Gurung, 1998.

2.4 Political situation of Kirati people.

After the people’s movement of 2006, Nepalese politics became more diverse. It was the movement that is against the undemocratic rule of King Gyanenderya. Millions of people have participated in this movement. As a result the country turned into a republic from a monarchy. The Election of Constituent assembly was held in 2008 and elected 601 members out of whom 218 identify them as the indigenous (Tamang, 2008:3). Not only particular Kirati people but as a whole the political situation of all indigenous people are the same.

Nepalese politics are based on excess of power, measured through poverty, education and different caste hierarchies. Nepal’s society can be divided broadly into distinct social groups. Caste society is the Hindu system and is based on the idea that the society is

divided into hierarchies. That means different types of privileges are afforded according to the caste status (Tamang, 2010:95). In the new constitution-making process the indigenous people's movement is struggling to raise their voices in the new constitution through participation, representation, territories and federal systems (ibid:98).

After the unification of New Nepal by King Pirthivi Narayan Shah, ethnic groups have been denied by the state; it's a long 238 year history. All indigenous groups have been suppressed, oppressed and marginalized; the state continues to exclude them from all kinds of state welfare schemes and state benefits directly goes in to the pockets of those who are in power. As far as concerning the Rai cast in present political scenario, there are a handful people those who are involved in Nepalese politics. This is affected by many factors but politics is the primary factor. Historically they had the political decision to join in India and British Gurkha armies. As a result they were far from mainstream politics, which is the political discourse to suppress the Rai people. It was legalized in the period of Rana prime Minister, Bir shamsher Rana in 1886. They also have certain agreements for example, when each soldier enrolled they had to get a certain amount of money from British government, Gurkha soldiers for example should not be ranked higher than a subedar. As a result the British government were given a free hand to select Gurkhas for their armed forces.

2.5 The occupation of Rai Kirati people.

Farming is the main occupation of the Rai people. Mostly they cultivated maize, millet, wheat, mustard in dry terraces, and rice in the wet fields. The grains grown are mostly for their own daily needs such as to use in festivals and to feed the animals. Besides that they use it to make spirits and beer to sell at the bazazr at the local market. In almost all households women raise buffalo, pigs and chickens, and they run tiny provision stores for supplementary income, especially used to sell homemade beer and alcohol (Lee, 2005:16).

In the past their profession was hunting and they liked to use bow and arrows, such as they used to weave their own clothes (Khandi) to wear. But in the modern times Rais are also employed in foreign military service and in foreign employment like the Indian and British armies. Along with their relatives they had the opportunity to work and stay aboard in countries like United Kingdom, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Brunei and

India. Because of that financially, comparing to other indigenous groups, they are better off.

Daily housework, such as cooking is the responsibility of the young women, especially girls. They tend to be the ones who gather firewood from the forests and carry water from the communal water sources while men are mostly involved in the agriculture activities. Inherently, Kirati people use the land under the Kipat system where the people exercised communal rights over the land, land that was tax free and included dominion over all cultivated lands, forests, streams and rivers within its bounds (Bista, 1967:38). But, raiti is the system that if other groups used the Kipat they have to pay tax to the owner of the land. People used to farm their land on their own, seldom are fields rented or cultivated by anyone others than the owners. Almost every single Rai village has a few soldiers, police or civil servants and older pensioners. Because of their bravery, fearlessness, honesty and straight-forward nature it's easy for them to join the armies. But, now days most Rais are also working with the government services too (ibid: 39).

These types of professions really show the Rai people as a hardworking people. The planting and harvesting seasons from spring to autumn gives them plenty of work to do and in winter time villagers make trips towards the important towns to buy necessary goods such as salt, oil and materials for clothing. They carry goods for trade rather than money on these trips. One farmer may have several fields and they shift from one to another according to the seasons. Traditional Bullocks are used for ploughing the land, the grass and dry undergrowth are burned away, supplying the soil with ash residue (ibid: 38). A majority of the people are in debt, the usual practice for money transaction to be made against security in the land.

2.6 The Religion of Rai people.

Kirat or Kirati is the religion of Rai people. We worship Sumnima and Paruhang as the archetypal proto female and proto male respectively. To worship the ancestors is significant and occurs to a great extent among the Rais. The religious text of Rai is Mudhum which is in oral form and is passed through one generation to another. It seems that Kirati religion has also been influenced from Buddhism that is practiced throughout the northern part of Nepal as well as Hinduism of the middle hills (Bista, 1967:43). To

worship many local deities is the traditional religious practice. Jalpa Devi is one of the main Gods and Goddesses living up in the Snow Mountains and saat kanya (seven virgins) are most commonly worshipped by the Rai people. The most important symbol of the Gods are the three stones where every types of religious rituals has to be start.

For every type of deities, foods have to be offered in every rituals occasions and festivals. There are numerous deities that exist in the Kirati religion for example Sikari, Sikatakhu-Budho, Balmo-Budhi ,Kulung-Budhi and Mangtewa- Budhi. According to local legends all of these ancestor gods are vanished alive in ancient days (Ibid). Nwagi is a one deiti, in ritual Rai people have to offer a few grains of rice before they start to eat. Another Khamang is considered the God of individual skills, the first piece of the meat is always offered to them when they are succeeding in the hunting. The religious leader are called the Ngopa or Nakcho, they announce verdicts of the Gods. They also act as a physician and treat the people by propitiating Gods and spirits during an illness (ibid).

According to the census of 2002 the number of people practicing Kirati religion are 636,151 representing 2.79% of the total population of Nepal. In the present time political and indigenous movement arose to encourage the Kirati people to refer to the religion as the Kirati religion (Lee, 2005:16). Among 12 kinds of religions it is the fourth largest of the major religions in Nepal.

2.7 Rituals that exist in the Rai Kirati community.

Numerous traditional rituals still exist in the Rai community; in this present modern world these types of rituals give a sense of indigenous identity. Traditional festivals and rituals are the most important aspects of Rai culture. Ways of celebrating rituals have had their own different ways. It is assumed that in Kirati religion, ritual is very essential to convert the society in to the civilized phase. For example, after the creation of human beings, people were scattered all over the world; they didn't have any idea how to celebrate the religious ceremonies and rituals. People were born, got married and died. In the lack of proper systems of rituals, they became uncivilized. After the rituals developed people became civilized. It helped to build the relation and respect to each other's rituals by every human being from impure to make pure and gave social rank respectively in many ways. There are many types of rituals in the Kirati religious society, like the rituals from the period of pregnancy to death. Rituals that almost certainly relate

to the Kirati society. Although we have numerous clans and sub-clans this study tries to focus on rituals that commonly exist in the Rai community.

All types of traditional rituals are based upon worshipping nature. According to the holy book Mundhum, Rai people worship Earth as a Mother Nature and always show the gratitude towards Mother Nature and Mother Earth. Different rituals are performed through symbols and images. When making new houses before digging or plugging the land Nakcho purifies the weapons through the chicken's blood. It is called the voga dinu (To give the sacrifice). Its ritual meaning is noting that bad accident occurs while building the house and to spread the blood all over the weapons means these weapons don't need blood more through accidents (Mukarum, 2009:44).

Traditional rituals often end by worshipping nature with different names and different shrines. For examples Lawa shrines are done in front of vakari (Coarse matting made of split bamboo). If a person knows the Mudhum they can perform this type of ritual. It is necessary to offer the sacrifice with a hen, cock and homemade beer. It is believed that after performing this type of ritual the grains are saved forever from insect and God will provide prosperous seasons every time for harvesting. It has similar meaning with the Sakawa Sili festival too.

Only names and ways of performing are different but rituals are done through same traditional goods. Every type of these goods has had its own meaning in the belief system of the Rai community. Bow, arrow, axe, eggs and traditional weapons are the tools that helped to create different meanings in traditional rituals. Through cracking the eggs and sacrificing cock's blood Nakcho predicts the future through eggs. It is believed that if Nakcho finds any blood signs or unclear signs in the eggs it assumed bad things will be occur inside the family or relatives. It is believed that by doing these types of rituals bad things such as illness, sickliness and various diseases will not occur in the family.

2.8 Establishment of traditional chula (Oven) and ways of worshipping.

The Chula is the traditional oven. It has its different rituals values in the Rai Kirti culture and every type of traditional ritual should start from the Chula such as when the period of harvesting and planting the crops, weeding and life passage rituals also started from the Chula (Mukarum, 209:7). Before starting the Sakawa Sili festival Nakcho should

perform certain rituals like to pray for our ancestors as well as purification for traditional musical instruments, which is used in festival.

Traditionally, the Chula was made by three stones; each and every stone has its own name and way of worshiping. Just for example, Diwalung, Tayalung and Ruthulung in the Rai Kirati language means ancestors, universe and nature (ibid: 7). The Kirati people take this Chula as a symbol of power, wealth, and relationship between daughters and sisters. It is a pure place for worshiping our ancestors and a wish for knowledge, power and wealth. Before establishing this Chula, special rituals should be fulfilled by the Kirati priest Nakcho. Nakcho can recall the special Mudhum language, traditional Vedic, incantation and a special way of deliberation. After that to purify these three stones Nakcho provides the ginger, food grain and homemade beer to each and every stones for purification (ibid: 9). Chula should be worshiped two times in a year, almost near the celebration the Sakawa Sili festival. Wishing for good harvest, before using new grains and providing new grains after harvest (ibid: 19). These are the general ways of worshiping; it may differ according to clans and sub-clans.

2.9 Life passage rituals in the Rai Kirati community.

In every type of traditional indigenous society, myths and rituals are closely interlinked with the religion. Starting from before birth to after death numerous rituals are performed. It seems visual when people perform, worship or celebration their rituals. In the Rai Kirati culture there are still many myths and rituals that exist in religion. For example dreams, death, soul, natures, sun and moon were taken as a root of myths, which seem in their ritual practice. According to Durkheim, "Ritual as a means that it brought the individuals in a group for the Practice of their religion" (Bell, 1997:50). It means that it's one way to create rules of conduct. For Douglas, the basic principle of rituals action is the same in both cases that ritual is always a matter of symbolic actions that express sociological truths in cosmological terms (ibid:50).

In Rai Kirati culture there are multiple rituals that exist today too. Concerning birth, marriage, funerary, purification, sacrifice, worship, magic healing, death and after death. About rituals, Kirati Mudhum says, "rituals should be followed by rules. Power and knowledge could be gained by rituals. If there is no religions, justice, rules and regulations there is also no any values of this universe" (Hang, 1998:58).

2.9.1 Birth.

Birth rituals are performed after childbirth, though there are many thar and pachha (clans) in general. The child is named between six and five days depending on their gender. Following which the Rai priest (Bijuwa or Ngopa) lifts the head of the mother and child after performing special ceremonies and gives a name to the child. On that day old women are invited to celebrate the Nuran (Birth ceremonies). Until having Nuran, food grain should be kept far away from Sutkeri (Women in childbirth) because the birth pollution can occur everywhere which is why the birth ritual is often regarded as the purification from birth pollution. If the grain is touched by Sutkeri before birth ceremonies the grain will not work (Mukarum, 2009:46). Priest Nakocho is not necessary as old women in the society can do this types of rituals.

Sal (Placenta and foetal membrane discharged from the womb after childbirth) should be cut through touching gold or silver goods. With full mention of the date, day, month, year and time of new born baby that paper kept inside the bamboo basket and hung on the tree (Hang, 1998:59). Purification will be done by making everything clean, newborn babies are kept inside the Kokro (Cradle) and should be carried by the mother. Before keeping the baby inside the Kokro, if baby is a son, things like a bow and arrow, weapons used in war should be shown towards the baby. Likewise if the baby is a daughter, comb and sewing goods should be shown (ibid, 2009:48). Water from seven roots or origin, Titepati (Thicket of bitter plant that offered to God) will be needed in a way of purification or performing Nuran. This water will spread through Titepati three times, first to Sutkeri, the newly born baby, food grain and all over the house. In day six or five the new baby will be taken out of the home and shown towards the Sun, according to Mundhum the name were kept (ibid:60). Inviting mostly old women, family and relatives this occasion is celebrated as serving feast.

2.9.2 Marriage.

Marriage in the Rai culture is seen as a natural phenomenon. Different types of traditional rituals should be followed in marriage too. The marriage can be one of three varieties: an arrangement, by capture or elopement or mutual agreement between the boy and girl. In the ancestor's period of time people were married through capture. Now the system of capturing does not exist (Bista, 1967:40). Love marriage with the agreement between both partners is common. Whatever the types of marriage, however,

those from the boy's side have to go with alcohol and gifts (Sagun) to the girl's house and ask for their consent and offer apologies. The Rais do not marry their maternal uncle's and aunt's daughters, though there is a practice of marrying one's widowed elder sister-in-law. The clan which is thar and pachha will be used as a default term to refer the kinship groups within the Rai cast. Clan or thar are retained patrilineal up to 4 generations, until and unless a son exists in that family (Lee, 2005:12). Siblings, first cousins and second cousins from same clan are not allowed to intermarry but if they are from different clans they allowed to intermarry. Conversely intra-marriage with those from outside the Rai ethnic groups is discouraged and only possible through "Love marriages" (ibid: 12).

The Rais clans are more often endogamous, which seems complicated because these in clans are found exogamous lineages along a direct line of seven generations, which can be affected in the marriages. Origin can exist beyond the seven generations, but after the seven or eight generations inter-marriage can occur and that can be the difference between differently named segments of the same clan (ibid: 40). It's common that young boys and girls are free to indulge in romance and to make advances to almost any partner except as prohibited by both common descent and by degree of relationship. Ideally, all the marriages are monogamous, that is, of one husband and one wife. Mostly younger generations consider Sakawa Sili as a perfect time to build the relationship.

The marriage ceremony has three gradual processes. The first is sagun, second most important is janti and third one is daiju which is followed through several years. Daiju is a wealth that is given to the bride from family and relatives. Although there are negotiations from both sides, it's the culture to marriage by elopement. The girl is usually taken to the house of a relative of the boy and kept there until negotiations with the parents or between representatives of both partners are completed (ibid: 43). Almost every wedding ceremony is done at the boy's house, religious leader bless the new couple. After that with respect, couple should pay one or half rupee (coin) to the brothers of the girl's mother and half a rupee each to the brothers and cousins of the girl's father. Rai's religions have been influenced from both Buddhism and Hinduism too. It's common that after marriage, the couple is free to spend a few years either at the boy's or girl's house. If they are separate, daughters go to live with the mother, sons with their family. When an unmarried girl becomes pregnant, her lover should marry her or

pay lifelong expenses if he decides to leave the girl alone. Having a child before marriage is not considered a serious disqualification and they have right to find another husband (ibid: 42).

2.9.3 Death.

Generally, the Rai community performs the rituals of deceased persons by burying the dead body. Rituals are performed in various ways and customs. Although some also cremate the dead or leave the body in a river to flow with the current, but it's not practice now-a-days. Mourning takes place for 5 to 7 days, and during this period the relatives of the deceased observe total sorrow for the peace of the departed soul. Salt, oil and meat are abandoned by the members and relatives of the deceased family until the date of final ritual is over.

A religious leader is required for the burial, food and local wine has to be offered in the place of burying. The Rais have much faith and trust that if the deceased person is in peace and reside in their house, particularly in the prayer room, it is believed that they bless them with prosperity. Nakcho religious leader addresses the spirit of the dead and requests it to go to its final resting place to join the ancestors (Bista, 1967:44). Nuci and Jayaksi are two souls that are named after death. Faith upon the Nuci soul is those who die through good ways and Jayaksi is opposite of it. Cacuwa is a food that feeds the dead body when they take it out from house. It's a good sign if stones are found when digging the grave (Koyu, 1997:78). Before lifting the dead body towards the grave, things are added such as coins, bow and arrow, mana or ten handfuls of rice packed into a cloth. Water or wine is put into a vessel called Chongey made by bamboo, and a white or yellow cloth and Kukuri (Nepalese sword) are needed for rituals (ibid:76). With the bow and arrow Nakcho finds the place for burial, and to cover the burial place it is believed that 3 or 5 stones are good. The deceased person is covered by white cloths, a few coins kept inside the burial place and woolen clothes are forbidden inside the place.

After performing rituals, the deceased person is kept inside the burial place and according to Nakcho everybody who is involved in the funeral should put a handful of soil for deceased person. This ritual is done 3 times. It should start from the son, brother or near male relatives because the chief of this mourning period should be the son. That's why the value of son is more important in the Kirati culture. Finally, Nakcho addresses the spirit of the dead and requests it to go to its final resting place to join the

Ancestors; he puts a white piece of the flag over the grave (Bista, 1967:44). After 5 to 7 days after touching and eating slat, oil and meat, the period of death is over.

Chapter Three: Important aspects of Sakawa Sili festival.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter tries to question the traditional Sakawa Sili dance in terms of its origin, types, rules and importance. In addition, the chapter provides importance aspects of the Sili dance in terms of its social, culture, historical and different religious norms and values.

3.2 Origin of Sakawa Sili festival.

It is difficult to know exactly when the Sakawa Sili festival was started. In regards to its origin, it is a traditional that varies according to clan and sub-clans in the Rai Kirati community. The community has more than 32 different linguistic groups, each of which has their distinct identities and languages. For examples, Bantwa (Rai's sub-clan) are called Sakanwa, Chamling are called Sakela, Tulung are called Tosi and Koyo called Sakal. But overall the meaning is the same, it is a name of traditional Sakawa festival where Sili dance is performed and worship takes place with three stones which symbolized the universe, ancestors and Mother Nature in the Rai religion.

Its origin could be analyzed through common myth also. In the topic "Tragic story of Sumnima," Dr. Arun Gupta writes, "Myth is the binding principle of culture, the loss of myth is the loss of culture, in Kirati culture Sumnima and Paruhong are the divine couples, names that is overwhelmingly linked with Kirat identity." (Yayokaha, 2010:80). Relating its origin through this myth, Paruhang used to live in heaven, one day he saw a beautiful Sumnima on the earth and fell in love. After marriage he left Suminma and did not return. One day in search of foods Suminma saw a creeper on stone near the bank of a river. From that creeper she made a Buti (intoxicating religious garland). But suddenly Paruhang returned back, she gave the Buti to Paruhang. It made him glad and he told her that he had a meditation and visit in the universe. Paruhang promised not to leave her, which made her joyful. Full of joy she started to dance. So it is believed that from that period of time Sili dance was started. (ibid: 80).

Another explanation of the origin, in the articles “Sakala *anthropological view*” Hatuwali writes, that its origin was around 606BC (Hatuwali, 2008:12-9) but it was not mentioned in AD. It was mentioned in Mundhum also that the Kirati religion is based upon nature. In the Sakawa shrine there are three stones which symbolized the universe, ancestors and Mother Nature. The writer emphasizes that its origin should be analyzed through an anthropological point of view. Because it is a festival in a way, it is one way to worship the Kirati ancestors. Through its anthropological views the origin of festival could be assumed from the beginning of human civilization because if we deeply analyze the traditional instruments which are used in the Sakawa festival, we find all traditional instruments like bow, arrow, cymbals, drums and weapons that were started to be used from the beginning period of human civilization.

Later Hatuwali writes, when earth and universe formed from that period of time this festival was started, through the evidence that Rai people worship their God Sumnima and Goddess Paruhang as their archetypal so Sakala Sili is a one way to worship them. Paruhang is considered as the universe and Sumnima is the protector of nature, creator and the universe. From this point of view its origin can also be assumed with the universe (ibid: 12). Vojpur and Kotang two districts of Nepal are considered as the origin place of this festival. The name of the first Sakawa festival was Chaunka, in Rai language the meaning of this word is a jungle of wild yam. In the begging place it was covered by these types of trees, after making it suitable to stay, the Kirati people have great faith upon that place and they started to celebrate the festival. For more than thousands years the Rai people have celebrated the festival as their great festival twice a year (ibid).

In Mundhum its origin was defined in this way. The Kirati king Budahang ruled the place called Dolaka, now it is the Dolaka district in Nepal. He always worried about his territory which his ancestors lost in the war. To earn the favor of power and force he always used to worship God Hankuwang once a year. On that worshipping day he has to wear crown, which is made by his virgin sister Soisoila. The crown should be decorated by her and has to be handed to the King. In a ceremony when the time came to offer the crown to the King Budahang, the sister was unpurified because she had a menstruation. Because of that and without properly handling the crown she ran towards the jungle and the crown fell on the ground from the king’s head. After this accident those who participate in the ceremony, all used to sing a song to request that Soisoila return to

handle the crown in good way. But, because she is shy she cannot return back and suddenly the crown was turned in to stone. After falling the crown was on the ground and people started to believe that the power of crown had shifted to the ground. From that period of time the Rai people used to worship the Mother Nature as the symbol of their God and celebrated the Sakawa festival to worship them (Bartaman, 1997:6).

Among different types of rite the Sakawa Sili festival can be seen as belonging to the calendared rites. According to Catherine Bell, “an ordered series of eternal re-beginnings and repetition.” (Bell, 1997:102). These are rites which help to bring society in order through repetitions and re- beginnings. It appeared through seasonal changes for example changing seasons like summer and winter that makes society in order to agricultural work and other social activities.

Basically the festival is celebrated twice in a year. In April when it is celebrated the festival is a worship ceremony for good planting and farming. In November the festival is celebrated for good harvest, and it is a way of giving thanks to nature for providing a good harvest.

Each year as a great festival Rai Kirati people celebrated the festival in collectively. In common open ground public space Kirati people used to gather in certain open public space to celebrate the festival. Every age group participated in the festival. The festival starts and ends with special rites performing by Kirati priest Nakcho. All together the festival takes place for five days in a one-season celebration.

It informs the society about the relationship between the seasons of nature and the rhythm of social life. The Sakawa Sili festival is also the seasonal celebrations. In April when the Rai people started to plant they took it as a seed, which is offerings to ancestors in order to secure protection for the fields as well as praying for good harvest. In November harvest rites normally indicate the festival to offer the first fruits or grains to the gods or ancestors. (Sakela Sili, 2012).

3.3 Types of Sili dance.

We cannot always describe its movements with words. Meanings of dance lie in symbolic actions when performed. Every movement has its own senses while performing the Sili dance. Viewer can feel its music, sounds, shapes and directions. Its meanings lie in the movements of bodies and how the dancers respond. Motions of the

movements is also different from one place to another while performing the Sili. It is visible in the festival period how participants moves their body, different ways of moving like fast, slow and mix. One common thing is that it is the way of motions that are found in Kirati land from more than thousands years.

It is very difficult to understand the motions of dance to those who are from outside the communities. People can fall with joy from the motions and directions but all do not understand the ways of dancing. Mostly we can find these types of unknowing behavior among the younger generations in Rai Kirati community. They participate in the Sakawa Sili festival, experience, move their bodies and do what the Silimagapa is doing (Leader of dancer). But, they do not understand the dance through its authentic meanings. They can only understand the Sili dance as moving their body, music and as entertainments. And try to feel it's our identity and history.

The best part and attractions of the festival lies in the Sili dance. The motions, movements and directions of dances have their own meanings, which can be interpreted in different ways. According to my informant Jaykumar Rai, it can be danced through four ways. While performing, all types of dances created the meaning that proved Kirati people have their distinct identity and history as indigenous community in Nepal. It shows the relationship between human being and the creature, experience of life through the dance.

According to Padam Bahadur Rai, "Sili is the name and way of dance, which can be performed by having rule and regulations, series and sequences where feet, hands and body lie on a stanza of a verse of musical instruments." (Rai, 2010:74). Certain groups of dancers are led by one person called Lak. Women who lead the group are called silimagma and men are called silimagapa. It is said to be that no one knows the origin of the Sili but in a modern trend, in certain places we find people assume the new form of Sili dance too.

Though its meanings lie in its motions, movements and directions similar to the dancers who mostly used their hands, feet and body in different ways to represents the meanings of dance. According to writer Bartaman, there are four ways of performing the Sili. First, their meanings of movements lie in nature's activity for example, acting like rivers, trees, sun and moon. Among this group, such Sili names as Naroa, Jauwa,

Nuruhang and Nam types exist in this group (Bartaman, 1997:6). Mostly dancers act out the activities of nature's roles as well as acting the animal's role and acting as a worshipping Sun. From these ways of dancing we can easily assumed the Rai Kirati people are worshippers of nature and that they have a long, close relationship with Mother Nature.

The second way of performing Sili is Paru Sili. This type of Sili can only be performed by Kirati priest Nakcho. Mostly Nakcho moves their bodies acting like they are doing war, being a hunter and rules to development the society. Movements symbolize how the Kirati people developed their culture and religion. Another name of Sili is Sumdsili, in these types of Sili dance viewers can feel, see and observe the acting of movements like how Kirati people act in agriculture activities. Among these four types of Sili dance, this is the one, which is the easiest way of performing and easy ways of understanding (ibid). In this type of Sili, a movement of dance seems like a way of harvesting, planting and common traditional house work activities were included.

The fourth way of performing Sili is Aatmik. Its movements symbolize how we are purified and how we feel our soul. In this type of Sili, the dancer acts out how to make life beautiful and wonderful. For that purpose the dancer uses dance similar to day-to-day activities which helped to developed inner strength and focus towards the future. Though it is performed in different ways, the Sakawa Sili festival brings togetherness, brotherhood and friendship in the Rai Kirati community and has for a long period of time. The dance really helps to bring the viewers and participants to enjoyment as well as the most important part which is to promote the Kirat culture, language, religion and identity.

3.4 Rules of Sili dance.

Bell defines the rituals as a "*Rules of conduct*" (Bell, 1997:24). According to her, rituals are the rules of beliefs and it should be performed according to religious beliefs. Similar to this definition, before starting the Sakawa Sili festival, Nakcho performs the traditional rituals like worshipping traditional Sakawa shrines, nature and traditional musical instruments. Rituals have to be done by the Kirati priest Nakcho and those who know the Mudumui language. With rules of rituals Nakcho should conduct the Sakawa rituals having certain particular behavior, images, movements and positions. The rules do not only have to be followed by Nakcho but there are many rules which should be

followed by participations also. Every participant has to wear the Rai traditional dress. Before worshipping the Sakawa shrine they should not start the dance and should not use musical instruments. The festival itself is one of the rituals, which should be followed by rules and prescribed rules practiced by the Rai people since their ancestors' period of time.

Paden William defines the rituals as, "*Behavior marked by prescribed rules*" (William, 1988:94). In rituals such as the Sakawa festival, those who are involved in the festival have a duty to follow certain ritual values which is prescribed by the ritual's rules. In the Sakawa festival also certain ritual rules should be followed. For example no one is allowed to touch the tip of the toes at the time of dancing, and if someone does by mistake, both the dancers must stop dancing and come out to beg a pardon by bowing down with folded hands.

Different family of separate blood relation are allowed to dance together to establish their love and relationship but not from same parents and cousins. It is taken as a sin to touch each other's hands or feet among the members of their own relatives but they can participate in different groups. All the participant should follow the rhythm of the song and tunes. Always there should be traditional Kirti musical instruments and all the participants should wear their own cultural traditional dresses too.

Though there are no social, gender and religious discrimination in Kirati community, at certain points, different cast and community are forbidden from this dance at different time periods. The mourning period lasts for a whole year. It considers whose family members or close relatives have died. The meaning of the festival also is based on the purification of the living and dying peaceful soul. In this period of time it is considered an impurity that we call jutho lagako (Hatuwali, 2008:11). In the mourning period no members of that family can participate in dance, but they can watch while being closed to the participants groups. Being non-participants means whole family members were in grief in the mourning period.

The main aim of the Kirati religion is not to publicize it through the Kirati religion. It is practiced within the community and is strictly forbidden for other casts. To leave or to enter the Kirati religion is not easy; religious members could rise through the sons who separate from family (ibid: 11). Those who leave the Kirati religion are called gayar jati,

meaning absent cast. For this casts it's possible to participate in the festival, but they cannot touch the traditional musical instruments that are used in the festival. But, they can watch the Sili dance being little bit away from the participants.

In the Kirati religion, after death, religious leader Nakcho addresses the spirit of the dead and requests their soul to join the ancestors. Nuci and Jaysksi are two souls named after death. Faith upon these souls, Nuci is those who die through good ways and Jayaksi is opposite of it. There is a particular Nakcho who only can address the Jayaksi soul, and for them it is also forbidden to participate in the dance.

Though many traditional rituals seem traditional and irrational in modern time, the Kirti people have faith based upon traditional religious rituals and values. For example in the period of festival Rai people should not be involve in these types of work like fishing or traveling far distances which is rituals belief systems in Kirat community. If it is done, it is believed the sources of water will stop. Nakcho Karna Bahadur Rai have a bitter experience when his son is against the ritual's beliefs system. He experienced death of his son while he was traveling during the period of festival when he was swept away by the Koshi River during his long journey.

3.5 Importance of the Sakawa Sili festival

The festival has different meanings in Kirati religion. Its Importance is directly interlinked with Kirati identity, culture, history and religion. Sakawa is the name of the rituals where Sili dance is performed. It helps to revitalization the Kirati culture in diverse ways. The festival is directly related with the God of nature and the main aim of the celebration is to worship nature for good plantation and harvesting. According to researcher Chandra kumar Rai, *"Sakawa is the one type of ritual, where three stones are consider as a symbols of earth, the universe and ancestors in Rai Kirati culture, which things were worshiped in the rituals"* (Hatuwali,2008:3). So, it is important in many ways.

Its importance can be analyzed in diverse ways like historical, social and religious points of view. Almost all the Kirati religion is based on nature; it is mentioned in the Mundhum too. Kirati people learn to respect nature and the festival evokes the awareness to be honest towards the nature and among all Kirti people. It is a way to show your kindness towards Mother Nature too. Traditionally, it is a way to worship and wishing for good

harvest. Besides that the meaning of the Sakawa is the stones where it is worshiped (ibid).

From a religious point of view, the festival has had its own importance in the Kirati community. It symbolizes its uniqueness during the performance. In the Nepali context the festival has been performed collectively in traditional dress for many years. All together people used to dance for five days in different places. Chula is the main symbols of the Kirati religion where the Rai people used to worship their ancestors and living souls. From the religions point of view it helps to Practice the Mudhum through these rituals which are performed in the Sakawa Sili festival. Its cultural aspects is in a period of festival where people used to gather in one certain place to make friendship (Mit), as well as meet the bride and groom's parents. Not only this but, people used to choose their bride and groom, and festival is the perfect time for marriage. In these ways it has its importance both from a cultural and religion point of view (Rai, 2010:90).

There are lots of important aspects of the Sakawa Sili festival for people's mental and physical well-being. All are in a festive mood because the rituals shaped the festival in such a way that people should become fresh in both ways. In the festival period people stop working in their fields and they are fully in festive mood, prepared to dance and enjoy in the festival.

While performing, people have to move their whole bodies. The performance keeps the body healthy, as the dance is very physical, and keeps the mind healthy as it is a meditation that keeps your mind in a balance. Another assumption is when you are in troubles in different ways if you wish or pray for Sakawa shrines than mentally we can be healthy too. After worshipping the Sakawa and participating in the Sili festival, people believe that in the coming year they will have a good harvest, good ways of income and there would be prosperity in the family. So, we can interpret its importance mentally and physically. Apart from this we can analysis its importance in these ways too.

3.5.1 Historical:

In the context of Nepalese identity, Rai Kirati people are considered as an indigenous and native people of Nepal. They have their own distinct culture, language and religion. For its development the government has played a vital role in different ways. Having clashed with different factors like modern values and traditional belief systems, Kirati

people were proud to preserve their own traditional culture. About the historical importance of Sakawa Sili festival, we can assume by analyzing traditional things that are used in the festival that Rai Kirati indigenous groups have their own distinct traditional culture, language and religion. It is true also as shown through its origin, history, musical traditional instruments and different ways of dancing. To preserve these types of historical importance the Sakawa Sili festival has played a vital role.

In the Mundhumi language the Sakawa Sili festival is called Dibaba. It means the tradition which continues from the ancestors. Through this meaning, it gives great lessons to all Kirati people to respect the ancestors and what they left for us as well as to celebrate the festival. It is one way to respect our ancestors and pray for our development and bright future. On the issue of the Kirati mother language as similar to the Mundhumi language, while worshiping the Sakawa shrine by Nakcho they can only verdict through the Mundhumi language. So the festival can be one way to preserve our traditional Mundhumi language too. Through language other things just like culture, religion and identity are preserved.

In the article, "Putting history into practice: The ritual dances of the soil" Schlemmer, writes "about historical values of this Sili dance is to identity preservation moreover to preserve its unique ways of performing" (Schlemmer, 2004:134). In Nepal, it is one of a few rituals that are performed collectively, and that is found among all the Kirati people. It gives a noble sense of feelings such as feelings of we, togetherness, motivations and mystical harmony with a deified nature (ibid). In different ways of dancing, the dance moreover symbolizes the folkloric practice with the aim of requesting agricultural prosperity from the ancestors. It also helps to preserve traditional musical instruments such as different types of cymbals, drums and different types of Sili which have been practiced throughout history.

There is no evidence to tell in which time period the dance was started and when Rai people started to celebration the Sakawa Sili festival. But in Kirati language, Sili is called a Dibaba which means traditions that started or continues from the ancestor period (Rai, 2010:87). Its historical importance is also to continue rituals that started from the historical period, in addition to saving and promoting the culture, language and traditions which from the ancestor's time.

3.5.2 Socially:

One reason why it is socially important lies in how the festival helps to play a vital role in the socialization and development processes in the Rai community. The festival was organized as a collective effort. For example from the starting period to ending many things should be arranged for success at the festival. For example, to provide the Nakcho, traditional musical instruments and ritual goods also are arranged collectively. By this process we can say the festival really helped to develop the society in harmonious ways. Before starting the festival Nakcho recites the mantra, starting from older to younger son in each family. This traditional system also shows how to respect the elder people and how society has to be in a system.

In the Kirat Rai society the mantra can bring togetherness, peace of harmony, motivations and having a feeling in the Kirati community. Not only that, in the period of the festival people have to gather in one place to perform the dance, if people have misunderstandings or disagreements one shall forget the past mistakes. People can build new friendships and relations are an important part of the socialization process, which can build the relationship within the Rai community while celebrating the Sakawa Sili festival. In the period of the festival those who are far from home often returned to celebrate the festival. Its main social importance could be to build social exchange within the Rai community because in the Rai Kirati community there are 30 tribes which have different languages and identities, although the Rais represent one community. Having distinct identities and languages festival could be one meeting place to share their traditional culture, which is most important part of social development in the Rai community.

There is a financial aspect to the festival as well. To arrange the finances, people usually participate individually to make it a success every year. They arrange things which are needed in the festival such as drums, cymbals, bows and arrows managed through collectively. It is the collective responsibility to all Kirati peoples. In the same way people gather certain money for Nakcho for his or her survival. To begin new things for example new relationship and sharing each other's feelings, the festival could be the best meeting point to develop society. Over all we can say that the Sakawa Sili festival can manage the Kirati society to improve in different ways such as developing the religion, culture, rituals and to practice various traditional myths and rituals. It helps to develop

the society in systematic, practical and equal ways within the Rai Kirta community in Nepal. It functions in the Kirat society to bring people together and to maintain the systems in the society.

3.5.3 Financially

The festival also has a financial dimension. The Sakawa festival has great importance since almost all rituals are done for wishing good financial status to each family. In a main part, in a way of worshipping the Sakala shrine or temple that Rai people called Sakala Tahan. In rituals the Nakacho provides a verdict while delivering a special mantra (traditional Verdicts) wishing to favor the Rai Kirati community financial strength. As well as in traditional rituals people wish for strength, prosperity and wealth. The verdict will be done through different names such as if it is done for good harvest or good grains it is called chsumyari or chanbi for wealth (ibid:89).

Not only this, but in the period of Sakawa after celebrating a month in different places, Kirati people have to think about their planting and harvesting work that makes them a hardworking person in the community. In the festival people usually sell their homemade goods, wine and beers in the exhibition and a small fair that is called mela. In that way it also has financial importance in the Rai Kirati community. Through Chasum and Siki Sili it teaches the youth to harvest and to sew cotton which is an important financial skill of the Rai community.

There is tremendous importance in the Sakawa Sili festival for people's financial, mental and physical well-being. Worshipping the Sakawa and participating in the Sili festival, people believe that in the coming year they will have a good harvest, good income and there will be prosperity in the family. So, we can interpret its importance mentally, physically and financially. To all the Kirati people the festival is one way for them to notice the importance of their agriculture works such as planting and harvesting. Celebrating this festival there is many belief systems which Rai people cannot ignore. For examples, if you are involved in the festival or worship the Sakala shrine, it would favor wealth, good harvesting and plantation. From this point of view it has direct financial importance for the Rai Kirati people because their lifestyle is focused around agricultural activities. Normally they grow enough grain to meet their daily needs and use the excess to make homemade spirits and beer which they enjoy in the great quantities from spring to autumn.

3.6 Importance of traditional musical instruments in festival.

With a full combination of traditional drums, cymbals, shield and spear the dance is performed in different ways. Traditionally there are more than a hundred Sili dances which exist in the Rai Kirati community. To perform the Sili, traditional musical instruments are needed to follow the rhythm of songs. The music is used mostly for ritual purposes. As it helps play a vital role in ethnic identity expressions of Kirati people and their unique ethnic qualities in relation to others in the community. The sense of ethnic identity is expressed through the music and it shapes the Kirati Rai's people lifestyle, ways of thinking and their role in the society.

All the traditional instruments have different meanings that lie in their sounds while performing the dance. There are lots of questions concerning the traditional instruments, such as why during the festival do people use these types of weapons, drums and cymbals? According to writer Hatuwali, in the festival time it is a one way to worship all these weapons for individual security (Hatuwali, 2008:54). All these types of traditional weapons have their own traditional belief system that exists since more than thousand years in Rai Kirati community. Worshipping weapons could wish to avoid accidents while using them.

Another reason is while listening to sounds from these drums; it is believed that our archetypal God and Goddess Sumnima and Paruhang will favor a good harvest. In a way from these sounds Jayaksi soul will disappear for forever. Before making drums Nakcho verdicts and chooses special trees and it's better to make through deer's skin. After making it, it is strictly forbidden to touch those who are from other casts and absent cast within the Kirati community.

In the Kirati language Maken is the word for cymbals. It is used to create more sounds together with the drums beat. Before using them they should be worshipped through special rituals in front of the Sakala Shrine. It is made from hard brass metal so that it helps to create more sounds.

Beside these traditional musical instruments, bow, arrow and sword are also used, giving a sense of ancient civilization that try to prove how the kirati people used their weapons. In addition, according to the Sakala researcher Vaktabahadur, "These

weapons are used because to save human being from Jayaksi soul that always tries to make trouble.” (Ibid: 55).

3.7 Rituals objects needed in Sakawa Sili festival.

The Sakala festival started having worshipped the Sakala shrine. Through different traditional things Nakcho verdicts and wishes wealth, security and prosperity to all the creatures from the Mudhumi language. ‘Bachup, yeast water and ‘totala’ banana leaf are considered as the most important rituals goods which is most necessary in the rituals performed.

‘Bachup, is the name of ginger in the Rai language. It has been used for various purposes, but in the Kirati religion it has its special meaning while it is used in Sakala sili rituals. It has its correlations from birth till death. Bachup could be used in each and every festival. In an article published in Yalambar magazine Chandra kumar writes, “Curi have relation with Capang such as ginger has relation with Rai.” (Yalambar, 2011:8). Curi is the name of the plant from which fiber is obtained and it is also name of fruit. Capang is also the highly marginalized indigenous community in Nepal. In every type of traditional rituals the Capang community uses the Curi plant like Rai people use Bachup.

In Sakawa, Nakcho uses the ginger for the verdict; Kachur is the way it is chopped. Every verdict’s result will be decided from pieces of ginger while it is chopped. If a piece of ginger turned flat on one’s back that is the sign of something good, in opposite if it is turned in flat upon the face it’s a bad sign. Besides that it is used for making parsade (food offered to an idol) and parsade will be shared with those who are involved in the festival, but not for the absent cast those who left the Kirati religion (ibid: 470).

Yeast water is kept in special chongas (bamboo baskets), after mixing yeast into water it becomes yeast water. Amrit water is considered to be a sign of life and immortality in Hinduism, the same as marcha pani (yeast water) is considered in Kirati religion. It is used in Sakala rituals to spread all over the Sakala shrine to help purification. In that period of time salt should be avoided.

Totala is also called Tupala. It is a name of banana leaf, which is needed in every type of traditional rituals to put something on it. It is especially used when Nakcho chops the ginger for the verdict, during which pieces of ginger should not fall outside the Tupala

(Hatuwali, 2008:4). Each and every type of rituals Tupala is needed, without it the Rai people cannot imagine to perform their rituals.

3.8 Worshipping day of Sakawa Sili.

This day is considered as a most important day for Rai people because it is a great festival as well as a way to respect the ancestors, identity and religion. Rituals start from Nakcho, having cleaned they purify all instruments that are needed in Sakawa festival. Beside drums all traditional instruments are kept in special tree's leafs that are called Katush (chest nut plant). Totola, ginger and yeast water (Marcha pani) is needed for verdict and purification to all instruments that are used in festival (Shiwahang, 2012:90).

Except Monday other days are forbidden to perform the rituals. Sunday and the eleventh day in lunar fortnight (Aakadasi) is considered as bad because on that day hardly no people sacrifice the animals. But, in a sakawa ritual there should be sacrifice, animal's blood should be spread all over the shrine. If the days are not followed properly, according to Nakcho Nar Bahadur Rai , "He have an experienced that in his life time once he did not followed the proper days, as a result he have to bear his son's death." Somehow these types of belief are still alive in the Kirati rituals practice. Belief system which has shaped the Kirati lifestyle for generations.

While performing the traditional rituals the main role depends on Nakcho because they only can verdict, know the Mudumi language and can follow the law of rituals. Through yeast water (Marcha pani) they purify the Sakawa shrine and start the verdict if God or Goddess will accept the request or not. In addition, remembering all creatures, universe, earth, sun, moon and sky will be worshiped before starting the Sakala Sili festival.

Traditional musical instruments are mostly taken out on Sunday and Saturday. Spreading yeast water all over the instruments Nakcho performs this ritual to purify the instruments. In the whole period of Sakawa Sili festival Nakcho cannot take oil and salt. If they do, it is assumed or believed that they will be polluted and that the ancestors will never favor for good wishes because oil and salt are to be avoided during the Mundhum verdict.

Beside drums and cymbals, all traditional instruments are kept on a chestnut tree's leaf. Same rituals will be done, which are performed before using the instruments. Totola

banana's leaf and ginger is needed for kachur and the result of verdict. A chicken will be sacrificed in a way of ritual, Nakcho recall the Mudumi language that, "Through your sounds, you all are able to call a good harvest and we are always thankful towards you." After showing respect and thanks to all traditional instruments, the Sakala festival will be over.

After the Sakala Sili festival, the next festival will be celebrated after six months and one day. Aasika ponma will be celebrated to beg the excuse if Nakcho did mistakes in a way of performing the rituals at the Sakawa Sili festival. It is an ordinary day that will be held in a Tuesday, in front of all old people those who are expert in Kirati language and Mudumi language. From that day all rituals and celebrations of Sakala Sili festival is over. After celebrating the festival until one week of Saturday Nakcho and Nakchoma cannot cross the river and cannot dig the field which is generally believed for generations in the Kirati community.

3.9 How Nakcho and Nakchoma is formed.

Nakcho is the main priest of the Sakawa shrine; everybody cannot be a Nakcho or Nakchoma. Nakcho is a male priest and Nakchoma is the female. There are special rituals, myths and beliefs that should be fulfilled. There are two ways to be a perfect Nakcho or Nakchoma. One, it should be after the death of the old Nakcho, society decides to make a new Nakcho. There are certain criteria such as he should be old, must have knowledge of the Mudumi language and knowledge about Rai rituals. Second, Chamapa Nakcho, to define this type of Nakcho, Nakcho Karna Bahadur Rai said, "Chamapa Nakcho is form through their dreams, with having special power that makes them to shiver".

In addition, through their dreams they should be Nakcho or Nakchoma that is male and female respectively. It is believed that if they see a hen in their dreams they should be Nakchoma. Nakcho is the opposite of it. It is believed that someone who starts to shiver should become the Kirati priest. But after having the shiver or dreaming is not an ultimate result of it, there are lots of traditional rituals through which the person will be tested. While performing rituals they should wear their traditional dress, it's visible that Nakcho can wear cloak and Nakchoma can wear jama (Frog).

They are considered to be the representatives of our God and the Godness Sumnima and Paruhang who used to favor in different ways to their creatures. In the same way both have their responsibility to favor Rai people in different aspects. According to Nakcho Kusman Rai, "They should be pure, should be far from debatable things that might occur in their life." So many rules and regulations should be fulfilled, for example, they should not cross the river, cannot be a hunter, as in a whole their role should be vital to develop the society in positive ways while having moral responsibility. It helps to create sentiments and solidarity in the Kirati community, which helps to build society in harmonious ways. Through their behaviours traditional rituals and values are transmit from one generation to another generation. Sentiments like love, hate and goodwill helps to build in the society through these types of rituals which is done by Nakcho and Nakchoma.

3.10 Impacts of modernization on the responsibilities of Nakcho and Nakchoma.

The main starting roles depend on Nakcho and Nakchoma while performing the rituals in Sakala Sili; without having the rituals nobody can start the Sili dance. Further, I would like to add a picture of Nakcho, presented in a fully traditional Kirati Nakcho dress.



Nowdays roles and responsibilities of Nakcho and Nakchoma are changing, much more so in town areas compared to city areas. In the Kirati religion they are consider as a representative of our God and Goodness Sumnima and Paruhang who used to favor in different ways to their creatures. To perform the Sili rituals only they have rights and responsibility because everybody cannot recall and verdict through the Mudumi language.

To continue their responsibility, certain rituals rules, tradational values and belief systems should be fulfilled by Nakcho. For example, they should not cross the river, cannot be the hunter and they should be pure. If these things cannot be fulfilled it's believed that they cannot verdict or recall the Mudumi language to favor the creatures. In the Kirati community only a few people can be a Nakcho or Nakchoma. Special rituals, myths and belief systems should be fulfilled and it's not easy either. In the topic "*How Nakcho and Nakchoma formed,*" I already mentioned how they are formed, in relation to that here I will try to interpret how their values are changed in town areas. It might be different factors such as financial difficulties, their rituals or values towards the religion. Most importance things in the town area cannot be fully practiced. Another factor is they would like to be close to the nature because it is believed that nature helped to make their soul pure in each moment, and it's necessary to be pure as well.

In the Nipsug Kirti religion magazine the writer Bartaman Navaraj writes, there is no any debates that through the time every types of traditional culture is in a way of changing but it should be changed in a positive ways. All these types of traditional cultures have to be particular, if not we are far from our identity. He more emphasized that research on this Sakala Sili required the most in-depth research which hadn't previously been done. It should not be interpreted only in surface levels; it should be interpreted from its wholistic period of time which directly related to the state the valuable assets, culture, civilization and unity of whole Kirati people (Bartman Navaraj, 1997:3).

While interoperating changing values of Nakcho, its better to correlate with the Mudhum, it is the oral religious text in Kirati religion which is passed through one generation to another and it is mostly limited within the Nakcho. In Kirati language it's called a Thuturi veda. While rituals performing Nakcho used the shamanic language that is based on natural, spiritual and supernatural power that is only performed by the

Nakcho according to the Mudumi language. Because of its limitation it is sure that it would be disappear one day from the Kirti culture. It must be developed in print materials or it should be developed as a religious text just like the Bible or Gita (Taramani, 2011:3).

In the topic "*Nakcho are the incarnation of ancient kings*" Nakcho Tak B rai expressed that they should not short the main hair that called tupi the hair left on the crown of the head. It is believed that it is their ornaments that make them extraordinary among the ordinary people. It is also believed that they should not cross the rivers because it is considered that their Mundumi knowledge is also swept towards the rivers. In a way of performing the Sakala ritual mostly used white and yellow colors besides red because red is considered as a symbol of blood and brutality in the Kirti religion. In the ancient period of time in ritual mostly Nakcho normally used incense that is made from pure herb's leaf but in the modern time it is normally seen that they started to use stick incense which is less impure compared to herbs. Another change is when Nakcho starts performing the ritual in front of the shrine, they joined the hands and said sawa instead of Namaste.

There is no any interlink and similarity between Hindu and Kirati religions but these Hindu people try to compare our archetypal God Paruhang to Hindu God Siva behind that what is the fact or reasons it's proved or visible today. The most important reason is to involve the Kirati religion in to Hindu religion because it is an ancient religion in Nepal and other reasons is to make inferior to the Kirti religion. They created the image of Siva (Name of Hindu's God) hypothetically and consider God also one who used to be always drunk, angry and an addict every time (Bahadur Tanka, 2003: 82). But nowadays while rituals are performed Nakcho almost avoids the names of Hindu's Gods because it is almost against the Kirati identity. They spread the negative rumor that Mahadav is the God of Kirati people but now every Rai people knows that it's the fake dream of Hindu's people to make Kirti a Hindu and it is also proved that there is no any correlations with our God Paruhang and Siva through Kirti folkloric evidence.

Chapter Four: Impacts of modernization.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will analyze what my informant says about modernization and impacts to the traditional Sakawa Sili festival. Modernization and rituals theory will help to interpret the thesis statements in to multiple ways. This chapter also compares and contrasts between modernity and traditions, ethnic identity, symbolic actions, and ways of representation while performing traditional Sili dance.

4.2 Reflections of modernization.

“Now little bit we are in a modern trend for examples changed in rhythm of song’s pattern, using much more electronic instruments instead of traditional instruments. (Informant #Jay Kumar Rai)”

There are different factors that helped to modernize the traditional Sili dance. Most important part of the modernization is Westernization. In the traditional ways of dancing, it has to carry out specific meaning while it is performed. The movements of dance and its dictations, motions of body, have to carry out particular meanings, which exist in our ritual values. It should give a noble sense of feeling, emotions, smells, sounds and traditional motions, which have existed in Kirati culture for a long period of time.

My informant Jay Kumar Rai pointed out some of the important factors that helped to modernize the Sili dance. One is the change in the traditional rhythms of songs, which were used in Sakawa Sili, which we called Lak. Electronic modern instruments, Western fashion and lack of proper space could be supporting factors that help to modernize the Sili dance. In Rai, traditional culture is valued while performing the festival. Every ritual should carry out the meanings while it is performed though it is hard to describe every movement with words. It is also difficult to search for the meanings with its traditional forms comparing its directions, dynamics and the transformations, but it should be danced in a four ways having traditional rituals and religion values.

Behind saying these things he has a long research career in the field of Rai’s culture and religion. He has participated many times in the festival and has experienced changing

traditional values in the Sakawa Sili festival. The context of saying these things in his research career he observed and study the difference between past and present.

Clashed between modern and traditional values, of course we can feel and hear the new ways of performing while we are participating the Sakawa Sili festival. The difference is clearly visible between older performer and younger performer. Those who are from older generations still can perform the dance in traditional ways. The age group of older performers can be categorized from 35 to 80 year old. Older performers know which types of Lak they are dancing. Mostly they do not need to follow the Silimagapa who is the group leader among the participants. They themselves led the dance and show their confidence in their ways of dancing in their movements and directions of their body parts. Similarities are visible when they perform the Sili. Mostly they use traditional musical instruments just like 'dol, and 'jamta. In comparison younger people are more interested in dancing through recorded songs without using traditional instruments. Because of these things it is obvious that the modern ways of dancing is bit faster, mixed with different movements compared to traditional ways of performing. A Younger generations' age group can be defined from 12 to 35.

Modernization is visible through digital technology. Digital musical instruments, compared to traditional one with dynamics and tempo. In the new forms of dancing the meanings of movements and directions of body are the same. It only seems a little bit faster than its traditional ways of performing. Just for examples every younger generations needs a Silimagapa to guide the certain groups, and absent of group leaders there are unknown situations among the participants and how they respond to their bodies and movements while they are performing. Most of the youth participants come having Western fashion, it could be the impacts which cannot be avoided from different factors like globalization, media and technology. Another important reason could be development of economic conditions among Rai youths because an economic condition is the one most important factor which led the traditional society towards the modern society. If they are wealthy they have internet, technology and different TV channels where they easily adopted the Western fashion and ways of living. According to Østerud it is an abstract level of adaptability (Østerud, 1993:37).

I have participated in the Sakawa Sili festival many times. With a lack of proper systems and guidance the festival lose its ethnic values in Kirti community. Though we are rice in

our traditional culture, religion and language we cannot manage the things that we have. Lack of proper training to youth participants in these issues means the festival only seems as a meeting point for enjoyments and formality.

Migration is another factor that has contribution to the modernization of the Rai Kirati community. We can find diverse settlements of Rai people all over the country as well as in the diaspora. As a result culture is changing and they cannot fully practice their culture, which Rai people used to do in their traditional homeland. What does migration mean in the Kirat community? How does it contribute to modernize the community? Along with these questions, issues obviously came about ethnic identity, traditional knowledge and representation of Rai Kirati community.

Correlations with migration writer Bista notes, "A major contribution to the Rai cash income derives from their employment in the Indian and British Gurkha regiments. Further....some leaves their villages to seek temporary work on wages in the eastern Terai and in Darjelling."(Bista, 1967:39). It's a necessity, it has been practiced from a long period of time and the main cause is poverty as well as seeing better opportunities.

It is obvious because of participants numbers, it needs more space to perform this traditional dance collectively, but in the diaspora world or when they are migrants of course they do not get enough space to perform the dance and people cannot exchange their traditional cultural knowledge with each other. As a result traditional cultural knowledge can be trapped. The same things happen in the Sakawa Sili dance too. Kirati people have migrated from their main origin places towards the capital city of Kathmandu as well as in Terai area for the opportunity of having a better life. Influenced by Western fashion younger generations adopt electronic instruments such as drums and a piano, traditional instrument are does not available as easily in city area. Though it is available younger generations may forget how to use the instruments by hand.

Traditional musical instruments such as Binayo, Murchunga, Tunga and Pung are almost forgotten which were used by ancestors. The impacts of migration, globalization and modernization are visible in Kirati traditional identity. Here I would like to add the same story which is happened to Sami indigenous people in Norway. In the topic 'Aspects of migration and urbanization.' Bjørg Evjen writes, "How did modernization processes in the society in general influence the story of the Sea Sami? I will be looking

at the Sea Sami people and the history of how they became invisible and how today they are becoming visible again.”(Evjen, 2007:42).

It's a story of Sami fisheries and how Sami people migrated from one place to another to fisheries and how the state imposed their power to make them invisible through different impositions like migration, urbanization, Norwegianization, industrialization and Christianization, which made them inferior. The similar story can be found in Nepalese indigenous politics too. What made Rai Kirati people migrate as well as inferior in front of the state. This is one example how this traditional Sili dance is losing its traditional values in the name of modernization.

4.3 Impacts of modernization in clothes.

The Sakawa Sili festival does not mean only dance. It has its symbolic meaning in different ways like traditional Kirati dress, foods, people and places. In terms of traditional dress Kirati history and identity were correlated from the beginning what participants wear in the festival. It shows our originality as well as our importance, existence and individual identity in our own community. Even though lots of changes occurred in Kirati traditional dress, still in special events, festival celebrations people usually wear it. It has its connection with traditional culture, indigenesness, heritage and pride. To preservation and promotion of traditional Kirati dress the Yayokkha Kirti organization had played vital role. Ethnic Kirati dress symbolized our identity, culture, language and religion. It brings the togetherness and we feeling among the Kirati community.

One dimension of the Sakawa Sili festival is that it has helped to create the consciousness about traditional Kirati dress in younger generations too. About this issues one of my informants said that, *“Younger generations are also aware towards our culture for example nobody participate without having Kirati traditional dress, in the period of festival time people make a new cultural dress too.”* (Informant # Ganesh Rai).

Modernization cannot only be judged through its negative aspects, it has its positive sides too. In his journalist career Mr Ganesh Rai had captured different pictures with the same participant in different years while she has participated. He said that first she appeared having jean pants and a t-shirt. After a few years she participated in Rai Kirati traditional dress, wearing long unstitched garment worn, like a type of sari which is

mostly handmade. Ganesh Rai added that this is a positive impacts of modernization and he expressed his thanks to Yayoka (Kirati organization) that helped to promote Kirati identity among younger generations.

Wearing Rai traditional dress could give a smile of our ethnic identity and give a sense of pride of being an indigenous people. Impacts can be judged through different time phrase such as ancient period, middle age and present modernized period. In ancient time Rai people used their ornaments, which were made from bones and tusk from giant animals; it seemed just like ornaments when it is worn. In the middle age women wear Tilhari,³ Kentha⁴ and Naugedi⁵ which are made from gold and silver mixed with valuable jewelry, but it is gradually replaced by modern Western fashion and with cheap price ornaments in present time. According to writer Yakkha Durgahang, 1500 AD was considered as a ancient period when Kirati civilization was started (Yakkha Durgahang, 1998:7). Morden period was consider from 1886AD and 1964AD. From these periods Rai people legalized to join the British Gurkhs soldier. As we as from this period government decided to applied new land reformation act (Neupane Kirshna, 2008:6).

4.4 Modernization impacts in symbols.

The dance seems Modernized, though its meaning lies in symbols. Regarding its rules researcher Padam Bahadur Rai said, "*Sili is a name and way of dancing, which can be performed through having rules and regulations, series and sequences that foot, hands and the whole body lies on the stanza of a verse of musical instruments*" (Rai, 2010:74). But, younger generations are much more influenced by western music like pop, rock and hip-pop and jazz music instead of traditional way of dancing which is from their own culture. Effects from different Hindi, American and European TV channels are seen, and they try to copy them in their lifestyles (ibid).

My informant Chandra Kumar Rai said, "*Now by the effects of modern trends participants dance through using modern ways of performing which cannot meet with the Sili rules and its meaning.*" Participants dance haphazardly, as it expressed they are creating new ways

3 Tilhari is kind of big gold ornament that hung from the neck, reaching a women's waist.

4 Kentha is a type of necklace containing 27 or 32 large beads enveloped with gold.

5 Naugedi is also a type of necklace with nine beads of gold.

of dancing. Besides though if they are followed by the rules comparing to old ones to new ways of dancing seems little bit faster. Such as it is visual while moving participates hands, whole body and feet.

In a historical period of time around 606 BC, the dancer was an expert who had complete knowledge and trains from our priest Nakcho before being involved in the festival (Hatuwali, 2008:12). But in a modern trend this tradition is almost lost. Not only this much, in festivals beside the Kirati peoples other people from other casts were forbidden to participate, not able to even touch our traditional musical instruments. If they want to watch the festival they should be far in the distance. But, now these things are changed, we can find in each and every Sakawa Sili festival other casts are also participating too, that makes huge negative impacts upon its traditional norms and values in Rai culture. Because those who are from other communities they might take the festival as fun. For them it is hard to understand the real meanings of festival and when different identity mix together there might be more possiablity for adapation other culture in the festival.

In terms of traditional dress women's dress are more affected by modernization than men because women are more conscious towards the fashion. They feel more comfortable when they wear jean pants comparing than a Sari (long unstitched garment). Apart from traditional dress women wear traditional jewelers like Tilhari, Kentha and Naugedi which is made from gold, silver and mixing with valuable stones, which almost rare to find these days. It could be possible too because of Western fashion, the expensive prices of these ornaments require an income source and participant don't like to wear it because lack of social security. Another informant Netra Mani Rai said about this Sakawa Sili festival,

"If we asked to younger generations about Sili, not all are serious about it they. They proudly said we don't like it." (Informants # Netra Mani Rai).

The trend somehow exists in younger generations. Why are they not interested in their traditional culture? So, its effects also analyze negative ways, behind this saying from younger generations there might be lots of causes that have already affected their mind set. For example migration, western fashion, lack of cultural practice and adopting other religion is the result of this saying. He expressed his view about doing research that we

have to look in both ways; research can give the reader a real flavor of their local identity.

4.5 In traditional musical instruments.

Modernization and globalization have had a huge impact on Rai Kirati traditional musical instruments which have been used during the Sakawa Sili festival. Lots of questions could be asked. If these traditional instruments are mixed with jazz, rock and hip pop music than what will be the result? Will the dance lose its traditional meaning, forms and expression?

Lak is the original tradition lyrics of song for the Sakawa Sili dance; it has its own ways of performance, creation and linked with the festival. According to traditional belief, it has deep connection with the Mundhum and the Mother Nature. Lak is developed through the oral literature. But present days because of impacts of modernization most of Lak lyrics is full of love which is popular among young generations. The festival came out through electronic media like for examples, TV, radio, CD and VCD. Because of these things it's a questions of traditional values, if it is professionalized no doubt it will change its traditional ways of representation.

Effects could be analyzed through pre-modern and modern periods. In pre-modern time instruments such as Binayo, Yalambar, Murchunga, Tunga and Pung are used. In modern time having different types of drums and cymbals are used with mixing western electric musical instruments having lots of experiments. Mordern period could be consider from 1946AD where government decided to applied new land reformation act. Another 1886AD from that period Rai people have legalized to join the Birtish Gorkha solider in Great Britian. By adoping different proffesions and migations had helps to impacts its traditional ways of celebrating the Sakawa Sili festival.

Binayo, is the most popular traditional musical instrument among Rai Kirati community. It is made from bamboo making holes and threads. It is not used now in the Sakawa Sili festival but we can assume that from this instrument the Rai Kirati people developed other modern instruments. It is made from a flat piece of bamboo; both sides are tied by two separate strong threads which produces sound and vibrations. Mostly country women are considered good players of this instrument. Now days because of many factors, people almost have forgotten to play this musical instrument, it is only found in

museum. There is no particular occasion to play Binayo. Generally, Rai people play it while they are taking rest during the time of firewood or while collection litter woods in the forest.

In Sumnima and Parohang magazine Sundar Kumar Rai writes, “Though there is not any evidence that by whom, when and where the instrument was invented, its name itself and its existence in Kirant community prove that it is a Kirant originated folk instrument. In fact Yalambar is the name of the first King of the Kirant dynasty of ancient Nepal.” (Sundar, 2009:47). From this statement we assume that it’s an ethno musical instrument that exists in Rai Kirati community.

It is also made from a piece of bamboo, strings are parallel crafted on it, like guitar that strings vibrate and the sounds were originated. The sound of Yalambar is similar with Madal which is a folk instrument of Nepal. According to some Nepalese scholars, Yalambar is almost similar with other instruments like bamboo drum. In fact, it is the typical Nepalese instrument which is invented and used by Kirati forefathers and ancestors. (ibid: 48). But it has not been used in the Sakawa Sili festival in present time.

Murchunga is an instrument made from iron and it produces the sounds like Binayo. Pung is made from the horns of an ox and Tunga which is made from Rhododendron’s woods and have four wires like Sarangi or violin. In historical period of time Kirati Rai’s forefathers and ancestors used this instruments, but it has not been used practically in modern days. There is no evidence how these traditional instruments were replaced, but modernization could be one cause. Correlations with these instruments with Sakawa Sili, of course it has its role and importance to make the rhythm strong. Through all these traditional instruments Kirati people express their lifestyles through the music. In myth there are also correlations with these type of instruments with our archetypal God and Goddess Sumnima and Paruhang too.

Gradually these traditional instruments are replaced by electronic musical instruments. Comparing the use of these types of traditional instruments younger generations are much more interested in electronic systems, that they feel more comfortable with. Though it has its own ritual values such as drums that are used in Sakala Sili it has to be made from deer’s skin with special trees. Today people have started to make them from cow and buffalo’s skin. It’s strictly forbidden to touch those who are from other casts

and absent cast; these values are also gradually changing. Cymbals belong to other musical instruments without having special rituals, it should not be used, but these types of rituals and mythical values are gradually declining. These changing factors could be sign of modernization.

Rituals have had their own social discourse and have not been completely displaced by any discourse (Cheal,1992:363). In response to this assumption, according to Habermas, "*Rituals has declined as a medium of communication due to the growth of rational discourse.*" (ibid: 363). With comparing these two statements it seems that the values of rituals are changing and it has become less important for the communication of meanings than it was in the past. Behind these things there are so many affecting factors such a thoughts in rational, religion and modernity. Again theorist Habermas argued that, "*A modern observer is struck by the extremely irrational character of ritual practices.*" (ibid: 363).

When it compare its values with modernity, it seems doomed because it gradually is replaced by more rational practices. In a way of performing Sakawa sili ritual symbols carry meanings, to interpret any symbols in a metaphorical ways its difficult for those who are from other communities. Rituals are the texts which can be read for their symbolic significance (Howe, 2000:64). It is unique also because they are situated in particular places, times and cultures. It takes long time to develop. Every times it is rewritten while it is performed. Not only in Rai Kirati community, in Nepal among 59 indigenous communities almost their cultures are shaped their religion through so many rituals values. When it is time for performing they take it as their great festival, almost all particular community was involved to make their indigenous festivals strong and successful.

Traditional musical instruments play a vital role to develop the ethnic identity and it helps to express our ethnic identity in the Sakawa Sili festival. While using these types of instruments it expresses how Rai people think about themselves and their role within the nature. Most important things are all these types of traditional instruments used for rituals context. When it is used as a ritual context, it is considered as a deep relationship between these types of instruments and the Rai Kirati community for many generations.

If we observe the Sakawa Sili rituals and its values in terms of traditional musical instruments it seems it's gradually changing or being replaced through the modernization impacts. While using these types of traditional instruments it's had to have its own traditional ritual values. For examples, drums should be made from deer's skin, hold be kept on special chest nut tree's leaf, forbidden to touch those who are from other cast and it should not use before performing the rituals. Another examples in terms cymbal, bow and arrow its rituals values are it is used to create more sounds with drums beats but most its rituals values are it is used because by its loud sounds the Jayaksi soul are disappear or it helped to make them trouble. But now if we observed the Sakawa Sili festival in a serious way we find that all from other casts, without following ritual values, are participating. In the modern time if we observed these festivals youth participates are mostly using highly attack only form of the dance. If this trend continues it could bring a huge negative impact on Kirati culture. Let's look for example, at Lakcham the Kirati word meaning to perform the dance. In the old tradition Lakcham is full of words like respect and devotation towards the Mudhum but its values are also changing gradually because younger generation mostly attack from modern entertainment and they try to copy in the Sakwa sili festival. Modern technology and modern sources of entertainment are the source of affecting factors such as internet, television and Western music. It does not mean that envelopment of youth participations can save their traditional culture forever, the same way there is the possibility to lose the interest of youth participation in the future. If all Kirati people cannot be serious in front of their culture identity, it will not be remain same.

Sili Hakapa and Sili Hakma traditionally they are the leader of the groups while participants are ineloving the festival. According to them it helps to perfrom the Sili dance through rules and regulations. They have knowledge and capacity to handle the mass of participants; for example, normally they used the traditional musical instruments which seem a little extra than normal participation. But, the value of Hakapa and Hakma also are gradually changing. If we seriously observe the festival everybody holding traditional musical instruments in morden time (Balakcha, 1992:12).

4.6 In dance and ritual leader.

“Ritual activity is tangible evidence that there is more to religion than a simple assent to belief, there are practices, institutions, changing customs, and explanative systems.” (Bell, 1997:22).

Many rituals should be fulfilled before performing the Sakawa Sili festival. But, through the modernized period of time all ritual cannot be performed in a proper ways because of a lack of traditional things needed in the Sili festival. If these types of traditional rituals cannot be performed in a traditional ways, gradually its belief systems, norms and values also disappear among the youth participants and those who are involved in the festival. The way of performing rituals is in front of the Sakala shrine. Nakch (priest) recalled the Mudumi language and verdict to perform the rituals to worship the ancestors.

The Sakala shrine is made from three lung (stone) having different names such as Suptulung, Taralung and Shakhalung (Mukarum,2004:7). The same Sakewa shrine also is worshiped by the Rai community in their homes too. In the Rai Kirti language lung means stone and in the Sakala shrine it has different names and symbols such as they worship in different ways like ancestors, old knowledgeable person and the society (ibid:7). It also is symbol of power, wealth and relationship between Mother Nature. Before starting the festival Nakcho recalls the special Mudhum language, traditional Vedic, incantation and special way of deliberation. Through spreading yeast water to purify these Sakal shrine Nakcho provide the ginger, food grain and homemade beer to each and every stones for purification. That is the general ways of performing the rituals before starting the festival.

In previous generations the Rai people used to perform puja (worship) basically offering meat, in the name of their forefathers but the new generation avoided most of the primitive kind of offering to the Sakala shrine. Another example, in ancient times, when there was any trouble or threat people beat the traditional drums called Hongken and Siliken loudly. If someone is working on the field and hears the drums, it is their duty to rush before the congregation. Now this type of traditional belief system has almost disappeared. The beating of Hongken and Chamukhi or Jhyamta is one of the interesting features of performing the Sakewa Sili festival. It symbolized the new season, new

beginning and new spirit among the Rai Kirati people. Indeed overall it's the time for celebration and prayer for prosperity.

To support the modernization effect one of the most powerful factors is modern education among the Kirat community; roughly there are 27 to 30 languages, languages which have their own distinct identity. A few languages are taught in primary school in a few places, like Vojpur, Illam and Jhapa. Boarding schools and Western education system try to bring the local community towards the Western traditions and capitalistic thinking. Modern education helps to bring the Rai community towards modernity and loses the traditional cultural identity. Young people hardly understand and feel more about traditional culture than what the daily necessities demand them to know. Through this modern education and number of emerging boarding schools there is no doubt with every new generation, bigger parts of this great heritage will be lost, and the same is happen with the Sakawa sili ritual too. In-depth research has to be done in this area too, local or traditional knowledge in any society does not stay alive just by itself, everybody has a responsibility to contribute his or her share in the process of remembering. Sili ritual has to be taught from primary level of education and those who are experts in this field their ritual and cultural memory should be actively collected in data in different forms so that any factors cannot easily affected this Sakawa sili rituals.

There are numerous traditional rituals that still exist in the Rai community; in this present modern world, rituals give a sense of indigenous identity. Traditional festivals and rituals are the most important aspects of Rai culture. Ways of celebrating rituals have their own different ways and meanings. It is assumed that in Kirati religion, ritual is essential to convert the society in to a civilized phase. For example, in Kirati culture these types of rituals helped to make a society united and systematic. After the rituals developed, it helped to build the relation and respect to each other, rituals that for every human being it makes pure and give social rank respectively in many ways.

The origin of rituals is directly linked with tribal communities, which might be indigenous communities in the late nineteenth century. In Rai culture too ritual played a vital role to practice the Kirati religion, to practice the ritual people continue to do what their ancestors did before. Meanings of rituals depends on the symbolic ways the Sili dance is performed. *"Ritual is always a matter of symbolic actions that express sociological truths in cosmological terms."* (Bell, 1997:50). Of course every indigenous

community all-around the world has had different lifestyles, beliefs and way of rituals performing. Questions and debates will arise asking if these types of rituals are rational or irrational which are Practiced through symbolic actions. It proved that indigenous people's knowledge seems particle, natural and facts in front of their religion, superstitions and traditional knowledge because their lifestyles are much more attached with their land and natural resources. In terms of traditional Sili dance too, it's symbolic meaning lies on worshiping the nature through different rituals that are performed from start to end.

Analyzing these traditional rituals through scientific knowledge it seems that it is based on superstition, beliefs, wild and mythical correlations. But that is not only ways to interpret the indigenous knowledge; it is those types of knowledge which are passed from generation to generation and as much in the indigenous community as by word of mouth. It is more natural which cannot compare to scientific knowledge. For examples in the Kirti religion also while performing the rituals, Nakcho recalls the Mudumi language that they learn from their ancestors, culture that existed from generations ago and it teaches to respect nature, religion, culture and the ancestors which are Practiced through long periods of time.

About its modernization effects in rituals, Sakawa Sili dance is only started after performing or worshipping the Sakala shrine by the Nakcho. All the traditional instruments have to be kept on special trees leafs called Katush (chest nut plant's leaf) but today it is gradually replaced in town areas because it is hard to find that types of plant. (Shiwahang, 2012:90). Apart from that, Nakcho who knows the Kirati Mudumi language, are those who can perform the Sakawa Sili rituals in a systematic ways through verdict in Mudumi language. In Nepal the modernization was started after the unification of the new Nepal by King Prithivi Naryan sha in 1773 AD. Afterwards the Hindus king tried to impose or enforce the Hindu code of conduct on all different indigenous nationalities. The government of Nepal promoted monolingualism by pursuing a '*one nation one language*' policy and suppressed the rights of linguistics minorities. Only the Nepali language was permitted in education and broadcasts. As a result all the indigenous languages were in suppressed positions.

At the same time it affected Kirat rituals too, for example the state imposed the law not to slaughter the cow, and beef meat is most necessary in Kirti rituals (D.B.rai,2004:12).

In the Kirati religion Nakcho offers beef meat to the departed the soul of their ancestors and it's necessary in Sakewa rituals performing too because that;s the time Nakcho has to offer the beef meat in front of the Sakawa shrine (ibid:13). Its modern effects these days is departed souls are invoked to accept the substituted meat as cow meat along with other varieties of meat for example deer meat. To slaughter the cow in Nepal still is considered as a hateful crime and if person found who slaughter the cow they must be in the imprisoned.

The most important things is in every type of traditional rituals in Kirati cultural chicken, beef, pork meat has to offer towards the Sakala shrine but the use of beef meat in Nepal has been abandoned. In their national constitution the cow is a national animal and it does not have to suffer in Nepal. But In the present through different factors like political situations, modernization and awareness in own traditional indigenous identity different movements started rising. All indigenous groups started to avoid the Hindu great festival Dashain which they bring from the India Kashi.

Before arrival Hindus in Nepal all indigenous peoples are celebrating their great festivals in their own traditional ways such for examples indigenous groups like Limbu celebrated the Yalaug, Kirati celebrated the Sakawa, grung sorati and the tamang celebrated the loshar. These types of movements helped to make indigenous communities aware of their culture, language and religion. In the modern trend when Nakcho is performing the Sakala rituals they almost avoided the Hindu religious terms such as Om⁶, Shatya, Kilash, Siva and Parvati which is the names of Hindu God or Goodness which they used to verdict while they used to pray. Besides that Kirati priest Nakcho used the words Paruhang and Sumnima (Bahadur Tanka, 2003:87).

Another examples of modernization in the Sakala shrine is that Kirati people totally avoid to use of the Tirsual(three toothed instrument) that is Hindu religious traditions besides that Kirati people started using bow, arrow and sword while rituals are performed (Bahadur Tanka, 2003:87). From 1981 AD Kirati people started to avoid the Hindus festivals and it could be because of the effects of modernization. In the Kirati religion every types of rituals Nakcho verdict the words that is almost to pray for the

⁶ Sacred sound uttered before and after a Vedic verse and mystic name ofr the triad of deities Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva in Hindu religion.

universe that is sun, moon, rivers and soil which is more natural (Kumar Shanta,1998:54). From historical period of time among five different settlement areas in Rai community they recall different names of the rivers while rituals performing for examples those who lived in Machi zone they pray for Maipokhari river, Kankai river as well as those who lived in Sagramatha zone they pray for Mount everst, Halsi temple, Dudpokari so it seems that Kirati people are honest towards their God as a nature (ibid: 55).

4.7 Because of open public space in the festival.

Every year the festival is celebrated in an open public space, where there is more possibility to mix up different identities at the same time. Viewers might come from different backgrounds and their ways of judging this festival is also different from person to person. Nepal's government decided to give a public holiday to the Sakawa Sili festival from 2002, so it is performed in different places and lots of Kirati Rai organizations take the responsibilities to continue the festivals. In the period of time the festival shows different issues, for examples ethnic identity, generation's gap between old generations and younger generations, traditions and modernity. It can be taken as challenges as well as its impacts of modernization that are affected through different factors.

According to the chairperson of one Kirati organization, Mr. Padamn Rai said that, *"In the name of modernization, there is interference upon Sakala Sili; we feel there is lots of vulgarity in dances and songs. Through this we are also start forgetting our culture, language, ancestors and our soil too."* (Hatuwali, 2008:1). Through media the dates of festivals are published. About its audiences and its participants there is not any bar for entrance in to the festival. Today every type of groups, casts, indigenous and non-indigenous peoples are participating. Because of this, the festival starts losing its ethnic identity as well as creating problems in the festival. In festivals we can observe just a few who are serious while the rest take this festival as only a meeting place to have fun only. It could be problem of generations' gap, lack of proper training and lack of systemic ways of performing for each and every group who participated in the festival. Because there are lots of causes in a modern time the festival slowly turned in to alcohol and drunkenness in additional to fights, rapes, sexual harassment and other violent activities were incersing.

In festival periods especially Rai Kirati women sell their homemade traditional things; beside that they mostly sell homemade beer, wine and alcohol. Those who are non-indigenous participants take these things in a negative ways as if it's a place to drink and get drunk, It's possible too because of the open space and they also thought that only in festival time these homemade liqueur are possible to get. Alcohol is becoming a negative and whole ethnic value of traditional Sakawa Sili festival are getting lost every day, which might be creating serious problems in the Rai community too.

4.8 Impacts of Westernization and globalization.

Peter Beyer defined globalization as, "That social communication links are worldwide and increasingly dense. On perhaps the more obvious level, this means that people, cultures, societies and civilizations previously more or less isolated from one another are now in regular and almost unavoidable contact."(Peter Beyer, 1994:2).

"Juxtaposition of particular cultures or identities not only brings differences into sharper profile, it makes it much more visible that the diverse ways of living are largely human constructions."(ibid)

This 21st century, through technology, the world is in our hands. The concept "*Think local act global.*" is almost impossible in indigenous cultures all around the world because nobody can stop the effects of the globalization, just as we cannot save our local indigenous traditional identity. According to Peter Beyer it's a social change, development of advanced communication and technologies that affect individuals and communities. As a result traditional norms and values are gradually replaced. Development of advanced communications, through different satellites and TV channels broadcasts different types of programmers that affect traditional Sili dance too. Different types of Western TV channels spread the programs all over the world and help to build the culture hegemony of power by developed nations over developing nations.

For examples, if we look at the Rai Kirati's traditional culture, youth are adopting Western fashion, style and way of living which they adopted through different TV programs which is directly a negative impact on Rai langue and culture. The younger generation is shy to adopt their own traditional cultural because they think that world is more advanced than what they feel in their own cultural community.

Day by day the world is becoming a single place through different technologies and media that crosses easily into traditional living styles. For example if all Rai Kirati communities have access of internet what will be the result? If all Rai groups have access of internet, modern technologies and worldwide TV programs will impact their traditional cultures in both ways that could be positive as well as negative too. In Kirati community it can bring challenges as well as opportunities.

On another side globalization could be a supportive factor to build the strong relation with traditional knowledge too. For example, in the Rai Kirati community different groups started to run their own Television Network, newspapers and radio programmers that is also a positive impact of globalization that helped to promote the Rai culture through different satellite channels all over the world.

4.9 Because of Western language and culture.

In a linguistic point of view, I would like to correlate how these modern languages also affect the Sakawa Sili dance. As we all know Nepal has been a multilingual country since antiquity. Except other languages, inside the Kirati indigenous groups almost 30 total different languages are spoken. It is said that, Jati Rai uti kura or There are as many languages as there are Rais. The conditions of these languages some are dying and most are in pathetic linguistic situation. My concern is how language affects the culture, especially in Sakawa Sili festival to make them modernized.

Mostly indigenous languages and cultures are deeply interlinked with each other. It helps to foster the culture, and if languages die the culture also dies. The change occurred after the unification of New Nepal by King Prithivi Naryan shah when Nepali (Khas bhasa) was imposed. Indigenous people were discouraged to use their mother languages. If they used, they were harassed, humiliated and even punished if they used their languages (S Vishnu: 33). The rulers actively promoted or spread the Nepali language throughout the indigenous communities' settlement areas and as a result most indigenous languages were almost lost and displaced. Only a few primary levels of education are taught in Rai mother languages. It is not enough to provide all Rai children when they are ready to enter to primary level of education and at the end they do not have a choice to take education through Nepali language that is majority language in Nepal.

In the same way Rai cultures and languages are also affected when these groups enter this 21st century, we can find among 30 different languages a few are almost disappeared. Younger generations fully adopt English language in the same way they try to adopt Western cultures too. Another reason is if they are fluent in English languages they feel superior in their community, easy to get access in every field and they cannot humiliate or harassed. As a result that brings negative effects in Sakawa Sii culture.

Chapter Five: Indigenous culture and politics focused on Sakawa sili festival.

5.1: Introduction:

This chapter will focus on indigenous cultural politics in Nepal. The chapter will give analysis of Nepalese indigenous rights in terms of self-representation, culture revitalization and the role of Kirati organizations towards the Sakawa sili festival. Chapter five also interprets how Nepal's indigenous people are voiceless in front of the state; and how indigenous groups and other minorities are suppressed, oppressed and dominated through one culture, one caste, and one religion. This chapter will draw correlations and will analyze indigenous culture of the Sakawa sili festival and how this indigenous culture is trapped through Nepalese state politics.

5.2 Cultural revitalization through Sakawa sili festival.

Oxford English Dictionary defines the meaning of word *Revitalization* as “revival and bringing again in to active use”. While talking about culture revitalization in the 21st century, the world's languages and cultures are not always static in their positions' they are change from time to time. It is to be said that languages are change between five kilometers, so it's a constant process of changing. Obviously if language changes it does matter in culture too.

Many questions can be raised regarding why every traditional culture is important for Rai indigenous communities. How can we revitalize the culture if it is in dying situation? All types of indigenous cultures carry out many things such as language, religion, customs and human behavior. We can look at the history of Europe, the concepts of nationalism and imagine communities which share like languages, territory, culture and

economy. And after and before the colonialism and post colonialism period many concepts were created including nationalism, nation states and identity.

In the issues of Sakawa sili festival, many questions can be raised. Does this traditional festival really support revitalization of the Rai community? What is the challenge in revitalizing the culture through Sakawa sili festival? If it is so, in what ways is it supportive? For example, if we are going to revitalize the Rai culture through this festival, it is important that the goal of revitalization process should be clear and visible in Rai's traditional culture, philosophy, music, dance, and environment and focused groups. The main factor in the culture revitalization process is how we integrate, develop and implement it in our culture.

Before analyzing how the festival supports revitalization of the Rai's culture, I would like to analyze reasons it should be revitalized and how this festival was dominated by one culture in Nepal's politics. Nepal has never been under colonial rule of any colonial power, before the territorial unification of Nepal by King Prithvinarayan shah in 1769 the nation was divided into 22 and 24 principalities. Through autocratic Rana rule, corruption, misuse of power and authority, bad governance and sociocultural inequalities from the beginning, all these 59 indigenous groups were marginalized from mainstream politics.

In the political history of Nepal, it seems that all leaders are fighting for their power rather than to develop the nation. According to writer Krishana Bhattachan, from 1846 to 1950 autocratic Rana system existed in Nepal. In this system they put the people in to jail without providing basic needs, and this system existed till 1950 (Krishna Bhattachan, 2003:4). With having several ups and downs Nepalese people experienced democracy for some years after the fall of the autocratic Rana rule in 1950. Again King Mahendra dismissed the 18 month parliament and introduced a party less panchayat political system with direct leadership of the king. The system existed till 1990. Due to people's movements the Nepalese people again experienced a multiparty political system. But the new system brought many appointments for the people. Misuse of power, bad governance and social inequalities from 1996 Maoist insurgency began, in a name of civil war, almost 13,000 people were killed and the majority were from indigenous groups. In the period of public war indigenous museums, art, and literature

were burned and because of the unsafe situation indigenous peoples could not celebrate their festivals.

In the history of Nepal, it was mentioned that Hindu castes had migrated to Nepal after 11th century due to Muslim invasion of northern India. They are the top most populated caste in terms of corruption, misusing power, authority, bad governance and sociocultural inequalities who ruled Nepal since 240 years (ibid). Because of all these types of effecting factors indigenous cultures, language and religions are trapped through this Hindu monopoly system. With many factors they try to destroy the indigenous culture by imposing Hindu religion and Khasa/Nepali language. Indeed dominant groups control the government in all levels including executive, legislative and judiciary. And the result, all these 59 indigenous groups are still suppressed and marginalized from the state. In terms of ethnic identity, language, religion and culture, these indigenous nationalities are discriminated against by the dominant groups.

This is the reason it is necessary for indigenous cultures to be revitalized in Nepal. In the issue of Sakawa sili festival, this festival helps to revitalize the Rai culture in several ways. It's not only for celebrating the festival but it also helping to find the culture, identity and language. Through different traditional images and symbols it creates the feeling of 'we' -those who are taking part in the sili festival. Not only this, the festival is the meeting point for all Kirati people to share their feelings, joy and experiences from every day of their mundane lives.

The festival brings the Rai people together and supports building nationalism in two different ways. It is a common meeting point to celebrate the festival for those who are suppressed form long period of time from the state; it is the tool to revitalize the Rai culture. Therefore, in the festival, all age groups are interested in participating. Not only in Rai community, but festivals could be developed and promoted as an indigenous identity all over the world. In the festival most of the participants are also from theaters, artists groups, or are singers and musicians. With them, it could be more possible to attract more international participants.

If we closely observe the festival and those who participate, they will demonstrate the Rai's culture, between traditions and modernity with issues in the context of Nepalese indigenous community. Inside the modernity the quest for dignity is a good example of

revitalization, development and establishing ethno relations among the Rai kirati community. Mostly participants dress up in kirati traditional dress; the meaning of dress does is not limited wear but it reflects many things among all the participants such as identity, culture, language, indignity and their history. Different types of traditional rituals, ways of performing sili dance and traditional foods help to revitalize the Rai community, make them proud of their ancestors, helped to promote the Rai culture and their indignity and build a common bridge for togetherness.

In the name of modernization, migration, western fashion and intercultural marriage, the traditional values of the festival are disappearing day by day. To that point, the festival could be one of the best tools to revitalize the Rai's culture. In many situations, because of rapid social changes, traditional community is affected too, but festivals try to adjust the traditional values by celebrating twice in a year. For example, Kirati Mudhum which normally verdict through Nakcho it is a verbal knowledge which includes Kirati myths, songs, stories, legends, norms and values can be practiced through the Sakwa sili festival. It is the great valuable assets of our ancestors.

According to author Rolland, the definition of *revitalization* is, '*deliberate, and organized conscious efforts by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture.*' (Rolland, 1972:475). He further described that it is usual phenomena which changed constantly with time, but to revitalize the certain culture there should be steps forward towards the national level to from the community level. So Sakawa sili festival also one of the vital tools for building the new institutions and dying culture. At the time of festival all groups are organized to promote the sili festival and all participants and members are contributed Rai organizations in a serious ways. It could be a profound experience for youth who are more affected by modernization; they can see and experience the new reality which is the real indigenous ways and culture in the Sakawa festival.

5.3 Indigenous politics questions of self-determination in terms of Sakawa sili festival.

'time afnai gharma afain bass namaga,[in Nepali], 'you don't ask for a shelter in your own home.'(Bhupal Rai, 2000:4).

To perform the Sakawa sili festival there should be a specific place, time, rule and regulation. Many questions could be raised such as is the particular and certain places

that provided by state to practice their culture for every indigenous groups of Nepal. If not, how do they practice or exercise their traditional festival in their homeland? These topics try to analyze indigenous politics and questions of self-determination in terms of the Sakawa sili festival.

Kirat people's questions of self-determination lie in their kiptat system. It is mentioned in history that after the unification of New Nepal by King Pirthivinaryan saha, parts of kirat Pradesh should belong to the kirati people. Regarding the system of kiptat, I have already mentioned in the 2.2 topic 'Geographical settlement patterns of Rai kirati community past and present.' Here I want to correlate the issues of self-determination with the kirati peoples. The ethnic origin places of Rai peoples are Khotang, Solu, Udayapur, Bhojpur, Okhaldhunga, Sakhuwasabha and Illam. Issues of self-determination in Nepalese indigenous politics are vague. Nepal is a country that is considered to have biodiversity and sociocultural diversity. For 240 years one caste, one religion, one culture, one language and one sex have been dominant over multi-caste, multi-religious, multicultural and multilingual society. Imposition of one language, that is the Khas Nepali language, does affect the whole indigenous community in their culture and day-to-day lifestyle.

From the history of internal colonization by King Pirthivinaryan saha, the kirati people have been marginalized in socioeconomic factors, such as dispossession of their land and identity. According to Kymlicka, culture rights should be considered as, *'if we really treat peoples in to equal ways, we have to take their issues in to different ways and try to make it possible for cultural groups to keep their uniqueness.'* (Kymlicka, 1995:108). But in Nepalese indigenous politics, it is applied in opposite ways, Nepal is as a nation in fact multicultural, and Kymlicka argues that a culture can shape our understanding of our reality. His most important and clear argument is based on equality and consideration that every cultural group has uniqueness, and they should be treated with equal rights. But, before the land reform act 1964, Rai's people had communal land ownership in the kiptat system. After this act was implemented, the owner of kiptat system was abolished and almost 77,090 hectares of land were taken from Kirti community (Neupane Krishna, 2008:6). Land was assigned to government employees, who mostly were to be Bahun Chhetris as remuneration. Since then, it has been a big question of self-determination among the Rai community.

When they have the Kipat system they practice the Mudhum in a traditional way. The kirati people have unique ways of celebrating their rituals and celebrating the Sakawa sili festival. They fully celebrate their traditional festival to ensure agricultural prosperity by pleasing the ancestors and the land; they are proud and honest towards their traditional land. The religion is defined in the holy book Mudhum, ensuring its purity, unity and perpetuity. But, after the Hindus arrival, they invaded the country, imposed their divide and rule policy, and imposed one culture. As a result, Rai people were affected, and they started migration and were marginalized from the Hindu's caste. They destroyed the society, burnt the holy books Mundum, occupied the land and divided the Rai people in different ways. Because of these unexpected events, Kirat culture based on Sakawa sili experienced difficulties.

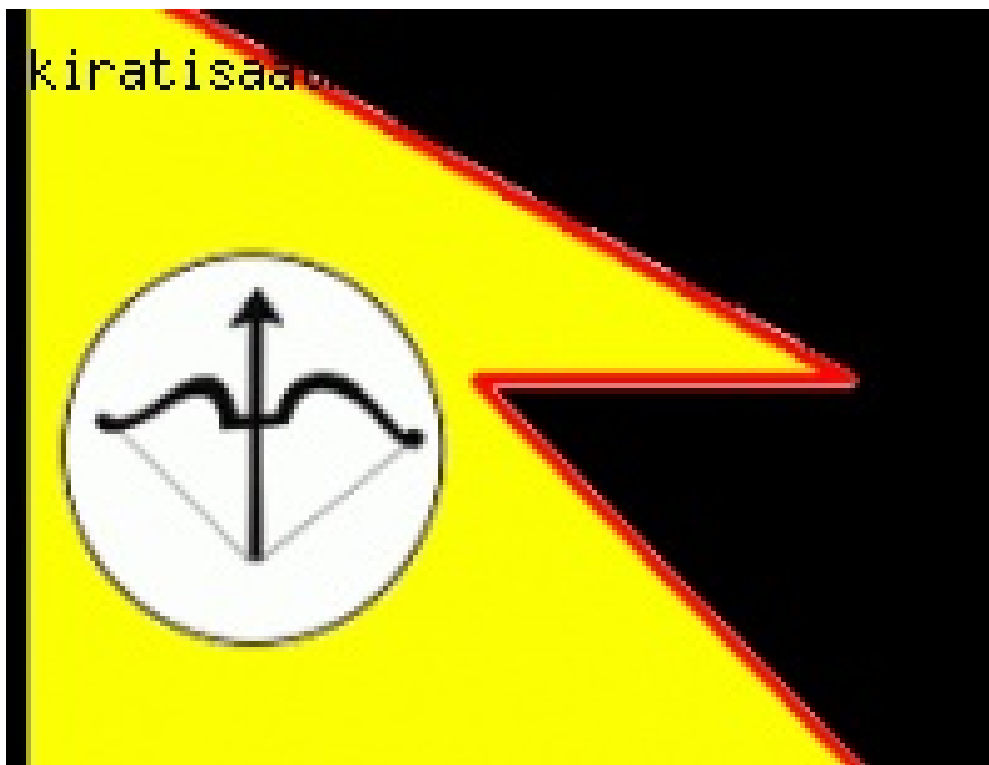
Sakawa researcher Nawaraj Rai wrote, '*Sakawa should not be analyzed only through dance but it has its correlations between states too.*' Before the Hindus arrival in the kipat area, to celebrate the Sakawa there was no need for different types of organizations as there are today. Rai people fully enjoyed their land with full ethnic identity. Society was full of peace of harmony, togetherness and honesty towards the culture with which they developed for hundreds of years. Folk culture, including: folk literature, belief and practice, dance and music, art and artifacts, tools, games, food, clothing and housing, fair and festivals, life cycle rituals and traditional healing practices are highly practiced in natural and traditional ways, which were learned through their holy book Mundhum. But, in the late sixties, in the name of the land reform program, all these traditional knowledges were abolished with the kipat land tenure system. Regarding language diversity, Rai people is the largest of the kirati groups which have more than 30 different languages in the same caste. There is a famous cliché also that is, "jati Rai uti kura," there are as many languages as there are Rais. Through this government system Kirati languages were affected; most languages were dying and negative affects have also influenced in culture.

All over the nation Nepal government decided to introduce the compulsory Sanskrit Hindu language, which they brought from Kashi, India to Nepal. They imposed this language from high school level and in the meantime they started to broadcast the Sanskrit language through the media. This process has had a negative impact in the the kipat area. This language started displacing other ethnic languages, and because of this,

most of Kirati's languages are almost dead. In terms of indigenous culture, religion and language it's a question of self-determination for all indigenous groups of Nepal. Hinduization or Bahunism created the society as a melting pot or homogenization with domination by one religion -Hindu; they started to displace indigenous traditional homeland. At all decision-making levels and in the public sphere, indigenous groups are underrepresented and marginalized.

5.4 Role of Kirati Rai organization in Sakawa sili festival.

'To be aware of your past means to be strong for your future.'(Alban, 2003:17) in Islim magazine.



(Flag of Kirati

Rai organization Yayokkha).

Kirat rai yayokkha have played a vital role in organizing the Sakala sili festival. In numerous ways the organization served to protect, preserve and promote the Rai culture in distinct social, cultural and linguistic ways among the kirati people in Nepal. It was established in 2047 BS. (1990). Comparing to other organizations, this organization seems much more focused on Sakala sili dance. It seems practical and natural too,

because dances not only carry out the dance but at once symbolize the sense of our identity, culture, language and religion.

From the established period of time it can create the feeling of 'we' among the kirati community. Its central office is held in Kathmandu valley which is in the capital of Nepal. Focusing not only in central but from time to time, the organization held many cultural programs throughout Nepal, especially in the eastern part of Nepal where the Rai community has more settlements. While in the period of sakawa festival, older generations share with younger generations kirati documents, traditional script, religious books, art, culture and history (Kirat Rai Yayokkha, 2012).

The organization has helped to build the relationships with other indigenous organizations and to share ethnic identity among indigenous groups of Nepal. Awareness campaigns were held from time to time through these organizations and included training in schools for Sakawa sili dance, primary education in mother tongue, and teaching Rai kirati languages in higher education. Sakawa sili competitions, promotion of traditional dress of kirati people and research schools have been established through this organization too. Through this organization, all kirati peoples can take part in a school, which is nonprofit organization. It is not an employment office, an agency nor a bank. All the board members and members of organization are fully social volunteers, nobody gets paid, but they have to contribute their own time and money. The main focus of the organization is to provide safety and educate about Sakawa sili program through different media, such as by providing CDs and DVDs.

The organization has had success, and it is visible in every type of political awareness program. It can build a common sense among the kirati youth that we should not anymore depend only on Yayokkha but every individual must participate in every organization and campaign that runs by yayokkha. This is a positive attitude from the organization and all kirati people are proud of it. With each and every type of social and political awareness campaign, Kirati youth start to participate, it means they are aware of the future for their identity, culture, language and religion. It helps to unify the Kirati people all over the world; the school runs with Kirati rai mother language, which is official in Nepal institutions that run by this organization. In rapid changing society with different factors of course ethnic identity clashed with many things, so also it did in Kirati communities. For example, while adopting other religions, culture and language youth

started to forget their actual identity and their culture, so at in this time organization helped to create the awareness programs to the youth. Not only did this greatly develop the networking programs with other national and international organizations, it uplifted ethnicity and indigenous people's identity (ibid).

Organizations focused on implementing to the studies, research and development of the Kirati culture and their languages too. Poverty reducing programs, uplifted unity among Kirati people are the the successful campaign of this organization. Considering unity then, why it is necessary only in Kirat community? Not only blaming the political situation of Nepal but many factors including modernization, migration, poverty and western education have had negative impacts on Kirati traditional culture. During the organization function and celebration of the Sakawa sili festival on that day, well know guests from all sectors like education, music and literature were invited. For example they invited to Sakwa sili musicians, dancers, writer, poets, doctors, engineers and professors who contributed their knowledge in different fields. They are long rewarded and respected on Sakawa sili festival by Yayokkhha. The aim of doing these types of events is that it could be effective and useful to Kirati youths to share the knowledge and it will help the community to reunite, respect and make a strong connection.

The above picture of a flag is the symbol of Yayokkhha. Most kirati people have these types of flags in their houses; we can see the Sakawa sili festival symbolizes our identity, culture and religion. It has a history as long as Kirati civilization and the flag have different meaning in its symbol, shape and color. The color the saffron yellow golden represents that the sun will never set in Kirati land. This is the beautiful example of how Rai Kirati people worship and respect the nature. It also represents that these peoples are just like gold in their appearance. Regarding its shape, it has a unique double triangle that symbolizes the Himalayas, which is the homeland of Rai peoples. The border of the flag is red, which symbolizes the brotherhood among Rai peoples and other ethnic organizations. It also symbolizes that Rai people are brave and resilient. We can see inside the flag there is a symbol of bow and arrow; these are their traditional natural instruments representing hunting and warriors. A circle represents the universe, and the inner circle represents the mother earth which is mentioned in the Kirati religious holy book in Mudhum also. The outer circle represents the sky, or it's the symbol of father or ancestors, and it also demonstrates that Rai kirati people always respect their

land and in both culture and religion. The circle is white, which symbolizes purity of their culture and religion.

To promote the Kirati Rai culture and especially the Sakawa sili festival the Kirat Rai cultural artist association was established in 2006 in Kathmandu. It organizes cultural programs related to Kirat culture such as Sakala songs competitions and awarding those who work more to Sakala sili. Every year this organization awards the young artist singers who have a bright future in the musical area. For individual encouragement, the organization awarded \$10,000 cash through 'Kirat Rai talent award'. The organization was actively involved in research on traditional musical instruments its promotion and preservation of Rai's culture. The organization has a main vision to promote the culture of Rai kirati people and make them popular among the public, to revitalize the culture. It organized national and international programs so that Kirat Rai artists get together, share their knowledge and share their experience. These types of programs are also organized through the Yayokkhha (Kirat Rai Yayokkha, 2012).

The organization makes various types of songs to raise awareness among Rai people about their culture. To improve the social awareness they produce many musical CDs, DVDs and documentaries related to Rai culture. The organization has a well known president, Jitan Rai who is a musical artist making work related to Rai culture. Regarding opinions towards the kirat Rai cultural artist association he said, *'To conservation the rai's culture that main problems lies in the state's rule and law.'* (Yayokkha, 2010:41). So he was more focused on the state rules, which should provide equality to all the religions. Nowadays Yayokkhha is actively involved with helping and awarding Nakcho, those who are most necessary in every ritual in Rai community. They are helping as well as awarding the people who know the Mudumi language as similar to Nakcho. Beside that organization has published the images of our archetypal God Sumnima and Paruhang proto female and proto male and it is distributed to every Rai Kiati people to worship every day (Shanta man, 2005:31). They publish the traditional proverb and tidbits which shape the Rai people's day-to-day life in their culture. For example, Lakcham is the lyrics of song which is necessary while sawawa festival is perform. The organization researched and published traditional Lakcham, which had almost disappeared from Rai culture. The organization's focus was that Lakcham should be full of words which Mudumi knowledge provided too ur religion. So the question can be

raised, what types of words are involved with Lakcham? For that, the organization is more focused on six 'S' words including: sadabwb, sahanavuti, sahissuwanta, samanta, santi and swabhimān{in Nepali} the meaning of these words are kind feeling, sympathy, tolerance, equality, peace and self-respect. These words should be involved into Lakcham's lyric which is taught to youth from this organization (ibid: 32).

5.5 Issues of ILO 169 in indigenous peoples rights in terms of Sakawa sili festival.

Nepal ratified the ILO 169 convention in 2007 (Subba Chaitanya, 2009: 65). What does ILO 169 mean to indigenous peoples of Nepal? And how is this law more applicable to Nepal's indigenous peoples? This convention mostly deals with the rights of indigenous people all over the world. First of all, it defines the words which symbolized the indigenous peoples in different ways such as for examples, native, aboriginal and hill tribes. In Nepal *janjati* is a word that means indigenous people. It talks more about common issues among the indigenous people all around the world, for example, their inhabited land, state boundaries, social, economic, cultural, political institutions and state sovereignty.

With regards to my topic, Sakawa sili, what are the issues in ILO 169? Questions could be raised, suppose for example how is state sovereignty formed? The meaning of sovereignty lies in nationalism, and nationalism could be formed through population, territory and symbols of identity, which can be found from different indigenous groups that they have culture, language and religion. In this context Sakawa sili could be a tool to establish the nationalism in Nepal. After the arrival of Hindu refugees in Nepal in late 11th century, Nepal applied different strategies and started to colonize the *janjati* land which they had inhabited for many centuries. They have controlled the political economy since the eighteenth century. For example, in *kambuwanpatra* the indigenous magazine writer Sankar Limbu writes, in the Act of water resources 1992 in Nepal that the state mentioned 600 rivers that shall belong to the state (Sankar Limbu, 2011:5). That is an injustice towards indigenous peoples because all these water resources have been inhabited by indigenous peoples of Nepal from many centuries.

All 59 indigenous *janjati* groups started to claim their native land, forest, water, pasture and other natural resources. In this present political scenario it is among the most complicated issues to be solved. Through these issues the state enacts various laws and

rules to preserve these rights for indigenous peoples of Nepal. It is natural too because ILO 169 provides minimum rights to use their traditional land. Janajati populations had a long history of political suppression, military oppression, ethnic discrimination, cultural destruction and economic marginalization. Since the Maoist insurgency began in 1996, Nepal has a new process of constitution making, and all these 59 janjati groups are demanding their inhabited land which is mentioned in constitution. Where they can get their homeland and autonomy, right to self determination, rights to equal representations, self-government rights and cultural rights too. About the Rai ethnic group they are also demanding their kipat system based in federalism where they have taken by applying for the land reform act 1964 and they took our homeland of approximately 77,090 hectares. After losing their land Rai people started migrating to different places and often they started to adapt new culture and tend to give up their traditional culture, which is of course affected to Sakawa sili too and Rai peoples started to lose connection towards their traditional homeland and cannot maintain their traditional culture in a fully complete ways.

Rulers started to impose Khas Hindu language in every Rai kirati community. As a result it has a negative impact on mother tongues, culture and kirati Mudhum too. They started to change Kirati Rai's indigenous VDC names in to khas Nepali language like mountains, rivers and native places. Most of traditional places are named after rivers, animals, trees and our god and goddesses for example, Chyomolungma that is the name of Mount Everest from the Sherpa community of Nepal but in history it was mentioned that the area also belongs to Rai peoples and these ruler changed the name of Chyomolungama into Sagarmatha in their khas language. This is vital politics to make their language more powerful towards comparing indigenous people's languages of Nepal. Originally the name belongs to the languages they speak like Rai's native land is named as a Khambus. Not only through language there are many examples how these Hindu peoples have taken our native land through applying various ways. Lack of command in Nepali language, lack of knowledge in Nepalese laws and legal proceedings and lack of power connection or powerlessness Rai people have lost their lands, properties and autonomy state. Because of simple, straight-forward, credulous and guileless nature they took lots of advantage from the Rai indigenous community in Nepal. All the state's policy and government officials power is based on belonging to Hindu and Chhetris majority groups. Who from the last 20th century ruled the Nepal and took indigenous people's

land, and applying different types of land reformation acts which is stronger from their side and which is easy to grab the indigenous land?

From the history there are several historical marks about how indigenous peoples of Nepal are dominated and discriminated. Before the unification of Nepal in 1769, all indigenous peoples had their own rule in their respective traditional homelands. After King Prithvivarman Shah's defeat of indigenous people's homeland he ordered to chop off nose tips and ears of the peoples of Kirtipur which is the traditional homeland of Newar indigenous groups. He suppressed the indigenous groups with full of brutality, physical punishment and humiliation to the minorities groups of Nepal. The policy of territorial unification was adopted forcefully by King Prithvivarman Shah and as a result all indigenous groups lost their traditional homeland and gradually started to lose their independence, rights to land, water, forest, rivers and pastures land as well as they started to lose their native language, religion culture and indigenous knowledge system (Bhattachan,2003:24). Another example, Hindu domination by King Drabya Shah attracted against the Magar king of Lig Lig kot in 1559 AD. Which is the beginning of the downfall of independence of indigenous nationalities of Nepal in Nepalese history.

In 1854 Muluki Ain (National code on Nepal) was implemented by Hindu Prime Minister Junga Bahadur Rana, founder of 104 years of autocratic Rana rule in Nepal. This national code restructured the caste and ethnic groups and divided them into a fourfold social hierarchy. Indigenous Janjati groups never belonged to this Hindu social hierarchy, but the ruler legally included them as in the second hierarchy as the alcohol drinking caste and punishments was based up on caste discrimination. As a result during the period of Rana rule, all these indigenous people were Hinduized and Sanskritized. Most indigenous groups started to lose their culture, language and religion. From that period of time Rai people started to lose their traditional Kipat land tenure and redistribution of land to the state elites (ibid). Lots of Kirati people's the history was burned like Mundhum that had a negative impact on Kirati religion, which is their holy book. Still it has negative impact, for example, Mundhum fully cannot print in written text and it is only limited up on Nakcho which is very rare to preserve.

The Rana rulers prevented indigenous groups from joining the British-India army and no government jobs were available except as a Pipa (porter). In the article which is published in Nipshung magazine, "Disgruntled British Gurkhas" writer D.B Rai notes, it

was the Rana minister Bir shamsher rana who had eventually legalized the recruitment in the British-Indian Army in 1886. With having certain discreditable agreement like Gurkha soldier should not be higher than soldier rank, British were pleased and they were given a free hand to select Gurkhas for their armed forces. In a return, the Rana ruler was lavishly conferred with medals and titles, it is also alleged that on each soldier enrolled they get specified sum was charged (D.B Rai, 1997:92). Through this discrimination lots of Kirati people migrated towards Britain, India, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong with them their valuable traditional culture also shifted and mixed with western culture. As a result they lost their traditional homeland, language, culture and religion too. From this entire marginalization history indigenous people started to fight for their rights according to ILO 169 as well as in front of the human rights commission of the United Nations.

5.6 Celebration of Sakawa sili festival in diaspora world.

'If we can do it here, we can do it anywhere.' This is a quote from one of the participants who is involved with Sakawa Sili festival in Kathmandu Nepal. Though the traditional homeland of Rai's peoples are in the eastern part of Nepal, we can find them in India as well, especially in Darjeeling, Sikkim, Assam, Nagaland and Bhutan. Because of migration we can find this community in Nepal from east to west.

Mostly large groups have migrated towards the capital city Kathmandu for better opportunities. In the United Kingdom most settlement through those who are in British army from the period of 1886 which it was legalized the recruitment in the British army. In the United States of America these castes have migrated through diversity visa (DV visa), which is offered by the United States government to developing countries as well as international students there as a students, professors, doctors and researchers for many years.

This topic focuses on how these diaspora communities celebrate their great festival Sakawa Sili because within them their culture, languages, tradition and religion also to change. To promote the Kirati culture lots of organizations have been formed such as Kirat Rai society of America, (KRSA) 2003, Kirat Rai Yayokkha UK 2004, Kirat Sunuwar welfare society UK and Kirat yakkha chhumma UK in 2008. All these types of Kirati organizations were formed in diaspora communities to promote the traditional culture of Rai cast which is provided to them through their ancestors. Questions can be asked

for examples are these types of organizations really devoted towards to saving and promoting the culture? If yes, what types of activities are held? In the name of modernization most young participants have started to adopt western culture which has had a profound impact towards the Kirati culture.

First I will start in Kathmandu where we found huge groups of those who have migrated from their homeland for many centuries. Every year Rai people celebrate Sakawa in open public place that we called Tudikhal. It is situated in the heart of Kathmandu, and for first time it was performed in the day of democracy day which is in 1963 and gradually it started to develop through the period of that time. The Rai people who lived in Kathmandu being temporary and permanently residents they decided to celebrate the Sakawa festival in the name of cultural preservation from 1981. In the beginning they only celebrated once in a year, but gradually they decided to celebrate twice a year. Now, we can find in the period of festival in many places where all Rai cast celebrated this festival having lots of fun, preserving and promoting Rai's culture, traditions, language, rites, rituals, music, art and different ways of dancing.

Who started celebrating the festival in Kathmandu? There are huge misinterpreting about who was the first. According to Sakawa researcher Chandra Kumar hatuwali, it was performed in 1981 May 23 where Kirti people started to gather in front of Sankar Dev campus's ground (Hatuwali, 2008:38). First credit goes to Shanti kumara Rai who was the organizer of this festival, singer were Laxmi rai, Vagawati Rai and the performers were Kadak rai, Tikaram rai, Nar Bahadur Rai and Milan Rai(ibid). The first time it was performed inside the ground of Sankar Dev campus. After few years, the numbers of the participants were increased and the palace is become limited. The organizer decided to search for another places to celebrate the festival and they were started to celebrate in Jawalakhhal which is open space. After the Kirat Rai organization Yayokkha was formed in 1990 to promote the Rai's culture various types of Lak were started to visible. The organization decided to the name the festival Sakala which is derived from Chamling, one sub cast inside the Rai community (ibid: 43). To preserve the traditional Kirati culture in Kathmandu I have already mentioned organization actives in topic 'Role of Kirati organization in Sakawa Sili festival.' In 6.3.

Let's look at the USA and how they are preserving the Kirat culture in America. Kirat Rai society of America (KRSA) was formed in 2003, the main aim of this organization is to

bring all Rais people together that live in America. It's a nonprofit organization which helps to promote awareness of Rai history, culture, language and religion. Not only in the USA but this organization helped to support and mobilized their resources to support in Nepal among other Kirati organizations who worked in the development and humanitarian sectors. In a way of preserving the Rai culture, often organization set the cultural programme like Sumnima Sanjh program which is a cultural night, Sakela festival and awarding VIP persons those who are supported to promoting the Rai culture in USA. Now and then KRSA invited Silimangpa from Nepal to command the Sakawa dance. As well as organization awarded to participants, performers, artists, technicians and volunteers those who actively involved in cultural night programme and Sakawa festival.

Each year's KRSA set the Sakawa Sili programme in Manhattan near to Hudson River, every year they invite the Silimangpa from Nepal to perform the Sakela rituals before starting the festival. Every beat of the Dhol, Jhayamta (Drums and cymbals), rhythm and every movement of Silimangpa remind them of their devotion towards our God and Goodness, ancestors, home, village and Mother Nature. Though they are in diaspora, they are able to share their traditional identity, feelings and promoting the culture being involved in the festival. The participants are dressed in traditional Nepali costumes as well as in ethnic Rai cultural dress. Young people look forward to these days and people arrive from other states such as Colorado and New Hampshire too. The festival evokes the questions of ethnic identity and it's a suitable time to meet relatives, old friends and neighbors so that they get the opportunity to see each other.. All types of cultural programmers are set giving particular names for examples Sumnima sanjh. It is from Kirati archetypal God which we worship proto female God Goddess in our Kirait religion. It symbolized the awareness to the younger generation towards the traditional culture and identity.

In UK the Kirati organization is formed in names like Kirat Sunuwar welfare society UK, Kirat Yakkha chhumma UK and Kirat Rai Yayokkha UK. Their aims are overall the same. To promote and establish brotherhood; harmonious relationship among all Rai people who live in UK. The organizations help to mobilize the young participants to involve actively towards cultural heritage conservation, awareness regarding Rai's traditions, languages, rituals, music and dance. It also provides a platform for individuals to express

their ideas, skills and capacity development. In the name of first Kirati king Yalambar the organizations set the cultural programme once in year within the Rai family those who lived in UK and to provide vital help when it is necessary.

5.7 Role of NEFIN (Nepal federation of indigenous nationalities) towards indigenous identity and festivals.

NEFIN was formed in 1991 as an umbrella organization of all indigenous peoples on Nepal. Currently people from 54 indigenous groups are members of the organizations out of 59. NEFIN has its membership with UN working groups on the issues of indigenous population all over the world. It is a national, autonomous and national level nonpolitical organization, which is established with having the vision to establish a secular and federal republic Nepal where indigenous groups are treated equally. Having respected their traditional cultural, religion, language and traditional homeland.

After the Maoist insurgency and the civil war in 1996, was the denunciation of the 1990 constitution and a demand for a new constitution to be made by the constituent assembly (CA). The main goal is to establish a new constitution where all marginalized voices and their rights should be ensured in the new constitution of Nepal. It is not only about the process of state rebuilding but it is also a nation building process. From the starting period of CA, NEFIN have played the a vital role to ensure the rights of indigenous people through diverse ways such as ethnic identity based on federalism, self-governance, right to self-determination and representation of all indigenous groups in decision making levels.

From the establishment period of time through various workshops, seminars and awareness programs NEFIN has helped the preservation of the indigenous culture, languages and religions. It helps to preserve and protection the heritage sites, indigenous people's museums and culture which have historical links with certain indigenous groups. The organizations often help to promote the celebrations of cultural festivals which is distinct identity of 59 indigenous groups of Nepal. For examples, development of cultural information centers, village tourism and protection of cultural property. To promote the cultural tourism management, NEFIN has established programmers for language, art and literature development. Nepal is of course a multilingualism and multiculturalism society, but due to internal colonization in a way

of modern Nepal, Hindu domination, hierarchical society, the caste system and cultural homogenization there is still actively favoritism in these various levels. As a result indigenous traditional cultural knowledge is suppressed. In these issues NEFIN has played a vital role from the beginning by protesting the government and demanding various indigenous rights from local levels to government levels. For example, in multicultural society everybody should be treated in an equally ways, indigenous culture, festivals, heritage, traditional knowledge, expressions, arts and literature should be according to ILO convention 169.

NEFIN has asked questions to the government about indigenous cultural rights in terms of public holidays to celebrate indigenous festivals, to promote the festivals through public media and to create awareness programme among the indigenous groups. Nepalese media play vital role in focusing cultural festivals but the sad thing research found is that there is a huge difference in the numbers of participants of indigenous people in the media. Nepalese media is dominated by the dominant cast which is Bahuns and Chhetris. In every type of mass media in terms of ownership, management, editors, reporters are from these majority groups. Lots of barriers like language, sufficient knowledge, prejudice and judging they are not able to broadcast the news in a justifiable way. As a result lots of traditional indigenous culture, language, folk dance, folk literatures, folk songs and folk music are interpreted in wrong ways far from their actual meanings. In the Nepal radio station which was established in 1951 and TV in 1985 information that is related with indigenous cultures are victimized or dominated by majority groups of participation in media (P Kharel, 2002:94).

In the present context about public holidays in Nepal, the governments have introduced public holidays for celebration of the Hindu festivals in a name of dog, cow and crow but there are no public holidays for indigenous groups when they celebrate their main festivals. Civil service holders celebrate their great festival Dasai, Tihar, Basanta panchami spending millions of rupees from national revenue. Despite all these types of inequality in indigenous culture, language and religion NEFIN actively helps to promote the indigenous culture. (Subba chaitanya, 2009:104).

Chapter Six: Conclusion.

In this study, 'The impacts of modernization on traditional Sakawa Sili festival in Rai Kirat community in Nepal' I have attempted to use a multidisciplinary approach. Through applying modernization and rituals theory including my fieldwork research study observed the impacts of modernization in diverse ways.

The Sakawa Sili festival is a great festival and it is very much alive among the Rai Kirat community. The festival can be seen as a calendric rite which helps to bring society in order through repetitions and re-beginnings. Basically the festival is celebrated twice in a year. April and November are the celebrating months which appeared through seasonal changes.

The major goal of this study was to compare the impacts of modernization in diverse ways. As well as to compare and contrast between old ways and new ways of performing among between younger and older generations. While performing the dance changing in motions, directions and ways of movements try to figure out but however it is also difficult to find out its real meanings in every movements because it is visual art performing and its ways of performing is not one there are many ways. Where symbols also played a vital role.

Based on findings from my participation observation I can figure out there are in many factors impacts of modernization is visible in terms of traditional dress, customs, language, musical instruments and ways of performing the dance. The research results had indicated that there were widely impacts of modernization which can be compare in both aspects.

Based on informants research found that youth are more interested to wear our traditional dress. They never neglect our own identity and instead they started to express their appreciation and respect towards the Kirti culture. It not helps only representing our ethnic identity but it also helped to represent harmony in other ethnic groups too. Though Western fashions become usual, Kirti youth are more interested to wear traditional dress often in festival period, special events and celebrations. In the

period of festival wearing traditional dress seems just like the fashion also. Not only this much, in the Kirati community it had various importance, it's a symbol of our one tradition, a signature of honor and loyalty for a historic culture. Most importantly is it is one way to respect our ancestors, culture, language and religion. Its impacts on Kirati traditional dress, we can take it as a new form of adaptability or modern form of understanding.

This research reveals that in many factors the impacts of modernization and globalization is visible in traditional Sakawa Sili festival. More importantly, however, the study highlights the prevalent sense of the festival which exists among the Rai Kirati community since long period of time. The most significant aspects of the findings are though it is impacts by modernization and globalization it also helped to revitalize the Rai culture in to multiple ways. As well as it have both impacts in the culture community. A modernization impact is visible on traditional dress, musical instruments and traditional rituals performing.

The result reveals that not only in the Sakawa Sili festival but impacts of modernization and globalization have been shown in diverse ways like language, culture and religion. Though this research is done through qualitative methods where I hardly presented my statistical mathematical figures and data. Due to migration and inter marriage will also effects to the Rai culture. The findings are especially pertinent for the issues concerning the relationship between Rai Kirati community and their great festival Sakawa Sili.

Numerous interviews have been presented in this research. All these interviews represent actual people with their personal experiences, their stories and aspirations. It is to them this research study is dedicated. It is my sincere hope that this study may be a step towards helping the Rai culture specially Sakawa Sili festival in terms its preservation and development. Together with this research I hope I really looking forward to the time when many books will be written in English language around the field of Sakawa Sili festival.

Overall, the festival very much alive among the Rai community. The majority of Rai populations have highly positive feelings towards their language, culture and religion. Most of them are interested to teach their children to speak Rai language and culture. They also suggested to their children to marry those who speaks their own language.

Most of the younger generations feel that their culture is most important to them and they are always willing to attend festival each year. At the same time many of them seem more interested in reading Kirati religious, history and culture books. Even though young generations wear jeans, listen western pop and rock music; eat in modern cafe they are also interested in their own Rai culture too.

Based on the findings from qualitative methods in order to its preservation and development whole community has to step forward towards its importance which lies in various ways. It must be emphasized from different levels that the festival also needs to be preserved and promoted. To keep its traditional ways of celebrating festival needs preservation. The Nepal government, state's law and different Kairati cultural community have to be serious on its preservation.

For its preservation and development steps need to be taken and it can be taken to ensure its vitality several generations from now. The research findings suggest that the Yayokkha Kirati cultural organization has to encourage the younger generations to participate in the festival each year. To make them aware towards their culture, religion and identity. In a festival period those who are engaged in this field they have to write creative writing in the journals and in workshops. Because number of the participations of younger generations in the festival shows that they love their own culture and desire to have its promotion.

From informants interviews research also reveals that digital modern technology is the one supporting factor to modernize the festival. It is more affected in Lak. Which are traditional rhythms and lyrics of the songs which are used in festival. Traditionally Lak is developed through Mundhum but modern Lak is more full of love songs. So study suggested that those who are in Kirati cultural community they have to seriously think up on Lak's lyrics.

This study also found that migration is one factor which affected the festival. When Kirati people migrated they were influenced from new ways of life, culture and community. As a result its effect on the Sakawa Sili festival too. Impacts of modernization on traditional clothes, traditional musical instruments and rituals values are the most affecting parts which this study reveals.

This research also indicated that new ways of dancing is also visible in modern time. The Impacts on traditional Kirati ornaments. An impact on participants's motions, movements and directions is the visible changes in festival. It is because of using modern digital sounds and music systems. The modern digital sounds can not give the smells of Dhol and Jhyamta (Drums and Cymbal) neither it helps to find out the traditional rhythms which our ancestors had created since long period of time.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Facts about indigenous people of Nepal.

FACTS, FIGURES AND INFORMATION ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF NEPAL. (NEFIN, 2012).

1. Indigenous people population 37.2 percent of total national population.
2. Only 14 percent Indigenous people are in the civil service.
3. 216 Indigenous CA members in the Constitution Assembly.
4. Majority of 13,000 people killed during 10 years of Maoist Movement are indigenous people.
5. 65 percent of ancestral land of indigenous people are occupied by national park and conservation and forced majority of indigenous people to migrate elsewhere.
6. Majority of Nepalese migrated abroad are indigenous youths.
7. Majority of soldiers serving in India, UK and other countries are indigenous people.
8. Majority girls sold for the prostitution are indigenous.
9. Majority of school drop out are indigenous students

10. Majority of prisoners are indigenous people.
11. Many indigenous sale their kidney and blood to buy foods for the family.
12. The word “Indigenous/Adivasi” is not mentioned in any of the text books, in the past 5 constitution of Nepal, history books and museum in Nepal.
13. There are public holidays in the name of dog, cow and crow but there are no public holidays for many indigenous festivals.
14. Many Indigenous people eating the beef meat are jailed for 10 years alleged of killing cow and ox because cow is national animal of Nepal. But Bahun and Chhetri owner of restaurants freely sale beef steak and no legal action is taken against them.
15. Police and army celebrate Hindu festivals such as Dasai, Tihar, Basanta Panchami spending million of rupees from national revenue.
16. Buddhist indigenous soldiers are forced to worship Hindu religion in police and army barracks.
17. Spends over 200 millions rupees to preserve dead sanskrit language. No sufficient but budget to print indigenous language text books and hire teachers to teach indigenous language.
18. Bhote Indigenous people of Bajura District including many indigenous in the far west of Nepal are forced to take citizenship with Brahman and Chhetri identity.
19. Raaji, Kusunda and Tharu are still working as slavery and bounded labors. No change in the living standard(NEFIN,2012).

Definition of indigenous people in Nepal.

1. First settlers prior to the formation of Gorkha and Nepal state.
2. Dominated group and no representation in state organs
3. Not included in the Hindu cast system.
4. Own language, culture and religion different from the rulers.
5. Listed by Nepalese Government Indigenous Act 2002.

Note: Brahmins, Chhettris and Madeshi Brhamins are not indigenous people of Nepal.

1. Fall under Hindu cast system.
2. 86% representation in the civil service.
3. Not listed as IP's by Nepalese Government Indigenous Act 2002.
4. Not recognized as IP's in India and migrated from India to Nepal.

CATEGORIZATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE BASED ON DEVELOPMENT

Advanced Group (2)	Newar, Thakali
Disadvantaged Group (14)	Tangbe, TeengaunleThakali, BarahgaunleThakali, MarphaliThakali, Gurung, Magar, Rai, Limbu, Sherpa, Yakkha, Chhantyal, Jirel, Byansi, Yolmo
Marginalized Group (19)	Sunuwar, Tharu, Tamang, Bhujel, Kumal, Rajbanshi, Gangaai, Dhimal, Bhote, Darai, Tajpuriya, Pahari, Topkegola, Dolpo, Mugal, Larke, Lohpa, Dura, Walung
High Marginalized Group (12)	Majhi, Siyar, Lhomi (Shinsaba), Thundam, Dhanuk, Chepang, Santhal, Jhagad, Thami, Bote, Danuwar, Baramu
Endangered Group (9)	Kusunda, Bankariya, Raute, Surel, Hayu, Raji, Kisan, Lepcha, Meche, Kuswadiya(INFIN,2012).

Appendix 2: Pictures from the festival.







Appendix 3: Pictures from the fieldwork.



Taking interview with informants Mr Ganesh Rai in Yayokkha office.



With my informants Mr Jay kumar Rai in Garmmer public school in Kathmandu.



Kiratawoshor, statue of first Kirati king. Oldest statue of Nepal.



Yayokkha central office in Kathmandu.