

**SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY: THE CUSTOMARY
INSTITUTION OF BAHING KAYAMI-KAYACHA**

(A Sociological Study of Manebhajyang Okhaldhunga)

A Dissertation

A Thesis

Submitted to the Department of Sociology, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Nepal,
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of (SA-560) of
Master of Arts in Sociology

Submitted by:

MEKH RAJ RAI

Symbol No. 401079

T.U Regd No: 6-1-999-618-99

Year 2069/70 B.S.

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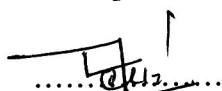
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DECLARATION

I, MEKH RAJ RAI, declare that this thesis entitled SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY: THE CUSTOMARY INSTITUTION OF BAHING KAYAMI-KAYACHA submitted to Department of Sociology is my own original work unless otherwise acknowledge in the thesis. This thesis doesn't contain materials which has been accepted or submitted for any other degree at the University or other institutions. All sources of information have been specifically acknowledged by references to the author(s) or institution(s)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mekh Raj Rai', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large 'M' and 'R'.

Mekh Raj Rai



TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

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Pradarshanmarga, Kathmandu, Nepal

Ref. No.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This thesis entitled "SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY: THE CUSTOMARY INSTITUTION OF BAHING KAYAMI-KAYACHA" has been prepared by Mekh Raj Rai under my supervision and guidance. This book is the outcome of his intensive and independent research work. I hereby recommend this thesis for approval and acceptance.

Ram Bdr. Karki

(Thesis Supervisor)

31st Dec, 2025



TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

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Pradarshanmarga, Kathmandu, Nepal

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LETTER OF APPROVAL

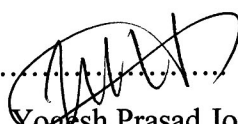
This dissertation entitled "**SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY: THE CUSTOMARY INSTITUTION OF BAHING KAYAMI-KAYACHA**" of Manebhajang Rural Municipality, Okhaldhunga submitted by Mekh Raj Rai has been accepted as partial fulfilment of the academic requirement of the degree of Master's of Arts in Sociology.

Thesis committee

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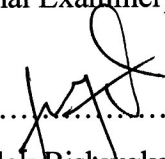

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DEDICATION

First and foremost, I dedicate this work to my divine, life-giving mother Bhagimaya Bahing (Nana), and to my late father Rambharos Bahing. I also dedicate it to my teachers and to the Bahing peoples.

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ABSTRACT

The Bahing are an Indigenous people of Kirat origin, having their own distinct language, customs, culture, ancestral land, and history. The Bahing people primarily reside in the Okhaldhunga and Solukhumbu districts.

This study attempts to analyze the practices, roles, structure, functions, cultural relevance, governance system, and current status of the customary institution *Kayami-Kaycha* within the Bahing society. The main focus is on the various components, roles, and responsibilities of the customary institution *Kayami-Kaycha*.

In relation to the institution *Kayami-Kaycha*, I have included in this study the descriptions and histories of ritual songs such as *Hakma*, *Dolokum*, *Salmaya*, *Kimo*, those related to ancestral rites such as *Wailingmo*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro*, marriage rituals such as *Chaiserikcho* (wedding ritual), *Walekumo* (land-worship), and *Tumlo-Yalo* (Ritual chanting, orals inscriptions). The document also covers the forts of the Bahing kings, the ancestors of the Bahing people, kinship relations, clans, traditional naming practices, occupations, religious traditions, *Sumni-lo* (the story of origin), worship traditions, *Dholyancho* (Time for upward worship), *Waelyancho* (Time for low ward worship), *Susumo* (Worship of Banjhakri), *Lwagum-Lwasiri* (traditional attire), *Jharajasi* (ornaments), *Chhamchhari* (musical instruments), *Gijowajo* (weapon), and the plants used in Bahing rituals.

The subjects included in this document are directly or indirectly connected to the customary institution *Kayami-Kaycha*, which is practiced among the Bahing society. Based on the available facts, it has been explained that the *Kayami-Kaycha* institution within the Bahing society consists of various separate departments, each with its own roles and responsibilities. It also describes the bodies *Dayalmulu* (Village meeting) or *Ngapsimulu* (Brotherhood meeting) responsible for selecting the individuals for these roles, as well as their leadership structure. Finally, based on the findings of the study, a summary and conclusion have been presented.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BKM	Bahing Kirat Mulukhim
BS	Bikram Sambat
CA	Constituent Assembly
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
DCC	District Coordination Committee
DDE	Department of District Education
DN	Dhyawa-Nakso (Head of the priest of the Bahing society)
EC	Executive Committee
FIKA	Federation of Indigenous Kirat Associations
ILO-169	International Labour Organization Convention169.
IPs	Indigenous Peoples
KK	Kayami-Kayacha
ME	Ministry of Education
NFDIN	Nepal Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities
NGO-FONIN	NGO federation of Nepalese indigenous nationalities
NPC	National Planning Commission
RM	Rural Municipality
SMC	School Management Committee.
SS	Shaka Sambat
TY	Tumlo-Yalo
UNDRIP	UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

GLOSSARY

Tumlocha	: A person having great spiritual and ritual knowledge of the Bahing people.
Champuri	: Crown
Tumlo-Yalo	: Oral scripture of the Bahing people,
Chi	: Pure local beer specifically used for Ancestor offering/Puja
Docha	: Clan
Mosum	: First step of Ancestor worship.
Galo	: Local liquor (Made by millet, rice, and grains)
Gadhi	: Ancient forts Kirat.
Hong Segro	: The highest Bahing ancestor worship of the Society.
Hopo	: King or head of the person indicates male.
Hoponima	: Queen or head of the person, indicates female.
Kipsar	: Girdle, A belt made from cotton cloth, which is traditionally wrapped on the west of the Bahing women and men.
Lo	: Language
Mamachinimo	: Female god of Bahing, of first female creator.
Mo	: Worship/Mother
Nagle	: Second step of Ancestor worship
Papachadubung	: Male god of Bahing or the first Male creator.
Ngasi	: Local homemade Beer
Tam	: Third step of the Ancestor ritual worship.
Dhyawa-Nakso	: Head of the priest of the Bahing society.
Nakso	: Priest of the Bahing Society.
Kayami-Kayacha	: Department of Personnel or Human Resources.
Ninanapcha	: The first human species on Earth. Or First Bahing Ancestor.
Niniryangma	: The first female creator of Bahing.
Chyangmakha	: Mother Earth, Earth
Silapa	: Jupiter

Ruwapa	: Venus
Parupa	: Mars
Wabukhu-Khunale	: Universe
Globuno-Mursyno	: The first Ocean which was created on the Earth.
Ngaku-Brink	: River
Freloo/Phleeloo	: Cultural word. Tumlo word which is used in ritual and ancestral worship
Sumni-Lo	: The Story of origin, planets, and human evolution.
Jhamcha	: Bahing Shaman
Chayacha	: Helper of Nakso
Ngabucha	: Helper of Nakso
Mulucha	: Male Advisor
Mulumi	: Female Advisor
Chicha	: Department of Liquor
Secha	: Department of Meat
Gijocha	: Department of Weapon
Blacha	: Department of Bow and Arrow
Sekhlecha	: Department of Hunt
Grocha	: Department of Cymbals
Burocha	: Department of Burokhwam
Ngarmocha	: Department of Ngarmo
Masicha	: Department of Ritual and Cultural Male Dance.
Masimi	: Department of Ritual and Cultural Female Dance.
Churicha	: Department of Churi
Khwasi	: Department of Khwasi
Guricha	: Department of Guri
Mosumcha	: Department of Mosum
Samdicha	: Department of Samdi
Sylphocha	: Department of Sylpho
Kajeri	: Department of Water, Woodfire, and Clean plates
Bhanse	: Department of Bhansekhwam
Twacha	: Department of food and Beverages to Serve Guests.

Dapsining	: Cultural and Ritual name of Clan and Persons which is given by Bahing priest during Ancestor worship (Hong Segro)
Bumtha	: Common, Common name, Common Ancestor
Munti Mo-Jwalti Mo	: Female creator
Phribdim	: Method
6	: Implosive sound exist in Bahing language

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Nepal is a sovereign and landlocked nation located in the Himalayan region, positioned between two major countries: People's Republic of China to the north specifically the Tibetan Autonomous Region and India, which surrounds it on the east, west, and south. Geographically, the country stretches roughly 885 kilometers in length and about 103 kilometers in width. Its landscape can generally be categorized into three ecological zones: the high Himalayan areas, the mid-hills, and the lowland plains known as the Terai. Out of Nepal's total area of 147,181 square kilometers, approximately 15% lies in the mountains, 68% in the hill region, and 17% in the plains. Despite its modest size, it represents about 0.03% of the world's landmass and 0.3% of Asia's land area.

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) defines the country as a secular federal democratic republic characterized by immense linguistic, ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. As famously expressed by King Prithvi Narayan Shah, Nepal can be understood as a "garden of various castes and ethnic groups." Scholars categorize Nepal's population in different ways. For instance, Sapkota (2022) classifies Nepalese people into four broad racial groups: Mongoloid, Caucasoid, Dravidian (Jhangad/Dhangad), and Proto-Australoid (Satar and Santhal). From a linguistic perspective, four primary language families are represented: Tibeto-Burman, Indo-Aryan, Munda, and Austroasiatic (Kirant, 2068). Historically, caste divisions evolved under different rulers. Jayasthiti Malla reorganized groups not previously included in caste hierarchies based on occupations, and later, during the rule of King Surendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, castes were further classified into categories such as Brahmanic (Janaidhari), alcohol-consuming (Matawali), and groups with distinct rules regarding water and purity (Bista, 2000). Nepal's rich physical and socio-cultural diversity, as well as its significant biodiversity, reinforces its identity as a vibrant landscape of varied peoples and traditions.

Regarding the Kirat communities, numerous ethnic groups exist with their own unique languages and cultures. Bista (2000) describes the Rai as local leaders who historically collected taxes, managed disputes, and represented the government within their jurisdictions a role typically inherited by the eldest son, which contributed to the

relatively small areas under their authority. Though widely recognized today as an ethnic category, the term “Rai” likely originated as a title granted by the Sen and Shah rulers of Bengal to certain Kirat Khambu groups who settled in eastern Nepal (Sharma, 2067). Therefore, scholars argue that “Rai” is more of a historically assigned designation than an original ethnic classification.

Nepal is home to more than 126 caste and ethnic groups, and over 124 distinct languages are spoken throughout the country. According to the 2021 census, 6,547 individuals identify as Bahing by ethnicity, while the number of Bahing language speakers is recorded at 14,449 (CBS, 2021). The Government of Nepal has officially recognized 59 indigenous nationalities and organized them into five categories. Among them, the Bahing are characterized by Mongoloid physical traits, including balanced facial structure and yellowish to brown skin tones. They belong to the Tibeto-Burman linguistic family, and their language spoken within the Bahing society is commonly known as Bahing Lo. The Kirat Bahing population primarily resides in the eastern Himalayan region, especially in Okhaldhunga and Solukhumbu districts, collectively making up about 0.02% of Nepal’s population (CBS, 2021). As one of the indigenous Kirat groups, the Bahing community maintains its own language, cultural practices, and distinct traditions. The Bahing Kirat Mulukhim (BKM) serves as the representative organization of this society, established to safeguard and promote Bahing identity through cultural preservation, language development, and socio-economic advancement. BKM was officially registered on 11 July 2004 at the District Administration Office in Kathmandu under the Social Welfare Council and is affiliated with both the Federation of Indigenous Kirat Association (FIKA) and the NGO Federation of Nepalese Indigenous Nationalities (NGO-FONIN). Historically, the Bahing people occupied an area situated between Wallo Kirat referring to the mountainous region east of the Likhu River and Majh Kirat, extending as far as the Arun River. Their primary settlements are found east of the Molung River in Okhaldhunga, known in the Bahing language as “Malo Gulo,” and stretch eastward toward the Dudhkoshi River referred to as “Ngakuma Ngalema” one of the major rivers of eastern Nepal. These areas also include southern parts of Solukhumbu district. Currently, significant populations reside in localities such as Moli, Ketuke, Waksa (Manebhajyang Rural Municipality); Bhadaure, Ratmate (Mupudyel), Mamakha (Chisankhugadhi Rural Municipality); Rangadip and Baruneshwor (Molung Rural Municipality);

Narayansthan, Bigutar, Rumjatar, Barnalu (Siddicharan Municipality); and Salyan and Necha wards (Nechasalyan Rural Municipality). Urbanization and improved access to roads and electricity are gradually reducing the remoteness of these traditional settlements. Due to migration, Bahing peoples have also spread to other districts including Sunsari, Jhapa, Bhojpur, Khotang, Sankhuwasabha, Ilam, Morang, Udayapur, Sindhuli, Ramechhap, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, and Kavre. Beyond Nepal, members of the Bahing diaspora are also found in neighboring regions such as Bhutan, Sikkim, United Kingdom, America, Australia, and parts of India. Bahing are the ethnically, linguistically, and culturally distinct ethnonym inhabitants of the eastern Nepal hill area, which is generally known as Kirant Pradesh in Nepal, mentioned in Kautilya period until the Rana regime. They have distinct origins and different cultural background. Among them, the government has listed out 61 indigenous ethnic groups all over the country and categorized them into five. Bahing was the ancient Kirant, a famous hunter said to have put up a strong fight against the troops of Prithivi Narayan Shah, who set up to unify the kingdom in the late 1700s. Unable to defeat the Kirant, they would be allowed to be kings in their own lands. They could settle their disputes and claim the land of the Duddhkoshi River (Ann 1999). These rights are embodied in the land tenure system of 'Kipat' and sealed in the royal decree. There are four forts of the Bahing. These forts were established to defend their kingdom from the attack of the Lichhavi, Sen, Malla, and Shah. They are called Taluwagadhi, Chisankhugadhi, Bungnamgadhi, and Chyanamgadhi, which were thirteen century A.D by the Bahing ancestors.

The Bahing community is often characterized as humble, respectful, honest, and selfless in nature. As one of Nepal's indigenous nationalities, they possess their own traditional attire, local knowledge systems, and specialized skills. Their cultural identity is shaped by a distinct historical homeland, customary social organization, and a rich body of both oral and written heritage. Spiritually, the Bahing primarily practice nature-based worship, expressing reverence toward the earth, water sources, forests, and ancestral spirits. Their major annual ritual, known in the Bahing language as Walekumo, centers on honoring Mother Earth and the spirits of their forebears. Agriculture has long been their principal means of livelihood. Historically, following the Sugauli Treaty, many Bahing individuals became renowned for their service in the British and Indian Gorkha regiments.

Over time, members of the community have diversified into other professions, business ventures, and international labor migration. The Constitution of Nepal (2015) has further strengthened the protection of the cultural, linguistic, and religious rights of indigenous and caste-based groups, including the Bahing.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Nepal is often characterized by its principle of “unity in diversity,” reflecting the coexistence of numerous ethnic communities, among which the Bahing represent a distinct group. However, the Bahing population largely remains economically disadvantaged and socially marginalized, with limited political representation. Their overall development status is relatively low, and many are compelled to abandon traditional livelihoods as they struggle to fulfill basic needs. Increasingly, Bahing Individuals particularly younger generations migrate to urban centers and other regions in search of better opportunities in education, employment, and entrepreneurship. This shift has resulted in a gradual weakening of cultural continuity. Customary laws, indigenous knowledge systems, and traditional institutions are becoming vulnerable as younger members grow detached from the ritual practices and cultural values traditionally passed down through elders. Formal schooling and changing lifestyles have further contributed to this disconnect. Consequently, many Bahing youths today possess limited understanding of their own cultural heritage. Given the potential loss of these ancestral practices, there is a pressing need for systematic study and documentation of Bahing customary institutions while elder knowledge-holders are still present. Preserving such knowledge is essential not only for the cultural identity of the Bahing peoples but also for future generations who may otherwise lose access to their indigenous heritage.

Indigenous communities maintain their own systems of customary law, shaped by their cultural values, belief systems, and relationships with land and natural resources. These customary institutions have historically regulated social, cultural, and territorial matters, evolving from ancient periods of hunting and gathering into more settled agricultural ways of life. The Bahing peoples, like many other Indigenous Peoples of Nepal, has preserved such traditional governance structures, transmitting them across generations. Bahing customary institutions embody participatory and democratic practices, ensuring community involvement in decision-making and the management of shared affairs. These systems also uphold cultural and ritual traditions,

reinforce social norms, and maintain territorial stewardship. Furthermore, processes of social differentiation within the community reflect distinctions among individuals and groups based on various cultural or social characteristics.

From a functionalist theoretical perspective, society is viewed as a complex system composed of interconnected structures that work collaboratively to maintain stability and social equilibrium (Durkheim, 1897). Within this framework, each social institution performs specific roles that contribute to the broader functioning and cohesion of society. In the case of the Kirat Bahing community, their customary governance system, referred to as *Kayami-Kayacha* fulfills these essential social functions. This institution oversees political authority, cultural continuity, and ritual practices, operating under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, who serves as the central figure in guiding and regulating communal affairs.

However, the traditional authority of customary laws and institutions has gradually weakened, particularly following increased state intervention and administrative dominance after 1831 B.S. As a result, many customary systems have been replaced or overshadowed by formal government laws and institutions. Despite this shift, customary governance once played a crucial role in regulating the political, cultural, and ritual life of the Bahing peoples, clearly defining community duties, responsibilities, and leadership structures within their traditional social organization. Until the early 1900s, the Bahing maintained an agricultural lifestyle closely integrated with their cultural and ritual practices. Yet, forces such as globalization, modernization, and broader socio-economic changes have significantly transformed their traditional way of life. Additionally, processes of acculturation through increased interaction with dominant cultures have affected many aspects of Bahing customs, beliefs, and social norms. What was once a collective cultural heritage shared by the nation's Indigenous Kirat Bahing people is now increasingly endangered, raising concerns about the preservation of their identity and traditional System.

The Kirat Bahing community maintains a distinctive identity rooted in its own language, social organization, cultural traditions, economic systems, and collective history. These unique characteristics form an essential part of their cultural heritage and must be safeguarded to ensure continuity across generations, thereby reinforcing their cultural sovereignty and rights (Bahingke Mimkha, 2068). However, despite their rich identity, various external forces have increasingly threatened the survival of these traditions. Cultural assimilation and Western influences have contributed to a gradual

erosion of traditional practices. Moreover, advancements in science and technology have indirectly impacted the values of minority groups by shifting lifestyles away from customs that once structured everyday life. Similarly, the widespread influence of modern information systems and media has accelerated processes of acculturation, often at the expense of Indigenous cultural expressions. Additionally, government policies and attitudes have not always been favorable or supportive of Indigenous cultural preservation. Consequently, the Kirat Bahing people are experiencing a significant loss of their cultural norms, values, and identity markers. There is an urgent need for timely recognition, protection, and promotion of their cultural heritage to prevent further decline and ensure that their traditions are preserved for future generations. The Bahing community continues to face socio-economic challenges, largely influenced by limited access to education and long-standing exclusion from state policies and development initiatives. A lack of awareness and persistent poverty further contribute to their marginalization. Economic hardships have pushed many young people from rural Bahing settlements to seek foreign employment, resulting in separation from their ancestral land and traditional cultural practices. Likewise, parents increasingly send their children to urban areas in pursuit of better educational opportunities. As a result, several key issues have emerged: ongoing migration from traditional homelands to urban centers for education, employment, and business; a widening generational gap in the transmission of indigenous knowledge and customary institutional practices; and the urgent need to document the structure and functions of these customary institutions before such knowledge is lost.

The Bahing community increasingly recognizes the need for urgent attention and support to preserve their language, cultural heritage, ancestral lands, and customary legal systems that have been transmitted across generations. Although they remain strongly committed to traditional cultural events, limited economic resources are often expended on customary rituals and festivals rather than developmental needs. Their cultural identity is deeply intertwined with their Indigenous practices; however, insufficient recognition in state mechanisms has hindered their participation and representation in national development processes. Safeguarding this heritage is vital not only for the Bahing people but also for the cultural wealth of the country as a whole. During this literature review, no comprehensive studies were found that specifically examine the Bahing customary institutions governed by Indigenous customary laws. Therefore, a detailed investigation into the threatened customary systems of the Bahing

communities in Okhaldhunga and Solukhumbu districts is necessary. Such research would contribute to academic scholarship and provide essential documentation to help preserve and promote these institutions for future generations.

1.3 Research Questions

Several studies have examined customary laws and institutions among specific ethnic groups in Nepal. However, research remains limited, and, to date, no study has specifically addressed the customary institutions of the Bahing community. In response to this gap, the present study is being conducted under the title “Sociological Study: the Customary Institution of Bahing Kayami-Kayacha.”

This research adopts an exploratory design, aiming to investigate the governance systems and identity practices of the Kirat Bahing peoples, with particular emphasis on their cultural knowledge and traditional norms. In addition, the study is descriptive, intending to provide a detailed and comprehensive portrayal of the phenomena under investigation.

The study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of Bahing customary institutions, particularly their traditional governance structures. By positioning these institutions as enduring socio-cultural entities, the research aims to illuminate how they reflect broader social, cultural, and historical dynamics within Nepal. The fieldwork for this study was conducted in Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality of Okhaldhunga District. The research focuses on addressing the following questions:

- (1) What is the customary institution known as in the Bahing society?
- (2) What are its main functions and structural components?
- (3) How does it function as a governing body within the society?

1.4 Research Objective

The primary objective of this research was to explore and analyze the customary institution known as *Kayami-Kayacha* within the Kirat Bahing society, with a focus on its governance system, cultural relevance, and structural functions. Specifically, the study aims to:

1.4.1 General Objective

This study has a general objective to document of *Kayami-Kayacha* of the Bahing society.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The Specific objectives of the study to:

1. Identify and document the customary institution *Kayami-Kayacha* as practiced by the Bahing peoples.
2. Analyze the institutional structure, components, and roles of individuals, including decision-making processes and conflict resolution mechanisms.
3. Understand the cultural significance of the role of *Kayami-Kayacha* in preserving social order, identity, and heritage of the Bahing peoples.

1.5 Rationale of the study

The present study aims to explore and analyze the depth of the Bahing customary institution, *Kayami-Kayacha*, to highlight a system that has been practiced and preserved by forefathers over generations. Documenting this institution is essential for safeguarding it for future generations, promoting awareness, and ensuring its continuity within Bahing society. The research also provides a foundation for further academic study and contributes to the systematic analysis of the performance and functions of customary governance. The primary focus of the study is to examine the functions of the governance system and its practices across social, cultural, ritual, and political dimensions. The findings are expected to be valuable to multiple stakeholders, including rights-holders, policymakers, academics, and related communities. The Kirat Bahing are one of Nepal's minority ethnic groups among over 126 recognized ethnicities. Centuries of marginalization have limited their access to education, resources, and opportunities, leaving them socio-economically and politically disadvantaged. To address these challenges, the Bahing Kirat Mulukhim (BKM) has been actively working to enhance the capacities of the community through programs that encourage self-driven participation in development processes. While cultural, religious, and social practices have traditionally been passed down from generation to generation, the influence of modern government institutions, urban migration, and international employment has contributed to a gradual decline in the transmission of Bahing cultural knowledge. Today, the Kirat Bahing face significant challenges in preserving their language, customs, traditions, and behavioral norms. Continuous acculturation and cultural change risk eroding these practices, which are integral to the community's identity and heritage. The loss of

such cultural, historical, and social assets cannot be compensated materially, given their irreplaceable value. Nepal, renowned for its cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity, demonstrates the principle of “unity in diversity,” which has historically contributed to national integration and social development. Preserving the cultural heritage of minority groups like the Kirat Bahing is thus critical for sustaining Nepal’s rich multicultural fabric.

The issue of identity among the Kirat Bahing is an urgent and pressing concern. Their customary institution represents a central social structure within the community, yet it has remained largely unexplored in academic research. This study aims to address this gap by focusing specifically on the Bahing customary institution and its role in preserving cultural identity. The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable insights for planners, policymakers, and scholars, informing the design of development programs and guiding further research on Indigenous governance systems and cultural preservation. Accordingly, the study has been conducted in the selected area of Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality in Okhaldhunga District, where the Kirat Bahing peoples maintains significant traditional practices.

Centuries of marginalization have left the Bahing peoples lagging behind in multiple spheres of development. Limited access to information, education, and skill-building opportunities has constrained their socio-economic advancement. To address these challenges, the *Bahing Kirat Mulukhim* (BKM) has been actively working to enhance the capacities of the community, promoting engagement in development initiatives while preserving traditional cultural practices. These initiatives aim to sustain the foundational values, beliefs, norms, and social practices that have been passed down through generations. Despite these efforts, the social, cultural, and indigenous practices of the Bahing are increasingly under threat. The community faces significant challenges in conserving its language, rituals, traditions, and behavioral norms, particularly in the context of modernization, urban migration, and Sanskritization. If these trends continue unchecked, there is a risk that Bahing cultural practices may eventually become subjects of historical discussion rather than living traditions. The loss of such cultural identity is irreplaceable, as it forms an integral part of Nepal’s rich cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity.

Nepal’s principle of “unity in diversity” has historically contributed to national integration and social cohesion. However, the Kirat Bahing continue to be

deprived of socio-economic privileges despite their distinct identity, traditional occupations, and cultural heritage. This study therefore aims to document and analyze the lifestyle, cultural practices, traditions, occupations, and the impacts of development on the Bahing peoples of Manebhajyang Rural Municipality. Such research is particularly valuable for scholars, policymakers, and stakeholders seeking to understand and support the preservation of Bahing cultural heritage.

Till date, no comprehensive studies have examined the socio-cultural, historical, traditional, and customary norms and values of the indigenous Kirat Bahing in the study area. The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable insights for planners, policymakers, researchers, development agencies, and scholars, informing the design and implementation of development programs and guiding further studies in similar contexts. This study holds particular significance for addressing the identity concerns of the Bahing community in alignment with national and international frameworks, including the Nepal Government's NEFDIN Act (2058), ILO Convention 169, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), all of which have been endorsed by the Government of Nepal in 2007. By documenting and analyzing the customary institutions and cultural practices of the Kirat Bahing, the study aims to contribute to both academic scholarship and practical strategies for the preservation and promotion of Indigenous identity and rights.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Every research project is subject to limitations due to constraints of time, resources, and scope. This study acknowledges several factors that may have influenced the depth and breadth of its findings. First, the study was limited by time and resource constraints, which restricted the ability to conduct an in-depth exploration of all aspects of the subject. Consequently, certain dimensions of the Bahing customary institution could not be fully examined. Second, the sample size was limited to thirty participants, including four Dhayawanakso and Nakso, three Tumlocha, two Bahing teachers, one Ngabucha, two local leaders, two Secha, two local government members, one Masicha, one lawyer, four Chicha, four Tumlocha, two Bahing local social workers, one Lingkhamkokaa, and one traditional attire maker. While these participants were carefully selected for their knowledge of

cultural and ritual practices, the small sample size limits the generalizability of the findings and may not fully capture the diversity of perspectives within the community. Third, the study focused specifically on knowledgeable individuals within the Bahing society, particularly those with expertise in customary practices and rituals. As a result, the findings may primarily reflect the experiences and perspectives of this group rather than the entire Bahing population. Finally, all information in this study is based on data collected directly by the researcher through interviews and field observation. While this approach provides rich qualitative insights, it may also limit the inclusion of additional historical or contextual sources that could have further enhanced the analysis.

Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable documentation and analysis of the Bahing customary institution, *Kayami-Kayacha*, offering insights that are significant for academic research, policy formulation, and the preservation of Indigenous cultural heritage.

- (a) This study is limited within Moli-1, Ketuke-4 and Waksa-2 wards of Manaebhajyang Rural Municipality of Okhaldhunga.
- (b) Limited time and resources prevented in-depth exploration.
- (c) Small sample size (30 participants) may not represent the full spectrum of views.
- (d) Focus restricted to knowledgeable cultural informants.
- (e) Data entirely based on primary and secondary sources collected by the researcher, along with journals.
- (f) Despite these limitations, the study offers a meaningful contribution to the understanding of indigenous knowledge of customary institutions, functions, and governance systems, within the Bahing peoples.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Social Structure and Customary Practices

The study of society as a “natural” science focuses on how social arrangements are organized and how their patterns take shape. A social structure refers to the full network of relationships that link individuals at a particular moment. Radcliffe-Brown’s students and associates were early adopters of this idea in their examinations of kinship systems. Through the investigation of kinship, scholars can better grasp the workings of social structures and, by comparing different societies, identify and evaluate the principles that shape social organization (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952).

Radcliffe-Brown (1881–1955) highlighted the centrality of social structure, setting anthropology apart from broader notions of culture that include every belief, object, or custom associated with a group. In contrast to biological organisms, where structure can sometimes be examined separately from function social structures are inseparable from the activities that sustain them. He used the term “functioning” to describe the ongoing social processes that build, maintain, and reshape these structures. His work on kinship, for instance, showed in a detailed way how particular systems, such as patrilineal descent, help fulfill the conditions needed to keep a society stable and enduring.

Edward Tylor’s (1920) classic description of culture as the full range of knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and learned habits that people develop within society highlights the importance of Radcliffe-Brown’s structural perspective, emphasizing how cultural components connect with the organization of social life.

2.1.2 Mechanical and Organic Solidarity and its significance to customary institutions

Goldschmidt (1966), states that in studying static and discrete institutions, attention should focus on the process of institutionalization, the definition of marriage to fit variable social patterns, and should focus on, the functions that marriage, family, and related social patterns serve. Radcliffe-Brown's (1952) ethnographic functional analysis of specific structures, such as incest taboos, kinship patterns, and religious rituals, is examined in terms of their functions for maintaining either the internal integration of the social whole or its survival and persistence in a given environment.

Mechanical solidarity is typical of traditional, small-scale societies where individuals share similar values, beliefs, and roles. In these communities, people perform similar tasks such as farming or herding, and there is a strong collective conscience, meaning that everyone largely agrees on what is right and wrong. Social bonds are based on similarity and uniformity, and the law tends to be repressive, focused on punishing those who violate shared norms (Durkheim, 1984).

In contrast, organic solidarity emerges in more modern, industrial societies where people have a high degree of specialization and perform very different roles. Because of this division of labor, individuals are more interdependent, relying on one another's unique contributions to keep society functioning. The collective conscience is weaker and more diverse, allowing for greater individualism. Here, social cohesion is maintained not through similarity but through mutual dependence, and the legal system tends to be restitutive, aiming to restore balance rather than punish. Durkheim used these two types of solidarity to explain how societies evolve and maintain stability as they become more complex (Durkheim, 1984).

Durkheim (1974) emphasized that trends toward industrialization in France, the resulting occupational specialization, urbanization, and proliferation of roles in separate governmental, legal, educational, and religious institutions, were part of this grand evolutionary trend of movement from societies based upon mechanical solidarity to those based on organic solidarity. Durkheim observed that societies have developed from simple, undifferentiated "mechanical" societies to complex, highly differentiated "organic" societies.

Durkheim explains tribal customary institutions as expressions of mechanical solidarity because they are rooted in shared beliefs, values, and traditions that bind the members of the tribe together. In tribal societies, people typically lead very similar lives, they engage in the same kinds of work (like hunting, gathering, or farming), follow the same religion or customs, and have a strong collective conscience. This shared moral framework is what creates social cohesion. Customary institutions in tribes, such as rituals, totems, taboos, or ancestral worship function to reinforce this collective conscience. They are often sacred and unquestioned, passed down through generations, and serve to remind individuals of their deep similarity and loyalty to the group. These institutions are not based on written laws or formal contracts but on tradition and moral consensus. Because people in these societies are bonded by likeness, the institutions that govern them reflect and strengthen that sameness.

Durkheim argues that in such societies, law tends to be repressive meaning that if someone violates a custom or rule, the punishment is often harsh and symbolic, meant to uphold collective norms rather than protect individual rights. Overall, tribal customary institutions are clear examples of mechanical solidarity in action: they maintain social order by uniting people through shared identity and common tradition.

Durkheim's (1974) description of the social structure of the aboriginal tribes led him to note that all the tribes have certain common features (1) Each tribe is divided into several clans, or large kinship networks. (2) Each of the clans that together form a tribe has its totem, with associated rituals. (3) Each totem reveals sacred symbols, particularly a special plant or animal, which is represented in an emblem. He saw the aboriginals as divided into clans, with each clan revealing a tern symbolized by sacred objects. For Durkheim, such a structure was the most elementary form of religion. This elementary form and its function are for the Aboriginal tribes. Furthermore, he felt that it needed to be attached to a visible and powerful sentiment and a concrete object. Hence, animals or plants, symbolized in emblems, become the concrete objects that represent, and personify "Mana". As Durkheim noted, Totemism is the religion not of such and such animals or menor images, but of an anonymous and impersonal force, found in each of these beings but not to be confounded with any of them. He emphasized that religious force is nothing other than the collective and anonymous force of the clan, and since this can be represented in the mind only in the form of the totem, the totemic emblem is like the visible body of the god.

2.1.3 Social Structure and Systems of Society

Spencer's (1944) functionalism from his organic analysis is summarized below:

- (1) Society is a system. It is a coherent whole of connected parts.
- (2) This System can only be understood in terms of the operation of specific structures, each of which has a function for maintaining the social whole.
- (3) Systems have needs that must be met if they are to survive.

Parsons' (1951)' early functionalism follows Malinowski's and Radcliffe-Brown's distinction between the social system and cultural system, and then introduces a third action system, the personality. In the social system, we are concerned with how the equilibrium of the social system is maintained by the operation of mechanisms to integrate both cultural patterns and personality systems into stabilized patterns of interaction that make up the social system. He begins to view four system levels, each meeting one of four system requisites in an overall action system. In turn, each system

level of the organismic, personality, social, and cultural must meet these same four needs, as must any of their subsystems. In the social system, Parsons does not explicitly name these processes as "mechanisms" but he views the system of cultural symbols as operating as "mechanisms" to maintain the social equilibrium. Parsons discusses two ways in which the cultural system performs this function. First, many components of culture, such as language, serve as resources for interaction. Implicit in his analysis are two functional requisites (1) The social system must have "a sufficient proportion of its component actors adequately motivated to act in the system. (2) The social system must seek to avoid a situation in which cultural patterns either fail to define a minimum of order or place impossible demands on people, and theory generates deviance and conflict. The next step in the functional analysis of an empirical system concerns the assessment of requisites that exist for various system referents: individuals, subparts, and the systemic whole. As a sociologist, he views the social system as the focal target of sociological analysis. He recognizes that cultural symbols (ideas, beliefs, dogmas, technologies, language, and other symbolic components) and personality states (motives, cognitions, commitments, and skills) influence how actors interact in the social system. Thus, the major task of sociological theory is to understand the process of institutionalization or the formation of stabilized social relations, that is, social systems. The social system addresses the issue of how actors became committed and able to interact, and how cultural patterns regulate interaction. His framework explains society as a complex system striving for equilibrium, where different institutions play distinct but interdependent roles to fulfill universal functions (AGIL), guided by norms and value systems. His ideas laid the foundation for modern structural-functional analysis in sociology. The function of a structure must be determined by the discovery of the needs that it meets. Initial concerns for a more adequate assessment of the function served by particular system parts. The emphasis is on description of (1) the parts (2) the social context in which it is embedded, and (3) the psychological status of actors. To assume that a part has a "positive function" is to define away all the interesting empirical questions.

2.2 Empirical Review on Customary Practices

Indigenous governance (Thami 2024) systems are sui generis judicial, administrative, economic, and political systems for exercising authority and upholding the Indigenous governance system of Indigenous peoples. Those

institutions help them to realize self-government, autonomy, and self-determination as enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN DRIP), inter alia other legal instruments.

Indigenous Peoples' (Ahren 2004) customary law, tradition, and customs are intrinsically and spiritually connected to their traditional land, waters, and natural resources, and Indigenous Peoples' way of utilizing the land reveals much of their customary law.

The study depends on empirical data from a sociological perspective. This Study held field-based research of questionnaires. The subject matter is based on questions from the informants. The informants are *Tumlochas*, *Dhyawa-Naksos*, *Naksos*, *Kayami-Kayachas*, Teachers, Social workers, and related fields. The title is Sociological Study: the customary institution of Bahing '*Kayami-Kayacha*'.

The study done by Khattri and Pandey (2023), The Galbo and Ghenba collaboratively establish and enforce rules for managing irrigation, grazing lands, forests, and heritage sites, while the Lama legitimizes these rules through moral and ritual authority, fostering community cohesion. Dhongbas (households) implement and monitor these practices, using sanctions and reciprocity to ensure compliance. Together, these institutions maintain long-standing, norm-based systems for managing terraces, irrigation networks, pastures, and cultural monuments. It was studied how indigenous institutions of the Loba of Upper Mustang interact and enable the community to cope with environmental and socio-cultural dynamics.

2.2.1 Structural Functionalism and Function of Customary Institutions

Darwin's theory proved applicable not only to living beings but also to the social science. Along with human evolution in the context of natural evolution, its application in the social sphere became equally significant. As the limitations of evolutionism became increasingly apparent, the diffusionist theory came to replace it. Diffusionism holds that cultural traits spread from central cultural hubs. Distant societies adopt these traits. In America, Franz Boas (1896). Strongly criticized both evolutionism and diffusionism. He accepted the general notion that societies develop, change, and also borrow traits from one another. However, he found the extreme positions of both theories to be intolerable. In his argument, Boas emphasized that culture should be

viewed as an entity in its own right. In his historicism point of view, Functionalism became established in society as a major approach following evolutionism and diffusionism, linking society together and contributing to its development. From 1930 to the early 1960s, it is argued that structural functionalism had a strong influence on the theoretical perspectives of sociologists. It is found to have played a central role in the development of sociology, particularly in North America and Europe (Loy & Booth, 2000a). Robert K. Merton and Talcott Parsons were the twin theoretical pillars of structural-functionalism at that moment.

Durkheim's framework emphasizes that society is a reality of its own, governed by social facts. Social cohesion is maintained through solidarity, which evolves as societies become more complex. He laid the foundation for functionalism, arguing that every part of society contributes to its stability, including religion, norms, and division of labor.

This study is based on functionalism, as a method and approach for gathering and interpreting data on specific societies that continue to prosper. Later efforts to revise and revive functionalism emphasized its utility as a method. Among sociologists, the emphasis has been on functionalism as an explanatory theory.

Malinowski (1944) views his brand of functionalism as an investigative way to organize, rather than interpret, data; he employs a set of theoretical assumptions in his functionalism, such as humans have basic or primary needs that prompt them to become collectively organized to meet their needs. Once humans are collectively organized, their collaboration creates new, "derived needs. These needs can only be met by the creation and maintenance of certain institutional patterns. To understand the "reason" for the existence of a social structure, it is necessary to determine its functions for either basic or derived needs.

Merton (1949) states that the "functional unity" postulate holds that a social system must reveal a high degree of integration among its constituent parts. Through investigation of a particular empirical system can the level, degree, and nature of integration can be determined. The "functional universality" postulate holds that if a structure exists in an ongoing social system, then it must have positive functions of maintenance of this system. Merton (1949) emphasizes that functionalism represents a triple alliance between theory, method, and data. That is, functionalism, on the one hand, is a useful method for collecting and arranging data, while on the other hand, it promises to be a useful way to interpret and explain regularities that emerge from

empirical investigation. The sociological explanation of a structure resides in the determination of its function in meeting integrative needs. Functionalism can guide rather than hinder empirical investigation of social systems. It does not develop abstract concepts or propositions. How to conduct functional data collection and how to build functional interpretations of data. He stresses that it can allow investigators to simply assume unity and then mechanically view social structures as contributing to this unity or integration.

2.2.2 Institutional Structure and Customary Practices

In socialism, the institutional structure is organized around collective ownership of resources, planned economic activity, and social welfare, where industries, land, and key assets are controlled by the state, cooperatives, or communities rather than individuals. Economic institutions emphasize planning (centralized or democratic), redistribution, and worker participation, while political institutions grant the state a strong role in ensuring equality, sometimes through centralized one-party systems or through democratic frameworks depending on the model. Social institutions such as education, healthcare, and welfare are universal rights, and legal institutions safeguard social and economic justice by guaranteeing labor rights, fair wages, and equal access to opportunities. When viewed in relation to customary institutions such as village councils, kinship networks, and traditional practices of communal land ownership socialist structures resonate with these earlier forms of collective decision-making and shared resource management, but extend them into a modern state framework. For instance, in many African societies, customary tenure systems managed land collectively under chiefs or councils, which later inspired socialist leaders like Julius Nyerere in Tanzania to promote ujamaa (familyhood) as the basis of collective farming and village cooperation. Similarly, in Indigenous Andean communities, the ayllu system emphasized reciprocal labor and communal resource use, values that shaped socialist-oriented policies in countries like Bolivia and Peru. Even in Nepal, traditional guthi and communal irrigation practices reflected cooperative management, which aligns with socialist principles of collective welfare. In this sense, socialism can be seen as a modern institutionalization of the collective spirit found in customary systems, where community well-being was prioritized over individual accumulation, while adapting it to the scale of national governance and industrial economies.

2.2.3 Functions

The "postulate of indispensability" holds that systems have functional requisites that must be met if they are to survive, and therefore, system parts must operate to meet these needs. The analysis is alerted to different system references, other structures, and systemic wholes for which particular parts can have functions. Metron (1949) then advocates an assessment of the net balance of functions of a specific structure. His model is thus clearly a method for analysis, with only secondary thought to the use of the concept of function as an explanatory principle. He argues:

- (1) Functional analysis must concern empirical systems, not abstract.
- (2) Investigation must focus on a particular structural pattern of interest.
- (3) This structural pattern must be assessed in terms of its consequences for empirically determined requisites (not a priori, abstract needs) of the system in which it is implicated and of the individuals in the system.
- (4) Functional analysis must assess positive, negative, and nonfunctional consequences of a structure on empirically established requisites.
- (5) Careful performance of the number above, the net balance of consequences of a structure can be assessed.
- (6) Understanding the net balance of functions can allow for the development of abstract generalizations about limited ranges of phenomena.

2.2.4 Dis-Function

Dysfunction in sociology refers to the negative consequences or harmful effects that a social institution, practice, or structure can have on society, disrupting stability and hindering the smooth functioning of the social system. While functionalist theory emphasizes the positive roles institutions play in maintaining order, dysfunction highlights how those same institutions may create inequality, conflict, or inefficiency. For example, education is meant to promote knowledge and equality, but it can also become dysfunctional when it reinforces class privilege or fails to provide equal opportunities. Similarly, customary institutions such as kinship networks or village councils, though often promoting solidarity, may become dysfunctional if they exclude marginalized groups, resist necessary social change, or perpetuate discrimination. In short, dysfunction draws attention to the unintended, negative outcomes of social structures that prevent society from achieving cohesion and fairness.

2.2.5 Manifest Function and Latent Functions.

Manifest functions are the clearly intended and publicly acknowledged purposes of social institutions. They reflect the goals that society consciously aims to fulfill for example, schools are designed to impart knowledge and skills, and customary village bodies are meant to organize community affairs and maintain order. Latent functions refer to the unintended or less visible outcomes of these same institutions. These effects may be positive, neutral, or negative, but they are not part of the institution's stated objectives. For instance, schools unintentionally create social networks or reproduce social hierarchies, while customary institutions may strengthen kinship ties or, unknowingly, reinforce exclusionary practices. These hidden effects highlight how social structures influence society beyond their formal aims. Bahing customary institutions matches with Merton's social and social structure theory (Merton, 1949, pp. 60-69).

2.3 Literature Review

Kirkpatrick's (1811) record, based on his diplomatic visit after the 1792 Sino-Nepalese War, offers one of the earliest written descriptions of Nepalese society. Though shaped by colonial assumptions and containing errors, it discusses debates over ethnic origins, political organization, religious life, taxation, military arrangements, and everyday social practices. He portrays Nepal as comparatively simple, sincere, and courteous. These observations both explicit and implied provide useful background for understanding the social and customary governance systems of groups such as the Bahing.

Hodgson's mid-19th-century work (1847), later republished in his *Miscellaneous Essays* (1880), contains the first recorded vocabulary and grammatical notes on the Bahing language. He classified Bahing within the Kiranti group and located it in the Wallo Kirat area of eastern Nepal. His documentation represents the earliest written source for understanding the linguistic foundations of Bahing society.

Comte (1903), in *Positive Philosophy*, established key foundations for functionalist thought by outlining the idea of "social progress" along with a systematic view of social organization. He portrayed society as gradually advancing toward higher levels of complexity and specialization, a viewpoint that later shaped the work of structural-functional theorists.

Durkheim (1974) expanded on earlier evolutionary perspectives by proposing that societies transition from mechanical solidarity rooted in shared likeness and upheld through punitive forms of law to organic solidarity, which depends on restitutive legal systems and growing institutional complexity. In examining Aboriginal communities, he observed their organization into clans marked by distinct totems and ritual practices, which he viewed as representing the most basic expression of religious life (Durkheim, 1974). He also maintained that social cohesion may deteriorate when technological advancement progresses more rapidly than the development of corresponding regulatory frameworks (Durkheim, 1974).

According to Durkheim's ideas, in my study of the Bahing society, it is found that the traditional institution *Kayami-Kayacha*, which has existed since ancient times, operates on the basis of mechanical solidarity. The foundation of social unity in this institution is shaped by individuals' way of life, lifestyle, values, beliefs, and traditions, all of which play a significant role in sustaining the *Kayami-Kayacha* institution.

Malinowski argued that certain institutions such as the family, the state, and religious groups appear in all societies because they fulfill necessary functions, even though their forms differ across cultures (Malinowski, 1884-1942).

He also outlined four key "instrumental needs" that social structures must address, one of which involves maintaining social order through the formal codification, regulation, and sanctioning of human conduct (Malinowski, 1884-1942).

Parsons explained that social systems are made up of several interconnected subsystems such as the economic, political, kinship, legal, educational, and religious spheres each performing essential functions required for the system's overall stability (Parsons, 1951).

In the Bahing society, various social institutions such as political, cultural, economic, kinship, legal, and religious systems are found to play roles in sustaining the customary institution *Kayami-Kayacha*. Therefore, this aligns closely with Parsons' ideas.

Merton (1949) advanced functionalist theory by introducing the distinction between manifest functions, those outcomes that are deliberate and openly acknowledged, and latent functions, which refer to the unintended or less visible effects of social practices. According to Merton's explanation of the distinction between manifest and latent functions, both types of functions are found to be associated with the traditional institution *Kayami-Kayacha*.

McDougal (1979) explored the social organization of the Kulunge Rai, describing how clan exogamy, lineage arrangements, and multi-stage marriage procedures contributed to maintaining group solidarity and ensuring orderly patterns of inheritance. Similarly, Bahing Society have distinct clan, lineage, marriage procedures that help to social solidarity and patterns.

Fisher's research on the Magar community of Tarangpur highlights how the village functioned as an important economic and cultural junction for trade across Himalayan areas (Fisher, 1986).

Gaenszle (1991/2000) investigated the Mewahang Rai, focusing on their kinship systems, mythological traditions, and ritual practices, and emphasized that the *Mundhum*, though unwritten, serves as a crucial cultural text that shapes and preserves Kirati identity. As mentioned, Gaenszle Bahing's mythological stories seem very important for relate to customary institution such as Sumni-lo.

Dahal's ethnographic study of the Athapahariya Rai illustrates how traditional leadership structures have endured despite ongoing socio-economic transformations. His study provides socio-economic transformations of Athapahariya and traditional leadership structures (Dahal, 1998).

Bista (2000) examined the Kipat system, which provided communal and inalienable land rights among the Kirati, managed by hereditary leaders such as the Rai and Subba, who were responsible for tax collection, dispute resolution, and the protection of community resources. Customary systems ruled in the specific societies Bahing customary institution Kayami Kayacha is also one of the institutions that ruled over the cultural, ritual and political systems in the Bahing peoples.

Forbes (1999) and Caplan (1967) explored the impact of government land reforms on the Kipat system, showing how the move from communal to private land ownership eroded traditional leadership, altered local political structures, and heightened conflicts among ethnic groups that relied on collectively managed land. Similarly, customary institution of Bahing have leadership of Tumlocha which leads the whole community. Mulucha have advisory body of the institution and implementor entity is *Kayami-Kayacha* in the Society.

Holmberg (1989) provided an in-depth account of ritual practices among the Tamang in Tamdusang, showing how Buddhist ceremonies, shamanic healing, and sacrificial offerings are interwoven in daily life. He also analyzed how these diverse traditions sometimes conflict or overlap within the community's systems of social

exchange, such as reciprocal gift-giving, labor sharing, and obligations between households. Samanistic healing and sacrificial offering are regularly practices in the Bahing peoples which is carry on through customary institution of *Kayami-Kayacha*.

William F. Fisher (2001) analyzed the dynamic nature of Thakali identity, demonstrating that their cultural distinctiveness and sense of community are continuously reconstructed in response to economic success particularly in trade, business, and entrepreneurship as well as changes in political power and local social hierarchies. Similarly, in Bahing society, economic achievements shape not only individuals' social status but also influence political authority and the organization of community structures, reinforcing the interconnection between wealth, power, and social relations.

Bhattachan and Pyakurel (1996) examined the dynamics of ethnicity and social integration in Nepal, highlighting how processes such as Gorkhanization, Hindunization, and Nepalization have reshaped cultural identities and social hierarchies. They showed that these processes involved the promotion of dominant cultural, religious, and linguistic norms, often leading to the assimilation of minority groups and influencing patterns of political authority, social mobility, and community cohesion across diverse ethnic populations. Paternal rituals such as *Hong Segro*, *Tam*, *Mosum*, and *Nagle*, which were traditionally practiced under the Bahing community's institution *Kayami-Kayacha*, now appear to be on the verge of disappearing due to the widespread influence of Hindunization, Nepali-ization, Westernization, and religious conversion.

Sharma (2067 B.S.) conducted a comprehensive study of the Kirat community, tracing the historical regional divisions into Wallo, Majh, and Pallo Kirant areas and examining the system of taxation, particularly the *Nau Lakha Kirati* levy. By combining oral histories from local elders with written historical records, Sharma highlighted how these regional and fiscal structures shaped social organization, governance, and community interactions within the Kirat society over time. However, history of Bahing peoples needs to explore and bring out, the publicly. So on this study some brief history are documented as well.

Bantawa (2018) explored the Kirat community's active participation in the historic silk trade, illustrating how this commerce not only shaped the growth of local markets but also strengthened social networks and inter-household relationships. Additionally, the study analyzed the origins and meanings of prominent place names,

emphasizing that administrative titles like Rai and Subba were instrumental not only in managing governance and resource distribution but also in sustaining and expressing the community's ethnic identity.

Rai, Muga Maya (2055 B.S.) gathered Bahing mythological tales and emphasized how these stories are closely linked to the customs of the traditional *Kayami-Kayacha* institution, especially those performed during *Hong Segro* ceremonies.

Rai, Mohan (2011) examined the socio-economic landscape of the Bahing community, exploring their livelihood strategies, management of resources, and economic exchanges both within the community and with external networks. In a related study, Baniya (2009) focused on the effects of patriarchal systems on Bahing women, showing how traditional gender roles, family hierarchies, and societal expectations influence women's participation in decision-making, education, and economic activities.

Bahing Sustocha (2018, 2075 B.S.) recorded the Bahing creation story, *Tumlo-Yalo*, offering an in-depth description of the community's cosmology, the origins of fundamental natural elements like earth, water, and sky, and the ancestry of their forebears. The work highlights how these myths reinforce cultural norms, guide social structures, and shape the Bahing people's perceptions of their connections to both the natural environment and the spiritual realm. It relates to the customary institution of Bahing *Kayami-Kayacha*.

Other linguistic work includes:

Epplé (2003) conducted a valley survey of the Bahing, Thulung, and Wambule languages, detailing their phonological systems, grammar, vocabulary, and tonal characteristics. The research also explored the linguistic similarities and differences among these Kiranti languages, shedding light on their historical connections. Michailovsky (1973) developed a detailed phonemic inventory of the Bahing language, documenting its unique consonants, vowels, tonal patterns, and pronunciation rules, serving as an essential reference for linguistic study and language preservation. Bahing language is an important function of social institutions of the society. connections, processes of language change, and mutual influences. It shows condition of language.

Phyual (2006) analyzed the morphological structure of the Bahing language, describing how words are formed through affixes, stem variations, and grammatical markers. In a similar, Thokar (2006) examined Bahing morphology by outlining

patterns of verb conjugation, noun formation, and case marking, contributing to a deeper understanding of the language's grammatical system.

Maureen Be Lee (2011) examined the development of a suitable writing system for the Bahing language and assessed its sociolinguistic strength, noting that approximately 80 percent of the community still actively uses the language. Her study highlighted how literacy practices, intergenerational transmission, and community attitudes contribute to maintaining linguistic vitality. Comparative theses by Phul Bahadur Rai (2009), Nira Rai (2070 B.S.), and Anita Rai (2072 B.S.) examined concord, word formation, and honorificity. Muga Maya Rai (2075 B.S.), documented the Bahing verbal paradigm.

Khattari and Pandey's research on the Loba community in Lo-manthang describes how institutions such as Galbo, Ghenba, Lama, and Dhongba function as key mechanisms that help the community adapt to ecological pressures and shifts in social and cultural life. My research Tumlocha, Mulucha, and Kayami-Kayacha function as key mechanism which helps to conduct cultural and ritual activities along with political, cultural, and social in Bahing (Khattari & Pandey, 2023).

Ni'matul Huda and Fauzani examined the Baduy community's model of hybrid governance, showing how their traditional institutions operate alongside and adjust to Indonesia's formal state administration. Their analysis demonstrates the ways customary norms, leadership roles, and decision-making practices are maintained while being integrated into official bureaucratic systems a pattern comparable to indigenous governance structures in Nepal (Ni'matul Huda & Fauzani, 2024).

Recent scholarship continues to refine and complicate understandings of Kirati languages and their socio-cultural contexts. Using a 100-item Swadesh list, Rai (2024) compares basic vocabulary across several Kirati languages and reports that varieties such as Bantawa, Puma, and Mugali Phangduwali share roughly 52 percent lexical similarity. This quantitative evidence demonstrates the substantial internal diversity within the Kirati group and offers a useful baseline for situating Bahing in relation to both closely and distantly related languages (Rai, 2024).

The historical trajectory of Kirati land tenure is further illuminated by Sharma (2019), who traces the abolition of the kiptat system and the socio-political consequences of dismantling communal tenure, updating the narrative found in earlier works by Caplan and Forbes. This shift in property relations is closely linked to wider processes of institutional change. A 2024 study in *Ecology & Society*

examines the interplay between endogenous (customary) and exogenous (state, NGO, donor-driven) governance structures in community forestry, finding that while formal rules often dominate on paper, local norms remain decisive in shaping outcomes. Household-level research in western Nepal reinforces this view, revealing a governance implementation gap in which state laws are seen as adequate but not effective, thereby leaving space for customary enforcement to remain relevant in practice.

Ethnographic-legal analysis of Yamphu Kipat in the Kailash journal deepens this perspective, contrasting the poetics of customary land discourse with the politics of legal codification, and showing how lived realities diverge from statutory texts. The CIPRED report on indigenous peoples' customary governance provides additional documentation of how traditional decision-making processes interact with state-led community forest user groups, highlighting policy opportunities for integrating indigenous institutions into formal frameworks. Similarly, a 2025 article in the Colorado Environmental Law Journal maps the legal architecture of Nepal's community forestry program against the lived practices of indigenous groups, advocating for reforms that center Indigenous needs and cultural priorities.

Applied conservation perspectives are offered in the CEPF final project report, which draws links between kipat principles and modern forest management efforts, documenting attempts to reconcile kipatiya and non-kipatiya communities in shared governance arrangements. Finally, the Endangered Languages Project's profile of Bahing provides updated demographic and vitality data, underlining the urgency of language preservation initiatives in parallel with socio-political recognition of customary systems. Together, these works broaden and update the literature by combining fresh linguistic evidence, critical classification debates, and contemporary analyses of indigenous governance in Nepal's changing institutional landscape.

2.4 Policy Review

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has the right to self-determination. By that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development. Article 5: IPs have the right

to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social, and cultural institutions (UNDRIP).

Nepal ratified Convention No. 169 in September 2007. Article 8(1) in applying national laws and regulations to the peoples concerned, due regard shall be had to their customs or customary laws. Similarly, Article 8(2), these peoples shall have the right to retain their customs and institutions, where these are not incompatible with fundamental rights defined by the national legal system and with internationally recognized human rights (ILO-169).

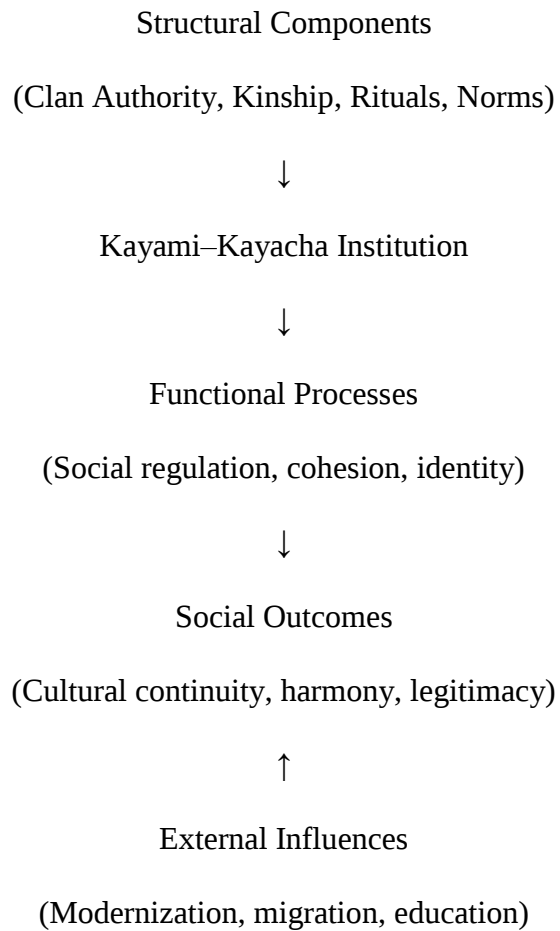
In addition, the 2015 Constitution of Nepal opened up avenues for the de jure acceptance of the Indigenous customary governance system at the local levels (Thami, 2024). A holistic approach consistent with the spiritual and cultural values and customary practices of indigenous peoples and local communities should be adopted, recognizing all of their relations, including right to their territories, lands and resources, as well as their rights, accordance with relevant national legislation and international instruments, to have control over their traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies (Decision 16/4 (CBD) Article (8)j). We conclude that local customary institutions secured rapid benefits to society through their adaptations. Building rapid participatory assessment processes into adaptation funds capture can be a means to both recognize and maximize their benefits to society (Tari, Daoud, King-Okumu, Caroline, Jarso, Ibrahim, 2015).

2.5 Conceptual Framework.

The Kayami–Kayacha is a traditional socio-ritual institution of the Bahing people that regulates lineage, ritual authority, social order, and cultural continuity. Structurally, it operates through clan-based leadership, patrilineal kinship and lineage systems, ritual and religious practices such as *Hong Segro*, customary norms and sanctions based on oral traditions, and intergenerational transmission of ritual knowledge. Functionally, the institution ensures social regulation, preserves indigenous culture, reinforces Bahing identity, and promotes social cohesion. Its outcomes include the continuity of indigenous culture, sustainability of ritual practices, social harmony, legitimacy of traditional authority, and intergenerational cultural awareness. However, the institution is influenced by external factors such as modern education, migration, state legal systems, religious conversion, and the decline of ritual specialists. The framework is theoretically grounded in structural functionalism and indigenous knowledge systems

theory, emphasizing social cohesion, cultural reproduction, and community-based governance.

Diagrammatic Representation:



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Research Methodology

This study, conducted under the Department of Sociology at Ratna Rajya Campus, under affiliation of Tribhuvan University. It is to prepare questions for the documentation, role, and structure of the customary institutions of the Bahing society as part of a Master-level sociology thesis. Under the proposal, a field questionnaire is used. During the field study, the research is carried out in adherence to sociological principles.

The research methodology outlines the overall strategy, methods, and procedures used to systematically investigate the traditional institution of *Kayami-Kayacha* practiced among the Bahing peoples. The importance of bringing out customary structure, function, and practices is to maximize reliability, and its validity is assumed to guide the entire research process.

3.2 Research Design

My research type is descriptive and exploratory of the customary institution of *Kayami-Kayacha* of Bahing society. This study employs a qualitative methodology rooted in sociological inquiry, with an emphasis on interpretive understanding of Bahing customs, beliefs, and institutions. While conducting the exploratory study, this method was adopted because it is helpful and relevant for further validating the information obtained from the community. Since most of the facts and evidence gathered from discussions with informants and the community are largely qualitative, the study has been documented in a descriptive manner. Therefore, by adopting the qualitative method, the relevance and appropriateness of the study are ensured, and for this reason, I have used the qualitative approach.

By identifying the problems of the study, various related information, interviews, focus group discussions, and observation methods were employed. Based on hypothetical assumptions, the key variables were identified, and on that basis, questions for further study were developed, thereby advancing the research process. “Because I have been directly and indirectly participating in and observing the hereditary institution *Kayami-Kayacha* within the Bahing society for the past twenty years, I have adopted this method in order to further verify and clarify certain issues within it through an exploratory approach.”

3.3 Study area

This study area is limited to the Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality of Okhaldhunga district. It is situated at around 700m to 2100m from the sea level and surrounded by greenery, secret hills from east to west, and slope land south eastern area of Ketuke Ward no. 4 Pankhudyal, Dheplo, Momlo, Chyantelmal villages, Moli Ward no. 1 Molidanda, Khata (Jere), and Khatukpa (Nipane) villages, Ward no. 2 Waksa, Dhyamnal, Merjum, Sifu, and Koksopu villages are the homeland of Kirat Bahing peoples. There are more than 1172 Bahing people who live in the Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality, so that is where the study is conducted.

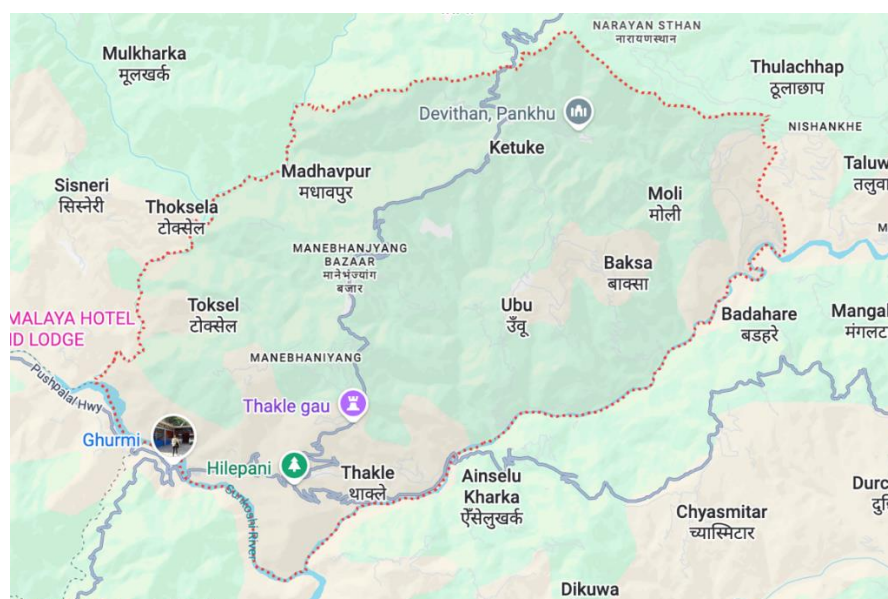


Figure 1: Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality

3.4 Rationality of the selection of the study area

The rationale for selecting the area is to identify its major locations of civil, social, and cultural importance, which helps promote the area nationally and internationally, benefiting all the Bahing people in that area, as well as addressing their issues by country. It has wide prospects for the development of an equal society, and there are macro and micro-level studies related to this issue.

The southern region of Solukhumbu district and the areas east of Okhaldhunga district, within the Wallo Kirat region, are the place of origin of the Kirat Bahing people. In Nepal, these peoples are rich in their language, customs, rituals, culture, traditions, traditional institutions, attire, and core values. With the development and expansion of infrastructures such as education, health, transportation, communication, and employment, the trend of these communities

leaving their ancestral homeland and migrating to other more developed areas of the country, as well as abroad, has been increasing rapidly. Due to such migration, how vibrant is the indigenous, social, and cultural identity of the Kirat Bahing people who still reside in their ancestral homeland? Is their language, culture, rituals, and customary institutions at risk of disappearing? This is because, with global trends such as modernization, cultural alienation, westernization, and acculturation, it is observed that original cultures and customary institutions are gradually fading away day by day.

Therefore, for the purpose of this research study, Ward No. 1 Moli, Ward No. 4 Ketuke, and Ward No. 2 Waksa within Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality of Okhaldhunga district have been selected as the research field. This area is considered one of the ancestral homelands of the Kirat Bahing people. The selected research sites are visited to collect factual data on the social, cultural, and political aspects of the customary institutions of the Bahing people, such as their ancestral rituals *Nagle*, *Tumatam*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro (Dhetam)*, or other governing traditions, as well as the changes observed within them. The aim is to identify the real issues revealed through the collected data, document them, and suggest appropriate solutions.

3.5 Selection of Research Participants

The research will involve a diverse group of participants who are directly or indirectly associated with the *Kayami-Kayacha* institution. These individuals are selected based on their knowledge, roles, and experience within the cultural and traditional framework of the Bahing community. These participants are considered knowledgeable persons with rich insight into cultural, ritual, custom, traditional, and customary practices of the Bahing community. Moreover, related teachers, local leaders, and community leaders will take part. The main participants are *Tumlocha*, *Dhyawa-Nakso*, *Nakso*, *Jhamcha*, *Ngabucha*, *Chayacha*, *Chicha*, *Secha*, *Masimi Masicha*, and *Kayami-Kayachas* are major research participants of this research. A total of 30 relevant individuals are included as participants in this study. Additionally, Bahing individuals residing in areas beyond Manebhanjyang may also be included if necessary.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

In this research, data collection is guided by the goal of understanding social behavior, customary institutions of the Bahing peoples, norms, values, and cultural practices within a specific Bahing society. To obtain the desired information and data for the study, the following techniques are applied.

- (a) Question for key informants from related topics of research in the field.
- (b) Focus group discussion.
- (c) Selected persons will answer on related research.
- (d) Observation was held during field visit.

3.7 Tools and Techniques

The following tools and techniques are used for data collection:

1. **Questionnaire:** A questionnaire is a tool for data collection. A set of structural questions is prepared to gather information from the Bahing society regarding customary institutions, culture, the structure of its functions, and the governing system, in consultation with community elders, practitioners, and key informants knowledgeable about the institutions. Semi-structured format allowed for both guided and open-ended responses.
2. **Oral Histories:** A collection of narratives from elders to trace the evolution and origin of the institution.
3. **Audio and Video Recordings:** With consent, key interviews and events were recorded to preserve oral traditions and analyze discourse and the practices of Bahing customary institutions.
4. **Photography:** Cultural symbols, dress, and gatherings were photographed to support the data collection of this research.
5. **Field notebooks:** During the field study, responses to questions that are included in the original set of questions asked to participants and respondents are recorded in the notes. Additionally, important points emerging from discussions are included as sources in the analysis of this study.

3.8 Observation

In this research, as certain social structure, cultural, and ritual practices of the Bahing society occur at different times, a semi-participatory and unstructured observation method is adopted. This will allow the researcher, during field study, to indirectly focus on important aspects related to the accuracy of the participants'

responses, which will hold significant value for the research. It will apply quasi-participant and unstructured tool.

3.9 Key Informant Interview

Key informants are those selected persons who know cultural and ritual knowledge such as *Dhyawa-Nakso*, *Jhamcha*, *Nakso*, *Tumlocha*, *Mulumu*, *Mulucha*, and *Kayami-Kayacha* of the Bahing society. School teachers, resource persons, local leaders, ward chairpersons, identity activists, social workers, and members are selected as key informants to collect information about the people of Manebhajyang Rural Municipality of Okhaldhunga.

3.10 Unstructured Interview/ Interview Scholar

During the field study, information has been gathered through informal means from various informants. These pieces of information, though outside the scope of formal interviews, will hold significance for this study. Key points related to social, cultural, customary institutions, structures, and governance are documented, and their validity and relevance are examined from multiple dimensions within the Bahing society.

3.11 Focus group discussion:

The focus group discussion method is an effective way to gather the reactions of a small group of people to a specific issue. It is more useful when a researcher wants to draw the background information on an issue. It is held to know about the traditional, cultural, and practices of the customary institution of the Bahing society. During the fieldwork, a formal focus group discussion is conducted with the Manebhajyang Rural Municipality of related wards. Those who are active participants during the fieldwork are chosen. Different age groups, from youth to old, along with males and females, are the participants.

In this discussion, during the study of *Kayami-Kayacha*, a customary institution of the Bahing society that is in a declining state, questions were prepared regarding the institution's functions, various departments, roles, and responsibilities. These questions were asked to thirty Bahing individuals, and based on the information obtained from their responses, three focus groups each consisting of ten participants were formed in Moli, Pankhu, and Baksa villages for further verification. The study was documented on the basis of the conclusions drawn from these discussions.

3.12 Sampling Size

The analytical approaches have also been used to some extent. The sample size is selected based on the census method. The sampling procedure is the process of obtaining information about the required population. This study area covers 146.61 square kilometers in the Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality. Among these, Ward No. 1 (Moli), Ward No. 2 (Waksa), and Ward No. 4 (Ketuke) are inhabited by the Bahing peoples. The total population of all ethnic groups within this area is 19,597, of which 9,380 are male and 10,217 are female. The Bahing population is 4,412. In this municipality, 6.7 percent of the population speaks the Bahing language (CBS, 2021). The purposive sampling is employed to select individuals who have deep knowledge and experience related to the *Kayami-Kayacha* customary institution and 30 participants are selected.

3.13 Sources of Data:

This study is based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data is collected through field surveys, interviews, questionnaires, and audio and video recordings. Similarly, secondary data is obtained from village ward records, district profiles, the population census of CBS (2021), and relevant literature from other individuals, experts, journals, and published organizations.

3.14 Interview Schedule

The interview schedule serves as a structured guide for the interviews conducted during this study. It is designed to collect relevant data regarding the Bahing *Kayami-Kayacha* customary institution, focusing on cultural practices, rituals, governance, and social roles. The interview schedule was developed using a semi-structured format, allowing flexibility for the interviewer to explore important themes that emerged during the interview while still following a consistent line of questioning. This ensures that each interviewee is asked about the same core topics, but there is room for elaboration based on their responses. A total of thirty individuals, regardless of age, who perform *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro*, and *Tumlo-Yalo* rituals or possess cultural knowledge related to them, are interviewed to uncover accurate information.

- (1) Opening: According to the introductory table of the interview, the researcher will introduce themselves to the respondent and maintain formalities. While fostering a friendly and comfortable atmosphere with the respondent, the purpose of the study is clearly explained. Additionally, a harmonious relationship between the

respondent and the interviewer is maintained, ensuring a positive and comfortable environment for the respondent to provide their answers.

- (2) Body: The questions were asked based on the main topic, focusing on the core subject area. Primarily, only the questions prepared according to the title of the study were asked to the respondents, and their answers were collected accordingly.
- (3) Closing: In the closed interview schedule, the interviewer will collect responses from the respondent by focusing on the core aspects of the main questions and guiding the discussion toward the intended conclusions. Emphasis is placed on ensuring the collection of complete information in alignment with the research objectives. This approach will help ensure that the responses obtained reflect the specific data the study aims to gather, thereby making a significant contribution to the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY AREA AND THE BAHING COMMUNITY

4.1 Introduction of the Study Area

According to the mantra recited in the vow of worship performed by Brahmin priests: “Bharat Varṣe Jambudvipe, Uttara Khande Himalaya Parvate, Kiranta Deshe”, the Brahmin priests of Eastern Nepal utter this invocation while making the ritual vow during worship. This mantra makes reference to Himalaya Parvate, Kiranta Deshe in which the second phrase refers to the country of the Kiratas which lies in the Himalayan region. Similarly, it is written in Part II of Mr. Percival’s *History of Nepal* that the Kiratis came to Nepal and began to rule around 15,000 years ago during the Dwapar Yuga. The hilly regions of present-day Nepal were formerly known as the Kirat country. Even today, eastern Nepal is referred to as Majh (central) and Pallo (far) Kirat (Chemjong, 2059 B.S).

Among the most ancient peoples living in the Himalayan region are the Kirat. The homeland of the Kirat is in the eastern part of Nepal. The land where the Kirat people dwell is called Kirat Pradesh (Kirat region). This region is found to be divided into three parts: The area from the Sunkoshi River to the Likhu Khola is called Wallo Kirat (Near/Western Kirat). The area from the Likhu Khola to the Arun River is called Majh Kirat (Middle Kirat). The area from the Arun River to the Mechi River and up to the western watershed of the Sihalila Mountain is called Pallo Kirat (Far Eastern Kirat). (Sharma, 2067, B.S).

According to District Profile of Okhaldhunga (2070, B.S), during the Kirat period, this district, which lies within Wallo Kirat, later came under the rule of Lichhavi King Mandeva I. In the Malla era, it was governed from Bhaktapur during the reign of King Rana Malla. To expand the kingdom, Malla King Laxmi Narsingh Malla sent Kaji Bhim Malla to this region. When Bhim Malla’s army advanced eastward and reached this district, they drove out the Kiratis who ruled here, looted their rice, pounded it in a mortar-like stone found in the area, and cooked and ate it. It is said that from the name of this stone mortar, the place came to be known as Okhaldhunga.

That very stone mortar is still preserved in Siddhicharan Municipality, Ward No. 12, Siddhicharan Park. Related to this legend, Bhimal, Thana, Chandane Khola, and Gadhi Danda still exist today. The renowned poet Siddhicharan Shrestha composed

his famous poem “*Mero Pyaro Okhaldhunga*” about this very district (District Profile of Okhaldhunga, 2070, B.S).

It is found that the Abhira dynasty, the Gopala dynasty, and the Kirat dynasty ruled over this land. Kirkpatrick (1811) has provided a Kirat genealogy, in which he mentioned the names of 27 kings. According to the Gopal Raj Vamshavali (genealogical chronicle), a 14th-century manuscript, it is recorded that the Kirati kings ruled for 29 generations. Although the Mallas tried to drive the Kiratis out of this region, known as Wallo Kirat, and rule over it, they were not able to completely expel the Kirati rulers. During Prithvi Narayan Shah’s unification campaign, Okhaldhunga was annexed into Nepal through attacks, espionage, and conspiracies against the Kirati rulers.

In the time of Bhimsen Thapa, under the administrative division of 29 districts, East No. 3 Okhaldhunga came into existence. In the administrative division of 2018 B.S., the present-day districts of Solukhumbu, Khotang, and Okhaldhunga fell under East No. 3 Okhaldhunga, whose headquarters (Thum), was at Chisankhugadhi. From Baisakh 1, 2018 B.S., when Nepal was administratively divided into 14 zones and 75 districts, Okhaldhunga became one of the districts of the Sagarmatha Zone. At present, according to the Constitution of Jestha 15, 2065 B.S., Okhaldhunga District falls under Koshi Province. The study area lies within the Okhaldhunga District, specifically in Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality under the local government.

4.2 Geographical Situation

Okhaldhunga has a total area of 1074km² and is located at approximately 27° 6 N to 27° 32 N latitude and 86°10 to 86°32 E longitude (District Profile, 2021). Okhaldhunga is endowed with natural sceneries and with a wide variation of cultural heritages, and lies at an altitude ranging between 390m from Jortighat to 3627m Lamjedanda. It has its own historical identity as one of the Kirat Kingdoms; Taluwagadhi, Chisangkugadhi, Bungnamgadhi, and Chyanamgadhi were ruled by the Bahing Kirat King, before the unification of modern Nepal. According to geographical details, it is a hill area interspersed with hills, ridges, villages, valleys, and wide basins.

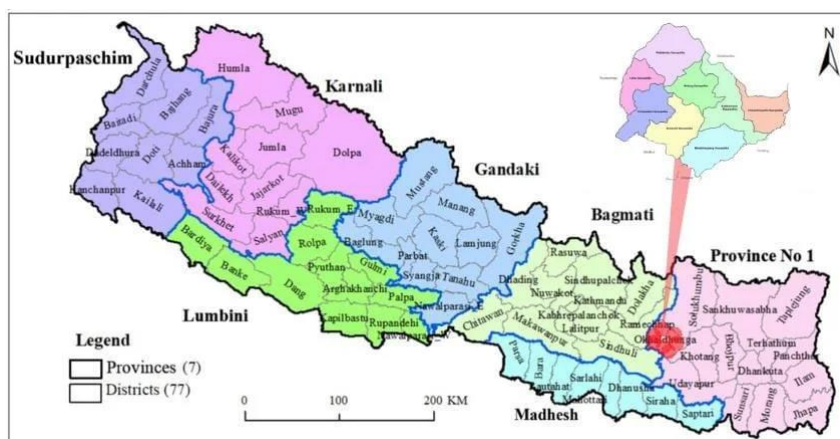


Figure 2: Research field of Manebhajyang Rural Municipality of Nepal.

4.3 Climate of Okhaldhunga

The climate of Okhaldhunga district is divided into four types. Tropical climate is found in areas below 1,000 meters, while subtropical climate occurs between 1,000 and 2,000 meters with warm conditions. Temperate climate is found at elevations from 2,000 to 2,940 meters, and cool temperate climate is found between 2,940 and 3,627 meters. The district headquarters, Okhaldhunga, has a subtropical type of climate. Similarly, in the research study area, Wards No. 1 (Moli) and No. 2 (Baksa) have a tropical climate, while Ward No. 4 (Ketuke) has a subtropical climate (Village Profile, 2021).

4.4 Political and Administrative Division

Based on political and administrative division, Okhaldhunga district falls under the Koshi Province of eastern Nepal. To the east lies Khotang district, with the Dudhkoshi River forming the boundary between the two districts. To the north is Solukhumbu district, separated by Nechadanda, Khanidanda, Pike, and Lamje ridges. To the west, the Likhu (Himaganga) River forms the boundary with Ramechhap district, while to the south, the Sunkoshi River separates it from Sindhuli and Udayapur districts (District profile, 2021).

For political and administrative purposes, the district has one House of Representatives electoral constituency, and there are two Provincial Assembly electoral constituencies. Administratively, it consists of seven rural municipalities Khijidemba Rural Municipality, Champadevi Rural Municipality, Chishankhugadhi Rural Municipality, Molung Rural Municipality, Likhu Rural Municipality, Sunkoshi Rural Municipality, and Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality, along with one Siddhicharan

Municipality, altogether divided into seventy-five wards. Under Siddhicharan Municipality fall the following wards: Taluwa Ward No. 1, Thulachhap Ward No. 2, Siddhicharan Wards No. 3, 4, 5, Ward No. 6, Ward No. 7 Bigutar, Baruneshowr 7, 8, 9, Ward No. 10, Siddicharan 11, and 12. Under Khijidemba Rural Municipality fall the following wards: Ragani Wards No. 1 and 2, Khiji Chandeshwari Ward No. 3, Khiji Kati Ward No. 4, Khiji Phalate Ward No. 5, Khiji Phalate Pokali Ward No. 6, Rawadolu Ward No. 7, Bhusinga Ward No. 8, and Patle Ward No. 9. Under Champadevi Rural Municipality fall the following wards: Palapu Wards No. 1 and 2, Kalika Ward No. 3, Phediguth Wards No. 4 and 5, Phulbari Wards No. 6 and 7, Bilandu Wards No. 8 and 9, and Raniban Ward No. 10. Under Chishankhugadhi Rural Municipality fall the following wards: Kuibhir Ward No. 1, Pokhare Ward No. 2, Diyale Ward No. 3, Ratmate Ward No. 4, Serna Ward No. 5, Bhadaure Ward No. 6, and Mamkha Wards No. 7 and 8. Under Molung Rural Municipality fall the following wards: Kuntadevi Ward No. 1, Baruneshwar Ward No. 2, Prapcha Wards No. 3 and 5, Harkpur Ward No. 4, Shrichaur Ward No. 6, Patle Ward No. 7, and Rangadip Ward No. 8. Under Likhu Rural Municipality fall the following wards: Sihandevi Wards No. 1 and 2, Narmedeshwar Ward No. 3, Yasam Wards No. 4 and 5, Gamnangtar Wards No. 6 and 7, and Tarkerabari Wards No. 8 and 9. Under Sunkoshi Rural Municipality fall the following wards: Balkhu Wards No. 1 and 2, Sisneri Wards No. 3 and 4, Mulkharka Wards No. 5 and 6, Chyanam Wards No. 7 and 8, and Katunje Wards No. 9 and 10. And under Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality fall the following wards: Moli Ward No. 1, Waksa Ward No. 2, Umbu Ward No. 3, Ketuke Ward No. 4, Manebhanjyang Ward No. 5, Thakle Ward No. 6, Toksel Wards No. 7 and 8, and Madhavpur Ward No. 9 (District Demographic Details of Okhaldhunga, 2080. B.S.). Among these, my study area was Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality.

4.5 Population

According to the final results of the 2078 B.S. national census conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics, Okhaldhunga district has a total population of 139,522 consisting of 71,472 (51.2%) females and 68,080 (48.8%) males. Within the study area, Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality has a total population of 19,597, with 10,217 (52.13 %) females and 9,380 (47.86 %) males (CBS 2021).

Table 1: Population of Nepal, Koshi, Okhaldhunga and Manebhajyang

Details	Female	Per.	Male	Per.	Total	Per.
Nepal	1,49,11,027	51.13	1,42,53,551	48.87	2,91,64,578	100
Koshi Provence	2,544,084	51.27	24,17,328	48.72	49,61,412	100
Okhaldhunga	71,472	51.2	68,080	48.8	1,39,522	100
Manebhajyang	10,217	52.13	9,380	47.86	19,597	100

4.6 Caste/Ethnicity of Okhaldhunga District

Okhaldhunga district is a common settlement area for various ethnic groups such as Chhetri, Brahmin, Magar, Bahing, Tamang, Kami, Rai, Gurung, Damai, Sarki, Sanyasi, Gharti, Yakkha, Thulung, Sunuwar, Sherpa, Majhi, Tharu, Yadav, Thakuri, Limbu, Mijar, Teli, Dusadh, and Newar, among others (CBS 2021).

4.7 The Kirat Bahing ethnicity and their written-unwritten histories

The Bahing are one of the indigenous peoples of the Kirat lineage. In *Nepal's History, Part II* by Mr. Percival London, it is written that the Kiratis came to Nepal and began to rule during the Dwapar Yuga, around 15,000 years ago (Chemjong, 2003). They belong to the Mongoloid race. This discussion is based on the primary and secondary sources I collected during my research on the written and unwritten histories of Bahing.

Phrelo (Fhlelo) is a repository of complex and unique vocabularies used in the cultural practices of the Bahing peoples. Over time, this language gradually evolved as Pai-lo, bai-lo, and Wai-lo, eventually spreading widely as a vernacular language within the Bahing. It is imparted through initiation by the ancestral deities in dreams and is used exclusively by Tumlocha¹, such as Nakso and Jhamcha, during ancestor worship and the Tumlo-Yalo rituals. In the Bahing peoples' culture, rituals, ancient human civilization, and historical events are narrated through Phrelo during the Tumlo-Yalo rituals, which are regarded as a major source of history. Phrelo, along with Tumlo-Yalo, is a unique form of oral literature that documents the entire Kirat civilization. The entire Bahing culture and civilization are sustained on its foundation. It is such a profound

¹ Tumlocha is person who is knowledgeable of Bahing ritual and culture.

scripture within which all Kirat Bahing characters, symbols, and myths are encompassed. Phrelo itself is the primary source of the vast creation of humans and living beings. It weaves and narrates the origin, struggles, and numerous contributions of the Kirat Bahing people. Phrelo has existed in the Bahing from ancient times to the present. It continues to give vitality to the history and development of our earth, water, air, ocean, vegetation, animals, human origin, and civilization.

In history, with the end of the Sumni (Origin era) period and the beginning of the Tumlo-Yalo period, two ancestral figures of cultural civilization among the Bahing people were Kakteesala Rinahong and Lungchiringma. According to the accounts narrated during the Tumlo-Yalo rituals of the Bahing society, the first ancestral place of origin is referred to as Sumnidu Saladu (Bahing Tejlal, 2007). During ancestor worship, when the forefathers recited the names of their cherished lands in the sacred language, they mentioned the names of the paternal, maternal, and state lands as follows:

“Sipubaya Hongma, Mapubaya Hongma, Charibaya Hongma, Dyarububaya Hongma, Hongmaku Hongma, Halmaya Hongma, Sirudu Hongma, Gandarvhi Hongma, Hinglewa Hongma, Hingmale Hongma, Sarsidu Hongma, Sarmaya Hongma, Yosadi Hongma, Takadi Hongma, Sayadi Hongma, Wabudi Hongma, Dikimblo Hongma, Mayamblo Hongma, Dhamudi Hongma, Parudi Hongma, Chyangmakhang Hongma, Wabukhung Hongma.....” In this way, the Bahing people have been reciting and preserving the names of the lands they acquired, motherlands, fatherlands, and state lands through the *Phrelo (Fhlelo)* language in their ancestral rituals from ancient times to the present. In the ritualistic section of the Bahing *Tumlo-Yalo* scripture, within the *Abalamka Tyak Tyake*, and *Amosusu Nalung*, it is recited as follows:

“Sumniding Kuteme Salading Kuteme, Tingmami Tammaya Saya Tongmaya Phopholmayo. Hangmakuding Kuteme Halmayading Kucho, Tingmami Tammaya Saya Tongmaya Phopholmayo. Sirududing Kuteme Gandarvhiding Kucho, Tingmami Tammaya Saya Tongmaya Phopholmayo. Sarsiduding Kuteme Sarmaya Ding Kucho, Tingmami Tammaya Saya Tongmaya Phopholmayo. Hingmaleding Kuteme Hinglewading Kucho, Tingmami Tammaya Saya Tongmaya Phopholmayo. Nepaldhuding Kuteme Newaluding Kucho, Tingmami

Tammaya Saya Tongmaya Phopholmayo Ya. To. Ngo. Ya. Ya. Mekeng Phophol Maya Tingmami Tammaya Saya Tongmaya” (Bahing Loro Tumlo, 2064 B.S).

According to the verses recited in the above Tumlo-Yalo: the first land of origin of the Kirat Bahing people was “Sumnidu Saladu”. From Sumnidu Saladu, the second land was “*Hongmaku Halmaya*,” which was regarded as the maternal land, paternal land, and state land where the Bahing ancestors ruled. The civilization of that land is remembered as “*Tingmami*.”

After *Hongmaku Halmaya*, the descendants of the Bahing people moved to the third land, “*Sirudu Gandarbhi*,” where they settled and ruled. They referred to the civilization of that land as “*Tammaya*.” From *Sirudu Gandarbhi*, they moved to the fourth land, *Sarsidu Sarmaya*, and ruled it as their state land and paternal land, naming its civilization “*Saya*”. From *Sarsidu Sarmaya*, they moved to the fifth land, “*Hingmale Hinglewa*” where they ruled and named the civilization of that land “*Tongmaya*.” From this fifth land, the Bahing ancestors again searched for new lands and moved to the sixth land, *Taka*; the seventh land, *Yosa*; and the eighth land, *Dikimblo Mayamblo*, where they governed.

Over time, they moved northward to the ninth land, *Paitip* region, and then to the tenth land, *Halkabung Phalhehang*, where they ruled. From there, they moved to the eleventh land, *Tharmalung Tharsilung*, and the twelfth land, *Khur Khrrawali*, proceeding through *Barilapcho* and opening *Takkhrema Khremalung*. From there, they arrived at the thirteenth land, “*Nepaldu Newaldu*,” the present Kathmandu Valley, where they established and administered a vast state. The civilization of this *Nepaldu Newalu* land was called “*Fofolmaya*” (Bahing Loro Tumlo, 2064 B.S.). It is mentioned that this very *Nepaldu Newalu* later became known as Nepal, giving the country its name. According to the Bahing *Tumlo-Yalo* tradition, it is found that from the *Hongmaku Halmaya* civilization onward, they had been ruling as Kirati rulers.

During my field study, based on the *Nakso* (Bahing priest), and the accounts of the ancestors, it was found that in the hunting age, the ancestors of the present Kirat Bahing people, Payiwa, came above the *Barilapcho* and opened and established the first human settlement at the elevated *Mukkakongko* and *Thamkongko* and *Mukka Kongko* in Kekli (Ketuke) of present-day Okhaldhunga. They lived there, hunting in the dense forests of the region and ruling the area. The descendants of Payiwa, known as *Khaluwa*, used to hunt and sustain their livelihood in the present-day *Kadeni*, *Syawan*

Thulachhap, *Moli*, *Pokhare*, and *Pankhu* regions. They collected edible ferns, nettles, and tubers from the streams and rivulets in that area for food. *Khaluwa/Khaliwa* had a male wild boar. That boar used to go to the forest every day to search for tubers and food. By following that male boar, they would discover edible resources in the region. Once, the male boar did not return to *Khaluwa* for a long time. Wondering where it had gone, *Khaluwa* followed its trail and found it lying in a place called *Syawan* forest today, gathering under a *Sapsara* (a kind of bush or thicket, dry tree leaves). In the Bahing language, a male wild boar is called “*Siva*”. The name of that place was later forms “*Siva*” to the present name, *Syawan*. (Audio Record: Late Bal Bahadur Rai, 2064, B.S.).



Figure 3: *Pankhu, Waksa, Some part Moli of Bahing Village*

4.8 Bahing ancestry and its connection to the Historic Land of Rumjatar

One day, while the male wild boar went out to graze, it returned in the evening carrying red soil in its mouth. *Khaluwa* was surprised, as there was no red soil in that area, and he wondered where the boar had found it. He decided to trace that place the next day. The following day, *Khaluwa* tied a small pouch of ash to the boar’s tail using an old piece of cloth and let it go. As the boar wagged its tail along the way, ash dust fell along its path. Following the trail of ash, *Khaluwa* reached Rumjatar. The Rumjatar area was a forest covered with Sal trees. *Khaluwa* claimed Rumjatar as his territory. From there, he returned across the river to his own dwelling place (Direct correspondance: Late Rai, Bal Bahadur, 2062, B.S.).



Figure 4: Bahing Historical Land Rumjatar (Dyambulu Yolingma)

On the other hand, the ancestor Rungbu descended from “*Lungchermabayongma*,” the present-day *Khokseli Badhare* and *Kaduwa* of Khotang, down to the banks of the Dudhkoshi River. There, he made a vine bridge and a crossing point at Karkibesi and crossed over to Okhaldhunga. From there, carrying his bow and arrows, he climbed uphill in search of hunting grounds and reached *Libjukongko* (Libju hill).



Figure 5 : Libju Kongko (Libju Hill)

In that area, *Rungbu* killed a *Ragasi* (Himalayan Goral), and its entrails were scattered around. At that moment, the ancestor of *Rabahanakah* (*Rabung*) came shouting, “Who is hunting on my land?” and confronted *Rungbu*. Since both had been hunting all day, they began to fight. Fighting continuously, they reached the banks of the Dudhkoshi River. Both became exhausted and very thirsty. *Rungbu* quenched his thirst by scooping water from the Dudhkoshi with his hand and drinking it. *Rabahanakah* asked him, “How did you drink the water?” When *Rungbu* replied, “I bent down and drank,” *Rabahanakah* also bent down to drink from the river. At that moment, *Rungbu* pressed his neck from behind and drowned him in the water. While struggling for breath, *Rabahanakah* made a bubbling sound “*bududu bududu*” in the water. (Direct Correspondance: Bahing, Jit Bahadur, 2072, B.S.).

After that, *Rungbu* went and settled in *Hindapu* (Phasku). From *Hindapu*, he moved up to *Mendapu* (Moli). From Moli, he moved to the present-day Gahate. From there, he went to *Mishankhe-Merema* (Nishkhe) and observed all directions from there. In the Bahing language, “*Mishankhe*” means to observe or view with the eyes. Because *Rungbu* observed the surroundings from there, the name *Mishankhe* eventually evolved into *Nishankhe*. From there, taking along his male wild boar, he moved to the vast forest of *Chimphree* (Fire-flame bush) on the other side of *Jigo Gulo* (Sisne Khola) beneath Nishankhe. Later, he crossed *Jigoma Hatama* (Sisne Khola), passed through Charkhu (Charkhuma Cherema), and came to settle in Rumjatar (Direct Correspondance: Bahing, Jit Bahadur, 2072, B.S.).

One day, *Khaluwa* was looking across from Moplodayal (Andheri) toward Rumjatar and suddenly saw smoke rising. He shouted several times, “Who is that, settling on my land?” But his voice did not reach across to Rumjatar. So, he crossed *Jigo Gulo* (Sisne Khola) and went to Rumjatar. When he reached the place where the smoke was coming from, he found a man lighting a fire in a hut. *Khaluwa* asked him, “Who are you, settling on my land?” The man introduced himself as *Rungbu* and claimed that he had arrived there first. *Khaluwa* replied that he had come to that place first and asked *Rungbu* how much land he claimed. While eating his beaten rice (*chiura*), *Khaluwa* pointed with his finger and said, “From here to there is my land.” *Rungbu*, while eating his roasted grain flour (*satu*), pointed here and there with his fingers as he spoke, and when he held his breath while speaking, the pointing extended as far as *Pupting*. At present, the name *Pupting* has evolved into Pukting Khola, which

lies between Bigutar and Barunebwar (Direct Correspondance: Late Rai, Bal Bahadur, 2062, B.S).

However, both claimed they were the first to arrive, and the dispute was not resolved. They decided to settle it by measuring whose ashes would be greater in amount, agreeing to collect their ashes and compare them. Then, each returned to his own dwelling.

Rungbu was clever. Throughout the night, he gathered wood from the surrounding area, lit large fires, and produced a great deal of ash. *Khaluwa*, on the other hand, was simple-hearted; he returned dwelling and slept. The next day, both collected their ashes and measured. *Rungbu* won that contest. Still, *Khaluwa* did not agree (Tam Ritual at 2074, B.S. Dhuske, Nakso: Biddikumar).

Then, they decided to measure the amount of *glidam* (pig dung) they had, declaring that the one with more would be considered the first settler. They separated once again. *Rungbu* collected the *Khabara* (*Arisaema tortuosome*) roots from around *Jigo Gulo* (Sisne Khola) and *Lingkuma Gulo* (Thotne Khola), placed them in his pigsty, and produced a large amount of pig dung. When they met again and compared their pig dung, *Rungbu* won once more. Yet again, *Khaluwa* did not agree.

Finally, they made a vow: “Whoever’s firstborn child is a son will be considered the one who came first to this land.” Later, *Khaluwa*’s first child, a son named *Hasali*, was born, while *Rungbu*’s first child was a daughter named *Ninangkhungma*. After that, both came to an agreement and decided to marry their son and daughter to one another. As *Khaluwa*’s son, *Hasali* grew up, he used to catch *Chule* (stinging nettles), fiddlehead ferns (*Nigure*), fish, *chepa*, and frog (*Kasi*) from *Jigo Gulo* (Sisne Khola) and bring them home. *Rungbu*’s daughter, *Ninangkhungma*, also grew up and became a young girl. She, too, would come to the same *Jigo Gulo* (Sisne Khola) to collect nettles, bamboo shoots, tubers, and frogs. As they met frequently in this way, young *Hasali* and young *Ninangkhungma* began to develop affection for each other. Eventually, *Hasali* followed *Ninangkhungma* to *Rungbu*’s dwelling, where he stayed for a long time.

Meanwhile, *Khaluwa* and his wife waited for their only son, who had gone to collect tubers, frogs, nettles, and frog (*Kasi*), but he did not return to the hut. One day passed, then two, and when more than three months had gone by without his return, *Khaluwa* and his wife began to suspect: “There is no one else in this land; surely *Rungbu* has killed our son. One day, he might kill us too.” Fearing this, they built a stone-walled

enclosure in the present-day Kadeni area, made a house inside it, closed the doors, and stayed securely inside for their safety.

After a very long time, *Rungbu* sent his daughter and son-in-law back home, sending along a *Chasuwa* (gift) filled with Pig thigh, rice, Chi (traditional liquor), and everything according to custom. The couple crossed the *Jigo Gulo* (Sisne River) and arrived at their home. When they reached the hut, *Khaluwa* and his wife were sitting inside with the door locked and the stone wall surrounding the hut. Suddenly, they heard someone calling, "*Papa, Mama.*" After calling many times, they thought, "Who is it? It must be *Rungbu*. He already killed one of our children, *Hasali*, and now he will kill us too." So, they stayed inside.

From outside, their son, *Hasali*, called out, "*Papa, Mama*, I am your son. Please open the door." But from inside, *Khaluwa* replied, "You are not my son. My son has been missing for a long time." *Hasali* answered from outside, "No, I am indeed your son. Please believe me." Then *Khaluwa* said, "If you are really my son, put your hand through the hole in the wall. We both will spit on your hand. If you lick that spit, we will believe you are our son; if you do not, we will know you are not."

On this condition, the son put his hand through the hole and held it out. Both the old man and woman spat on *Hasali's* hand, and when *Hasali* licked it, they believed he was truly their son. They opened the door and came outside. Their son had brought along the *Chasuwa* (gift) sent by his in-laws in the *Tolo* (Special Bamboo basket). On the other hand, *Rungbu*, wanting to see what his daughter and son-in-law were doing, had secretly followed them and hid near *Khaluwa's* hut, sitting concealed in a tree.

The simple-hearted *Khaluwa* and his wife, filled with joy, placed the "*Chasuwa*" sent by their in-laws outside on the porch and performed the "*Chyise Rickcho Tumlo-Yalo*" ritual to complete the ceremony before bringing it inside. *Rungbu*, hidden in the tree, watched as *Khaluwa* performed the marriage ritual and became pleased to see that *Khaluwa* possessed extensive knowledge of *Tumlo-Yalo*. Thus, the Bahing people were the first settlers of the Okhaldhunga district. Their descendants built four forts to protect their land. These forts were Taluwagadhi, Chishankhugadhi, Bungnamgadhi, and Chyanamgadhi. The name Rumjatar originated from the name of the Bahing ancestor *Rungbu* through gradual distortion over time (Mimkha: 2063 B.S and 2068, B.S).

4.9 History of Four Gadhis and their boundaries

There is a total of four forts in Okhaldhunga, the ancestral land of the Bahing ethnic group. These forts were established in the 13th century by the Kirat Bahing ancestors in their respective regions to protect their territory, during a time when Sen from Bangladesh and India entered Kirat land and attacked the Kirati people. In Okhaldhunga, the four forts were established by the Kirat Bahing ancestors to fight against the attacks of the Sen Kings.

4.9.1 The History of Taluwagadhi and Its Boundaries

One of the Kirat Bahing ancestors, *Paiwa/Paihong*, during the hunting age, while hunting, stood between two tall hills located northeast of Ketuke, southwest of Lagalake, south of Gorumare Pass, west of Moplodyal (Andherinarayansthan), north of Moli, and in the northern region of Pankhu. Of these two hills, in the Bahing language, one is called Mukka Kongko (Mukka Hill), and the other Tham Kongko (Tham Hill).



Figure 6: Mukka Kongko (Mukka Hill, first territory of Bahing ancestor Paiwa)

The descendants of that same *Paiwa*, known as *Khaluwa*, settled in the present-day *Kadeni* and *Siva Ban* (contraction as *Syawan*) areas. *Khaluwa* had a male pig. That pig used to live and graze in the forest of present-day *Syawan*. In the Bahing language, the male pig is called *Siwaa*. From this word *Siwaa*, through linguistic contraction, *Siva Ban* became *Syawan*.

Khaluwa's descendant was *Hwasalu*. Among *Hwasalu's* sons, the eldest was *Tolowa*, the second was *Rinamsacha*, the third was *Hangucha*, and the youngest was

Ripocha. The fort established by *Hwasalu*'s eldest son, King *Tolowa*, is *Taluwagadhi*. The descendants of *Tolowa* are still known as *Tolacha*. The meaning of “*Tolo*” comes from the name of a Kirat Bahing king, “*Tolo*,” and “*Wa*” means elder or senior. Therefore, *Tolo* was elder than the others. The combined form of “*Tolo*” and “*Wa*” became the word “*Tolowa*.” Over time, the word “*Tolowa*” was contraction and came to be known as “*Taluwa*.” The fort established by King *Tolowa* of the Bahing is *Taluwagadhi*. *Gorumare Bhanjyang*, *Okhrenibhanjyang*, *Jorchiloune*, *Ratuwapani*, *Chuche Dhunga*, *Damai Thala*, *Bhreng Danda*, *Liblukongko*, *Sanagkugulo* (*Pankhu Khola*), *Ngadyal*, *Dumre Khola*, *Bange Salla*, *Rambuwa*, *Lingkugulo* (*Thotne Khola*), *Mamkha Dhik*, *Rumjatar*, *Sisne Khola*, *Lami Soti*, and other such areas are the historical boundaries of *Taluwagadhi*.

When the Sen kingdom attacked, King *Tolowa* brought down the deity Januka Devi from *Khakhale-Pakhale*, presently called *Khalde-Pakhale*, located at the head of *Lingkuma Gulo* (*Thotne Khola*) on the border between Solukhumbu and Okhaldhunga districts. He placed the deity in a palanquin carried by four of his Bahing soldiers and installed it at the center of *Taluwagadhi*. After worshipping Januka Devi, he fought against the Sen forces, and defended his kingdom's territory.

Later, during the Shah period, the descendants of King *Tolo* fought the Shah's forces thirteen times. *Taluwagadhi* collected taxes from 700 households and paid them to the then central government. For this reason, the tax records continued to mention “*Saatsaya Taluwa*” (Seven Hundred *Taluwa*) for a long time (Mimkha, 2063, p. 29).



Figure 7: *Taluwagadhi*

4.9.2 History of Chisangkhubgadhi and its boundaries

Among the descendants of the Kirat Bahing ancestor of *Rungbu* were the eldest son *Chishankhu*, the middle son *Bishankhu*, and the youngest son *Namrukhu*. He had two wives. The first wife gave birth to his first daughter, *Ninangkhungma*. The fort established by the eldest son, King *Chishankhu*, is called Chishankhubgadhi. To protect the fort from Sen attacked, he installed the goddess Kalika Devi there and fought against the Sen Forces, defending his kingdom's territory.

The territory of *Chishankhubgadhi* extends from east of *Lingkugulo* (Thotne Khola), through the Rambuwa Ghat area, and from the northwest of the Dudhkoshi River northward to the border of the palace of Thulung Jubahang, a descendant of the Mugli king of Solukhumbu. Later, King *Chishankhu*'s descendants, *Chyamajiti*, ruled from the *Chisangkhubgadhi* (Mimkha, 2063, p. 29).



Figure 8: Chisankhubgadhi

4.9.3 History of Bungnamgadhi and its boundaries

The fort established and ruled by the Kirat Bahing ancestor, Bahing King *Bungnam*, is called Bungnamgadhi. Its boundaries extended from the Taluwagadhi boundary or the stream below Beteni in the northwest, to Gorumare Bhanjyang in the east, to *Malo Gulo* (Molung Khola) in the west, and the north up to Chitre at the head of *Malo Gulo*. Later, King Bungnam's descendant Bunga ruled the kingdom (Mimkha, 2063, p. 29).



Figure 9: Bungnam Village



Figure 10: Bungnamgadhi

4.9.4 History of Chyanamgadhi and its boundaries

Located to the west of the Okhaldhunga District headquarters, this now lost fort was established in ancient times by the Kirat Bahing ancestors to protect their kingdom's territory from external attacks. Its central point, Chyanam, lay within an area that stretched from Malo Gulo (Molung Khola) in the northwest to the Sunkoshi River in the east via Likhu Khola. King Chyama of the Kirat Bahing established the fort in his territory, and it came to be known as Chyanamgadhi after his name.

After Kirat land was incorporated into the Gorkha kingdom, people of other ethnic groups from Kaski and Gorkha migrated into the area, leading to the disappearance of Chyanam Fort's existence at the hands of these newly arrived communities.

For the first time, by order of the Shah, the *Katuwal* system was sent from Kaski and Parbat in western Nepal to Chyanamgadhi. Later, the *Katuwal* system was also introduced from Chyanamgadhi to Taluwagadhi. Those same *Katuwals* are now scattered and living in the Taluwagadhi area (Mimkha, 2063, p. 29).

4.10 Kinship System in Bahing

According to Rai, T. D. (2070), from a general sociological perspective, the kinship system is established in two ways: through blood relations, called "consanguinal kinship," and through marital relations, called "affinal kinship." Kinship plays an important role within the family and society, as it determines the marriage arrangements of children. Among the Kirat Bahing, both types of kinship systems are regarded with significance. In the Bahing peoples, paternal lineage is called "*Hadnata*", and maternal lineage is called "*Dudhphora*." Within the paternal lineage, seven generations are recognized. Among descendants up to seven generations, children of the same lineage and clan are considered related, and if someone dies within these seven generations, there is a tradition of observing ritual impurity *Sase-Buse* (*Jutho Barna*). Under the maternal lineage (*Dudhphora*), sons and daughters born from the mother's womb and their children are not allowed to marry into the mother's maternal relatives. In the Bahing society, marriages such as between a paternal aunt's daughter (*Phupuchela*) and maternal uncle's daughter (*Mamachela*) are prohibited. Highly respected kinship relationships include *Hyelpo-Hyelmo*, *Hyelpo-Hyelpo*, and *Hyelmo-Hyelmo*, while very sensitive and humorous kinship relationships are referred to as *Rimi-Riwa*, *Kacha-Kacha*, and *Warcha-Warcha*. Other, less significant or ordinary kinship relations also exist.

4.11 Bahing Lineage

The first creator of existence, *Mamachinimo*, was born from the womb of Mother Earth. She was the first woman on Earth. *Mamachinimo* united with the spirit of the Heleju Thomoju (wind) as the father figure. The spirit of air thus became the first male of creation. After that, *Mamachinimo* gave birth to her first child, a daughter. She told her daughter that her father was the spirit of the Heleju Thomoju (wind) and

introduced him by the name *Papachadubung*. The daughter was named *Niniryngma Marengma*. Later, *Ninirengma Marengma* loved *Ruwapa* (Venus), and although she wished to marry him, circumstances led her to marry *Silapa* (Jupiter) instead. From the union of *Ninirengma Marengma* and *Silapa* (Jupiter) were born the thorny plants, living creatures, animals, and birds. Among the animals, the first offspring was the *Gupsapa-Pochepa* (tiger), the second the *Wam* (bear), the third the *More-Paka* (monkey), and the fourth and last was *Ninanapcha* (Human) (Bahing, D. S., 2077 B.S.).



Figure 11: Thorny vine Plant beared by *Niniryngma* call *Gunggerwa* in Bahing

The descendants of *Ninanapcha* are the Bahing people. Among the cultural ancestors, *Champiyongma*, followed by *Kaktisala* and *Lungchiringma*, were the first founders of the *Hong* ritual. Likewise, his two elder sisters, *Jauma* and *Khliuma*, were also important characters and are regarded as the cultural ancestors of the Bahing people. During the study, based on responses from unstructured questions, it was found that the Kirat Bahing people's ancestors did not have the practice of recording the names of their ancient forebears in written form. Therefore, it was generally observed that parents would pass down to their children the names of their grandparents and great-grandparents, and grandchildren would have knowledge of up to three generations.

In reality, within this community, the birth name, the name used for calling, and the ceremonial name given in the *Sari-Reri* (Ancestors soul) ritual are all different. In the *Sari-Reri* (Ancestors soul) ritual, the ceremonial name is formally bestowed through a ritual process by the *Nakso* (ritual priest), and this is known as *Dapsining*. Therefore, in this community, the commonly used name in everyday life, the official name registered with government bodies, and the *Dapsining* given by the *Nakso* in the *Sari-*

Reri (Ancestors soul) ritual are usually different. In general society, the name by which a person is called is known as *Chopining*, and the name given after a person's death is called *Bulamning*. The *Bulamning* is bestowed after a person's death by the *Nakso* (ritual priest) and the *Ngabucha* (assistant ritual performer) based on the individual's character, habits, and deeds during their lifetime. The genealogies of the ancestors can thus be traced based on the *Dapsining* names inscribed in the *Tumlo-Yalo*. However, it was found that people in the community could recall and maintain knowledge of family lineage for about seven generations. Based on the *Dapsining* of the ancestors inscribed in the *Tumlo-Yalo*, the genealogies are as follows:

According to the ancestors, the Bahing forebears are as follows. *Paiwa/Paihong*, *Dungmowa*, *Rukhusalu*, *Waripsawa*, *Timriwa*, *Dhimriwa*, *Nayango*, *Dhayango*, *Rukhusalu*, *Kharupaso*, *Namdhongma*, *Asawa*, *Samriwa*, *Khaluwa*, *Rendukpa*, and *Rungbu*. Among the aforementioned ancestors of the Bahing ethnic group, the descendants of three of them are still found today (Kirat Bahing Tumlo, 2069).

4.12 Clans within the Bahing

Docha refers to the sub-clans within the Bahing peoples. There are various distinct *Dochas* among the Bahing. These *Dochas* originated from a common ancestor but, over different periods, became ritually and culturally divided into separate *Docha* groups. Within their respective clans, they remain united and engaged in rituals, traditions, as well as economic and social activities. Marriage is allowed between one *Docha* and another, but marriage within the same *Docha* is strictly prohibited. At least up to seven generations, marriage within the same *Docha* is forbidden. Some areas only apply for three three-year of prohibition on it. If such a marriage occurs unexpectedly, the community, through the guidance of the *Tumlucha* (cultural authority) ritually assigns them a separate clan identity (Lee, 2005).

Within the Bahing, the existing *Dochas* include:

Thamrocha, *Hajupacha*, *Yumbucha*, *Diburcha*, *Dungmocha*,
Mupucha, *Dilingbacha*, *Piyacha*, *Rawallecha*, *Myrsacha*, *Prongmocha*,
Kharadiburcha, *Nambyrsacha*, *Sechocha*, *Luticha*, *Hongucha*, *Moplocha*,
Rinamsacha, *Sustocha*, *Ripocha*, *Tolacha*, *Kharayulcha*, *Hawalindi*,
Munari, *Tonimi*, *Jailung*, *Muluwa*, *Khalsecha* *Tarkasecha*, *Tembocha*,
Hadikhamcha, *Duflocha*, *Dyangpacha*, *Rokecha*, *Bono*, *Nopo* *Bono*,

Procha, Changa, and Rampho etc. (Bahing Kirat Mulukhim Bidhan, 2066 B.S.).

4.13 Dapsining: Distinct Ritual Name of Bahing

Within the Bahing society, each *Docha* has a distinct ritual name, which symbolically represents that *Docha's* cultural identity. This special ritual name is called *Dapsining*. The *Dapsining* is formally bestowed, especially by the *Tumlocha* (ritual leader or Knowledgeable of the Bahing rituals), to encompass the *Docha*, connecting it from the founding ancestor down to the present generations, under their qualities, behaviors, and traditions. The use, practice, and significance of *Dapsining* are particularly important during *Sariselo* (ancestral rites), marriage ceremonies, death rituals, and healing practices performed by *Jhamcha* (shaman) (Bahing, D.S., 2065 B.S.) The various *Dapsining* are as follows:

(a) Paiwa to Khaluwa Bumtha Dapsining (Hangu, Buddi 2069)

- (1) *Khaluwa*:- *Onkholu Khoropu, Tepayu Sironma, Tepayu Nayungma*
- (2) *Tolocha*:- *Onkholu Khoropu*
- (3) *Rinamsacha Bumtha Dapsining*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Lotesa Piwa Dungmowa Khaluwa Rimmawa Muluwa Lesewa Skkhruwa Lukkhruwa.*
- (4) *Ripocha*:- *Onkholo Khoropo, Banuse Lunisa, Riduli Supurma.*
- (5) *Nithala Ripocha*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Hawanise Tingnise Jumaise.*
- (6) *Honggucha*:- *Onkholo Khoropo, Hongdulu Sobokha Tepabung Nayungma Munthalu Dapthongwa Rithalu Rithangwa.*
- (7) *Moplocha*:- *Onkholo Khoropo, Luripa Sanakha.*
- (8) *Nithala Ripocha*:- *Onkholu Khoropu Hwanise Tandise Jumaise*
- (9) *Hwalindi*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Sangapa Luripa Sibise Phiyungma.*
- (10) *Munari*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Sangapa Luripa Sibise Dhonita.*
- (11) *Jayalun*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Sangapa Luripa Tangduse Walekha.*
- (12) *Muluwa*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Muluwa Lesawa Sakhru Lokhruwa.*
- (13) *Nithala Muluwa*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Hawaturi Timukha Rimukha.*
- (14) *Piyacha*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Sangapa Luripa Sibise Luripa Hundulu Dukhungma Pitulu Pituksa.*
- (15) *Sustocha*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Sangapa Luripa Barale Hiyungma Namringma Pichhale.*
- (16) *Halesi, Bhumju Sustocha*:- *Onkholo Khoropo Khacheli Dayi Lorika.*

(17) Tonimi:- *Onkholo Khoropo Sangapa Luripa Lindies Yakhepa.*

(b) Rungbu Bumtha Dapsining:- *Tangdise Tamoka Hongdulu Hamoka Hahari Hariwa Bhakpalu Siriksa.*

(18) Dilingbacha:- *Dyemniwa Doriwa, Wabulu Wayunḡma*

(19) Dungmocha:- *Dunise Sanjaka, Bhakpalu Siriksa*

(20) Hajupacha:- *Hwanise Jumnise, Bhakpalu Siriksa*

(21) Yumbucha:- *Dyemniwa Doriwa Loniwa Lonita*

(22) Diburcha:- *Budulu Harita, Kharitembu Wailonḡma*

(23) Mupucha:- *Budulu Harita Kharite Wailongma Mupdalu Muluta*

(24) Thamrocha:- *Thamniwa Walaka Rimnima Namboma.*

(25) Kharadiburcha:- *Kharahaw Liblihaw, Tukahaw Tayahaw.*

(26) Khalsecha:- *Budulu Harita Kharite Wilonma Mupdulu Muluta.*

(27) Rokecha :- *Rekeha Nakaha Khosimba Roringwa.*

(28) Dengpacha:- *Tongdise Hawnuse Jumnisa.*

(29) Rendukpa Bumtha Dapsining:- *Mamayo Lunayo Salayo Saplayo.*

(30) Nambyarsacha:- *Namdulu Hwakha Dundulu Duleta.*

(31) Nithala Nambyarsacha:- *Tongdise Tamoka Lunayo Rapdayo.*

(32) Samthala Nambyarsacha:- *Namdalu Hawakha Lukhupsa Walekha.*

(33) Sechocha:- *Tonḡdise Tomokha Tingdise Tirikha.*

(34) Rawllecha:- *Ronise Sangaka Dunise Hawakha.*

(35) Myrsacha:- *Dundulu Duleta Myrdalu Siriksa Benese Luriksa.*

(36) Bono:- *Hantaku Lorima Chitaku Plingmayo Mintiku Luksale.*

(37) Nopo Bono:- *Ayoho Napoho Sabunduwa Bunduwa Chitayo Plingmayo.*

(38) Jugule Bono:- *Hahari Hawari Dhadhari Dharita Hantaku Lorika.*

(39) Sallo Bono:- *Sanchalo Sati Chitayo Plingmayo.*

(40) Prongmocha:- *Prongdolu Harita Jepdele Seleta.*

(41) Duflocha:- *Dudule Dufleta Pichhalu Desongma.*

(42) Tembocha:- *Tendulu ḡechakha Binase Loringma.*

(43) Kharayulcha:- *Tanḡdise Tamokha Tundise Tirikha Kharaha Libliha.*

(44) Tarkasecha:- *Budulu Harita Karitembu Yilungma.*

(45) Tarkase:- *Budulu Harita Sibise Mupdulu Syalnita.*

(46) Parocha :- *Parocha Momacha.*

(47) Changa:-

(48) Rampho:-

4.14 The Bahing Language

In Okhaldhunga District, the Bahing language is mainly spoken in Siddhicharan Municipality, Manebhanjyang Rural Municipality, Molung Rural Municipality, Chishankhugadhi Rural Municipality, and Nechasalyan Rural Municipality of Solukhumbu District. The Bahing community refers to their language as *Bahing Lo*. This language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family. According to the CBS (2021), there are a total of 14,449 speakers of the language in Nepal.

During my field study, I found that elderly men and women in the villages still speak the Bahing language. However, most school-going children and young people have started speaking Bahing less frequently, as their education is conducted mainly in Nepali and English. On the other hand, those who can afford better education believe that speaking English will secure a better future for their children, so they tend to enroll them in boarding schools. As a result, the mother tongue is at risk of extinction.

It was observed that the local government has no specific policy or plan for the preservation of the mother tongue. The Bahing Kirat Mulukhim Organization had conducted some informal classes in the Bahing language for a short period of time. With the increasing number of unemployed people in Nepal, many youths are going abroad for foreign employment. Consequently, they see learning foreign languages as more beneficial for their future than learning Bahing, which has led to a lack of interest in the mother tongue among the younger generation. For the first time in Nepal, with the initiative of the Bahing Kirat Mulukhim Organization, the positive cooperation and support of Ward No. 1 Moli Ward Chairperson Raj Kumar Rumdali and his committee, and at Shree Kalika Higher Secondary School, formal education in the Bahing language, under the category of local languages, began on the date 2077 B.S. (2020 A.D.). Currently, teacher Dilip Rumdali teaches the Bahing language up to Grade 3 at that school. This can be regarded as a small but significant beginning toward the preservation of the Bahing language. During the field study, I found that the language exists in two forms, which are as follows:

- (1) Phre Lo / Phle Lo (Cultural and Ritual language)
- (2) The Bahing Lo (common spoken language)

The meaning of “*Fhre/Phle*” is ritual language, and the meaning of “*Lo*” is “language” or “speech.” Among the Bahing people, this is a ritual language used exclusively during various annual ancestral (Sari-Reri) rituals of different levels, such

as *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Byarba Lyakcho*, *Tam*, *Tumatam*, and *Hong Segro (Dhyetam)*, which are considered special and significant ancestral ceremonies.

This language is also used in marriage rituals during *Chyise Rikcho*, and in new house-building ceremonies, *Wayilingmo (New house worship)*, *Susumo (Guru of Shaman Banjhakri)*, *Walekumo (Land worship)*, and *Jalimmo (newly sprouted Crops worship)*. It is an oral language spoken only by the *Nakso* (Priest) and *Tumlocha* during worship. This language is believed to be received by the *Nakso* through dreams, endowed by the ancestral spirits. The use of *Fhre/Phle Lo* is strictly sacred and is employed only during *Tumlo-Yalo* rituals. It is never used on other occasions.



Figure 12: *Jalim Mo*

“Bahing” refers to a distinct ethnic group and society of Kirat origin in Nepal. “Lo” means language or speech. Therefore, the language spoken by the Bahing people is called *Bahing Lo*. Generally, it is the language spoken within households and throughout the entire Bahing society. For this reason, the language spoken daily by people of all ages, from children to the elderly is known as *Bahing Lo*.

Table 2 : Distinction between words in common Bahing Lo and Phre/Phle Lo

English	Common Bahing language	Phre/Phle Lo (Cultural Language)
Ginger	<i>Pi:rum</i>	<i>Pirumle-Phremule</i>
local beer	<i>ηasi</i>	<i>chee</i>
weapon	<i>gijo</i>	<i>gijo-wajo</i>
rice paddy	<i>Bura</i>	<i>chapuni-hwamela</i>

Rice	<i>Bure-se:ri</i>	<i>Chapuni chamni se:ri</i>
Millet	<i>Charja</i>	<i>Hulija-Phremuja</i>
Maize	<i>Grelejma</i>	<i>Hulija-ninthija</i>
Alcohol	<i>gal</i>	<i>Sipkhaku-khamaku</i>
Gourd	<i>Pupum</i>	<i>Selewa-Lingmawa</i>

4.15 The occupation of the Bahing people

In ancient times, the Bahing people used to engage in hunting. With the passage of time, they began to sustain their lives by gathering fruits and tubers. Later, they started practicing animal husbandry and farming. Since they mostly inhabit hilly slopes with cold and dry climates, the majority of Bahing people cultivate millet, maize, buckwheat, wheat, barley, potatoes, and some fruits. In places with water sources, such as areas with streams and rivers, they also grow rice. Alongside farming, they engage in animal husbandry, raising buffaloes, cattle, pigs, and poultry. As they do not consume goat meat, goat farming is relatively rare among them. Besides agriculture, they brew and sell alcohol and traditional liquor (Jaand). A few are employed in the Indian Gorkha Army, British Gorkha Army, Nepalese Army, Nepal Police, and civil services. Nowadays, many have migrated abroad for foreign employment.

CHAPTER FIVE

BAHING CUSTOMARY INSTITUTION AND ITS ROLE IN BAHING TRADITIONS

Social structure consists of the total of all social relationships of all individuals at a given moment in time. Various dimensions play an important role in keeping customary institutions alive. Among these, economic, social, political, cultural values, and necessities are found to sustain them. This study attempts to explore how traditional institutions, which are embedded in the customs of certain ethnic groups, have been continuously preserved from ancient times to the present. It also investigates which elements have contributed to this continuity. Based on the research papers reviewed during this study, it was found that cultural traditions, value systems, and political aspects have played a significant role.

5.1 Tumlo-Yalo

Tumlo-Yalo refers to the unwritten form of rhythmically recited mantras used in the Bahing society during various life-cycle and sacred rituals such as marriage ceremonies, death rites, birth rituals, *Sariselo* (ancestral chant) rituals, house-building ceremonies, land-worship rituals, and all stages of creation. It is essentially a repository of sacred mantras, rhythmic words, and knowledge of ritual procedures. The mantras and the methods or procedures to be performed exist in oral form. It is believed that this knowledge is learned by the *Tumlocha* through dreams, bestowed by ancestral spirits. Additional learning is acquired from knowledgeable *Nakso* and *Ngabucha*, which together complete the *Tumlo-Yalo*. Within *Tumlo-Yalo* lies the unwritten corpus of rhythmic mantras, methods, and ritual knowledge used during *Wayilingmo*, *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Tumatam*, *Hong Segro* (*Dhyetam*), *Chayise Rikcho*, *Bryaba Lyakcho*, *Walekumo*, *Jalimmo*, *Baksa*, *Dayal Baksa*, *Susumo*, *Sasebuse*, and *Sumni Lo*. Any of these events is referred to collectively as performing *Tumlo-Yalo*. “*Tumlo-Yalo* falls under the intangible culture of the Bahing Indigenous peoples.” (Bahing Kirat Mulukhim, 2082). Furthermore, *Tumlo-Yalo*, which exists in an unwritten form, is regarded as their intangible religious scripture (Rai, T.D., 2070). The Bahing ancestors used to say: “*Tumlom Tupso, Yalom Yalso*,” which means “One must act according to proper method and knowledge; without knowledge and method, one will suffer or face misfortune.” Therefore, the belief persists that *Tumlo-Yalo* must be performed with purity, sincerity, and full devotion to the worship.

It is an intangible cultural heritage of the Bahing people. *Tumlo-Yalo* holds the same sacred status for the Bahing ethnic and peoples as texts like the Vedas, the Bible, the Tripitaka, and the Qur'an do in their respective traditions.

5.1.1 Religious Traditions

The religion of the Bahing society is formed from a fusion of animism and shamanism. After the Kirat land was integrated into the Gorkha state, the influence of Hinduism gradually led to the celebration of Dashain and Ruddripuja. This occurred due to the influence of neighboring communities and under the orders of the then Shah administration, whereby the Rai headmen within the Kirat region instructed the tenants to celebrate Dashain and Tihar. Thus, the practice of observing Dashain began in the Bahing society as well. Apart from Dashain and Tihar, these communities do not celebrate other Hindu festivals. However, they do observe rituals such as Satyanarayan puja, chanting, and Rudri performed by Brahmin priests. Besides this, the Bahing people worship spirits, practice shamanism, and venerate nature.

The Bahing people worship natural elements such as stone, soil, fire, water, forest, air, and land as sources of power. They believe that these very elements stone, soil, fire, water, forest, Mountain, lake, river and land are the primary components responsible for creating humans as well as the entire universe. Along with this, to honor their ancestors who gave them life, they offer the harvest they produce and the animals they hunt once a year in the month of Poush/Magh (15 Dec to Jan.), in a ritual known as *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, and *Hong Segro*. They do not believe in heaven or hell. Rites such as birth, marriage, and death are conducted within the Bahing people by priests such as *Dhyawa Nakso*, *Nakso* (priest), *Ngabucha*, and *Tumlocha*, who recite their *Tumlo-Yalo* (oral ritual scripture). In this way, the Bahing cultural rituals have been kept alive.

On the other hand, since ancient times, the Bahing have practiced an important tradition known as *Jhamcha* (shaman), where problems seen during illness in any member of society are diagnosed and treated through incantations and medicinal herbs, playing a vital role in healing. There is a difference in roles and responsibilities between a *Nakso* and *Jhamcha* (shaman). A *Nakso* must be from within his own lineage, serving as the chief priest for marriages, ancestor worship, and death rituals within that lineage. He conducts these rituals by reciting the prescribed words and using the necessary materials from the *Tumlo-Yalo*. Some *Naksos* are trained by ancestral spirits, while

others learn from elder *Tumlo* practitioners. To become a *Nakso*, one must be pure, having married within the same community (endogamy), and must not consume goat meat. However, not everyone can become a *Jhamcha*. A *Jhamcha* acquires his spiritual knowledge and power through the energy of the *Ban Jhakri* (forest spirits), ancestral spirits, and deities, which is bestowed upon a pure person. Like in other communities, through tantric methods, they can reveal the past, present, and future. They diagnose the illnesses of people in society, identify the problems, and heal using mantras and medicinal herbs. When someone in the Bahing society dies, the close relatives perform the *Sasiya* (mourning rites). On the night it is performed, the *Jhamcha* arrives at the deceased's house with a drum (*Dhol*, *Dhyangro*) and cymbals, calls upon the deceased's soul, asks about their wishes and desires, pleases the spirit, and then guides it to *Sarikhim Rerikhim* (ancestral abode or place). There, the spirit is separated from the living brother, Sisters, and relatives and later worshipped as *Sari-Reri* (ancestral deity) when the time comes. Both the *Nakso* and the *Jhamcha*, when performing rituals, must sit around a hearth with three stones planted in it and perform their worship there. The Bahing people revere and worship ancestral spirits and nature. Therefore, since all these are connected to nature, the Bahing are nature worshippers (Rai, T. D., 2070 B.S.).

5.1.2 Sumni-Lo (Story of Origin)

Among the Kirat Bahing society, the Hong Segro ritual is considered the most significant ancestral tradition. According to the Bahing language, when discussing the origin (Sumni-Lo) from Frelo/Fhlelo, and as interpreted by the Bahing shamans and Jhankris of the Kirat Bahing society who possess supernatural powers, including Jhamcha (Shamans), a great Tumlocha (cultural knowledge person), a great Dhyawa-Nakso (Bahing priest), Nakso (a priest), helper Ngabucha of (Nakso), Chyacha (teacher of culture), and the ancestors, the creation of the universe is described as follows:

In the beginning, there was a state of absolute void and formlessness, a zero state. The Chyangmakha (Earth), along with nine planets, was flung out (Chyangghlesta) from the Nininam-Baninam (sun). Thus, with the creation of Earth, along with nine planets came into existence. At first, Mother Earth was extremely hot. As the Earth began to cool, hot vapor turned into Kuksyalgwa-Jobugwa (clouds), covering the entire Earth. These vapors cooled down on the Earth and

caused the first Rewaku-Jimtiku (rainfall) on Mother Earth. This rainfall led to the creation of springs and Sibuku-Mabuku (water sources).

Due to the cooling caused by rainfall, Mother Earth cracked; leading to the formation of low and high landforms. The heavy rainfall flowed through small valleys, eventually forming Ngaku-Bingkru (rivers). The water flowing through rivers collected in the deepest parts of the Earth, giving rise to vast oceans. In the Bahing Tumlo-Yalo ritual, the first emerged ocean is called Globuno-Mursyano. The Earth gradually cooled, it eventually transformed into a land of Fum (snow) and Ice. Therefore, in the initial phase of creation, the Ninninam-Baninam (Sun) gave rise to the Chyangmakha (Earth) along with the other eight planets, making a total of nine. Subsequently, clouds, rain, rivers, oceans, and fum (snow) are believed to have formed. Based on these planets, astrologers and shamans interpret the planetary phases such as Rahu, Ketu, and Shani as sources of various crises or challenges a person may face. They determine the positive and negative effects on individuals by analyzing the distance and angles between these nine planets and Earth. In my research, through multiple interviews with shamans, I have found that the planetary phases identified by astrologers through birth charts correspond closely with the insights gained by shamans through their supernatural abilities. These insights are based on their spiritual journeys to the nine planets in the cosmos and the powers those planets are believed to bestow. According to them, the planetary influences perceived by both shamans and astrologers align in meaningful ways.

During *Hong Segro*, the highest form of ancestral worship practiced by the Bahing people, the oral recitations performed by *Dhyawanakso*, *Nakso*, and *Tumlochha* known as *Tumlo-Yalo* clearly describe how the *Niniman-Baninam* (Sun) gave rise to the Earth and the other eight planets, as explained in the first chapter of *Sumni-lo*. The cosmological explanations found in *Sumni-lo* during *Tumlo-Yalo* appear closely aligned with various scientific theories about the origin of the universe.

In the course of time, Mother Earth cracked open, and from her womb emerged Mamachinimo, the first female creator. She grew up and reached womanhood. Perhaps by the law of nature, in the passion of her

youth, Mamachinimo began seeking a male companion. But she was alone on Earth there was no one else. She attempted to marry a rock, but it was not possible. She tried to mold a man from soil to make him her husband, but that too failed. She even tried to fulfill her sexual desire with a mountain, but it was not possible either. Desperately yearning for a male, Mamachinimo eventually climbed to the peak of a tall Jojuma-Amphoma (mountain), lay on her back, and fell asleep from exhaustion. At that moment, with the blowing Heleju-Thomoju (Wind), the spirit of the air approached her and made contact. Through this union, her sexual desire was fulfilled, and she became pregnant. Thus, in the origin of the Kirat Bahing people, the mother is Mamachinimo, and the father is the spirit of the Heleju Thomoju (wind). Hence, the name Bahing is believed to have evolved from oxygen. Therefore, in the origin story (Sumni-lo) of the Kirat Bahing, the necessity of both male and female for creation and the continuation of future generations is clearly and naturally established. Even when performing spiritual rituals or entering trance, Kirat Bahing shamans often utter the phrase: "Ini vayu Lengana, ini vayu ripzhungmadi, Suma Pai Numyiniko" The literal meaning in English is: "When I worship your soul of spirit, may the protection and grace of your spirit descend upon me, please accept it."

In the second chapter of *Sumni lo*, recited during *Tumlo-Yalo*, it is described that the first female creator, *Mamachinimo*, was born from the womb of the motherland. According to the laws of nature, the relationship between male and female or between man and woman became established as the basis for the continuity of future generations. The husband of *Mamachinimo* was *Heleju Thomoju* (wind), meaning air, also called *Papachadubung*. According to *Sumni lo*, this confirms that on Earth the first creator was the female *Mamachinimo* and the male creator was *Heleju Thomoju* (wind), that is, oxygen.

When the time came, the pregnant *Mamachinimo* gave birth to a daughter named *Niniryangma-Maryangma* (also known as *Niniryangma-Kokoryangma*). Perhaps by the law of nature, as days passed, *Niniryangma* grew up. In time, she reached youth, and like her mother *Mamachinimo*, she too began searching for a male companion, wandering all over Mother Earth in search of one. Sadly, she found no other human being on Earth.

There was no one else, only her mother Mamachinimo, and herself. Being in the prime of youth, Niniryangma was overwhelmed with sexual desire, just as her mother had once been. But she could not find any living being suitable to be a man. Eventually, exhausted and desperate in her search for a male, Niniryangma like her mother, collapsed in weariness and desire at the peak of a Jojuma-Amphoma (mountain). At that very moment, once again, the spirit of the Heleju Thomoju (wind) approached her to engage in union.

However, seeing this, her, Mamachinimo intervened and stopped the act, saying: "Niniryangma, you must not unite with Heleju Thomoju. He is your father, Papachadubung. Instead, look elsewhere." After this warning, Niniryangma began to think about finding a husband not on Earth, but elsewhere. This was the first time Niniryangma learned from her mother that her father was Papachadubung, the spirit of the Heleju Thomoju (wind). Obeying the command of her mother Mamachinimo, Niniryangma looked toward the eastern sky from the earth and saw Ruwapa (Venus) shining brightly and beautifully. From the depths of her heart, she wished to make Ruwapa (Venus) her husband. She decided to send a marriage proposal and entrusted two birds, Gikhiyongma and Khidiyongma/Gikhiyongma Praptiyongma, with the role of Phupcha (matchmaker) to deliver the proposal to Ruwapa. Before Gikhiyongma and Khidiyongma, the two birds, could reach the place where Ruwapa (Venus) was, carrying sacred millet beer and alcohol as auspicious gifts and a bag containing the traditional attire Dasuwa (traditional Bahing dress), Ruwapa had already set. While passing along its orbit, Silapa (Jupiter) arrived at the place where Ruwapa (Venus) had been. Gikhiyongma and Khidiyongma, the two birds, presented Niniryangma's marriage proposal to Silapa (Jupiter) with sacred offerings of millet beer and alcohol, according to ritual custom. However, Silapa (Jupiter) said that the proposal was not meant for him but for Ruwapa (Venus), and advised the two Phupcha (matchmakers) to take the proposal to Ruwapa instead.

After that, Gikhiyongma and Khidiyongma placed the ritual millet beer and alcohol before, and with joined hands, respectfully requested him to accept the marriage proposal. However, Silapa (Jupiter) Silapa refused their

request, saying, “I cannot marry her,” and again advised them to take the proposal to Ruwapa (Venus). But after receiving Niniryangma’s proposal three times, Silapa eventually felt compelled to accept. At that time, it was the Satya Yuga (Age of Truth), and so the world stood firm on three promises and three words. Silapa (Jupiter) said, “Surely Niniryangma does not truly love me, I am dark and rough Sogolokpa-Bhegolokpa (Goiter), not handsome at all. If Niniryangma truly does love me, then give her my token of affection, Asikidangma (a comb, crest), and prepare a good bedding place for me. I will come to earth at Tukumchema-Kuripmaridi (midnight). But if she refuses, I will certainly create chaos.” With these conditions, he sent the two matchmakers back to the Chyangmakha (earth).

On the other side, when Niniryangma received Silapa’s token, the Asikidangma (comb, crest), she liked it. Still, just as Silapa had instructed, she laid out a bed on the earth and waited for him. Meanwhile, Silapa arrived at Niniryangma’s place at Tukumchema-Kuripmaridi (midnight) who wearing splendid garments such as Champhuri-Chayama, Sapachhiri-Ampharongma, Ambiri-Hidari, Saleri-Takperi, and Bubulongma”(Distinct traditional dress of Bahing women). But when Niniryangma/Mamamini Niyamo saw Silapa (Jupiter) who was dark and Sogolokpa Bhegolokpa (goiter) rough in appearance, she truly did not like him. Silapa (Jupiter) said, “I knew Niniryangma would not love me. It was only because of the three promises that I came. Now I’ve been humiliated. I won’t leave without causing trouble.” Silapa (Jupiter) brought drought to the earth, drying it out completely. He left his urine and semen on a Kagilo-Gilipho (Taro plant) leaf and, after causing chaos, returned to the cosmos. All the Ngaku-Brinku (rivers) and Globuno-Mursyano (the first ocean on the Earth) on Earth dried up due to the drought, turning the Earth barren. The snow covered world gradually came to an end. After doing all this, Silapa (Jupiter) left his semen, mixed with urine, on a leaf of the slimy Taro leaf and set off from the earth toward Wabukhu-Khunale (universe).

Niniryangma was tormented by thirst caused by the drought, and on top of that, she suffered from sexual longing. She searched the earth for water but found none anywhere. In the end, she collapsed unconscious onto top mountain of Mother Earth. At that time, two birds Gikhiyoungma and

Khidiyoungma came and sprinkled the semen of Silapa (Jupiter), mixed with urine, all over Niniryangma's body by soaking their wings and bodies with it and fluttering around her body "phir, phir, phir." In this way, the mixture of Silapa's urine and semen fell into Niniryangma's mouth. Unconscious from thirst and sexual desire, Niniryangma awoke from the droplets of urine. Both her thirst and sexual longing were satisfied. She became pregnant. Thus, in the Kirat Bahing origin story (Sumni-lo), the second creator came to be known as Mother

Niniryangma-Maryangma/Niniryangma-Kokoryangma/Mamanini-Miyamo, and the father as Silapa (Jupiter). Silapa (Jupiter) is referred to by the ritual name "Papa Likpabu-Ambetikpa" when mentioned in ancestral rites and by Jhamcha (shamans). From this very event began the tradition of sending two Phupcha (matchmakers) as representatives to coordinate marriage arrangements. This custom is still practiced among the Kirat Bahing society today. It was also from this time that the tradition of honoring a request made three times (tin bakyé) took root. Thus, among the Kirat Bahing people, when visiting someone or requesting something, it has become customary to make the request three times before it is accepted.

*Similarly, the ritual of offering local Gala (alcohol) and fermented millet Chi (beer) as ceremonial gifts developed as a formal tradition. When the pregnant Niniryangma reached full term, she created the first offspring from her Ngelegwa-Jobugwa (womb) in the form of vegetation. Initially, thorny plants were created, followed by other types of vegetation. Since she experienced great pain during childbirth caused by the thorny plants pricking her womb, she cursed her first offspring, saying they must grow, survive, and exist only in cliffs, rocky areas, slopes, and difficult terrains. Because of this curse, according to Kirat Bahing tradition, plants are found scattered on cliffs, hillsides, and rugged places. It is worth noting that even today, among the Kirat Bahing, there is a tradition of burning Chabra (wild Asparagus) in the hearth and placing it above the main door during the Ning-julcho (naming ceremony) when a child is born. This Chabra (*Disporum cantoniense*), *Smilax S. aspera* (Ghunggeruwa), *Khuwari* (*Mimosa rubicaulis*), *Ghangaru* (*Pyracantha crenulata*) is also believed to be one of the creations the offspring of Niniryangma.*

Niniryangma created Sije-Roje (small animals) as her second offspring. As her third offspring, she created tiny living beings. As the fourth offspring, she created Singkhe-Mangkhe (birds). Finally, she gave birth to wild Bhakpa-Rwasa (animals). Among them, as the first, she created the Gupsapa-Pochepa (tiger); as the second, the Wam (bear); as the third, the long-tailed monkey (More-Sokse/More-Paka); and lastly, as the final offspring, she created a Ninanapcha (human).

In the third chapter of Sumni-lo, recited during Tumlo-Yalo, the birth of Mamachinimo's only child, *Niniryngma*, takes place. She loved Ruwapa (Venus) and wished to have him as her husband, but due to circumstances, she unwillingly had to accept Silapa (Jupiter) as her husband. *Niniryngma Maryngma* created the Earth's vegetation, living beings, animals, birds, and human beings. Therefore, in the Bahing Tumlo-Yalo, Mamachinimo and Niniryngma are revered as creators and are referred to as Muntimo-Jwaltimo (Female creator), and Muntipi (Creator "Grand Mother").

When Niniryangma was about to create Ninanapcha (humans) among the living beings, she briefly mistook the monkey (More-paka) for a human, and adorned him with a Chichimala (necklace) as a symbol of humanity. That necklace was the first ornament of humankind, bestowed by Mother Niniryangma herself. However, the long-tailed monkey was not a human. Eventually, she gave birth to Ninanapcha (humans), and the Chichimala (garland of priceless stones) that the monkey had been wearing was taken back by Niniryangma and given to Ninanapcha. That is why, it is said, even today, when people chase monkeys, the monkeys cry out "Chi chi chi", as if pleading, "Where is my Chichimala?", asking the Ninanapcha (humans) to return it. In this way, the creation of the first human on Earth was completed. She entrusted Ninanapcha, the youngest of her offspring, with the ownership of the Earth and full responsibility for its use and protection. Because the responsibility of protecting himself and all other living beings had been placed upon Ninanapcha, he became the first on Earth to develop weapons, the Kokofyakcho (bamboo-strip whip) and the Bla-gurtha (arrow bow) to defend himself. Thus, in the second phase of Sumni-Lo (creation), it is described in Kirat Bahing's Sumni-Lo (Origin Story) that:

(a) First came the thorny plants,

(b) Second, the "Sije-Roje" insects and animals (living beings),

(c) Third, the "Singkhe-Mangkhe" birds,

Fourth Stage:

(d) The eldest was the "Gupsapa-Pochaepa/Gupsapa-Bhuwapa" tiger,

(e) The second, the "Wam" bear,

(f) The third, the "More-Paka" monkey,

(g) The youngest and last "Ninanapcha" (human).

As time passed, among the living beings she had created, the Gupsapa-Pochepa (tiger), the eldest brother, and the Ninanapcha (human), the younger brother, lived their lives together. They would go into the forest, hunt together, bring the prey back to their dwelling, offer some to their mother, and eat the rest themselves. One day, under the bright full moon, Ninanapcha, the younger brother, was hiding on a tree branch at dusk, aiming for prey with Bla-gurtha (an arrow bow) and a Kokofyakcho (bamboo-strip whip). At that moment, his elder brother, the Gupsapa-Pochepa (tiger) saw his brother's shadow clearly on the ground. Mistaking the shadow for prey, the tiger leapt and attacked the shadow of his brother.

Seeing this, the younger brother Ninanapcha warned his elder brother: "You're trying to kill me don't do that! If you don't listen to me, I'll break you with my Kokofyakcho (bamboo-strip whip)." But would the tiger, his elder brother, ever listen? That day, Ninanapcha went back to their dwelling and told their mother what had happened. As this kind of behavior continued for several days, Ninanapcha finally said to his mother: "Mama, please talk to elder brother Tiger. It caused extreme pain. If he keeps leaping at me like this, I won't call him brother anymore I'll break him with my Kokofyakcho (bamboo-strip whip). Niniryangma then advised the tiger: "He's your younger brother. Don't tease him like that."

Another day, while Ninanapcha had gone hunting in the jungle with his elder brother, the tiger, he ended up killing the tiger. When they didn't return to their dwelling together, their mother began questioning the Ninanapcha. The two brothers had gone hunting together. Niniryangma asked Ninanapcha, "Did you kill your elder brother, the tiger?" The younger brother replied, "I don't know." Niniryangma said, "Don't lie! You went with him you killed your brother." She asked him the same question three times. Since it was the Satya

Yuga (Age of Truth) at that time, any statement could only stand on three utterances one could not lie more than three times. After being pressed by his mother, Ninanapcha finally confessed and admitted that he had killed his elder brother, the tiger, because of his threat.

Mother Niniryangma, filled with concern, asked Ninanapcha, "Why and where did you kill your brother? Where is his body? Tell me everything." Then the youngest son, Ninanapcha, told her the entire account of what had happened. To bring her eldest son, the tiger, back to life, Niniryangma placed a Syapulung (Knife sharpener) and a Byambu (conch shell) inside a Tolo (sacred Bamboo container), covered them with cloth, and went toward the place where the tiger had been killed. Following the path described by Ninanapcha, she arrived at the spot. There, she fashioned a heart for the Tolo (Thunse), and using the Byambu (conch), she blew up into the tiger's mouth three times and into his anus three times. After this ritual, the tiger came back to life. The tiger said, "Ah, Mama! I slept so deeply!" Mother replied, "Yes, you must have but it was your brother Ninanapcha who killed you with the Kokofyakcho (bamboo-strip whip)." After hearing this, Ninanapcha realized that he could no longer live together with his brother, the tiger. He told his mother, "Mother, let's not live with the elder brother. Someday, he might kill you, too." Ninanapcha's daily life was spent hunting and feeding his mother, elder brother Tiger, Bear, and Monkey with game meat and wild roots to keep them alive. During this time, Ninanapcha began leaving his elder brothers at home with their mother and would go hunting alone. One day, when Ninanapcha returned to their dwelling with hunted prey, he found that the Tiger and the Bear had joined together and killed and eaten Mother Niniryangma. The Bear had eaten her brain. In a fit of rage, the younger brother Ninanapcha struck his elder brother the Wam (Bear), on the head with a flat stone. That is why it is said; the bear's head became flat.

The younger brother Ninanapcha requested that both of them show him their mother's bones. They showed him everything, including Mother Niniryangma's Ruse-Kakse (bones). Ninanapcha, weeping and lamenting, gathered his mother's bones and, through the ritual of a method of invoking natural forces through sacred Hawa-Thamsi (utterance), awakened her and restored her to life. Because of the actions of his elder brothers, Tiger and Bear, it became impossible for the family to live together anymore. Since the elder

brothers never helped the younger in his tasks, and by the command of Mother Niniryangma, the tiger and the bear were separated from the deweler and sent to live in the jungle. A mother's love is felt by all. When it came time to go to the forest, the bear left easily. But the tiger, making a promise to his mother, said: "Mother, I will obey your words. If you ever feel hungry, I will hunt for you and leave the prey at a distance. If I roar from the hilltop, it means I've left the prey down in the lowlands. If I roar from the lowlands, it means I've left the prey up on the hill. Come and eat it, Mother." Saying this, the Gupsa (tiger) went off into the forest. From that day onward, tigers and bears began living in the forest, caves, and dens as their permanent homes.

Only *More-paka* (Monkey) and *Ninanapcha* remained with Mother Niniryangma. The younger brother, *Ninanapcha*, began not only hunting but also gathering wild fruits, edible roots, and tubers from the forest to feed his mother and elder brother. As time passed, *Ninanapcha* became the first to begin agriculture on Earth. At their dwelling, Mother Niniryangma, *More-Paka* (Monkey), and *Ninanapcha* began living together. *Ninanapcha* started cultivating various roots and tubers and began planting maize. In the Kirat Bahing cultural language, maize is called *Hulija Ninthija*. One day, Mother Niniryangma sent Monkey to help his younger brother *Ninanapcha* with farming. At that time, *Ninanapcha* introduced the first agricultural tools using a *khruk6ale* (forked tree branch) and a *kokoble* (hoe) as farming implements. But Monkey, being very lazy, didn't work. Instead, he would just lean the *khruk6ale* against his buttocks and stand idly. Before ready to grow crops, the monkey started eating everything, and the younger brother *Ninanapcha* became extremely angry. Seeing Monkey standing in the field, leaning a wooden *kakable* (hoe) against his backside, *Ninanapcha* struck him from above with the same hoe. As a result, the handle of the hoe became the origin of the monkey's tail, according to the tale.

Despite many warnings from their mother, Monkey didn't change his ways. Eventually, Mother Niniryangma cursed him, saying: "From now on, you shall live in the forest. Survive by stealing the crops cultivated by *Ninanapcha*." That is why it is said that monkeys began living in the forest and stealing crops planted by humans. Even today, monkeys live by stealing human-grown crops.

Also, among the Kirat Bahing, there is still a belief that one should never curse someone in anger, because the curse may come true and affect others. Therefore, while science claims in its theory of human evolution that humans evolved from monkeys, the Sumni Lo of the Kirat Bahing states that monkeys are not the ancestors of humans, but their elder brothers. Thus, the scientific view of the origin of the Earth and the version found in Sumni Lo align in many ways. For this reason, the Sumni Lo of the Kirat Bahing is considered scientifically consistent with the origins of the Earth (Bahing, D.S., 2022).

In the fourth chapter of *Tumlo-Yalo*, various stages of human evolution are described. These include the stages of the hunting age, the agricultural age, and later the age of the development of customs and culture. Observing these events, the accounts of origin and human evolution appear consistent with scientific explanations. However, although science asserts that the ancestors of humans evolved from chimpanzees or monkeys, *Sumni-lo* states that humans did not develop from monkeys but were born separately as distinct beings all as descendants of the same creator, *Niniryangma*. This assertion in *Tumlo-Yalo* presents a challenge to scientific views.

प्रस्तावित बाहिङ किरात उप-स्वयत्त प्रदेश



Figure 13 : Bahing Territory

5.1.3 Ancestor worship tradition of Bahing

It is mentioned in the works of sociologists, anthropologists, historians, and researchers that the Indigenous Kirat people are among Nepal's ancient communities who worship nature, honor their ancestors, and believe in Jhamcha (shamans). In practice, the Kirat primarily worship natural elements such as rivers, trees, soil, stones, and land as symbolic representations of deities. On the other hand, they honor the ancestral spirits once a year during the Nepali month of Magh by performing ancestor worship to receive blessings for protection from illness, the prosperity and progress of their children, and the abundance of crops. Ancestor worship is performed through various stages and levels as outlined below.

5.1.4 Wailingmo

In the Bahing tradition, after constructing a new house, before moving in, the house is plastered with mud, a hearth and a shrine are set up, and a rooster is sacrificed as an offering. According to tradition, when *Kakthisala* and *Lungchhiringma* had their first child, a daughter named *Wayilingmo*, they decided to build a house on Earth for the first time. They cut down a tree and tried to set a main pillar into a dug hole, but it kept falling. While they both tried to raise the pillar with great effort, the baby *Wayilingmo* slipped from *Lungchhiringma's* lap into the hole. During the process of setting the pillar firmly, the pillar crushed the child, and only then did the pillar stand upright. It is believed that Mother Earth took a human life as an offering for the first house ever built by humans, and thus, the house was successfully erected. From that day onward, the Bahing people have maintained the tradition of offering a rooster (known as *Wayilingmo*) when a new house is built, as a ritual to prevent misfortunes or calamities and to bless the home (Bahing, D.S., 2066 B.S.).

During the *Wayilingmo* ritual, the Bahing people prepare a pure millet brew in a small container by mixing half a mana (a traditional measure) of water and place it near the hearth. Then, the *Nakso*, *Ngabucha*, or an elder male must sacrifice a rooster at the hearth. Its blood is sprinkled on the three stones of the hearth, the main pillar, and the main door while reciting the *Tumlo* chants. After the blood is sprinkled, the rooster may either be eaten by the elders or discarded. Following this, the *Nakso* takes the millet brew placed near the hearth and sprinkles it around the hearth, the main pillar, and the main door while again chanting the *Tumlo*. In this way, before moving into a new house,

the Bahing perform this ritual to honor and please their ancestors. It is believed that by doing so, peace and harmony will prevail in the family, and when ancestor worship is performed in that house, the spirits of the forefathers will come to the worship (Rai, T.D., 2070 B.S.).

5.1.5 Mosum

In the Bahing society, the earliest and most basic form of ancestor worship is called *Mosum*. During *Mosum*, a place opposite to the fire hearth (*Naglé*), usually located on the northern side or the ground-level part of the house, along the wall or in a corner, is designated as the *Mosum* area. People from other castes or communities besides the Bahing are forbidden to enter or sit in this place. Only the *Tumlochas* (ancestral priests), special ritual meats (*Arikchobaa*), and those who partake in *Balamka* (ritual food) are allowed to stay or sleep in this sacred area. This spot is believed by the Bahing people to be the dwelling place of the ancestors. The act of worship performed by the *Nakso* (shaman/priest) in the name of the ancestors at this location is referred to as *Mosum*.

During *Mosum*, a bamboo *Nanglo* (tray) is placed in the *Mosum* area after sprinkling it with water. On this, a *Hengmala* (banana leaf) is spread out, and on top of it are arranged: four *mana* (a traditional measure) of *Moka* (cooked rice), the rooster's body from the neck to the head (three joints including the head), *Chi* (fermented millet beer) in a *Pupum* (*Chindo*), *Pirum* (ginger), *Yuksi* (salt), *Sitamse* (wild game meat), and *Nga Jum* (dried fish), among other items (Rai, T.D., 2070 B.S.). These offerings are neatly arranged on the banana leaf placed on the bamboo tray. Additionally, four *mana* of rice, along with *Chi* and *Pirum* (ginger), are offered to the *Nakso* as a gesture of respect for conducting the *Saritharma* (ancestor ritual stuffs).

After placing the offerings in the *Mosum*, the *Nakso* sprinkles *Chi* while reciting the ancestral chants and performs the ritual. This ceremony takes about 2 to 3 hours to complete, after which the participants eligible to consume the ancestral are offering *Moka* share and eat it. This form of *Mosum* is considered the simplest and least expensive type of ancestor worship in the Bahing tradition.

5.1.6 Nagle

In the Bahing society, the second level of ancestor worship is called *Nagle*. During *Nagle*, the ritual site is located opposite to the *Mosum* area on the southern side

of the hearth or, according to the ground level arrangement, near the edge or by the window. This designated area is referred to as the *Nagle* place. At this spot, the *Nakso* (priest) sits on his ritual *Khosimba* (*Nakso* Chair) and performs worship in the name of the ancestors, which is known as *Nagle*.



Figure 14: *Nagle* at Pankhu

For *Nagle*, the ritual spot is smeared with clean clay and cow dung, sprinkled with water, and then a ritual mat made from bamboo *Blowcho* is laid from the wall down to the floor. *Hyngmala* (a banana leaf) is placed in two layers, one upside down and one right side up, on top of the mat. Over this are arranged: four *pathi* (a traditional measure) of rice, three *Selewa Pupum* (*Lagenaria Siceraria*-Bottle Gourd) filled with *Chi* (fermented millet beer), pieces of ginger, ginger leaves, *Bhakpajum* (dried meat of mountain goat, deer or frog), *Sitamse* (dried meat of ox), salt (*Yuksi*), oil, *Belong Karcham* (Special ritual bowl with beers, peace of cooked rices, oil, salt, dry meats for offer), white cotton peace with Bow and arrow, *Khabakhim* (white cloth made by *Bahing* women), copper vessel, brass vessel, *Nga Jum* (dried fish), and other offerings.

Alongside these, one *pathi* of rice, one *Selewa Pupum* (*Lagenaria Siceraria*-Bottle Gourd) of *Chi*, and ginger are placed as the *Saritharma* (Special offering to the *Nakso* as a gesture of respect for conducting the ancestor ritual of gift) for the *Nakso*, with the cup covered by a ginger leaf and tied with ginger leaves, and placed on the left side of the *Nagle* spot. Once all the ritual materials are arranged, the *Nakso* sits by the hearth with his own *Selewa Pupum* (*Lagenaria Siceraria*-Bottle Gourd) of *Chi*, sprinkles *Chi* while chanting the ancestral *Tumlo* (invocations), and performs the worship. After

reciting the entire *Tumlo* by the hearth, he then moves to the *Nagle* area, sprinkles *Chi* three times while saying "*Soito*," and begins reciting the *Tumlo* aloud.

During this ritual, the *Nakso* and the *Ngabucha* (Helper of *Nakso*) chant the *Dapsining* (ancestral invocation), call upon the names of the ancestors, and mention the names given after death *Bulamning* as well as their living names *Chopining*. They request forgiveness from the ancestral spirits for any shortcomings and offer them the grains, meat, and other items as a token of remembrance and honor.

The ritual also involves symbolically traveling through the sacred parts of the house: the front of the hearth *Khayiito Bobiyo*, the main pillar *Salamri Tosiri Tham*, the hearth itself, the seating place *Kurcho*, the spot where the ritual *Chi* is kept *Chigro*, the ladder *Damdiri Yongmari*, the ground floor *Safle Lafle*, the store room, the attic, and out through the main door *Lafyandu Bufyandu*, across the veranda, courtyard, and ritual grounds then extending spiritually to the Bahing ancestral lands: the fields, hills, mountains, rivers, plains land Terai, and further across to Tibet's *Thingrizong* and towards West up until *Nepaldu Niwaldu* (present-day Kathmandu). After completing this spiritual journey that connects the household with the ancestors, a pig or boar is sacrificed and offered in the name of the ancestors.

After the pig is sacrificed, the *Secha* (butcher during *Tumlo*-*Yalo* ritual) separates all types of meat that are to be offered to the ancestors from those meant for regular consumption. These are then boiled and prepared accordingly. The *Chicha* arranges the fermented millet beer *Chi*. The *Bhanshekhvam* cooks the rice offered to the ancestors, prepares it into *Moka* (a rice which is offered for ancestors), and places it together with the boiled meat in the *Nagle* area.

After this, the *Nakso* once again begins the ritual chanting *dapcho-socho* using the prepared offerings, presenting them to the ancestors. The entire *Tumlo* (ancestral invocation) is recited again. During this process, all ancestral spirits are called upon, and forgiveness is sought for any mistakes committed unknowingly during the ritual. Prayers are made for the community to be free from suffering and disease, for peace and prosperity, for abundant harvests, and for the children to progress and succeed. These blessings are requested from the ancestral spirits through the *Nakso* and *Ngabuchas* (helper of *Nakso*).

Once the ritual is completed, the *Chi*, *Moka*, and *Yamka* (ancestral offerings) are shared and consumed by those present as the sacred portion from the ancestors. From the day the *Chi* is brewed for the ancestor worship until the ritual is completed

and the ancestors are formally bid farewell, people from outside the Bahing or other Kirati communities are prohibited from entering the house where the ritual is held. Thus, this *Nagle* ritual is traditionally performed every year during the month of *Magh* (December-January).

5.1.7 Tam

Among the Bahing people, a full-day ancestral worship ritual performed with the beating of *Gro/Manimo* (a type of cymbal) is called *Tam*. It is considered a higher-level ancestral rite than *Nagle* and *Mosum*. When the head of the household falls ill, a *Tam* is performed by invoking the power of the ancestors for healing. *Dhywanakso* (Bahing priest) or *Selimi Selicha* (Bijuwa Dhami) conducts divination by cutting *Ngarmo* (Kachud) to determine if *Tam* is required, or it may also be performed when someone expresses deep devotion towards their ancestors. The Bahing generally perform *Tam* during the months of Poush and Magh (roughly December to January).



Figure 15 : Tam

Tam includes more *Tumlos* (ancestral chants) than *Nagle*, and it is customary to sacrifice a male pig and a male chicken during the ritual. During *Tam*, the *Nakso* (ritual leader) must wear traditional attire, known in the Bahing language as *Jharjhwasi*. This includes:

1. *Jati* (Bhala)
2. *Betho* (Khukhuri knife)
3. *Kringma lawagum* (Bhoto)
4. *Jakhlee wa* (a dress made from nettle fiber)

5. *Champuri* (crown)
6. *Takal* (bell)
7. *boboringma* (rounded bells)
8. *bagu* (feathers)
9. *Salama* (ritual bag)
10. *Khosimba* (traditional wooden tool to sit *Nakso*)



Figure 16 : *Champuri Chamaya*



Figure 17: *Champuri Chamaya*

During *Tam*, the *Jharjhwasi* attire worn by both men and women is placed in *Tolo* (*Thunse*) and then kept in the *Pujathan* (ritual altar). While chanting the *Tumlo*, the *Nakso* calls out the ritual names of each *Jharjhwasi*, known as *Dapsining*.

Tam is performed indoors, where the *Nakso* and *Ngabuchas* stand in four lines, beating the *Gro/Manimo* cymbal and dancing while reciting the *Tumlo*. It is not performed outside. During *Tam*, the *bala* (soul) of the sick person is invoked, and a small bronze vessel is filled with pure alcohol or tea, where the invoked soul is placed. Once the vessel with the soul is placed, the patient feels heavy. The alcohol or tea containing the soul is then given to the patient to drink.

By invoking the soul in this way, the ritual leaders identify the condition of the soul and carry out treatment accordingly. It is believed that this process heals the patient through the power of the ancestors and gains their blessings. Those with a spiritual third

eye can see the state of the soul whether it has arrived and how it is positioned. Such a person is called *Romichi Munba* or *Taba*. There are three types of Tam in total.

5.1.7.1 Nagle Tam

In this *Tam* ritual, even though the *Nakso* places the *Gro/Manimo* (cymbals) and *Jharajhasi* (traditional dress bells and decorative) at the worship site, they are neither played nor worn. The recitation of the Tumlo-Yalo can be completed in four chapters.

5.1.7.2 Masi Tam

In this *Masi Tam* ritual, the *Nakso* wears the *Jharajhasi* (traditional dress) and performs the ancestor worship while reciting the Tumlo-Yalo in rhythm, accompanied by the beating of the *Gro/Manimo* (ritual cymbals). The *Ngabucha* sits on the opposite side and assists the *Nakso* with the recitation. Two individuals called *Chicha* (who is responsible for managing Chi), manage the preparation and arrangement of *chi* (ritual beer). During the Tam, only the *Nagle* and those around the hearth perform dances according to the ritual tradition. Although Rai mentioned in his research paper (Rai, T.D., 2070 B.S.) that this dance is called *Sakela Sili*, in reality, it is not found that the Bahing people perform *Sakela Sili*. The dance performed in the Tam is referred to as *Tam Sili*. The *Masi Tam* is completed in eight chapters.

5.1.7.3 Yangle Tam/Tuma Tam

This ritual is performed in the same manner as the *Masi Tam*; the only difference is that the Tumlo-Yalo recitation is done in sixteen chapters.

5.1.7.4 Hong Segro (Deyetam)

Within the Bahing peoples, *Hong Segro* is the greatest and most significant ancestral ritual. In the *Hong* ritual, the creation of the Earth, constellations, planets, mountains, seas, vegetation, animals, and finally humans *Ninanapcha* is recited. It also recounts how our forefathers and creator ancestors transitioned from the hunting age to the agricultural age, cultivating fields and producing grains. Alongside these events, it explains how consciousness developed and how cultural rituals evolved. During the *Hong*, the *Dhyawanakso* (ritual specialist) chants these narratives, creating vibrations from the sacred point of utterance.



Figure 18: Masimi performing Hong Segro Sili (Dance)



Figure 19: Masicha performing Hong Segro Sili (Dance)

In the past, the *Hong Segro* ancestral ritual used to be observed for nine days, but gradually it was reduced to seven days, then to five days. Nowadays, it is observed for only three days. To conduct this grand *Hong* ritual, the villagers gather under the leadership of the main ritual figures *Tumlocha*, *Mulucha*, *Mulumi*, and all the villagers at the household where the *Hong Segro* will take place. There, they hold discussions and assign responsibilities regarding when and how to perform the "*Hong Bocho*" (the *Hong* ritual). This consultation process is known as *Dyal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.



Figure 20: Hong Ritual

Within the Bahing peoples, there exists a customary institution to successfully conduct the Hong Segro ritual, known as Kayami-Kayacha. This institution comprises *Mulucha-Mulumi*, *DhyawanaksoTumlocha*, *Nakso*, *Ngabucha*, *Chaycha*, and *Jhamcha*, and various other departments under different responsibilities. These departments are entrusted to individuals who possess profound knowledge of cultural rituals and are recognized for their ancestral purity *Ngapsi Mulu* as per the community's counsel. The ritual body performs all the required ceremonial procedures and recites the *Tumlo-Yalo*. Among them, the highest ceremonial authority consists of *Tumlocha* (*Dhyawanakso*, *Nakso*, *Ngabucha*, *Chaycha*, and *Jhamcha*).

The *Kayami-Kayacha* functions mainly as an administrative body to manage the successful completion of the *Hong Segro* ritual. Within its structure:

- a) *Burocha* and *Burokham*: manage food-related arrangements.
- b) *Ngarmocha*: collects forest items like wild ginger (*Kachur*).
- c) *Kajeri*: manages the cleaning of grinding stones, water, utensils, and other essentials.
- d) *Sekhlich*: hunts wild animals such as deer, goral, fish, mountain animals, and Kalij pheasants, fish and frogs.
- e) *Selicha*: manages leaf plates (*Seli*, *Musure Katus*).
- f) *Syalphocha*: collects *Seli* and *Kongkochi* (Bhote Timbur) and certain leaves required for rituals.
- g) *Churicha*: manages *Churi* (a specific wooden item used in the ritual).
- h) *Khwasisicha*: manages *Khwasi* (a specific wooden item ritual).

- i) *Gijocha*: manages weapons like bows, arrows, spears, knives, and khukuris used in the ritual.
- j) *bargacha*: hunts using snares and traps.
- k) *Masicha-Masimi*: perform the Ritual cultural dances of *Hong Segro Sili*.
- l) *Tumlocha*: delivers the ritual recitations.
- m) *Grocha*: manages and plays the "Gro"(traditional cymbals, Jhyamta).
- n) *Gracha*: twists and prepares the ancestral cord according to the ritual.
- o) *Babami*: manages guests.
- p) *Blacha*: hunts using bows and arrows.
- q) *Bhanse*: cook and serve food for the guests.
- r) *Secha*: handles all meat-related tasks.
- s) *Chicha*: manages the preparation of traditional liquor for offerings.
- t) *Crecha*: separates the various meats used for offerings in different ritual stages.
- u) *Guricha*: The bamboo pole erected at the corner of the porch during the *Hong Segro* ritual.
- v) *Twacha*: Food and liquer server for guest.

Through this systematic allocation of responsibilities, the *Hong Segro* ritual is carried out successfully. Typically, six months to a year before preparing the *Hong Segro*, a village council *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu* is held, where duties are divided according to each individual's knowledge and skill. Once the *Hong Segro* ritual is decided upon, women of the Bahing society especially those who are women whose childbirth stopped, are assigned the responsibility of preparing "*Lingkham*" (Yeast, fermentation starter for traditional liquor). The appointed women collect the required medicinal herbs and prepare the *Lingkham* (Yeast) according to the prescribed ritual process.

After the *Linkham* (Yeast) is ready, the head of the household brews sixteen vessels of pure millet beer (*Chi*) in the name of the ancestors. Additionally, one vessel of pure liquor is prepared specifically for hunting purposes. When the time comes, the hunters (*Sekhlichha*) take one vessel of pure liquor to perform a ritual worship in the name of the forest spirits and the hunting deity (*Susu*), seeking permission for the hunt. After the ritual, they go hunting and bring back whatever is found: Deer, Himalayan goral, Kalij pheasant, wild chicken, birds, wild boars, fish, and frogs to the household conducting the *Hong Segro* ritual. The head of the household then specially invites his brothers, sisters, relatives, and particularly his own daughters to participate in the ritual

ceremonially. The first day of performing *Hong Segro* is called *Dayambulu Fikchom/Syamcho*. On this day, all members of the *Kayami-Kayacha* gather at the household where the ritual will be held and begin preparations according to their assigned responsibilities.

In the courtyard of the house, eight flat stones are erected along the courtyard all of which is called *bagulung*. Depending on the space, *Khwasi* (a wooden item placed in the upper wall of the house opposite to the frontyard), *Churi* (a wooden item in the lower wall of the house opposite to the frontyard), and *Gurising* (a bamboo pole) are then placed upright above the courtyard. An ancestral cord (*Ya Sarigra*) is tied from the courtyard to the *Churi*, *Khwasi*, and *Gurising*, passed down through a hole in the roof, and fastened to a place near the fireplace called *Mosum*, decorated with *Syalpho* (a square item made by arranging leaves of *Musure Katus* in grid). At the same time, the *Nakso* performs an ancestral worship called *Nagle*, while the *Burokham* and *Bhanshekhvam* begins the formal cooking procedures. After the first phase of ancestral rites inside the house, the *Dhyawanakso*, *Chaycha*, *Ngabucha*, and *Masimi-Masicha* perform the *Dayambulu Fikchom/Syamcho Sili* (dance). This dance includes:

- a) *Lingkham*: The dance for preparing Yeast.
- b) *Sekhlee Sili*: The dance for hunting.
- c) *Chee Kicho Sili*: The dance for brewing ancestral liquor.
- d) *Boti bacho Sili*: The dance for inviting guests.
- e) The dance for cleaning and purifying the house and courtyard, (*Dymbulu Symcho Sili*) etc.

On this day, the main daughter of the household performing the *Hong*, along with her brothers, relatives, and close friends, arrived bringing "*Chasuwa*" (gifts) of liquor and beer as per the custom. On the second day of *Hong Segro*, from the morning, the *Dhyawanakso* performs ancestral rites inside the house, during which a pig and a rooster are sacrificed inside the home. Outside, in the courtyard, a male ox is tied to the *Churi*, and the *Masicha* and *Masimi*, dressed in ceremonial attire, perform various ritual dances according to tradition. These include:

At the same time, in the courtyard, the *Dhyawanakso* begins the ritual known as *Tiri Hikcho* (*Tiri* counting), *Sumni Kucho* (to bring story of Origin), and *Sapungma Hikcho* (to chant the proper ritual land and its activities). Holding a *Jatti* (spear), the *Dhyawanakso* marks three spots at a precise distance in the courtyard and begins chanting the *Tiri*.



Figure 21: Dhyawanakso chanting (*Tiri Hiksang*) during Hong

While performing the *Tiri*, he narrates the story of *Sumni* (Origin), invoking the forefathers from below and the foremothers from above, reciting the sacred names of various lands, rivers, mountains, forests, cliffs, and hills, and symbolically uniting them in the courtyard, a process called *Kiki Kucho*. During this ritual journey through the different lands, they symbolically travel as far as *Silapa* (Jupiter), *Ruwapa* (Venus), *Paruap* (Mars), and *Wabukhu-Khunale* (Universe). After uniting the forefathers and foremothers in the courtyard, the powers of all Bahing clans are invoked, and a rhythmic vibration is performed step by step, known as *Si Kuscho*.

Following this, the *Masimi* and *Masicha* perform a series of ritual dances, including:

- a) *Sekhle Sili*: The dance for Hunting Dance.
- b) *Chi Kicho Sili*: The dance for brewing ancestral liquor.
- c) *Sait Kocho Sili*: The dance for inspecting the fields.
- d) *Bhasme Phadepacho Sili*: The dance for clearing the fields.
- e) *Rikham Likcho Sili*: The dance for lighting fire.
- f) *Bhasme Dhecho Sili*: The dance for digging the fields.
- g) *Ka phucho Sili*: The dance for sowing crops.
- h) *Ka Khupcho Sili*: The dance for harvesting.
- i) *Ka Hamcho Sili*: The dance for drying grains.
- j) *Ka Rokcho Sili*: The dance performed while cultivating the fields.
- k) *Boti bacho Sili*: The dance for guest invitation.
- l) *Singkhe Mangkhe Sili*: The dance of the changing seasons and birds.
- m) *Hadi Sili*: The dance of the porcupine.
- n) *Bhakpa Sili*: The dance of wild animals.

- o) *Hong Sili*: The dance of performing.
- p) *Sari Reri Samthipacho Sili*: The dance for honoring the ancestors.
- q) *Asik Blacho Sili*: The dance for receiving blessings.
- r) *Jauma Khleeuma Sili*: The dance of Lophophorus and Peacock.
- s) *Ngarkuwa sili*: The dance of Demoiselle crane.
- t) *6ala Rupcho sili*: The dance performed the ritual of claiming or protecting a soul.
- u) *Gee Ancho Sili*: The dance performed to gather Wealth.
- v) *Boti nung Sari Bida Gicho Sili*: The dance performed to bid farewell to guests and ancestors
- w) *Wa Pucho Sili*: The dance performed while removing clothes.

After completing these, the ox tied in the courtyard is sacrificed with a bow and arrow. The hunted animals and sacrifices are divided according to ritual rules, and all the meats are offered as prescribed. The prepared food is then distributed and served to the guests as sacred offerings (*prasada*). At this moment, a *Dholokum* (a specific cultural chant and song) is sung in the name of the ancestors to honor them with the highest respect and receive their blessings.

In the evening, a ritual called "*Punika Lechom*" is performed in the *Mosum* in a distinct manner for the ancestors. Throughout that night, in the name of the ancestors, the *Masimi* and *Masicha* perform various ritual dances in the courtyard according to tradition. Inside, they dance in *Nagle* and in the *Mosum*, raising the honor of the forefathers and seeking their blessings.

The *Dhyawanakso* conducts healing rituals for the head of the household or any ill person and performs a ceremonial naming *Fung Bancho*. This ceremonial name is later used to call upon the person as an ancestor after their passing. In the evening, the elders sing *Dholokum* in the name of the ancestors, using ritual languages, while consuming beer and liquor as ancestral offerings and performing ceremonial dances.

The following day, on the third day, the ritual begins with dances of prosperity with wealth (*Ji Ancho Sili*), where the *Masimi* and *Masicha* dance from the porch into the house, circling the hearth three times while performing the dance to bring in *Ji* (prosperity, wealth of god). After this, the guest farewell dance is performed, followed by the *6ala pokcho Sili* (a dance to take the souls). When the *Masimi* and *Masicha* perform the *Wa Pucho Sili* (symbolic dance of removing ceremonial attire), the sequence of dances comes to an end, and they formally remove their ritual clothing.

After the guest farewell dance, the "Tumlocha" conduct "Samdi" with good ritual speech for all guests and Tolo (a special bamboo basket) brought by brothers, relatives, and guests, placing a packet of meat and a little liquor in it as gifts, and bids them farewell by offering blessings: "May everything go well, may everyone be blessed."

To honor those with responsibilities in performing the *Hong Segro* including the *Tumlocha*, *Nakso*, and members of the *Kayami-Kayacha* a portion of meat, a bowl of Chi (liquor), and rice are placed together as *Saritharma* (ritual way to respectfully thanks). Both the household and the *Kayami-Kayacha* express gratitude, wishing: "May such auspicious occasions always come, may the ancestors bless us, and may there be prosperity and well-being." Invited guests (6ana Boti) are given, according to the means of the household, some meat offered to the ancestors, a handful of rice, and other tokens as gifts before their departure. Thus, among the Kirat Bahing people, the unique ancestral ritual known as *Hong Segro* has been practiced and preserved. During the *Hong Segro* ritual, the Dhyawanakso elaborately narrates and vibrates the story of:

- a) How humans came into existence,
- b) How the Kirat Bahing forefathers hunted during the hunting age,
- c) How they collected roots and tubers during the wild-gathering age,
- d) How they learned agriculture in the farming age,
- e) How customs and culture were born,
- f) How they developed clothing,
- g) How the Earth and the nine planets, water, oceans, living beings, and humans were created.

All these elements are ritually recited to honor the ancestors, prepare the first alcoholic beverages, and offer them respectfully to the departed souls to please all the forefathers. The purpose of performing *Hong Segro* is to seek their blessings for the progress, prosperity, and well-being of future generations and descendants (Bahing, D.S., 2081 B.S.).

5.2 Cultural songs

Among the Bahing Society, there were traditional songs; during various occasions such as weddings, ancestor rituals, and village fairs or markets. Nowadays, these songs have almost disappeared. Only a few elders in the villages still sing them occasionally. These songs used to be a tradition performed during different festivals and celebrations.

5.2.1 Dolokum

In the Bahing society, the songs sung especially during weddings and the *Hong Segro* of ancestor rituals are called *Dholokum* songs. There are two types of *Dholokum*: one is *Kuyamolam Dholokum* (the path of death) and the other is *Phunglam Dholokum* (the auspicious path). *Phunglam Dolokum* is sung especially on auspicious occasions, such as weddings and the *Hong Segro* ancestor ritual, according to custom. *Kuyamo Lam Dolokum*, on the other hand, is performed only during death rituals.

(a) Phunglam Dolokum

Doo hai Dolorasi Dolokum doo
Doo hai Ana Dwake Dolokum doo
Doo hai Dwani Rasi Dolokum doo
Doo hai Phunglam Dolam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Sumapaya Niyalakay Dolokum doo
Doo hai Ikkesari Badipoke Dolokum doo
Doo hai Animuri Namnathum Dolokum doo
Doo hai Sumadamla Nilade Dolokum doo
Doo hai Khachemari Mame Kikki Dolokum doo
Doo hai Nupkala Jhupkalade Dolokum doo
Doo hai Yinisarsa Sayabungdwa Dolokum doo
Doo hai akke Miri akkedwada Dolokum doo
Doo hai Khachemari Mamedokka Nupkalade doo
Doo hai Ikkesari Badipoke Dolokum doo
Doo hai Ani Muri Ani Dwawake Dolokum doo
Doo hai Animuri Yonaningda Dolokum doo
Doo hai Harulwa Nupkalade Dolokum doo
Doo hai akke Muri akke Dwada Dolokum doo
Doo hai Namnakhuli Mame Gyangda Mame Nupkalade doo
Doo hai akke Muri akke Dwake Dolokum doo
Doo hai akke Miri Namnachayo Dolokum doo
Doo hai Mametokka Nupkalade Dolokum doo
Doo hai akkesari badipoke Dolokum doo
Doo hai Ni Gwatah bani Gwatah Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kupidapi Nuptanina Dolokum doo.....

The remaining verses (*Sumni*) should not be sung everywhere.

(b) Kuyamolam Dolokum

Doo hai Kuyamolam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Sapsalu Bakamlu Dolokum doo
Doo hai Tosidu Salam Du Dolokum doo
Doo hai Mukusi Dalosi Dolokum doo
Doo hai Puktiji Dhwareji Dolokum doo
Doo hai Lwafle Swafle Dolokum doo
Doo hai Nisanga Taranga Dolokum doo
Doo hai Khasiŋgo Walanŋo Dolokum doo
Doo hai Waila Wasela Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kakhurdi Lukpakho Dolokum doo
Doo hai Lukpami Lurikho Dolokum doo
Doo hai Swaksitembu Yuku Yungma Dolokum doo
Doo hai Charikho Lukpakho Dolokum doo
Doo hai Swaksitembu Yukuyungma Dolokum doo
Doo hai Chiridi Khwasidi Dolokum doo
Doo hai Charikho Lukpakho Dolokum doo
Doo hai Visiku Yungmak Dolokum doo
Doo hai Swaysalmalam Ngwalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Moplomalam Wangalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Lukumalam Wangalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Pintemalam Wangalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Dhupulalam Wangalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Jigoma Chalmakulam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kupidapo Nipumakai Dolokum doo
Doo hai Singma Dumte Nuptemana Dolokum doo
Doo hai Pindima Lam Yolingmalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kupinapo Nipokai Dolokum doo
Doo hai Lingkuma Ngale Madi Dolokum doo
Doo hai Lingkumayo Hingle Hamba Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kupidapo Nipomakai Dolokum doo
Doo hai Bungkhronalu Wangayodi Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kwamenalu Padiyokai Dolokum doo

Doo hai Asibelu Bubelomig Dolokum doo
Doo hai Abubeyo Motolomi Dolokum doo
Doo hai asupogna Nimnana Dolokum doo
Doo hai Imiri Idawada Dolokum doo
Doo hai Wasibuko Nipomakai Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kupidayo Niponakai Dolokum doo
Doo hai Jumalam Iinjumalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Khliampu Wangalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kramchulelam Wangalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Woldongmalam Wangalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Mukumayo Hunenema Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kupidapo Nupunakai Dolokum doo
Doo hai Mukunayo Hunehamba Dolokum doo
Doo hai Khivapesai Numsongkai Dolokum doo
Doo hai Mukana Hunemahamba doo
Doo hai Kupinapo Nuptena Dolokum doo
Doo hai Sirankulam Wangalam Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kupidapo Nupangke Dolokum doo
Doo hai Brakalnalu Wangayodi Dolokum doo
Doo hai Kupidapo Nipunakai Dolokum doo.....

Other *Sumni* (verses) continue further. (Late Nakso Parje, Moplodayaal, 2061 B.S.)

5.2.2 **Hakma**

In the Bahing society, there is a type of cultural song known as *Hakma*. According to the elders, *Hakma* songs use words from the *Tumlo-Yalo* recitations. They mainly include the recitation of ancestral ceremonial names, names of plants used in rituals, and are sung joyfully while sitting around the hearth, drinking *Ngasi* (traditional liquor), with one group singing in response to the other through ceremonial dialogue.

According to ancestral beliefs, singing *Hakma* with ceremonial *Tumlo-Yalo* recitations had the power to make the leaves of a lush green tree fall, and it also held the power to reattach the fallen leaves as they were. This is an account from long ago. A wedding party had come from Nechatatase to Moplodayal (Andherigaun). All the wedding guests stayed overnight, enjoying themselves. Throughou the night, a Bahing

elder from Moplodyal and another from Necha sat around the hearth and sang *Hakma* for entertainment until noon the next day.

However, the Bahings from Necha began to use the ceremonial words of *Hakma* collectively to attack the elder of Moplodayal, who was singing alone. Unfortunately, he was outnumbered. His elder brother was cutting grass near the river in Moplodayal. With his divine insight, he realized that his younger brother, who was singing *Hakma*, was under ceremonial attack. He slowly carried the grass load and came to the wedding house, chanting *Tumlo-Yalo* along the way, and helped his brother sing *Hakma*. The two brothers together attacked the Necha wedding party with their ceremonial knowledge through *Hakma*. Both sides clashed with their respective powers through this song. In the end, the wedding party returned to Necha with the bride, but it is said that many of them fell ill due to the *Hakma* attack. Thus, *Hakma* is a song with ceremonial power and knowledge, containing the profound wisdom and strength of *Tumlo-Yalo*. Today, it has disappeared.

5.2.3 Kimo

In the Bahing society, especially according to marriage rituals, after the *Chayiserikcho Tumlo-Yalo* ceremony is completed, it is formally declared that their daughter has been given away in marriage according to tradition. After this, the bride's maternal family, with tears in their eyes, express their sorrow through the *Kimo* song when sending off their daughter, sister, or elder/younger sister someone bound to them by blood to another household. As she is like a piece of their own heart, they voice their pain and grief through the mournful melody of the *Kimo* song during her departure. The bride's maternal family sings the *Kimo* in a heartfelt rhythm:

"Ae Kimoke, Tami Kipomi Lata, Aiyani lau lau Kimoda ngaksong ba, lau lau Kimoda ngaksong ba.

Ae Aiyaya dose bura mamara pose, Aghalang ose, lau lau Kimoda ngaksong ba."

The meaning of the song is: "*Kimo's daughter has been taken by Kipo; oh, Kimo is crying, oh, Kimo is crying. Come inside, both of you, eat rice and pork; oh, Kimo is crying.*" In this way, leaning at a sixty-degree angle, they stomp one foot on the ground with a *dhyaap dhyaap* sound, crying, singing, and dancing to express their emotions. Nowadays, the younger generation has forgotten the *Kimo* song and no longer performs

it. Primarily, the influence of Westernization and cultural transformation has led to the disappearance of Kimo (Bahing, D.S., 2061 B.S.).

5.2.4 Salmaya

In the Bahing tradition, during fairs and festivals, a song called *Salmaya* is sung collectively for entertainment while playing the *Madal* (a traditional drum). Its melody is distinct from other songs. There is a tradition of singing these songs in this manner. This song form was created in the Nepali language after it entered the Bahing settlements from other communities, mainly for entertainment purposes. Nowadays, the younger generation is not even aware of this song. For example:

Riula Saili Riula Maili Darim Phul Riula

Darim Phul Riula ha hai, Darim Phul Riula

Aadhi Jowan Haskhelmai Gayo Aadhima Yasai Jiula

Aadhima Yasai Jiula la hai Aadhima Yasai Jiula

Ukulai Uku Mulako Duku Palangi Halkeko

Palangi Halkeko la hai Palangi Halkeko

Etima Ramro Allare Jowan Ka Jaan Dhalkeko

Ka Jaan Dhalkeko la hai Ka Jaan Dhalkeko

5.2.5 Lahabire

In the Bahing society, after completing any fair, festival, or ancestral worship and bidding farewell to the ancestors, the elderly would sit cross-legged around the fireplace, without any musical instruments, and drink *Ngasi* (traditional liquor). Dividing themselves into two groups, they would pull a long rope (symbolically) and sing a song called *Lahbire* as a form of entertainment.

In this song, they would humbly express their sorrows, pains, affection, and respect for the ancestors through words and rhythm, without fixed beats or instruments. It was customary for both groups to drink *Ngasi* and sing throughout the night. Today, this song has almost disappeared, and the younger generation is unaware of it. It is a song sung in the Nepali language, composed by the Bahing ancestors after the Kirat region was unified under the Gorkha administration, and other Nepali-speaking communities entered the Bahing settlements. The lyrics of this song are as follows

Ghurulai Ghuru Parewai Ghuryo, Hai Rajako Dhurima □□□

Hai Rajako Dhurima (2)

Ko Banchchau Hola, Ko Marchau Hola, Hai Yo Hamro Hurima □□□

Hai Yo Hamro Hurima (2)

Himalai Chuli, Tai Pallopatti, Hai Rukh Sukyo Sarlanggai □□□

Hai Rukh Sukyo Sarlanggai (2)

Choliya Phate Darjilai Diula, Hai Man Phatyo Bharlanggai □□□

Hai Man Phatyo Bharlanggai (2)

5.3 Festivals Observed by the Bahing People

The Kirat Bahing society mainly divides the year into two periods and carries out its activities accordingly. Thus, they observe two seasons in a year, known as *Wayelyancho* (Udhauli) and *Dholyancho* (Ubhauri). The *Dholyancho* period begins on the full moon day of the month of *Bichima* (Baisakh), and the Udhauli period begins on the full moon day of the month of *Khandiri* (Mangsir). The rituals and festivals performed by the Bahing people in *Dholyancho* and *Wayelyancho* are as follows:

5.3.1 Dholyancho (Ubhauri)

The Bahing people believe that from the full moon day of Baisakh, time begins to *Dholyancho* (Ubhauri) (this seasonal period of Upward). The Earth heats up, and the weather becomes hot. As the ground gradually warms, water begins to emerge from it. New shoots sprout in plants, and greenery starts to spread. During this time, birds rejoice, sing melodious tunes, fly around, and begin nesting and hatching their young ones. Wild animals also become more active. Fish in rivers and streams start migrating upward toward the hills. At the same time, the *Ngarkuwa* (Demoniselle Crene) bird travels from the plains to the Himalayas, crossing over the mountains and continuing its long journey to Tibet. Thus, during *Dholyencho* (this seasonal period of Upward), everything awakens and comes to life. Humans, too, take this as a sign to begin cultivation when they see the *Ngarkuwa* (Demoniselle Crene) bird flying upward. On this full moon day of Baisakh, the Bahing people perform the following rituals:

5.3.1.1 Walekumo (Land worship)

On the full moon day of Baisakh, the Bahing people, together with the villagers, worship Mother Earth by preparing a worship site (than) and placing sacred stones, offering a rooster's sacrifice, incense, rice grains, leaves, and other offerings as a mark

of respect and reverence to the Earth. They believe that Earth is the fundamental basis for all living beings, animals, plants, humans, and everything else to exist and sustain life, and that without Earth, this would not be possible. Therefore, as grains and food are produced from the soil, stones, water, and air, the ritual called *Walekomo* is performed on the full moon day of Baisakh.

5.3.1.2 *Gothamo*

Among the Bahing people, during the ritual called *Gothmo*, households that have many livestock perform this ceremony. The purpose of *Gothmo* is to protect the cattle and livestock in the household, to keep them free from suffering and disease, and to ensure they provide milk in abundance. This ritual is performed in the name of the animals. *Gothmo* is held on the full moon day of the month of Baisakh. During the ceremony, milk from a cow is cooked rice pudding and Babar (offering bread for worship). A four-lined mark is drawn using rice flour, a twig of Mugwort (*lokxi*) is planted, and a sacred stone for *Chandi Lung* (Chandi stone shrine) is installed for worship.

As part of the ritual, offerings are made: a rooster is sacrificed for the cow's peg, another rooster for the ox's peg, and a hen for the buffalo's peg. These sacrifices are dedicated to different deities: *Gaidu*, *Gosai*, *Bhimsen*, *Naran*, and *Budhabare* making a total of five deities, each associated with the respective livestock pegs.

- a. *Gaidu* protects cows, so worship is performed at the cow's peg.
- b. *Gosai* protects goats, so a shrine is set at the goat's peg for worship.
- c. *Naran* protects oxen, so a shrine is set at the ox's peg for worship.
- d. *Budhabare* protects buffaloes, so a shrine is set at the buffalo's peg for worship.
- e. *Bhimsen* protects all the livestock collectively, so a shrine can be placed at any animal's peg for his worship.

5.3.1.3 *Susumo*

Among the Bahing people, on the full moon day of the month of Baisakh, it is customary for the villagers to gather together or in their respective places to establish a shrine (*than thapna*) and perform the ritual called *Susumo*. *Susumo* refers to the belief that certain spirits (*Susu*) are the owners or guardians of the land, cliffs, hills, fields, and forests. These *Susu* are worshipped as ancestral powers of the Bahing people.

The *Susu* include: *Dhou Susu*, *More Susu*, *Waleku Susu*, *Sobu Susu*, *Jeji Amfu Susu*, *Wae Susu*, among others. Each *Susu* is worshipped in its respective domain. It is believed that the *Susu* protect their areas, and some of them also possess the power to

bestow shamanic abilities (*dhامي utarne*). During *Susumo*, a rooster, *Chi* (millet beer chi), *Babar* (a traditional offering bread), dried fish, an oil lamp, salt, oil, and a line drawn with flour are prepared, and a special type of shrine is set up for the worship ritual.



Figure 22: *Sobu Susumo*

5.3.1.4 Sansari Mo

The Bahing society performs a ritual called *Sansarimo* on the full moon day of either the month of Chaitra or Baisakh. On this day, the entire village gathers to offer animal sacrifices typically a rooster and a male-goat as part of the ritual. The *Sansarimo* is performed with the belief that it will prevent diseases that spread through the air, or are carried by the Heleju Thomoju (wind), from affecting people and animals, and to protect them from loss of life or property.



Figure 23: *Sansari Mo*

During the worship, seven-piece stones called (*Chandilung*) are arranged in a formation to create a shrine. Next to each stone, a stick made of bamboo or bitter plant Mugwort (*Loksi*) is planted. On each of the stones, offerings are placed, including a coin (*Bheti*), vermilion powder (*sindoor*), pieces of cloth (*Dhaja*), rice (*akshata*), and sacred leaves Mugwort (*Loksi*). As part of the ritual, a measure (*mana*) of rice is placed

in a bowl made of leaves (*Pattri, Duna*), with an oil lamp lit on top. Incense made from cow butter is burned, and prayers are offered asking for the removal of all misfortunes, spirits (*Desan, Masan*), and negativity from the area.

Some of the meat from the sacrificed rooster and goat is roasted and offered again during the ritual. Afterward, the entire village cooks the remaining meat and shares it as *prasad* (blessed food). As part of the *Sansarimo* ritual, the community symbolically purifies and protects all the land within their area this includes agricultural fields, grazing lands, and areas used for collecting firewood and fodder through ceremonial invocation and offerings.

5.3.1.4 Deu Deutamo

Among the Bahing people, on the full moon day of Baisakh, rituals are performed to worship the deities and spirits, especially those identified by shamans (*dhami-jhankri*), around the settlement. On this day, offerings such as milk, incense, ritual gifts, sacred rice (*akshata*), vermilion, and betel nut are presented according to the specific deity being worshipped. In some cases, a young male goat or a rooster is sacrificed as an offering. It is believed that this worship fulfills one's wishes, protects the village from misfortunes, and brings prosperity.

5.3.1.5 Gurumo

In the Bahing society, shamans (*bijuwa dhami* and *jhankri*) who have acquired their spiritual powers perform a ritual on the full moon day of Baisakh to honor their spiritual masters. They believe that by worshipping their gurus on this day, they receive special powers and blessings, and their masters become pleased. Thus, on this full moon day, the shamans perform *Gurumo* to gain spiritual strength and empowerment.

5.3.2 Wayelyancho (Udhauli)

From the full moon day of Mangsir, the cold season gradually begins. The leaves of the trees slowly turn yellow, wither, and start to fall. As the dry season sets in, all the leaves eventually shed. This is also the time when people harvest their crops and store them in their homes. Birds migrate from the hills to the plains (*Madhes*) to escape the cold. Fish in the rivers and streams of the hills also start to move downstream toward warmer areas. During this period, farmers' houses are filled with stored grains. This time is called *Wayelyancho*. *Wayelyancho* begins from the full moon day of Mangsir. Therefore, on this day, rituals and worship are performed as described below.

5.3.2.1 Gothmo

The Bahing Society performs a ritual called *Gothmo* on the full moon day of the month of Mangsir, just like during the *Baisakh Purnima* ritual. This ritual is conducted for the health and protection of domesticated animals. The method of performing the ritual is the same as the one done during *Baisakh Purnima*, which is carried out in the cattle shed (*Gothmo*).

5.3.2.2 Devi Deutamo

On the full moon day of Mangsir, the Bahing community visits the temples of the local deities surrounding the village. They offer pure cow's milk from their own home, incense, sacred rice grains (*akshata*), oil lamps (*diyo*), ritual pots (*kalash*), monetary offerings (*bheti*), ritual sticks (*lingo*), flags (*dhaja*), vermilion powder (*sindur*), betel nuts (*supari*), and, depending on the deity, items like tridents (*trishul*) and bells (*ghanti*), to fulfill their personal wishes. The offerings and rituals vary depending on the specific deity, as some gods and goddesses require animal sacrifices according to tradition.

5.3.2.3 Susumo

On the full moon day of Mangsir, following the tradition of *Waelyancho* (Udhauli), the Bahing community worships the *Susus* local guardian spirits believed to reside within their respective territories. For the *Susu* worship, a shrine (*than*) is prepared using pure homemade *Chi* (millet beer chi), a line drawn with flour, *Babar roti* (a traditional bread), and *chindo* (a leaf or plate used to hold offerings). The ritual includes offerings of *sal* incense, an oil lamp (*diyo*), a ritual water pot (*kalash*), one *mana* (local measurement) of rice, and the sacrifice of a rooster. Different types of *Susus* are believed to inhabit different places, so the shrines and methods of worship vary accordingly. The purpose of the ritual is to appease these spirits and to protect the land, crops, and agricultural prosperity.

5.3.2.4 Bhimsinmo

The Bahing society, either individually or collectively, performs a ritual once a year at the base of a sacred tree on the full moon day of either Mangsir or Baisakh. During this ritual, they offer animal sacrifices such as a rooster, a male buffalo, a male-goat, or a duck, and pray for the protection of humankind. The offerings include oil lamps (*diyo*), monetary offerings (*bheti*), sacred rice grains (*akshata*), sacred leaves (*pati*), betel nuts (*supari*), and vermilion powder (*sindur*). After the sacrifice, some of the meat is roasted and offered as *pakuwan* (a prepared offering). The meat is then

cooked and shared among the participants as *prasad* (blessed food). When a bull is sacrificed, it is customary to divide the meat into portions and distribute it to every household in the village as *prasad*.

5.4 Lwagum Lwasiri (Traditional Clothing)

The Bahing society has its own traditional clothing that has been worn since ancient times. These garments carry a proud and distinctive identity of the Bahing people. During various rituals, cultural practices, and festivals, members of the Bahing society wear their traditional attire as a way of honoring family ties, upholding social dignity, and preserving cultural values.

5.4.1 Piyalakcho

In the Bahing society, the complete traditional headgear ensemble, which includes a cotton cloth, peacock feathers, a *champhuri* made from the orchid plant (*Ambiri*), and a *bagu* (a decorative feather), is collectively referred to as *Piyalakcho*. *Piyalakcho* is crown of Bahing Peoples.

5.4.2 Champhuri/ Piyalakcho

Champhuri refers to a beautiful and attractive head decoration made by intricately weaving fibers and bark from the *Ambiri* (orchid) plant, which is hung around the head. In the local Tumlo-Yalo language, it is called "*Champhuri Buriphung*". *Champhuri* is an ancient crown of honor conferred by the kings of the Bahing Peoples to the household heads (*Hong Segro*) who perform the duties of the king.



Figure 24: *Champhuri/Piyalokcho, Crown of Bahing Tradition*

5.4.3 Mokte Wa (Waisa Wa)

Mokte is a traditional garment made by spinning cotton into thread and weaving that thread into fabric. Its shape resembles a *Bhoto* (a traditional Nepali vest). The sleeves do not have collars, and the hem is beautifully decorated with designs made from the bark of the *Ambiri* (orchid) plant. When weaving a *Mokte*, a specific number of threads are used, based on fixed counts. Only members of the Bahing society weave these garments. The *Mokte* is worn by *Dhyawanakso* (priests), *Nakso*, *Ngabucha*, *Jhamcha* (shamans), *Masimi*, and *Masicha* key cultural or ritual figures.

Both the front and back of the *Mokte* are adorned with intricate designs made from *Ambiri* bark. This particular decorative section is called *Sapachiri Ampharong*. For *Dhyawanakso* shamans (*Nakso* and *Dhami*), the *Mokte* is spiritually empowered through mantras and the Tumlo ritual process, turning it into a garment filled with sacred power.

5.4.4 Mincha Mektewa

The traditional clothing worn by Bahing women is called *Mincha Mektewa*. It is made from threads of *khadi* (hand-spun cotton) and *Jakhhlee* (nettlebark fiber). Woven using a specific number of threads, its hems are beautifully decorated with ornamental patterns made from the bark of the *Ambiri* (orchid) plant, which adds to its

unique charm. Bahing women, especially *Masimi*, wear this attire while performing the *Hong Segro* dance during special occasions.

5.4.5 Kringma Lwagum

Similar to other women, Bahing women also dress up in traditional attire when visiting as guests. This specific traditional outfit is called *Kringma Lwagum* in the Bahing language, and in Nepali, it is known as *Cholo* (blouse or traditional upper garment).



Figure 25: Bahing Traditional Dress Lawqumlwasi

5.4.6 Salama (Sarangemai)

It is a small, neatly crafted bag made from cotton thread, beautifully decorated with patterns made from *Ambiri* (orchid) bark. All four corners of the bag are adorned with sharp Porcupine thorns and *Ambiri* tufts. This bag is worn during the *Hong Segro* ritual by *Dhyawanakso*, *Nakso*, *Shaman*, *Ngabucha*, *Masimi*, and *Masicha*. It is traditionally used to carry ginger, rice, and *Tokti/Tukuni* (ritual wooden bottle). When needed, *Tumlo Frikdim* is used by *Nakso* and *Dhami* as part of the ritual. During the *Salama Tumlo* ceremony, participants are addressed using the respectful terms "*Sarngemai Rangemai*".

5.4.7 Saigra

Bahing women use a cord called *Saigra* to neatly arrange and braid their hair.

5.4.8 Pagari

It is a simple, ordinary type of turban worn by men. It does not include the use of *bagu*, *Mujri*, or *Champhuri*. This turban can be worn by the general public as well.

5.4.9 Kipsari

This is generally known in Nepali as a *Patuka* (a traditional waistband). In the Bahing peoples, it has traditionally been worn by both men and women. It used to be handwoven from *Jakkhlee* (nettle fiber) or cotton. The *Kipsari* was commonly worn by *Nakso*, *Ngabucha*, *Masimi*, *Masicha*, mothers, grandmothers, Rai Post, Jimmawal Post, community elders, and those in positions of responsibility. They would often tuck a *Betho* (khukuri knife) into it. However, the younger generation has largely stopped using it today.

5.4.10 Mulibja

In the Bahing society, there is a longstanding tradition of using distinctive symbols and attire, which are alternatively referred to as *Gadha*. This is worn by *Dhyawanakso*, *Nakso*, *Masimi*, and *Masicha*, draped over both shoulders and crossing over the chest, with the ends hanging down on both sides of the waist. This specific style is called *Mulibja*. The same symbol is also represented by drawing a cross with ash on the jars of home-brewed *jaand* (traditional millet beer) prepared for ancestral offerings.

5.4.11 bagu

In the Bahing community, a traditional head ornament decorated with peacock feathers, kalij (pheasant) feathers, Red junglefowl feathers (*Luiche* feathers), and *Khleeuma* (Lophophorous) feathers is known as *bagu*. This headpiece is worn exclusively by individuals with ritual authority, such as *Nakso*, *Ngabucha*, *Jhamcha*, *Masicha*, and *Masimi*, who are recognized as knowledgeable practitioners of *Tumlo Fribdim*. It is not permitted to be worn by others.



Figure 26: *bagu*

5.4.12 Mujari

In the Bahing society, a cultural head ornament made from peacock feathers is called Mujuri. This ornament holds deep cultural and ancestral significance. According to tradition, Jauma, a symbolic female in the form of a peacock, gifted her feathers to her younger brother Kaktisala, who is regarded as the cultural ancestor and founder of the Hong Segro ritual practices. In honor of this gift, Kaktisala wore the peacock feathers on his head as an ornament. Since then, wearing Mujuri as a head ornament has become a customary tradition in the Bahing society.

5.4.13 Piyangkum

According to Bahing tradition and customs, women follow a cultural practice of covering their heads in the presence of relatives, in-laws, and respected individuals. To preserve their dignity and show respect, as well as to protect their heads, women neatly wrap a wide piece of cloth around their heads. In the Bahing language, "*Piya*" means *head* and "*Kum*" means *to cover*, so the cloth used to cover the head is called *Piyangkum*.

5.5 Jarajhwasi (Traditional Jewelry)

Among the Bahing people, during the time of creation, the first ornament given by the creator Ninirama to Ninanapcha was **Chichimala**. In this way, it is found that different kinds of ornaments have been worn in different periods. They are as follows:

5.5.1 Yum/Buyum

This is a necklace similar to '*Pwalo*' and '*Panna*'. It is rare and highly valuable, and is now in a state of near extinction. Currently, it can occasionally be found in old graves. When rubbed against hard metals like flint or iron, it produces sparks. Gems of this kind have become nearly impossible to find. In the past, Bahing women used to wear them as part of their traditional jewelry.

5.5.2 Chukurungma

It is found to have been used as a ring, initially made from wood or animal horns, and later from metal once it was discovered. In Nepali, it is known as a ring, and nowadays, the practice of wearing rings made from precious metals has become widespread. In the Bahing language, it is called *Chukurungma*.

5.5.3 Ngamogra

This is woven from different varieties of *Rikcho*, *Chinda*, and *Tabu* bamboo. It is traditionally tied by spiritual practitioners (*Nakso*, *Jhamcha*) who are well-versed in ritual methods. There is a long-held popular belief that when children wear this *Ngamogra*, they are protected from bad dreams. It serves as a protective charm.



Figure 27: *Ngamogra*

5.5.4 Sapachhiri Ampharongma

This is a type of artistic motif. It is used and pronounced during ancestral worship and is woven into ritual items such as *nanglo* (winnowing tray), *Radu Kapal* (*dalo*, basket), and ceremonial clothing like *mokte*. These artistic patterns are often described in detail during ancestral rites. In *Tumlo-Yalo*, it is referred to as *Sapachiri Ampharong*.



Figure 28: *Sapachhiri Ampharongma*

5.5.5 Jimala

Although it generally looks similar to 'Yum', it is slightly different. 'Ji', in the Bahing language, represents Lakshmi or wealth of the god. It is not found everywhere and was used as a precious ornament.

5.5.6 Gichule-Yuchule

According to the ancestors, this is a type of ornament. It is no longer in use today. It is called *Gichule-Yuchule*.

5.5.7 Tikur

This *Tikur* is a type of ornament. Its use has disappeared.

5.6 Chhamchhari (Traditional Musical Instruments)

Like other communities, the Bahing people also use various types of musical instruments. These instruments are used either in cultural and ancestral rituals within the community or for entertainment and celebration. In the Bahing language, these musical instruments are called *Chhamchhari*.

5.6.1 Liphe

Liphe is a traditional percussion instrument, similar to a *khajadi*, made from either iron *Rhus chinensis* Mill (*Richi*), *Euphorbia royleana* (*Chongkhi*) wood. One end has a handle, while the other end is triangular and sharp at the tip, with beautiful carvings or patterns in the middle section. It is used during the performance of '*Hong Segro*', where dancers hold it in one hand while performing. This instrument holds cultural significance as it is used exclusively during ancestral rituals.



Figure 29: *Liphe*

5.6.2 Rangbe

This is one of the popular traditional instruments made by cutting and shaping the hardened part of bamboo splits, widely used by the Bahing ancestors. It used to be tied to the strings of blouses worn by mothers and sisters and played for entertainment while working in groups, going to markets, or herding cattle. It was also a token used to charm or attract loved ones. Its popularity was not ordinary. In Nepali, it is known as *Binayo*, and in the Bahing language, it is called *Rangbe*.

5.6.3 boboringma

The *boboringma* is a round-shaped object made of brass, resembling a bell. It is especially worn by shamans, *Naksos*, and spiritual practitioners either as a necklace or tied around the waist. They wear it while performing rituals and dances during shamanic trances and the *Hong Segro* ceremony.

5.6.4 Muchunga

The *Murchunga* is a musical instrument made of iron. Like in other communities, Bahing women also hang it from the strings of their blouses. In villages, it is traditionally played using the mouth to produce rhythmic tunes and melodies, adding joy and entertainment to local gatherings.

5.6.5 Gro/Manimo

The *Gro/Manimo* is a percussion instrument made of bronze. It is used exclusively in the Bahing community during ancestral rituals such as *Tam*, *Tumatam*, and *Hang Segro*. In Nepali, it is known as *Jhyamta*, while in the Bahing language, it is called *Gro/Manimo*.

5.6.6 Pungbang

This *Pungbang* instrument is made from bamboo. Both ends of the bamboo are sealed, and a small square-shaped hole is made in the middle. A string from the same bamboo is placed over it so that it can be played. It is designed to match the rhythm of songs. In the past, it was commonly played while herding cattle for entertainment. Nowadays, it has been named a Kirati instrument.

5.6.7 Pyapyalya

This is played by placing leaves from plants found in forests and hills on the lips and producing a melodious tune using the rhythm of the mouth. It serves as a means of entertainment for herders and people collecting grass, firewood, or working in the fields, helping to cheer a weary mind and also to attract the attention of those far away. In the Bahing language, it is called *Pyapyalya*.

5.6.8 Dhol

In the Bahing society, drums are not used by ordinary people. They are used only by shamans and spiritual practitioners (*Dhami* and *Jhankri*), and that too only after being granted in their dreams or through spiritual power by their gurus. The drums are typically made from specific trees indicated by the guru, usually *Holo* (*Duabanga grandiflora*) trees, *Jhisi* (Mountain Ebony) trees, or Bamboo, and are created only when empowered by the guru's blessing.

5.6.9 Dhyangro

In the Bahing society, shamans and spiritual practitioners (*Dhami* and *Jhankri*) make and use the *Dhengro* only under the command of their invisible spiritual power. It is usually made from *Holo* (*Duabanga Grandiflora*) trees, *Jhisi* (Mountain Ebony) trees, and bamboo; other types of trees are not used for this purpose as no mantras are applied to them. The *Dhengro* is used exclusively by *Dhami* and *Jhankri*.



Figure 30: *Dhyengro*

5.7 Gijowajo (Traditional Weapons)

In ancient times, the Kirat Bahing peoples used to weave and sew their own clothes, work with iron, and craft leather goods themselves. When the Kirat region became unified with Nepal, Brahmins, Chhetris, and Dalits from western Nepal particularly from Kaski, Pokhara, and Gorkha came into Kirat land. With the division of labor, they were assigned tasks: some were ordered to sew clothes, work with iron and leather, and Brahmins to perform priestly duties, while the Kiratis were assigned agricultural work. As a result, the Bahings, particularly the Kharadiburcha clan, stopped making weapons from iron and bronze.

In the past, their ancestors used to make their own weapons and household utensils. Evidence of this can still be found in Ward No. 1, Moli Ghardayal, where the Bahing ancestors of the *Kharadiburcha* clan, who had come from Mankha's Chamban, used to craft weapons, *lantitase*, plates, and other necessary utensils from iron and bronze. Even today, many bronze scraps are found scattered around Ghardayal. The weapons and tools made and used by the Bahings themselves include the following:

5.7.1 Betho

Generally, in the Bahing society, the *Betho* has been used both for daily purposes and for self-defense. It is used for cutting wood, chopping trees, splitting firewood, and cutting meat, and it also serves as a weapon for defense in case of an enemy attack. In Nepali, this is called a *Khukuri*.



Figure 31: *Betho*

5.7.2 Blagurtha

In ancient times, among the Kirat Bahing people, *Blagurtha* was a weapon used for hunting. During the hunting era, the Bahing society relied heavily on hunting for

their livelihood. Nowadays, it is used in ancestral rituals such as *Hong Segro*, as well as in weddings, religious traditions, and various cultural customs.

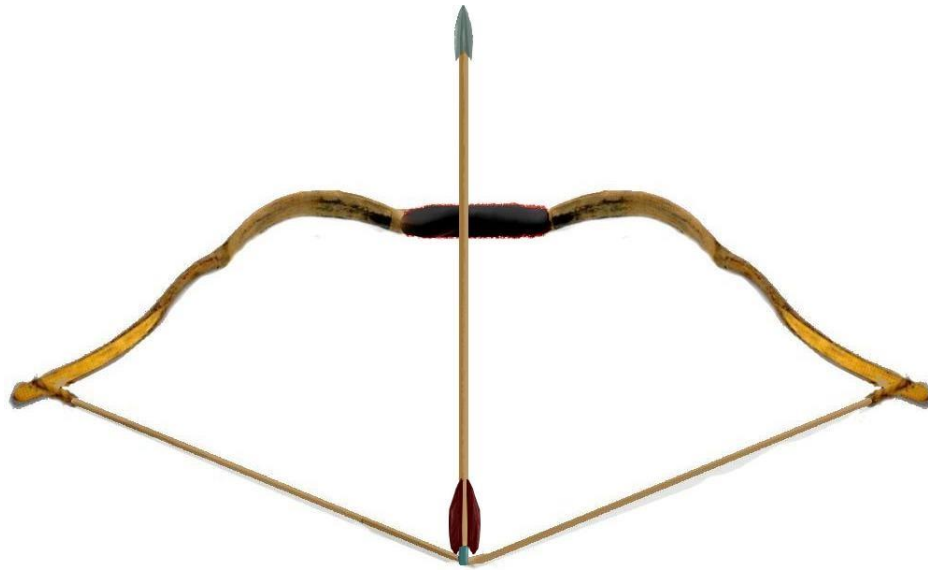


Figure 32: *Blagurtha*

5.7.3 Guyo

Bahing women use this tool in their daily life. It is made of iron in a crescent shape, with a wooden handle that may be plain or decorated. Bahing women use it for chopping firewood and cutting tree fodder. In the Bahing language, it is called *Guyo*, while in Nepali, it is known as *Hasiya* (sickle).

5.7.4 Khurumbi

Generally, it is used for harvesting millet, performing ancestral rituals (*Tumlo-Yalo*), and for self-defense. Bahing women used to tuck it into their waist and carry it with them. They often carried it for protection, but nowadays, it is no longer used by young women. The *Kharumbi* is similar in shape and type to the *Guyo*, being made of iron, but it is comparatively smaller. Its handle is sometimes adorned with beautiful carvings, while some are plain.

5.7.5 Kha

This weapon is commonly used by the Bahing peoples as well as other communities for splitting wood and felling trees. It is a useful tool for human needs and is called *Bancharo* (axe) in Nepali.



Figure 33: Kha

5.7.6 Khruk6ale

According to Bahing *Tumlo-Yalo*, during the second era of creation, *Ninanapcha* (humans) made wooden digging tools as their first weapons. The events of digging and farming with the *Khruk6ale* are described in *Sumni lo*. The *Khruk6ale* functioned like a modern-day hoe.

5.7.7 Kokofyakcho

Kokofyakcho refers to a long, straight bamboo stick or the entire bamboo plant. It is said that Bahing ancestor *Ninanapcha* was the first to use it as a weapon for hunting. With this weapon, he would strike and kill nearby animals and birds, using the hunt to feed himself. The use of *Kokofyakcho* as a hunting tool continued up to the generation of our grandparents (*Kiki Piki*). Nowadays, however, its use is no longer seen among the younger generation.

5.7.8 Saandi (Khunda)

Before other communities arrived in Kirat territory, the Kirat Bahing people used to make their own weapons. Using the Saandi weapon, the Bahing kings fought against the Lichchhavi, Sena, and Malla rulers to protect their forts (Taluwagadhi, Chisankhugadhi, Chyanamgadhi, and Bungnamgadhi). Among the weapons made by the Bahing society, Saandi is one of them. During ancestral worship such as Nagle, Taam, and Hong Segro the Dhyawankso and Nakso (Knowledgeable person of Tumlo-Yalo) must wear it for protection. This weapon is called Saandi (Khunda).

5.7.9 Jatti

In ancient times, the Bahing people frequently used a weapon called Jatti for hunting. In Nepali, this weapon is known as a Bhala (spear). The Bahing kings used to keep it in their forts, and it served two primary purposes: first, for hunting, and second, for defense against enemy attacks. Today, during Bahing Hong rituals, the Dhyawankso holds it while reciting the origin narratives, and it is also carried during the *Tirihikcho* and *Sapungma Hikcho* ceremonies. The use of Jatti is found only in the Lorosaari and Paiwasari forms of the Hong rituals.



Figure 34: Dhyawanakso holding Jatti

5.8 Plants and Instruments used in Bahing Traditions and Rituals

Among the Bahing peoples, there are treasures of plants associated with traditional knowledge. These treasures are especially used in ancestral rituals such as *Tumlo-Yalo* and are found to play an important role in healing and treatment. They are categorized as follows.

5.8.1 Pirum (Ginger)

Pirum is commonly used in ancestral rituals. Its role includes being employed as a ritual weapon by the *Nakso*. When the *Nakso* performs ceremonies such as *Wailingmo*, *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro*, and *Susumo* he strikes the *Tumlo* and places it in his hand or on the altar, then chews the *Pirum* and sprinkles it around. It is believed that this destroys negative forces and provides protection. Shamans (*Dhami*) also use *Pirum* in rituals by applying mantras for healing purposes. On the other hand, *Pirum* is used in daily life as a spice in cooking and is rich in medicinal properties. In Bahing *Tumlo-Yalo*, it is referred to as *Pirumle Frameule*.



Figure 35: *Pirum* (Ginger)

5.8.2 Lingkham (Yeast)

Lingkham is a medicinal ingredient used in making alcohol offered to ancestors or for general consumption. When preparing *Lingkham*, four types of herbs are mixed: bark, the flower or bud of *Ambhak* (*Guava*), the flower or bud of *Bhara* (*Jackfruit*), flower of walnut or bark and a type of shrub called *Byaljam* (*Yest herb plant*) in the Bahing language. It is believed that only Bahing grandmothers who can no longer be pregnant are permitted to make *Lingkham*; others are not allowed. It is prepared according to specific days and astrological timings. Only *Lingkham* made by these grandmothers is used in ancestral offerings or rituals. In Nepali, it is called *Marcha*. Its use is considered essential during death rituals, ancestral worship, weddings, and when

Dhami perform ceremonies. The alcohol produced from it is regarded as a vital component of *Panchamrita*, a sacred ritual mixture.



Figure 36: *Linghamkokaa (Yeast) Maker, Maina Sari Tolami*

5.8.3 Seli

This tree is a species of *Katus* generally found at altitudes ranging from 700 meters to 3,500 meters above sea level. Its leaves are smooth and long, and it typically grows from one meter up to 150 meters in height. In Nepali, it is called *Musure Katus*. For the Bahing society, it is a heritage related to biodiversity and traditional knowledge. Branches with leaves are used by the Bahing people in ancestral rituals *Hong Segro Tumlo* during weddings to perform *Sulphikcho* (to remove negative forces), and by shamans (*Dhami*) when invoking mantras to protect themselves and their helpers.



Figure 37: *Seli Plant*

5.8.4 Byaljam

This is a small species of grassy shrub. It grows on slopes at altitudes ranging from approximately 300 meters to 3,500 meters above sea level, primarily during the rainy season. It is typically collected in the months of Bhadra, Asoj, and Kartik. This shrub is a key herb used in making *Lingkham (Yeast)*. In the Bahing language, it is called *Byaljam Phung (Yeast herb plant)*.

5.8.5 Phoro (Walnut)

In the Bahing society, the flower or bud of *Phoro* is used as a medicinal ingredient in making *Lingkham (Yeast)*. It is an important biological resource linked to the traditional knowledge and skills of the Bahing people. In Nepali, it is known as *Okhar* (Walnut), and in Bahing *Tumlo-Yalo*, it is called *Phoro Phung*.

5.8.6 Tiku (Guava)

In Bahing *Tumlo-Yalo* language, it is called *Tiku*, and in Nepali, it is known as *Tiku* (Guava). This fruit grows in hilly regions, and its fruit can be eaten until the months of Bhadra, Asoj, and Kartik. In the Bahing society, its buds or flowers are used to make *Lingkham (Yeast)*, linking it to traditional knowledge. It is called *Tiku Phung*.

5.8.7 Palam (Bamboo)

Palam is used daily for making various types of baskets, bows and arrows, and roofing for houses. Likewise, Bahing shamans (*Dhami*) and spiritual practitioners (*Jhankri*) scrape bamboo with a khukuri to create fine strips, which are then used to construct the *Dhami*'s altar or shrine. Additionally, *Dhamis* apply mantras on bamboo and use it as a tool for protection and healing. Because bamboo holds the capacity to channel spiritual power, it is closely associated with the traditional knowledge and skills of the Bahing society. In the Bahing language, it is called *Palam*, while in Nepali, it is known as *Bans* (bamboo).

5.8.8 Loksi (Mugwort)

Loksi is a plant widely used in ancestral rituals and shamanic ceremonies among the Kirat and Bahing communities. It is abundantly found in forested areas from the lowlands (Terai) to the hilly regions. *Loksi* has a pleasant fragrance but a bitter taste. In

the Bahing society, it plays an important role in purification; its water is sprinkled during rituals to sanctify spaces.

If a member of the Bahing society eats goat meat, they must cleanse themselves by rubbing and sprinkling *Loksi* water over their body before entering the house where ancestral worship is performed. Thus, *Loksi* also serves as an important medicinal plant for purification. In Nepali, it is known as *Titepati* (mugwort). Generally, Nakso, Shaman use this for purification during their rituals process.



Figure 38: *Loksi* (Mugwort)

5.8.9 Pupum (Calabash)

It grows at altitudes ranging from about 300 meters to 1,200 meters above sea level. Its stem is long and tubular, ending in a round and large tip. *Pupum* has a bitter taste. The plant is a creeper, and its leaves are broad and trifoliate in shape. Since ancient times, it has been used to offer pure *Chi* (ritual liquor) to ancestors; therefore, it is still used in ancestral worship such as *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro*, and *Susumo*. There are three types of *Pupum*: *Selewa*, *Ngarkuwa*, and *Humpunge*. *Selewa Pupum* and *Ngarkuwa Pupum* are used in ancestral rituals, while *Humpunge* is used for carrying water and liquor. In *Tumlo-Yalo*, when invoked, *Selewa* is called *Selewa Lingmawa*. In Nepali, it is known as *Chindo*.



Figure 39: Pupum



Figure 40: Pupum

5.8.10 Wafu (Broom Grass)

This is a plant of the Nepalese *Wafu* (Broom grass) species commonly found in hilly areas. It is generally used as fodder for grass and for covering the ground. In the Bahing society, shamans (Dhami) use it in *Wafu* rituals with mantras to protect themselves and, through mantras, to attack enemies as a weapon. Nakso uses *Wafu* by striking the *Tumlo* with its leaves to remove negative forces affecting children or the sick.



Figure 41: Wafu (Broom grass)

5.8.11 Ngarmo

Ngarmo is found on cliffs, slopes, and forests at altitudes ranging from 1,100 meters to 3,500 meters above sea level. Its roots bear rhizomes resembling ginger. The plant has ordinary, round, long leaves and can grow up to approximately two feet in height. In the Bahing society, Nakso and Jhamcha cut its rhizomes to observe omens, determining what is good or bad, auspicious or inauspicious. In Bahing traditional institutions, during *Kayami-Kayacha* rituals, a team of two people is assigned to collect *Ngarmo*, and these individuals are called *Ngarmocha*.



Figure 42: Ngarmo

5.8.12 Bhara (Jack Fruit)

In Bahing *Tumlo-Yalo* language, it is called *Bhara*, and in Nepali, it is known as *Bhara (Jackfruit)*. It is found at altitudes ranging from 100 meters to 900 meters above sea level. This is a large tree, and its fruit is sweet. In the Bahing society, its buds or flowers are used to make *Lingkham (Yeast)*. Therefore, it is associated with the traditional knowledge of the Bahing people.

5.8.13 Ambiri (Orchid)

Among the Kirat Bahing communities, this wild plant is important in *Tumlo-Yalo* rituals, particularly in the making of ceremonial attire from its plant and buds. It typically grows and spreads on cliffs, slopes, and tree branches and is found at altitudes ranging from 1,200 meters to 3,500 meters above sea level. In Nepali, it is called *Ambiri (Orchid)*. There are various species of this plant, and three of them are considered essential for Bahing rituals and cultural practices.

In traditional use, ancestral Jhamacha (shaman) and Nakso employ it in ceremonial clothing, decorating garments with intricate patterns and using its buds to embellish pouches. Additionally, *Dhami* and *Jhankri* use it as a spiritual tool during journeys: if enemies or obstacles hinder their path, they use mantras to create a bridge of *Ambiri* over rivers, cliffs, or landslides, completing their journey successfully. Furthermore, *Ambiri* is also used for healing through mantras. These practices are deeply connected to the traditional knowledge of the Bahing society.



Figure 43: Ambiri (Orchid)

5.8.14 Mokte

Mokte is a sacred plant for the Bahing society. Mokte is a strong climber plant found at elevations ranging from 300 to 1,200 meters. In Bahing religious worship, plates are made from the leaves of Mokte to place ritual offerings, and they are also



Figure 44: Mokte (*Bauhinia Vahlia*)

used for daily meals. Likewise, the fiber from the bark of its vine is used to make the Yasari Gra (*pitri* ritual rope), for trapping animals, and ropes for hunting. Spiritually, there is a long-held belief among the Bahing people that a person born under the influence of the Mokte flower becomes a *Dhyaonakso* (priest) or *Nakso* (spiritual specialist). In Nepali, this plant is known as Bhorla.

5.8.15 Hayangmala

In the Bahing community, during ancestral rituals such as *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, and *Hang Segro*, banana leaves are used as an important sacred element, and in the *Tumlo-Yalo* ritual they are called **Hayangmala**. Banana leaves are regarded as holy in the Bahing culture, and specifically during *Tumlo-Yalo*, they are referred to as Hayangmala.

5.8.16 Bhuli/Bhumi

In the Bahing society, during all Hong Segro rituals, the *Masicha* (ritual dancers) hold and dance with a ceremonial object called *Bhuli/Bhumi*. This item is

traditionally made using the tail of a Yak or a Chauri. Among them, the Bhuli with a predominantly white color more than black is considered the best.



Figure 45: Bhuli

5.9 Kayami-Kayacha: Practice, Structure, and Status of Customary Institution within the Bahing society

Functionalists believe that all members of society work together in harmony to achieve common goals, based on mutual agreement. Such coordinated efforts are considered beneficial for the entire community. Upon closely observing the customary institution of 'Kayami-Kayacha' practiced among the Bahing ethnic, one can find the presence of mechanical solidarity. In the course of my research, I found that *Kayami* refers to the women's working body, while *Kayacha* refers to the men's working body. The term *Kayami-Kayacha* is thus formed by combining these two words. Therefore, the primary meaning of *Kayami-Kayacha* is a working or functional body. "*Kayami-Kayacha*" is the body responsible for implementing the responsibilities assigned and determined for each department through joint decisions among the *Tumlocha*, *Mulucha*, and the community. *Kayami-Kayacha* is essentially an administrative mechanism or institution. It consists of various departments, each with its own specific responsibilities and roles. The use and practice of *Kayami-Kayacha* is found to be applied particularly in two main contexts, which are as follows:

5.9.1 Implementation and Practice of *Kayami-Kayacha* in Political and Administrative Contexts

Since ancient times, the Bahing ancestors of Okhaldhunga ruled their respective forts (gadhi) and maintained their own armies to defend against enemy attacks. During the existence of Bahing kings in forts such as Taluwagadhi, Chisankhugadhi, Chyanamgadhi, and Bungnamgadhi, administrative functions were carried out and managed as needed through the traditional working institution known as *Kayami-Kayacha*. After these administrative structures of the Kirat region were incorporated into Nepal through the Gorkha administration, the traditional practice of *Kayami-Kayacha* came to an end in the four kingdoms ruled by the Bahing kings.

5.9.2 Application and Practice of *Kayami-Kayacha* in the Completion of Rituals and Cultural Functions

Apart from political and administrative functions, the traditional institution of *Kayami-Kayacha* has continued to be practiced and applied within the Bahing community in cultural and ritual contexts particularly in ceremonies such as *Wailingmo*, *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro*, and marriage rituals. Under the *Kayami-Kayacha* system, various roles or divisions fall within this traditional institution. These include: *Churicha*, *Khwasicha*, *Secha*, *Chicha*, *Twacha*, *Gijocha*, *Blacha*, *Syalphocha*, *Gracha*, *Ngarmocha*, *Grocha*, *Sekhlichha*, *bargacha*, *Kajeri*, *Burocha*, *Mosumcha*, *Guricha*, and *Krecha*.

Kayami-Kayacha existed in practice as part of both cultural traditions and political structures. However, after the fall of the forts and kingdoms, it is now found only in practice within cultural traditions.

For my research, the documentation and analysis of information obtained from the workplace, responses from participants, and observation notes revealed that the traditional institution of *Kayami-Kayacha* within the Bahing peoples operates through the following dimensions and functions. The roles and responsibilities of each of these functions are described as follows.

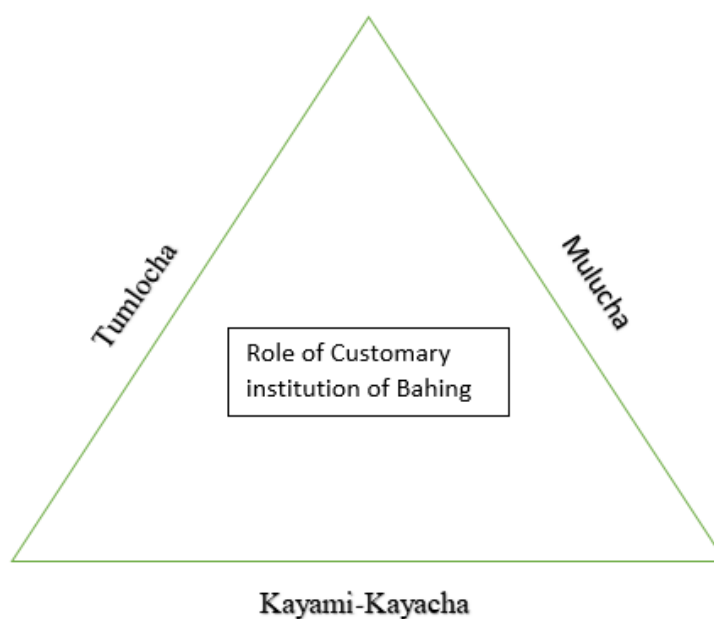


Figure 46: Customary Institution of Bahing

5.9.2.1 Tumlocha

Within the Bahing caste, the *Tumlocha* holds the responsibility of performing ritual ceremonies related to ancestral worship (*Sari Reri mo*), such as *Wayilingmo*, *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro*, and *Bryabmalyakcho*. They also carry out death rituals (*Sase Buse*, *Bulam Chancha*) and marriage ceremonies (*Chayise Rikcho*, *Sul Fikcho*, *Sarifyarcho*, and *Bakal Lukcho*). Additionally, other religious rituals (*Susumo*, *Walekumo*, *Dayalwaksa*) are performed following the *Tumlo-Yalo* method.

Tumlocha, such as *Dhyawanakso*, *Nakso*, *Jhamcha*, *Ngabucha*, *Chaycha*, and *Samdicha*, are considered the principal *Tumlocha* among the Bahing ethnic. The other roles of *Tumlocha* include resolving community disputes, delivering justice, making decisions for the welfare of society, and even holding the authority to make political decisions.



Figure 47: Tumlocha Team of Pankhu Village.



Figure 48: Dhwayanakso chanting Tumlo-Yalo



Figure 49: Nakso Late Rambharos

5.9.2.2 Mulucha

Mulucha refers to an integral part of a traditional institution that, along with the *Tumlocha*, provides essential advice to the overall *Kayami-Kayacha*. The role of the *Mulucha* includes offering advice and suggestions on aspects omitted during rituals and ceremonies conducted by the *Tumlocha*. It also involves distinguishing right from wrong in societal matters and providing guidance accordingly. At the political level, the *Mulucha* plays a decisive role. Individuals capable of making sound judgments are selected as *Mulucha* by a gathering of the community. It is an essential part of the *Kayami-Kayacha* system.

5.9.2.3 Masimi Masicha

The responsibility of the *Masimi Masicha* is to formally perform the ritual dances during *Hong Segro*, the most significant ancestral ritual. In this dance, according to the *Sumni lo* (Story of Origin), events such as the origin of life, the emergence of human civilization, the hunting age, the agricultural age, and the development of rituals and culture are sequentially narrated by the *Tumlocha*. As the *Tumlocha* recite these stories, the *Masimi Masicha* play a crucial role by depicting them through acting and dance. The *Masimi Masicha* are an integral part of the traditional institutional system.



Figure 50: Masimi Sili performed by Masimi



Figure 51: Masimi performing ritual dance



Figure 52: Masicha, Mr. Jit Bahadur Bahing

5.9.2.4 Jhamcha (traditionally known as Selimi Selicha)

The responsibility of a *Jhamcha* is primarily to treat the sick in the village community using mantras (chants), tantra (ritual practices), and medicinal herbs. Additionally, after a person dies, the *Jhamcha* goes to the house of the deceased and by channeling spiritual power as a *Jhamcha* (spiritual healer), calls upon the spirit of the dead. They then play a vital role in spiritually transferring the soul to *Bulnyamkhim-Yalnyamkhim*, the sacred resting places for ancestral spirits thus separating the spirit from the world of the living.

The *Jhamcha* bears the responsibility of performing this separation and ensuring the dead spirit is placed in its proper resting place. They fulfill both spiritual and ritual duties. In ancient times, when doctors and nurses were not yet present in society, *Jhamchas* were those who continuously served the community with powers believed to be received through supernatural means.



Figure 53: Jhamcha (Bahing Shaman)



Figure 54: Jhamcha (Shaman)



Figure 55: *Selicha (Bahing Shaman)*

5.9.2.5 Ngabucha and Chayacha

The responsibility of *Ngabucha* and *Chayacha* is to assist in the recitation of the *Tumlo-Yalo* by sitting to the right and left of *Dhyawanakso* and *Nakso* during the recitation.

5.9.2.6 Churicha

In the Bahing community, during *Hong Bocho*, a significant ancestral ritual, two individuals known as *Ngapsi Mulu* or *Dayal Mulu* are designated to make the ritual *Churi*, a sacred wooden structure using wood from *Katus*, *patle katus*, or *sal* trees, as required by the ritual procedures. According to the *Tumlo-Yalo* (ancestral tradition), *Churicha* are responsible for cutting the wood, crafting the *Churi*, carrying it to the house where the ritual is being performed, and embedding it in the upper part of the courtyard.



Figure 56: *Churi*



Figure 57: *Churicha* making *Churi*

5.9.2.7 Khwasicha

Using wood from *patle*, *katus*, or *sal* trees, planks are prepared to make the *Khwasi*, which is required for the *Hong Bocho* ancestral ritual in the Bahing community, following the procedures prescribed in the *Tumlo-Yalo* tradition. The *Khwasi* is brought to the ritual house and embedded into the wall of the upper section

of the courtyard. This task is carried out by the *Khwasi-cha*. Usually, two person *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu* are designated to take on this responsibility.

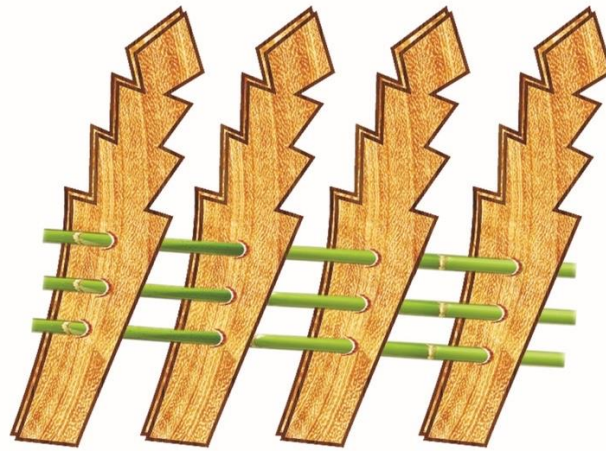


Figure 58: Khwasi



Figure 59: Khwasicha doing his duty around Khwasi



Figure 60: Khawasicha making Khawasi for Hong

5.9.2.8 Secha

The responsibility of the *Secha* is to handle all tasks related to meat preparation during rituals such as ancestral rites, marriage ceremonies, death rites, or any other form of worship, and *Hong Segro*, in accordance with prescribed ritual procedures. Individuals assigned to the *Secha* role are selected by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu* under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*. Experienced members of the community are chosen to take on this responsibility.



Figure 61: Secha cutting meat of Hong



Figure 62: Secha deviding offering meats

5.9.2.9 Chicha

The term *Chicha* refers to the person responsible for managing all aspects of traditional alcohol (*jaad*, *chi*, and *raksi*) required during various rituals such as ancestral rites (*Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Taam*, *Hong Segro*), marriage ceremonies, or death rites according to the prescribed ritual procedures. Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, individuals with knowledge of these practices are appointed as *Chicha* by the *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.



Figure 63: Chicha preparing Chi



Figure 64: Chi

5.9.2.10 Twacha

The *Twacha* are two women one appointed from the host's side and one from the guest's side who are responsible for distributing the offerings (such as *raksi* and *jaad*) brought by the host and the guests to the visitors and workers present at the house. On the host's side, more than two women may also take on the role of *Twacha*.



Figure 65: Twacha

5.9.2.11 Gijocha

The responsibility of the *Gijocha* is to craft and manage weapons such as *Blagurtha* (bows and arrows), *Betho* (khukuri), and *Saandi* (Khuda), *Jatti* (Tir), *Naharni*, which were used for hunting by the Bahing kings of the past. Additionally, during ancestral rituals such as *Hong Segro*, *Tam*, and *Nagle*, the *Gijocha* are also responsible for making and managing the hunting weapons needed for the ceremonies.

Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, individuals with expertise in weaponry are appointed as *Gijocha* by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.

5.9.2.12 Blacha

The responsibility of the *Blacha* is to kill the sacrificial ox and pig using a bow and arrow during the *Hong Segro* ritual. The person specifically designated for this task is known as the *Blacha*. According to the *Tumlo-Yalo* tradition, it is customary to carry out the sacrifice using a bow and arrow during *Hong Segro*. Historically, Bahing ancestors and kings also used bows and arrows when going hunting in the forest. Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, experienced individuals are appointed as *Blacha* by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.



Figure 66: *Blacha*



Figure 67: *Blacha*

5.9.2.13 Syalphocha

The responsibility of the *Syalphocha* is to collect *Seli* (a ritual item made from *Musure Katus* branch and leaf), which is an essential element in the *Tumlo-Yalo* procedure during the ancestral ritual *Hong Segro*. The *Syalphocha* prepares it according to traditional methods and manages its proper placement at the designated location. Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, two individuals with relevant experience are appointed to this role by the *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.



Figure 68: *Syalpho* and *Ya Sari Gra*



Figure 69: Syalphocha preparing Syalpho



Figure 70: Sylpho and Yasari Gra

5.9.2.14 Gracha

The responsibility of the *Gracha* involves two main tasks. In ancient times, Bahing ancestors used to *barga Sirga* (set traps) for hunting. For this purpose, small ropes were made by twisting fibers from *babiyo* grass and threads from the stems of banana plants (*damcha*). Thirteen small trap-setting ropes are crafted in this way, and these ropes are called *barga Sirga*.

The second responsibility of the *Gracha* is to make long, thick ropes. These are made by combining *lokta* fibers from the *bhorla* plant and *babiyo* grass to create strong, long ropes. This rope is called *Yasari Gra*. Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, two individuals with experience in this craft are appointed as *Gracha* by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.



Figure 71: *Gracha* making *Gra*

5.9.2.15 Ngarmocha

The responsibility of the *Ngarmocha* is to collect and manage *Ngarmo* (*Kachur*, a type of wild herb), an important medicinal plant used during the Bahing ancestral ritual *Hong Segro* and by *Jhamcha* (shamans) for their rituals. It is used to perform divinations according to the *Tumlo-Yalo* tradition, to assess the well-being, fortune, or misfortune of individuals and the community. Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, two individuals with experience in this practice are appointed as *Ngarmocha* by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.



Figure 72: Ngarmocha



Figure 73: Ngarmocha

5.9.2.16 Grocha

The responsibility of the *Grocha* is to play the *Gro* (traditional cymbals) in rhythm according to the *Tumlo-Yalo* tradition during the Bahing ancestral rituals *Tam* and *Hong Segro*, especially while performing the *Hong Segro Sili* (ritual sequence). The *Grocha* is responsible for continuously playing the *Gro* (cymbals) until the *Hong Segro* ritual is fully completed. Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, two experienced individuals are appointed as *Grocha* by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.



Figure 74: Grocha

5.9.2.17 Sekhlecha

The responsibility of the *Sekhlecha* originally stems from the ancient practice of hunting as a means of livelihood. In the present day, the *Sekhlecha* are responsible for going into the forest during the *Hong Segro* ritual to hunt animals such as deer, ghoral, wild boar, kalij pheasant, junglefowl, fish, and frogs to be offered to the ancestors. It is the *Sekhlecha*'s duty to provide hunted meat for the *Hong Segro* ritual in accordance with the *Tumlo-Yalo* tradition. Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, experienced *Sekhlecha* are appointed to this role by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.

5.9.2.18 bargacha

During the *Hong Segro* ritual, the responsibility of the *bargacha* is to go into the forest, set traditional *brgacha* (Trap), and bring back *hunted* animals to be offered to the ancestors. Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, two individuals with experience in this area are appointed to this role by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.

5.9.2.19 Kajeri

During rituals such as *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro*, and weddings, the responsibilities of the *Kajeri* include pounding rice to make beaten rice (*chamal*), collecting firewood, arranging water for cooking, cleaning cooking utensils, and washing and keeping clean the dishes used by the guests. Under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, women are appointed to this role by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.

5.9.2.20 Burocha

During the performance of ancestral rites, especially when guests are invited and fed, it is the responsibility of the *Burocha* to organize and manage the rice collected

from relatives, friends, and fellow villagers in the designated kitchen area called *Bhanshekhwa*m. The *Burocha* is also responsible for arranging the special worship of ancestral spirits inside the house. The responsibility of the *Burocha* is assigned under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*, and this decision is made by a gathering of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.



Figure 75: Burocha doing his duty of Burokham



Figure 76: Bhansekhawam

5.9.2.21 Mosumcha

Mosumcha refers to individuals who, after years of experience serving in various roles from the lower levels of responsibility during the *Bahing Pitri Sanskar*

(ancestral rites), are finally entrusted in their mature age with the duty of partaking in the sacred *Balamka* and *Arikchoba?a* ancestral offerings. Those who receive this responsibility are called *Mosumcha*.

The *Mosumcha* are given a designated seating area from near the hearth (*Bakal*) to the upper end of the ritual space. This area, known as the *Mosum* space, is strictly reserved for them, and people from other castes or communities are prohibited from entering or sitting there. While the ancestral worship is ongoing, the *Mosumcha* must remain present in this sacred space.



Figure 77: *Balamka Mo*



Figure 78: *Balamka Kyakcho (Atyaktyke) Mo*

The role of *Mosumcha* is assigned only after an individual has fulfilled duties as *Chicha*, *Secha*, *Ngarmocha*, and *Ngabucha*. The appointment is officially made by a gathering led by the *Tumlocha*, along with either the *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*. During the ancestral rites, *Mosumcha* are permitted to consume special sacred offerings known as *Balamka* and *Arikchoba?a Pitri Prasad*, which are strictly forbidden to the general public.

After consuming the *Balamka* and *Arikchoba?a*, the *Mosumcha* must observe a sixteen-meal (sixteen-time eating) purification fast (*Sohra Chhak Barnu*). During this period, they must abstain from eating maize, nettle greens (*Sisnu*), leafy greens (*Saag*), tomatoes, white brown lentils (*Mas*), and horse gram (*Gahat*). Additionally, they are not allowed to cross rivers or streams until the purification period is over.

5.9.2.22 Guricha

The responsibility of the *Guricha* is to cut a tall bamboo pole (*Lingo*) and bring it to the house where the *Segro* (ancestral ritual) is being performed, and then to erect it by embedding it into the ground near the wall of the courtyard. This task is assigned to two experienced individuals, designated as *Guricha*, by the *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu* under the leadership of the *Tumlocha*.



Figure 79: *Guricha* fixing *Gurising*

5.9.2.23 Krecha

The responsibility of the *Krecha* is to properly separate the types of meat according to ritual procedures for the ancestral offerings (*Pitri Puja*). Among those who

have knowledge of the correct methods for preparing meat for such rituals, one individual is designated with the role of *Krecha*.

5.9.2.24 Samdicha

The role of *Samdicha* is to express gratitude and appreciation, on behalf of the head of the household, to the responsible individuals from various departments of the *Kayami-Kayacha* (administrative body) for fulfilling their duties in carrying out *Hong Segro*.

This is done on the final day of the *Hong Segro* ritual by honoring them with traditional offerings placing liquor, meat, and rice in a tray (*Kapal*) and presenting it to them in the Tumlo language as a mark of respect for their contributions.



Figure 80: Samdhicha doing his Samdhi

5.9.2.25 Lingkhamkokaa

In the Bahing society, during the annual ancestral worship performed once a year in the months of Paush and Magh including rituals such as Pitripuja, *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro*, and funeral rites. The grandmothers of the Bahing community are required to prepare the traditional *Anga* (main yeast). This *anga* is made by mixing old *anga* (old yeast) with the flowers and bark of the *Tiku* (Guava) tree, the flowers and bark of the *Bhara* (jackfruit) tree, the flowers and bark of *Phoro* (walnut), *Byaljam* (a herb plant used for making yeast), and other ingredients. The responsibility of making this *lingkham* (yeast) is assigned by the assembly of *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*, who work under the leadership of *Tumlocha*. Among the community members especially

mothers and grandmothers known for their purity certain women are entrusted with this responsibility. These women are called *Lingkhamkokaa*, meaning the ones responsible for preparing the *lingkham* (Yeast).

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

The Bahing customary institution *Kayami-Kayacha* reflects functionalist principles by sustaining social order through shared norms, rituals, and customary laws. It fulfills manifest functions like dispute resolution and cultural governance, while rituals such as *Tumlo-Yalo* recitation and *Hong Segro* rituals serve latent functions that strengthen community unity. Historically a political authority during the Kirat era, it is now primarily a cultural and ritual institution. Led by the *Tumlocha* and supported by the *Mulucha* and various specialized departments, *Kayami-Kayacha* continues to preserve justice, identity, and tradition within the Bahing society.

Kayami-Kayacha is the traditional governing institution of the Bahing Indigenous people, responsible for maintaining social order, justice, and cultural harmony. It functions as a customary court that resolves disputes, manages community affairs, enforces unwritten laws, and preserves rituals and moral values. Highly respected within the community, it safeguards identity, unity, and traditional practices.

The institution is structured into three main bodies *Tumlocha*, *Mulucha*, and *Kayami-Kayacha* led by the *Tumlocha*, who conducts major rituals, oversees spiritual lineage, and makes cultural or social decisions. The *Mulucha* offers guidance and assists in ritual and political matters. Both are selected through community consent and ancestral knowledge.

6.2 Conclusion

The following conclusions have been drawn from this study regarding the structure, roles, responsibilities, practices, and current condition of the traditional customary institution *Kayami-Kayacha*. The *Kayami-Kayacha* customary institution of the Bahing people embodies the core ideas of functionalist theory by Durkheim, Parsons, and Merton. Through its structured roles, rituals, and customary laws, it sustains social cohesion, reinforces collective values, and ensures both visible (manifest) and invisible (latent) contributions to community stability. Although its political authority has diminished over time, *Kayami-Kayacha* continues to play a vital role in preserving

cultural identity, guiding social behavior, and maintaining harmony within the Bahing society. Its enduring importance highlights how traditional institutions remain central to cultural continuity and social order in the Bahing Indigenous Peoples.

6.3 Discussion

- (1) Among the Bahing community, it was found that three main bodies operate within the administrative structure of their traditional customary institution in cultural, social, and political aspects. These are *Tumlocha*, *Mulucha*, and *Kayami-Kayacha*.
- (2) Role and Responsibilities of the *Kayami-Kayacha*: The *Kayami-Kayacha* is an administrative body responsible for carrying out the cultural, social, and political activities of the *Bahing* society. Within it, there are various departments such as *Masimi*, *Masicha*, *Chicha*, *Churicha*, *Khwasicha*, *Secha*, *Gijocha*, *Blacha*, *Syalfocha*, *Gracha*, *Ngarmocha*, *Grocha*, *Sekhlich*, *Kajeri*, *Burocha*, *Mosumcha*, *Krecha bargacha*, *Lingkhamkokaa*, and *Twacha*. These are all divisions within the *Kayami-Kayacha*. The role of the *Kayami-Kayacha* is to fulfill the responsibilities assigned by *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*. Generally, each department consists of two appointed individuals. The selection or assignment of these individuals based on their experience and knowledge of the respective field is carried out by *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu* under the leadership of *Tumlocha*.
- (3) Role and Responsibilities of *Tumlocha*: The role of *Tumlocha* is to lead and preserve the community's social and cultural traditions. It provides leadership to the *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*. The responsibilities of *Tumlocha* include performing *Tumlo-Yalo* (ritual duties) during marriage, death, and ancestral ceremonies; delivering social justice; and making political decisions when necessary. It also makes decisions that serve the welfare and interests of the communities. *Tumlocha* holds the highest level of honor and prestige within the community. Under *Tumlocha* fall several positions such as *Nakso*, *Ngabucha*, *Chaycha*, *Selimi Selicha (Jhamcha)*, *Mosumcha*, and *Samdicha*, among others.
- (4) Role and Responsibilities of the *Mulucha*: The *Mulucha* plays the role of observing and evaluating whether the traditional customs and practices carried out between the *Tumlocha* and *Kayami-Kayacha* are right or wrong, as needed. They provide appropriate advice on matters of social justice and political decisions. A *Mulucha* is a respected person in the community, and the recognition or selection of such a person as *Mulucha* is done by *Dayal Mulu* or *Ngapsi Mulu*.

- (5) Role and Responsibilities of *Selimi Selicha (Jhamcha)*: The role of the *Selimi Selicha (Jhamcha)* is to heal and treat individuals in the community who are suffering from illness through the use of *mantra*, *tantra*, and medicinal herbs. In the *Bahing* community, the *Jhamcha* performs the spiritual duty of guiding the souls of the deceased to the afterlife known as *Bulnyam Khim* (the house where the ancestors' spirits reside) and *Sarikhim* through spiritual powers. Traditionally, from ancient times up to the present, the *Jhamcha* has fulfilled and continues to fulfill the role of a healer or traditional physician within the community.
- (6) In Ancient Times, during the era when the Kirat land and kingdom existed, the ancestors of the *Bahing* people are believed to have ruled from four forts: *Taluwagadhi*, *Chishankhugadhi*, *Bungnamgadhi*, and *Chyanamgadhi*, located in what is now the former Eastern Region, District No. 3, Okhaldhunga. Within these forts, the *Bahing* kings practiced traditional custom-based administrative systems. After the disappearance of the Kirat Kingdom, it has become customary for the *Kayami-Kayacha* to perform ancestral rituals known as *Hong Segro*, *Tam*, and *Nagle*. The worship of ancestors (*Pitri Puja*) is traditionally observed once a year, usually during the months of *Poush* and *Magh*, and this practice continues to be followed in *Bahing* settlements.
- (7) Religion, Rituals, and Beliefs: The *Bahing* people worship the elements of nature, such as land, forests, hills, stones, air, water, animals, and ancestral spirits, everything that exists in the natural world. Therefore, the *Bahing* are nature worshippers. They do not believe in the concepts of heaven and hell.
- (8) Oral Religious Scripture *Tumlo-Yalo*: In the *Bahing* society, the oral text containing the ritual words and methods used during various religious and cultural ceremonies is called "*Tumlo-Yalo*". The *Tumlo-Yalo* is recited in a ceremonial or ritual language known as *Fre Lo* or *Fle Lo*. It is believed that knowledge of the *Tumlo-Yalo* is received through ancestral power bestowed upon the chosen individual (*Nakso and Selimi*) in dreams. Additional knowledge is taught and passed down from one *Tumlocha* to another during ancestral rituals. This is the intangible cultural heritage of the *Bahing* people. Just as the Hindus have the *Vedas*, Muslims have the *Qur'an*, Christians have the *Bible*, and Buddhists have the *Tripitaka*, the *Bahing* society has the unwritten oral religious scripture known as *Tumlo-Yalo*.

- (9) Ancestors of the Bahing: The ancestors of the Bahing people are *Payiwa* (*Payihong*), *Dunglewa*, *Dungmowa*, *Rukhusalu*, *Waripsawa*, *Timriwa*, *Dhimriwa*, *Nayango*, *Dhyango*, *Kharupaso*, *Khaluwa*, *Rungbu*, and *Rendukpa*. The descendants of these ancestors are the Bahing ethnic group and community, who are indigenous people of Nepal. At present, the descendants of *Payiwa*, *Rungbu*, and *Rendukpa* are mainly found scattered across various areas of Okhaldhunga and Solukhumbu districts.
- (10) The Creators: The creators are known as *Mamachinimo* and *Papachadubung*. *Ninirengma Marengma* (*Ninirengma Kokorengma*) created plants and living creatures and gave birth to the first human on Earth, *Ninanapcha*. *Ninanapcha* is regarded as the ancestor of the Bahing people.
- (11) The Origin Story 'Sumni lo': According to *Sumni lo* (the story of origin), *Ninirengma*'s first chosen and proposed husband was *Ruwapa* (Venus), and her second husband was *Silapa* (Jupiter). Therefore, from *Sumni lo*, it is understood that the Bahing people's first proposed father is *Ruwapa* and their second father is *Silapa* (Jupiter). In the *Tumlo-Yalo*, *Silapa* is referred to as *Bhakpa Liku Ambetikpa*.
- (12) Cultural Founders and Figures of Hong Segro: The first founders of the Bahing people's cultural and traditional institution, *Hong Segro*, are *Kaktisala Rinahong*, *Lungchiringma*, *Jauma*, and *Khliuma*.
- (13) The Bahing People: The Bahing are an indigenous peoples of Kirati origin with their own distinct language, customs, culture, land, unwritten and written history. They are of Mongoloid appearance.
- (14) The Bahing people are primarily nature worshippers, ancestor worshippers, and followers of shamanism, guided by their unwritten religious scripture known as *Tumlo-Yalo*. Central to their belief system is ancestor worship, which forms the core of their ritual practices. During ceremonies such as *Wailingmo*, *Bakallukcho*, *Mosum*, *Nagle*, *Tam*, *Hong Segro*, and *Byarbalyakcho*, they observe and perform traditional customs and customary institutions collectively known as *Kayami-Kayacha* (ancestral customary practices).
- (15) Cultural Dances of the Bahing People: Among the Bahing people, the traditional cultural dances include *Hong Segro Sili*, *Kimo Sili*, and *Dholokum Sili*.
- (16) Ritual Songs among the Bahing People: In the Bahing peoples, ritual songs are sung during ancestor worship and marriage ceremonies. During *Hong Segro* and

weddings, the *Dholokum* songs are performed, while *Kimo* songs are sung exclusively during marriage ceremonies. *Hokma* songs are sung with spiritual significance, whereas *Lahbire* and *Salmaya* songs are performed for entertainment and enjoyment.

- (17) Use of Natural Resources in Bahing Rituals: During ancestor and marriage rituals, the Bahing people traditionally use various natural plants and organic materials such as *Pirum*(*Ginger*), *Wafu*(*Broom grass*), *Palam*(*Bamboo*), *Ngarmo*(*Kachud*), *Richi*(*Bhakimlo*), *Khali*(*Chiraito*), *Holo*(*Lampate*), *Jhisi*(*Bauhinia variegata*), *Chabra*(*asparagus*), *Charja*(*Millet*), *Seri*(*Rice*), *Seli*(*Musure Katus*, *Castanopsis*), *Kongkochi*(*Bhote Timbur*, *Sichuan pepper*), *Salam*(*Sal*), *Tosi*(*Pine*), *Ambiri*(*orchid*), *Pupum*(*Chindo*), *Khiyam*(*Babiyo grass*), *Gramuchi Safa*(*Banana*), *Lingghi*(*Cotton*), *Mokte*(*Bhorla*), *Mulu*(*Katus*), and *Loksi*(*Mugwart*). These are regarded and used as valuable biological resources in their cultural practices.
- (18) Traditional Attire of the Bahing People: The traditional and ceremonial *Lawgum lawsir* (dresses) of the Bahing people include *Moktewa*, *Kringma Lwagum*, *Champhuri Burifung*, *Champhuri Chamaya*, *Sapachhiri Ampharongma*, *Sayigrra*, *Kipsari*, *Piyalkcho*, *Salama*, *bagu*, *Narimokte*, *Piyangkum*, and *Mulubja*. These garments represent the cultural and ritual attire of the Bahing peoples.
- (19) Traditional Weapons Used by the Bahing People: The *Gijowajo* (traditional weapons) used by the Bahing people include *Betho*, *Kha*, *Khurumbi*, *Guyo*, *Bla*, *Gurtha*, *Saandi*, *Jatti*, *Naharni*, *Kokofyacho*, and *Khruk6ale*.
- (20) Musical Instruments *Chhamchhari* of the Bahing People: The traditional musical instruments used by the Bahing people include *Dhol*, *Dhyagro*, *Takal*, *Gro*, *Rang6e*, *Muchunga*, *Madal*, *6obomringma*, *Liphe*, *Bhuli/Bhumi*, and *Pungbang*.
- (21) Ornaments Used by the Bahing People: The traditional ornaments *Jharjhawshi* used by the Bahing people in ancient times include *Chukurungma*, *Tikkur*, *Yum*, *Buyum*, *Pwalo*, and *Chichimala*. In modern times, they are found to use ornaments such as *Tilhari*, *Mundri* (ring), *Dhungri* (earring), *Bulaki* (nose ring), *Anti*, *Phuli* (nose stud), *Chandrahar*, *Athanihar*, and *Charanihar*, among others.
- (22) *Khapchiri* (Pots and Utensils) Used in the Bahing People: In the Bahing society, various traditional *Khapchiri* (pots and utensils) have been in use since ancient times. These include *Karcham*, *Belong*, *Pu*, *Chokpu*, *Kokchuma*, *Tase*, *Kanchura*, *Jhyanga*, *Batha*, *Kharkhanda*, *Phosi*, *Phunga* (*Khunga*), *Chumlo*, *Tuli*, *Patri*, *Duna*, *Lipu*, *Chumlo*, *Dhiki*, *Lohorolung*, *Tho*, and *Thahar*, among others.

(23) Measurement Units Used in the Bahing Community: In ancient times, the Bahing people used several traditional units of measurement. For grains and liquids, they used *Thaptha*, *Renchum*, and *Hobo*. For weighing meat, they used a Tulo (balance scale) with units such as *Dharni*, *Bisauli*, *Hamali*, *Satser*, *Naubodi*, *Ser*, and *Panser*. Nowadays, these traditional systems have been replaced by kilograms and liters.

6.4 Recommendation

During the field study of the Bahing people's customary institution *Kayami-Kayacha*, the researcher identified several key recommendations. If these suggestions are implemented in the future, they can help preserve this institution in the long term and ensure its continued practice within society. The following points present those recommendations.

- (1) The Bahing people of the study area practice a distinct ancestral ritual known as *Hong Segro Tolowa*. According to their tradition, the forefathers granted the ritual lineage (*Hong Segro* the ancestral cord or spiritual inheritance) to their brother *Rinamsacha*, while they themselves performed only minor ancestral rites such as *Nagle* and *Mosum*. As a result, the traditional institution *Kayami-Kayacha* has not been fully practiced in its complete form. If the community begins to recognize *Hong Segro* as the central ancestral practice and gradually restores it to its entirety, there is a strong possibility that this institution can be preserved and revitalized.
- (2) The *Kayami-Kayacha* institution is declining, as its practice mainly preserved within *Hong Segro* rituals is threatened by migration, children's education needs, the loss of knowledgeable elders, and the lack of transmission to younger generations. Among the Bahing, roles like *Secha*, *Chicha*, *Mosumcha*, *Kajeri*, *Samdicha*, *Nakso*, and *Ngabucha* are now limited to a few ancestral rituals, while only *Hong Segro* still engages all departments of the traditional system.
- (3) In Bahing tradition, individuals serving in *Kayami-Kayacha* are compensated with in-kind offerings rather than cash. While once practiced as a political institution during the Kirat era, *Kayami-Kayacha* today is limited mainly to ancestral and marriage rituals. Providing monetary support and institutionalizing it at the local level could help sustain and preserve this cultural practice.
- (4) The traditional institution *Kayami-Kayacha* is most actively practiced and utilized during the *Hong Segro* ritual. However, the experts and practitioners of this Institution such as *Tumlocha* (ritual specialists) known as *Dhywanakso*, *Nakso*,

Ngabucha, Chaycha, Samdicha, Selimi, and Selicha are gradually aging. The younger generation finds it difficult to perform these complex rituals due to lack of knowledge and experience. Therefore, the traditional practices and knowledge of *Kayami-Kayacha* should be included in the local school curriculum and textbooks so that children can study and learn them formally.

- (5) Modernity is causing a decline in traditional Bahing language, dress, arts, songs, and music, especially among youth. The state should provide targeted support to preserve and promote these cultural heritages.
- (6) The Bahing community should prioritize the systematic documentation of ancestral rituals including *Wailingmo, Mosum, Nagle, Tam, Hong Segro, Chayise Rikcho*, and various nature and land-related worship practices through written records, audio archives, and video recordings. Establishing a community-led cultural preservation program, involving elders, ritual practitioners, researchers, and youth, will help safeguard these traditions and ensure their transmission to future generations. Furthermore, creating digital and community-based repositories can enhance accessibility, promote cultural education, and strengthen the continuity of Bahing heritage.
- (7) In the Bahing Indigenous Peoples, there exists a traditional social institution known as *Kayami-Kayacha*, which plays a vital role in maintaining social order, justice, and community harmony. This institution functions as a customary governing body that upholds the traditional laws, customs, and practices of the Bahing people. The functions of *Kayami-Kayacha* include resolving social disputes, managing community affairs, enforcing customary rules, and ensuring the preservation of cultural and moral values within the community.

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APPENDIX- I

Questionnaires for interviewees.

(1) Respondent's details:

Name:..... Age:

Sex: Date:

Municipality: Ward No:

Tole:

S.N	Name	Sex	Age	Education	Knowledge specific	remarks

(2) What is the Bahing customary institution you call? Tick ✓ given point, if not, write the name.

(i) Kayami-Kayacha (ii) If other, name it:

(3) What role does it play in governing system of the society?

(4) What is the position of the following roles in the hierarchy in the Kayami-Kayacha?

Please tick or circle the correct option.

(a) Position of Tumlocha

(i) Highest

(ii) Low

(b) Role of Nakso and Tumlocha

(i) Decision

(ii) Order

(c) Position of Mulucha

(i) Advisor

(ii) Interpreter

(d) Role of Ngabucha/ Chayacha

(i) Check and Balance

(ii) Side helper

(e) Position of Kayami-Kayacha

(i) Human Resource Department

(ii) Labour team

(5) How is the election of the person for the roles conducted?

(6) What are functions and structures of Kayami-Kayacha? Tick or circle the correct answer.

(a) Dhyewa Nakso/Nakso/Tumlocha

(b) Ngabucha

(c) Chyacha

(d) Mulucha

(e) Masicha

(f) Masimi

(g) Chicha

(h) Churicha

(i) Khawsicha

(j) Chicha

(k) Secha

(l) Gijocha

(m) Blacha

(n) Sylphocha

(o) Gracha

(p) Ngarmocha

(q) Grocha

(r) Sekhleecha

(s) Kajeri

(t) Burocha

(u) Mosumcha

(v) 6argacha

(w) Any others

(7) What are role and responsibility of given organs of Kayami-Kayacha? Please mention in points as given below:

(a) What is role and responsibility of Tumlocha?

(b) What is role and responsibility of Nagabucha?

(c) What is role and responsibility of Mulucha?

(d) What is the role of responsibility of Masicha and Masimi?

(e) What is the role and responsibility of Churicha and Khwasicha?

(f) What is the role and responsibility of Secha?

(g) What is the role and responsibility of Chicha?

(h) What is the role and responsibility of Twacha?

(i) What is the role and responsibility of Gijocha?

(j) What is the role and responsibility of Blacha?

(k) What is the role and responsibility of Sylphocha?

(l) What is the role and responsibility of Gracha?

(m) What is the role and responsibility of Ngarmocha?

(n) What is the role and responsibility of Grocha?

(o) What is the role and responsibility of Sekhleecha?

(p) What is the role and responsibility of 6argacha?

(q) What is the role and responsibility of Kajeri?

(r) What is the role and responsibility of Burocha?

(s) What is the role and responsibility of Mosumcha?

(t) What is the role and responsibility of Kayami-Kayacha?

(u) How does govern through Kayami-Kayacha?

(v) What is the role and responsibility of Guricha?

(8) Where is the Kayami-Kayacha customary institution properly practised in the Bahing society?

(a) Culture

(b) Politics

(c) Other:

APPENDIX- II

Photos



Fig 78: Jauma Khleeuma Sili



Fig 79: Harvest Dance of Bahing



Fig 80: Khata Jere Bahing Village



Fig 81: Mrs. Asha Kumari Tolami knitting Bahing traditional Cloth Too



Fig 82: Mahang Kali Devi



Fig 83: Jere Khata Village of Moli



Fig 84: Sivaji, Natural Image of Suldik ward No:1 Moli



Fig 85: In the field with Informants for Bahing Culture



Fig 86: Kathuwa



Fig 87: Dhyawanakso



Fig 88: Dhyawanakso



Fig 89: Making Leaf Plates



Fig 90: Hong Sili (Ritual Dance)



Fig 91: Sekhlee Sili (Hunting Dance performed by Masicha)



Fig 92: Greatest Tumlocha: Mr. Bandhubir



Fig 93: Bahing Traditional Oven



Fig 94: Khwasi



Fig 95: Completion of Champuri



Fig 95: Champuri Maker, Dheplo Saili



Fig 96: Child Ceremony by Nakso Mr. Ram Bharos



Fig 97: Making alcohol for ancestor worship by Mama Nana



Fig 98: Chicha Chi



Fig 99: Punika Lecho Mo



Fig 100: Masimi wearing Champuri Chamaya



Fig 101: Khwasicha and Bhakpa



Fig 102: Nagle Mo



Fig 103: Hunting Kasi (Paha) for ancestor offer



Fig 104: Bhakpa Sili



Fig 105: Chicha



Fig 106: Nagle Mo Nakso: Mr. Rekh Raj Bahing



Fig 107: Nakso Mr. Ram Bharos doing Nagle



Fig 108: Chicha giving ginger to Nakso



Fig 109: With Board members of Bahing Kirat Mulukhim during research process



Fig 110: Instrument for Alcohol-making Khunga and Dabha

APPENDIX- III

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APPENDIX- IV

अनुसूची: ५

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