

## Functions of *Nachhung* (Shaman) in the Chamling Rai in Eastern Nepal

Rai Puspa Raj

### Abstract

*Rai is an indigenous people and decedent of Kirati dynasty, inhabitant of eastern part of Nepal. It is known as Kirat Pradesh before the unification of Nepal. Now, Kirat Pradesh is became political word in Nepal for name of province number 1 but not endorse till present. The Chamling Rai society is comprised different interdependent parts and units as like religion, culture, economy, polity, educational etc. Kirat religion is a part of Rai community constituted by the different units and interdepended among different parts. The Chamling word Nachhung (shaman) is called priest of the Kirat religion. So, this article focuses on the Nachhung who is the Rai priest, shaman and healer as functional unit of the Rai society. The main research questions if how the Nachhung plays function as the being part of Rai society and contribute to existence of Rai society as whole. It explores the interdependence of Nachhung on other parts like rite and ritual, marriage, feast and festival, community, health, social and religious activities.*

**Keywords:** Nachhung's function, rite and ritual, *Sakela* festival, healing illness.

### Introduction

Shamanism is a kind of religion in the primitive society. Tylor argues that animism is the first religion of the world. There was found debate on shamanism among different scholars in 19th century. Tylor, Schmidt considered shamanism as primitive religion but Durkhiem, Marcel Mauss considered magic as immoral and private act. Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown and Evan Pritchard considered magic as religion, which function is social control and maintenance social value. Later, Marett and Hultkranz saw magic is a part of religion and shamanism is a genuine religion (Walter, 2004).

'Shaman is an inspired prophet and healer, a charismatic religious figure, with the power to control the spirits, usually by incarnating them. If spirits speak through him, he is also likely to have the capacity to engage in mystical flight and other out-of body experiences' (Lewis, 1984:9). 'A shaman is one who has direct communication with spirits, is in control of spirits and altered states of consciousness undertakes some magical flights to the spirit world' (Townsend, 1997:1).

Religion is the social glue of the society which maintains social solidarity. It is a highly collective thing. The totemic objects kept for religious rituals which are the representation of the clan or tribe, community (Haralambas & Heald, 2003).

Nepali society is diverse in terms of culture, religion, language etc. So, it is fertile land for shamanistic study. Foreign scholars such as McDonald, Sagant, Jones, Hitchcock, Reinhard, Allen have carried out research on Nepali Shamanism in the decade of 1970s. Later, many scholars have done research on Nepali shaman. In this context, this article is concentrated on the functions of Nachhung (Shaman) of Chamling Rai in Khotang district.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Shamanistic research was started by foreigner during the decade of 1970s in Nepal. Sagant (1976), Jones (1976), Hitchcock (1976) and MacDonald (1979) carried out research of shamanism of Nepal in different caste and ethnic groups. Jones and Sagant studied of Limbu shaman. MacDonald studied Kulung Rai. All These scholars focus on origin of shaman by mythical process. Allen (1976) studied Thulung Rai Shaman. Reinhard (1976) studied Raji community, shaman find out cause of disease by feeling of the pulse and reading rice grains.

Bista (1996) describes the role of *Nakcho* (shaman) as religious leader, including to only death ritual of Rai. Gaenzle (2004) describes the shaman and priest as ritual specialists. Hatuwali (B.S. 2064) describes the Nachhung role in Sakela festivals.

Schlemmer (2019) classifies types of shaman and role of shaman in death ritual in Kulung Rai community. Kirat Rai Chamling Khambatimma, (B.S. 2071) classifies the Rai shaman as *Home* or *Khatwa* performs natural death rites. Other shaman like *Mapa* or *Mopa* performs the unnatural death rites but gives more attention on collection of *Mundum*.

Various studies after 1990 are concentrated on ethnic discrimination and ethnic politics in Nepal. A few of studies are centralized on the shamanism of Rai, but less research has done on *Nachhung's* function in Chamling Rai.

So this paper's main research question is how the Nachhung is originated in Chamling Rai? Second research question is how the *Nachhung* plays function as the being part of Chamling Rai society and contribute to existence of Chamling Rai society as whole?

### **Research Methods**

Diprung Chuichumma Rural Municipality ward no. 2 & 3 (Dandaguan and Batase), Khotang district has been selected as the study area. The rational for selection of this study area is *Majah Kirat* and densely populated of Rai. The universe of the study is unknown, but the sampling unit is Rai shaman, Rai cultural expert who is called *Hosung* and *Pasung*

(elderly person). Primary and secondary data have been collected by the open ended interview schedule. Key informant Interview schedule has been used to get detail information about to identify the function of Nachhung. Researcher reached in the field site then planned for interview and some informal dialogue were conducted with member of *Waitung* (Social Organization). Qualitative data has been interpreted. Through data screening, coding, editing then interpretation has been done. It is limited only Chamling Rai area and does not cover other areas of Rai.

### **Brief Introduction to Rai**

Rai is an indigenous ethnic group and descendent of Kirati dynasty, ruled over thirty-three descent of Nepal. '*Kirat Pradesh*' is the ancestral land of the Rai people. Kirat Pradesh is situated in eastern part of modern Nepal, which is divided into *Wallo Kirat* (near Kirat), *Majha Kirat* (middle Kirat) and *Pallo Kirat* (far Kirat). Majha Kirat covers Solukhumbu, Okhaldhunga, Khotang and Bhojpur.

Historically, there is no exact date of the when did Kirati become Rai but the term 'Rai' term originated from 'Ray', which means 'the king'. Many researchers have concluded that when Prthivinarayan Shah captured middle Kirat and far Kirat then he appointed local Kirati to work as intermediaries' local people. Then, Khumbu concluded was given the title 'Rai', means 'chief' or 'headman' (Bista, 1996). These headmen were given royal commissions and the honorific title 'Rai' (McDougal, 1979). Nowadays, almost of the Kirati indigenous people use 'Rai' title as their last name that identifies them from generation to generation. Now, it becomes the surname of all Rai people. The Rai is a division of the Kirati people. Rai tribe can be defined as the segmental divisions who have common cultural trait and similar cultural element. Rai is not a single tribe but comprises different subtribe. Rai has been divided into 35 sub-tribes, which are Athpahriya, Thulung, Bantawa, Wambule, Khaling, Nachhiring, Chamling etc. Each sub-tribes have distinct cultural and social structure. "*Das Rai, Das Bhasa, eka Bhansa*" (Ten Rais, Ten languages, one Kitchen) proverb shows that unity in diversity of Rai community. Chamling is one of the subtribe of Rai.

### **Origin of *Nachhung* (Shaman)**

According to Tylor, animism is the earliest form of religion which means the belief system in spirits (Harlambas & Heald, 1980). Rai are animistic, who worship nature like river, mountain, rock, tree, stream. They believe that all natural things have soul.

Lewis defines that 'shaman is an inspired prophet, healer, and a charismatic religious figure with the power to control the spirits, usually by incarnating them. If spirits speak through

him, he is also likely to have the capacity to engage in mystical flight and other out-of-body experiences' (Lewis, 1984:9)

According Mundum, *Mubumi* (cuckoo bird) was first shaman and *Kubumi* (*Kuthurke* bird) was first assistance of shaman (Kirat Rai Chamling Khambatima, B.S. 2071). *Laladum* and *Dolemku* (female forest spirit) make shaman in Kulung Rai community. Those persons who are selected by *Laladum* and *Dolemku* became shaman. They give the power to see the invisible and to divine future (Schlemmer, 2019).

*Nachhung* is the main priest of Rai and who performs the all kind of cultural activities. *Nachhung* also plays role as mediator to worship natural things and ancestors. Their ancestors' soul is immortal so Rai people used to *Nachhung* for resting their ancestor soul in *Chula* as household deity. *Nachhung* worships ancestor soul on the occasion of *Udhauli* (downward) and *Ubhauli* (upward) twice in year.

According to Key informant Jukta Bahadur Rai, understanding the origin of *Nachhung* needs to take help from *Mandum*. *Mandum* is the orally recited text by *Nachhung*, which is also called *Thuturi* (orally) Veda of Rai. *Nachhungs* are the main source of *Mandum*, who preserve the *Mandum* their memory and transfer to other *Nachhung*. He elaborates as follow:

*Paruhang* (god of sky) offered marriage proposal to *Nayima* (god of earth). *Nayima* rejected the marriage proposal of *Paruhang* due to unattractive physical appearance of *Paruhang*. Powerful god *Paruhang* thought take revenge of *Nayima* behavior toward him. *Paruhang* is supreme powerful god who can create, destroy, and protect all creatures of universe. He broke the wing of wind, then drought was started, all river, stream, pond were dry. *Nayima* having strong desire for drinking water but she could not found drinking water. *Chibe* Bird (bronzed drong) helped to bring drinking water. Bronzed drong gave *Karkalo* leaf water. *Nayima* drank *Karkalo* leaf water for satisfying her thirsty. It was not water but it was semen of *Paruhang*. *Nayima* was conceives sperm of *Paruhang*. Gradually, *Nayima* physical appearance was change and felt uneasy and illness. In this situation, she was called different types of shaman such as *Kul Dhami*, *Khatwa Dhami*. *Khatwa Dhami* found out the cause of illness of *Nayima*, she was pregnant.'

-Interview with Jukta Bahadur Rai, 2076/03/18

From this statement, *Nachhung* origination main source is *Paruhang*. *Paruhang* created the universe, species and animals. God created the *Nachhung* to care of all creatures in the earth, *Nachhung* is as a mediator between god and creatures. Individual or personal interest and wants is not suit for origin of *Nachhung*. *Nachhung* is selected by *Paruhang* and *Nayima*. Some *Nachhung* are selected by the spirits, which has lower power.

According to *Nachhung* Hast Bahadur Rai, *Nachhung* was created by *Paruhang*, person who will be selected as *Nachhung* has different signs, do different activities and has different dreams with god, and goddess. The main symptom is body while listening sound of playing drum, cymbal and brass plate. Another symptom is ill feeling when eat mutton, and take meal in funeral rite. *Nachhung* Akash Rai also argues that the origination of *Nachhung* by abduction of *Banjahnkri* (god of forest). There were so many *Nachhungs* were found in the period of *Nayima* illness. These *Nachhung* were *Kalchuada Dhami*, *Mul Dhami*. *Gardi Machha Dhami*, *Kahula Dhami*, *Katahar Dhami*.

The type of *Nachhung* is based on the origination and functions. Generally, both male and female can be originated as *Nachhung* (shaman), there is no clear gender division on *Nachhung*, little division on seen like *Nachhung* is male shaman and *Nachhungma* is female shaman. *Nachhung* classification is based on three criteria, which are: a. based on evolution: *Mapa*, *Mubi*, *Surlumi* b) based on cultural function: *Mapa*, *Khatwa*, *Ruchipa* and c) based on Mundumi *Nachhung* path: *Khatwa* and *Mapa* (Kirat Rai Chamling Khambatimma, B.S. 2071). But the main divisions of *Nachhung* are *Khatwa*, *Mapa* and *Sakela Nachhung*. Similarly, two types of Shaman namely *Mopa* and *Selewa* are found in the Kulung Rai. Female shaman is called *Mopped* (Nicoletti, 2004).

*Nachhung* are widely accepted by all clan members and their *Waitung* (social organization) meeting. The types of *Nachhung* is called in Nepali word *Pagari Dhami* (recognized shaman). It is also called *Kul Dhami* (priest shaman). After the selection, he/she function as the Rai priest in the society who gets *Dhami pathi* (food grain for Shaman). Rai people believe that *Nachhung* is the living intellectual property, whose role is guideline and protect the Rai society by mediating the god and goddess.

### ***Nachhung's Function in House construction, Establishment of household deities (Mochhama and Chula)***

Rai are naturalism, so respect to earth as god. Rai people believe that there should be worship the earth before new house construction. *Nachong* purifies weapons, which used in making house and sacrifice cock. It's symbolic meaning is to get protection from any accident from the house making (Mukarung, B.S. 2065).

*Nachhung* Parkash Rai elaborated the function of *Nachhung* in Rai house construction and establishment of *Chula* as household deity. Rai people worship earth as a Mother Nature and Sky as father nature. They always pay homage to *Bokhama* (earth) and *Haikham* (sky).

Before the starting of house construction, Rai people invite to *Nachhung* for checking the soil, where they are going to make house. *Nachhung's* function is to examine soil based on divine power getting by Paruhang and Sumnima. *Nachhung* declares that soil is good or bad for house construction. After the selection of the best place, *Nachhung* worships the *Bokhama* (earth) with recitation of *Mundum*. Then, the function of *Nachhung* is to purify the weapons that are worshiped by *Nachhung* spreading local beer, blood of sacrificed cock.

The *Chula* is simply three stones but its cultural importance is very high. It is sacred thing of all Rai house. Its importance is very high in every aspect of Rai people. All rituals depend on the worshipping of *Chula* (*Hullung* in Chamling Rai language) *Puja* for example *Ubhaulti* (going up), *Udhaulti* (going down), marriage ritual, death ritual start from the *Chula* (Mukarung, B. S. 2065). Rai (B.S. 2075) presents the importance of *Chula* in Bantawa Rai. It is *Hutlung* in Bantawa Rai language. *Hutlung* is belief of supernatural power and sacred things. It is the basic foundation of all rituals of Bantawa Rai (Rai B.S. 2075). *Sakhewa Nachhung* should worships at *Chula* for taking power from the *Chula*, otherwise do not well perform in *Sakhewa* worship (Rai, 2073).

Mukarung (2065) categorized that the *Chula* three stone pillars like *Diwalung*, *Tayalung* and *Ruthulung*, that means ancestors, universe and nature (Mukarung, B.S. 2065).

Key informant informed that *Chula* is made by three erected stones, which are symbolized by ancestors' soul, and household deity. The names of three stones are *Pakhlung*, *Makhalung*, *Siptilung*. *Pakhlung* is placed in the right side, which represents the ancestors, *Makhalung* is erected in the left side, which represents the relative of mother and *Siptilung* is the main household deity. Fire is symbol of the power and light that burn all types of evils and bad and gives light to choose right path.

The function of *Nachhung* is changing physical house into cultural house. *Nachhung* is invited in new house for resting three stones as sacred *Chula*. In this rite, relative, near neighbors are invited in the new house. *Nachhung* consecrates the three stones pillar as sacred. All presence participants make collective consciousness, these stones as their god and goddess. *Maundhum* hymns are recited and cock is sacrificed, offering food grain, and local beer. Rai people worship *Chula Udhaulti* and *Ubhaulti* in a year, when *Nachhung* takes crucial role for worshipping *Chula* during *Udhaulti* and *Ubahaulti* in the Rai community.

*Mochhama* is the household deity of Rai, who protects the household from evils. It is positioned on the separate room which is called *Dechhem*. *Mochhama* establishment rite requires *Nachhung* compulsorily. *Nachhung* main role is resting the household deity in new house. All clan members participate, it is valuable new household owner. He/she gets the

cultural identity and cultural name of house. *Nachhung* purifies the *Mochhama* to continue clan we-feelings and integrations.

### **Nachhung's function in *Chhauwa* or *Chhirinam* Festival**

According to the key informants, it is newly harvested crops offering festival. Rai do not eat newly harvested crops especially ginger after performing *Chhauwa* or *Chhirinam* (*Udhauli*/downward of sun). In this occasion, Rai people worship their household deities like *Chula Puja* (sacred oven, where three stones are symbolized) and *Mochhama Puja* by offering new cultivated goods like ginger, paddy, maize, millet etc. *Nachhung* (Rai priest) performs *Chula Puja* by sacrificing cock, ginger, *Jaand* (local made fermented millet by used yeast). In this festival, *Nachhung* was compulsory need to worship god and goddess. Now, *Nachhung* is not compulsory need to worship due to changing role of *Nachhung*. Its function is replaced by the elder people who know about the *Mundhum* (religious text of Rai). *Nachhung* Hast Bahadur gives priority on the past history of role of the *Nachhung* in *Chhauwa* festival. *Chula Puja* is not easy, it is so difficult to do *Chula Puja* in accordance with *Mundhum*. *Nachhung* who has knowledge and power by given Paruhang and Sumnima can worship *Chula Puja* and performing *Chauwa* festival. Nowadays, the decreased function of *Nachhung* in *Chauwa* is imperfect of *Chhauwa* festival of Rai.

### **Nachhung's function in *Sakela* or *Ubhauli* Festival**

*Sakela* is a great festival of Rai, which is celebrated during *Baishakhe Purnima* (full moon day in the *Baishakha*), and *Mangsire Purnima* (full moon day in the *Mangsir*). *Baishakhe Purnima* is also called *Ubhauli* (upward) festival, is associated with good farming and plantation. Similarly, *Mangsire Purnima* is also called *Udhauli* (downward) is associated with good harvest.

*Sakenwa* is also called in Rai Bantawa language, *Toshi* in Thulung Rai language. Rai people worship Paruhang, Sumnima, nature and *Nayima* (forms of serpent). It was started by the goddess Sumnima, who firstly dances with happy and joy (Rai, B.S. 2063). Hatuwali argues that *Sakela* was introduced with creation of our universe and creatures. It was the one way of worship our creators Paruhang and Sumnima (Hatuwali, B.S. 2064). Bartman gives different aspects of origin of *Sakela*, he focuses on the political events in the reign of Buddhahang king of Dolakha. Her sister *Soisoila* made a beautiful crown, which was wear by king on the occasion worship of god *Hanhuwang*. *Soisoila* could not presence in the crown handed ceremony, crown was formed stone in the ground by the divine power. After that incident, Rai started to worship that stone and earth and celebrate *Sakewa* festival (Bartaman, B.S. 2053).

Key informant Ram Rai asserts that Nachhung chooses the sacred place by his/her dream located area and the using *Mundhumi* power send to *Washep* (feather of bird) which is go in there, where *Sakela Than* is established. Rai people participate and confirms to establishment of *Sakela Than* collectively. The priest is called *Sakela Dhami* (*Sakela Shaman*) as like Durkhiem notion of collective consciousness.

Rai people worship three stones in *Sakawa* festival, which are symbolized earth, the universe and ancestors by *Nakchung* (Hatuwali, B.S. 2064). Key informant *Sakela Nachhung* Hasta Bahadur says about the role of *Sakela Nachhung* in *Sakela* festival.

*Sakela Nachhung* purifies the *Sakela Than* and also purifies their assistances such as *Kanchhari* (drum player), *Tokaya* (director), *Mul Dhole* (Main Drum Player), *Silimompa* (Dance master), *Silimoma* (Dance mistress). *Waitung* and *Dhiatung* all participate in *Sakela puja* in *Sakela Than* (residence of god). *Sakela Nachhung* worships the god and goddess by reciting *Hwarisi* (prose of *Mundum*). He/she worships by chanting the names of all creatures, universe, earth, sun, moon and sky. Then he/she offers local *Janda*, wine, rice and ginger, seedlings of paddy, seedling of maize and sacrifices cock, he-buffalo. He/she recites the *Hwarisi* for good framing and production and the forecast the future will be good or bad. He/she do *Yari*, by using *Apa* is a kind of forest ginger. He/she cuts *Apa* one by one and investigate the future of the community. All devotees give their worshipping goods to *Sakela Nachhung* for offering the god and goddess. He/she orders to start play *Dhol* and *Jhynta* (cymbal) and start to dance *Sakela Sili*. *Dhol* (Drum) are made by local tree but is selected by *Nachhung* spiritual power. After worship is completed, *Nachhung* leads the path with all assistances including carrying *Seuli* (branch of tree), where people perform *Sakela Sili*. *Nachhung* reaches the spot of dancing *Sakela Sili*, he/she purifies the spot and worships of the earth mother nature. He/she removes the evil spirits from the surrounding, where *Sakela* is performed. *Nachhung* gives permission to erect *seuli* Lingo then *Muldhole* plays the drum and *Silmoppa* and *Silimomma* start *Sakela Sili*. *Sili* is associated to the imitation of birds, animals and the expression of civilization process like hunting, gathering, farming. *Nachhung/Nachnungma* elaborates the all types of symbolic meaning of dances and its origination and importance in Rai community. *Nachhung/Nachnungma* recites the *Mundum* prose how the dances were originated and how their ancestors performed and transformed from generation to generation. All people can dance *Sakela* with happy and joy. All villagers like Chhetri, Tamang also participate in *Sakela puja* and and dancing *Sakela Sili* so we are binding in the name of *Piple Sakela*.

-Interview with Hasta Bahadur Rai, 2076/03/20



The above statement shows that the Sakela festival is community festival, which is performed by whole Chamling Rai community and also other villager who are non Rai. *Nachhung* plays main role to protect and to bring prosperity in community and whole village. This festival makes social cohesion and village solidarity of Chamling Rai like Durkhiem notion.

#### **Nachhung's function in *Hullung* or *Ubhauli* Festival (upward worship of household deity)**

According to the key informants, a year divided into two seasons such as *Ubhauli* and *Udhauli*. *Hullung* is held in *Ubhauli* with in fifteen days, the day from *Baishakhe Purnima* (full moon) to *Baishakhe Aushi* (black moon). *Hullung Puja* is a kind of ritual of *Ubhauli*, which is concerned on household deities such as *Chula Puja* and *Mochhama Puja*. *Nachhung* plays great role to perform in *Hullung*. Rai social organization (*Waitung*) makes decision of the *Hullung* day. *Pagari Dhami* (appointed shaman) should perform this *Puja*. All members should participate in this *Puja* ceremony. It is started from the house of *Waitung* headman and then *Nachhung* and participants visit the every house of *Waitung* member. *Mul Dhole* (main drum player), *Slimoppa*, *Silimomma* are dancing in front of the house, *Nachhung* worships the *Chula* where reside the ancestors soul and god and goddess. Those soul which do not take ancestors, reside beyond *Chula* are also worship at eaves and courtyard. The *Nachhung* remedies all evils and ill from the house and wishes to enter the better health, wealth and crops.

#### **Nachhung's Function in Life Passage Ritual**

Ritual specialist *Lachocha* performs the death ritual to manage dead person's soul and transform the dead person's soul (*cap*) into an ancestor (*khal*). Unnatural deaths by drowning, burning, falling, and committing suicides become "bad dead" (*hilsa*, *hillasi*, etc.). Shamans trap bad spirits, exorcise witches, or kill the spirits of bad death (Schlemmer, 2019). Gaenzle (2004) Shaman and priest are ritual specialists whose functions are maintain a link to ancestors, remembering deeds, speaking to them in ritual invocation and interacting with them in ritual exchange.

According to Key informant, *Nachhung* performs *Marimo Puja* and *Waiko Puja* during the pregnancy period of women for better of child and mother, he/she protect from the bad evils and ancestors spirits. After child birth, *Nachhung* role is not necessary within six days. *Nwaran* (Naming ceremony) is performed after five or six days. In the past, *Nachhung* played role in *Nwaran* such as name was chosen, informed to new baby birth but nowadays, *Nachhung* do not need in *Nwaran* (naming ceremony). Similarly, *Nachhung* function is less in feeding ceremony and hair cutting ceremony.

The *Nachhung* plays an important role in marriage ritual. He/she performs the *Chula Puja* (hearth with three erected stone) for happy marital life, prosperous life and long live marital relationship. *Nachhung* worships *Chula* at house of both bride and groom. He/she culturally take out bride from her father *Chula* and perform *Bagdatta* (promise words of parents to give his daughter to groom) in front of hearth. It means bride's houseside ritually transfer her daughter to groom. Similarly, *Nachhung* keep the name of bride in *Chula* of groom house. Ritually, bride lineage is transferred after end of this ritual. She is became ritually and culturally member of this house and whole clan organization.

*Nakcho* religious leader addresses the spirit of the dead and requests it to go to its final resting place to join the ancestors (Bista, 1996).

According to key informant, Chamling Rai buries dead body by *Nachhung* performing death ritual. *Nachhung* takes permission to dig out earth with recitation of earth *Mundum*. When pit is ready, then *Nachhung* cleans and purifies pit and manages to convince reside dead body here by reciting *Mundum*.

*Khatwa Nachhung* only performs to resting soul of natural death. After the lifting dead body in grave, *Nachhung* orders to all funeral participants give *Matti* (gives handful soil to dead body), After the three days mourning, *Nachhung* offers food, meat, local wine to departed soul. Chamling Rai believes that body is dead but soul is not dead. So, deceased person's soul is managed by *Nachhung*. *Nachhung* performs *Yari* (determine reside place of soul) ritual. Dead body soul is rested based on the death nature. The person who dies through natural and good ways, his/her soul rests on *Chula* and with ancestors. Departed soul rest with ancestor is known as *Nikhali*. The ritual is performed in the day by *Pagari Dhami*, whether he/she is *Mapa* or *Khatwa*. The person who dies through unnatural and bad ways, his/her soul does not rest on *Chula* and with ancestors. The ritual is performed in the day by *Pagari Dhami*, whether he/she is *Mapa* or *Khatwa*. Departed soul rests outside of the house or *Chula* is called *Khali*. This type of death ritual is held on throughout night, which is called *Thulo Chinta* (long healing ceremony) by only *Mapa*, *Khatwa Nachhung* do not this ceremony. *Mapa* directs the path of departed soul. *Khali* soul can divided into different types such as *Siya Khali*, *Hachappa Khali*, *Hoduppa Khali*, *Tamrapo Hiropa*, *Mamo Hiropa*, *Chacha Khali*. These *Khali* are resided appropriate place by *Mapa Nachhung*. Only *Mapa Nachhung* has to special function to eradicate or drive off evil spirits of unnatural death. On the occasion of *Ubhauli* and *Udhauli* these soul are offered ritual goods by *Nachhung*.

### ***Nachhung's* Function in Healing Illness**

Good health of individual depends on interrelationship among individual body, one's familial, social, and cosmic relations. Shamans have power to control or combat spirits, ghosts and witches. They perform healing rituals to cure individual illness, familial

wellbeing and prosperous. Shaman's function is to integrate the various communities into a broad network of shared commonalities and experience (Walter, 2003).

McDougal (1979) describes functions of the *Nokachh* (a part time priest) are performing *Nagi Puja* (water serpent), household rites, village rites and the *Dhami* (diviner and spirit medium) are curing sickness, warding off calamity and promoting family prosperity of Kulung Rai (McDougal, 1979).

The *Jhankri* himself that the magical powers, which represent the linkage between the shaman's alter state of consciousness and the therapeutic effects generated in patients by the shaman's ritual performances. Altered states of consciousness can influence healing by other means. Trance may promote health by psychophysiological or psychoneuroimmunological means (Sidky, 2009).

Needy house organized the night healing ceremony (*Chinta Basne*). It is basically organized to purpose one is treatment for ill persons and other is protect household from ancestors spirit, evil spirit and evaluation of evil planetary constellation. Like Gaenzle, shaman role is to remove severed evil planetary constellation (*Grahadas Katnu*). The shaman transfers the evil planetary constellation from household members to banana tree through the cotton thread (Gaenzle, 2004). It is also found that in the Chamling Rai. There is found a practice *Grahsdas katnu* with sacrifice hen, fish, ash gourd, crab, banana tree etc. Rai people believe that the *Nachhung's* supernatural power transfers person's evil planetary constellation to these animals and plants.

*Chinta Basne* purposes are different in the Chamling Rai community. House protection from night shaman ceremony is organized by house owner. *Nachhung* Hasta Bahadur Rai describes that the purpose of *Ghar chinta* are protection from the evil spirits, leave evil spirits from house, purify the bad place, haunted place and wrong place of house. The *Nachhung* forgives to every mistake by house owner and ask for fulfill household wishes as well as get protection and affluent forever. Other important function of *Nachhung* is to cure ill members of house.

*Nachhung* Akash Rai elaborates the *Nachhung's* function to heal ill member's house.

We *Nachhungs* are invited to heal ill member by ill member's house. At first, *Dhami* start to diagnosis what types of ill by touching pulse, feeling pulse, ill examination by counting rice kernels on brass plate with chanting *Mandum*. We get sign from the divination process. If it is minor illness, I will do simple healing ritual such as only *Jharphuk* (to cleanse and blow in healing spirits). If it is major illness, I will order to organize night healing ceremony. In accordance the cases, I will do *Sir ubhyune* (revive honor), I will do worship

certain god, ancestor and deity, I will offer the name of cock and animal, I will ward off evil spirit in forest, at crossroad, in the bank of river and I will suck out evil spirits etc. In the case of pregnancy, I will perform *Waiko Puja* (water deity worship) and *Marimo Puja*. In the case of heart pain, I will away out *Buwamori* (cause of ill by clan members join illegal sexual relation within same blood group) and inform all Waitung member. In the case of lack of appetite, I will do *Ulta Katne* ritual. I also give the herbal medicine to patients. The diseases of abdomen pain may be cause of *Nash* or *Bhed* (intentionally caused by the evil eye such witches, sorceress), I will suck evil eyed things from abdomen by using *Sikiya* (instrument of *Nachhung* that is made by branch of bamboo) and paste of *Kaulo* (*Persea odoratissima*). I will also make *Janter* (folding written mantra, which is wore by patients) for long period sick persons.

-Interview with Nachhung Akash Rai 2076/03/26

## Conclusion

*Nachhung* plays vital role of ritual socialization, which reinforces the common values in the Rai community. *Nachhung* also contributes to strengthen belief systems and taking cure from the disease and ill. Shaman is known as knowledge holder of holy *Mundum* of Chamling Rai. His/her main function is to transfer *Mundum* knowledge from generation to generation. He/she can explain universe, nature and god and goddess. Chamling *Nachhung* interprets and determines the social and cultural world of Chamling Rai. He/she gives high attention to communal prosperity, communal protection and creation by interlinking among spiritual, natural, psychological aspect of human. He/she can perform function as mediators between the profane world and sacred world. He/she is recognized as doctor of Chamling Rai, who performs healing process and make a healthy persons. He/she is herbalist, priest, ritualistic, spiritualistic, and naturalistic. He/she is [mediums](#), [witch doctors](#), spiritual healers or prophets but nowadays his/her functions are changing due to urbanization process, modernization and globalization process.

*Nachhung* origination process is not effective now. *Nachhung* is not available sufficiently in urban area. So *Nachhung* role is non-function. Those Chamling Rai who have followed other religion such Christian and Buddhist have dysfunction of *Nachhung* like with Merton's notion of manifest function and latent function, dysfunction and non-function.

## References

- Bista, D. B. (1996). *People of Nepal* (6th ed.). Kathmandu: Nepal.
- Damain, W. (2003). Among spirits and deities: diverse shamanisms in the Nepal Himalayas, *Cultural Survival Magazine*, 27-2.

- Gaenslz, M. (2004). Rai shamanism. In M. N. Walter & E. J. N. Fridman (Eds.), *Shamanism: An encyclopedia of world beliefs, practices, and culture*, Volume 1 (pp. 275- 277). California: ABC-CLIO.
- Haralambos, M. & R. M. Heald (2003). *Sociology themes and perspective* (20th ed.). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Hitchcock, J. T. (1976). Aspects of Bhujel shamanism. In J. T. Hitchcock and R. L. Jones (Eds.), *Spirit possession in the Nepal Himalayas*, (pp. 165-196). Warminster: Aris & Phillips.
- Jones, R. L. (1976). Limbu spirit possession and shamanism. In J.T. Hitchcock & R.L. Jones (Eds.), *Spirit possession in the Nepal Himalayas*, (pp. 29-55). Warminster: Aris & Phillips.
- Lewis, L.M. (1984). What is shaman? In M. Hopal (Ed.), *Shamanism in Eurasia*, (Pp. 3-11). Gottingen: Edition Herodot.
- McDougal, C. (1979). *The Kulung Rai*. Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar.
- Nicoletti, M. (2004). *Shamanic solitudes: ecstasy, madness and spirit possession in the Nepal Himalaya*. Kathmandu: Vajra Publication.
- Reinhard, J. (1976). Shamanism among the Raji of southwest Nepal. In J.T. Hitchcock & R.L. Jones (Eds.), *Spirit possession in the Nepal Himalayas*, (pp. 263-293). Warminster: Aris & Phillips.
- Sagant, P. (1976). Becoming a Limbu priest: ethnographic note. In J.T. Hitchcock & R.L. Jones (Eds.), *Spirit possession in the Nepal Himalayas*, (pp. 55-99). Warminster: Aris & Phillips.
- Schlemmer, G. (2019). Following the ancestors managing the otherness. In M. Carrin (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of the religions of indigenous people of South Asia*. Leiden: Brill.
- Sidky, H. (2009). A shaman's cure: The relationship between altered states of consciousness and shamanic healing, *Anthropology of Consciousness* 20(2):171-197
- Townsend, J. B. (2001). Modern non-traditional and invented shamanism. In J. Pentikainen (Ed.), *Shamanhood: symbolism and epic* (pp. 257-264). Budapest: Akademiai Kiado.
- Walter, M. N. (2004). Introduction. In M. N. Walter, & E. J. N. Fridman (Eds.), *Shamanism: an encyclopedia of world beliefs, practices, and culture*, Volume 1 (pp. I- XXVIII). California: ABC-CLIO.
- किरात राई चाम्लिङ खाम्बातिम (वि.सं. २०७१) मुन्दुम । काठमाडौं: किरात राई चाम्लिङ खाम्बातिम ।
- मुकारुङ, शुभ (वि.सं. २०६५) किरात र राई जाति । काठमाडौं: नेपाल फेडरेसन अफ इन्डिजिनिअस ।
- राई, कमलजंग (वि.सं. २०७३) साखेवा सिली । ललितपुर : आदिवासी जनजाति उत्थान राष्ट्रिय प्रतिष्ठान ।
- राई, गडुलमान (वि.सं. २०६३) किरात संस्कार । ललितपुर : आदिवासी जनजाति उत्थान राष्ट्रिय प्रतिष्ठान ।
- राई, राजकुमार (वि. सं. २०७५) बान्तावा राई: समुदाय र संस्कृति । काठमाडौं: एकेडेमिक बुक सेन्टर ।
- वर्तमान, नवराज (वि.सं. २०५३) साकेवाले भलो गरुन्, निप्सुङ, ४(२), पृ. ६ ।
- हतुवाली, चन्द्रकुमार (वि. सं. २०६४) साकेन्वा: किराती राईहरुको महान् चाड । काठमाडौं: बान्ताव रिसर्च सेन्टर ।