

The Contribution of the Ancient Kirat Civilization in Nepal and its Consequences of Decline

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Abstract

Nepal is a multi-lingual, multi-religious, and multi-cultural South Asian mountain country. The source of its civilization is the Kirat dynasty and the sacred book or scripture of the Kirat religion: 'Mundum', which had been founded by the indigenous Kirat people and had rich social and cultural values. Kirat is a collective term for the indigenous people of Nepal. Kirat Dynasty had long ruled the country and left a rich legacy; this includes equal treatment of all ethnic groups, religions, and members of both sexes to maintain the spirit of social harmony. In the late period of the Kirat Dynasty, the Indian Brahmins in the north introduced caste discrimination and oppression of the Dalits and so-called untouchables, forced the mountain people to convert to Hinduism and upgrading Khasa to the national language of Nepal. The language and religious cultures of about 60 indigenous peoples have disappeared from history during this process. Kirat religion also tended to decline. It is the 21st century, but Nepal still has hidden caste and gender discrimination. The main purpose of this paper is to clarify that the historical narrative of Gopal as the source of Nepali civilization in mainstream academic circles today has distorted due to the lack of information about the ancient and original Kirat civilization. The real context of literature and history of Nepal is still obscured. Based on the oral history and social memory of the mountain peoples, this paper presents the characteristics of ancient Kirat civilization and religion, reveals the status of its creation and carrying heave and the country's prosperity is closely related, and improves the social and cultural status of the indigenous people, ensuring the fair inheritance of cultures of all ethnic groups is the only way for sustainable development.

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1. Preface

The Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal is in the South Asian subcontinent, adjacent to India and China, with cultural diversity and a typical multi-lingual, multi-cultural, and multi-religious country. In Nepal, there are Indigenous Mongoloid and Indo-European Aryan people. Most of the population believes in Hinduism and follows the caste system of each ethnic group, and they have been observing traditional customs. According to National Census 2021, there are 142 ethnic groups and 124 languages. 81.19% of the population believes in Hinduism, 8.21% in Buddhism, 5 % in Islam, and 3.17% in Kiratism. Many people in mountainous areas believe in traditional religions.

Nepal was an ancient kingdom until 2008. Different Kings ruled during that period. Ancient legends say that the Kirat dynasty of the Kirat people ruled Nepal after Gopal and Mahispal dynasties. The Kirat dynasty is the longest-living dynasty in Nepal's history and thus holds an important position. Some scholars now claim that the Kirat dynasty is the source of the civilization history of Nepal (Rai 2014:12). Modern Nepal is a civilization descended from the Kirat dynasty [1]. The Kirat civilization and cultural structure of Kirat is strong [2].

Unfortunately, there is still a lack of complete information on the ancient Gopal, Mahispal, and Kirat people in Nepalese history due to the lack of necessary research. We only know so far that the historical material of the Kirat dynasty is slightly more than the Gopal and Mahispal dynasties, so it is more authentic and reliable. Nepal and the Kathmandu Valley were ruled by Som and Lichchhavi dynasties after the Kirat dynasty. The Lichchhavi inscriptions contain information about the Kirat civilization: while the ancestors of the Gopal and Mahispal dynasties were still nomadic, the Kirat people settled in the Kathmandu Valley, started agriculture, developed small industries and crafts, and exported products to China and India. In addition, there are records of taxation, religious ceremonies, festivals, and other activities. These records show that the Kiratas were artistic and meticulous, with a complete state system and relics such as statues of Kings, gods Kalabhairav, goddess Kali, and the palace of Gokarna [3]. For example, the Birupakshya of the Kirat period is the oldest idol in Nepal. The Kirat period not only had different ethnic groups but also introduced Shaiva, Vaishnav, and other Buddhist shrines and other religious temples.

In 250 BC, when the 14th king of Kirat Sthunka was on the throne, he received the Indian Ashoka, visited Lumbini, the birthplace of the Lord Buddha, and erected a stone memorial column. The column had inscribed with Brahman inscriptions. It is the earliest document ever found in Nepal. Later, Lumbini had been visited by Faxian Feiyan, an eminent monk in the Eastern Jin dynasty, and Xuanzang Yuanzhang, a monk of the Tang dynasty [4].

In Nepal's history, the system of monarchy, national philosophy, democratic rule, sovereign centralization, legislation, and criminal punishment was related to the Kirat dynasty. Its administration, religion, politics, society, economy, culture, language, law, and government judicial system were continued, expanded, and strengthened in the successor Lichchhavi dynasty. The language of the Lichchhavi dynasty was Sanskrit, and place names had written in Sanskrit. But earlier settlements were more likely to be named in the Kirat and other languages. Lichchhavi's time was powerful, but its roots were already rooted in the Kirat dynasty. Therefore can

say that it was the Kirat people and their dynasty that contributed to the foundation of Nepal's ancient civilization. Nepal's modern society also evolved from Kirat. Insufficient research on Kirat civilization and religion in today's Nepalese academic circles affects the world's complete understanding of Nepalese literature and history. This article intends to combine archaeological history and ethnological data to present the status and role of the social and cultural consequences of its decline, aiming to restore the historical truth and discover the future development of Nepal.

2.The Narrative Limitations of Official History

History is a combination of events. Historians can obtain historical records from inscriptions and other recorded documents and then study the social, political, economic, cultural, scientific, and related themes and changes of that time according to chronological order. According to Pokhrel Rajkumar, "History is a way of understanding the world through multiple comparisons. By learning the lessons from the past, humans regulate their present actions and guide their future development"[5]. History is the eye through which people recognize their home, says Gyanmani Nepal. Once people forget history or have no sense of it, they may forget their home lineage. By studying history, we can know what our ancestors have done or missed for the development and progress of our country, learn from experience and lessons, and then take measures to deal with reality in the future [6].

Who writes history, why, and how? Who is the creator of history? Is the History of Nepal true? Rajkumar said that history should be written based on factual evidence. Nepalese culture is not rooted in Mesopotamian civilization, Nile Egyptian civilization, or Western philosophy. Our current knowledge is limited, and we don't have any evidence of the early history of Nepal, so we can only infer history since the rise of the Gopal dynasty based on Eastern philosophy [7]. Based on Rajkumar's statement, we can say that a thorough study of Nepalese history reveals a lack of historical materials before the Gopal Dynasty. However, Nepali historians have accepted the history since the Gopal dynasty as the beginning of Nepali history.

The valley where Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, was called the Nepal Valley in ancient times. But when and why did Nepal become the name of the country? How did Kathmandu become the capital name of Nepal? Although these questions' answer is ambiguous, historians have different views on the origin of Nepal and even when and why the name of Nepal came into being. According to Sesil Bengal, Nepal comes from the Tibetan Language. Ne means house, Pal means plush, and the combination means wool house[8]. This may be because Tibetans know that ancient Nepal was rich in wool exported to India. According to A.L Badel, the Burmese term Ne means religious place, Pal means resident, and it means resident of a sacred place. Some scholars say that in Kirat, one of the indigenous tribal languages of Nepal, Nyet refers to goods, Pa refers to the people, and the combination means merchants. Some scholars say that in the Newar language, one of the main ethnic groups in Nepal, Ne refers to the middle, and Pa refers to the land. Nepal refers to the Middle Earth valley between the north and south mountains [9]. In the 1914 edition of the Janak Education Material Center's History book, G. Nepal asserts that the word Nepal originated from Nip caste of the royal family of Gopal dynasty. Other linguists, historians, and Hindu and Buddhist mythologists have their own theories. But it is a fact that the Nepal name had not unified before modern times.

The author draws a preliminary conclusion based on the reading analysis: when the ancient Kirat dynasty traded with India, it was called Kirat by the Indians. The word Nepal in ancient Sanskrit texts is synonymous with Kirat. Ram Chandra Rai [10] quoted Tikaram Sharma Nepal is synonymous with and derived from Kirat. Scholars differ on the etymology of Nepal.

Nepalese historical materials since the Lichchhavi dynasty are more reliable and credible. However, the academic circles have different opinions on the time and place of the dynasty's beginning in Nepal. Scientific and artistic attainments of the ancient King Manadev I are recognized nationally. But the historical legacy of the King's predecessor deserves more attention. It is believed that national or social history should be written by those who have morality and merit. But the truth is that all Nepali history books are full of praise for the mighty Kings. For example, the history books from the Rana and Shaha dynasties praised the Kings and rarely mentioned the general people. Professor N.K. Nobel Kishor Rai thus says: "History should not be just the biography of Kings and conquerors. The regional, social and living histories of the people and the geography of the country are yet to be written" [11]. The powerful government plays a crucial role in preserving historical data. However, historical materials are often limited to emperors. They do not adequately describe the heroic deeds of the Nepalese soldiers who fought alongside the Kings against foreign enemies during the unification of Nepal or the Nepalese soldiers in the Nepali-British War. What is the reason? Lal Syankarelu Rapacha in the 'Journal of Indigenous Nationalities Foundation For Development' has explained the history written from the Top (Superstructure in Marxist thought) and the Bottom (Base in Marxist thought). He says that only the strong have history, language, and culture, and the others only follow and obey the characterization of colonial historiography. The result is history written from the Top. So far, the mainstream historical theory in Nepal has been written from the Top. For instance; Magars, Gurungs, and other mountain warriors have always been involved in the founding of Nepal, But Prithvi Narayan Shaha (King) alone won the title of founder of modern Nepal [12]. It is self-evident that the narrative writing of the history of Nepal is so operated.

Obviously, this can not fully and correctly present the historical development of Nepal. If we want to write the history of Nepal today, we must add the knowledge of the history of the Kirat civilization. Unfortunately, mainstream historians are still not fascinated with exploring when and where the Kirat people settled in Kathmandu and laid the foundations of Nepalese Civilization. The historical fact that the Kirat people created a civilization in Kathmandu still needs historical data to support it. In ancient times, Nepal was still a multi-national country and land-state lords in different regions. But the Kathmandu Valley is clearly the center of Nepalese civilization. Its history is thus more on display. Unfortunately, the contribution of the Kirat civilization remains to be revealed. This article tries to make up for that.

3. Overview of Kirat civilization and religious history

The founders of the Kirat civilization were the Kirats. It is one of the about 60 indigenous peoples of Nepal but has the oldest culture. The Kirats ruled Nepal for a long time and left many descendants. However, due to the lack of detailed historical data, research, and discussion, national and international scholars have different opinions on which ethnic groups belong to the descendants of the Kirat people today. From an ethnological and anthropological point of view, Rai, Limbu, Yakkha, and Sunuwar, the mountain peoples of present-day Nepal,

share the Kirat name. Most of their family names are prefixed with Kirat as a collective name to show their identification such as Kirat Rai, Kirat Limbu, and so on. Chemjong Iman Singh, Bista Dor Bahadur, Pandey Ram Kumar, Swami Prapannacharya, Budha Magar Harsa Bahadur, and many other historians pointed out that The Gurung, Magar, Tamang, Sherpa, Tharu, Thakali, Jirel, Dhimal, Lapche, and other ethnic groups also have Kirat attributes. According to the book “Kirat Rai International Conference and Kirat Festival 2011” Published by Kirat Rai Yayokhkha, Surel, Jirel, Dhimal, Hayu, and Thami and among other ethnic group also claim to be descendants of the Kirat people [13]. Ramchandra Rai concluded that Nepalese indigenous cultures are actually similar, Kirat is thus the ancestral root of all indigenous people [14].

Historians also disagree on the etymology of Kirat. Janaklal Sharma puts it this way: ‘Kir’ means pig, ‘Ata’ means to kill and eat. Ramchandra Rai’s book “Heritage of the Kiratas” supports Govinda Tandon and opposes Janaklal Sharma. He quoted Tandon saying that the “Kirat” word is not related to pigs. ‘Ata’ is not to eat or slaughter in the Rai language, but to give up. “Kirat” refers to the continuous conquest of land that extends to the sea [15]. Swami Prapannacharya also said: “Kirat” means ‘ruling the sea’[16]. Sunit Kumar Chatterjee [17] argues that Kirat should be the Sanskrit name of the ancient Chinese and Tibetans. Singh G.P. Sith objected to Chatterjee’s claim, he points out that there is no historical record of Han Tibetan or Tibeto-Burmese people calling themselves Kirat moving to South Asia. Kirat is thus certainly not of Chinese origin from the North-east but only of Indian origin from the south [18]. Ramchandra Rai proposes an alternative [19]: The word ‘Kailaso’ in Kirat scripture/philosophy Mundum means a place of sanctuary for the supreme Gods and is pronounce close to Kirat. Its root is Mount Kailash. Its pronunciation evolution trajectory is Kailaso to Kailati to Karati to Kirat. According to the Sanskrit-Hindi dictionary, the word “Kirat” means a tribe that lives in the mountains and earns its living by hunting [20].

Regardless of the origin of the etymology, Nepalese scholars agree that there are two sources of ethnic groups from outside and settled in Nepal: one is the northern Mongolian race. The second is the southern Indo-European Aryan race[21]. The Origin of the Burmese currently known as the Mongolians of Nepal, It has considered to be the valley of the Huanghe River in China. Based on the content and details described in the ‘Mundum’ such as worship methods, worship materials, place names, primitive traditions, etc., there is a basis that the Kirats may have spread to other places from the Huanghe River [22]. It is similar to the oral history of the Miao people in China. According to Tony Hagen and Chemjong Iman Singh, the Kirat people came to Nepal from China. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee and some historians, linguists, culturalists, and researchers even consider that the Kirat people are a branch of the Mongolian ethnic group in China. This claim is unconditional and clearly needs more research.

Still yet, Nepal doesn’t have any information on where the Kirat people lived before the Mahispal dynasty and how they moved into Nepal Valley (now Kathmandu Valley). But after the defeat of Lichchavis, there is evidence from history that the kingdom started to govern in the eastern part of Nepal. Some historians and researchers say that the Kirat ruled the east part of Nepal after being defeated by the Lichchhavi. Likewise, other researchers say that the Kirat used to regulate eastern Nepal. Mahispal Kings attacked and defeated Kirat in the Kathmandu Valley and started to rule there. Even after being defeated by the Lichchhavi, they still went to occupy east Nepal and Established the ‘Kirat State’. Even now, the eastern part of Nepal (the area inhabited by

the Kirats) is named Wollo or Near Kirat (the Kõits-Sunuwar living), Majh or Central Kirat (the Rai Living), and Pallo or Far Kirat (the Limbu living). The Sanskrit classics, the Rigveda, the Mahabharata, and other ancient texts all mention that the Kirat people ruled Nepal and the Indian subcontinent and thus were natives of Nepal, India, and Bhutan. But they didn't leave a complete documentary record. Kautilya has written in his book Economics that the Kirat people had engaged in the wool trade to India. They are brave and call themselves Kirawa, its root is Kiwa (tiger). The Sanskrit scripture, the Ramayana, also says that the Kirats are as strong and formidable as a tiger. Today's Kirat descendants differ in language, but their pragmatic customs and religious and artistic rituals are the same: they worship natural deities and intermarry. When they plant and harvest their crops, they celebrate festivals based on the worship of nature, named festivals in their native language: the Rai call it 'Sakela', the Limbu call it 'Chasok Tangnam', Kõits Sunuwar calls it 'Folasyodar' and Yakkhha called it 'Chasuwa'. Among all kinds of cultural matters of the descendants of each branch of Kirat people, Kirat religion and Mundum scripture is a common belief and has a profound influence on their social culture. They share a common cultural heritage.

The Mundum holy book is not only the ancient belief of the Kirat people but also a primitive poetic text imbued with Buddhist scripture and philosophy. When people perform rituals, shamans and Dewa (priests) sing Mundum in rhythmic tunes. These national historical memories have been passing down from generation to generation orally. The Kirat people have all ceremonial celebrations, which has carried out according to the Mundum, including all the crucial joint rituals of the individual from birth to death. The Mundum performs the dual functions of culture and society and uses traditional etiquette to regulate people's production and life communication. The book 'Kirat Rai International Conference and Kirat Festivals 2011' points out that Mundum in the local language is "cognition of the origin and development of human beings, and exploring the future for good and bad"[23]. It is also called Mukdum, Mundhum, etc., and has different meanings in the Kirat Rais languages. For example, in the Puma language, 'Mun' refers to exorcism, and 'Dum' refers to a dialect combination 'dialect used during exorcism' in the Bantawa language 'Mun' refers to a man, and 'Dum' refers to dialect, means people's dialect and Chamling language 'Mun' refers to creativity and 'Dum' refers to dialect, 'means creativity of dialect'[24].

In short, Mundum refers to the vernacular creativity of people everywhere. [24] Mundum contains language, culture, history, geography, art, literature, philosophy, law, society, religious beliefs, values, people, animals, and the five elements (Earth, air, water, fire, and ether). According to Vishnu S. Rai in the book Mundum Hosung by Kirat Rai Chamling Khambatim, Mundum is an unwritten audio document that has been practiced and used by the ancestors of Kirat since ancient times. It introduces the Kirat people's background and views on the origins of creation and the evolution of human civilization, how humans moved from hunting to animal husbandry to agriculture [25]. As no one can recite Mundum, Dewa (Kirat priest) who can recite Mundum has endowed with divine power. The Kirats believe in witchcraft and supernatural ghosts and gods. Even today, when someone is sick in the mountain village, the family will have shamans perform exorcism rituals before going to the hospital. The witch doctor treats patients through Mundum. Kirats believe that the daily life of Kirats starts from Mundum. If there is no Mundum, there is no Kirat. Unfortunately, with the strong introduction of Hinduism, the Kiratism (Mundum scripture), which plays a vital role in the inheritance of social life and culture, gradually declined in Nepal.

4. Decline and Consequences of Kirat Civilization

People don't know the whole structure of the Kirat civilization so far, but according to the present situation, it is not difficult to infer that Mundum is its core. Mundum has a lasting influence on Nepalese history and shapes and maintains Kirat's social and cultural life. We should begin today to examine the trajectory and consequences of its decline under Hindu pressure.

4.1. The rise of Hinduism and the decline of Kiratism

The Lichchhavi rulers of ancient Nepal were from northern India, which established the powerful Lichchhavi Dynasty in 465, which lasted for more than 400 years (to 879). Some scholars believe that Hindu dominance in Nepal began at this time. In the 8th century, a king invited an Indian Brahman master, Sankara (700-750), to spread Hinduism [26]. At this time, Nepal had become a paradise for the flourishing of various religions. In ancient times, most kings believed in Hinduism but did not oppose the beliefs of other religions, which enabled Nepal's religion to flourish. After the establishment of the Malla Dynasty, the king strongly advocated and praised Hinduism, and a large number of Hindus entered Nepal.

In the 14th century AD, King Jayasthiti Malla forced the people to believe in Hinduism, strengthened the structure of the Hindu caste system, and forced the indigenous peoples of Nepal to give up their language and religion, convert to Hinduism, and speak the Khasa language (Nepali). By the 18th century, Hinduism had further strengthened in Nepal, and its dominance had consolidated. The caste system (Varna System) is a hierarchical caste system based on Hinduism. The caste system has divided into four castes, Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra. It introduced the concept of social stratification in Nepal and people's social life constrained by class [27]. The most critical characteristic of the caste system is to solidify and assign different values to occupations and treat them differently. For example, the Brahmans were priests, scholars, teachers, and so on; Kshatriyas served as Kings, warriors, soldiers, and magistrates; The Vaishyas were more farmers, shepherds, and merchants; Shudra, on the other hand, had more services. The caste system, characterized by significant hierarchical discrimination, often solidifies the division of labor and separates the superior from the inferior for abuse by the religious and political upper classes. For instance, the Brahmans are the so-called upper caste; the Shudras are the so-called lower or untouchable caste. Under this system, Nepalese indigenous people had classified into the Vaishya. The tribe chief claims to belong to the Kshatriya. Strongly speaking, the caste system does not necessarily conform to Hindu orthodoxy, but this is how secular rulers use religious categorization to maintain their rule. According to Gita Kumari Dahal, the 'eternal Lingeswor' of King Naradev (645-879 AD) can prove the fact that the Lichchhavi dynasty initially introduced the caste system from India [28]. However, it has not been vigorously promoted and respected. With time, caste discrimination has intensified, and the aborigines and the Dalit (so-called untouchable) castes have been subjected to more extreme and cruel oppression. Vishnu Rai recorded that when King Prithvi Narayan Shaha invaded the Kingdom of Kirat, he brutally killed the elderly, pregnant women, and fetuses of Kirat. Both corpses and survivors were tied with the holy thread Janai (holy tread of Hindus) and forcibly converted to Hinduism. At that time, some Kirat people didn't use to eat mutton. However, the authorities determined that those who did not follow the new regulations to celebrate the Dashain and smear the blood hand-prints on the wall would jailed for opposing Hinduism [29].

Under this pressure, many place names in the ancient period have also changed to Sanskrit. Over time, more indigenous peoples have forgotten their religious, linguistic, and cultural norms. Giuseppe Mazzini, an Italian revolutionary historian, said: "If you want to destroy a people, you have to destroy the language of that people." It could be seen in Nepalese society. The rulers and historians worked together to change the name of Kirat. Although historian Baburam Acharya called Mt. Everest 'Sagarmatha', its traditional name was Chomolungma in Kirat. Acharya came from a Sanskrit-speaking Hindu family and was fluent in Nepali [30].

Brahman used to believe that if the indigenous people read the book, they would become anti-Brahman. Therefore, they encouraged only the Brahman and Kshatriya castes to read, preventing the indigenous and so-called untouchable people from reading and literacy. As a result, Brahman's discourse and information misled indigenous and so-called lower caste people. Because of their lack of education and self-consciousness, they became more weak. The so-called upper caste monopolized power, wealth, and knowledge, while the indigenous and so-called lower caste became increasingly powerless and ignorant. Nepal's rich and powerful class and proletarian class emerged from this. Vishnu Rai commented: "From a Marxist point of view, religion creates a terrible abyss of class systems. The ruling class develops a powerful society under the guise of religion to enhance its power and class status." [31]

The civilization created by the Kirat people has contributed to the history of Nepal. However, the Hindu rulers since then abused their power to eradicate the language, religion, and history instead of studying the Kirat civilization to save history. As a result, the cultural identity of the Kirat people is on the verge of decline and even extinction.

But all caste oppression and inequality are bound to lead to revolt. Nepal's mountain aborigines have fought incessantly against cultural monopoly and social persecution of their Hindu rulers. Since entering modern times, various social movements and resistance struggles in Nepal have continued in 1950, 1960, 1979, 1989, and 2005-06. The People's Liberation Movement in 2005-06 was the most important. Its purpose is to eliminate the exploitation and oppression of caste hierarchy and establish a country dominated by proletarians. In 1996, the Maoists of the Communist Party of Nepal launched a continuous armed struggle that lasted for ten years, eventually leading to political changes in the country: the end-of-the-millennium dictatorship of the Hindu monarchy. It has established a more equal, harmonious, and sustainable republic.

The political awareness of the Nepalese people has since awakened and improved. Aboriginal language and cultural self-awareness continued to strengthen. Indigenous scholars began to study and write their own linguistic, cultural, and religious history. The Kirat people, who had no written language, also devoted themselves to academic writing by oral language and oral history. Provincial and local authorities have also gradually recognized local aboriginal languages as official languages. It laid the foundation for the protection of endangered languages and cultural traditions and won various policy support. Nevertheless, as Dahal Geeta Kumari said, although Nepal declared a "secular state" in 2006, it abolished Hinduism's state religion status and banned caste discrimination, the long-standing stereotypes and prejudices are still causing all kinds of caste discrimination and persecution of the untouchables [32].

4.2. The Influence of the Decline of Kiratism (Mundum holy book)

'Mundum' contains rich social and cultural connotations of Kirat, including heroic legends and their historical roles. Its decline will inevitably hurt Nepalese society, mainly in the following aspects:

(a) Lower Status of Women. The Mundum advocates equal rights and status for men and women without gender and caste discrimination. The legacy of this system still exists in the indigenous community of Kirat descendants. Mundum could also protect human rights by respecting Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and other religions. After the emergence of Hinduism in Nepal, women's freedom started to be restricted, making them inferior to men, which cultivated the stereotype and prejudice that men are superior. Hinduism stipulates that women should be behind men and can only do chores, which means housekeeping and family care. The Brahmin creed advocates that women do not need to read, should not talk too much, but should obey their husbands and not talk back. The consequence of this tradition is that the mainstream view in Nepalese society until recent years is that women are incompetent and virtuous. Women outnumber men in Nepal, but more men are literate than women. Men are still the sole breadwinner in most families, which makes food and clothing problems for many families. The consequence is that many families in Nepal are still struggling to escape poverty.

(b) Changes in religious beliefs The decline of Mundum affects Kirat descendants to inherit and write their history. The Hindu intellectual elite-dominated and monopolized history writing. Buddhism flourished in Nepal during the Kirat dynasty but had been suppressed by the Hindus. Even though the Kirat people respected all religions, Hinduism relied on political power to force Nepalese to convert, thus destroying the balance of tribal language and traditional beliefs. The indigenous professed conversion to Hinduism, but their rituals and practices are still carried out traditionally by their community priests. Although the Kirat descendants in front of them claim to be Hindu, they also exhibit their rituals and beliefs by Mundum norms. After the establishment of The Republic of Nepal, indigenous people also began to learn, understand, and enhance their cultural image.

(c) Loss of traditional culture Kirat descendants comprise most of Nepal's mountain peoples. They used to believe in the teachings of Mundum and used them as a rule of daily practice. Kirat people's rites of passage are possible according to the Mundum. Their judicial practice also followed the norms of the teachings of Mundum. By extension, the Mundum regulates the relationship between man and nature and between man and man. But with the demise of the Kirat civilization, Mundum also tended to decline. Most social and cultural connotations are disappearing and many traditional norms are slowly forgetting.

(d) Bias in historical writing The spiritual core of Nepalese civilization is the Kiratism. Some researchers and Kirat priests (Dewa) say that Mundum contains records of the daily activities of life and everything that happened in ancient times, it does not have written materials, so it can be transferred by recitation and word of mouth. As the Kirat religion declined, the records contained in Mundum are slowly forgetting. At the same time, the descendants of the Kirats had no right to read and had difficulty recording and writing their history. Forgotten historical memory does not mean the absence of history. Without studying and preserving Kirat's religion and Kirat culture, without revisiting Kirat people's history, the writing of Nepalese history does not reflect the development of its history.

Nepal, a mountainous country in South Asia, has always been an independent and sovereign country. It used to

be governed by its traditional cultural practices and religious classics. However, since modern times, many neighboring countries, including India, have suffered from the influence of colonial powers. Due to the pressure of Hindu culture and religion on Nepali society, the language, culture, and religion of many indigenous tribes have been eroded or even endangered. Yet castes and gender discrimination are inherent in Hinduism. Even if discrimination and oppression against the so-called untouchable have ended by the political and legal system, it still exists in social practice. The pernicious effects are still evident.

According to Rai, quoting Thomas Hobbes, those practices of the big bullying the small, the strong bullying the weak, and the rich subduing the poor, all belonged to the law of the jungle, 'fishery justice' (Rai, 2019: 405). Regrettably, this fish-pond order is still widespread in the 21st century in Nepal and broadly in the international community. The belief that "MIGHT IS RIGHT" still prevails on every continent. The roots of caste and gender discrimination in South Asia lie not in Hinduism but in the rulers who hold secular power. Hindu ruler abuses Hinduism to indulge in blind worship, to erase the history, culture, language, and religion of other countries, and to show their power. Therefore, this paper emphasizes that the Nepalese republican government has more obligations and responsibilities to protect the cultural traditions, language, and religion of all ethnic groups, to enhance the social status of the bottom marginal minority, and take measures to improve their history writing, to enrich the civilized image of Nepal.

5. Conclusion

The ancient history of the Kingdom of Nepal is unclear. Only the general sequence is knowable: the Kirats established the dynasty, followed by the Lichavi and Malla. The modern history of Nepal began with the King Shah in 1768. Thus, we can safely say that the political and social civilization of Nepal began with the Kirat dynasty. Mundum is the core of the Kirat civilization. It is not only the social culture of specific ethnic groups but also the source of the civilization history of Nepal. The governance system of the Kirat dynasty has operated on the teachings and philosophy of Mundum. At that time, Nepali society was relatively balanced, with no caste and class discrimination. Most Nepali historians agree that most contemporary Nepalese indigenous people are of Kirat descent. But, later in the Kirat dynasty, Brahmans introduced Hinduism and a single Sanskrit system. The languages, religions, and cultures of other ethnic groups gradually disappeared. Caste discrimination has led to a widening gap between have and have not. The Brahmin colonial tendencies of Hinduism led to the decay of Kirat Mundum. Its core message is gradually forgetting everything. At least half of the cultural information of Nepal carried by its native ethnic groups is disappearing. It has to excavate and organize information on the history of the Kirat civilization. But the harsher reality is that the profound influence of the caste system has made Nepal's modernization road difficult and tortuous. Many women, Dalits, and aboriginal children in the country are still unable to gain the ability and reasonable opportunity to interpret their own social culture through higher education. Relevant policies and regulations still need to be fully improved and implemented.

On the other hand, although the descendants of Kirat suffered from exploitation and oppression for a long time, and even were forced to convert to other religions, wherever they went, no matter how strong the cultural oppression and social exclusion were, they still made a tenacious effort to let Mundum play a role in preventing the complete disappearance of the Kirat people, their languages and religions. Kirat people's life practices, daily

behavior, and even social life still take the principle of Mundum as the basic norm. Many folk festivals and religious rituals are still performing by the Mundum holy book, Shaman, and Dewa (Kirat priest) rather than the Hindu scriptures and Brahman priests. They still worship the Kirat goddess Sumnima and the god Paruhang. These facts support the principle that Kirat cultural information is essential and indispensable to the complete history of Nepal. Therefore, we should study the Kirat people's language, religion, culture, history, and their classical dynasties more deeply and have to present the truth of the history and civilization of Nepal more comprehensively.

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