

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Nepal anciently known as “Nepa: Manda” for the territory of Kathmandu Valley and its surroundings is very rich in its culture, traditions, art, customs etc. The valley, also the capital city of Nepal lies at the altitude of about 1300m from the sea level. Eight rivers flow through the valley namely Bagmati, Bishnumati, Dhobikhola, Manohara, Hanumante, Kodku, Nakhhu and Balkhu. The valley had been ruled by different kings from different dynasties; Gopala, Mahispala, Kirata, Lichhavi, Malla and Shah dynasties. After this, the country was declared as a republic state.

The cultural heritages in this area which are from those periods recently seem to be the master piece which has a great significant importance. The authentic scientific written history of Nepal is dated back to 5th C.A.D. by the Changu inscription of Lichhavi king Mandev (vajracharya, 2030 : 7-8) . The fact is accepted that the original history can be traced even some centuries earlier when Gopalas, Mahispalas and Kirat dynasties ruled here. But the history of those eras is only studied in chronicles. Hence Lichhavi period is known as ancient period. The standing heritages whether tangible or intangible, whether dated or undated, from various eras of the history of Nepal has got its importance reflecting the then civilization.

The tangible heritages are found in this area from the period of beginning of the Christian era and some even much older. The study of history in Nepal has to be coincidentally studied with the natural calamities of this tectonic active area. Due to many landslides, great earthquakes and other forceful calamities, those undated artifacts or monuments are not present in front of us which needs to be excavated from the probable sites.

The intangible heritages are also found in a huge number in our country. The festivals, traditions, cultural dance, rituals etc. have pointed out a great significance in the sector of the intangible heritage world of Nepal. Such heritages are found even from the Vedic period. The process of performing

a “*yagya*” is also a type of intangible heritages which reflects an image of Vedic traditions. Different festivals from Malla period as well as Lichhachavi period are still in practice in today’s life.

One of such important intangible heritage is “Kartik Naach” of Lalitpur District. This is also famous as “Katti Pyakha” in local Newari language. This is the drama with dance, music and dialogues which was established by Malla King Siddhi Narsimha Malla which was performed in the courtyard of royal palace of Lalitpur. The platform where the Kartik naach is performed is an open platform, known and resembles an open theatre. The platform as established for the same naach is named by the name “Katti Dabali”. One of the most important days of the naach is “Narsimha Avatar”. This is the most awaited as well as mysterious part of the whole naach.

Narsimha avatar dance in the kartik naach is a dance which shows how and by what conditions lord Vishnu is forced to take various incarnations to fight against the bad things in the world where Nrisimha avatar was taken to kill a devil king Hiranakshya when his entire limit for committing sin was crossed. This shows how a king of the demons Hiranakshya when misused his power as gained from the lord Brahma as a boon, was punished finally.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Kartik Naach, an intangible heritage even though has been in the continuity since its initiation time till this date, it has got some problems which may lead to the discontinuity in the tradition. This dance drama has a significant role in the cultural property of Nepal and might play a vital role for the recognition of the country in the international field for a new sector. This dance from 17th century has got potentiality to get the name and fame of the country and culture of valley to highlight in the world as

Orchestra/Opera from China, Mask tradition of ancient Greece, ritual theatre. The problems faced in the traditions are listed below.

- Documentation has not been carried out scientifically reflecting the importance of the tantric theatrical event Nrisimha Avatar in kartik naach . Why this has not been done?
- Lack of recognition of artists who are primary cultural holders, who have been participating to conserve the tradition as well as follow it. How shall it be done?
- Lack of identification of the role of distinct caste for their distinct role in this community based tradition. What is the reason for this?

1.3 Objectives of the study

As mentioned the problems above, the objectives of this research is mentioned as below:-

- To document scientifically emphasizing the theatrical tantric ritual event of Narsimha Avataar in Kartik Naach of Patan Durbar Square.
- To analyze critically about the recognition of participants of Narsimha Avataar in Kartik Naach.
- To highlight the role of caste based artists who have been continuing the tradition in Narsimha Avataar in Kartik Naach

1.4 Review of Literature:

Every piece of ongoing research needs to be connected with the work already done and to attain an overall relevance and purpose. The review of literature thus becomes a link between the research proposed and the studies already done. It also highlights about the aspects that have already established or concluded by other authors, and also gives a chance to appreciate the evidence that has been collected by previous research, and thus the current research work in the proper perspective.

As this study is concerned to one of the intangible heritage of Lalitpur district, I have consulted various books, journals, articles regarding Kartik Naach as well as the history related to that theatrical drama. Some books, journals, articles have listed down the importance and significance of Kartik Naach but precise study has not been conducted yet. However these books are really indeed very helpful for studying the importance, significance and history of Kartik Naach.

-) Gerard Toffin, 2012 , *Vaishnava Theatrical Performance In Nepal : The Katti-pyakha of Lalitpur City*, **France : Asian Theatre Journal**, vol. 29, no. 1.

In this article, the writer has mentioned the kartik naach as a theatrical performance and has mentioned it as not only a series of ritual events performed for the pleasure of the gods, nor as mere spectacles acted out for the entertainment and merriment of the spectators. They play many other functions, both aesthetic and social, within local groups as well as within the larger ethnic community. He has given a brief introduction for its socio-religious importance in the society. Even though he couldn't made the boundary of his research paper wider by pointing out the details process of the Nrisimha Naach.

-) Hareram Joshi, 2060 B.S., **Nepal ka Chadparva**, Kathmandu: Joshi Research Institute.

The following book is the collection of the festival celebrated in Nepal. The author has explained about different festivals with its importance and legends which are celebrated according to the Lunar Calender of Nepal. Regarding this, he has missed to describe about the Kartik Naach of Patan except some photographs.

) *Hari Man Shrestha*, 2009 A.D., **Kattipyakha**, Lalitpur: Jestha Nagarik Samaj-Nepal,

In this book, some factors of Kartik Naach have been mentioned including the dates of its commencement as well as its elongation process and duration. In his book, he was much concentrated on the songs and dialogues of the funny characters 'baathas' but the process of its demonstration and the recognition of the artist is not mentioned.

) Marianna Kropf, 2003 A.D., *In the wake of Commercialised Entertainment: An Inquiry Into The State Of Masked Dance-Dramas in the Kathmandu Valley*, **Kathmandu, Contribution to Nepalese Studies**, Vol. 30, No. 1 (53-103).

In this article, the author has mentioned that Siddhinarasimha Malla (king of Patan 1619-1661) initiated the yearly staging of stories in praise of Lord Krsna in the month of Kartik (October-November), which have been known as Narsimha- or Kartik-Nac upto present. He also emphasized on the uses of different masks in different cultural dance performances as well as uses of specific steps and movements (cari, mandala) and hand gestures (mudra) in different mask performances in Kathmandu valley. But he didn't mention about the specific uses of the gestures, masks and movements taken by the artists in Kartik naach.

) Satyamohan Joshi, *एथेन्सको आम्पिथिएटरदेखि ललितपुरको कार्तिक नाचको उबलीसम्म*, **Kathmandu, Bhrikuti Academic Publication**, Vol.1, No. 1, 2064 B.S.

In this article, the author has correlated the different important characteristics of plays of different countries. He has mentioned the Tragedy plays of Greece, Comedy from France, Ballet from Russia, India, Japan, Opera from Germany, Italy and China, etc. He has

correlated the Nrisimha Naach with the Tragedy plays from Greece mentioning that the stage is an open stage as in Athens. He has also mentioned that even the history of plays from Amphitheater of Athens has been replaced by the modern stages but the liveliness of the tragedy play in Lalitpur square introduced more than 350 years ago is being played in the same pattern in this 21st century too. In addition to that, he has mentioned that the use of dialogues is very limited in this performance. He has described the wise use of fires as the lights in the stage and the way how Nrisimha enters the stage. In the meantime, , he failed to correlate the cultural and religious sector of the play.

) Tulashi Lal Singh, 1124 N.S., **Kattipyakhaya Chun Amsha**, Nepal Sanskriti.

He has given a brief summary about Kartik Naach summarizing an old manuscript “कात्तीप्याख्या छुं अंश” but he hasn’t described anything for nrisimha avatar.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE

This research will help to know more about the rituals involved in the Nrisimha Avataar event of Kartik naach which annually is celebrated in the Lalitpur Durbar Square, Lalitpur, Nepal in the month of Kartik. To add for its significance, it also helps to some extent, in the field of preservation and conservation of the naach. Last but not the least, it would definitely highlight the caste based functions in the event and know the present situation of this festival.

1.6 Limitation of the study

This study is focused only in the study of the Kartik naach festival held annually in the core area of Lalitpur Durbar Square, Lalitpur. Furthermore, it is focused only on the Newar community based festival. In addition to that, it is concentrated mainly on the event named Nrimsimha Avataar. In this study, observation had been done only in the year 2069 B.S. by me.

1.7 Methodology:

The present study is conducted in descriptive method of research design. This research is not quantitative type. This is a qualitative research. Due to this reason, none of the statistical tools have been used in the research. Datas have been obtained both from primary and secondary sources of information. Both of these datas have been compared. If in the case, primary data vary with secondary data, primary data has been taken into consideration.

Types of datas that have been used in this research are described below.

1.7.1 Primary Source:

These datas have been collected by different means. They are:

- Direct Observation: The study area is properly researched through direct observation and are properly documented as well. The whole performance in the year 2069 B.S. has been observed.
- Interview: Interviews are conducted with different informants such as local cultural experts, local people, artists and different scholars from the related field. For this, sampling has been done. Sampling has been done in Purposive method.

- **Key Informant:** Informations related to the research are collected from the key informants. Informants have been selected in Purposive and Non-Random Sampling Method.
- **Photographs and Maps:** Different photographs and maps are collected from the study field.

1.7.2 Secondary Source:

Helps are taken from the books, magazines, newspapers, articles and journals related to the topic. All the datas are analyzed to fulfill the objectives. The personal experience, field observation and information from individual and focus group discussion have been used while elaborating and specifying datas.

In this research, as this is a qualitative research, need of tabulation of datas has not been sensed. The collected datas have been used where and when required.

Chapter Two

Historical statements of Avataar

2.1. Avatar concept

In Hinduism, we can find main three branches in the civilization of Aryans. They are namely Shaivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism, whose followers considered Shiva, Vishnu and Shakti or Devi as a supreme deity respectively. Hinduism also known as Sanatan dharma is considered to be the oldest religion in the world.

People do follow yoga and saadhana in Shaivism to get the ultimate goal which they believe is Mokshya or self-liberation. For Shaktism, people do follow tantric rituals along with scarification of lives. Vaishnavism is totally related with devotion or Bhakti-Marga. It's the branch where the self-liberation is believed to be gained by total devotion and doing prayings instead of practising hard yoga, sadhana and tantric rituals.

In Vaishnavism, a term Avataar or incarnation can be noticed. The followers of Vaisnavism can be called as Vaishnavs. They worship the Supreme Being under names such as Rama, Krishna, Parashurama, Narayana, Basudeva, Nrisimha, Matshya, Baraha, and so on. They all reject sacrifices and believe that salvation can be attained by Bhakti or devotion and loving faith to the deity, Vaishnavism cult developed around various Avataar or incarnation of Vishnu. The Avatars were the form of Vishnu that was believed to have assumed in order to save the world when it was threatened by disorder and destruction because of the domination of the evil forces. It seems that different Avataars were popular in different parts of the Indian sub-continent. (Rai, 2010 :8)

From the very beginning, lord Vishnu had taken different incarnations. Whenever the evils are here in this heavenly world, whenever people suffered from the bad deeds of someone, to prove the world that the victory is always with the good ones and the bad things cannot be sustainable, incarnations or Avatar are taken. Also the Avatars are taken to save the people and religion as well as well-formed society from the devils or the sinners.

For similar reasons, lord Vishnu had also taken different incarnations or Avatar. The Avatar might be bhagawan Avatar, abesh Avatar or amsha Avata.

A time earlier, Avataar of Vishnu was seen Twenty-Four Avataar. But all of these Avataar were not praised by the people much. The temples and the images were also not seen much. Then after, ten incarnations got famous among the people and till now we can find the images of those ten incarnations. It got famous as 10 incarnations or *Das Avataar*.

24 incarnations of Lord Vishnu can be named as below (Kohli, 2009:146)

- 1) Matshya Avatar
- 2) Kurma Avatar
- 3) Nar Avatar
- 4) Narayan Avatar
- 5) Maha Mohini Avatar
- 6) Varaha Avatar
- 7) Nrisimha Avatar
- 8) Vamana Avatar
- 9) Parashuram Avatar
- 10) Brahma Avatar
- 11) Rudra Avatar
- 12) Jalandhar Avatar
- 13) Bishan Avatar
- 14) Sheshayi Avatar
- 15) Arihant Dev Avatar
- 16) Manu Raja Avatar

- 17)Dhanvantari Avatar
- 18)Surya Avatar
- 19)Chandra Avatar
- 20)Rama Avatar
- 21)Krishna Avatar
- 22)Nar Avatar
- 23)Buddha Avatar
- 24)Kalki Avatar

Hence, Ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu which is quite popular till this date are seen as follows. (Moorthy, 2013:15)

- 1) Matshya Avatar
- 2) Kurma Avatar
- 3) Varaha Avatar
- 4) Nrisimha Avatar
- 5) Vaman Avatar
- 6) Parashuram Avatar
- 7) Ram Avatar
- 8) Krishna Avatar
- 9) Buddha Avatar
- 10)Kalki Avatar

Nrisimha Avtar is one of the Amsa Avatar of Vishnu. Amsa Avatar is a special form of incarnation in the form which is totally different than a normal human being, extravagantly strong, to complete a special task. The other example of such type of incarnation is Baraha Avatar.

2.2. Nrisimha Avaatar

Lord Vishnu has been praised in different areas and people have been worshipping him in those areas. His incarnation in the form of Man – Lion has been also found to be worshipped in different areas inside as well as outside Nepal.

2.2.1 Presence of Nrisimha Outside Nepal

As Nrisimha is praised by the Hindus everywhere, not only in Nepal, the tradition of worshipping Nrisimha is found in different places. As Incarnation worshipping is related to Bhakti Marga, the sculptures of the Avatar of Vishnu are found in those places. In the same way, sculptures of Nrisimha is also found in different places in different phases of history.

An image of Nrisimha supposedly dating to second-third century AD sculpted at Mathura was acquired by the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1987. It was described by Stella Kramrisch, the former Indian Art Curator of Philadelphia Museum as "perhaps the earliest image of Nrisimha as yet known". (Meister, 1996:291-301)

An image of Nrisimha, dating to the 9th century, was found on the northern slope of the Mount Ijo, at a place called Prambanan, Indonesia. (Fontein, 1990:145).

In Andhra Pradesh of India, a panel dating to third-fourth century AD shows a full theriomorphic squatting lion with two extra human arms behind his shoulders holding emblems of Lord Vishnu. This lion, flanked by five heroes (*vra*), often has been identified as an early depiction of Narasimha (Khan, 1964:1-5)

2.2.2. Presence of Nrisimha in Nepal

Nrisimha has got a great importance in the history of Nepal. As many times, kings of Nepal were inclined to Vaisnavism, different images and festivals related to the avatar Nrisimha also can be found in Nepal from different phases of history of Nepal. During the Lichhavi period, many people migrated Nepal from different places and they introduced the festivals and drama related to the Nrisimha.

At the premise of Changunarayan temple of Bhaktapur district, ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu is demonstrated till today on stones as *Chhaya Darshan*.¹ The same thing is also demonstrated in Kathmandu Darbar Square in front of the Kumari ghar (house of living goddess Kumari) during the festival of Indraajatra when a lot of people gather at that place to participate in the festival².

¹ During an interview with a local youth who have a sound knowledge of cultures and traditions of Changu village, Mr. Ashim Bhatta, who is also a priest of Kileshwor Mahadev temple in the premise of Changu Narayan temple has mentioned about the demonstration of 10 incarnation in stones by the priest of Changu Narayan temple. He also mentioned that this demonstration is done several times a year on request to the priest with certain amount of payment. Date: 10 Kartik, 2070 B.S.

² During an interview with Mr. Baldev Juju, a culture expert from Makhan Tole, Kathmandu has mentioned about the presence of demonstration of 10 Avataar (*Dus Avataar*) at Kathmandu Durbar Square during Indra Jatra festival. He has also highlighted to the fact of the presence of image of Nrisimha in various places. Date: 18 Poush, 2070 B.S.

Likewise at right side of the Dolkha temple's premise, there is a statue of 10 incarnation of Vishnu³. Also at the gate of all three palaces of Malla Kings of Kathmandu valley, viz., Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur, the statue of Nrisimha can be observed.

All these events as well as the presence of manuscripts about Nrisimha at national archives indicates that there is a huge belief of Nrisimha in Nepal.

According to the ancient story, the fourth incarnation of Lord Vishnu or Nrisimha was born on the fourteenth day of the bright, waxing half of the lunar month of Baishakh (*Baisakh Suklapakchhya Chaturdasi*) (Lochtefeld, 2002:42). In Nrisimha Avataar of Kartik Naach which is performed at Lalitpur shows that Nrisimha killed the king of devil and helped his follower and the devil's son, Parhlad. The main message of Nrisimha Avataar in Kartik Naach is "evil eventually gets defeated by good". This drama must be shown on kartik sukla pakchhya Trayodashi and the time is consulted with astrologers to get a good auspicious time⁴.

Kartik Naach has been performed on the stage at Patan Darbar Square locally known as *Kaati dabali* (Photo no. 1) during the month of Kartik after the completion of rice harvestation.

According to the Vaisnab religion, Kartik is considered to be a month of Lord Vishnu and is also believed that Lord Vishnu take Nrisimha Avatar on this day and kill the Hiranyakasyapu. Therefore at mid night of the trayodasi tithi of this month, the Nrisimha Avatar of Kartik Naach has been performed on Kaati

³ During the interview with Mr. Baldev Juju, he mentioned about the image of Nrisimha at Dolkha. Date: 18 Poush, 2070 B.S.

⁴ During a visit to the house of Mr. Pratapdhar Sharma, who has been playing the role of Nrisimha several times, once in every two consecutive years these days, has mentioned how the auspicious time is fixed for the Nrisimha Avataar of Kartik Naach consulting local astrologers. Date: Kartik 12, 2070 B.S.

Dabali by lightening the light called *Chiraag* (Photo no. 2) at four corner of kaati dabali. Nrisimha Avatar is considered to be the main attraction of this Kartik Naach.

The statue of Nrisimha was developed during the Lichhavi period in Nepal. Most of the Lichhavi kings were Vaishnav. They believed that their ancestor was Surya, the Sun, hence Suryavansi, the descendents of the Sun (Vajracharya, 2053 B.S:548). Also they believed themselves as one of the Avatars of Lord Vishnu. Hence, the statues of Nrisimha is found from the Lichhavi period. One of the example of stone sculptures of Nrisimha from this period can be taken as Stone sculpture of Nrisimha from Changu Narayan complex (Photo no. 3). This sculpture found in the Changu complex is dated to be from 13th century A.D. (Pal, 1985:97). The cultural experts deny this dating as they opined this sculpture from much earlier period. The oldest sculpture of Nrisimha is found in Inaruwa of Sunsari district of Nepal which has been dated from 5th-6th century A.D.

In Malla Era, sculpture of Nrisimha has got an exact shape. Stone sculpture of Nrisimha (Photo No. 4) established by King Siddhi Narsingh Malla of Patan, similar stone sculpture at Nasal Chowk of Kathmandu (Photo No. 5) established by King Pratap Malla, wooden sculpture of Nrisimha at Mohankali Chowk of Kathmandu along with other ten incarnation of Vishnu, stone sculpture at the gate of Nepal Art museum of Bhaktapur (Photo no. 6) are some of the examples of master pieces of Nrisimha sculpture of this era. Making this type of statue indicate the last stage of human development.

2.2.3. Establishment of temple

To the mid of Malla dynasty Nrisimha Avatar of Lord Vishnu was fully developed than other period. On 1646 B.S. (N.S. 710), Purandar Singh established temple of Nrisimha (Photo no. 7) in front of premise of Patan

palace for remembrance of his beloved brother Narsimha (Vajracharya, 2056 B.S: 40-42).

At Wolachheyn Tole, Kathmandu ward no. 27, Nrisimha's temple existed even at present and this was developed by placing four pillars on N.S. 957 in its initial stage. But it is believed that this temple was there from 7th/8th centuries. For conservation of this temple *Shri Narsimha Aaju Guthi* has been established⁵. This temple has only upper part i.e. head of Nrisimha.

2.2.4. Dance Performance

It is believed that, Nrisimha's dance was started during King Siddhinarsimha Malla. Eventhough it is believed that this dance has been commonly performed prior to his regime too but due to various problems like unstable state government, the chain of dance performance has been stopped. Then the King Siddhinarsimha Malla again restarted this dance⁶. The continuity of Kartik Naach has not been stopped since it started from N.S. 761.

2.2.5. Nrisimha Jatra

The Brahmin people of Kathmandu, Sharma / Rajopaddhyaya clan, resident of Patan organized Nrisimha Jatra yearly on the day of *Bhadra Shukla Pakchhya Panchami*. To celebrate this jatra, a Guthi has been established. Only the member of this guthi who is responsible for running that festival in that year, can decide who is going to be Nrisimha at this time. Someone from

⁵ During an interview with a local of Wolachen Tole, Ason, Mr. Madan Maharjan had mentioned about the Nrisimha temple and its antiquity. He is also a Guthi member of the Guthi related to that temple. Date: 16 Aswin, 2070.

⁶ During a telephone interview with a historian, Mr. Chhatra Bahadur Kayastha, he mentioned about different Nrisimha dance performances in different places. Date: 9 Magh, 2070

the Rajopadhyaya clan wearing the mask of Nrisimha will be taken around the ancient downtown of Patan along with two attendants and Prahlad from the same clan. They are also joined by a group of girls from the same clan as Angels (*Apsaras*). The person becoming Nrisimha for the festival is normally the eldest son in law of the family who is managing the festival. On the occasion of jatra, the ritual of worshipping starts from the house of the guthi member who is supposed to manage the festival for the year. Then the festival is held inside the old Patan area getting around the city (Photo No.8). Then after, celebration is followed by a feast with all the members of guthi and family members⁷.

On this jatra, the rally just like a victory rally is organized in whole Patan core area. In this rally, most of the people go around the core town along with Nrisimha, Laxmi and Saraswati, Prahlad and Apsaras. Also a symbolization of two devils, Madu and Kaitava, representing as a doll is tied with a string of white cloth and tied on the back of Nrisimha. Then they will be also taken around the city dragging along the whole lane along with the Nrisimha. On ancient time, it is believed that the person who is taking part of Hiranyakashyapu in Kartik Naach will become unconscious or fell down even at the time of rally, if Nrisimha, along with the whole team, reach in front of his house.⁸

This jatra was organized with the aim of minimizing the obstacles when the country lies in negative astrological symptoms. This Nrisimha jatra is related with peace and tranquility aesthetic but Nrisimha Naach of Kartik Naach is related with Fury aesthetic. This Nrisimha jatra has no relation with the

⁷ During an interview with Mr. Mukunda Jwalananda Sharma, one of the senior member of the guthi who has also experience of successfully handling the guthi on behalf of his father, at his house located at Jwagal, Kupondol has explained about the Nrisimha Jatra held annually in Patan. Date: 10 Magh, 2070

⁸ During an interview with one of the artist of Kartik Naach who has been playing a role of Hiranyakashyapu along with a lot of other roles for several years, highlighted some points related to Nrisimha Jatra. Date: 3rd Ashwin, 2070.

Nrisimha Naach of Kartik Naach. So Nrisimha Avatar of Kartik Naach is totally different from this jatra.⁹

⁹ During an interview with Mr, Pratapdhar Sharma, he has given a brief summary of Nrisimha Jatra and its relation with Kartik Naach. Date: 12th Kartik, 2070.

Chapter Three

Introduction of Kartik Naach

3.1. Development of Kartik Naach

Kartik Naach is one of the long original cultural dance/act of Nepal and has been started during Malla period in 761 N.S. This dance is shown for whole month of Kartik. This is the reason why this tradition has been named as Kartik Naach (Interview: Mr. Hariman Shrestha, 2nd Bhadra, 2070) and is related with the Lord Hari/Vishnu/Krishna Lila. It had seen that, King Siddhi Narsimha Malla added an act or dance linked with Lord Krishna and his incarnation in Kartik Naach, as he was a religious and devotee of Vaishnav religion. Moreover, from religious point of view, Kartik is the month of Lord Hari/Vishnu. It is clear that, all dances/acts associated with the Lord Vishnu and Krishna are surely shown at its related month. Also main occupation of Nepalese people was agriculture. Also this tradition, people come to participate directly and indirectly after harvesting season. So, most of the deity's acts/dances were shown to overcome the tiredness of the people from the agricultural work. King Siddhi Narasimha Malla has developed this Kartik Naach to get the misfortunes off from the nation. After discussing with his *Shiskshya Guru*, *Naatyacharya* Haribansa Upadhyaya (Sharma) and *Dikchhya Guru*, Bishwonath Upadhyaya (Sharma), this Kartik Naach has been started. He introduced this tradition for 8 days by introducing different acts related to Shree Vishnu. At that period, Kartik Naach joined all the people (people from all caste) in one platform and made them faithful to the nation. After this, on 787 N.S. / 1723 B.S. his son Shreeniwas Malla added 7 more events and hence continued this tradition for 15 days in total. He added comic events named Baatha. After this, the tradition has been continued by his successors too. His son, the grandson of King Siddhi Narsingh Malla, King Yog Nagendra Malla, also introduced 15 more days to this tradition on 804 N.S. / 1740 B.S. giving the frame of whole month of Kartik for this theatrical tradition of Patan.(Shrestha, 2009)

This dance has been demonstrated in the past for either two days or four days or for one month too. Whatever be the number of days of the festival, there are some events that should be demonstrated in specific days if they are to be performed. An event, Jalashayan Vishnu, must be shown in the day of *Kartik Suklapakchhya Ekadasi*, Baraha Avatar during *Dwadashi* and Nrisimha Avatar at day of *Trayodsi*. The lineal succession that has been continued from the date of its commencement has been maintained till now.

Sequences of dance shown for eight days is given in table below

S. N.	Days/Tithi	Sequences
1	<i>Kartik Suklapakshya Shasthi</i>	बाथः प्याखं : च्वले खुदाँ दाँ खुदाँ
2	<i>Kartik Suklapakshya Saptami</i>	बाथः प्याखं : कौला खिचा
3	<i>Kartik Suklapakshya Astami</i>	बाथः प्याखं : महामूर्ख
4	<i>Kartik Suklapakshya Nawami</i>	युद्ध कला : शितज्वर + विषमज्वर कृष्ण + महाद्यः
5	<i>Kartik Suklapakshya Dashami</i>	देवी प्याखं द्योला, ख्याः कवं भैरव, कुमारी, महालक्ष्मी
6	<i>Kartik Suklapakshya Ekadashi</i>	जलशयन : मधु- कैटव वध
7	<i>Kartik Suklapakshya Dwadashi</i>	वराह अवतार : हिरण्याक्ष वध
8	<i>Kartik Suklapakshya Trayodashi</i>	नृसिंह अवतार : हिरण्यकश्यपु वध

If the dance is decided to be shown for one month, the Naach is ended by events *Bastraharan* and *Dadhilla* during *Kartik Shuklapachhya Chaturdasi* and Buddha Avatar during *Kartik Shukla Poornima* (last day of the month).⁹

3.2. Scriptural Aspects of Kartik Naach

Scriptural act/dance is defined as an act/dance that is taken from traditional stories and related with the spiritualism. By creating different role (like god, devil, animal etc.), different dances are shown in different areas of Kathmandu Valley. For example; Astamatrika Naach and Nawadurga Naach are performed in Bhaktapur, Harishiddhi Naach in Jalaya, Kartik Naach and Eku Naach of Pharping and Chitlang, DasAvatar, Lakhe, Sawa Bhakku, Mahakali Naach, Devi Naach etc of different regions. All these acts/dances are related with scriptural acts/dances.

Kartik Naach is related with the Shri Hari. Vishnu Lila and developed by linking with pure scriptural acts. Stage development, story selection, music, acting, jewelry, dress, embellishment, makeup, starting phase of the dance as well as its endless point etc. all these defines the scriptural dance. Most of these dances are thoughtful and have acting, different positions of hands and fingers (*mudra*), jewelries, dresses, embellishment, as well as it is educational, entertaining and informative values. Before starting the scriptural dance, the god of dance; *Nasa dhya* is worshipped which is also called as *dya lhyayegu*.

A new dancer must worshipped the god of dance (*Nasa Dya*) with a clay pot full of rice called *kisilin* to enter in any scriptural dance group. The scriptural dance is of three types; with whole mask, without mask and half mask with showing half face. Kartik Naach is performed with all these three types which is specialty of this dance/act.⁹

Tantra and *mantra* is another specialty of this dance. Symbolization of killing a person who is playing the role of Hiranya Kasyapu is shown in a very realistic way. The person is made unconscious. Again he is brought to a conscious state. This part of making him alive is strongest part of this Kartik Naach.

A person playing the role of devil must be of *Chitrakar* caste, residence of Patan's *Nuga Kawa*. During the dance performance of Nrisimha and Hiranyakasyapu, a fight between two is tried to demonstrate. The devil is taken to the state of unconscious once touched by the god Nrisimha. Unconscious devil is again made conscious by sprinkling the water taken from the right spout of the stone spout situated at the left hand side of the Patan Royal Palace in the courtyard of Patan Durbar Square. The spout is known as *Manga Hiti*. The water fetched from that spout is sprinkled by the priest of Taleju Temple to bring back the consciousness.⁹ This type of traditional dance shown with deities, tantra and mantra has challenged the modern scientific technologies of 21st centuries. This dance is alive till now because scriptural and Tantric part is very much strong.

3.3. Cultural Aspects of Kartik Naach

In Kartik Naach, the cultural aspect is mainly of Bathah Naach. The word Bathah means clever. In Kartik Naach, there are three characters called Bathas and they are brothers. The eldest brother called as *Gaa:Daju* is representing a character from Patan. He is popular as *Yami Bathah*, middle brother called as *Sama* is representing a character from Bhaktapur, Hence popular as *Kwopya Batha*. The youngest one is called as Yela Bathah. Among these three Bathahs, the youngest brother Yala Bathah was very much clever and cunning!&!,*&_). The vision of this Bathah Dance is taken as Trimurti, the triad of Bramha, Vishnu and Maheshwor. Main agenda of *this Bathah Pyakha* is to tell and educate the people about the present situation of the society. Bathah pyakha is reliance on the different legendary stories which is linked with the current situations, social conditions and general public and educates the audiences. *Lyawa layegu, Chwole khunda-dan khunda, Kaula khicha, makasi miyegu, khushin chikegu (Jicha), tikhikan – chyon dhwoggi, sati wonegu, maha murkha* (the Great Stupid One) etc. is also an integral part of Kartik Naach lies within the Bathah Naach (Shrestha, 1129 N.S.: 73, 95, 113, 135, 155). Bathah Naach has got its aesthetics viz, love (*shringaar ras*) and laughter (*Hansya Ras*). In this Naach, dialogues are also deliberated along with dance. Though this dance is linked with the story of general public,

Script is such that if there is anything to make decision, concerned character should go to Dwarika forest and decision is to be made in front of the Lord Krishna.

The Batha Naach is related with one of Vishnu's Lila, thus this give vision and education that Shri Hari Vishnu is omnipresent. His presence is everywhere and everytime. No one can live apart from him.

In Batha Pyakha, for the dance show, the whole stage has been covered by the performers. Maximum utilization of the stage can be seen. Performers are seen moving to the right corner of the stage and perform their act/dance. After this they are seen moving to the left corner of the stage and perform act/dance. Also prior to this dance *Nasa Dhya*, the god of dance, music, drama, is worshiped and then the act/dance is started.

As the place where god resides is known *Devalok*, that of human is called *Martyalok* and that of devil is called *Pataalok*. In Kartik Naach, all these three places have been represented. Thus the social aspects of Kartik Naach isn't only Baatha Naach. Thus the whole Kartik Naach has got its social aspects as social norms and beliefs are also represented in whole Kartik Naach.

The Nrisimha Avatar segment has also got all the three regions i.e. Devalok, Martylok and Paatallok. The scene of Vishnugan as Devlok, that of Daitygana as Paatallok, segment of Nrisimha being worshipped by people representing Martyalok, dances of apsara at Devalok. King of devil Hiranyakasyapu is killed at a different place than devalok, martylok and paatallok by Nrisimha. He is killed on the lap of Nrisimha. In the traditional views, the lap is also a separate kind of place different than other three places i.e devalok, matyrlok and paatallok. This even has increased the glory of the Kartik Naach.

3.4 Management of Kartik Naach

2.2.6. Manuscripts related to Nrisimha

In Nepal, old manuscripts has been conserved by both government and local people. These manuscripts are conserved at National Libraries viz, Keshar Library, Tribhuwan University, Bhaktapur Palace etc. managed by

Kartik Naach was continuously shown for one month from the starting year i.e. B.S. 1698 (N.S. 761) to B.S. 2006. But at B.S. 2007, due to the political instability and democratic movement in the country, Kartik Naach is also effected. The continuation of performance for one month was disconnected. Only two events in two days were performed i.e. Nrisimha Avataar and Baraha Avataar. From B.S. 2008 to B.S. 2038, the same two days performance only could get continuation. For these years, a day for Nrisimha and a day for Baraha was demonstrated. However, after 2038 B.S. the festival was extended to eight days with the help of different groups of people. At the same time, Kartik Naach Management Committee was also established. After this, all the performers of Kartik Naach, members of management comittee, Head of Nagar Panchayat Mr. Shiva Prasad Gautam, the then Acting officer Mr. Krishnaman Manandhar, Honorable Keshar Bista- Minister of education and culture, gathered and collected Rs. 20000/- and they deposited this collected money as the seed fund. Among the collected money, Rs. 10,000/- was donated by Lok Sahitya Parishad in the name of Murtiman Prize; Rs. 5000/- on the name of late Poet Baikuntha Prasad Lakaula and Rs. 5000/- on the name of dance teacher Mrs. Bina Joshi (Interview: Mr. Hari Man Shrestha, 2nd Bhadra, 2070). In B.S. 2070, it was performed for 10 days adding various dances that were performed during 2006. B.S.⁹

government and Aasha Shafu Kuthi managed by local people and also conserved at individual household. Within this, about 62 manuscripts named as Das Avatar (Ten Incarnation) has been preserved and 203 books with the name of Nrisimha written in different languages are conserved in national archives. Laxminrisimha kawach, Nrisimha kawach, Laxminrisimha puja bidhi, Laxminrisimha-sahashranam-stotra, nrisimha mantra kawach, nrisimha stotra, Nrisimha champu, nrisimhalila, nrisimha gayatri etc. are some manuscripts are conserved in national archives. First inscription “Trailokya vijaya nama” nrisimha kawach of N.S. 100 linked with Nrisimha is mentioned in the list developed by the Nepal-German hand written books conservation plan. Microfilm number of this book is 1100/7 (Preliminary list of manuscripts, Block prints and Historical Documents microfilmed).

In this way, the existence of worshipping Nrisimha has been seen in and outside Nepal has been seen in various forms. This has also been supported by the rulers also. Due to this reason, Temples related to Nrisimha has been constructed. Also in many places, folk dances have been introduced related to Nrisimha Avataar. A couple of festivals have been started related to this avatar. To give an addition, many of the manuscripts are found related to Nrisimha. So, Nrisimha Avataar has been praised in different form in our society and has got the equal enthusiastic values in the society

CHAPTER IV

Nrisimha Avatar

As per the Darwin's theory of Evolution, life existed firstly in water. So primitive lives were inside the water. Then slowly, those creatures who could live both in the land as well as water, the Amphibians, were evolved. After that, the land creatures were evolved. This theory of Darwin has a correlation with the avatar concept of Lord Vishnu as well.

The first incarnation of Vishnu is considered to be *Matshya* Avataar, which means in the form of a fish. So the avatar concept is also developed from the water. After this, the second avatar is considered to be *Kurma*. This form of Vishnu is an amphibian which can live both in water and land. This shows the transformation of evolution of life from water to land. The third avatar is totally land living creature, Baraha followed by Nrisimha avatar . both of these avatars are related to land living creatures .

Then slowly the Human evolution is seen to be started in the avatar theory also. Succeeding avatars of Nrisimha namely Bamana, Parashurama, Rama, Krishna and Buddha are the forms of human in order of showing how people started to live.

We can see in Nepal, in the same way, different Avataars of Vishnu are praised in different time in the history of Nepal. The ancient history of Nepal shows that Matshya, Kurma avataars were popular during Lichhavi period. In the later phase, during early medieval periods, stone sculptures of Varaha Avataar and Nrisimha Avatar were seen. In Malla Era, Nrisimha sculptures were seen in every courtyard of the royal palace of Malla kings. They even started to introduce dances and festivals related to Nrisimha. This is how, Nrisimha is seen to get popular during Malla period.

4.1. Nrisimha Avatar in Kartik Naach

In Kartik Naach different short acts are joined. Among these, Baraha Avatar, Nrisimha Avatar, Krishna Avatar (Krishna Lila), and Buddha Avatar is also shown by connecting with Das (10) Avatar. But Nrisimha Avatar is the most attractive act of Kartik Naach. Local people as well as people from different other places are seen watching the Nrisimha naach. The main causes of the high priority of Nrisimha Naach on kartik naach are given below:

1. Kings have faith on the Vaishnav religion and the time sequence shows that during the period of starting of Kartik Naach, Nrisimha Avataar was getting popular among the devotees.
2. The King has written a literature in Maithili Language and gave a name as Nrisimhaka Banitaharu related to Nrisimha as king himself was a Maithili.
3. In a stone inscription from Katu Baaha of Kwalakhu Tole of Patan, the name of King is written as Narsimha Malla which showed his devotion to Nrisimha Avatar.
4. At that time, competition has been occurred for making and establishing the statue of Nrisimha at door side of all three palaces of Kathmandu Valley.

The time and condition during Malla period was such that there used to be a scenario of competition between the three kings of three cities of Kathmandu Valley. In the context of Patan, King Siddhi Narsingh Malla was a follower of Vaishnav religion and he has more faith to Lord Vishnu. Also kings during that period were taken as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. So, this dance, Kartik Naach has been started which has got the inclination towards the devotion to Lord Vishnu and his incarnations. At that period, the major concern of the King was for his people to feel safe in

his state. This is the main reason of starting the Kartik Naach because by this tradition he has tried to bind his people in unity. Unity is the most concerned factor for security. In this drama/dance the king has connected all of his people and has brought them in a same platform regardless of caste and religion. By this, the King has made sure for any rare scenario, if some misfortune occurred in the nation, all the people living in the nation may unite and tackle to overcome from that misfortune. Hence the King Siddhi Narasimha Malla, who has thought like this can be considered as a supporter of democracy.

Also King Siddhi Narsingh Malla, in this Kartik Naach, has tried to make all the caste to participate, Specific tasks were given to all of them as per their capacity without being biased. So he can be considered as a supporter of inclusive of all caste and religion.

4.4.1. Legends of Nrisimha Avatar

Nrisimha Naach in Kartik Naach is based on the incarnation of Nrisimha of the Lord Vishnu. That's why, the story of this act/dance shows the Hiranyakashyapu (symbol of untruth) was exterminated by Nrisimha. The story behind the Nrisimha Avatar described in Vishnu Purana is present below.

Hiranyakashyapu has done a severe penance to please Lord Brahma. His determination made Brahma appear before him, fully propitiated, and the creator asked the demon to have his boon. He demanded that he should not be killed either by man or god or demon, neither in the day nor in the night; neither outside the home nor inside it and neither on the land nor in water. He eventually had this boon which made him almost invincible. He conquered the three worlds; driving out Indra, the king of gods, out from heaven. He also assumed the titles of Savita, Vayu, Agni, Varuna, Kubera, Yama and rest of

the gods. He routed the gods out of heaven when roamed here and there shelterless. Hiranyakashyapu was now the sole authority in the Universe. Everyone had to worship him. he was now the master of progeny of Kashyap sage. Now, he lived in a magnificent palace made of crystals. He enjoyed all the pleasures of three worlds (Chaturvedi,2006 :40)

Hiranyakashyapu had four sons: Anulhad, Lhad, Prahlad and Samhlad. When he had been doing the severe penance, the Indra king of heaven attacked his home and also abducted his wife, Queen Kayadhu, who was expecting a child. At this point, the sage Narada intervened and protects the Queen Kayadhu. The Narad was supreme devotee of Lord Vishnu. So the third child of Hiranyakasyapu, Prahlad was influenced by the transcendental instruction of the sage and had attachment with Bhagwad Geeta from the early childhood. Prahlad became a devotee of the Lord Vishnu. He even refused to acknowledge his father as the supreme Lord of Universe and claimed that Vishnu was all-pervading and omnipresent. On the other hand, the Hiranyakasyapu had animosity with Lord Vishnu. So he eventually became angry and took his son Prahlad as a culprit. He decided to kill his son. He gave an instruction to his demons to kill Pralhad. The demons tried to use their illusionary powers on Pralhad but none of their powers could stand before him. He ordered him to be trampled underfoot by an elephant but an elephant was unable to crush the body. They threw him from a high cliff, but he fell down as gently as a flower drops upon the grass. They tried to poison , starving him for days, throwing him into a well, and other measures on the child one after another, but they failed in all attempts because Lord Vishnu was protecting his devotee. Normally he got saved himself somehow by chanting the Mantra: "*OM NAMO BHAGVATE VASUDEVAYA*". The more the demon tried to kill him, the healthier he merged after every ordeal.

Hiranyakasyapu was getting mad in anger. Though said to be the most powerful existence in the three worlds he was unable to kill his own adolescent son. At last his sister, Holika, came to help him. She gave him an idea reminding him about her boon of not getting effected by fire. Her plan was to sit on a burning pyre wood with Prahlad in her lap so that he may be incinerated to ashes and she would come out unaffected by fire. She

accordingly arranged a pyre and sat on it with her nephew Prahlad in her lap and the pyre was sat on fire. The opposite thing happened. Holika was incinerated despite of the boon she has got and Prahlad was unaffected chanting the name of Vishnu (Dalal,2010 : 160).

Pralhad fearlessly gave instruction to the demons' children about the Lord Vishnu. One evening, Hiranyakashyapu asked his son if his god was there in the pillar. Then king hit the pillar, upon hitting the pillar, it cracked with a thundering sound and came out Nrisimha, an incarnation of Vishnu, in the form of half-man and half-lion form. Then immediately, that man-lion held the king by the gruff and took him to the threshold of the building. It was neither the day time nor night. It was twilight. Taking the king to the threshold, the man-lion sat on a stone and placed the king on his lap. This ensured that neither the king's body was not on the land nor in water nor on the sky. Then the man-lion incarnation of Vishnu tore the intestine of the demon king from the middle. He has killed him fulfilling every condition that Hiranayakashyapu had put forth while asking for his boon from Lord Brahma. He was killed at twilight, by a man-lion, almost nowhere in the middle of land and sky (Chaturvedi, 2006 :42,43). On the basis of this story, Nrisimha Avatar dance/drama has been composed in the Kartik Naach till now.

4.2 Identity of Performers

a) Nrisimha

In the Nrisimha Avatar, the main character is the Nrisimha, who vanquished the devil. Nrisimha is neither a man nor an animal. Rather it has a head of a fiery lion and body of a human. For the main character i.e. Nrisimha, only the Upadhyaya (Sharma) caste people, resident of Purnachandi Tole, Mahadev Nani, can take a part. This is proved by the inscription present at the damaged temple of Lord Shiva of Patan's Punchali Tole, in which the dance talent of the Natyacharya Toyibraj is also written with his descendants. It is clear from the inscription that, this Shiva temple was established at N.S. 763 (1700 B.S.) (Vajracharya, 2056 B.S:88-90)

At the day of performance, the person playing the role of Nrisimha wake up early in the morning, shave his hair, cut his nails from *Nau* (a newari caste), take a bath and then change his sacred thread, *Janai*. If a person taking part of Nrisimha is performing for the first time, then the previous Nrisimha performer should give him a *Mantra*. Then he will go for fasting for the whole day. He does not eat anything, not even a single drop of water for the whole day. Before the performance, he should visit *Nasa Dhya* of Patan's Batha, Sauga for worshipping. It is believed that, at the time of visiting to Nasa Dhya, if a person taking part of Hiranyakashyapu and Nrisimha meet each other, some misfortune may happen. So, for it not to be happened, they communicate with each other before going to the Nasa Dhya to make sure that both of them don't visit the temple at the same time. Then, the role player of Nrisimha will go to the Krishna temple at Patan Durbar Square for worshipping Lord Krishna. After finishing all the puja, he will be going to Keshab Narayan Chowk inside the Patan Royal Palace for dressing up himself. He will put on his jewelries too. Before this, the descendants of King Malla will go to fetch the water from the stone spout at Durbar square known as Magan Hiti . the water is used to clean and wash the feet of Nrisimha. Then the preist of Taleju temple will do the prayings to the Nrisimha .He will also help Nrisimha to wear a mask of Nrisimha. Then Nrisimha is ready to come out to the stage (Katti Dabali). At the time of going to the stage, a musical instrument called Mwali will be played. A Sukunda oil lamp is lighted up he will stand behind a pole by covering the face with plain white cloth¹⁰.(Photo No. 12)

b) Hiranyakashyapu

In the Nrisimha Avatar, Hiranyakashyapu is taken as the symbol of untruth. Lord Vishnu took Nrisimha Avatar to stop the sinful work of Hiranyakashyapu. So, in the Kartik Naach, Hiranyakashyapu is considered as a negative role player.

¹⁰ On an interview with Mr. Pratapdhar Sharma, who has been playing the role of Nrisimha for several times mentioned how he must prepare himself on the day of Nrisimha Avataar in Kartik Naach from the early morning to play the role of Nrisimha.

A person taking part of Hiranyakashyapu must be of Chitrakar caste, resident of Nuga Kawa. At the day of performance, one who is playing the role of Hiranyakashyapu will take an early morning purificatory bath and then visit the Nasa Dhya at the Sauga Tole of Patan and worship to the god Nasa Dhya by offering *Kisilin* and *Samaye*. He will also go for fasting for the day. Nowadays, he is allowed to eat fruits if he can not stay the whole day without eating anything. Before coming out from the house, he will have a feast with all his family members. After that, he will come out of his house lighting up a light called 'dyewa' (special candle made by brass or mud and pour with ghee). It is believed that the lighted Dyewa must not be extinguished before he reached home after finishing his performance.¹¹

At the time of leaving from his house, he wears all the attires for his performance of Kartik Naach. His dress and jewelries are worn except the crown and the belt. The belt known as *Jabi* is a kind of belt wear by gods and goddess. These two things, Belt and crown aren't worn there because these two things are valuables and has been put under the surveillance of the government at Kartik naach Committee Office. So he will wear them after reaching at the committee office. After Hiranyakashyapu goes out, his family members will put hays at the entrance of his house. The Performer again will go to the Nasa Dhya for lighting up a 'Dyewa' and goes straight to the dabali (stage) after putting on Mukut – the crown and Jabi - the belt. Hiranyakashyapu enters the stage with his minister Jaya and Vijaya and his son Prahlad. Then, the dance/act is started. After sometime Nrisimha enters and the fight between him and the king is demonstrated (Photo No.13). At last, he kills the Hiranyakashyapu. At this time Hiranyakashyapu is literally transformed to the state of unconsciousness. Then people carry him to a house nearby to a place called Pradhan chowk and let him lay down on the hays. People rub his palms and feet to give him warmth and to prevent him from getting cold. Till that time, the Taleju's priest will be doing a puja ceremony to Nrisimha. After this, priest goes to the Manga Hiti, the stone spout to fetch the water from first spout among three, facing west. After some time an unconscious Hiranyakashyapu wake up and gets back to his home. In

¹¹ Interviewed on 16th Aswin, 2070, Mrs Rita Chitrakar has explained about how preparations are done for her husband for the role of Hiranyakashyapu in the day of Nrisimha Avataar . At the meantime, she also explained the factors that she is responsible to follow in that tradition as a wife of Hiranyakashyapu.

his home, he is awaited by his family members, specially his wife. A ritual of providing *Shagun* is completed then after.

Shagun basically means good luck. It is given in different occasions most prominent in Newari culture to symbolize a healthy time. It is a normal practice in various religious and cultural rituals. However, during travels, its significance is greater. A balance between five elements, earth, fire, wind, water and sky or space is regarded integral for human safety and prosperity. Shagun is given to make sure there is balance between these elements, which is integral for the happiness and safety of the one who is leaving. Items symbolizing these elements in different ways, namely, egg, fish, alcohol, meat and a Newari dish called *Baara* are all present as a part of this ritual, creating the balance that we talked about. There is the presence of sculpture of Lord Ganesh, followed by a Mandala made with rice and colors, curd, duck's egg, fish and alcohol. One after another, relatives present these items to the concerned person (Poudyal, 2012) .

Taking sagun is one of the Newari ritual. It always take e.g. before starting new works, after winning the war etc. as a symbol of five elements i.e. egg as air, dry fish as water, wo/bara (Newari dish made by pulse) as sky, meat as earth and wine as fire elements.¹²

The performance of person taking part of Hiranyakashyapu is finished after taking sagun (Photo No. 14) and again he starts his daily schedule.¹³

Details of a artists taking part of Hiranyakashyapu is as follows:

1)	Name:	Kiran Chitrakar
	Date of Birth:	2035 B.S.
	Date of entry to Kartik Naach:	2048 B.S.

¹² Interviewed Mr. Binaya Rajopadhyaya, a culture Journalist, mentioned about *Shagun* tradition among Newars.

¹³ Interviewed Mr. Kiran Chitrakar, the role player of Hiranyakashyapu. Date : 3rd Ashwin, 2070.

	Teacher/Instructor:	Hariman Shrestha
	Performances:	Jaya, Indra, Kumari, Madhu, Bishamjwor, Hiranaksha, Hiranyakashyapu
	He performed as Hiranyakashyapu from 2055 B.S. to till now. His father late Keshab Chitrakar also performed as Kumari and Bishmijwor in Kartik Naach.	
2)	Name:	Manik Lal Chitrakar
	Date of Birth:	1978 B.S.
	Date of entry to Kartik Naach:	2015 B.S.
	Date of Death	2055 B.S.
	Teacher/Instructor:	Hariman Shrestha
	Performances:	Hiranaksha, Hiranyakashyapu till 2054
3)	Name:	Buddha Ratna Chitrakar
	He performed as Hiranyakashyapu from 2055 B.S. from 2002 B.S. to 2014.	

c) Pralhad

Pralhad was born at demon's place but he was a devotee of Lord Vishnu. His father Hiranyakashyapu effort to change his devotion from Lord Vishnu to Shiva could not succeed. Thus Hiranyakashyapu decided to kill his son Pralhad but again he could not succeed. At the end, Lord Vishnu appear as Nrisimha Avatar after listening the summoned of Pralhad and killed Hiranyakashyapu. Thus Pralhad has major role in the Kartik Naach.

One who performs as Pralhad need to be of age 11/12 years and can be of any caste. At the day of Kartik Naach, he also should take a purificatory bath. Nowadays, Mr. Shiva Joshi performs as Pralhad (Photo No. 15) and he has performed as Kumar and Kuber.

d) Devgan (Deities)

i. Shri Baikunthanath Vishnu

For this character in Nrisimha Naach, from 1959 B.S, people from Shrestha caste were giving performance. It is not compulsory that the person must be from the Shrestha caste though. anyone from any other caste can also be performing as Shri Baikunthanath Vishnu. The person performing as Shri Vishnu also purifies his soul on the day of performance by taking a purificatory bath.

Mr. Krishnabir Shrestha has been playing the role of Shree Bishnu as well as Varaha since 1959 B.S. Also he was playing the musical instruments too. After his death, his successors Mr. Hem Bahadur Shrestha continued his role from 1971 B.S.till his death. He died on 2022 B.S.

ii. Laxmi and Saraswoti

Both Laxmi and Saraswoti are both seen in many cases with Shri Vishnu. These are female characters. Though they are female characters, performances were done by males by wearing attires as female (Photo No. 16). So, a question arises, why is this discrimination seen ? May be, this is a dance of deities and all the performers must be very pure. Also, it is believed in Nepalese society that female cannot be stay as pure during their mensuration period. May be, similar to this, there are several reasons that female/girls cannot enter to Kartik Naach. there is no hard and fast rule for any caste to play these characters. Anyone can play these roles. Nowadays, these characters are performed by people from caste *Tamo*, *Raghubanshi*, *Shakya* and *Sikami*. Now these characters are performed by Mr. Swojan Raghubanshi, Mr. Ujwol Shakya and Mr. Joses Sikami.

iii. Jaya and Bijaya

Jaya and Bijaya are two gatekeepers/guards of Lord Vishnu. Anyone can take a part for these characters also. Nowadays, people from *Maharjan* and *Tandukar* caste have been performing the roles of Jaya and Bijaya. Mr. Vijaya Tandukar and Mr. Rikki Maharjan has been taking a part as Jay and Bijaya respectively. Mr. Vijaya Tandukar has also played role of *Agni*

and *Vayu* in *Indragun*. His grandfather Mr. Mangal tandukar had also played the role of *Chand* and *Vajrabaahu*.

iv. Apsara (Angel)

In this event, Apsara Urbasi has been taken as the angel from heaven. This is also a female character. But this character is also performed by male. Anyone or any caste can take part for this character but he must have good appearance and have knowledge about the dance and music. Now Mr. Swojan Raghubanshi has been performing as Apsara. He has also experience of performing as Bhakta Prahlad, Saraswoti (Rukmini), Laxmi, *Dharti Mata* (Earth) and *Kawan*.

e) Daityagan (Devils)

i. Chanda and Prachanda

Chanda and Prachanda were two minister of Hiranyakashyapu. There is no strict rule in the selection of the performer for these characters too. Anyone from any caste of Newar community caste can take part. Though anyone can take part, now days Joshi and Tandukar has been taking part for these role. Now Mr. Mahesh Joshi and Mr. Dinesh Tandukar respectively performed as Chand and Prachanda. Mr. Mahesh Joshi has also performed as Subahu, Madhu Daitya, Khwopye Bathah, Bishmjwor etc. and Mr. Dinesh Tandukar also performed as Laxmi, Madhu Daitya, Yama, Indrayani, Kamabati etc.

ii. Sandak and Amarka

Sandak and Amarka are spiritual teacher of King of Devil Hiranyakashyapu. There is no strict rule in the selection of the performer for these characters too. Anyone from any caste of Newar community caste can take part. At the moment, Mr. Tirash Maharjan

and Mr. Rajesh Tamrakar respectively performed as Sandak and Amarka.

f) Helpers

The Kartik Naach is a theatrical drama. So curtain as an integral part of a theatre is equally important in Kartik Naach. A curtain is just not a piece of cloth of different varieties but also an important part of the theatre. As a matter of fact, the drama cannot be started without raising a curtain and cannot be closed until and unless the drape scrolls down. So, their value can't be ignored in the set up of the stage and it is very important to choose the right Stage Curtains as per the concept and scenes of the act to magnify the effect of the play. Like all the other important ingredients in a play as lights, microphones, and color effects, curtains are also equally important.

The curtain used for Kartik Naach is a white piece of cloth with a painting of Natyeshwor (Nasa Dhya). This curtain is held in hands in both ends by two helpers. Nowadays, Mr. Nanda Muni Shakya and Mr. Basanta Napit have been taking this responsibility (Photo No. 17).

A beautiful ceremonial oil lamp-stand called *Sukunda* is placed in the area of Katii-Dabali. This represents the one-time watery valley as a whole. It has got a great importance in the culture of Newars. As water of the lake makes Svayambhu-jyoti-rupa shine, it must be a kind of oil. Similarly, the thousand-petalled lotus found at the base of the lamp-stand represents a lotus on which the Brilliant Light of Svayambhu appeared. The back of the lamp is adorned with Naga Rajas (Serpent Kings), the rulers of the lake. The figure of Vasuki Nagaraja is engraved on the oil spoon. So the country Nepal is also called sometimes, the land of Vasuki. And the Sukunda itself is designed like a water pot. Moreover, the triangular oil-saucer attached beneath it is a symbol of the Goddess Guhyesvari (Shakya. 2004 : 62-64). The Goddess Guhyesvari represented by the triangle dwells at the root of the lotus upon which the Brilliant Light of Svayambhu stands in the mythological story. This

beautiful elements of Newar culture , Sukunda, is lighted up in the Katti-Dabali as an initiation of every Newar culture, events, dance or art. If, the suknda is not extinguished after finishing the dance, it will allow to light up for a while. Mr. Nanda Muni Shakya carry the sukunda during the act.

During the Kartik Naach, five Chirag is lighting up, so five person must need to hold this Chirag. This work is always done by the people of Maharjan caste.

4.3 Conflicts

Conflict is an important and necessary element in any drama/dance/acts. This is a heart of drama and gives the quintessence/essence of the drama. In the drama/dance/act, there are two types of conflicts: Internal (mental) conflicts and external (physical) conflicts.

Internal (Mental) Conflict

The conflict that performer execute mentally or internally is known as internal (mental) conflict. Internal conflicts contain all those things that occurred internally. Some of the examples of internal conflicts are anger, fear, confusion and so on. The audience cannot determine these types of feelings externally or physically. They determine only from the feelings or expression or emotion at the time of performance. In Kartik Naach internal conflict is also present but fewer than external conflicts.

Most of the dances in Kartik naach have both internal and external conflicts. But the internal conflict has been mostly executed during the Nrisimha Avaatar dance such that after the Vishnugana enter to the stage other four devgana Laxmi, Saraswoti, Jaya and Vijaya enforced Vishnu to take a Nrisimha Avaatar and then Shri Vishnu went out from the stage earlier to take a Nrisimha Avatar. This is one aspect of the internal conflicts.

External (Physical) Conflict

Both internal and external conflict plays an important role in any types of dance/drama. This external conflict is seen in many events in Kartik Naach like *Shitjwor - Bishmajwor Yuddha*, *Krishna - Mahadev Yuddha*, *Madhu Kaitav Badh*, killing Hiranakshya and Hiranyakashyapu. They are considered as external conflict in Kartik Naach. Without the external or physical conflict, none of the dance/drama become perfect. It also consider as the heart of any dance/drama. External or physical conflict is strong than the internal or mental conflict. Among all dances in Kartik Naach, Hiranyakashyapu Vadh, the killing of Hiranyakashyapu, represents external or physical conflict. So, during this dance performance , a lot of audiences are seen who came there to watch that external conflict between Hiranyakashyapu and Nrisimha . The main attraction of the Kartik Naach is the Hiranyakashyapu's badh or war between Lord Nrisimha and Hiranyakashyapu.

4.4 Environment

In the Kartik Naach, an environment explains about the context of the performances on the Kartik Dabali.

The main occupation of Nepalese people is agriculture. Most of the people are dependent on the agricultural work. The main crop is rice. Kartik Naach is also started after finishing the harvesting period and when people are taking

rest from their work. The month Kartik is also the month when people praised mostly Lord Vishnu. So, it is believed that due to these reasons the Kartik Naach was performed in the month of Kartik. This month has got a suitable environment too which is neither too hot nor too cold. So the performance will not be effected much due to adverse climatic condition, Also to add, there is no rain normally in this time which makes the environment pleasant for outgoing to the people too so that they can enjoy with full participation in this Kartik.

The Kartik Naach is used to be performed for one whole month from its starting period to 2007 B.S. Then from 2008 B.S. to 2037 B.S, it was also effected by the change in the political scenario of Nepal. It happened to be performed only for two days for that entire period. Time passes and some positive signs were seen in this cultural heritage and the year 2037 B.S. happens to be a milestone in the history of development of Kartik Naach. From this period, it is continued for eight days. In the year 2070 B.S., it is demonstrated for 10 days.

Now the environment during the performance i.e. Kartik Naach is discussed here.

Nowadays, from Kartik Shukla Pakshya Sashti to Kartik Shukla Pakshya Trayodashi, 7pm to mid night the Katti dabali of Patan is covered by artists, singers and musicians of Kartik Naach. Also there is a presence of audience too who have visited that place to watch and enjoy Kartik Naach. People from the different places has come to watch the Kartik Naach. The whole Patan Durbar square is full of audiences. This is the strongest point of Kartik Naach. Number of audience is increased at last day i.e. on the day of Nrisimha Avatar Naach than the starting days. This gives the energy for performers, singers and musicians.

In the Kartik Naach, there are two views related to dance. One is dance related to deities and another is folk dance. Nirisimha Naach is dance related

to deities. At the time of Nrisimha Naach, the performer wears different jewellerys and dresses.

4.5 Dialogues

Most of the scriptural dances have very little dialogues but in drama, dialogues are most important. Kartik Naach also has got some dialogues.

All the dance/acts of Kartik Naach were designed with both dance and dialogues. On the Vishnugan/Krishnagan act,. dance as well as dialogues are deliberated in Maithali language¹⁴. In the Bathah Naach, dialogues are deliberated in Newari language. During Malla period, all the dialogues were written in the Maithili language as the King himself talk Maithili language. Nowadays, only in Bathah Naach have dialogues in Newari language.

In the Nrisimha Avaatar act, at the time when masters of Prahlad, Amarka and Sandak gave him education as per the wish of King Huranyakashyapu, short dialogues are deliberated. In this dialogue when '*Om namaha Shivaya*' was teached to Prahlad, he would be continuingly saying '*Om Namaha Bhagbate Basu Devaye*'. Today's Nrisimha Naach has only these dialogues. All other dances have only the acting/drama. To understand this dance/drama, one must know or read about the Avatars of Lord Vishnu otherwise it will be difficult to understand by only seeing the drama.

4.6 Music

Music is the strongest point of any dance/drama/act. All the dramas/act/dances were developed on the basis of music. In the

¹⁴ Dated 16th Ashwin 2070, Mr. Kancha Dangol, one of the artist was interviewed. During that interview, he highlighted about the dialogues used in Kartik Naach.

drama/act/dance, music as well as songs also plays a major role. Music and songs are not apart from each other. Before starting any scriptural dance, Nasa *Dhya* must be worshipped. This ritual of worshipping the god of dance is also present in Kartik Naach.

Any songs either of *Natyeshwor Mahadev (Nasa Dhya)* or other songs/poem, the name of writer is normally written after last paragraph. In this dance/drama, name of writers Mr. Vijayananda and Mr. Chandra Shekhar is noticed only at some places. The name of Mr. Chadrashekhhar is present in Nasa Dhya's song of *Sudhama* dance of Kartik Naach. He was a minister of King Jagat Prakash Malla and one of the best poets in that period. Likewise, name of Mr. Vijayananda is noticed in *Nasa Dhya's* song of Baraha Avatar. The name of King Siddhi Narasimha Malla is only noticed in song of *Arati*. But after him, his son King Shrinivas Malla's name is noticed at different places. He wrote around 16 songs for the Kartik Naach. Similarly, after King Shrinivas Malla, his son King Yognarendra Malla wrote more songs and also new dance was added to Kartik Naach in his period. He wrote around 24 songs and used in *Manavanar Lila* and *Usha Haran Lila*. Then songs written by King Vishnu Malla is sung before entering to the stage. Around his 8 songs are used in Kartik Naach. After him, the name of his son King Rajyaprakash Malla is also seen at different places. 12 songs that was written from him is used in Kartik Naach (Shrestha, 2009).

Music and songs together helps the performer to give an expressions in any scriptural dance form. So these are most important part of this dance. Half of the story of scriptural dance form is understood from the music used in this. In this dance ,when a musical instrument *Tipan* is playing, it is understood that *Vishnugana* are entering the stage and when playing *Jhaka*, *daityagana* are about to enter. Music is combination of lyrics, melody (*Rag*), rhythm (*Taal*) and musical instrument and has high importance. Here, lyrics are understood as melody as most of the dance do not contain song. There are different types of melody. Melody gives direction to the performer and also influences to do an expression and acting. Melody that has been used in the Kartik Naach is as follows:

Table: List of the melody (*Raag*) and rhythm (*Taal*) used in Kartik Naach

A. Melody (Raag)	
1. Maala	2. Mangalgujari
3. Gauri	4. Rajvijaya
5. Dhanashri	6. Sauri
7. Mangal	8. Vathyari
9. Bhupari/Bhupali	10. Asawari
11. Kaushi/Kausik	12. Kamod
13. Kafi	14. Swavelagu
15. Gaudamaal	16. Nata
17. Pahariya	18. Prathamajali Pramanjar
19. Pahariya Manjari	20. Kola
21. Malhar/Malar	22. Ramkali
23. Basanta	24. Sindhur
25. Nistanga	26. Hori
27. Kanha	28. Shwratha
29. Belawat	30. Sahana
31. Belari/Barlari	32. Biharga/Byagraha
33. Shri	34. Eman
35. Kedar/Kedal	36. Sohi
37. Bivhas	38. Marthi
39. Sarangi	40. Mangalastak
41. Vijaya	42. Syama
43. Panja	44. Pancham
45. Devargi	46. Mistanga
47. Gunda	48. Godagri
49. Vijamarsi	

Rhythm (Taal)

1. Yeka
2. Cho
3. Jati
4. Pra
5. Astra
6. DhalanJati/Dhalanjati Mathyama
7. Doma Pa Ya
8. Gandha

Gauri, Malu, Velawat and Bhupari are most widely used melodies (Raga) in Kartik Naach whereas Malu/Mala, Basanta, Velawat, Bhupali, Soratha, Saranga and Kafi are most widely used in Nrisimha Naach. Similarly, Yeka, Cho, Jati and Prataal is mostly used rhythm (taal) among which in Nrisimha Avatar, Cho, Jati and Prataal is mostly used.¹⁵

C. Names of musical instrument used in Kartik Naach and Nrisimha Naach

Different types of musical instrument have been used in Kartik Naach and Nrisimha Naach during the performance.

Table: Name List of musical instrument used in Kartik naach and Nrisimha Naach

A. Musical Instrument Used in Kartik naach	
1. Babucha	2. Jwo Nagada
3. Tah	4. Damokhin
5. Khin Baja	6. Mridanga
7. Dhah Baja	8. Pwonga
9. Bhushya	10. wali (Sahanai)
B. Musical Instrument Used in Nrisimha Naach	
1. Khin	2. Mridanga
3. Tah	4. Babuucha
5. Pwonga	6. Mwali (Sahanai)

D. Introduction of Badhya Guru (Music Teacher)

¹⁵ Dated 2nd Bhadra 2070, Mr. Hari Man Shrestha was interviewed when he briefly explained about the music and related topics in Kartik Naach.

In this Naach, musician that plays right Khin has been called as the music teacher.. Right khin was started to be played by priest Haribansha Upadhyaya (Sharma) and now it has been played by successors. So, it is clear that priest Haribansha, residence of Patan, PUNCHALI TOLE, was first *badhya guru* of this Naach. Then his son and grandsons respectively Gangadhar, Shridhar, Ratnadhar, Nilmadhav, Gopidhar, Kusumdhara, Prayagdhara, Chakradhar, Jagatpatidhar, Jaganmohandhar, kantidhar, Umadhar and Pratapdhar have become gurus (teacher). By rules ,family member of the person who is going to take a part of Nrisimha must play a Khin. But these days, person who knows to play *Khin* becomes a *badhya guru*.

People of Shrestha caste, residence of Kothu Tahvyah, Mangalbazar, Patan have maintained role as an assistant music teacher. Respectively Krishnabir, Hembahadur, Siddhiman, Kesavkrishna, and Mahila Nyachyon is consider as an assistant music teacher. Similarly, it is seen that teacher of *Mwali* is also ancestor of the persons linked with the Kartik Naach.

E. Introduction of Musician

In this dance/drama, one who is playing *Khin* is known as main music teacher and assistant music teacher. Besides Khin, damokhin, Dha, Mridanga, Jwo nagada, Tah, Jhyali, Pwonga, and Mwali are also played in this dance/drama. And a person playing these musical instrument are considered as musicians.

The history shows that, all the people listed above as a main music teacher and assistant music teacher was also worked as a musician. Bramhadhar, Debendradhar, Bajuradhar, Mukundadhar, Dharmendradhar, Lalitadhar, Kumardhar, Shripratapdhar, Jagatpatidhar, Bigyadhar, Prakashdhar Sharma are musicians who has played a right hand side Khin. In present condition Vishnumohandhar Sharma and Pratapdhar Sharma play right hand side Khin as well as Damokhin, Dha, Jwo Nagada, and Mridhanga. Anyone can play all the musical instruments except Pwonga and Mwali. Only the caste *Byanjankar*, resident of Chyasa Patan, can play Pwonga and *Kapali* caste of

Patan Mangalbazaar can play Mwali. Likewise, Bekharatna Bajracharya and Pradhumna Shrestha respectively resident of Patan Naka Bahi and Mwahmadu Galli plays left hand side Khin. Ramkrishna Tamrakar and Lal Bahadur Shrestha plays Tah and Jhyali respectively.

F. Singer

In present condition Ramkrishana Tamrakar sings a song/raag and play Tah simultaneously. Similarly, Lal Bahadur Shrestha plays Jhyali (Babucha) and sing a song/raag.

G. Stage

As per religious beliefs, Lord Bramha has given the responsibility of making a stage to Bisokarma. The stage has been designed in three ways: Bikrista Natya Griha (main dance/drama stage) in rectangular form, Chaturusra Natya Griha in square form and Trauasra Natya Griha in triangular form. Length and breadth of this Kartik Daboo is equal i.e. square. So this stage has been making as Chaturusra Natya Griha (Sastri: 1119 N.S.: 52-55). Exact construction date of Kartik dabali is not known but it is believed that this stage was made before starting the Kartik Naach. 20X20 feet Kartik Dabali has been constructed by facing North direction. It has about 2.5 feet height. At the center of this stage, around 28x28 inch Nritya Mandala is made as center point. A small hole was dug at all four corners of this stage and one at front part to put the *Chiraag*. Chiraag is the oil light. Outside of the main stage, a sub-stage is present where musicians and singers sit down. The entrance path is made at the middle part and exit path is made at left side of the stage.

Stage

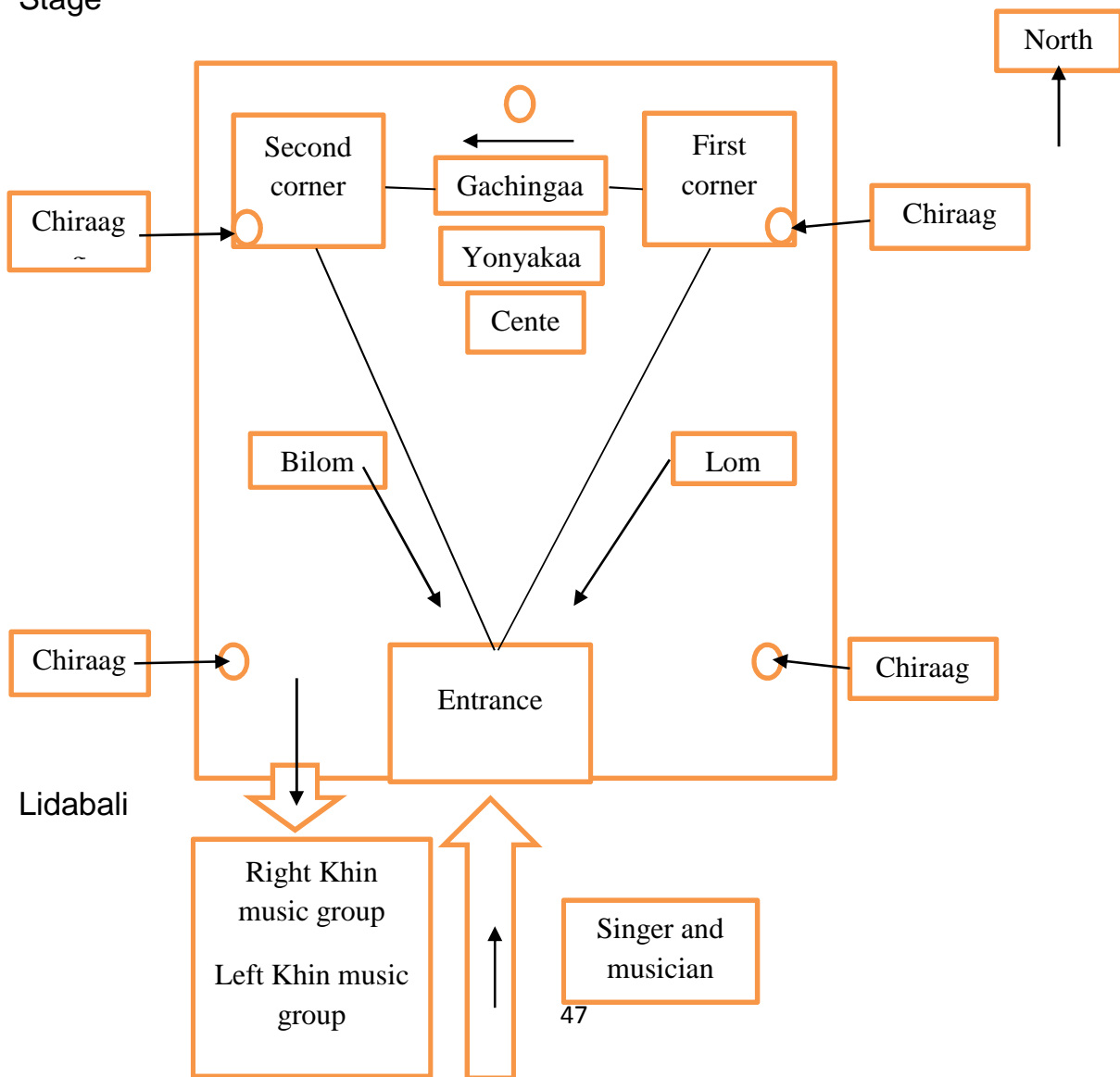


Fig: Arrangement of Kartik Dabali

4.7 Audiences/society

Audiences/society is the most important part of any performances related to dance/drama. Audience is necessary for any dance/drama/act. Without audience, there is no importance of any dance/drama. Thus, from the ancient time all dance/drama has been made to target an audience. The main aim of any dance/drama is to give the moral education and entertainment to the public and this helps to develop the nation as well. It is believed that, if the people of a nation are educated, then development of the nation will occur. So, in ancient time, this type of dance/drama was shown in the absence of today's sophisticated entertainment technologies like television, radio, mobile, etc. Nepalese people have huge faith/devotion on the gods. This is the main reason that they make a different dance/drama related with legendary stories of different gods and goddess and linked with current situation of people and society. This would definitely give them moral education and entertainment too to the people living in the society. But these days, due to the development of new and sophisticated technologies, audiences have changed their choices.

The Kartik Naach tradition is alive till now. It hasn't been replaced by the introduction of alternative choices that people would get from modern technologies. This dance has got high importance among people and also it

has a characteristics to gather all people from different caste. So, this is obvious that, during the Kartik Naach number of audience is high (Photo No. 18)

CHAPTER V

Performance of Nrisimha Avatar

5.1. Dhya Lhayegu

From the Scriptural point of view *Dhya Lhayegu* means giving respect to Dance teachers and all other respected people. This dance is also started after doing Dhya Lhayegu. To start this dance according to ritual, all the musical instrument were placed below the golden window of Patan Durbar (Palace). First of all a sukunda having ganesh's symbol is lighted up. Then all the musician take their instruments and start to play looking to the Keshav Narayan temple at east direction. Then played music by looking at Bangalamukhi Temple and Temple of Bhim. After this they came back and play music looking at the Harishankar Temple situated at the South side of pole of King Narendra. Only then enter to the Kartik Dabali and put the sukunda and all musical instrument at the middle of the stage. After sometime lighted up the chirag and play the Pwon, Khin sitting at the Li-dabu (side stage). This pown and khin is played to call the Nasa dhya. At the end of playing pwon and khin, raag/song is also start to sing. After finishing to play pwon and khin, then only start to sing by worshipping Natyashwor. At the ending of singing a song of Naatyashwor all the musician goes to the middle of stage with playing instruments and came out to the stage. Then only the dance is starts formally¹⁶.

5.2. Entrance of Performer to the stage

5.2.1. Entry of Vishnugana

The curtain was put on the stage after finishing song of Natyashwor for a while. Then lord Vishnu along with Vishnugana (Shri Vishnu, Laxmi, Saraswoti, Jay and Bijaya) enter to the stage. As soon as they enter to the

¹⁶ Observation was done by me during the event of Nrisimha Avataar in Kartik Naach, 2010.

stage, all the Vishnugana went to the North side to the point where there is the curtain of Natyeshwor and took their place by looking toward musical group. To start any other dances, all the performers have to sit behind the curtain containing the image of Natyashwor and then walk nine steps and dance for a minute. Then only they will can sit facing South. This is one of the rule of Kartik Naach. Then to start the dance, again nine steps is taken from that place then all the five performers goes to the entry side and look towards Krishna Temple. Then the curtain is opened and Vishnugana starts dance with music.

The performers introduce themselves by different *mudras* with the dance. Together with the music, song is also being sung from nearby stage Lidabali. Firstly the performers dance looking at South and then all five performer look first dip, right corner, South and do dance, then dance by showing second dip, North-South and they walk behind and left the stage from door. Performance of Vishnugana is finished after their performance of about 45 minutes on the stage. At this time the Lord Vishu goes to the back stage in little hurry to perform as Nirisimha. Then slowly Laxmi, Saraswoti, Jay and Bijaya leave the stage.

5.5.2. Entry of Devil' Masters

After the Vishnugana, Sandak and Amarka enter to the stage. The curtain was placed at the stage in front of the entrance likewise previously as for Vishnugana. They do the same thing as done by Vishnugana and the curtain is pulled up from the stage. Then they move to right and left corner and introduce themselves by showing different *mudras* and symbols. In this dance, it can be noticed that masters are in hurry to go to the Hiranyakashyapu's place.

5.2.3. Entry of Daityagana (Devil)

Later devil's master exit from the stage, Daityagana (King Hiranyakashyapu, Minister Chanda and Prachanda and son Pralhad) enter the stage. The curtain is placed on stage before this. They also do same like Vishnugana and Devil's master. They dance and give their introduction by showing different mudras and symbols. They dance looking towards the South and then goes to the right corner and left corner of stage and dance respectively. They finished their dance according to ritual and scriptural rules and take sit on the stage. At the same time the Master Sandak and Amarka hastily enter to the stage, dance for a while, reached to Hiranyakashyapu's place and greet him symbolically. Hiranyakashyapu, Master and Pralhad also greet him back. Hiranyakashyapu sent Prahlad with Master to give him an education. They greet the Hiranyakashyapu and exit from the stage by dancing. After this hiranyakashyapu and his minister goes to right and left corner of stage by dancing and leave the stage.

After a while Master Sandak, Amarka and Pralhad enter to the stage. They act like they are teaching Prahlad in their school. Th (Gurukul). They are trying to teach Prahlad to tell '*Om Namaha Shivaya*' but he continues to tell '*Om Namaha Bhagwate Basu Devaya*'. By seeing this, master are very much worried and they sent back Prahlad to his father's place. There they teach him same like at *Gurukul* but he again continue same as before telling the chants of Lord Vishnu. Then masters give responsibility of Prahlad back to his father and leave the stage with dance. Then the king Hiranyakashyapu order his minister to tie his son at a pole and the minister agree and tie him at the pole. And they stand in front of the Prahlad facing with each other. At this time too, he fearlessly keep on telling '*Om Namaha Bhagwate Basu Devaya*'.

5.2.4. Entry of Nrisimha

After sometime, the Nrisimha enter the stage by breaking the pole (made up of Nepali Paper) with terrible, heroic, fierceful features. At the same time, five chirag is lighten up strongly. By seeing this fierceful feature of Vishnu, the king already trembled. Nrisimha dance with showing different mudras at the middle of the stage making pattern of *Shri Yantra*. Then after about half an hour, Nrisimha ask Hiranyakashyapu for a figh. Hiranyakashyapu agree to fight with Nrisimha. They fight with each other and after about half an hour, Nrisimha kill Hiranyakashyapu. At that time Hiranyakashyapu only become unconscious. Then Nrisimha rip up his stomach, take out an intestine and wear on his neck. Prahlad, Laxmi and Saraswoti come and stand close to the Nrisimha. Then priest of Taleju do a special Puja to Nrisimha.

5.2.5. Entry of Apsara (Angel)

After finishing the *Puja*, an apsara Urbasi from heaven come to the stage to calm the Nrisimha. Apsara Urbasi enter to the stage, greet to Nrisimha and then go to front side of stage and start to dance facing towards Nrisimha. This dance also has different mudras and symbols. After finishing the dance, apsara exit from the stage.

Then Nrisimha start dancing with mudras to describe how he killed Hiranyakashyapu and exit from the stage with Laxmi and Saraswoti. Bhakta Prahlad also leave the stage with them.

All five Vishnugana come to stage to do a ceremony of *Arati*. At the time of arati, they dance with different mudras by putting *Sukunda* at middle of stage and they finish the dance by taking *arati* of *Sukunda*. They do the same thing like before starting the dance. They do dhya lhayegu looking at the

Harishankar Temple situated at the South side of the column of King Narendra, looking at Bangalamukhi Temple and to the Keshav Narayan temple placed at east side. All the performers also present at the time of dhya lhayegu. At the same time they bow down to the earth all the points of dhya lhayegu and ends the dance.

5.3. Lights

During Kartik Naach, at four corner of Kaati dabalim, four Chiraag is lighten for a whole month except on the day of Nrisimha Naach. On this day five Chiraag is lighted up.

5.4. Procedure of Doing Puja

Dance is either scriptural or tantric. Before starting to teach, Nasa Dhya (god of dance) must be worshipped. It has a rule that all the performer of this dance, singer, musician or any other related people can start dance after worshipping this form of Lord Shiva by offering *Kislin*. They start their rehearsals and teach dance to new participants before a couple of months after doing puja to Nasa Dhya. Taleju's priest do *puja* to *Bhairav*, *Kumari* and *Mahalaxmi* on the day of showing Devi Naach, to *Baraha* on the day of Baraha Naach and to *Nrisimha* on the day of Nrisimha Naach. Now Bhisma Jwalananda Rajopadhyaya is a priest of Taleju temple. Puja is done simply offering yellow, red and orange colored vermilion powder, rice grains, *jajanka*, *batti*, incense, fruits, *naibedh* etc in a special plate used for this ceremonies called *Kotya*.

Before rehearsals of the dance, puja is done by setting samaya dwon (mass of samaya) in front of the Nasa Dhya. Animlas were sacrificed during this Puja ceremony but this have been replaced by offering eggs since last 30 years.

At this time they celebrate a feast with all the members of the festivals and other related people. Before starting the dance at the time of rehearsals, Nasa Dhya puja must be done on every Thursday but after finishing the dance there is no rules for doing puja.¹⁷

5.5. Jewelries/Dresses

Jewelries and dresses plays most important role in the scriptural dance. Without these, the dance become valueless. So, the performer must give high priority to this. On the day of performance, the dresses and jewelries are given to the performers after the confirmation who is going to take part in which character. Precious jewelries and dresses of all performers except Nrisimha and Baraha's is kept in Patan Museum and these will take from the museum when needed.¹⁸

5.5.1. Nrisimha Character

One Crown (Mukutt (crown), Tayo, different flower's chain, two pairs of pyakhan angu (finger rings made of silver), mekhala jabi (a belt made of pearls), blouse made by taas (a fabric), bala (bracelet), red handkerchief tie on wrist, jama (frock) etc. are dresses and jewelries need for Nrisimha. Nrisimha kept these carefully himself at his resident. Similarly, Baraha has also need same jewelries and dresses and kept carefully himself at his place.

5.5.2. Vishnugana (Shri Vishnu, Laxmi, Saraswoti, Jay and Bijaya) Character

¹⁷ Interviewed Mr. Kiran Chitrakar and Mr. Uttam Ratna Shakya, dated 3rd Aswin 2070, when they mentioned in brief about the different aspects of puja ceremony done in Kartik Naach

¹⁸ Interviewed Mr. Kiran Chitrakar and Mr. Uttam Ratna Shakya, dated 3rd Aswin 2070, when they mentioned about the jewelleries used in Kartik Naach and how they are stored.

Three mukut (crown), two kinkinthewayen (jewelries put on a head of Laxmi and Saraswoti), five mekhala jabi are kept in the Patan museum and jhijhon, pyakhan angu, bala and five blouse made of taas a fabric, jamas are kept in the committee office. Chain of flowers must arranged by the performer themselves.

5.5.3. Daityagana (Hiranyalashyapu, Pralhad, Chanda, Prachanda, Sandak, Amarka) Character

Four mukuts (crowns), four mekhala jabi are kept in the Patan museum and three khadga (weapons), four pairs of pyakhan angu, bala and four blouse made of taas a fabric, jamas, and two pairs of dhoti, cap two sticks for devil's master Sandak and Amarka are securely kept in the committee office. Chain of flowers must arranged by the performer themselves except two devil's master as they do not need a chain of flowers.

5.5.4. Apsara (Angel) Character

Kinkinthewayen and mekhala jabi of apsara is also kept in Patan museum and other dresses are kept in committee office.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

6.1. Summary

Lord Vishnu had taken different incarnation, whenever people suffer from the bad deeds of someone, to prove the world that bad thing never wins over good ones and cannot be sustainable. The Nrisimha Avatar is fourth incarnation of Lord Vishnu which is neither a human nor an animal rather has a head of fiery lion and body of human. This incarnation has heroic or brave, fierce and marvelous features. Lord Vishnu created this incarnation to teach the discipline and a moral education for people. The people placed Nrisimha at higher level and worshipped.

The Kartik naach was developed after introducing the Lichhabi period in Nepal. It is seen that the main aim of showing this dance is to make strong Nation by making all the aspects of Nation strong. King Siddhi Narasimha Malla developed this Kartik Naach to be off the misfortune from the nation and give the education and increase the cultural value of valley after discussing with Shikchhya Guru/ Naatyacharya Haribansa Upadhyaya (Sharma) and Dikchhya Guru Bishwonath Upadhyaya (Sharma) in N.S. 761. This Nrisimha Naach is heart of Kartik Naach. Also King Shrinivash Malla and King Yognarendra Malla joined the different Lila of Lord Vishnu and legendary story like Bathah Naach at their period. Thus all three Kings, all the related people: performer, singer, musician, and senior people linked with this Naach, must thankful to them for their continue participation, patient and faith on this dance.

Till now at Changunarayan temple 10 incarnation of Lord Vishnu has been performed. This is also shown in front of the Kumari ghar (house of living goddess Kumari) during the indrajatra. Likewise at right side of the Dolkha temple premises there is a statue of 10 incarnation of Vishnu. At the gate of all three palaces of Kathmandu valley the statue of Nrisimha is present. All this events as well as the presence of inscription about Nrisimha at national archives indicates that, in Nepal there is a huge belief of Nrisimha.

The Kartik Naach was developed according to scriptural on a basis of Natyasastra. The developer of this dance was priest/ Haribansha Upadhyaya (Sharma) and he is also professor of King Siddhi Narasimha Malla.

All the aspects like expression and acting of performer, ras, shringar (makeup), decoration of stage, dresses, jewelries, musical instruments, song etc. have important role in their place and these aspects must be strong for long continuity of any dance/act. Kartik Naach had been shown from the ancient time and this has a highest value till now because all the aspects discussed above is very much strong and gives the education as well as entertaining.

6.2. Conclusion

The Kartik Naach is a form of tragedy dance/drama and has been stand as a best model of dance/drama. Kartik Naach is cultural masterpiece. So it must be conserved, preserved, patronage and promoted. Similarly not only the dance but also all the all aspects that is related with this dance like management, characters, musicians, singers as well as all the related people and members must be necessary to conserved, patronage and promoted. Work of all related people: founder, performer, musician, singer, helpers, advisors of Kartik Naach is appreciable and the new generation must value the contribution of all the member worked in Kartik Naach and they must work with patient to give a continuity for a long period.

This thesis covers all the aspects of Nrisimha Avatar in detail. There is a different aspects are remaining to do research (thesis). Anyone can do research (thesis) taking any aspect of the Kartik Naach e.g. management, arrangement, music, songs etc.

6.3. Recommendations

The recommendations are as follows:

- a) It is necessary to improve some aspects of Kartik Naach to fulfill the demand of modern age.
- b) In the scriptural dance/drama, dialogues are also necessary. So, the dialogues must be included in all the dramas of Kartik Naach.
- c) Proper management of Musical instrument must be necessary.
- d) Different trainings must be given to musician and singer at different time.

e) During the performances crowd of audience must be managed properly.

Appendix –A

Name List Of Informants

S.No.	Name	Profession	Address
1.	Mr. Ashim Bhatta	Young Cultural Expert	Changu
2.	Mr. Baldev Juju	Cultural Expert	Indrachowk
3.	Mr. Pratapdhar Sharma	Artist & Musician of Kartik Naach	Patan
4.	Mr. Chhatra Bahadur Kayastha	Historian	Kathmandu
5.	Mr. Madan Maharjan	Guthi Member	Ason
6.	Mr. Mukunda Jwalananda Rajopadhyaya	Guthi Member	Kupondol
7.	Mr. Kiran Chitrakar	Artist of Kartik Naach	Patan
8.	Mr. Hari Man Shrestha	Kartik Naach Expert	Patan
9.	Mr. Binaya Rajopadhyaya	Culture Reporter	Patan
10.	Mr. Kancha Dangol	Kartik Naach Member	Patan

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