

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

This is an ethnography study of Darais, an ethnic group and the changes on the way of Darai and interaction with other emigrated Parbatiya caste/ ethnic groups in Jagatpur of Chitwan District. Jagatpur is a well known traditional Darai homeland. Since 1960 after the success of anti –malaria campaign different caste/ ethnic groups (Parbatiya) from hills and ethnic Darais have been living there together. Jagatpur is an example of heterogeneity of Darais and Parbatiya mixed settlement. Viewing the local Darais perspectives on the socio- cultural continuity and changes in the area, I present the context by which the Darais shape their distinct identity uninfluenced by urban ethnic movements of recent decades.

Darais have a long but not properly researched history in the country. Their settlements are basically in the inner Terai and river valleys. Today the Darais are scattered over the several districts of hills and terai of central and eastern Nepal- from the Narayani Zone in the west to Mechi in the eastern terai. Chitwan, Tanahu, Nawalparasi, Gorkha, Lamjung, Kavre districts also accommodate the Darais (Kathry 1995). According to CBS data of 2001, the total population of Darai is 14,859 and the population of Darai in Chitwan District is 8,221. Interestingly, Darai language speakers are 10,210 i.e. higher than the total Darai population in the Chitwan. Hodgson (1880) introduced Darais as one of the “Awal” groups primarily settled in the lowlands, formerly malaria – affected area (Awal, lowland). They are supposed to represent the remainder of an ethnic people. Currently, most of Darais are peasants; partial occupational activities (fishing) however are to be observed among them. The old civil code in 1854 recognized and provided Darais jati a status. It puts them under caste groups of the “Enslaveable Alcohol- Drinkers” (Masinya matwai) (Hofer 1979) Darais have been close physical and cultural proximity with Tarus of the terai (Bista, 1987).

Darais are Hindus and worship family deities too. According to Rakesh (1994), they entered into Nepal when there was Muslim attack on India in 14th century. They celebrate Dashain, Teez, Mangle Sakranti, Tulsi-Akadashi and Holi Purnima. They worship Bimsen, Mahadev, Rapati River, Forest god and Kul puja. They offer goats, pigeons to the god and goddess but they do not follow Hindu cultural norms and festivals as high caste Hindus follow. Darais have distinct birth, marriage and death rituals. Darai Utthan Samaj claims that due to strong influence of Hindus these days many Darais follow Hindu religion and celebrate Hindu festivals and also regard themselves as Hindu (NEFDIN 2005:94).

Since 1992 Darai Utthan Samaj (DUS), a registered center level organization located in Chitwan District, has been working to unite the Darai Jati. DUS works under the directive principles of Janajati Mahasangh, an umbrella organization of all registered Nepali ethnic groups. The main goal of the DUS is to shape Darais identity by following traditional culture and to raise jati (caste/ ethnic) consciousness.

On the other hand Parbatiya is a term commonly ascribed to the Nepali speaking, hill population. It comprises of high – castes hill ethnic groups and occupational castes. Darai and Parbatiya interaction in Jagatpur, a small heterogeneous socio- cultural setting in middle of Rapati Valley, present the contexts of continuity and changes and shapes caste/ ethnic identity and consciousness.

Throughout this thesis I present social contexts of Darais –Parbatiya interaction, continuity and change to Darai's culture, livelihood strategies, identity, and ethnic consciousness at local level in Jagatpur VDC of Khadgauli village.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Darai constitutes the largest ethnic groups in the Inner Terai of Nepal. Danuwar, Bote, Raji, Kumal, Majhi are other ethnic inhabitants. Their supposedly long history and culture has not been recorded, despite their unique way of life, Darai of the inner Terai failed to attract attention of both native and foreign researchers. Very few scholars have written small articles about general characteristics of Darais. Even though Darai is categorized as a highly marginalized and economically backward

ethnic group (NEFEN, 2005), deep ethnographic study has not been conducted. Bulky volume of ethnographic studies of many ethnic and caste groups have been carried out by both native and foreign anthropologists. However, most of the scholars concentrated research on either higher geographical altitude- mountain dweller or relatively purer ethnic groups (Shah 2004). There is extensive literature on the Sherpas, Tamangs, Gurungs, Thakalis, Magars, Rais, and Limbus from mountain and middle hill regions. These types of one sided studies contribute to create false notion about caste/ethnic group's composition, has argued that "large numbers of himalayan and hill ethnic group studies "contributed to the false notion that Nepal is a country composed of primarily Buddhist 'Tribal Groups'"(Cameron, 1998:17, quoted in Shah2004).

I chose Darai because of their marginal space in academic documentation, in other word Darai discourse was not properly studied.

It is said that ethnic identity can be saved through preservation of past as it is. In the name of identity, these days, ethnic people have explicit caste / ethnic consciousness at all levels. I am interested to test my hunch whether rural common people have shaped their caste/ethnic consciousness as reflected in urban intellectual and political apparatus landscape or not. I mean whether the formation of ethnicity is genuine cultural interest or beyond it. Change is also considered threat for identity. Another aspect of ethnic group I want to be clear is whether socio-cultural and livelihood strategies changes cause loss of identity and threat of existence or they provide new outlets for shaping identity and existence in new manner. In media and politics, it is depicted that ethnic groups have almost antagonistic relationship with Hindu caste groups. How far do these relationships reflect in local Darai community and how do they perceive their own larger ethnic formation?

The Darai is one of the least known, socially and politically marginalized ethnic groups in Nepal. Darai are far behind from the mainstream of development in our country. This is one of the main representatives of excluded groups, so, it has become necessary to record their identity, their culture and way of life before it is lost to history. This research does not only have academic value but this can also help in the design of better government and development program to ensure inclusion of

marginally and demographically tiny cultural group. Therefore it can hope that this ethnography study will help to record the unique culture identity of Darai people and way of life.

Darai and emigrants parbatiya groups interaction is quite interesting research topic because previous literatures present that Darai prefer isolated settlement. They do not want to meet new people. If new comers visit their settlement many of them go to either to the forest or river (Baral 2057). They are peaceful and are of honest nature, thus they do not prefer to go to the police offices and law courts to out cases. (Gautam and Magar1994:129) Darais (as peasants and fishermen) perception the outer world and people especially hill emigrants is expressed on their everyday life experience. On the other hand Darais of Jagarpur do not have any existing ethnic organisation nor do they have much knowledge about the ethnic movement until my field work. And till yet Darai discourse was not properly studied like the other ethnic groups like Gurung, Newar, Tamang and Magar etc. So, there are lot of causes that bring my attention towards Darai ethnic group.

Cultural change is considered as threat to identity but the process of change is inevitable (Jenkins1996). Darai cannot escape from that process of social and cultural change. There is various change agents that influence Darai to change on their cultural and livelihood strategies and there is something that helps them keep up tradition. Persistence of a cultural past is ideal, while practiced reality compels people to change way and mean of making adjustments in the group boundaries (Chhetri 1990). Ethnic groups have choices to follow other culture and resist them (Caplan 1970) J. Fisher argues that social interactions are the very foundation of social systems. The social interaction does not “lead to liquidation of ethnic differences through acculturation, cultural differences persists in spite of interethnic contact and interdependence” (1987:184). In the same vein changes in a Darai tradition, culture and livelihood strategies strike me for further study.

My argument is Darais of Jagatpur have different perspectives on caste/ethnic relationship; socio- cultural changes and identity. Based on above mentioned problems this study answers some questions: Who are Darais? What are their

perspectives on caste/ethnic group's interaction? What are influencing factors of their changes? What is their perception on identity?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main purpose of this research is to produce ethnographic knowledge about the cultural practices of Darai people at Khadgauli village of Jagatpur VDC of Chitwan District. The specific objective of the study can be listed below:

-) To trace out, history and myths of origin of the Darais.
-) To analyze, changes on Darai culture, identity and livelihood strategies.
-) To analyze, Darai perceptions and relations with other caste/ethnic groups.

1.4 Importance of the Study

The first goal of this research is to fulfill the partial requirement for master degree in anthropology from Tribhuvan University in Nepal. Based on short term field work, employing a theoretical and substantive anthropological approach, this research focuses on changes on every day practices of Darai, their interactions with hill emigrants (Caste/ Ethnic groups) Darais and Parbatiya groups have co-operation as well as tension on certain issue . Both groups learnt one another culture to some extent. The influenced by urban ethnic movement. They are co-opertive with all Parbatiya caste/ ethnic groups equally. Thus it shows an outline of the relationship between caste and ethnic groups in remote village, which will be helpful for policy making on different levels.

1.5 Chapter Organisation

This work is divided into six chapters. Following these introductory remarks, chapter two presents concept of continuity and change and sketches the history of ethnic study, concepts of ethnicity, ethnic identity and existing literatures about Darais. Third chapter is about anthropological research method. It presents my field stay and techniques of data collection. In the fourth chapter I have described geographical setting of the research area, oral history of origin, life cycle rituals, and livelihood strategies and changes on Darais. Chapter five is about identity, religion, festivals, food, commesality, treatment practices, language, Darais perception and relations with parbatiya caste/ ethnic groups, Darais identity and their world experiences in

Jagatpur is presented in this chapter. Finally, summary and overall findings are presented in the sixth chapter.

CHAPTER - II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Nepali Ethnic /Caste Groups as a Model of Anthropological/ Sociological Research

CF Haminendrop is the first anthropologist to study the Himalayan people of Nepal, his book “The Sherpas of Nepal” (1964) encouraged other sociologist and anthropologist to establish a tradition on ethnographic study in Nepal.

Among the native anthropologist Dor Bhadhur Bista is the first and pioneering one who has attempted to sketch an anthropological map of all ethnic groups of Nepal: In his book “People of Nepal” (1987) he has focused only the majority of different ethnic groups but there is no seprate title for Darai. He has included this group into the Danuwar, Manjhi and Darai chapter.

Normally, Nepali culture is treated in a homogenous fashion built in the frame work of Hindu ideals and beliefs: this is only partially true in fact; Nepal is a multi- cultural nation, composed of diverse ethnic groups with differences in language, religion and culture. So, that is the reason why many native and foreign anthropologist and sociologist are taken many ethnic groups as a model of their research. For example a good anthropological monograph writing is more theoretically driven such as David Holmberg’s “Order in Paradox” (1989) applying the model of (Symbolic Anthropology) and Linone I Caplan’s “Land and Social Change in East Nepal” (Conflict Model). Homberg notes that while noting down certain kinds of symbolic prevalent in tamang culture, tamang rituals process of reciprocity and Tamang Buddhism could be explained.

Caplan’s research is the study of Hindu ethnic interrelationships and conflict focussing on two cultural groups: the Brahmins and Limbus of Eastern Nepal. Limbus are consider the ethnic group, where as the Brahmins are considered the migrants in

this region. The name Indreni cluster is the fictitious name of the village where the author conducted his research. The objective of the whole book is to analyze the social, economic and political interrelationship between the Brahmins and Limbus of Eastern Nepal.

The book "Priest and Cobblers" is a study of the changes which have come about in the past two decades in relation between castes (particularly priests or Brahmins) and untouchables (most of the cobblers) in a Hindu village in the hills of western Nepal. Particular attention is paid to shifts in the economic and political links between the two groups since 1951, when Nepal emerged from a century of isolation from the outside world and internal stagnation under despotic regime (Caplan:1972). Ortne (1978), Prignede (1993) are other prominent scholars who studied on Sherpa community in Solukhumbu district and the Gurungs of Kaski district respectively.

"The Newars" a book written by Nepali (1965) is of considerable sociological value. On his intensive study, he had concentrated on urban and rural differences? Furthermore to find out a detailed study on marriage and the family among the Newars, regional variation of socio-cultural life, Guthi, religion, caste, high, material culture, tradition, feast and festivals etc.

2.2 Continuity and Change

Continuity underlies Stability. Because of social continuity group members come to expect definite types of behavior which do not normally change results from the pull between innovating tendencies that makes for the continuation of existing cultural forms. Encyclopedia of the social science defines that the continuity of culture rests fundamentally upon the process whereby the past is brought into the process and extended into future. Perpetuation of the culture whereby continuity is achieved may be through process that are unorganized and informal or highly systematized and formalized (1970:316). The persistence of traits from earlier periods into a period when condition of life have been modified gives rise to social conservatism. On the other hand, change goes on everywhere and at all times. It may be induced by factors and forces spontaneously arising within the community or it may take place through the contact of different culture.

For Malinowski “culture change is process by which the existing order of society-its organization, beliefs and knowledge, tools and consumers’ good-is more or less rapidly transformed” (Malinowski 1945: VII). Changes implies several parts of social heritage. This heritage may be classified for the present purpose under material object and non-material culture including organization, science, art philosophy, literature, religion, customs and the like. F. Barth (1969) points out that in order to understand social change. We need to describe all of society in such terms that we see how it persists maintains itself and change through time (Barth 1969 105). As is clear from Barth’s statement, continuity and change ought to be considered simultaneously. David Mandelbaum’s (1961) argument is that traditional and modern culture traits coexist in some societies. He says that there is the possibility of traditional societies modernizing without necessarily abandoning their traditional institution, beliefs and values, Continuity of the past and acceptance of new things go at the same time.

M.N. Srinivas’s concept of sanskritization is also important to analyze continuity and change within a caste or tribal group. Interactions among different categories of the population over a long time might have motivated many of the ‘tribal’ groups or even the caste Hindus to change their “customs. Rituals, ideology and the way of life in the direction of high caste” (Srinivas 1966:6). He argues that Sanskritization is a unilineal process in which non-caste and low caste groups consciously adopt the high caste practices and customs acquire high caste status (ibid). The theoretical ideas of continuity of the people and culture enclaves maintaining ethics boundaries provides a frame of reference for Darai, a ethnic group of Jagatpur. They spontaneously tend to maintain boundary around them as well as accept some new cultural traits to fulfill the gap of defunct practices.

2.3 From Tribe to Ethnic Group

One of social anthropology’s traditional theoretical engagements has been a concern with corporate groups and social systems. During the colonial and post-colonial periods the subject matter of the discipline was marked “primitive peoples and culture” (Firth 1958:6, quoted Jenkins 1986). These so-called primitive people were commonly organized into tribal groups. Malinowski (1922) developed the notion of ‘the tribal’, as a real social entity which caused both theoretical and methodological

development of anthropology....with his tables of kinship terms, genealogies, maps, plans and diagrams, proves the existence of the extensive and big organization, shows the construction of the tribal, of the clan, family....Ethnographer has in the field, the duty before him of drawing up all the rules and regulation of tribal life, all that is permanent and fixed, of giving an anatomy of their culture, of depicting the constitution of their society (Malinowski 1922:10-11).

This yields two important things about tribe: distance tribal society from the civilized and framework for the cross-culture comparison of primitive social organization. For R. Jenkins (1986) “the notion of tribe draws the distinction between ‘them’ and ‘us’ and basic similarity between different sort of ‘them’ (1986:173). F. Barth identifies four features of anthropological model of the tribe: biologically self-continuity shared basic culture values, a bounded social field of communication and interaction members and identified by others and identifies them (Barth 1969: 10-11). This anthropology notion of the tribe implied that such groups are isolated, backward (so-called primitive) and especially non-western.

The classical analytical framework of ethnographic studies is put into question, when they illustrated controversy like whether the ‘Nuer’, as documented by Evans-Pritchard (1940), is really the Dinka (Newcomer) or whether they are both distinct components of a single plural society (Gluckman 1972, Jenkins 1986). Jenkins argues “the event which most clearly marked the paradigm shift within social anthropology from ‘tribal society’ to ‘ethnic groups’ was the publication of *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*’ by F. Barth in 1969a” (Jenkins 1986:173). Barth insists ethnic group and its production and reproduction in routine social interaction are to be taken as problematic feature. For him, ethnographer must examine the practice and process whereby ethnicity and boundaries are created. So, the starting point and identification by actors themselves (Barth 1969:10). He focuses on individual and group interaction rather than ethnic group’s culture stuff. In south Asia, scholars distinguish ‘tribe’ from ‘caste’ in terms of their social organization. D.R. Dahal (1979) argues that ‘tribe were associated with a particular territory and considered to “subsist in isolation”. In order words tribes were conceptualized as territory bound homogeneous group living in isolated village (Dahal 1979). In India, legislation distinguished sharply between,

tribes and caste, but the Nepalese Muluki Ain 1854 (Old Legal Code) treated all the tribes equally as castes, and hierarchized them along with everyone else (Sharma 1977, Hofer 1979). According to William Fisher (1993) Nepal Janjati Mahasangh applied the term nationalities rather than the previously more frequently used tribe. He argued that his translation indicates a shift to self-definition from externally based identification and draws attention to their conviction that Nepal consist of a number of equal nationalities which collectively constitute the nation rather than a set tribal who stand in opposition to the nation (Fisher 1993).

D.R. Dahal argues that researchers show cultural incompatibility and present a conflict model among castes and ethnic groups which is confusing and meaningless in the context of Nepal, is argument is many of Nepalese caste/ethnic groups have shown considerable cohesiveness and ability to adapt to new condition through an acculturation process (Dahal1979). He notes that “foreign researchers have portrayed Terai-ethnic and hill ethnic groups as socially, politically and economically inferior to other Hindu groups in Nepal. They have shown that these groups as economically and conservatives” (Dahal1979:220). Thus, the meaning and relationship between ethnic group and other people vary according to time, place and social contexts.

2.4 Ethnic Group and Identity

The word ‘ethnic ‘comes from the ancient Greek ‘Ethnos’ which seems to have referred to a range of situations in which a collectivity of humans lived and acted together which is translated today as ‘people’ and ‘nation’. Eriksen defends the analytical use to concept and suggests that it should be taken to mean” the systematic and enduring social reproduction of basic classification differences between categories of people who perceive each other as being culturally discrete “(Eriksen 1972:7). The linked concepts of ethnicity and ethnic group have passed into everyday discourse and become on the culturally diverse societies.

Max Weber argues since the possibilities for collective action rooted in ethnicity are imprecise, ‘the ethnic group’ and its close relative notions cannot easily to precisely define for sociological purpose. His arguments are: Ethnic membership does not constitute a group; it only facilities group formation are: Ethnic membership does not

constitute a group; it only facilitates formation of any kind, particularly in the political sphere. On the other hand, it is primarily the political community no matter how artificially organized, that inspires the belief in common ethnicity (Weber 1978, quoted Jenkins 1996).

Everett Hughes has different arguments about ethnic group and degree of measurable or observable difference from other groups. It is an ethnic group, on the contrary, because the people in it and the people out of it know that it is one; because both the ins and the outs talk, feel, and act as if it were a separate group. His focus is thus: “ethnic culture differences are a function of ‘group-ness’, the existence of group is not a reflection of culture difference” (Hughes 1994:91 quote Jenkins 1997).

Some anthropologists doubt that ethnic relations can be separated out from the general range of social interactions. ‘Us’- ‘them’ distinctions, after all, are essential to social grouping of any sort. Wallman (1986) argues, basing in Barthian framework that: “ethnicity is the process by which ‘their’ difference is used to enhance the sense of ‘us’ for purpose of organization or identification.. Because it takes two, ethnicity can only happen at the boundary of ‘us’ changes so the boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’ as the sense of ‘us’ changes so the criteria which mark it change” (Wallman 1986:3). By this definition, ethnicity is transactional, shifting and essentially impermanent. Benedict Anderson’s notion of communities, nation and ethnicity formation undergo same process of imagination. He argued that communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity and genuineness but by the style in which they are imagined “It is imagined because the member of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion”(Anderson 1983:6). So, ethnic boundaries are always made of and one of the key issue becomes the manipulation of perceived significant difference. Therefore, ethnic phenomena are not natural, inherent or eternal.

D. Gellner (2001) argues the various ways of construction of ethnicity. There are many times and places where people have no particular ethnic feelings,” their ties to other people are much more local, and their religious or political allegiances may go for beyond the ethnic group” (Anderson 1983:94, Gellner 2001). In their another

study, he argues that when a given population shares a common language, a culture and common attachment to a given territorially or at least historical line to these shared features, it thereby constitutes an ethnic group (Gellner 1997).

F. Barth (1969) offers a model of ethnic and social identities as somewhat fluid, situationally contingent and the perpetual subject and object of negotiation. His proposition is that “it is not enough to send a message about identity; that message has to be accepted by significant others before an identity can be said to be ‘taken on’”. Ethnic identities are to be found and negotiated at their boundaries where the internal and external meet”. In this way ethnic identity can be understood from the dialectical interplay of process of internal and external meanings. Barth’s argument is “ethnic identities are flexible, if not totally fluid” (1969:18). On the context of politics of Swat in Pakistan, he focused on how political grouping develops and changes as the result of inter-personal strategizing and transaction by or emerge out of interaction was taken further in models of social organization (Barth 1969, Jenkins 1996). Thus, the focus of the study should be the membership of ethnic group recruitment rather than simply assuming an obvious process of birth and death. The distinction which Barth (1969) draws between ‘boundary’ and content’ (cultural stuff) allows a widened distinction to be drawn between ‘nominal identity and virtual identity. The former is the name and latter the experience of an identity what it means to bear it. It is possible for ethnic groups to share the same nominal identity and for to mean can stay the same-Tharu for example while the experience of being a Tharu can change dramatically stable while the name changes. For better understanding of ethnic identity formation ethnic concepts and arguments need to be reviewed.

2.5 Concept of Ethnicity: Primordial, Modernist, Constructive/Synthesis

There are several ways in which the problem of origin may be approached. One is the position adopted by Yinger (1986) who uses the term ‘primordial’ to refer to that aspect of ethnicity which expresses “genuine culture to which the sense of long-standing attachment is experienced’ (1986:5). He sees genuine culture is only one source of ethnic strength. According to primordialist, the ethnic identity has been an aspect of social identity that has remained more or less unchanged from the pre-modern past (Guneratne 2002, Gellner 1997). This approach goes back toward deep-

past, immutability and 'naturalness' of the particular groups. "Ethnic concept of modern world is usually explained in terms of ancient hatreds whether it involves Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda-Burundi, Sinhalese and Tamils in Sri Lanka or Hindu and Muslim in India" (Guneratne 2002:2) Macfarlane (1997) argues that Gurungs are reviving their ancient cultures. Many Gurungs agreed that "the traditional Gurung priests are the pachyu, and the Lehbri lamas are a more recent addition" (1997:185). In Hindu context gotra is main symbol to search origin of different castes. It is very difficult task of drawing line between pseudo-ethnicity and ethnicity where the primordial element plays at least some part.

Instrumentalists in the other hand emphasized that ethnic distinctiveness is to gain some political or economic advantages. Interest based ethnicity expresses stratification or material symbol. Some modernists argue that interests are well served by ethnically based movement precisely because, as J. Milton Yinger notes, "they combine and interest with an affective tie" (Yinger 1986:27). Herstein presents the flexibility of ethnic unity "Despite class, racial, language, and religious differences among people, they develop organizations and leaders as adaptive mechanisms to deal with their shared circumstances" (Herstein 1983, Yinger 1986:97).

D. Gellner (1997) argues most of the ethnic activist is motivated solely by the pursuit of economic or political advantages either for themselves or for the group. Holmberg (1989) clearly mentioned about the formation of Tamangs, who are people not based on a single culture. "The Tamang as a named category of ethnic group like many other group emerged not out of time immemorial from hidden past of Himalayan valleys but with the formation of the state of Nepal" (1989:12). The fiction of ethnicity simply disguises the interest basis of some group conditions. Ethnic groups are made of on the processes of social interaction in different times Therefore formation of ethnicity is beyond cultural interest.

"Ethnicity is not only primordial nor it is simply the product of elites manipulating the consciousness of the subaltern classes and inverting traditions, but it is the outcome of specific historical processes that shape a society's experiences"(Guneratne 2001:3). He argues articulation of Tharu consciousness and ethnic commitment varies greatly between the modernized Tharu elites

and majority of the Tharu on the grassroots level (ibid).

Anthropologists have been very much influenced by F. Barth's constructive model or attack on static views of ethnic groups and culture. D. Gellner analyses dual status of Barth's position about ethnic concepts. "Barth is clearly not a primordialist, since he emphasizes that there may be no continuity to the 'cultural stuff or' genuine culture' enclosed by the boundaries, nor a modernist, since he assumes that ethnic groups have existed at all times and in all places". (Gellner 1997:15). Some of the scholars consider ethnicity as a political phenomenon and relate ethnicity to group competition over scarce resources.

After close study in context Anthropologist conclude that 'the importance of ethnicity grows as modernization and globalization proceed and that ethnicity as understood and experienced today is, at most modern phenomenon. It must be explained as a response to contemporary pressures and not as a leftover of some precious type of society (Gellner 1997). Similarly Cohen concluded " Ethnicity is thus basically a political and not a cultural phenomenon, and it operate with the contemporary political contexts and is not an archaic survival arrangement carried over into the present by a conservative people" (Cohen 1969:190).

For Berreman, "The distinctiveness of a ...cultural group corresponds with the degree, duration and kind of isolation of the people involved these cultural drift, the process of divergent or differential cultural change" leads to differences between ethnic groups (Berreman 1963:787). Whether ethnicity is primarily cultural or political, the important point is that it has to be created. It is not an essential and universal aspect of human condition. These models of ethnicity is, rather than seeing people as passive recipients of the forces of modernization, Hinduization or the nation-state, prefers to see them as potentially active manipulators, negotiations, and transformers of the cultural forms these processes generate and of the contexts in 'which they interacts. It requires the analysis of how ethnicity is internally felt as well as how its external boundaries are created or imposed. Judith Butler (2003) cited Gayatri Spivak's argument named "operational (strategic)

essentialism", a false ontology of women as a universal category of oppressed irrespective of multiplicity and discontinuity of the rebel against the univocity of the sign, but she suggests that they need to use it for Strategic purpose (Butler 2003). I agree with Spivak's operational essentialism in the process of ethnic unity in Nepal. I have reviewed some ethnographic works in Nepal that present creative use of common symbol to organize them in spite of multiplicity and discontinuity.

2.6 Review of Ethnographic Texts

In this part ,Thakali, Gurung, Tamang, Magar, Rai, Limbu Tharu and other minorities ethnic groups' literatures have been reviewed to show internal contradictions of current phenomena of 'one group one culture' identity, internal hierarchy within the group, multilateral ways of cultural change and continuity reshape identity in new manner. Continuity and change are processes of managing both ethnic identity and livelihood. The connecting points among different groups are construction of ethnicity and identity in new context of social interaction.

W. Fisher (2001) by presenting Thakali case argues that ethnicity is not inherent quality that is passed on from generation to generations; it is dynamic process and emerges fully only through interaction and conflict. The recent attempts by the Thakali to define their identity and clarify their history and cultural practices suggest that "to return to tradition they must first create it-or recreate it-but this process of recreation establishes it in a way in which it has never existed before" (Fisher 2001:5). Thakalis are not clear about their traditional culture of Hinduism, Buddhism or pure Shamanism. Fisher notes one of the Thakali speakers on conference as he said, "Without a clear tradition to which to return, we ought to embrace Hinduism because it is the dharma of our forefathers and because it is the most practical dharma for our future" (2001:5). It shows that ethnic identity and history are changing through political change. Changes on political and new context of social interaction reshape identity on new manner.

In March 1992 Gurung activists held a conference in Pokhara and passed three

resolutions that "Gurung history had been destroyed by Brahmins, that there were no superior or inferior Gurung clans, and the original Gurung priests were pa-chyu and Lehbri"(Macfarlane 1997:185). Macfarlane (1997) with the help of Pignede's 1966 argues the internal contradictions of history and culture, among Gurungs. Char Jat has nothing to do with Gurungs specifically. "Char Jat actually referred four Hindu Varna, namely Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra". These four fold caste division was later absorbed into the Gurung system (Macfarlane 1997:194). Harka Gurung argues "There were indeed superior and inferior clans among the Gurung but the issue to the status cleavage among Gurung was in its Brahmanic interpretation ascribed by some of their elites" (Gurung 1997:508).

But Pol Gurung, a Gurung priest argues that Gurung's priestly texts do not tell any history and origin of Char Jat (Gurung 2007) these contested views on Gurung identity have become frequent issue of debate among Gurung. According to Pol Gurung they have gone to court to solve superior identity. When the court to solve superior identity. When the court could not solve the issue they themselves made decision saying all Gurungs are equal. But a number of different interpretations of what Pignede called the char jat and Sorah jat have different origins, origins in the north and south. Macfarlane summarizes that the main route was down to Burma and then westward through Assam and eastern Nepal to their present settlements. One legend tells how "the tunings were wandering shepherds who came down through the high pasture of Tibet, through the kingdom of Mustang, to settle the southern slopes of Annapurna range, yet other traditions suggest a dual origin, with the 'four jat' as they are known coming from the south, from the northern India, and the 'sixteen jat' coming from the north" (Macfarlane and Gurung 1990:1-2).

Pignede argues that Gurungs are divided into the status groups namely the higher ranking Charjat and the lower ranking Sorahjat. "The Charjat for their part, comprise four clans: the Ghale, Ghodane, Lama and Lamichhane. The status declivity between Charjat and Sorahjat is reflected among other things in the fact that the latter had until recently been regarded as the servant of the former and that

even today lamas are village headlines (Kiroh) are exclusively member of the Charjat group" (Pignede 1966, Hofer 2004:121).

Levine argued that "Tibetan speakers long were considered Bhatiya. Some decades ago they were instructed by government representatives that their jat had become Tamang and that change in jat was to their advantage being of higher caste status, (Levine 1987:79-80). Holmberg's (1989) argument is that the historical and social conditions behind the emergence of the Tamang reinforced some quasi-tribal features. "Tamang, culture ... was much created as undermined in the genesis of contemporary Nepal ... an insular or 'tribal' character of Tamang culture emerged in response to the evolution of socio politics- in the greater Himalayas where the local sector Tamang turned in upon themselves in a process of involution" (Holmberg 1989:15). He describes the notion of par-Tamang identity is a recent phenomena in which many different groups were mixed. Ethnic identities in Nepal are subject to interaction context and strategies of creative use. The social meanings of particular terms vary from local levels to national frames, from the grounded to the imaginary, generating incongruence and misrecognition as to how identities are constituted at different levels (Campbell 1997). People may agree to be Tamang in linguistic terms but deny this identity in dietary and cultural terms.

Shaubhagya Shah (2004) presents the mutual influences of culture between the caste and ethnic groups. Hindu castes adopt liquor drinking habits and other Matwali practices which he calls Matwalization. This process of Desanskritization as Srivastava termed has been noticed in some Nepalese villages. His argument is "cultural flows are not only unidirectional-going down from the Hindu caste- they also travel in the reverse direction as well"(Shah 2004:18). In the same vein, Andrew Russell argues by referring the case of Yakkha-one of Rai groups of eastern Nepal-that far from "one-way process of acculturation there is a yakhafication of Hindus as well as a Hinduization of the yakkha" (1997:348). He argues that yakkha success for their identity management by applying different strategies of negotiation, manipulation and subversion of others culture. Yakkha selectively accept Hindu's culture, such

as their adoption of the caste system and some Hindu festivals the yakkha are at least superficially 'Hindu'. However, "the Hindu order is being manipulated and subverted even in these avowedly Hindu domains" (Russell 1997:339) in terms of language and religion, "there is a tendency to incorporate new cultural elements into the yakha's own, the absorption of Hindu practices and values has been selective and does not necessarily mean old forms have been completely done away with" (Russell 1997:339). There are limits to the borrowing that fit the pre-existing and shifting matrices of yakkha culture This is also a good example of change and management of identity in own way. Charles Ramble analyzed that the Tibetan-speakers of Northern Nepal have never mobilized the fact of their common religion, language and culture as the basis for an ethnic forum (1997). The indigenous Tibetan speakers comprise a Bhotlya' Lamaist group embedded in a wider society that is distinguished by markedly different Hindu culture. But they lack common culture, language and close interaction because of geographical barrier. These groups present themselves as, orthodox Hindu or devout Tibetan Buddhist in order to gain acceptance and, ultimately, material profit, within the appropriate milieu. All the time however these traders retain a 'real' cultural identity which is kept hidden from observers and their identity is focused on certain tribal ritual performance that periodically takes place in their heartland (Ramble 1997:404). He presents different Tibetan ethnic groups living in Trans-Himalayan valleys in contrast with Madhesh is living in the south, is still no evidence of any strong sense of ethnic solidarity amongst these Tibetanids which might bind them together. Ramble links the rise of ethnicity directly to the economic and political benefits it can bring to the group concerned. The legal code of 1854 endorsed the idea of the inviolability of customary practices of different Jatis (Hofer 1979). Even during Rana regime many social and cultural groups were left free to follow their customary tradition and practices, gave adjudication on disputes over infringements of customary practices on customary rights of the specific caste or ethnic groups (Sharma 1997). The terms to describe a caste (Jat) and an ethnic group (Jatis) in the Nepali language stem from a common root. The word Jat, in early writing referred to a his caste. It might be possible to interpret Prithvi Narayan Shah ethnic status as to his 1, Narayan Shah's use of the

expression "Char Varna Chhattis Jat" to describe the social universe of his state. In fact Varna could be said to allude to the people of the caste order, while Jat referred to the ethnic multiplicity of Nepal (Sharma 1997:481). The spirit of inclusion of all castes/ethnic groups was derived with legal cod-, of 1854. One outcome of it was the promulgation of single national hierarchy (Sharma 1997; Hofer 1979). But "this hierarchy must be understood as only a loose arrangement, leaving enough room to the various ethnic groups to enjoy their customary traditions freely within it "(1997:418). Along the historical process of Hinduization, Hinduization happened neither in the same degree nor in a uniform manner against all groups and individuals. The Hinduization process never cut deeper than the imitation of the Hindu high castes mannerisms by the others (Pfaff-Czarnecki 1997).

Since the political changes of 1990, ethnic politics has become a permanent fixture in Nepal's multiparty democracy. Today, most of all ethnic groups have own cultures forum or association. A large organization called the Nepal federation of nationalities (Nepal Janjatis Mahasangh) was established in 1990 to bring all the smaller forums under a single umbrella. They started with seven such groups and nineteen in 1993) and 21 in 1995. "This federation claims to speak on ethnic matters on behalf of all its federating units, and non-political organization but the 17-points charter it submitted to the government in 1993 includes very much political demands" (Sharma 1997:484).

Being Nepali means different things to-different Nepal is and we need to be constantly aware of the gap that may exist between official aspirations and the actual feelings of a population devoteda, along ethnic, caste and class lines.

Shaubhagya Shah (1993) analyzes how different organizations emphasize difference and ignore commonalities. He quotes Malla K. Sunder, a journalist and vice-President of the Nepal Bhasa Manka Khali as saying, "the Newar carry a psychology of the vanquished at the subconscious level and view the Khas as the victors" (Shah 1993). Some ethnic groups rejected Dashain and Tihar festival to emphasize their differences. Shah notes G.S. Nepali's statement for the need for "generating awareness and creating pride in indigenous traditions, heritage and personalities, but we fail to recognize the contribution of our own khas, Kirat and other local heroes"(Shah 1993).Some outsiders, (researchers) are actively engaged in the process of the creation and re-interpretation

of ethnic identity. L.Caplan (1970) argues that the cleavage created between Limbus and Brahman by the land confrontation is expressed in and reinforced by attitudes of hostility, by the absence of reciprocal and cooperative relations and social or religious ceremonies of others. His statement is "The political hierarchy created centuries ago by Brahman dependence on him by land grants gradually collapsed and was replaced by one_ in which the Brahman have become the most powerful "(1970:9). Arun Guneratne argues that the development of ethnic consciousness among Tharu is as Aderson's imagined community' because the different Tharu 'imagine from east to west in Nepal have very little in common culturally except their common ethnonym (Guneratne 2002). "Prior to modern times, the Tharu of different regions did not think of themselves as all belonging' to the same jat, but Tharu identity of belongingness has emerged from the condition of modernity" (Guneratne 2002:6). Guneratne says Tharu ethnicity is socially constructed out of preexisting cultural orders and social & political elites are significant actors in this process so in this process elites manipulate common symbol, but even where a common symbol does not exist in an objective sense, it can be creatively imagined. He argued that a system of symbols is not a necessary precondition for the development of common ethnic identity~that needs cultural labor of elites as in Tharu ethnic identity. "But Tharu ethnic activists received cultural raw material from the past or they did not start off with a cultural tabula rasa on which it inscribe the particularities of the identity they wish to promote" (Guneratne 2002:193).

Singun Odegaard argues that Tharu are chanaino from castes to an ethnic group which is different forms of social organizations based on different principles (Odegaard 1997). Her point is that the previous stratification among Tharu subgroup is going to form an egalitarian ethnic group by the help of Tharu elites. She argues that the cultural and ethnic consciousness of elites and grassroots have great gap where Tharu of grassroots do not assert their Tharuness self conscious way as the Tharu elite (Odegaard 1997, McDonough (1997).

J. Fisher argued that ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of social interaction but are, the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built and social system, interactions does not lead to the liquidation of ethnic differences through acculturation-, cultural difference persist in spite of interethnic

contact and interdependence (Fisher1987). He insists that "among Tarangpurian rather than either sanskritization or Tibetanization a process of religions Trangpurian is under way for the descendants of the few high-caste Thakuri families who settled and intermarried and were 'magarized', the process is even more complex" (1987:190). He tried to trace out the material and ethnic transactions that connect Tarangpurian to one another and to the rest of the world and this process are slowly engulfing the people of Tarangpurian blurring and maintaining boundary mechanisms between them and the rest of the ever approaching world beyond their valley. He argued that "despite the internal cleavages of wealth, status and power, interpersonal relations in the Taranapurian are pervaded by an aura of defuse reciprocity "(Fisher 1987:177).

R.B. Chhetri (1990) argues that the identity of Tibetan Refugee in Pokhara is characterized by dialogue between the ideal and the practical. The ideal consists in persisting as distinct people in Tibetan Buddhists while practical reality leads them to find ways and means of making adjustments in their group boundaries, so it is in their process of dialogue that persistence and change girl the'- behaviors and practice. He makes clear that "Tibetan refugees have a set of rakes to draw a boundary between Tibetan refugees and non-Tibetan so persistence and change among Tibetan Refugee in Pokhara seems to revolve around the perception of Tibetan via-avis the non-Tibetans" (Chhetri 1990:8). His argument is gnat many Tibetan refugees do not want to return back their ideal homeland because they developed new strategies of adaptation here and they will face more difficult problems to exist on their changed behavior.

2.7 Existing Literature of Darais

Dor Bhadhur Bista is the first anthropologist who compares Darais, Majhis and Danuwar with Tharus of the Terai. He argues that Darais are not much different in their appearance, attitude and behaviours from Tharus (Bista 1987). "They have striking cultural and physical similarities to the Tharu and inhabit neighbouring regions in the Terai forests and inner valleys. They are very dark and seemingly boney, yet have great health and strength like the Tharus. They are considered to have developed immunity against malaria. They live in vary malaria areas in proximity

with the Thrus but are more dependent on fishing and less on forest game and farming”. (Bista1987: 130). Gautam (2057) has also provided some important information on the darai people of Nepal. Poudel (1989) has studied about darai language and Adhikari (1985) also describe and provides an ethnographic picture of Darai community. Some works concerning the ethnographic study of different ethnic groups existing in different parts of Nepal have been done after opening the Department of Sociology /Anthropology in Tribhuvan University. But this does not mean that there was not any work on this field prior to the opening of the department. Finally among the minor group of Nepal, Darai is one of the major groups with a distinct culture and social identity. Till now, their ethnic significance is not explored clearly as others like Brahmins, Chhetries, Gurungs, Magaras, Newars, Sherpas, Rais, Limbus, Rajbassis, Danuwars etc. To sum up, various authors have mentioned Darais as a separate ethnic group without establishing linkages and relationships with the caste and ethnic groups. Few master Dissertations have picked up Darais near Kathmandu who are far from their own traditional culture. None of them has addressed ethnic identity and changes issues in a holistic manner which present study attempt to cover among rural Darai of Jagatpur. The mentioned conceptual discussions over the ethnic identity, ethnographic writing, changes and Darai literature have laid the foundation for the analysis of the field data.

CHAPTER - III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Rational for the Site Selection

There are number of causes of attention to choose Darai- Parbatiya interaction in Jagatpur VDC (ward no:2), of Khadgauli village Chitwan District, for master degree dissertation on suitable subject matter of this area. I went to Jagatpur with the help of a staff of Integrated Rural Development Society (IRDS) , NGO conducting water programme there .My initial observation of social, cultural and geographical beauty of Jagatpur struck on mind. I came to know the geographical -environmental setting and socio –cultural background of the people in general.

As I came to know, this area is homeland of Darai ethnic group; Parbatiya emigrants of late 1960's turned social mosaic. This social setting helped foregrounding my hunch of ethnic-caste discourses. Then I strated brainstorming about the relationship between host and guest people in this area with the help of water project staffs.I was introduced as Darai researcher with both Darai and Parbatiya people.

After 10 days, general survey I strated to search existing literature about ethnographic and Darai in particular. During my three months stay in Kathmandu I made frequent communication with the people of Jagatpur and I decided to include Jagatpur Darai settlement of fifty household for my master degree dissertation.

Another aspect of selection of Jagatpur was purely for anthropological field exercise. Anthropology is unique among scholarly disciplines which combines intellectual tradition with both the sciences and field realities. I have not been this part of the country and Darai are completely new ethnic group, new culture and new language reinforced me to conduct research. So, the next cause to choose Jagatpur was virgin area as well as backward ethnic group. And also according to the 2001 census there are 14859 Darai people in Nepal and in Jagatpur VDC of Chitwan there are 77 house hold of Darai community and population is only 725 (Darai uplifting society 2061,Chitwan District). So there is largest settlement of Darai people in this VDC. That is reason why I select this area for my study.

3.2 Data Requirement: Nature and Source

Since the study is anthropological, the collected data are descriptive in nature. Considering the social context, data needed for this study to be collected from individuals as well as group levels. The individual level data include caste/ethnicity background, cultural practices, livelihood strategies and perspectives of viewing own group and next group of people in terms of caste/ ethnicity. Basically focus was given to the individual experiences of Darai and strategies are individual level data.

Data for this study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. At first to set background about ethnicity and Darai secondary sources were used. Primary data have been obtained during my 3 months field stay with the host community by using different data collection techniques. Some informants have been given pseudonym to protect their privacy and identity.

3.3 The Household Survey

The household survey was conducted using both structured and unstructured interview schedule. The basic quantitative and qualitative information such as sex, livelihood strategies, family size, and other socio economic, cultural characteristics of the household were gathered through household survey.

3.4 Participation and Observation: Watching and Listening

It is commonly stated that a fieldworker is verying 'observe' and 'participate' My fieldwork was no exception from this general rule- hence a mix of participation and observation, watching and listening. During my field work especially in April and May I joined fishing on my leisure time. I did not know to throw fish net but I caught fish by *Duwal* method of fishing.

In June and July, the busiest agricultural period: most of people remain in the fields and even during the peak season they have almost hour leisure at noon because of extreme hot weather. They gather under mango *Gachhi* (tree) and share their experiences of oxen, types of paddy, water canal, history and new comer, wage and labor exchange. As a city girl I don't knew general idea of agriculture but I help them

by carrying food and water from their houses Darai are surprised because they assume that I have not such practices. Group work was very interesting when we shared food at evening. Darai women started to joke at me by calling '*Ketala*' (*Ketala* is a typical Nepali word who do the agriculture work).

During the field work, I was able to collect so much data and information from key informants which I could not obtain from my presence. In this purpose, I sought help of some selected community people who were old, knowledgeable about history and society. Darai and high castes informants helped to solve my queries as much possible as they could. In my study, case method was employed to obtain detail historical change, politics and caste/ ethnicity integration and tensions among Darai and Parbatiya caste groups. These cases helped to know grassroot situation of caste/ ethnic interactions.

Contexts are emphasized as the crucial 'thing' in ethnographic research because context are so important for understanding 'ongoing life'. To better understand 'ongoing life' it is important to inscribe oneself into 'otherness'. Such an inscription is what deserves the term participation (Hastrup 1989, quoted Odegard 1997:22). In order to grasp reality, it is therefore necessary to have experienced it and here in lies the concrete challenge of the ethnographer. The study of Darai, parbatiya groups implies study social contexts for caste/ ethnic consciousness and cooperation. Throughout my fieldwork I felt and experienced things. Although I don't base my analysis of Darai on my own experiences of being 'us' / other these experiences made me aware of the flux and fluidity in such processes.

3.5 Field Experiences

"To call the social fact total is not merely to signify that everything observed is part of observation but also above all the observe is of the same nature as his object of study, the observe is himself part of observation" (Levi Strauss 1987:22)

Apart from ten days initial survey my field work started on March 2008 and completed on June 2008. This was the first time for me to stay long time field work in such serious academic research. I was not exception from the normal challenges

faced by anthropologist in establishing local rapport. I depicted my feeling and villagers perception about my presence in following lines.

I had full time leisure at this busiest time in the village. I thought ethnographic field work is worthless and unproductive in time of villagers. I felt loneliness and estrangement effect of natural and cultural environment. Another major problem I faced was: all Parbatiya and Darai groups did not want to reveal their social reality because I was a stranger on their eyes. After lunch, I walked around the village and people asked me dozens of questions: what is your purpose of wondering here? what did you see interesting aspect to choose this area?

When I entered into the Darai settlement first time women and old men turned their heads otherside. First they hesitated to speak with clean dressed stranger.

Another joy of my field stay was one woman called me '*Mit Chhori*' (Fictive daughter) because according to her my body and facial structure was almost similar to her daughter, who used to stay in Kathmandu. She treated me as daughter. She always gave feedback and other villager's perception to me that help me to tackle other behavioural problems. She frequently invited me for dinner and told secret events of the villagers. I respected her as mother and called '*Ama*' I used to call elder male Darai *Kaka* (Uncle) and elder female *Kaki* (Aunt) Elder Darais preferred to be called *Kaka/Kaki*.

By the end of my field work many Darai and Parbatiya people invited me for dinner. I at least-visited everyone's house and said goodbye but I promised them, that I would come next time. I experienced completely different than what I expected first and three months field stay changed my personality and open my eye.

3.7 Limitation of the Study

As a student, I was carrying out the research for the partial fulfilment of the requirement for the master's degree in anthropology. It is not fair enough to conclude that a student researcher's findings are limited because of its applicable and academic knowledge, however the resources I invested to obtain data and method of presentation were limited. Next, what I conclude about the ethnic consciousness of

Darai and parbatiya emigrants groups may not be applicable to generalized the relationships of ethnic consciousness of other areas and other ethnic groups because the conclusions emerging from this study are based on spatial temporal and social context specific. Societies are in constant flux and my interpretation is the result of my interaction with 'my' informants. At the end it only rests to emphasise that all understanding are partial and my understanding is no exception from this rule.

3.8 Ethical Aspects

Darai are one of the least known socially and politically marginalized ethnic groups in Nepal. So, I will be careful not to harm the local people and communities. If there is any difficulties in revealing the name of the informants it will be kept as secret or used by changing name of the wish of informants.

3.9 Dissemination of Result

The findings of my research will be produce as Master Degree thesis and it will be a good reference materials for writing articles, project design, publish in journals, newspaper etc. And it will help other researcher, who will interest to do academic research on Darai

CHAPTER – IV

DARAI OF JAGATPUR: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

4.1 Jagatpur Village and Darais, Pre 1960

Before 1960, the Chitwan valley was mostly covered by dense forest and it was used as a place of entertainment by Rana families because they used it as hunting reserve. At that time the fear to Malaria fever was in climax. Therefore it was also known as Kalapani (Death Valley). At that time too, it was inhabited by the indigenous ethnic like Tharus, Darai, Bote, Chepang. The latter phase of human settlement in Chitwan begins after the launching of Rapti Valley Development Project in 1956 which was initiated with a view to rehabilitate the flood victims of 1954 as well to exploit land resources. This programme attracted Parbatiya people in large number for more than could be accommodated, to emigrate in Chitwan by eradicating malaria. As the whole district was covered by dense forest before the eradication of Malaria till late 1960s, the village was no exception. At that time too, the village was inhabited in limited areas amidst of the forest by an ethnic groups, thru and Darai are the original inhabitants of the village. It may be evidenced by the name of VDC itself Jagatpur and other villages such as Khadgauli, Belhatta etc Khure's (rabbit's living place) is Khadgauli, Jahar (alcohol) eating place Jagatpur and Bel forest is Belhatta. As it is believed, they all originated from the Darai dialect late 1960s, emigrants of diverse ethnicity from hilly region began to settle in the village. As a result, today the village has become the conglomerated of diverse ethnic groups the main settlements in the village are Shitalpani, Jagatpur, Khadgauli, Belhatta, Dhurbanagar, Ghailghari, Madhupuri, Kerunga, and Pragatichowk.

4.2 Jagatpur Village and Darais Post 1960

Jagatpur village is one of the village development committee (VDC) among the 36 VDCs of Chitwan district. This VDC lies in the central part of the district and is connected by a gravel road with the east west highway at Bharatpur and thereby the national transportation network. k. Though Jagatpur VDC is located 21 km south from the district headquarter, Bharatpur. The Rapti river which flow along the southern

border of the village separate it from the Royal Chitwan National Park (RCNP) It is bordered in east side by Patihani and west by Sukranagar and in the north by Parbatipur VDCs. The total area of the village is 1752 hectares of the total land, 90 percent is under the agricultural use and rest is occupied by road, canal, stream, public land and jungle.

The climate of the village is tropical and sub-tropical. The village is covered with thick layer of mist and also experience violent windstorms of short time. The annual rainfall occurs around 2000 mm and temperature varies between 6° C in winter to 26°C in the summer.

Topographical the village is plain landscape with gentle slope from north to south. The elevation of village way is approximately around 250 meters mean sea level. The land of the village can be classified into two main types the lowland (ghol) and the upland (pakho). The ghol is wet land contains water and found along the two sides of the stream. The pakho land lies at slightly higher elevation than the ghol land. The ghol land covers approximately 30percent of the total land of the village. The major ghol area is Sitalpani, Madhupuri, Kerunga, Dhurbanagar and Pargatichok. In Ghol side most of the soils of the villages are of alluvial origin. The vegetation of the village is tropical deciduous as well as tropical evergreen with the domination of former over later. However most of the original vegetation has now been replaced by cultivation. The trees that are found in the village include Sisau, Simal, Bakaino, Jumuna, bamboo etc outside of the village in its south side large area is covered by Sal wood forest where varieties of shrubs and grasses are found.

According to VDC profile of Jagatpur, the total population of this VDC was 9952 with 4723 male and 5229 female. The total number of households were 2042 with the average family size was 4.87. The VDC has 9 ward with different villages. There are different ethnic groups and Parbatiya immigrants people living in Jagatpur VDC like Brahmin, Kami, Tamang, Chhetri, Darai, Sarki, Newar, Magar, Damai, Giri, Gurung and others (Thru, Kumal, Bote, Gharti, Chepang, Rajput etc), VDC office 2002(VDC Profile)

Since most of the land of village, more than 88 percent is under cultivation it is well populated. The more concentration of population is found in the bazaar area among the roadside namely Jagatpur, Belhatta, Madhupure. There are two types of settlement in the villages cluster and scattered. The typical Darai village landless settlement in public land the bazaar area have cluster settlements while house in the settlement of Parbatiya immigrants are widely scattered the distribution of Ethnic population in Jagatpur is given the table 2.

Table2: Ethnic Composition of Population of Jagatpur VDC

S.No	Caste/Ethnic Groups	Population	Population percent
1	Brahimin	2306	23.18
2	Kami	1396	14.02
3	Tamang	1371	13.78
4	Chhetri	1043	10.49
5	Darai	725	7.28
6	Sarki	644	6.47
7	Newar	463	4.65
8	Magar	444	4.46
9	Damai	306	3.07
10	Giri	305	3.06
11	Gurung	244	2.45
12	Others	705	7.09
Total	-----	9952	100

Source: VDC Office 2002 (VDC Profile)

4.3 Oral History of Origin of Darais

There is no uniformity of saying Darai origin and history among Darais themselves. Most of the Darais at Jagatpur agree that their ancestors came from India almost six hundred years ago. Magal Ram Darai at the age of 75 argued that Darais were originally from Mongolia then came to India and entered into Nepal to save them from Muslim attack in India. Buddhi Ram Darai school teacher told me that Darais

came in Nepal from where Tharu came because Tharu and Darais were two brothers. He told me Darai myth of origin:

There was a family who had two sons. They had only one plate to eat food. One of the sons used to eat food on metal plate (*Thal*) another deprived to get that plate and he used *Duno* (small plate made of leaves of the tree). One day they quarrelled for the *Thal*. At the same time king came in their house and solved the case. The elder brother who used to eat on *Thal* got *Thal* forever and his descendant became 'Tharu' and the younger brother who used to eat on '*Duno*' got '*Duno*' forever and his descendent became Darai.

The word Darai originated from *Dard* which is a ethnic mentioned in the Mahabharata, Mnau Smriti and Haribangsha Purnana in the Hindu religious texts According to the story prevalent among the Darai community, it is said that initially these people had a kingdom in Darbhanga now located in Bihar state, India. It was the migration (for what reason is unclear) from Darbhanga which caused the spread of these people to the Chitwan and other hilly areas. However to support this story, there has not been found, till today, any corroborative evidence. During the *Baise Rajya* period, the various kingdoms in the Karnali region were divided into the various *daras* for administrative convenience and it is from these *daras* for administrative convenience and it is from these *daras* that the word Darai is alleged to have emerged. Although it is difficult to state clearly the origins of these Darais, however from a historical perspective, it can be found that the Darai name is mentioned in the *lal mohar* granted by King Prithivi to Siddhi Bhagawantnath. The Darais are known by many names: Darbai, Darhi, Daree, Daroe, Daraie, however, today they are recognised by the name of Darai. (Dahal: 1985:157)

Resident Hudsonsaid, "Darai people cannot tell their exact origin. History also does not know their motherland, language, their structure and their physical structure. They look like Turaniyam caste then now days it is called Darai. So, we must research about this caste.

4.4 Life Cycle Rituals: Birth, Name Giving, Marriage and Death Rituals

Darais of jagatpur have their own typical cultural practices. The clear visible distinction between the Darai house and the parbatiya house is color of the floors. Darais apply white mud on their floor everyday even if the floor does not worn out whereas Parbatiyas apply the mixture of red soil and cow dung. I felt uneasy to step upon soaking pasted floor early morning in the Darai family. One can notice the pasted walls, of the house and the with white soil yard which is the identification of the Darai household. They believe that white color is the symbol of god.

Other ethnic groups like: Gurung, Tamang, Magar Danuwar, Newar have perceive themselves as ethnic group followed by some of the Hindu culture. And Darai also do not follow all Hindu cultural practices even if they claim themselves as Hindu. Their celebration of Tihar is also different from parbatiya caste/ ethnic group, celebration. They worship their own ‘Kul Puja’, they do not worship any pictures neither they worship mental status of god and goddesses Even on the occasion of Dashain they worship their *Pitri*. They do not worship ‘Laxmi Puja’ they kill goats to eat meat and not for the sake of god. They worship soil, Rapati River and Jungle God. They do not believe on Menstrual Pollution and *Ausi* (full dark night) and *Purnima* (full moon day) the day not ploughing for the Parbatiyas .Budhiya Ram made a fun with me. “Darais lai Na *Aunsi na Purnima*” resembling to a famous saying in Parbatiya” culture- ‘*Kuno Goru lai Aunsi na Purnima*’. Literally Darai do not care about Ausi and Purnima. Darais’ life –cycle rituals are unique and some of them are gradually changing these days.

Birth Ritual (Ceremony)

This ceremony is carried out at home with help of *Sodeni* (female attendant). It is the occasion of happiness for the family at that time *ghar garuwa* worship the *kuldevta* and read holy books. When the baby takes birth, his/her father is not permitted to see his baby until his birth ceremony. The mother also should not utter *aaama* (mother) during the time of delivery pain. After the delivery, having the umbilical cord cut off the baby is cleaned with hop and hot water by *sodini*. Then she handed the baby to the mother. Beside this no special ceremony is held on the birthday. If the first born baby is a boy, the father is garlanded and *tika* is put on his forehead.

Naming Ceremony (Nwaran)

Nawaran is the important ceremony of Darai family. This ceremony is performed on the ninth or eleventh day of a child's birth. Naming ceremony takes place regardless of gender. *Ghar Guruwa* is the prominent figure in the ritual.

If the child is a son, the naming ceremony is on the eleventh day and if the child is daughter, the naming ceremony is on ninth day. Naming is done for two purposes: one for the purification of the women and the whole family from pollution and the other is for the naming of the child. On this day, the mother, child and father are given bath. To perform this ceremony, they invite child's maternal uncle and a simple *pooja* "praying God" is done using phool (flower), *pati*, and *Akheta*. After the *pooja*, both the mother and child are drunk some drops of Gahunt (cow's urine) and sprayed it all over the house for the purification as the cow is considered living God in Hindu culture. At that time, the child's maternal uncle burns the "*simthi*" and he puts a *tika* and line of its ash and *simrik* on all the pots used by the mother. Maternal uncle tied three times fold thread coloured with yellow (turmeric powder) around the neck, hands, legs and waist.

At the ceremony to invite the uncle family, *ghar gurwa* and *sodeni* in this ceremony, chicken is the most important food. They are given rice, *mad* "alcoholic drink" and cock's meat. *Ghar guruwa* takes whole legs and *sodeni* takes half of the cock's chest.

A child usually gets two names: one is ritual name and next often used, on some important occasion. The other given name is used throughout his life. This name is based on the day he/she is born an Aitabar 'Sunday' is called *Aita* for male baby and *Aite* for female baby. Similarly, if the baby is born on *sombar* 'Monday' then male baby's name will be *Samala*, *Somlal* and female baby's name is *Samila*. But now a day most of the Darai people of the study area have started to give new name (like Soroj, Urmila etc) as in other ethnic groups. From this day onward birth pollution is not observed. Only in some special case for instance, if the child's health is critical

Observance of birth pollution reduced to seven or even minimum of five or three.

According to old Darai people, Darai people did not do *pasni/ bhat khuwai*. But now a days , when child reaches the age of 6 months for sons and 5 months for daughters, they decides the day for the initial rice feeding of *pasni* this ceremony is not Darai's cultural aspect but it is due to interaction with Parbatiya people.

Marriage Practice of Darai Community in Jagatpur

Marriage is regarded the most important ritual among Darais too. In the study area there is practice of endogamous types of marriage. The whole idea of endogamy has been described and pointed out that “endogamy is a corollary of hierarchy, rather than primary principles “ (Dumont 1980:113). Endogamy has had a special position and functioned as the prime boundary between jats (Guneratne 1994). To accept intercaste marriage, Dumont argues, can also be seen as acceptance of food. Intercaste marriages in general presuppose that the two parties can eat together (Dumont 1980). The Darais of Jagatpur kept on their endogamous ideals largely but not completely since few of young Darais stated intercaste marriage. Theoretically, they marry with the community member except the member of their own patrilineage group. According to their tradition they have to permit own patrilineage group. According to their tradition they have to permit their children to observe multilateral cross-cousin marriage, which is the preferred type and carried out in ordinary circumstances without any one asking. The younger brother has to accept his elder brother's widows as wife after elder brother expires. *Jethaju* or elder brother is not allowed to marry his *buhari* or younger brother's wife as his wife. Both Parbatiya and Darais in Jagatpur invite and participate Language is the one of the best identity mark of an ethnic group and Darai have their own language ate each other's party.

There are two types marriage prevalent among these people: love marriage and arrange marriage. Though it is unnecessary for the parent's agreement in the case of love marriage it is essential that the prospective bride and groom should be willing to this union in the case of arranged marriage. The average marriage age for the girl and boys is 16 and 21 respectively. Arranged marriage with the same caste was prevailed in the Darai community. Inter caste marriage is restricted. Both the parties are panelized demanding compensation in case of inter caste marriage. The system of settled marriage is more or less similar to that of other Hindu communities. However, *pui the* (a person who goes to ask for girl) is employed as mediator of the boy's side. *Ghardekhuwa* (a party from boy's side) and *gharbaru* 'a party from girl's side' were found very much common which indicate the relative importance of the girl's in the community. They should decide whether they should arrange feast or not. If they

should arrange the feast, the boy's side and girl's side both should have *kalmia* 'discussion' and *gar baru* "decision for feast'. *Tika* is asking from the boy's home, and the day for marriage '*janti Jane*' is decided and invited their relatives.

On the day of marriage, the bridegroom is massaged with *til ko pina* and given bath, and after the bath taken, he is given oil massage by *madaulehi* 'friend of bride groom on the day of marriage'. Before going to *janta* 'bride's house' or *anmaune* 'sent to bridegroom's houses', people have *mad* 'alcoholic drink' and becomes very happy and they go from the sign of *sukra tara* and *lokandharo*

Spread *aksheta* and flowers with rose. They take rice, pulse, sat, oil, and he-goat is given to feed the *janti* from the boy's side. Those things are taken to the girl's house and they light *chirak* near *karash* 'a sacred water pot'. Girl's father puts *tika* on the forehead of the boy's father, his uncle and other *janti*. The bridegroom is taken on back inside the bride's home. At time the girl's from the girl's side blocked the door with *musal* of *dhiki*, light the lamp and asked money. After giving the money from the boy's side, they give him way to enter and feed him two bottles of mud. The boy gives girl's mother *dhupauro* (*sari, blouse, patuka* 'cloth belt'), and other clothes and jewels for the bride. On that day, *takdhakman kerauni ganyaman* is done on that. *Takdhakman kerauni* in their language means 'to hit and kill hen and cock with wooden knife', if hen dies first, the bride will die first and if the cock dies first, the bridegroom will die first. After that chicken meat and wine is fed to the *ganyamanya* 'respected person' and *janti* from the bridegroom side. Then *goda dhune* 'washing bride's leg action is started by the bride's father, m other, uncles, aunts, and sisters and it makes introduction greeted to all *janti*. While taking the bride's outside to take her bridegroom's home, the girl's blocks the way and they are given some money and they let them to go outside and they light *chirak* and the bride and groom put *tika* and fed *sagun* from the bride's side.

When the *janti* reach at the bridegroom's home, they put *tika* on the *ganyamanya* 'respected people' and pray their *kuldevata* 'God and the bride is taken into the house. After her entrance, her friends gone with her are given money. Both of them are fed *maur*, and bridegroom puts *sindur* on the bride's head. After that, feast is fed to all of them by the bride's hand. After having feast by the villagers, all the *janti* are told

good bye. On the third day, to return *durun*, cock, rice, bread, and latter two legs of he-goat are carried to bride's first home.

Death Rites (Disposal and Mourning)

Death is the last life cycle and the most sorrowful step of human life. Darai community is the different on the part of death ritual. And their death ritual is the identity marker. When a person dies, there is a different death formality in the Darai community. Dead body should be covered by fishnet before calling the villagers to participate in the funeral march. If the dead person is a male, his wife returns *sindur* by opposite way to put oil in forehead and legs. Then the dead body is put on a cot made of bamboo and *batbahur* 'a mixture of paddy, maize and other grains with some coin) is carried to go dropping on the way. The person carrying *batbahur*, also carries a plate, glass, sickles and the things that were used by the dead person with cow dug, oil cake, a spade.

As soon as they reach the place by the side of the riverbank, they throw some coins there to buy a piece of land with the nature for the placement of the dead body. Rich family cremates the dead body while the poor bury it.

Whatever case may be, the eldest son cuts the nails of both the hands and legs of the dead body and shakes the dead body for three times on the bamboo cot. The son get shaved his head and chin. He took of all the clothes of the corpse and put the corpse on the *chita* 'funeral place' gives *dagbatti* or burns. They collect the stones and makes *chihan* "tomb" and rice is cooked and mixed with *jand* "alcohol" and makes heaps separately and *batbahur* is spread, then the eldest son turns south and he should break the rice cooking pot with stone without looking the pot. Then all the *malamies* 'people who were gone in the funeral procession' take bath and returns home, they leave the spade upside down while returning home. The people gone in the funeral procession are given money according to the economic condition of the dead body's home. All the women of the same home and village takes bath and have *sunpani* 'gold-jewel washed water' and go home before the *malamies* come. They step on the throne and returns to their home. If they are *barakhi barne* 'mourn the sorrow of dead body' they were white dress and have sacred food. On the day, everybody stops plugging and

digging. Sometimes, they threw the corpse also when the food comes in the river to have less expenditure.

After a few months, or before the *aunsi* of *Tihar*, the *kajisa/kriya* of dead body is done. On the occasion, all the villagers should invite all the relatives of the dead person. Who died? When? When should they avoid salt in their food (*noon barne*)/ this message should be sent to all the relatives, daughter, sisters etc. On the occasion, *pindo* is kept according to their custom. Before three days of *pindo rakhne* stove of mud is made; rice is put on the stove and kept on the way in the evening. On the second and third day the stove is also shifted the pot with rice and let the rice cook and the lamp is lit and kept on the way. This is done by the son and son-in-law. At that time, son-in-law is decorated by black and white colored line on his body and make him as if he is a bull, it seems frightful. One man and one woman, who do the *kiriya*, eat the food without salt once a day. Nobody is allowed to touch them. At night they are surrounded by net. A stick, a *lota* 'pot with water', copper coin are kept with them. Their sons-in-law must come on the following day. They should bring 1-2 *pathi* rice, 3-4 bottle of wine and a cock, on the third day daughters make *jhajhro papro* 'a kind of bread made on the banana leaf in the fire'.

On the fourth day, son-in-laws bring rice, oil, turmeric powder, cock if the dead person is male or when if the dead person is female banana-leaf, a small branch of *peepal* with leaves, *kush*, flower, dried –cow dung, match, *simthi*, wine, unripe banana, *dhup*, oil cake, the straw used by *kirenha/ kirenhi*, stick, *lota* with all the villagers go to the bank of the river and put *pindo*.

This activity is done on the *aunsi* of *Tihar* on the memory of their dead ancestors as their *kuldewata*. On the day, all of them take bath. *Pindo* 'a mud made statue of dead person' is made and the leaf of *peepal* is kept near the dead, *kush* is tied with thread, the balls made of the mixture of bread, banana, flour, turmeric powder are kept on its hands, arms, head, chest, navel, and the lamp is lit and the branch is all buried on the ground. On the sides of it, water is faced, banana leaves or *duna* 'leaf plate' are kept dropped the drops of wind (*tarpan dine*).

On the side, *dhup*, leaf of *peepal* and other materials are kept. Straw is thrown in the river. *Kirenha* sacrifice pigeon and cock after his hair cut when all of them finished taking bath, *kirenhi* grand the water of *lota* and wine in the *duna* 'leaf plate'. After that all the members of dead person's house take bath and offer (*chadhauchhn*) water to the *pindio* turn by turn. Then they including *kirenhi* make the *pindo* upside down and lifted from the ground, this action is called *sohorai*. Some of them collect all the things and throw them in the river.

After completing these rituals they will be eligible to mix with society.

4.5 Livelihood Strategies

Darai traditional occupations were agriculture, fishing and hunting. For agriculture and animal husbandry they were very specific. When land was sufficient they only cultivated rice, and keep oxen and cows. They left straw on the field to graze oxen but later they collected and managed it. When they were contacted with Parbatiya emigrant groups. Darai started to cultivate wheat, maize, and mustard and mix crops of lintels and vegetables. Old Darai said, "Nowadays Darai have varieties of vegetables but 20/25 years ago, if we hadn't got fish and meat, we had to eat rice only with salt". Gradually, Darai started rearing goat, ducks and chickens. By selling them they earned good amount of money. This was what happened as the cultural exchange between Darai and Parbatiya groups. Thirty years ago, Darai planted only rice in monsoon season and were busy at fishing and hunting rest of the year. They planted rice on irrigated field. They did not plant wheat, pulses, maize and other vegetables. When rice was rip they harvested only the seed (*bala*), the straw was left on the field. They grazed their oxen on the straw throughout the winter and the remaining straw which would rot and become fertilizer for the cultivation. Since late 1970's and 1980's from the interaction with the Parbatiya slowly they started to cultivated maize and white on the field. Darai imitated Parbatiya straw collection for winter season for cattle and for sell too. These days Darai also collect straw. They do not eat maize and wheat even now; they either sell or make alcohol (*jand*).

4.5.1. Tradition Occupations

Farming- Most of the Darai in Jagatpur are peasants and practice subsistence farming, if possible with some of the surplus for sale. They do not have much land now. Some of them became squatters. Few Darai had a surplus for sale. Beside agriculture many farmers are also involved in seasonal labour services, livestock, trade and few of them are involved in fishing. But agriculture is the main source of income of Darai farmers among all the wealth categories. The main crops grown during summer are rice and maize, wheat, mustard seeds and various kinds of lentils are winter crops. It is common to distinguish between *Pakho – Bari* (rain –fed, dry field) and *Khet* (irrigated, wet field). The main *Pakho –Bari* crops are maize, mustard, pulses, wheat and dry rice whereas rice is the main wet field crop.

Fishing- Darai like fish very much. There is saying among Darai and Parbatiya “Darai eat rice with a smell of fish or one fried fish on the top of rice”. Darai spend 2-3 hours every day at river for fishing. Every morning Darai children go to the river and they return with 1 or 2 pieces of fish. Rice with the fish- curry is regarded delicious and prestigious food. When they are free, they pass time at riverside; play on river but very few Darai want to sell fish. Most of them consume themselves. They apply indigenous knowledge and method of fishing.

For fishing, till ten years ago they had certain area, or they could not enter other village’s area. They had to use only traditional method of fishing. From last 7-8 years some Darais and Thrus used chemical poison and destroyed the regeneration power of fish, but now , fish on Rapati river are endangered and almost in disappearing condition. They don’t find varieties of fish. They said fish enables their immune power to resists dangerous diseases like malaria. Now, Darai are planning to make rule against poison on river.

Hunting- Hunting is the second most favourite occupation after fishing as the source of entertainment and consumption on leisure time. For traditional hunting, they use fibre nets to trap the prey on it . Usually they take 4/5 nets and spread them at possible ways where their praise run and try to escape. There are 15 to 40 members in a group. When they enter into the jungle, they divide work. Few persons prepare and spread nets and secretary hide nearby nets, if prey comes over nets then they trap it and beat by big stick on their hands. If the prey is tiger and leopard, cleverly, they have to

climb on the big tree. Very skilful persons take responsibility of this work of trapping and killing the prey.

Rest of the persons silently go around the jungle in circular way. One group from right hand side covers the area at the distance of 20-30 meters for one and similarly from left hand side other group goes up trapping the possible residence of the prey; when they reach all possible places from where prey can escape. They start shouting and coming inward from all sides, if there is prey it will come from the net spreading way, if not, they move on other places for hunting . Dhami promises to offer a pigeon for Rapati River or jungle god, then the god becomes happy and next time on next place, they will succeed to kill prey. So, they use both physical powers and spiritual power to succeed hunting. When they succeed to kill desirable animal deer and wild pig then they take it near by the village and chop it. They divide it as for the people who had participated on hunting. Each net gets equal part as a person gets. The meat is very small portion, but whole family becomes happy to have soup of hunted animal. If they kill fox or undesirable animals, some of them use it to make alcohol.

Before maoist insurgency they had guns. But later Maoist took their guns and they returned back to their traditional method of hunting. Though hunting is illegal but no one complains about Darais hunting. When forest was turned into community forest Parbatiya groups banned for hunting but Darais kept on hunting. Now Darais are allowed for hunting within community forestry too. Parbatiya groups did not complain to district headquarters. Maoist also did not disturb but made them aware about possible dangers on the forest from government and Maoist side.

Basket weaving- Weaving basket, namlo, damlo, nanglo, net etc is also traditional occupation, mostly women engage. Darai use local own bamboo and mostly they go to kasara jungle where according to them, is sufficient bamboo. Male family members bring it and female members make it slice and weave.

Previously they claim that they used to weave their clothes but of the raw materials produced from shorts of plants by themselves. All the needed things for fishing nets hunting and trapping nets are locally produced by them, out of bamboo reeds. They make different kinds of things like chhatris, mandros, hats and others. They exchange

these things for food grains. Darais said bamboo materials/product don't have proper price at local market because they have sufficient product. If they take them to Narayangarh and Kathmandu they will get responsible price. But most of them don't like to supply out because of lack of business knowledge. To talk about division of labour in family and community, male members engage on wage labour, agriculture, and outer work , fishing and hunting whereas female engage in household work of cooking , washing, cleaning, weaving and fishing. Boys and girls are engaged in grazing animals, fishing and few of them go to schools.

4.5.2 New Livelihood Strategies

Now a day due to the economic hardship Darai people adopt new strategies along with traditional livelihood strategies.

Wage Labour- Wage labour is another sole source of livelihood of Darai community. There is a discrimination made in wage labour males get higher wage than females for the same type of work. The discrimination has been made due to their physical condition and previous rites (pahile chaliaelo) 'tradition' Most of them take cash in return to their services and some of them take food grain in return. It is in the condition if they work. In agriculture field they are paid in food grain and if in construction work, they are paid in cash. Most of them go for wage labour during plantation and harvesting season because the annual food grains production is insufficient to them to maintain daily needs. It was informed that a person gets (male Rs 100 and female Rs 80). Sometimes they get three or four kilograms of grains instead of doing full day labour.

Beside this they bring bamboo shoot, *neuro*, *bayar* and berry from the jungle and bring it to the nearest village to sell to exchange with food- grains. These are only to seasonable sources of their livelihood for short time. Some person's from the corpus area have got the opportunity to work as safe guard, peon, waiter etc in the National Park of Chitwan and other Hotel.

Animal's Husbandry –Animal Husbandry (Livestock) is another source of livelihood but also cultural and nutritional point of view. The people of Jagatpur VDC

of Khadgauli village keep livestock primarily to fulfill the necessities of milk product, meat and compost manure. In addition to these oxen are used to plough and chicken, ducks are used either for meal or sold in cash income and used cultural ceremonies.

Vegetables- Before for vegetables Darai depended on either fishing or hunting. They like fish and meat very much. Recently they started to cultivate vegetables and different kind's pulses. They bought improved seeds and started commercial vegetables farming. Though agriculture is primary occupation, but it is not for the food necessary for year. One cause of food shortage is they consume large quantity of food for local (Jand) and alcohol.

Manure Worker- New shift in livelihood has been followed among the Darai of Jagatpur. Many young boys and girls have been working as manure worker in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Narayanghar. They usually work on construction companies and household labour. Among the Darai of Jagatpur- Khadguli, only 5 young boys are in gulf countries, they sent good amount of money which is deposited on the bank by their parents in Narayanghar. Five people are engaged in Chitwan National Park in Kasara (Jagatpur). Fire wood selling was another source of livelihood. People sell their firewood when they were not able to get agriculture work and to catch fish. Few Darai boys are learning skilful works like carpeting, house making, plastering, plumbing and weaving. These days, old Darai are happy with new generations because they don't have to borrow any labour for their village work.

Labour - Both agriculture and animal husbandry are labour consuming economy. The term "labour input" means the fulfillment of required labour as per necessity. The domestication of animals' required regular labour compared to agriculture. All the family members are engaged either directly or indirectly in agriculture / animal husbandry. Almost every member of the family shares the work such as preparing the food carrying manure to the fields sowing seeds collection firewood and fodder from the forest.

Even economically inactive population is also helping hands of family. The boys and girls are allocated different jobs based on their age and capability. A grown up by specially 12-13 years helps his father in the field and forest a girl helps the mother in

household activities as lightening the fire bringing water, preparing food and taking care of younger children. Boys and girls start working as apprentices within the range 5 or 6 years old.

As the family is the principal productive unit, it is also the sole source for supply. All the family members contribute during planting, harvesting and other working season, which needs additional labour. In such occasion, they invite labour from their relatives, neighbour. There are mainly two kinds of labour in existence: one which is based on wage and locally known as *jyaladari* and another is a labour exchange system and locally known as *parma*. Under *parma*, there is no discrimination in respect of age and sex. Every individual can join it but the return of their work is expected in the same basis. Now a day in the corpus area, *parma* system is slowly dying out.

Short Term Migration- This new stragie is attracting the youth of Darais in Jagatpur. They like to earn money in a very short period. So, they like to go to aborad (Golf countires and India) as a lobour. Sandesh Darai said that due to lack of education and proper traning they don't have enough opportunity in Nepal. So, if we are migrate to Golf countries at least our children are able to go to schools or collages and our family also fulfill their basic requirements.

Communal Cattle Grazing System

Communal cattle grazing system is famous among people of Jagatpur. Basically Darai girls and old persons take cows, oxen and goats of many households. Those who look after cattle are called ' *Chharuwa* '. Those households who own only oxen and few cows are interested to [pay certain amount of rice on annual basis for the *Chharuwa*. Both parbatiyas and Darai who do not have own family manpower to graze cattle contract with *Chharuwa*. There is a system of paying to the *chharuwa*. If anyone takes responsibility to graze two oxen of other household, the owner has to pay 25 pathi *Dhan* (almost 75 kg raw rice) per year. Darai *chharuwa* takes responsibility of all whoever wants to make him *chharuwa* irrespective of castes and ethnic groups. *Chharuwa* is treated as one of the family members. Cattle owners invite *Chharuwa* feast and festivals. Magal Ram Darai is landless but his family survives by this way.

“I do not have any cattle but my one daughter takes 10-12 oxen (1 Hal= 2 oxen) to graze at riverside or jungle every day. The owner of oxen give 25 Pathi rice equal cash price per year. Some of them give a pair of clothes for her. I take small piece of land of sharecropping. My other daughter is working in Kathmandu.” Similarly Aita Ram Darai said that his son does not like to go school. He left schooled to be *Chharuwa*. From last year he is given 12 oxen of both Darai and parbatiya. He earns almost 7 *Muri* of rice which is a main source of livelihood of his 5 member family.

CHAPTER - V

DARAIS IDENTITY; LOCAL PRACTICES AND ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS

5.1 Identity

Jagatpur Darai do not know the exact meaning of recently used term Janjati (Ethnic group) Many of them get angry when politicians talk about Darai as a janjati group .Buddhi Ram Darai said,” We are not untouchable or lower caste janjati group .We neither allow lower caste to enter into our houses nor do we eat buff meat (those who eat buff –meat are considered lower caste). Other part of the country considered Darai as lower caste.

Whenever they go out of the Jagatpur they like to introduce themselves as Darai They usually not tell their clan names as – Buda, Rajbansi, Koklasahi, Suryabansi, Banpati.

As in the case of other ethnic in the kingdom, these Darais are also one that possesses *thars*. The *thars* of these ethnic are determined by their occupations and there does not exist any such custom as whether one is of a higher or lower *thars*.This is different with other ethnics within the kingdom. These people consider themselves of equal status to the neighbouring Tharu and Kumal. (Dahal:1979).

So, when I turned the pages of school registration book, and I found that everyone has written their step (Thar) as “Darai” for example- Mangal Ram Darai, Man Bhadur Darai etc.

“The term janjati is emblematic of both the highly contested and politicized nature of ethnicity discourse in Nepal in recent years as well as the inadequacy of various conceptual terms to carry the complex and dynamic character of identity. Janajati is self descriptive term recently adopted by the leadership of the various Tibeto- Burman groups to distinguish themselves from the Hindu Jat/Caste” (Shah 2004:12). Fisher argues that Janjatis are regarded in opposition to the Varna system or nor –Hindu is fundamental character (Fisher 1993).

Buddhi Ram Darai a teacher said only writing Darai as surname does not save real identity. Darai have different language, dress, food and cultural practices. ‘If any non Darai comes in my house, she/he will notice different taste of our food, our language and dress at least’. He says these are identity markers of Darai.

In term of language, they speak both Nepali and Daraian clearly. Their dresses are not different than other Parbatiya people. Many of them are educated and some of them got their education from urban areas. School teachers and rich Darais sent their children Narayanghar in private school and Kathmandu for higher education. Virtually common Darais :language, dress, food etc show Darainess .

5.2 Language

A language is a means of communication of one’s feeling to another uttering some words with or without gesture. Language is the system of arbitrary vocal symbols because each and every social group or in context of Nepal, every ethnic group has its own language or mother tongue. Every language has symbols, which can be understood by own group and they communicate to each other. Though language man has been able to devise continue and change the great variety of his material cultural institution Herskoeits (1974:287). It is estimated that almost 92 dialects are spoken by over five dozen ethnic groups in Nepal (CBS: 2001).

The Darai language is one of the dialects of 40 dialects of Nepal. In case of Darai, it has not its own scripts through they are said to speak an Indo-European language as they belong to the same dark skinned people (eg. Bote, Tharu, Dhimal, Satar etc) from the south.

Before 1990, only main leader or Jamindar Darais hardly understood Nepali language; because of their visits to district headquarters. Other Darais didn't understand Nepali language. Darais hesitated to talk with Parbatiya group they did not share ideas and problems with Parbatiya people. Only the villager's leader dealt with Parbatiya groups. Few old Darais cannot speak Nepali properly but they understand Nepali too. Sabita Darai, a Darai female teacher teaches non formal education class in both Darai and Nepali languages. Among themselves they speak their own language but when they meet Parbatiya people, they speak both Nepali and Darai. Many Parbatiya people can speak and understand Darai language. Parbatiyas prefer Darai when they interact with Darai people. A sample of the words is listed with their approximate equivalents in Nepali and English.

Darai Language	Nepali	English
Mai	ma	mother
Tai/taohe	tapaai/ timi	you
Hame	haami	we
Baa/bubaa	baa	father
Chhaawaa/chhaahik	chhoraa/ chhori	son/daughter
Dida	didi	elder sister
Bhauje	bhaauju	elder brother's wife
Aagi	aago	fire
Paani	paani	water
Maachh	maachhaa	fish
Har	halo	plough
Dari	kodalo	spade

Chhipa	thaal	dish
Mad	jaad	alcohol
Sata	dhaan chharne	sow paddy to germinate
Karika	garnu	do
Ghauka	ghamka	fishing net
Ote	chha	is
Kote	kata	where
Aamaa	aamaa	mother
Kya karelar	ke gari rahelo chhau	what you are doing
Bhanju	bhanji	sister's daughter
Pisaa	pusai	father's sister's husband

It seems that Darai language is similar to Nepali language to some extent. Although, some of the Darai people don't speak their own Darai language in the study area. Because of long term socio- cultural interaction with Parbatiya .This shows that the Darai language is going to parish.

5.3 Dress and Ornament

Darais have their own typical dress which they link with their myth of dress and death together. Their traditional dress is pure white (without tailor fitting) cloth. Males wear white Langoti (loincloth) and females wear a long white sari. The myth behind the white dress is:

There were two Darais brothers older one was just married. He accidentally died. There was 'Sati' (wife must cremate with husband) system. Younger brother took sister-in-law for cremation. There were a few processions too. When husband and wife were made ready for cremation, wife escaped and entered into the jungle. Brother-in-law followed her by carrying white clothes which was used to cover death bodies; before cremation. After long time brother-in-law found sister-in-law. She was naked. She pleaded him not to burn her rather they can marry and live other part

of the country. Brother –in-law also agreed and gave white clothe that was carried to tie her. Then, they strated hunting in the jungle, fishing on the river. On ther other side, dead body of brother was put on fire wood and all procession returned because the responsible brother did not return.

But, now Darais wear colourful and fashionable dresses. Hardly 10 to 15 old Darais wear traditional white *langoti* and *sarai* in Jagatpur. Rest of the Darais wears shirt and long half – pant. Young boys wear like other Parbatiya people but they do not put on cap. Young women wear colourful *sari* and *blouse*. Children at the age of 8 are nacked but those strated schools wear clothes. In winter Darais male usually wear two shirts at the same time. Most of households have single blanket for night sleep. They used bamboo carpet and a blanket beside the fire (hearth). Those Darais who had quilt that family was counted as rich family. But now many young Darais have bought quilt when they came home from urban places. One Darai joked “ When Darais had to visit long day for relatives, he took a shirt and a pair of sandal on the hand and went to relatives house, when he reached nearby house then he put on shirt and sandal” this saying is very popular among old Darais.

Darai’s women traditional ornaments are made of silver. Their jewelries are ‘*Haseli*’ on neck, *Nattha* on nose, ‘*Anata*’/ *Kasaudi* and ‘*Matha*’ on wrist,’ *Hataya*’ on arms. All women have tattoos on their hands and legs which they regarded as permanent jewelries. Now few young women wear golden ornaments like *Har* and *Kasaudi*.

5.4 Ghata Nach

Entertainment is the main objective of using vulgar Daraian words among themselves. For the sake of enjoyment they organize different types of dance programmes during winter. Darais of all age, irrespective of gender enjoy watching dance. Ghata Nach (a type of Daraian dance) is very famous among them. This dance is based on short episodes of religious texts and other oral stories. This dance is organized on the occasion of festival or leisure time. This dance continues 2-3 nights also. Darais from other villages also come to watch Ghata Nach. The host household has fix amount for the dancer groups. The dancer group can collect money from audiences too. They performed some comedic drama to present social issues: The main aims of the show

to create laughter among audiences. Dramatic characters with disguised faces performed dance on the stage. All characters are male and some of them play the role of female. For the sake of enjoyment they caricature social and cultural phenomena. They have another type of dance which is called Badaki Nach (literally big dance). It was big at nominal level but actually it was easy dance. To perform Badaki Nach they do not make stage and dramatic characters, They play *Madal* and sing songs. This type of dance was not expensive and they can organize any time. In comparison with Ghata Nach, Badaki Nach was not interesting. For Ghata Nach, there is grand preparation of local alcohol, money and stage. Mangal Kumar Darai said that Darais of Jagatpur have not organized Ghata Nach since 1995 B.S because different political parties organized dance programmes and Darais get entertainment from these dances. According to him Ghata Nach was expensive so Darais left to organize it. He analyzed that before there were not other means of entertainment, T. V, film, hat bazaar, party programs. So, Ghata Nach was only main entertainment program but now there are T.V., films, party's programs which are the main causes of disappearance of Ghata Nach.

Another occasion of organizing dance is Tulsi- *Akadashi* (which falls 7-8 days after Tihar). Unmarried young girls are main organizer of this dance. This day both unmarried boys and girls take bath and observe fasting. Girls take small pot of water and visit different temples and holy place of river and jungle. They give money to small children who sit on the road. At evening these girls dance with *Amkhora* (small water pot) and *Thal* plate. They put Amkhora on the head and Thal on the hand. This dance is also very famous among Darais. Both parbatiya and Darais participate to see the dance. Parbatiya people are interested to see *Akadashi* dance. These girls invited special dance group from other part of Terai too. Dance groups were to give entertainment for the Darais. They present dance whole night. For the preparation of dance unmarried girls collected Rs 50 to 100 from each of them. They have play for dance group too. On the occasion of *Akadashi* all unmarried girls return their houses, if they are out of family. They wear new clothes and visit each Darais houses. *Akadashi* dance is still popular among the Darais of Jagatpur.

5.5 Religions

A religion is more or less coherent system of beliefs and practices concerning a supernatural order of beings forces, places or other entities: a system that for its adherents has implication for their behavior and welfare implications that the adherents in varying degrees and ways take seriously in their private and joint life. There are supernatural beings (god, goddess, angels), supernatural place (heaven, hell and purgatory), supernatural forces (the Holy Spirit, karma, the Hindu law, curse and effect by which men's deed have inevitable consequences not only in this life but in the next life. And mana the magical power that in Polynesia is thought to be controlled by certain gifted individuals and supernatural entities (for example-souls) K.C (1995:49)

The census of 2002 shows the majority of Hindus (80.65) over other religions like Buddhism -10.8 percent, Islam 4.3 percent other 3.4 percent and not stated 1 percent from this data it is clear that most of the Nepalese population follow the Hindu tradition and cultures . Religion is a part of culture and also belief and practice. Every society has been bounded with religion, the specific guidelines of their life span.

Although the Darais call themselves Hindus, they don't have any clear-cut concept of the religion but they are believes of the sacred cow and its urine (*gahut*) .They have been worshipping Hindu god and goddess and celebrate most of the Hindu festivals like Dashain, Tihar and also sometimes organize *satyanarayan puja*, *kulaen puja*, *chaitte Dashain* ,*Falgu Purnima* etc, they accept the existence of such forces in the form of spirits benevolent and malevolent, which control the daily activities of their lives. Rationally, their religious beliefs can be divided into two aspects. Firstly it is equated with *pap* 'sin' and *dharma* 'virtue' and it is ethnical in character and secondly it recognizes such forces that control the material world.

They assume that religion for them is to look after the family and not to betray anyone. Slaughtering animals and telling lies is sin but however, is not a sin to sacrifice animals to divinities and sprits. In this way it is not also a sin to catch fish because it is their profession. They cannot think much about rebirth but believe that people go to heaven after death. Possibly, they have derived some knowledge about god, heaven and hell from the story of *satyanarayan puja* where the creators, *Brammha* and *Vishnuare* have been narrated.

This community believes that all the properties, misfortunes and diseases are caused by spirits. Their practical religious life revolves around the activities of the pacification and propitiation of these spirits by performing various rituals. It has affected their rituals a great deal.

Kul Dewata

Worshipping *kul dewata* (Mahadev, Bishnu) once a year, sacrificing pigeon, hen, duck and goats etc was reported a common practice in the community Kul dewata is worshipped at the interval of 2 to 5 years.

All the gharaniya blood and bone relatives gathered by specifying the location on the basis of occasion. All the villagers were invited and precipitated for eating and drinking kul puja Prasad. It was meant to get rid of any irregularities in their family out their superstitious belief.

Nag Pooja (Praying Snakes)

Darai worship nag as the gods of the earth. This pooja held in nag panchami in shravan sukla panchami. This was performed by making images of nags by ground rice and worshipping but now a days it is changed as the printed photo of nag is worshipped with *dubo*, *lawa*, cow-milk etc. It is done to protect community from natural calamities such as flood, lightening, landslide etc.

5.6 Festivals

Nepalese society is known as the society of festivals and feasts. There is hardly a month in a year without festival. As Nepal is ethnically culturally and linguistically diverse country, Nepali people celebrate various types of festivals in different ways according to their own manner. In the words of Anderson, “ In Nepal as in all the countries, festivals are celebrated in slightly different ways varying degrees of intensity, depending upon the locality economic and social status, religious and family back ground and personal inclination,(Anderson 19976:16)

People expose themselves and their living through the mirror of festivals. These all festivals are full of fun, men enjoys a lot. Through the study area all the Darai celebrate almost all Hindu festivals such as Teej, Dashain, Tihar, Maghe Sakranti, Chaite Dashain, Falghu poornima etc. They are considered Hindus because they are the believers of the sacred cow and its urine, Gautam (1994:64)

A brief account of each of these important festivals among Darai ethnic in Pidreni is given in this section.

Dashain

Dashain, like the westerner Christmas season is by far the longest most auspicious and most joyful time of the year, celebrated countryside by all castes and creeds during the bright lunar fortnight ending on the day of full moon in late September or early October, Anderson (1977: 142).

Dashain is the most joyous festival celebrated for 15 days performing many religious tasks. Every home is scrubbed and painted everything is cleaned to welcome the goddess Durga, families are reunited blessings and happiness are exchanged. Darai people celebrate Dashain according to their own tradition. When Navdurga starts, they sow barley (*jamara*), pray goddess Durga, wear new clothes and sacrifice cock, pig, and goat to Durga. They play baraha jhulikai swing and make the environment pleasant. They invite their relatives and neighbors to feed sweet tasty and sacred food. One day of *tika* tenth day of dashain they get tika from their seniors and honorable person of their village and have *jad* wine etc according to their economical condition. To respect their parents in law, they go to *sasurali wife's* home village taking duck cock etc. They get tika for five days (tenth day to fifteenth day purnima).

Tihar (Bahitika)

In special feature of Tihar in Darai community is that whoso ever in on *Barkhi* due to parents death during any time of the year gets purified and is free from mourning for the eternal peace of those who passed from this very prepared day. Tihar is the most important festival among other festival of Darai. This festival is celebrated as *pitri amosa* "the memory of the ancestors" in Darai society. If a person died in a village in the year the village is called *jutho* not sacred and vice versa. The people of the scared village prepare tasty food, fish, meat and wine etc, sing song, pray the material and eat tasty things, play swinging and becomes happy. They don't get put tika like other castes. From the Thursday before Tihar they started to pray their *pitri* ancestors in the *aunsi* they take this festival as their grief/ mourning avoiding about their ancestors (esp. parents if they are dead). So this festival is far more different from the others festivals.

Teez

Teez is celebrated as a women festival entertained by both the married and unmarried women. However, the process of celebrating is found different from Hindus. Unmarried girls are supposed to clean one of the house wall and painting it by black color a day or two days before of Teez.

They take bath in the morning and take new clothes to decorate themselves with golden, silver and other whatever ornaments they have, cosmetics and they make painting by making a diagram of *Mahadev* and *Parwati* (Hindu god and goddess), sun, moon, papal, elephant, airplane etc with white color on the black painted wall in the evening, they eat *falahar* (fruits) . They keep on dancing for the whole night of the Teez.

Married women are supposed to drink their husbands' leg water before having their food. On the next day, as a rule to the community, married women is not allowed to go their parent's house but now it is getting modified that may be the effect of the neighboring castes. It is learnt that specially on Teez, women got clothes and ornaments of their choice to buy from their guardians and they need not to work on Teez festival day except merry making, dancing and playing of the lord for the sake of getting good husband in case of unmarried and for all the good of the husband and family members of all those married.

Fagu (Holi Purnima)

Holi is a very interesting festivals celebrated in the Nepalese society especially in the Terai. In this festivals, Darai people gather together before 7-8 days of Falgu Purnima and go to the village to village, house to house, sing song, play *dhamphu* 'drums' dance and make pleasant.

On the day before *holi*, they put *chir* in the juncture of the ways and main road. For this they erect bamboo on the ground, surround it by the mustard straw and make a space in the middle, they take an egg, break it and pray. Then they light the fire on it and take warmness of the fire, sing '*horiya parva*' song move around the fire place and dance being very happy.

Next day, on the Holi Purnima they play '*bhaibhur kachhne*' put the *tika* with ash of the *chir* and different color using sprayer. This festival is celebrated by all: children, young, old, men and women, the members of Darai community.

On the day they eat and feed *jand*, meat and other food according to their economic condition. They sing pleasant song, dance *mayur naach* and visit here and there

making pleasant. Women don't dance while playing drums. They make *dampfu/dholak* 'drum' mayar *pankhi* 'the feathers of peacock' color it with different color sing song and celebrate it in a very interesting way.

Saune Sankranti

Shrawan / Shrawn are the fourth month of Nepali calendar and the first day of this month is known as Saune Sankranti. This is the festival of mid Agricultural season. The Darai of the study area relax for one day with feast and entertainments. This is the only one day feast with entertainments. This one day feast is fully recreational and also the encouragement for the future agricultural activities. The feast consists of bread, cock meat, liquor mad etc

Amausaya

Another important festival of the Darais is Amausya which is actually *pitree aunsi* or Bhadra Krishna Amausaya. On this day, in the morning, they place rice and curries on banana leaves and establish their *pitree* who is offered these gifts. They offer *jad*, *raksi* and *dhoop* (incense) to their *pitree*. In the evening, songs and dances liven up the atmosphere

5.7 Food

The main foods of the Darais are: *bhat* (rice) *roti* (unleavened bread), *sag* (green vegetables- leafy), *sabji* (vegetables), *dal* (pulses), *machha* (fish). *Jad* and *raksi* are prepared in their houses. In the process of making *jad*, much food grains are fermented and thus misused however; they believe that their pujas are incomplete without these liquors. Darais like to drink liquors and feel it a sort of luxury.

5.8 Traditional and Modern Treatment Practices in Jagatpur VDC

Jagatpur VDC lies in Chitwan district where health services and other facilities are not available in proper manner. People living in this village have less access to health facilities they do not get proper treatment even in case of emergency. In Darai community of Jagatpur VDC we can divide the treatment pattern having two parts.

Traditional Treatment Practices

In darai community of Jagatpur , all court, road, canals etc were full of scattered sheep, goat and cow –dug and other wastes during a prior time. Till now all the persons old or young of this community urinate and defile on the roads, garden public place on the bank of rivers and canals etc without hesitation. Most of the people in darai community prefer to get treatment from local faith healers. In the village where are local Dhami, Jhakri, Sodeni (traditional birth attendant) .They think that the causes of illness is bad game of evil spirit ill luck or by evil such as witches and angry gods. So, modern treatment could not recover it .Though the case of pregnancy female would not like to go to the hospital. They delivered at home and sodini and gharguruwa looked after the, as a doctor lack of health knowledge of sodeni most of female die having excessive bleeding. New born child become victims of T.T by using the sickle to cut umbilical cord (the Navel) instead of new blade.

Modern Treatment Practices

Most of the Darai people on the study area are uneducated though, come to the town daily for various purposes and have seen the people carrying their patients to hospital, yet this habit has not formed in Darai community(locality). They do not have knowledge about giving vaccine to their children which government announced free and available in their own community. They have not enjoyed modern medical facilities but hardly known about modern treatment practices like way of living (chimney ventilation) supply of safe water (boiled water) state of personal hygiene, health knowledge, sanitation, etc through the interaction with Parbatiya people and the different health instead of believing to *dhamis* and *jhakris*. Even in the case of diarrhoea, they have knowledge of treatment or giving 'jeevan jal 'and in the emergency cases they prefer to go to hospital.

5.9 Family Structure

During the field visit, I found two types of family in Darai community i.e. nuclear and joint. The nuclear family consists of married couple and their unmarried children and

the joint family is a group of brothers families living together in which there is a joint resident, kitchen and storage.

The community belongs to patrilineage family (the lineage of children is descending from the male side of the parents). All the decision and plans of the family are undertaken by the oldest male member of the family.

The family structure in the study area has been changed from joint family to the nuclear type, due to change in economic condition and population growth. The Darai economy is purely an agrarian economy previously they owned some land naturally, more agricultural labour was needed the source of earning were more than today. Hunting, farming, livestock were thought to be their ethnic jobs. So, they had more resources for their livelihood, therefore they used to have joint family system. But these days, due to the high rate of population growth and decline of nature and ethnic resources they have to face economic difficulties. In a joint family there may be greater number of children and old or feeble people. It means less number of working people cannot feed all of them with the help of the limited resources. Hence the nuclear type of family system came into existence. Another reason for changing the family system from joint to the nuclear is the family quarrel for inherited property. In the case of Darai people if a family has two or more daughters in law, then they begin to compete with one another pinching each other for their work and superiority. The quarrel also arises relating to their sister-in-law's children and their dowry. The sister-in-law who has brought more dowries wants to show her natal home more prestigious family. In a joint family, the conflict is further aggravated by the quarrel between the daughter and daughter-in-law. She begins to dominate later. After that the sister-in-law persuades her husband for family separation. The brother or the son of the family realizing the tension between his sister and wife and he feels better to have separate household.

At present, the economic prospect of the people of the study area has been hampered by the different difficulty likes road construction, license system on hunting and fishing no grazing land etc and only a small fragmented land could not support all the family members. Therefore the only labouring young group becomes the source of earning. Very few labouring people had to feed all the olds and children of the family.

After the son's marriage the daughter-in-law begin to force her husband to live separately from the joint family. Because of begin only a few members, there does not arise any food problems although they have to do wage labour.

So, now most of the Darai people in the study are like to live in nuclear family rather than other types of families, viz. Joint or extended families previously according to their tradition, they pushed to live in joint but now socio and economic causes are the main forces for family disorganization.

5.10 Commensality

One of the traditional distinctions between high caste and others is reflected in the different practices towards alcohol. For high caste alcohol is scripturally and traditionally a polluting drink, while ethnic group consider alcohol as a ritual and social drink. The first Muluki Ain (1854) actually divided the entire society into two moral-legal categories in terms of liquor consumption Tagadhari (who wear sacred thread and abstained from liquor) and Matwali (liquor consumers) (Holfer 1979). The new civil code (1963) has removed the legal discrimination and inequalities laid on caste and drinking. Few high castes Hindu secretly start liquor drinking and express liberal attitude toward food consumption and touch ability.

Hindu cultural value oriented and attitude towards liquor, buff and beef are forbidden. After democracy in 1990, some the local high caste people started liquor and buff consumption openly through beef has been strictly prohibited. There is no restrictions of liquor and any kind of meat among high caste hindu of Khadgauli village. Liquor drinking, buff-eating, card playing and defining characteristics of local elites. Traditionally, Darai are liquor drinking group, both male and female and even children's used to drink home brew rice-beer early morning as breakfast and main course mean buff eating and card playing are defining characteristics of local elites. Traditionally, Darais are liquor drinking group, both male and female and even children used to drink home brew rice-beer early morning as breakfast and main course meal too. But Darais do not eat buff and beef. Darais are freely enjoyed chicken and duck. High caste Hindu consumes liquor and buff without hesitation where as Dalits are regarded untouchable by the same reasons. Darais are strict about

their commensality of food taboo and boundary maintenance. They do not follow high caste behaviours blindly.

5.11 Context of Social Interaction

Whenever I went in Darai settlement both Parbatiya and Darais would ask me why I had come down to this part of the village. When I explained I was there to study about the Darais in this part, first Parbatiya people started to talk about Darais and their culture. Darai would usually remain silent, but after we (Darai and me) were alone, Darai complained about Parbatiya ways of talking by saying “Parbatia want to make fun about us with outsiders, actually they have dual character many Brahmins of this area pretended as pure but they secretly came in our houses to drink alcohol during late evening. Many of them openly eat buffalo- meat and local alcohol openly. “ When Darais and Parbatiya met, such meetings were dominated by Parbatiyas.

Many Parbatiya commented upon the darai food habit and sanitation. They also demonstrated to me sanitation problems around their houses. The Parbatiya women, who are also school teacher at Khadguli tole, asked me how I managed with my food in the darai house. When she saw me eating rice with Darai, she seemed very surprised. Because of sanitation and quality, parbatiya generally did not eat rice in a Darai houses. Darai can eat rice with salt and chilli, if they do not find any curry. She also wanted to know how I managed to eat the very spicy, chilli and salty Darais food. When I said this was no problem she hardly believed me. Some parbatiya friends were different and did not talk about Darai in the humiliation. Khet Raj Adhikari, a Parbatiya shopkeeper in Jagatpur, frequently eats in Darais houses and he also invites them in his house. Arjun Bhujel and Khub lal Darai exchange vegetables, rice and delicious cooked food. Many parbatiya and Darais practiced “Paicho” (borrowing things by promising to return back later) of money, food and labour.

To observe everyday interaction among Darai and Parbatiya group’s discrimination are created on the basis of economy and level of understanding .rather than castes and ethnic groups. Among ethnic groups, parbatiya ethnic groups-Bhujel, Magar and Newar are more intimate with parbatiya castes than Darai and Tharu. It does not mean that Darai and thru have antagonistic relationship with Parbatiya high castes. Many Darais at Jagatpur have trust on Parbatiya groups more than Darais because Parbatiya people also help them to solve their problems

5.12 Darai – Parbatiya Consciousness

Category 'parbatiya' includes all Parbatiya people of different castes and ethnic groups. Inside Parbatiya group, Nepali language (all Parbatiya emigrants of Jagatpur speak Nepali language) geographical origin Parbat (hill) are among them. Beside Brahim and Chhetri, Newar, Kami, Sarki and Damai (occupational caste) Magar, Gurung, Tamang ethnic groups are called Parbatiya people. Among occupational caste groups in Jagatpur all Sarki and the most of Kami is peasant. Only Damai and few Kami practice their traditional occupation. Among Parbatiya groups, the degree of caste consciousness is expressed on their settlement pattern. Sarki's have one separate cluster, Kami have another separate cluster where as high caste and Parbatiya ethnic groups have mixed settlement. Most of the Darai also preferred separate settlement. The center of Jagatpur is mixed settlement of Darai and Parbatiya.

Darai perceive Parbatiya high caste and ethnic groups equally. Old Darai do not want to build house in purely Parbatiya settlement. Santa Bhadur Darai aged 55 did not allow his son to build separate house in Parbatiya settlement even though he has land there. He said, "Darai are helpful but Parbatiya are selfish." He built new house in his yard for his son. Young Darai has different perspective. Ananad Darai aged 35 built his separate house in Parbatiya settlement in front of Sarada School. According to him "Darai are socially backward there in comparison to Parbatiya people. Some of the criteria for this characteristic are related to illiteracy, bad dietary, improper dress as well as behaviours. We can learn at least these things from Parbatiya groups. Until and unless we keep us out in this modern period we will have more disadvantaged." Darai considered Dalits as unclean people because they eat dead animals particularly buffalo. They do not eat with Dalits. Darai think Dalits are lower caste and untouchable by birth. Other parbatiya groups as considered touchable even though they knew some non- Dalits parbatiya eat buff-meat. Both Darai and parbatiya people have different derogative words to tease each other. Parbatiya people are called 'Mohi ganayo' (Bad smell of curd) and Darai are called 'Ghugi' (small water animal like fish). Parbatiya people eat mohi and Darai eat ghugi but they do not like if other people tease them using these words. Sense of Darainess and Parbatiyaness are expressed in this level too. On the other hand there is intra-hierarchy and inequality among Darai in terms of culture, economy and power-politics. Some Darais are rich

and dominant in Jagatpur-Khadgauli community. All the Darais do not fall on the same poor class.

CHAPTER - VI

SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

7.1 Summary

Throughout this thesis I have discussed the process of continuity and change among the Darais of Jagatpur in Chitwan District. In the preceding chapters, I have explained that spontaneous identity in the present study is characterised by continuity and change in practices and beliefs of Darai. The study has more specifically focused continuity and change in rituals (naming, marriage and death), agricultural process, traditional occupations (fishing and hunting) and way of life of the Darais of Jagatpur.

Since the main objectives of the study are to analysed continuity and change of Darai culture, identity livelihood and their interaction with Parbatiya emigrants as well as Darai ethnicity, I have tried to explore areas of spontaneous continuity and change, their cooperation and conflict with Parbatiya people and their caste/ethnic consciousness. The theoretical concepts of continuity and change an ethnic identity have been frame work for organizing the discussion in the study. It has been argues that continuity and change in practices and beliefs could also be regarded as strategies of locally informed boundary management and livelihood. Barth's (1969) concept of ethnic boundaries, W. Fisher's concept of fluid identity, Anderson's concept of imagined community and Guneratne's concept of ethnic consciousness were relevant in developing the conceptual background of continuity and change present in chapter two. From obtained information we can conclude that there are practices in which Darai have shown to be more attention like tradition occupations of hunting, fishing, beliefs in god, marriage, cremation rituals. The change of practices, on the other hand, can be observed dress- ornament, agricultural activities, treatment practices, family structure, livelihood strategies and language.

Methodologically, this study has applied a number of methods to answer a set of research question. Participation observation, non participation observation, listening

formal and informal hangouts with Darais life history and interviews are tools to obtain presented data in this study gathered by means of ethnographic interviews and observation have more contextual information in the writing. The continuous influence of Anti- Hindu orientation and gradual consents on Loshar as common among nationalities, Loshar will be national festival for all ethnic groups. The idea of being part of greater Darai ethnic or ethnic nationalities as a whole is a recent phenomenon. The Darais of Jagatpur perceived themselves Hindu and continued worshipping Hindu and nature gods. They do not have any idea of Buddhism and Loshar. They categorized people on the basis of geographic origin rather than caste/ethnic groups and religion.

There are several factors which have contributed to shape new boundaries of the Darais. These factors pointed out are both external and internal ones, and I described some of them in chapter 4 and 5. One major factor of exchange is parbatiya emigrants into the Darai settlement area after the malaria eradication project in 1960. In the process of transformation from isolated ethnic group into cultural 'melting pot' Darai imitate Parbatiya and vice- versa. Although Darai changed their cultural, social and economic behaviour but they retain their identity as non- Parbatiya rather than non -Hindu. On the other hand Parbatiya groups have been changing from their historic cultural principles (especially caste principles) to multicultural aspects of modernity. This means inter caste marriage, alcohol and buffalo- meat consumption new norms and values have been changing from close system to natural processes of acculturation.

Jagatpur Darais comment ethnic elites because they thought it is another way to control backward people. According to them culture should be practical and changeable. 'No one can keep on the tradition of hundreds year culture as it was' Magal Ram Darai said Darais are not worried about their changed culture but they are worried about their backwardness in society and inside ethnic organizations. The Darais look upon themselves as different caste to some extent and maintain their mutual boundaries. Language, marriage and death rituals, weaving net communicate continuity among them.

Darai and Parbatiya talk negatively about each other's dietary habits but Parbatiya themselves eat and drink liquor with Darais. Participation on marriage party and acceptance of inter caste marriage are symbol of food acceptance. People prefer Darai language at informal situation and Darais also followed Parbatiya culture and both Parbatiya and Darais are culminating towards globalization through T.V. and V.C.D. market penetration. Darais hired TV and VCD to watch Nepali and Indian films. Some Darais went to third countries and brought TV, VCD and new generations are found of foreign culture. I saw many school children buying postcard on the occasion of New Year 2064 B.S. among them both parbatiya caste/ ethnic groups and Darais below 15 years old are excited to give their friends.

To talk about Darai organizations there is no single organization to promote caste/ ethnic unity and sense of ethnic consciousness in Jagatpur. The Darai villagers at certain level are excluded from Parbatiya groups from in some social and development activities. But at the same time both groups wanted each other to participate more actively. This may seen as a paradox, but I have seen this rather as an indication of the pragmatism inherent in the Darai identity maintenance as well as the ambivalence in relation to each other. At the same time as Parbatiya are blamed as heater and clever simultaneously they are also admired for their education and proper livelihood. Darai have learnt many practical aspects of art of living from parbatiya groups. In Jagatpur the attachment between Darai and Parbatiya groups seem more intensive and cohesive even though they have sufficient micro-level conflicts. They thought Jagatpur Darais are distinct from the Darais of other areas.

To summarize, Jagatpur Darais define themselves as Matwali group and maintain their identity according to changing contexts. There are various aspects of Darais which are manifested differently as identity continuation, maintenance and change. They keep on tradition of fishing, hunting, life cycle rituals, beliefs on gods and festivals to some extent. The shift from name giving (like,Aita RamDarai to Sandesh Darai), from traditional treatment practices (gurau jakri) to hospital, tradition dress to some different and colour full dress but in some extent only, inter caste marriage, new strategies of livelihood are processes of modernization rather than sanskritization.

While some elites Darais increasingly interested identify themselves as an ethnic group, other may conceptualize them as a Matwali Hindu.

As the proposed objectives of this study, I have tried to look society through the eyes of the Darai of Jagatpur . Including myths and history their perception on identity and traditional culture has been recorded. Their understanding of cultural identity differs with other Darai elites and activists. Social interaction between the Darai and the Parbatiya groups reflect co-operation as well as conflict on certain context.

As the end, I would like to conclude my dissertation by highlighting the major findings of this research that reflect the main identity makers and change within Darais of Jagatpur Darais.

7.2 Conclusion

According to local Darais their ancestors would have entered into Nepal to save them from Muslim attack in India in 14th century. They are the earliest people to move into the Chitwan least hundred and fifty years ago. Darais language (both Darai and non – Darai speak), marriage death rites, step (*thar*), food and festival like: Amausaya, dress and ornaments are main identity markers of the Darais of Jagatpur. They are still following their traditional occupation: fishing, deer hunting and basket and net weaving and also adopt new livelihood strategies like wage labour, short term migration to Golf countries and to India,. Name giving, traditional treatment practices like(gurau jakri), are almost to disappearance.

Darais and Parbatiya people are experiencing both conflict and co-operation on local level for instance, invitation of Parbatiya people on rituals of the Darais, inter caste marriage, labour, animal cash and food exchange and unity on agricultural activities. Similarly household level conflict can be realized at the matters of land resources, derogative names of each other (Gungi for Darais and Mohi Ganayo for Parbatiya). Darais call all hilly emigrants (high caste, ethnic and Dalits) as Parbatiya group but Dalits are regarded as polluted lower caste. Darais of Jagatpur put hill ethnic groups and high caste people in same distance. They do not have ethnic- consciousness nor any proximity with ethnic people as presented in urban socio- political level.

Sankritization is reflected when high caste people started liquor drinking and buffalo-meat consumption and Darai language speaking. Darais are still practicing traditional (virtual) ways of life which is spontaneous, locally informed and product of relationship with the parbatiya people. Changes are the outcome of Parbatiya emigrants as well as penetration of modern socio- economic system.

At the end, Continuity and change are not random processes because Darais continued some of their traditions for distinct identity and they adapted new phenomena as strategies of life. Darais and Parbatiya people have developed consensus about local issues. They do not have communal antagonistic relationships rather they have mostly realized supports on local socio- economic and art of living.

7.3 Recommendation

On the basis of this micro level study the continuity and change of Darai community in Jagatpur VDC of Chitwan District. The following are the major recommendation by my personal field experience to uplift their socio- economic life.

1. Due to the limitation of the time I was unable to focus on Darai's indigeneous knowledge practices. Their indigenious practices like using local herbal plants for different purpose is appropriate for academic excercise or futher researchable issue.

GLOSSARY

Amosa	aunsi,
aunsi	new moon
Bahari sana baharai lena	tit for tat
Baraha jhulikai	swinging
Bat Bahadur	mixture of the all grains and coins
Bazaar	marketing place
Bhaibhur kachhne	put tika using ash and colours
Bhandar kotha	store room
Bhoto	inner wear with laces or bottoms on the shoulders.
Brahmin, Chhetri, Vaishya and sudra	Caste stratification according to Hindu system
Britri madesh	inner Terai
Chirak/chir	fire lit on the day before Holi Purnima
Churiya	names of hill
Damphu/dholak	drum-shaped musical instrument

Dhami/Jhakri	traditional healers
Diyo-kalash puja	worshipping oil lamp and water vessel
Dulhan farkaune	returning of the bride
Gagree	long with narrow neck pot to bring water
Gahat	a kind of lentil
Gahut	cow's urine
Ghar Guruwa	priest man
Ghol	wet land
Ghumka	fishing net
Goda dhune	washing of the feet
Har	plough
Horiya	song of Fagu
Jand	a kind of alcohol
Janti	member of wedding party
Jethaju	elder bother of husband
Jhajhro pa	bread made on the banana's leaf to hear in fire
Jutho	polluted food
Kachhar	outer wear, from the waist to the knees
Kanjar	fore dust
Kasaudi	a kind of cocking pot
Katta	a small unit of measurement of land
Khar	thatch, straw
Khet	paddy field
Khure	rabbit
Kirenha	Dead person's son

Kriyaputri	the deceased's son
Kubindo	a kind of pumpkin
Kush	a kind of grass having spiritual value
Lagauti	under wear strip
Mad	beer
Madeule	the friend bride
Mahabharat parbat	names of mountain
Malami	a member of funeral procession
Manu	Hindu's priest's name
Neuta	invite
Pakho	dry land
Phuli	nose-top
Pindo	meal for dead person
Pitri	ancestors
Puinte	mediator of marriage
Purnima	full moon
Raksi	Alcohol
Sodani	traditional nurse
Sunko Bitalake Jail	going to bring the bride
Uthauni	naming ceremony

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