

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Nepal is ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse community. Nepali people celebrate various types of festivals on different months according to their own manner. And no doubt Nepalese people celebrate various festivals according to their culture and tradition. As such, they worship various gods and goddesses and enjoy themselves eating, drinking, singing and dancing.

Nepal is the land of various castes, tribes and ethnic groups. These people have their own unique culture, social organization, myths, legends and traditions. These castes, creeds, tribes and ethnic groups are contributing to build a complex whole of Nepali national culture. Among these groups Tharus are the most populated group of Nepal terai settled from east to the west. They have their own culture and festivals also. Festival is a time of feasting or celebration; an anniversary day of joy, civil or religious; a feast. They worship various gods and goddesses and enjoy themselves by eating, drinking and dancing (Sharma, 1985).

A festival is an event, usually and ordinarily staged by a local community which centers on some unique aspect of that community. Among many religions, festival is a set of celebrations in honor of God or gods. A festival is historically interchangeable. The word festival derive from middle French word *festivus*, from the Latin word *festivus*. Festival was first recorded as a noun in 1589. Before it had been used as an adjective from the fourteenth century; meaning to celebrate a church holiday. A festival is a special occasion of feasting or celebration, that s

usually religious (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, 8/31/2009).

Regarding the festival of Nepal, Majpuria and Gupta write: Nepal is rightly called the land of festivals. The land of festivals. The festivals of Nepal preserve in themselves a vary fascinating picture of the great historical, cultural, social as well as economic aspect of Nepal and her people. They myths, folks legends and tradition throw ample light on the cultural traditional and historical aspects of the country (Majpuria and Gupta, 1981:3)

Tharus are indigenous people in Nepal . They are of most ancient simple, honest and backward community. Their main occupation is farming since time immemorial. They live in 24 districts of Terai and inner Terai (Chaudhary, 1999:1). From the eastern of Nepal comprising Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Saptari, through Bara, Parsa, Chitwan in the center, Rupendehi, Kapilvastu in the west and Dang Deukhuri , Banke, Bardiya, Kailali, Kanchanpur in the mid west and far west, these people are found and have been started to be the aboriginals of these regions by many scholars (Gautam and Thapa-Magar, 1994: 325).

Tharu community, who made Terai fertile and productive cultivable belt. Now Terai is called “Bread basket” of Nepal. The contribution in making the Terai belt green and productive by this community is immense. They all the time fought with fatal malaria, fearful animals as Tigers, Elephants, Rhinos, scorpions and snakes. They cleared thick forest into cultivable land due to their untiring labor and effort (Chaudhary,1999:1).

Tharu is the fourth largest ethnic group of Nepal. The total population of Tharus is 15,33,879 out of 23,151,423; which is 6.75 percent of total population (CBS, 2001).

Tharus are very prosperous community from cultural point of view. They celebrate different types of festivals in a year. Now it can be said in brief that Tharus are one of the various ethnic groups of Nepal who have their own types of unique indigenous knowledge and cultural identity. Within the Tharu culture, there are various types of festivals which exhibit their socio-cultural life. At the present all castes and ethnic groups are losing their cultural identity.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Nepal is the land of cultural heritage. Every society change during the lapse of time. Hence, Tharus society is also no exception of it. Festival is a part of culture. So it loses its originality causes of interaction with non Tharus, migration, education, communication, means of transportation etc . So Tharus festival and their socio-cultural significance also have changed in the Ghorahi Municipality. Cause of change, new generation do not know about which is their festival and their socio-cultural significances . Various Nepalese and foreign scholars have talked and published books, articles in short form about the Tharus and their festival. Tharus celebrate many festivals like Maghi, fagu, holi, dhuriya gurahi, hareri, mutha lehai, astamki, dasya, dewari, barka aatwari, hardwa etc. Some festivals are their own , some of other caste. Due to continuous interaction with other religious and caste groups, They have been losing festivals identity and their socio cultural significant. Like wise the Tharus at Ghorahi Municipality of Dang district are also suffering from the same problem. Therefore “ Festivals of the Tharus and their socio-cultural significance” of Dangaura Tharu is very essential as it may throw light on festivals and their socio-cultural significance of these ethnic group.

This research is concentrated on Dangaura Tharus in Ghorahi Municipality of Dang district. The problems of this research are as follows:-

- (a) What are the traditional festivals of Tharus people in the study area?
- (b) What are the socio-cultural significances of the Tharu festivals?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to analyze Tharu festivals in relation to their socio-cultural significances.

The specific objective of the present study are :-

- (a) To provide a detailed description of various festivals celebrated by Tharu people in Dang Deukhuri area.
- (b) To describe the socio-cultural significance of the various festivals of the Tharus of study area.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Tharu is one of the indigenous group who scatter in the whole part in the Terai of Nepal. They have own language, culture and social system.

The festivals of Tharu people is one of the most important parts of Tharu Traditional culture. Traditional festivals of Tharus have undergone some significant change. Hence it is necessary to provide a systematic documentation before they vanish from the cultural screen of Tharu.

There are many studies of Tharu in Nepal. However, few studies concentrate as festivals of Tharu. Hence , the present study tries to describe the festivals and their significances. There fore , it will be the intention of this study try to document those festivities that are either

declining or have disappeared. So it is hoped that it will be helpful for the any scholar, researchers, students, interested individuals to detail study of Tharu festivals and their significances in future.

CHAPTER-II

Literature Review

2.1 Origin of Tharu People

There is a great controversy about the origin of the Tharus. In the past, some Nepalese writers, scholars, sociologists, anthropologists and even historians have done much crafty business in writing false history of origin of Tharus and their culture, due to which Tharus history had been put in disguise for some time. There was reason for it. So the Tharus history had been degraded to the great extent by publishing imaginative and futile articles. But at large, Tharu scholars, international writers, scholars, sociologists, anthropologists published that the Tharus were originated in and around Kapilvastu. Their source of provenance is and around Kapilvastu.

According to Chaudhary (2003:1), “Tharus were originated in and around Kapilvastu. Their main source of provenance is Kapilvastu. These facts were supported by new national as well as international scholars. Tharus are the original inhabitants of Nepal and they were born near Kapilvastu.

Many other writers have tried to trace them through a legend indicating their Indian origin from the “Thar” desert of Rajasthan in north western India. According to this, when Muslim rulers captured Rajasthan and murdered the inhabitants and plundered their wealth and raped women, then the princess and many other royal women attendants immigrated into the forest of Terai. They waited for some years for their husbands inside the forest; at last they accepted their male servants as a

new husband. The offspring of these Rajput women and their low caste servants become Tharus. These writers derive the word ‘ Tharu’ from ‘ Thar’ desert (Risley, 1892:313)

According to Gautam and Thapa (1994:325), regarding the origin of the Tharu, scholars have not been able to come to a definite and clear conclusion. Some scholars say that Tharus are migrants from the ‘Thar’ desert in Rajasthan, India. Others say that they are descendents of the children that were born out of the liaisons between the Rajput women and their servants who fled the musalman invaders and after living without their spouses in these area for long periods, they ultimately cohabited with their servants thus giving birth to the breed known as the Tharu.

According to Acharya(1953), Tharus belong to the mongol, who used to speak Kirant in the hill and they (Tharu) later learned Aryan language and they formed separate group. So Acharya claims that Tharu’s original place cannot be beyond the Himalayas . It means Tharu’s place of origin is Nepal.

Tharus are one of the indigenous tribal peoples scattered all along the southern foot hills of the Himalayas from Bhutan in the east to the Nainital Terai of India, in the west and including the whole of the Terai portion of Nepal. The greater part of Tharu population resides in Nepal.(Srivastav, 1958:9)

Majumdar (1942) argued that Tharu are definitely a Mongoloid tribe. They cannot be placed in any other tribes and caste through a DNA test. Thus it is concluded on the basis of the evidence that Tharu are Mongoloid, who are successfully assimilated non Mongoloid physical features (ibid).

The 'forest people' came from many regions at different times to seek peace and shelter of the Jungle; the environment then molded them, over a very long period of time into groups of special people, all of them called the Tharu (Meyer, 1995).

According to Chemjong (1967:195), "the Tharus of Kochila family of morang and Saptari districts of Nepal seem to be the survivors of Koch Kirat people of North Bengal and who must have migrated from North Bengal to morang and spread all over the Terai districts of Nepal".

In this way, many scholars have tried to determine the origin of Tharus in Nepal and a number of these theories are quite plausible. Hence, there is enormous confusion relating to the issues. However, if one considers the possibility of more than one specific origin of the Nepali Tharus, the question of origins becomes more comprehensible. Certainly one should take into account that the Tharus of eastern, central, western and far western Nepal are quite different and consequently, may stem from somewhat different circumstances. For example; the Tharu women (Rana Tharu) of Kailali and Kanchanpur districts traditionally cover their head with a piece of black cloth. The explanation given is that is an expression of the mean thing they (Rajput women) did by getting married with servants while they lived among the chitauri Tharu or the Dangaura Tharus. But there is not any controversy that they settled during thousand years ago.

2.2 Socio-Economic status of Tharu:

Socio economic means "in a system of social stratification, it refers to combination of various social and economics indexes of rank which

are used in research studies. The term is often used to deal with stratification in a society without the need for the assumption that there are distinct to or social classes.

Bistha (1967:117) was the first native anthropologist to make a first study into a variety of ethnics groups of Nepal based on field observation. He has given some description on the different aspects of the Socio-Economics life of Tharu. He writes "Tharus are Socio-economically backward people and are probably among the oldest groups to inhabit the Terai. They usually live in a very close to the heavily forested regions. A large numbers of the villages of the Tharuwan are found in small clearings in the middle of the forest itself. Most of the large compact Tharu settlements are found in Tropical malarial areas, infested with wild animals such as elephants, rhinocers, bears, tigers and poisonous snakes."

Rajure (1997) has noted a special attitude of Tharu to live in isolation which he expressed" A general Tharu mentality ,which is found neither among the hill ethnic groups(Tibeto-Nepalese) nor among these of Terai ((Indo-Nepalese)makes the Tharu feel content within their own Tharu society and circumstances. This has kept Tharus almost isolated within their own localities and has made them a group relatively unknown to outsiders." Rajure (1981) further write "Their socio-economic and educational backwardness, the effect of the old civil code, the behavior of the land lords, merchants and local officials have all combined to induce the sense of "tribal inferiority among the Tharus "This indicates the other dimensions of their status as indigenous being generally the realm of the state decision making and thus open to

economical, political, social, religious and racial discrimination(ILO 1989).

The ready availability of land in the Terai area had left most Tharus with little appreciation of its value. The most immediate consequences of Tharus through out the Terai of Malaria eradication program was that they lost land. The situation was particularly devastating in some of the western districts especially Dang (Gunaratne 1980), where most of the land formally controlled by Tharus passed into the hand of immigrants, mostly Brahmins, Kshetries and Tahrus from hill's. Many castes and kingship affiliations with local government functionaries to appropriate Tharu land. There are many stories and tales about the cheating of land from the Tharus. In the Dang many clever people like Brahmin and Kshetries from hills come and snatched land from the Tharus by coercion and mollified actions giving loan and making adding zero more even after paying back and again gave compound interest without tearing the papers in spite of in stipulate the time .This sort of story prevailed through out Terai especially Chitwan ,Navalparasi and west from Dang to Kanchanpur (Chaudhari, 1999). According to the Guntratne (1996) in Chitwan a Brahmin who came Chitwan after the malaria eradication program, notorious in the surrounding village for the way he amassed land. He readily provided loans to Tharus, when they found themselves unable to pay back the loan within the stipulated time, he would extend repayment person, but in return they would be asked to agree to the addition of another zero to some specific on the promissory note. The Tharus, liberate and unfamiliar with written document would fail to see the significance of this and would readily consent. The debater eventually confronted by the many lender with a promissory note far a some for greater then that which he had originally borrowed and well beyond his

ability to repay would lost all or part of his land for fulfillment of the debt.

Bista (1967) says that most of the Tharus in Dang Deukhuri have been exploited by zamindars, and revenue-agents. Tharus, in the past days were not interested in holding the land registered in their name ,due to the absence of cash. They were not interested in their cultivating barren or virgin land ,for which that didn't have to pay revenues for a certain period :later they again moved on in search of such new land. Tharus who had private registered land sold the land whenever possible even at a cheap price and moved further west (Bardia, Kailali) to cultivate new land; some lived their. As a result the Tharus were forced to become sedentary (small scale peasants), and many of them ended up like kamaiyas (bonded labor) to rich absentee landlords.

Bhatta (1996), studied in Patyani VDC of Chitwan district and he found the causes of landlessness of Tharu community. He says "The problem of landless which was originated historically in the form of bounded labor system that is massive in the Tharu community. The government resettlement problem through benefited hill people did not solve the problem of landless Tharus. It further worsened the problem by allowing exploitation of Tharus through social interaction between society, backward Tharus and advanced hill people".

According to Dhital (2002), Tharus, unlike the hill people never went to army recruiting center of any major India country in search of job. This situation still prevails with the exception of a few educated young Tharus who are now being employed in some jobs within the country. Their economy is entirely based on agriculture .This consists of

both subsistence agriculture and some selling of exchanging of surplus food discouraging them from going out for other needs. This economy keeps them engaged in their own localities discouraging them from going very far for non agriculture jobs. The Tharus socio-economic context to discourage them traveling any a great distance especially in to the non Tharus areas. However they move from one place to another in search of a better off form jobs with better facilities ,but generally these moves do not exceed a distance of more then three or four days walk.

According to Chaudhary (1999), socio-economic condition of Danguara Tharus, went down because of kamaiya systems and bonded labors. Majority of the Tharus are victimized due to kamaiya system and ultimately become bonded laborers. Basically he was postulated two reasons, one is social culture that costs maximum extravagant and superfluous expenses and the second is the malaria eradication followed by land reforms which made the presser of clever population from north and south and people run land permanently settle in the village.

Tharus are socio-economically backwarded than the other groups in the society .Their economy is traditionally associated with farming. Their agrarian structure and cropping system are traditional. But now they are in different situation than some years ago.

2.3 Rituals of Tharus

There are different method of purifying ,sanctifying individuals and shaping the way of life of the people in different society. Tharu community is one of them which has its own types of rituals .Tharu rituals are also different from other community. There are mainly four

types of traditional rituals of Tharu . Like, birth, chhaewar, marriage and death.

When a baby birth in Tharu society, a room is prepared to baby and mother (Dahit, 2062:10) . Where as special management of safety are prepared. Sorinya (traditional mid wife) take care of the mother and the baby. Tharu's purify the postnatal in a few day after taking bath, which is called Ghatwa Karaina. After the Ghatwa Karaina ceremony, mother is freed to participate in her household work. And they keep the child's name by themselves. The name mostly they keep according to the child's birthday's date's name. Suppose if he is born on Sunday, his named is kept Aatwari Sing Tharu(Gurung, 2005:130).

When he reaches the age of 4 to 5 years, in the month of falgun and on monday or a wednesday, puja is offered to deties worshipped by the family or in other word the Kul deatas. This is followed by the childs maternal uncle or mama performing the ritual called Chhaewar or hair shaving(Gautam and Thapa Magar,1994). According to Gurung (2005:131), at this time the maternal uncle or mame shaves the child's hair. The mother receive the hair on her sari and sheds it in the river.

Marriage, as an institution, permits men and women into family life. It is called a further step towards completeness. It is the permanent relationship that allows the couple to have sexual intercourse and reproduce without any social restriction. According to Tharu concepts, happiness is consequent on having a lot of children and seeing these children married. Tharus aspire to see their houses full of children and grand children. According to Gautam and Thapa Magar (1994:335), most

Tharu marriages occur when the children are quite young. A boy of 8 to 9 years of age will be married to a girl who is 15 to 16 years old. This sort of unbalanced age marriage match is done, they explain, because of their practical belief that an extra work (the women) is made available by this union. Another reason offered is that the girl's sexual appetite increases as she grows older and the boy will be able to accommodate her as he will also be growing proportionally and thus the balancing of this sexual high is possible. This also serves as a buffer to control the desire for extra material sex which is supposed to satiate this unfulfilled craving on the other hand it is also seen that this form of disbalanced age marriage is cause for the girl to have extra marital sexual liaisons on account of the boy's inability to perform at the early age of 8 or 9 years.

Gopal Dahit (2062), describes the six types of marriage system in Tharu society. Generally, there are just two types of marriages found among the Tharu people. One is arrange where all the relevant rituals are completed, and the other is the love marriage.

Regarding the marital customs of the Tharus, it seems that through they are assimilating some Hindu features in their usual way of life, yet the rites and ceremonies concerning marriage are rarely influenced by outside customs. A few educated and rich Tharus who are developing a taste from a different culture have started to introduce alien patterns such as the abolition of the bride price or of the exchange of girls or women for marriage, through not the rites or ceremonies themselves. Campaigns for social reforms are very necessary to uplift an underdeveloped community, but the programs for such reform must not simply impose the norms and values of the dominant Hindu culture.

The rituals of death differ according to the place of habitation. While the eastern Tharu people inhabit areas near the rivers, they cremate their dead on the river banks. The Tharu of Saptari cremate their dead. While those towards the far western areas bury their males face down and females face up. Certain Tharu in Dang Deukhuri areas cremate as well as bury their dead. As earlier stated, the males are buried face down and the females are buried face up. Some Tharu use the seated posture for burials. Prior to the burial, a white cloth is laid inside the grave and the corpse is placed on this then it is covered with the other piece of white cloth (Gautam and Thapa Magar, 1994:339). At last they cover with soil.

2.4 Festival of Tharus

Festival is a process of rejoicing. It is important in human society and culture for several viewpoints. Festival is a part of human culture; hence, every culture has its own festival. In society people get a lot of recreation from the celebration of festival. During the festival period people become happy and try to be free from anxieties, troubles, mental tensions and other general practical difficulties. During the short period of festival they want to be free from this troubled and busy world. During festival period they wear beautiful cloths, eat delicious food, people love and respect each others.

Tharus are very prosperous community from the view point of culture. So they celebrate different festivals in a year and invite relatives. Tharus festivals are so much expensive by the causes of feasts. They give feast to the many people, who are not invited too. Hindu festival calendar, for the Dangaura Tharus 'Dasai' is the main festival, for the Koshi

Thus it is the new years of Baisakh called 'Suruwa Pavan' or 'Jusital' and for the Rana Thus it is 'Holi' (Chaudhary,1999:64).

Festivals are the lens through which the culture of a country is brought into focus. Nepal is rich in its cultural heritage is also shown by several festivals which the Nepalese still observe in their traditional way, Festivals in Nepal are reckoned not only as occasions to indulge in eating, drinking and making merry but also as occasions when one is to devote. Some of one's time to the worship of and meditation upon god and goddesses in different forms and manifestation of one supreme being (Shrestha and Singh, 1973:1-2)

There are many ritual family pujas, as great community gatherings at the temples which we call festivals. In all, the deity is honored; worshiped, appeased or beseeched for some blessing with offerings of flowers, lighted wicks, holy water, rice colored sacred powders and pester, coins, often fruits and vegetables and some times liquor and blood sacrifices (Anderson, 1977:15-16). So , festivals are the part and parcels of Nepalese life.

“Festival in Nepal means faith on god, feeling for family and fun with friends. Nepal is the land of festivals with rich cultural heritage. Religion has always been the central core of the land of festivals with rich cultural heritage. Religion has always been the central core of the Nepali culture. This is one of the reasons why every thing ceremonial in Nepal always begins with the spontaneous social spirit and eventually ends up with the friendly feast and fun for all. This is what the celebration of any festival means to the Nepalese people. This has long been the Nepalese way of life probably from the time immemorial. And it is quite interesting to note that more than 90 Percentage of the Nepalese

festivals have religious origin”. (Deep, 1992:2)

According to Gautam and Thapa, (1994) “There are some differences in the religious practices of two Tharu people which is related in the Uttar Paredsh region of India, and with whom even to day marriage ties exist. These Tharu do not celebrate Dasai and Tihar, but Holi or fagu and Teej are their most important festivals. The males Rana Tharu take Teej brata or fast and not their females. But the Dangauriya Tharu celebrate the Srawane Sankranti, Gurihai as their main festival along with Hardawa which is after the harvesting and Aitriya after the threshing. Maghe Sankranti for a period of three days.

Tharus have their own language, religion, culture and social rituals which give the Tharus identity. They are coming with celebrate festival like other caste. They are Maghi, Fagu, Holi, Dhuriya Gurahi, Hareri, Mutha lehai, Astamki, Dasya, Dewari, Panchami Sharad, Barka Aatwari, Sawaniya Sankranti, Aauli lena , Aauli Utarna, Badka Puja, Shirawa Paban, Jitiya Pawan, Same Chakewa etc(Dahit,2005:50)

Different writers have given their different opinions of the Tharu festival. Tharus are indigenous people who have their own festivals. “They celebrate Dasai, Tihar also. Beside this they celebrate the ‘Maghi’ very grandly. On the first date of Magh; which is called Maghe sankranti by the pahadi. On Maghi they cut pig which is called the jita by their language. They celebrate it for seven days . At this time the married or unmarried daughters and sisters are respected and donated. But the eastern Nepals Tharus have not been found to observe this Maghi festival. Only the western Nepali Tharus are found it celebrated. They celebrate the Fagu purnima. Festival also very grandly by smearing the cinnabar and liquid color. This Falgu purnima is celebrated there . On

the day after the hilly people's celebration in Nepal. But the Tharus settled all over the part of Nepal celebrate this fagu very interestingly by playing cinnabar and liquid color (Gurung, 2005:130).

For the Nepalese, the continuous flow of interrelated festivals through out the year is literally a way of life, reflecting their joys and fears , dreams and sorrows. The festivals become a calendar, making the changing season, the revolving of the years and ages, given continuity and meaning to their lives. They cement the strong and vital bonds between individual member in each family, as well as the ties within established social propping of caste and clan and class. And to degree the festivals are instrumental in welding together the citizens of a recently democratized nation.

Tharus have their own festivals. They celebrate festival own type . Dasain, Tihar, Fagu, Maghi sankranti are the festivals of Tharus (Mechi Dikhi Mahakali Samma, 2031).

According to Rajure (1977:180), Tharus have feasts and festivals which take place at intervals during the season when they are not occupied in the fields. Some of those , which are associated with rice cultivation, have been already described in the relevant places in the chapter on Tharus Agricultural economy. Their most important festivals are Maghi, Dasya, Atwari, Astamki and Dhureri or the Holi.

Now it can be said in brief that Tharus are one of the various ethnic groups of Nepal who have their own type of unique culture. Within the Tharu culture they are various types of festivals. And festivals have socio-cultural significance too. Among the Tharu community also festival has great socio-cultural significance. On the one hand, they are

preserving their traditional culture and on the other hand, festival helps to maintain social integration and solidarity and festival also helps to maintain social discipline in the Tharu community.

2.5 . Theoretical Base

Structural Functionalism is a theoretical approaches in which societies are conceptualized on social system and particular features of social structure are explained in terms of their contribution to the maintenance of these system, eg. Religions, ritual explained in terms of the contribution on it makes to social integration (Collins, 2000).

According to Levy (1996), Structural Functionalism is simply a synonym for explicit scientific analysis in general. It is nothing more complicated than asking one of the following empirical question: (1) What structures are involved? That is , what observables uniformities can be discovered or alleged to exit in the phenomena studied? (2) What functions have resulted? That is , what conditions resultant from previous operations can be discovered or alleged to exit in the phenomena studied? And (3) What functions take place in terms of given structure? That is ,when process can be discovered to take place in terms of observable uniformities, What resultant conditions can be identified?

Social structure is an arrangement of persons in institutionalized roles and relationship, structural continuity is the continuity of such arrangement (R.C. Brown).

Social structure is network of social relationship which is made of different types of element like, culture , rituals, religion , festival, education, laws, norms, beliefs and values etc. Every elements function

in the system togetherly which contributes positively to the continued operation of that system and they bring social integration, social order and harmony. And they help society to run continuously.

Festival is a structure. There are different types of parts. These parts work together. When they work together, the structure is made of festival. When the Tharu people going to celebrate festival, gardhurrya offer their deities. Gardhurnya prepare the worshipping things. Other member of the house also participant in this activities. Like Gurrai festival, Guruwa offer the village deities, Gardhurryas gather all the offering things, female person prepare the food . They have their own work which made the structure of festival.

Festival also the part of society which brings social integration , feeling of 'we' in the society. When they are celebrating festival, the members of family gather in their house. They invite their relatives, villagers and share their feeling , problems which brings feeling of we and integration with them.

CHAPTER-III

Research Methodology

3.1 Rationale of the Study Area

This Study area (Ghorahi Municipality) is situated in Dang district. In Ghorahi Municipality, there are 11 wards or 142 villages. Tharus are settledown in 49 villages out of 142 villages. The whole munucipality has been covered by the settlement of Tharus. They are indigenou people of this area. Causes of interaction with other caste, community, education, road building, invention of new technology, relation of urban area, and communication etc. So Ghorahi Municipality was selected because celebrating method of Tharu festival and socio-cultural significance of festivals are changing. Now all days Tharus young generation do not know about their traditional festival and their significances in the study area. So Ghorahi Municipality was selected to find out their traditional festival and festivals socio-cultural significances. And to introduce new generation of Tharu with their traditional festival.

3.2 Research Design

This research is based on the descriptive type of nature. Descriptive research design is used to describe the Tharu festival and exploratory research design is used to explore the significances of Tharu festivals of Dangaura Tharu community in the study area.

3.3 Nature and Sources of the Data

The data collected both are qualitative and quantitative in Nature. Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The

primary data collected through interview, observation and group discussion methods and secondary data collected through Municipality records , library, documents books, Journals , Internet, CBS, news paper and literatures of Tharus.

3.4 Study Population

There are 37 households in the Maghai village and all the households were selected for the study . All 37 households were selected for the study. All 37 households were interviewed about their festival and their significance of festivals.

3.5 Data Collection Method

3.5.1 Interview

For the primary data collection , all the households (37) were interviewed using an informal interview rather than using formal questionnaire to obtain information about the name of festivals, celebrating month, days , worshipping gods and goddess, worshipping materials, kinds of food, dress, ornaments, songs and dances.

3.5.2 Observation

Those topics which were not covered in informal interview such as worshipping method of festival, significance, changing factors. So these activities were collected by means of observation. Participant observation was used to find out the method of worshipping, celebrating method of festival and non participant observation was used to find out the significances of festivals.

3.5.3 Group Discussion

Group Discussion was used to check required information about the traditional festival of Tharu and their socio-cultural significance by interview and observation. Group discussion was conducted among the member of Tharus community, educated person, elder person, Mahaton.

3.6 Data analysis and Presentation

Most of the collected data are analyzed descriptively and presented. Statistical tools are not used in the analysis due to the lack of quantitative data.

3.7 Limitation of the Study

The study has the following limitations:-

-) This study is confined in Ghorahi Municipality word no. 1 of Dang district. So it cannot represent the Tharus festival of the whole Nepal.
-) This study tries to provide a detailed description of various festivals and their significances celebrated by Tharu people.
-) This study is based on the descriptive research design. Both primary and secondary source have been used to collect the required data.

CHAPTER- IV

Introduction of the study Area

4.1. Geographical Setting

Maghai village is situated in southern part of Ghorahi Municipality . East of the village is Gulri gangari, in west is Baukhai Gangari which separate to land of Gulariya village, in south there is Karhahi community forest and in north it join its border with Panaura Dabar. This village is ward number 1 of Ghorahi Municipality. The settlements of the village is a typical and is similar to many other Tharu village of the municipality.

In the center of the whole village into two halves and other road join Gairagaun and Gulariya east to west. From each side of the wide graveled north - south road houses stand fifteen to twenty five feet back in an irregular row. Through the houses are quite close to each other, there is some gap between them . So that owner of the house may easily go around them when necessary.

4.2. Population

A Tharu villave consists of several families living inside a compact social unit which give benefits them both sociology and economically several families within this unit are related to each other.

Maghai is a homogeneous Tharu village. It has 37 houses in total. 35 houses are Tharu village out of 37 houses having average households size of 6.65 person. The village population is composed of 109(44.13) percent females and 138(55.87) percent males. The age distribution of the population by their sex is given below.

Age and sex distribution of the population by sex of Maghai

Age Group	Male	Female	Total	Percent
0-4 year	12	7	19	7.69
5-14 year	23	15	38	15.38
15-24 year	21	14	35	14.17
25-34 year	34	26	60	24.29
35-44 year	29	30	59	23.89
55-54 year	9	9	18	7.29
55and over	10	8	18	7.29
Total	138	109	247	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2010

This table shows that the percent of child age (0-14) is low because of education. They are more educated than the past years. They get the knowledge of family planning services. Economy is the other cause. They are poor in economy . So they do not want to give the birth more than two child in the study area.

Tharus are majority group then other caste / ethnic group. The ethnic composition of Maghai village is given in table no. 2 below.

The ethnic composition of Maghai village

Caste / ethnic Group's	Total Population	Percentage
Tharu	234	94.74
Newar	7	2.83
Brahmin	6	2.43
Total	247	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2010

The above table shows that the Maghai villave has 94.78 percent of people are Tharu as well as Newar 2.83 percent and Brahmin 2.43 percent castes/ ethnic groups get in the study area.

4.3. Education

Education is one of the most important aspects of human societies. A well educated person can play a good role in the society as well as national building activities then an uneducated person . It is also evident that more educated family as well as society can be more integrated than the illiterate family and society . Hence, it can be said that education is one of the most important aspects of human life.

Description of educated people in Maghai Village

Level of education	Number	Percentage
1-5 class	52	31.33
6-10 class	89	53.61
S.L.C passed	16	9.64
Intermediate	5	3.01
Graduate / Post Graduate	4	2.41
Total	166	100.00

Source: Field Survey 2010

According to the table, a total of 166 persons were found to be formally educated this is 67.20 percent of the total number of people in this village. Of this figure, 52 (31.33 percent) go to primary school, 89(53.61 percent) go to lower secondary and secondary level. The no of school going more mature age decline due to the economic importance of

the children at home. Very few people have pursued higher education. Many people (specially girls) have had to leave school without completing a certain level. The Tharus of the study area are not very much conscious about education. Poverty is the main reason for the backwardness of the Tharus in educational field due to poor economic condition . Many children were found not to be attending the school despite their wish and desire. They go to search for work here and their, foreign country . So mostly they leave their study after nine class.

4.4. Heath Service

In Maghai village, there is no any health center. So some years ago, all the sick people go to the witch doctor and Guruwas for the treatment of their disease, if the illness do not recover then they go to the health center. But now they go to the Mahendra hospital which is situated in Ghorahi Municipality 4 Km. far from the village. There is serious health problem due to lack of skill manpower and equipment. If the illness do not recover their , people go to Nepalgunj, Kathmantu, Lakhanau India and other place .

4.5. Road and Transportation

In the centre of Maghai village, a wide graveled road runs north-south dividing the whole village into two halves and other road join Dharapani to Ghorahi and Dharna to Ghorahi which are the segment of Tulsipur-Lamahi road. There is no any facilities because this village is only certain distance far from Ghorahi Market. The people of this village use Dharapani-Ghorahi and Dharana-Gulariya road to go market, school. Some people go to market on foot, some bicycle ,some use motor cycle . The economic condition is going to improve day by day cause of road.

They use these road to sale their production like vegetables, corn etc. So we can say road plays to increase their economic condition in this village.

4.6. Communication

Communication is a factor, which effected on festivals and their significant in Tharu society. Through the communication , persons know about the situation of one society to another societies . The development of communication has brought directly or indirectly cultural changes in the Maghai village .

Maghai village is situate in Ghorahi Municipality which is some distance far from Ghorahi. So there are facilities of communication. They use telephone, mobile, radio, television for communication . They use telephone and mobile to communicate their relatives who are far from them. They use radio, television to listen and see news and other activities. Before one year, they went to Ghorahi to communicate their relatives because at that time there were no any telephone or mobile. But now, in this village, there are 8 CDMA telephone, One land line telephone and every house have 2 or 3 mobiles . So we can say that this village has many facilities of communication.

CHAPTER-V

Festivals of Tharu and their significance

Tharus are very prosperous community from the viewpoint of culture. Like other communities of Nepal, Tharu people also celebrate different festival their own type in a year and invite their relatives. Tharu festivals have its own importance in society. Some of the important festivals which are celebrated in the study area are given briefly.

5.1. Maghi

Maghi is the most important and biggest festival of Tharu. This festival falls in first on Magh month, which is called “new year” of the Tharus. Yet there is no any religious myth or legend associated with day. For Tharu it is a time of eating, drinking and celebration and of doing no work at all. Even personal servants and agricultural employers of Tharu get holiday during these festivals. All the annual agreement between land owners and tenants or masters and servants end at this day and must be renewed during or after the festival, if both sides wish to do so.

Some days before the festival, in the month of paush, some jar is specially prepared from *Andhi* rice. But now *Andhi* rice not available in the study area. At the same time some common jar is also prepared. Before 3 or four days, some rice is soaked in water and pounded in the *dheki*. From this pounded rice flour *dhekri* cakes are made and steamed in the last night of push . But now rice is pounded in the rice meal. Before three days, they dig tarul, 2 days before, they go to catch fish for the festival in *Bheura* or *khola* which is made before one month. They dry these fish and keep it for the main day of Maghi. Before one day, they kill

pigs for meat. They gather all meat at the Mahatons house and they share meat. At the same evening, they make dhikri cakes and steamed, for the next day . All the same night, they gather in the Mahatons (village chief)house and they sit around the fire and sing *Dhumru* (one kind of song), play madal, and they dance hole night .

On first of Maghi , when the cock crows, all male persons go to take a bath in stream or a well. Some people go to pilgrimage sites in the vicinity. When they are taking bath, in first deep, they throw coin in water. After taking bath, they put on tika which is white but now they use red. It is started with elderst person. He put on tika himself and other person take tika with elderst person. Couples who have no children or whose children are dead, go on pilgrimage to the ask for the born of children from the deites *Baraha, Narayan* and *Basudeo*.

In every house, when all people come back from their bath, all the males of the house go to the deity room. One, two or three pots drop (Nisrawau kaharna) some cereals and salt in a separate pot, to be donated to the sister / sisters of the men of each generation. Each donator has to drop five *unjuri* full of rice, five single hand full of whole grain black grams and some amount of salt as well as some money. These collected materials are equally delivered in second day of magh to the sister or elder sisters.

After this activities , small person respect elder persons and elder person give them asirbad. All persons in the family gather in one place and they eat many kinds of food which they made. They discuss their homes problem when they are eating . They make plan which will they do

in a year. Like , make home or not , do marry or not, whose field is used? etc, and they go from one house to another. They respect elder person and they drink more jarn and eat many kinds of food. They continue this activities, when the all house finished, the activities also stop. These feasts last usually for about a week.

During the mid day of the main day of the festivals, all the house hold head gather at the Mahaton's house. Carrying one *golra* (full of janr, which they drink there. And they started to dance that time. They dance one house to another house with making different groups. Next day, they gather again at the same place with the same amount of jarn. This jarn is consumed during a *khel* (village discussion), in which the Mahaton asks each individual *Gardhuriya* (head of the house) about his problems: whether he has any intention of building a new house or renovating an old one, or whether some one in house, is going to married etc. These questions are asked to let Mahaton know what sort of community help at what time will be needed to the concerned *Gardhuriya*, so that he may prepare or fix a rough schedule for such events.

They discuss the problems of village too. And they make annual plan of village. At this discussion, they chose a new Mahaton. How many members works in community works? They chose black smith, Chaukidar, Guruwa, Kesauka, etc. Anyway in this Maghi dewani (discussion in Maghi), they discuss out the problems of community household and problems of village. And they make annual plan to solve them.

At the same day, they go to their young and elder sister's home to delivered nisrau (rice, salt and black grams and money). Sisters are waiting there brother . When brother reach her house , she is very happy and she gives delicious food and jar her brother. At the evening , brother come back his house.

During the maghi week , there are several male and female groups of mature Tharu dancers in special colorful and charming dresses. They sing, dance and beg for money from one house to another. After some days, they eat nachanauri. They use some money to by meat for nachanauri. Some money they use to solve the village problem. Like, cannel making , tap making, road making etc.

Maghi festival has its own significant. One the day of Maghi festival , all the Tharus gather at the house of the Mahaton and discuss their early work. They discuss their own livelihood. Because some Tharu of the study area are landless peasants. They work as share croppers or wage laboures. They also discuss whether they will continue to work for their farmer master or not. On that day also discuss the behaviour their land lords should do to them due to their poor economic condition they have to sell their labour work at the same wages or not. So this festival has socio-economic importance.

At the same time Mahaton asks each individual gardhurrya about his problems: whether he has any intention of building a new house or renovating an old one, or whether some one in his house, is going to get married. These questions or asked to let the Mahaton know what sort of community help at what time will be needed to the concerned gardhurrya. So that he may prepare or fix a rough schedule for such events. Like waise they select new Mahaton, black smith, chaukidar etc. Any way in

the Maghi festival, all the house hold head gather at the house of the Mahaton and discuss their early work which help to run Tharu society.

This festival helps to preserve their traditional culture because on this day they worship their ancestral deities and at the same time they also respect their old aged people . Like waise they dance wearing traditional dress , ornament which is their traditional culture.

In this festival , they gather at the house of the Mahaton or in a place and entertain themselves by eating, drinking and dancing. As per rule they must gather at the house of Mahaton which regulates the behaviour of the Tharu people and helps to maintain social order in the community level. At the same time get together of Tharu people helps to bring a sense of 'we' feeling and social integration.

5.2 Dhuraheri or hori (Holi)

In hindu religion, it is celebrated on the full moon day of falgun. The holi festival has vision that king Hiranyakashyap was a cruel ruler and he did not believe the existence of god but his son Pralhad was firm devolve of god so he wanted to kill his son Pralhad. One day he put his son Pralhad in the lap of his sister Holika and asked to burn in the fire. The result was different, Holika, the died but Pralhad remained alive. So the name of Holika , the festival is called Holy.

Tharu people of the study area celebrate this festival differently. It is influenced by Hindu festival of Holi. They perform this festival on the same day or before or after. Kitchen fire in each house is put out before the Holi festival. Next morning, some boys of the village go to a near by khola shore to bring a branch of *semra* tree. Some of them take drums

with them while others take cow bell. When returning with the *semra* tree , they play drums and jangle the cow bell . Then plant the semra tree at a short distance from the *deuthannwa*.

Meanwhile, *Gardhuriyas* gather near the *deuthannwa*. They clean *deuthannwa* and make holy fire by rubbing two dry pieces *gainyari* and *fosra* wood. This fire must not be blown on with the mouth. Some of the *Gardhurrias* cook roties. A few women from Mahanton's family also help them in cooking. A huge amount of roties are prepared and these roties are shared each houses full of a dish. But now they donot share these roties in the study area. When they finished to cook roties, they keep these roties in a *chhitni* (a small basket made of bamboo) and hung a tree's branch . They keep new fire under the ground . They share that fire in the evening.

In the evening after sunset, the Mahaton takes a bath, bring fresh water in a *lota* and goes to the *deuthannwa* (a house where village deities kept). A few *gardhurrias* go behind him carrying cow's milk, holy liquor and some of the roties to be offered to the village level deities by the Mahaton. Mahanton plasters the space below the wooden images in *deuthannwa* where he puts a bigger lamp in the middle and then several leaf lamps beside it . He applies spots of vermilion powder over the wooden figures, winds cotton thread three or five times all wooden images of gods. Then he offers milk and liquor. At last one leaf plate full of roties is offered to each figure of deity in the *deuthannwa*.

After the offering to the deities, Mahaton goes to the *semra* site, makes three circumambulations round it and puts three or five times

twists of cotton thread round it. Then he applies vermilion powder over it, offers liquor and roties are hung over the branches. He puts some dry straw over the semra. A roll of straw is made. This roll of straw lighted and Mahaton takes three or five time circumambulations around the semra with the lighted *semra*. Then he lights that semra. Finally he cuts that semra with a cutter. Boys snatch that roties, which is hung above the semra and under the semra tree. Then they share these roties and eat. After that they throw clay lumps over the tree. Then boys gather in a place with a drum and cow bell. A boy ties cow bell on the mid part of body and boy also ties a drum on the mid part of the body. Who ties cow bell, he walks ahead of group. Then they play drum and jangle the cow bell and they round the village at their waist and occasionally sing, which is generally contains teasing and jokes about the girls. Like, *ek tepri ki dui tepri, hau bathaniyak dudh akri, budhyo bardha garima, bathaniya choda barima*

Next day, in the study area boys gather and they collect rice , salt, oil, jar and money from each house and they go to picnic. In this way Tharu people celebrate hori or dhurari.

Culturally speaking about the cultural importance of dhureri festival, we can say that this festival helps to preserve Tharu traditional culture. Because on this day they gather as the house of the Mahaton's and make holy fire by rubbing two dry pieces gainyari and fosra wood. This fire must not be blown with mouth. They prepare roties and worship the ancestral village deities in the deuthannwa. They plant branch of semra tree at a short distance from the deuthannwa and put some dry straw over it. At evening Mahaton worship and burn it. After that boys

play madal and cow bell and round the village with seasonal song, which is their traditional culture.

On this day, Gardhyrryas must gather at the Mahatons house and they prepare roties to offer their village deities and they share these roties all houses. After worshipping at deuthannwa, they eat roties and drink liquor togetherly which regulates the behaviour of the Tharu people and helps to maintain social order in the community level. At the same time get together of Tharu people helps to bring a sense of 'we' feeling and social integration.

During the time of holi festival, the young boys gather in the evening time. They round village with singing holy song which is vulgar words. It has s religious belief. When they use vulgar word, witch go away from their village. Next day again they gather and collect rice , vegetable, jar and money to picnic. Which activities united those boys . So we can say that holy festival also has its own significances.

5.3 Gharrai (Thatching houses)

Gharrai is a special type of ceremony belongs to only Tharus. In the morning time a person of each house gather and they thatch their house commonly. They do this activities regularly when they do not finish thatching all the house of the village. After thatching all houses of village, they prepare alcohol. One day they gather and discuss about meat and date. And they celebrate this festival in a special day. They cut meat and enjoy with jarn, alcohol, dancing and singing. But now they do not celebrate this festival in this time because they do not thatch their house with straw. They use CGI sheet to roofing.

Gharri festival has its own importance. This festival celebrated after thatching the houses of villagers. When they are going to thatch house, one member from each house gather for thatching house. They thatch houses together and they share their feeling . Which bring feeling of 'We' and integrate the society.

When they are going to celebrate this festival, they cut pigs ,goat. They call their relatives and celebrate it . So this festival ties strongly with their relatives. It has economically significant also because when they thatch their house together, they save their property.

5.4 Gurrai

Gurrai is a special festival of only Tharus. They celebrate two types of Gurrai . One is called Harrya Gurrai which is celebrate after planting paddy on the month of shrawan or bhadra month generally end of the monsoon . Other is Duriya Gurrai which is celebrate before planting paddy on the month of Jestha or Ashadh month when generally begins monsoon. In the both types of Gurrai, they offer many chickens, pigs etc.

5.4.1 Duriya Gurrai

This 'Poojah' is performed in the end of Jestha or Ashadh month when generally begins monsoon. This poojah is performed by *Deshbandhya Guruwa*. When they are going to perform this festival, Mahaton and Deshbandhya Guruwa do not eat any things this day. In the morning , all the Gardhuriya gather at Mahaton's house and divide the work like to collect chicken, to collect jarn and vegetables. Some Gardhuriyas also collect jarn and vegetable from each houses. Some

gardhuriyas go to bring pig and some to call Deshbandhua Guruwa's house. And some Gardhuriyas prepare the poojah tings.

At evening , all Gardhuriyas gather in the Mahanton's house and go together at deuthnwa. Deshbandhya Guruwas sacrifice chickens and pigs their village deities. All chickens and pigs meat share each other. This festival indicates that there will be no enough time for work so they closed all types of drum beating till they perform Dhuriya Gurrai.

5.4.2 Harrya Gurrai

Harrya Gurrai is performed in the end of Shrawan or Bhadra month generally end of the monsoon. This 'poojah' is performed by Deshbandya Guruwa and wish for the whole years as they have gone several kind of disease and poisonous insects during their farming period, with the help of village Guruwa with flowers and necessary items. When they performing this festival all Gardhuriya gather in Mahaton's house and they divide the work to collect chicken, jar, vegetables from each house. Some *Gardhuriya* prepare necessary things. In the evening '*Deshbandhya Guruwa*' and other 'Gharguruwas'(a family prist) of the village perform "*Dhupabati*" in the Mahaton house and *Dieuthnwa*. They also sacrifice chickens and pigs and they become free from all sorts of miseris and then beat drums and dance by singing songs. From this day they are free to beat drums as to the customs. Next morning, Mahaton and a boy round village with '*Khirbhan*'(mix of milk and water) and they offer this Khirbhan in irrigation canal. In this way they perform this festival.

Gurrai is special festival of only Tharus. They celebrate this festival two times. One in end of Jeatha or Ashadh month other in Shrawan or Bhadra month.

In this festival, all Gardhuriya of village gather in Mahaton's house and they divide the work like to collect chicken, janr, baby pigs etc. They obey their work which help to continue the society.

Performing Dhuriya Gurrai, Deshbandhya Guruwa sacrifice chickens and pigs in Dieuthanwa and he closed the dancing instrumental. It has symbolic meaning when they are performing Dhuriya Gurrai, the time is going to begain rainy season. If they take enjoy with dancing, their rainy work effected by it. So the they perform this festival . And they donot play dancing instrumental in this time . They hard work at field. It helps to improve the economic condition of them . So we can say every festival has its own types of rules and regulations. All the Tharus people must obey them to bring social integration and perserve Tharu traditional culture.

They celebrate Harriya Gurrai in the end of Shrawan or Bhadra month . It has also symbolic meaning . When they celebrate this festival, it means they are free to play dancing and singing instrumental. And safety from several kinds of diseases and poisonous insects in whole years. In this way, we can say that festival preserve the traditional culture.

5.5 Saunya Sankranti

In the study area they celebrate Saunya Sankranti . This festival is celebrated in the first of Srawan. During this festival they do not perform any ' Poojah'. On this day they gather one place and cut pigs, goats and share the meat. They prepare alcohol, janrs, meat and various kinds of food items and eat. On this day donot go to the field for farming and they take rest and enjoy.

This is not their own festival. When they interact with other caste , they start to celebrate this festival. This festival celebrate in the first of Srawan which lies the rainy season. They are tired doing field work. In this day, each house head gather and they cut pigs, goat. They share meat . Which brings feeling of ‘we’ and social integration. They do not do farm work in this day. They celebrate with drinking jarn, wine. So this festival remove their tiredness. So we can say that this festival fulfill the need of Tharus. So it is important.

5.6 Astimki (Janmasthanami)

Tharus of the study area celebrate the festival of Astimki which is the day of lord Krishna’s birth and falls on the Bhadra (dark half period) month. Mostly Tharu girls and young women participate in this festival. All fast for the whole day with out taking even water or liquor. But small girls and weak women may take some fruit or milk products but not any cereal.

Before the day, they go to catch fish for dar. They cook dar at evening and eat before the cock crow. In the morning, a man paints over the surface of the big earthen grain container (*dehri*) standing at the southern limit of the *bahari* at the house of Mahaton. When the paint dry, an expert man draws and paints the figure of Krishna, *Barmundeya* (Rawan), *lawaleya* (boat man), fish, sun, moon, men, women etc. But he should bath and fast to participate in this act. Other hand, on this day , early in the morning, girls and women clean their house and take bath and wear clean cloths.

In the evening at about seven p.m, the crowd of fasting girls and women gather at the Mahatons house. Every girls and women comes with

a lighted oil lamp(diya) placed over the some rice on a plate, along with guava, banana, citrus fruit. They go to *dihurar* (a room to place the god) and some old womens start to song. They come *bahari* (a section of the house where all the person sit and discuss their feeling) with singing of Mahabharat. Then first rice is placed on the mates; then oil lamps put over it and they keep fruits and flowers of *Ghunyasara* around the lamp by the worshipping girls. Then the oldest woman put tika marks of each male or female, deity's image with the exception of the Bharmundya. Firstly they tika mark *Khana* (Krishna) . Which is already made by a expert man in the morning. Finally the girls sprinkle water over the *Khana* in parchana manner. All women and girls do this act at their turn.

After worshipping, girls and women go to their home in the *konti* (sleeping room) and plastered with cow dung. They keep fire, fruit, butter, cucumber, banana. They separate some guava, cucumber, banana and butter, some holy water in a lota. Then all fasting women girls and women sit around these things . An oldest woman put some butter and pieces of fruit over the fire and sprinkle water around the fire then immediately all women and girls do this act their turn. After this they separate some pieces of edible items from their plate as *agrasan* and keep it for their brothers. Then they start to eat fruits and curd.

After these act, women and girls again gather at the Mahaton's house where they sing about the birth of *Kahana*. They pass whole night in singing and putting oil in their lamp.

When the cock crow, they go to their house and they prepare food and vegetable. In the morning they gather Mahaton's house and they

again tika marks of each male or female, deity's image with the exception of the *Barmundya*. Finally the girls sprinkle water around these figure in their turn. They put flower of *Ghunesra* (one kinds of flower), pieces of citrus and oil lamp over a leaf dish. Then they go to stream or kula with dish and they throw this dish in kula. They take bath and come back home .They go to *konti* and they again plastered with cow dung. Then they keep a piece of fire, some rice, vegetable in a leaf dish . Butter of cow keeps in a leaf small dish and a lota of water keeps in plastered place. They sit around the fire. In their turn they put all things over the fire and sprinkle water around the fire. Then they separate some rice, vegetable for their brothers and eat. In the study area , this day they go to see lakhe in Ghorahi bazaar.

Astimki is a festival of Tharu which is the day of Lard Krishna birth and falls in the shrawan bhadra . This festival is celebrated by only ladies after a long fasting. This festival has it's own importance. When they are going to celebrate this festival they gather at the Mahaton's house. On the one hand they worship Kahana and they application Kahana to get good life partner like you. Which is their religious work. In this season, they are busy in their field work. When they gather at Mahaton's house, they share their feeling each other. So this festival brings feeling of 'we' and social integration in the society. On the other hand the worship is started with elder woman because they respect elder woman and they worship their turn. So we can say that this festival bring the rule and regulation in community which keeps equilibrium in society.

After worshipping , girls and woman go to their konti of house and some place plastered with cow dung. They keep fire , fruits, butter,

cucumber, banana and butter holi water in a lota and they offer these things over the fire. Before eating, they separate some pieces of edible items their plate as agrason and keep it for their brothers. It ties strongly sister and brother in kinship.

Tharu is the labouras people . So they feel very weak and they have many tension in that season cause of planting rice . So this festival maintain their tension and give them recreation.

5.7 Hardwha

This festival have not any religious myth and story. When the Tharu people finish to plant paddy in their fields, they observe this festival one day in the month of sharawan or bhadra.

After finishing to plant paddy, they prepare special liquor and jarn. Before some days of this festival, Mahaton calls a member of each houses from the village. They gather the Mahaton's house and discuss about the day and *jita* (meat for festival). Tharu people think somar and budh good day . So they choose these day. They discuss about jita also. They prepare a list about the meat. They eat much meat in this festival, they go to their relatives house to give invitation about the hardwha.

In this festival day, they gather at the house who is given meat(pig, goat)in the morning. And they cut meat. When they finish to cut meat, they gather all meat a place and share the meat. The Tharu people think that plantation of rice in the field is very difficult work because it takes at least Asadh and Swawan and they feel very weak in this season. So the people of study area observe this festival for relaxing themselves. On this

festival they do not work in their fields whole day . At evening , when their relatives come their house, they entertain themselves by eating , drinking , singing and dancing. They call that person who helped them in plantation of paddy.

So that it can be said, they celebrate this festival for entertainment in the study area.

Hardwa is the festival of Tharu which is celebrated after finishing to plant paddy. It has it's own importance in society. When they transplanting, they have to fulfill series of difficult operations. Their hands and feet are soared with wounds due to rotten and dirty water and muds. Some times they have feet suffering from serious wounds difficult to go inside muddy soil and plant. And they feel very weak in this season. So they celebrate this festival to avoid their weak feeling, tension and to take entertainment.

When they are going to celebrate this festival, Mahaton calls a person from each house. When they gather at Mahaton's house, they discuss about day meat and other village problem and they also discuss their harvesting activities and do that work as already decided by them. Which activities brings social integration and social order in society.

In this festival , they invite their relatives, neighbor and those persons who helps them to planting paddy. They entertain by eating, drinking, singing and dancing with their relatives, neighbors etc. They share their feeling with them, which brings feeling of ' we' with their relatives, neighbor and their relation ties strongly with them. So we can say that this festival bring social integration in community. Other Tharu

festivals are so much expensive by the cause of feasts. They give feast to the many peoples who are not invited too. So we can say that this festival has it's own importance in society

5.8 Atwari

Atwari is another important festival of Tharus, which is celebrated by only Tharu community to gain more efforts. In Tharu language, 'Atwar' means Sunday. So the names of this festival is also given as Atwari. This festival falls on the first Sunday of the bright fortnight of Bhadra. It is a fasting festival observed by males only. This festival in the study area is observed by fasting. Most of the Tharu males take part in this festival and some female also take part in this festival in the study area. According to some respondents, ties is their traditional behaviour. The men, who is physically strong observe this festival.

Before the day, they go to catch fish for dar. They cook dar at evening . At midnight before cock crow, they take a heavy meal(dar) consisting of rice, fish and other kinds of food. But now all days they take meat also. After taking dar, they are allowed to take any things. Like water , salt, food. In the study area at 9 or 10 o'clock, they take bath and change clothes and head of he house hold gather at Mahaton's house in the bahari where is plastered with cow dung. For holy fire, they put phosra and gainyari wood over the guitha. They made holy fire by rubbing these wood . Then they go to their house with holy fire and start to cock roties.

Firstly, one of the older men who is fasting takes small bits of this flour in his hands, presses it flat and puts it in boiling oil for deep frying.

Which is cooked only one sided to offer the fire god (*bhewa*). Then they cook other roties. In the study area, male and female cook roties. When the cakes have been cooked , they go to take bath again at 3 or 3:30 p.m. A senior person bring a lota water from bathing place. He plaster some portion of bahari section with cow dung. Then he put fire wood, holy water, some curd in a small leaf dish, roti (which is already cooked at first) and fruits(banana, guava, cucumber) a little cow butter in the plastered place. Then he put a small piece of this roti, fruits, butter and offers it to the holy fire. After that he sprinkles holy water over the fire three times. Other men also do like wise one after another who are fasting. Then they divide equally cakes, curd, fruits among all fasting men in different dishes which is given their sister next day and they start to eat.

Next day, in the morning, women and fasting men prepare meal. When they finished to prepare meal, fasting men go to take bath again and senior person brings a lota holy water. Some portion of the konti is plastered with cow dung. In the plastered place, they keep fire wood, holy water , butter of cow, took and vegetable in a dish. A senior person start to offer food, vegetable had been cooked in the morning. Then the sprinkles holy water over the fire three times. Other fasting men do like wise one after another. They distribute food ,vegetable among all fasting men in different dishes. Then they separate some food, vegetable for their young and elder sisters in their portions and they start to eat. After doing *pharahar* (morning activities), they go to their sister's house to distribute *agrasan* (rotis, food, vegetables, prepare things). In this way , they celebrate atwari festival in the study area.

Attwari festival is not celebrated in other community except Tharu community. Which is celebrated to gain more efforts. It is a fasting festival observed by males only . At mid night before cock crow, they take a heavy meal [dar]. After taking dar, they are allowed to take any things. They made holy fire by rubbing gainyari wood and prepare roties. At evening, after taking bath, they offer roti, fruits, butter in holy fire and eat. On Monday they prepare many kinds of delicious foods and vegetables. Those who were performing poojah take bath and eat all sorts of food. After take all sorts of food and send to their sisters and elder sister. Which is their traditional cultural behavior. So we can say that festival preserve the traditional culture of the community.

Attwari festival observed by only male. During this festival, they finish their farm work doing long time. So they entertained themselves by eating and drinking. When they are going to performed this festival, all male persons gather their house and they interact with each other and discuss their family affairs and if there is any problem, they solve it by group discussion.

Performing this festival, male persons separate some portion of meal for their sister or elder sister. On Monday morning, doing pharahar, they go to their sisters house to distribute agrasan. When they reach their sister's house, sister respect them and they share their feeling each other . Which is necessary to run society and it brings social integration in society.

5.9 Dasya (Dashain)

Dasain is Hindu festival. This is also observed by the Tharu

community of Nepal. This is other important festival of Tharu. But it is influenced by Hindu festival. Before one month of the dasya, on the day of full moon light dasya starts and all the females of Tharus dance by making two semi circular line and males beat drum called '*mandra*' and help by singing '*sakhiya*' song . On the first day, they dance taking leaf of pumpkin. Second day, they dance taking lahara. After second day, they dance taking *chauri* (one kinds of paper). In this dance, they song life history of lord Krishna. During the dasya, they clean their house. They plaster their house with cow dung then they plaster again with *dhaura mati* (white soil) out side the house.

On the first day of Dasya, a elder person goes to take bath and he brings a lota of water early in the morning. He puts maize seedings in a basket which is kept in duharar southern dark corner place which is used as *jiura* (jamara). Maize seeds for *jiura* must be shown in the morning by either male or female member of the family before eats. At the sixth day , they go to catch fish and they dry these fish for given *pittar* (death anniversary) in ninth day . on the seventh day, they collect the pots for cook dhikri cakes. They wash painas topi (one kinds of pot which is use to dhikri cake) , baskets and mats. Then these things are dried. Rice is soaked in water over night. They prepare all things in this day. At evening, they cook dar for *pujarwa* (who worship the god) and *pujarnya* (who prepare dhikri and the worshipping things). They eat dar before cock crow.

On the eight day, one of the women of the family, who will be cooking these *dhikris*, has batted herself in the morning. On this day she fasts until all the dhikri cakes cooked and offered to the deities in a ritual.

The Gardhuriya of the house, who will perform this ritual also fasts. During their fast, they are allowed to take as much liquor as they like but not food or water. At 2 or 3 o'clock *pujarwa* offer cow milk their gods and Goddess in *dihurar*. Then he goes to Mahaton's house with a *karai* (an earthen pot used to serve wine) liquor. All the Gardhuriyas gather in the Mahaton's house and they drink liquor, fruits and meat which provided by Mahaton. But *pujanya* does not eat any things. The pre soaked rice is pounded in the *dheki* in the morning same day. But now all days they do not pounded in the *dheki*. They go to flower meal for flower. At the evening, *pujanya* prepare the *dhikri* and steam in the *painas topi*. At dark, when she steamed *dhikri*, the Gardhuriya of the house goes for a bath and brings one *lota* of fresh water. Then he goes to the *dihurar* taking *jura*, a few *bebri* (a kind of scented plant), some vermilion and one *karai* liquor. Worship starts with the application of vermilion spot to all deities and religious objects. Then *jura*, *bebri*, *dhikri*, liquor are offered their all deities. After that, a few drops of water are sprinkled.

In the same evening, the worshipper makes a *bhedwa* (sheep) from a *Kubinwo* by in-searting wooden sticks in it. Then it is left standing on its feet in front of their deities. A *lota* keeps with fresh water and covered with *sal* leaves, and put it below this animal. A leaf cup put over the *sal* leaf with several cereals and a lit oil lamp put on the top. The lamp is kept burning over the whole night.

In the morning at 3 or 4 am, the worshipper cuts the *bhedwa* on the ninth day. The front pieces is offered over the deities along with liquor. And the back piece is kept over the roof of main door for offering to the ancestors. In the same day, women prepares a special meal for the *pittar*.

Rice and five or seven other items of vegetables are cooked for the offering like whole grains of black gram, mustard, pawai, beans and fish to be offered. When meal is prepared, the worshipper goes to take bath and brings some fresh water in a lota and some broom. Mean while, the part of floor in the deity room below the southern parts of the room is plastered with cow dung. Two *dhurras* (round sape of flour) are made in a row over the plastered space. The worshipper sits facing south, towards the plastered area with two of the *dhurra* designs on his right and one his left. The woman brings two leaf plates containing all five special items of vegetables with rice. Then worshipper serves the first dish with his left hand and other dish served by his right hand. Using his left hand, he puts the first dish over the eastern *dhurra* and using right hand, he puts the second dish over the western *dhurra*. Then the worshipper applies vermilion tika offers the fresh water and milk of cow. Some *jiura* and *bebri* are also offered to their ancestors. This act is called pittar dena.

After the offering their ancestors , the worshipper gives the right dish meal to children for eat. This food is eaten by only male child. Other person cannot be eaten. After eating they must wash their hands and mouth well. Gardhuriya's wife clean this place and she collect all dishes with left hand . Then she goes to throw these things away in a stream.

After the offerings to the ancestors, the worshipper starts by sacrifices to different deities. 3or 5 cocks are sacrificed. Then the deities must be offered with holy water.

In the same day at 3 or 4 p.m., Gardhuriyas or others who represent them, go to the Mahaton house to get tika, carrying *jiura*, *bebri*, one *karai*

of liquor and seasonal vegetable. Other hand Gardhuriyas wife or others who represent them also go to the Mahaton house to get tika carrying with same things. The Mahaton or senior people provide 'tika' to juniors males or females person on the forehead. They put on white tika with seedlings of maize, bebari leaf but now they use red color. When they taking tika, they song of *badki mar* (Mahabharat) . some men play madal. For this occasion every house has drinks.

A group of girls dance during the whole dasya. Mostly the bachelors and single girls participate in it. The girls from two semi circular lines facing each other and males are played the madal in the middle part of two circular lines. Girls dance with maijira (a cymbals) with their hands. This dance is called sakhiya nach. In this dance, they song the life history of lard Krishna. This dance starts from Astamki and end one or two weeks after days . In this way, Tharu celebrate the Dasya in the study area.

It has it's own socio-cultural importance in society. In this festival, all family get-to-gether and take tika from the head of their respected relatives, which they think as compulsory obligation. This helps to regulates the behaviour of individual people and help to maintain social order and harmony as the community level and also help to bring social integration.

During the eight day of Dasya festival, they prepare dhikri cakes. At dark Gardhurrya of the house goes for bath and bring one lota of fresh water. Then he offers their ancestral deities with jura, bebri, dhikri, liquor and sprinkled with water. In the same evening, the worshipper makes a

bhedwa[sheep] from a kohara . At the ninth day morning at 3 or 4 am, the worshipper cut the bhedwa and front piece offer over the deities along with liquor. Women prepares a special meal for the pittar. In the morning, the worshipper offer this special meal their ancestral deities and their ancestor with jura, bebri, milk and water, which helps to preserve their traditional culture. So it has religious significances.

On the ninth day, all Gardhuriya's gather at the house of Mahaton's carrying with jiura, bebri , one karai of liquor and seasonal vegetable. And Mahaton or senior person provide 'Tika' to juniors males or females person on the forehead which is compulsory. This helps to regulates the behaviour and help to maintain social order and harmony as the community level and also help to bring social integration.

During the time of Dasya festival the girls dance making two semi-circular line and males beat mandra at the Mahatons house. They dance continue from Astimki to after one or two week of Dasya. This dancing activities also help them to understand each other, which is most necessary for community life. When they gather at dancing place, they share their feeling and they discuss their problems. Some time boys and girls can get marry too. So what we can say that Dasya festival also has socio-cultural significances.

5.10 Auli Lena (First harvesting of new crops)

This ceremony is purely Tharu custom and it starts after ripening of paddy before harvesting the paddy. During this festival 'Ghardhuriya' (house head) takes bath and remain in fasting and take a sickle and without speaking with anybody and carry a bundle of paddy with stacks

and put it in the middle of the main courtyard of the house. The female takes a glass of water with burning incense and take that bundle of paddy and keep it in *Dheurar* (deity room) and worship them. Then they keep it in the main pole of house and tie it with rope. After performing this ceremony, they start to cut paddy. This is the main rituals of the Tharus before harvesting a new paddy crop.

During the Auli lena festival. 'Ghardhuriya ' takes bath and remain in fasting and take a sickle and without speaking with any body and carry a bundle of paddy and put it in the middle of the main courtyard of the house. The female takes a glass of water with burning incense and take that bundle of paddy and keep it in Dheurar and worship them. Then they keep it in the main pole of house and tie with rope. Which is their traditional culture. There fore festival preserve their traditional culture.

5.11 Auli Utarna (Last harvesting of paddy)

After the harvesting of the paddy they leave some paddy in the north east corner for final ceremony. Performing this ceremony, they carry a small bamboo, flower, one '*karai*' (a small pot which is made from mud) alcohol , in the field where they leaves some paddy. Gardhuriya offer these things and he cuts all paddy without breadth . He offer these paddy too over the bamboo because they give the thanks their deities for more rice. And they come house with singing and dancing. They cut meat and they give feast them who help them to cut paddy. They take enjoy with janr, alcohol with dancing and singing.

In this festival , Gardhuriya offer wine, flower, and cut paddy which they leave in the north east corner. When the Gardhurrya offering wine, flower and paddy, he says their deities “you have gaved more

paddy in this year and you will give more paddy next year also. After finishing this ceremony, they come home with dancing and singing. And they cut chicken and celebrate it. This festival removes their tiredness and gives them recreation. So festivals fulfill their needs.

5.12 Pendya

Pendya is a Tharu's festival which is celebrated after thrashing the paddy by the help of bullocks and male buffaloes. Panddya perform to bring sai. Which is done threshing place.

When they are finishing thresh, they keep some paddy for this day. If other villagers do not finish to thresh, they help them and at last they keep some paddy for last day. At the last day, all the male villagers go to threshing place with *jatowar* (the main rope used to tie many cattle for threshing), *katyar* (a kind of mop made of branch of tree, broom), *akhril* (a wooden stick to shake straw), animal and start to thresh, which is kept for last day when they finished to thresh, women go their with *supa* (a winnowing tray), broom for winnow.

After that all villagers Gardhurryas and Gardhurnya gather in the threshing place with jarn, liquor, pig and chicken. They gather *jatawar*, *akhril*, *katyar*, *supa*, broom. Then they sacrifice pig and chicken for their deities. Then they offer liquor. After this they cook pigs and chicken head and all villagers eat with offering liquor, jarn and they start to dance. They come their house with dancing. They think that they are bringing jakhinya their house. This jakhinya bring sa(h) and their paddy become more. When they reach house, they drink more and enjoy.

But now, they do not do this act in the study area. Now all days when they finished threshing paddy , the Mahanton call all gardhuriya. They gather at Mahaton's house .They discuss about meat, date. They prepare a list for meat and they fixed a day for pendya.

They invite their relatives for pandya before one day. They also invite that villagers who help them threshing. They gather a place and cut pigs, goats in the fix day . They share this meat and prepare it . In the evening, when their relative come, they start to celebrate this festival and take enjoy. They celebrate this festival every year after threshing and winnowing ceremonies in the study area.

Pandya is a special festival of Tharu who has its own importance. Pandya is a festival of Tharu which is celebrated after threshing the paddy . They perform this festival on the threshing place. They sacrifice some chicken and pigs offering their deities for much rice.

During this festival , on the threshing last day, all villagers gather on the threshing place and thrash all the paddy. Women winnow these threshing rice. After that all villagers gather on threshing place with chicken, pigs, liquor, and jar and they sacrifice chicken and pigs to their village deities. Then all villagers eat these meat with offering liquor , jar. They start to dance and go to their home with dancing. They think that they are bringing Jakhinya in their house. They take enjoy with dancing. So we can say that festival maintain their tension and society integrated cause of festival.

But now, when they finished threshing paddy, the Mahaton call all Gardhuriyas and they gather and discuss about meat, date. This activities brings rules and regulation in society.

In this festival, they invite their relatives, neighbor and those person who helps them to threshing paddy. And celebrate it with them by eating , drinking . Which brings feeling of 'we' like way Hardwha. So we can say that this festival also bring social integration in society.

CHAPTER- VI

Summary, Findings and Conclusion

6.1 Summary

Various caste , tribes and ethnic groups are live in Nepal. They have their own unique culture , social organization, myths, legends and traditions. Among these groups Tharus are the fourth largest group of Nepal who live in 24 districts of Terai and inner Terai from the eastern of Nepal comprising Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Saptari, through Bara, Parsa, Chitwan in the center, Rupendehi, Kapilvastu in the west and Dang Deukhuri, Banke, Bardya, Kailali , Kanchanpur in the mid west and far west. In the past, they deforested and cleared the land and made it productive cultivable belt into farming.

There are the great controversy about the origin and ethnic-history of the Tharu. Different writers have different views . Some writers write, " Tharus were originated in an around Kapilvastu. Their main source of provenance is Kapilvastu. Many other writer have tried to trace them through a legend indication their Indian origin from the 'Thar' desert of Rajputna in north western India. When musalim rulers captured Rajputana and murdered the inhanitants and plundered their wealth and raped women, the princess and many others royal women attendants immigrated into the forest of Terai. But there in not any controversy that they settled during thousands years ago.

Every society changes during the lapse of time. Tharus are indigenous people in Nepal. They have their own culture. Festival is a

part of culture. Their traditional festivals are losing their originality causes of interaction with non Tharus, migration, education, communication facilities, development of transportation etc. Causes of change, new generation do not know about which is their traditional festival and their socio-cultural significances. Like wise the Tharus at the study area suffering from the same problem.

The major objective of this study was to analyze the Tharu festivals in relation to their socio-cultural significances and to present briefly about the festivals of Tharu. Maghai village of Ghorahi Municipality was selected for the study. In this village, there are 37 households and all households were selected for the study. All 37 households were interviewed, observation method was used to find out the method of worshipping, celebrating method and group discussion was used to check required information. Descriptive research design was followed in the study and due to limited time and limiting factors the study of all aspects of Dangaura Tharu was not accessible.

Maghai village is situated in southern part of Ghorahi Municipality where the village population is composed of 109(44.13) percent females and 138(55.87) percent males. Average household having the size of 6.65persons. There are 94.74 percent population of Tharu as well as Newar 2.83 percent and Brahmin 2.43 percent. The condition of education is not good because they are poor in economy. They go to Mahendra Hospital to treatment of their disease but some person go to Guruwas for treatment. They use Dharapani-Ghorahi and Dharna-Gulariya road to go market. And facilities of communication is good. They use telephone, mobile, radio, television for communication.

Tharu culture is very old and more prosperous. Their festivals are various types but due to the bad habits of usage of more alcohol, it pulled them slowly backward by socio-economically. Their main rituals are found mainly dour types. These are birth, chhaewar, marriage and death rituals. Tharu worship various types of deities and their deities are commonly called "Bhutwa". They believe in Guruwa, ghosts and witches.

Tharus are very prosperous community from the viewpoint of culture like other communities of Nepal. They celebrate different festival their own type in a year and invite their relatives . They worship various gods and goddesses and enjoy themselves eating, drinking, singing and dancing. These festivals have their own significance. They celebrate Maghi, Dhureri, Gharrai, Gurrai, Saunya Sankranti, Astimki, Hardwa, Atwari, Dasya, Auli Lena, Auli Utarna and Pendya. When they are celebrating these festival, all members of the family gather their house. They invite their relatives and enjoy with them. Every festival have their own significances. Like when they are celebrating Maghi, all member of the family gather and discuss about their problem. On Maghi festival, small persons respect elder person. Which brings feeling of 'we' and it brings social integration.

At last we can say that every festival has its own types of traditional rules and regulations. All the Tharu people must follow these to bring social integration and preserve Tharu traditional socio-cultural life. Hence, the festivals of the Tharus have socio-cultural importances.

6.2 Major findings

Tharus are indigenous people (community). They are most ancient simple, honest and backward community. Tharus are the most populated group of Nepal terai settled from east to the west. They have their own unique culture and festivals also. Festival is a process of rejoicing. It is important in human society and culture for several viewpoints. Festival is a part of human culture; hence, every culture has its own festival. In society, people get a lot of recreation from the celebration of festival. During the festival period people become happy and try to be free from anxieties, troubles, mental tensions and other general practical difficulties. During the short period of festival they want to be free from this troubled and busy world.

Tharus are very prosperous community from the view point of culture. So they celebrate different festivals in a year. Their most important festivals are Maghi, Dasya, Atwari, Astimki, Dhureri. Other festivals are like Gharrai, Gurrai, Saunya Sankranti, Hardwa, Aulilena, Auliutarna and Pandya.

Festivals help to bring social integration in Tharu society. During the time of feasts and festivals, Tharu people gather in a place and interact with each other and enjoy themselves by eating, drinking and dancing which also brings the idea of 'we' feeling or this get together may encourage the sense of communalism; hence they would be integrated.

Maghi is the most important or biggest festival of Tharu. They gather in the house of Mahaton and discuss about their yearly plan which

is economically significant of this festival. When they are celebrating the festival, they respect elder person and they go to their sister's house to distribute nisrau. Which brings feeling of 'we'. It is social significant of this festival. They dance together one house to another house which is cultural significant of this festival.

Dhureri (Hili) is other festival of Tharu. On the Dhureri festival, head of the house gather in the house of Mahanton and they divid the work to collect liquor, chicken, jarn. Which regulate the behaviour of the Tharu people and help to maintain social order in the community level which is social significant of this festival.

Gharrai is the festival which celebrate after roofing house. They thatch their house together and save their property which is economical significant of this fesival. When they are thatching together, they share their feeling. Which unite them. It is social significant of this festival.

Gurrai festival has also economical, social, cultural, religious significances. They celebrate this festival in the Duthanwa together. They gather and collect all the things and offer their village deities. Which is their religious activities and it brings social integration. This is the social significant of this festival. Gurrai festival celebrate before and after planting paddy. They close dancing instrument and they give full time in their field work which is economical significant of this festival.

Astimki festival celebrate by only ladies after a long fasting. When they are celebrating this festival, they gather at the Mahaton house. When they gather , they share their feeling. They respect elder person. So this

festival start with eldest lady. Which brings social integration in the society. So it can be said, this festival has social significant.

When they are celebrating Hardwha festival, they gather at the Mahaton's house and discuss about the meat and date. Which activities united them . They invite their relatives and neighbor who help them to planting and celebrate together. Which brings social integration in the society. It is social significant of this festival.

Attwari festival celebrate by only male member. When they are celebrating this festival, all member of the house gather and discuss about their problem. Which improve their economy. It is economical significant of this festival. They worship Bhim in this festival which is their religious work. They prepare different types of roties and distribute their sister's house. It brings feeling of 'we'. Which is social significant of this festival.

Dasya is one of the most important festival of Tharu. They worship their deities and ancestor with jura, bebri, milk and water. Which helps to preserve their traditional culture. So it has religious significant. Mahaton or senior person provide 'Tika' to juniors male or females person on the forehead which is compulsory. This helps to regulates behavior and help to maintain social order and also help to bring social integration. Which is social significant of this festival.

During the time of Dasya festival, girls and boys dance together. When they gather in the dancing place, they share their feeling each other. Which brings social integration. It is social and cultural significant of Dasya.

Pandya is the festival of Tharu which is celebrated after thrashing paddy. When they are performing this festival, all the male and female head of the houses gather at the thrashing place and thrash the paddy. When they thrashed paddy, they offer liquor, jarn, pigs, chickens. They also drink more liquor and jarn together. It brings social integration. Which is social significant of this festival. But now, they celebrate this festival differently. After some days, they discuss about the time and meat. They invite their relatives and celebrate with them. Which brings social integration in the society. So this festival has its own significant.

6.3 Conclusion

Nepal is the land of various caste, ethnic groups. Among the various ethnic groups of Nepal, the Tharus are one of the indigenous tribal groups of Terai. Like the other people of Nepal, Tharu people have their own types of culture. They celebrate different types of festival. Mainly, they celebrate Maghi, Ghurreri, Gharrai, Gurrai, Saunya Sankranti, Astimki, Hardwa, Atwari, Dasya, Auli lena, Auli Utarna, and Pandya festival.

Due to the contact with non Tharu, impact of education, communication, Tharu culture's originality has been losing. Tharu culture has been highly influenced by Hindu culture. Some festivals have associated with religious myth and some festivals have not. These festivals have their own socio-cultural significance. For example on maghi festival all the Tharus gather at the Mahaton's house and discuss their yearly farm work. Every festival has its own type of rules and regulations. All the Tharu people must obey them to bring social integration and preserve Tharu traditional culture.

Due to poor economic condition, contact with other people and development of modern technology, Tharu festivals have undergone some significant change. For eg. food habit, dress pattern, way of observing various festivals , and way of living.

At last it can be concluded that the festivals of the Tharus are the part of Tharu culture. They observe Hindu as well as tribal festivals which have socio-cultural significances.

Though this study is constrained several ways, it may have fruitful to general readers to understand the various festivals of the Tharus in the study area and their socio-cultural significant. And at the same time it is also expected that this study will motivate other researchers to carry out further research work in the field of festivals which are observed and practiced by other communities.

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