

CHAPTER-ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Nepal has a heterogeneous society with complex ethnic mix. It embraces variation in the ethnic groups, religions, cultures and geographical areas and hence is often called a colorful garden of 4 'Jat' and 36 'Varna'. If we carefully look at the social structure of the Nepalese society, we find various Jats and ethnic groups living in different age at the same time (Bhattachan, 2000). Nepal is a multi ethnic, multi lingual and multicultural state where 102 castes and ethnic groups coexist and 92 languages and dialects are spoken. The indigenous ethnic group comprises about 38 percent of the countries in total population of over 25 million (CBS; 2001).

With the few exceptions the majority of Nepali people live in well defined specific geographical regions. Brahman along with Chhetris are most widely distributed throughout the country. More than half of all Brahmans and Kshetris live in the western hills, where they form eighty percent of those areas of population (Bista: 2000). Other Indo Aryan speaking people like Thakuri, occupational castes such as Damai, Kami, Sarki etc and few high cast Newar spread unequally throughout the country. Various ethnic and indigenous people live in their traditional home land.

National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) Act 2001 A.D. writes " Indigenous peoples are those ethnic groups or communities who have their own mother tongue and traditional customs, distinct cultural identity, distinct social structure and written or oral history of their own" .

All ethnic and indigenous people living in Nepal have been influenced by two great religions and social traditions, i.e. Hinduism and Buddhism. But the spread of Hindu civilization in Nepal has greater impact over the ethnic people in Nepal than the Northern Buddhist religion.

Ethnic people like Gurung, Magars, Rai and Limbus have been in contact with Hindu migrants from the south led by the aggressive and the militant Rajputs of the Kshetria cast of India (Messerschmidt:1976) .The Nepalese Hindu cast of Brahman and Kshetri eventually came to dominate hill people culturally, politically, and economically.

Nepali, originated from Sanskrit language, became the lingua franca and it is widely used by the Magars and the other ethnic people. The ethnic people came under the Hindu caste system and hence started to practice caste discrimination. They worship Hindu gods and deities and they have absolute belief in fatalism (Bista: 2000) .This process of Hinduisation of indigenous people led them to practice social and cultural system of Brahmin.

According to NEFIN, 2003 the highly marginalized groups consist of 13 groups such as Santhal, Jhangad, Dhanuk, Danuwar, Majhi, Bote etc. Newar and Thakali belong to the advanced group while Kusunda , Bankariya, Raute, Surel, Hayu Raji etc, who close to physically extinction, are categorized as endangered groups.

Although Hinduisation plays the vital role in social change among ethnic people of Nepal including Magars : westernization, modernization, new economic and political reforms , migration to the place where other cast like Brahman and Chhetri are in domination are other sources of socio-cultural change among them. Their social organizations like family, marriage, kinship, the status of men and women and their roles are mostly based on Hindu religion and its ' beliefs. Their traditional customs, norms and values are all influenced by Hinduism more than any other factors of social change mentioned above. According to Census 2001 the total population of Pyuthan district is 2, 12,484. The population of Magar community is 65,032 which is the largest size of population of Pyuthan district in ethnic/caste base which is followed by population of Chhetri and Brahmin community. The total population of Maranthana VDC is 5651 and Magar of Maranthana VDC comprised 21.77% of total population of the VDC.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Magars are the indigenous people of the area of western region of Nepal called Magrant (regions of the Magars). Since they have long been in close contact with Brahman and Chhetri, they adjusted their various norms and values with Brahman and Chhetri cultures.

Since Hindu are ruling caste of the region the traditional institutions, language and life cycle rituals of Magar are heavily influenced by them. This process of Hinduisation among Magars however is not uniform in Nepal. Some Magars, who are relatively

less influenced by Hinduism, speak their own language. They still comprise their traditional institution, rituals, customs and habits in their identical ways. Their birth and death ritual contain Buddhist elements but are observed in rather different ways than the orthodoxy Buddhist ones.(Khatri:1995).

Social change among Magars is not only the Hinduisation, there are many other factors which are responsible for such social and cultural changes. The status of women, structure of family, kinship system, economic institution and life cycle rituals are heavily affected by westernization, modernization, economic and educational changes.

The study attempts to find out the patterns of social change among Magars of Mareng village of Pyuthan district mainly due to influence of Hindu culture and migration. Brahman and Chhetris are the dominant caste group of Nepal. They are politically, economically and culturally powerful. Although the Magar people still practice various rituals in their own ways, the intrusion of Brahmin cultural symbols and Hindu philosophy in their life style are easily observable. This indicates patterns of social change among them due to Hinduisation.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The general objectives of this study has been focused on the social patterns of social changes among Magars of Mareng village of Pyuthan district .They have adopted Hindu rites and rituals in large scale and it will be an appropriate example of Hindu influence among Magars and other ethnic groups of Nepal.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:-

1. To explore the historical background and origin of Magar community of Nepal.
2. To ascertain the traditional social institutions of Magar community and their undergoing changes.
3. To identify the sources of social change among Magars and to show its' patterns and consequences.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study has been focused on social changes among Magars of Mareng village of Pyuthan district. This study will be helpful to understand social structure, and organization, economy and cultural values of Magars. Due to continuous contact, political and economic dominance of Hinduisation, various kinds of social changes have been resulted among them.

It will be useful for other interested persons, researchers and development workers for further study and it will help to conduct social planning in future. Likewise this research will also be helpful to understand the changing patterns of social and cultural status of Magars in general.

1.5 Organization of the Study

This study has been divided into nine chapters. First introduction chapter deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance and organization of the study. The second chapter deals with the relevant literature review for this study. Chapter three is about research methods adopted in the study. It describes the design of the research and various techniques of data collection and analysis. The fourth chapter is about the settings of the study area. Chapter five is about historical background of Magars community in Nepal. Chapter six describes social organizations of the Magars in the study area which includes the structure of family and kinship system. The chapter presents their life cycle rituals as well as festivals and traditional customs and the various patterns of change i.e. changes in kinship, family, rites and rituals etc. Chapter seven elaborates economic organizations of the Magar. Chapter eight attempts to analyze sources and consequences of social change among Magar people of the study area. The ninth or final chapter includes summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER-TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with the relevant literature for this study from various books and articles. It is divided into two sections. The first section is about the various conceptual frameworks about society and the change in the structures and function of society. The second section is focused on studies about Nepalese people and communities. This section presents the analysis of various research works done by different native and foreign scholars on the social, cultural and economic changes in indigenous communities especially Magar communities of Nepal.

Human society in general refers to the group of people living in a particular geographical area. But in sociology, it is used to designate the system of association rather than their group. Society is a system of procedures, authority and mutual aid, of many groupings and divisions, of control of human behavior and liberties (Maciver and Page :1981). Therefore, society of human being is the complex patterns of social relationships, norms and interactions that arise among them.

Change is the law of nature. This law is true for material objects, animal creatures, human beings and their society. Change is so much the natural order of human existence and social life that it comes to be taken for granted, to excite no curiosity of surprise.(Moore;1965)

Society is a dynamic and hence is always changing from one type to another. The system and patterns of social relationship is dependent on various factors such as cultural values, technology, political institutions, ecology, ideology and economic system. When these factors vary, they simultaneously change the social process, social interaction and social organization of human being. These changes lead to the modification in established patterns of interhuman relationships and standard of conduct (Lundberg and others: 1999). This process of modification is what we call social change. Ginsberg writes “by social change I understand a change in social structure eg. the size of a society, the composition or balance of the parts or the type of its’ organization .” Thus social changes are the variation from the accepted modes of life weather due to alteration in geographical conditions, in cultural equipments,

composition of the population or ideologies and whether about diffusion or invention within the group.

The evolution, development and change in society have been a central question for sociologists, philosophers and social thinkers. August Comte, who is called father of sociology, formulated the famous law of the three states of development of human thought- the theological, the metaphysical and the positive, which were also the bases of the three historical forms of social organization (Etzioni: 1970). Herbert Spencer saw the development of society as a process of evolution which like organic evolution is a process of growth increasing differentiation of structure and function and increasing interdependence among the differential parts (Ibid: 1970).

Two pioneer social thinkers Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee, however divert from organic evolutionist, argued the cyclical theories of the social evolution. Spengler sees human existence as an endless series of ups and downs. Like the waves in the ocean the great cultures appear rise to great heights, only to subside again while others rise in their turn. Like the individual organism, each culture has a life cycle of birth, childhood, maturity, old age and death. For Toynbee, society is a cycle of growth and disintegration of civilization. A civilization comes into being only if it successfully responses to the challenges from culture, ecology, political system, economy etc. When a creative minority becomes stagnant and dominant its' society is no longer capable of successful responses to challenge and civilization disintegrates.

Marx presented his ideology about evolution of society and its development in the different way from other linear evolutionists. His theory provokes the economic determination of society and culture. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructure. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual process of life.

Large number of sociologists and anthropologists has been devoted to develop a theory that shows the relationship between technology, ecology and the socio-cultural features of human beings. Clifford Geertz , Marvin Harris , Julian Steward etc have shown the beliefs and practice that seems quite irrational may still result in rational utilization of the environment given a particular level of technology (Khattri,

1995). They attempt to conceptualize how the interplay of process in the nature and processes in social life shape people's life condition i.e. it helps us to understand the interdependence which emerge in people's interaction in relation other and in relation the elements in natural environment (Ibid:17).

Srinivas (1952 first introduced the notation of sanskritization as an undergoing process of social change in india, in his book " religion and society among coorgs". He defined Sanskritization as the process by which a low Hindu caste a tribal or other groups changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently twice born caste (Kuppuswami, 1972:55) He says a low caste people claim higher position in the caste hierarchy by adopting vegetarianism and by sanskritizing its ritual functions.

Shrinivas also has used the term westernization to indicate the changes which took place in India during the British rule in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He says changes in dress, food, style of eating manners etc by westernization. Another big change introduced by westernization in the Indian society is due to new system of education which was thrown open to all people, in contrast to the traditional schools which were restricted to upper cast children and which mostly transmitted traditional knowledge.

2.1 Literature in Change of Culture of Magar Community

Studies of the history about Nepali society and culture are better to measure by decades rather than by centuries. Baral Magar (1992) describes the various social and cultural features of Magars of Palpa, Tanahu, and Syangja districts. He writes that they speak four types of Magar languages. They still comprises their own traditional institutional homeland of Magars is western hills of Nepal. But the impact of Hinduism is more powerful cause for the social changes among them. They use their traditional wears like *Bhoto*, *Kachhad*, *Panga*, and *Vangra* etc.in few scale. The westernization and modernization has impact on their traditional economy, structure and function of the family and kinship.

Until 1950, Nepal was virtually closed to outsiders and it was practically impossible for foreign researchers to pursue their studies (Khatri, 1995:17). Then after hundreds of foreign as well as native scholars, sociologists/ anthropologists and research persons

have studied the mosaic of Nepali society and culture. The various ethnic groups, their culture, social organization and traditions have become huge interesting subjects of study for them.

Magars, traditionally dwell in the western and mid-western hilly regions called *Bara magarants* (twelve regions of Magars), are found in every district of the country at present. Migration to other districts particularly to east Nepal dates in past as far back as the Gurkha conquest and related events of eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. At present Magar settlement range from Tanahu district of Gandaki zone to the Arghakhanchi and Gulmi in Lumbini zone, Syangja, Kaski in Gandaki zone, Baglung, Myagdi, Parbat in Dhaulagiri zone, Rukum Rolpa, pyuthan and salyan in Rapti zone and Dailekh and Jajarkot in Bheri zone. The Magars have spread all along the hills of eastern part of Nepal and to few places in the western and eastern Terai (Bista :2000) .

Baral Magar (1992) and various Nepali scholars have also studied the various aspects of Magar society and culture. Buda Magar (1997), Gurung (1996), Oppitz (1982, 1983) have contributed in the studied of this ethnic group.

Messerschmidt (1974) states that the interaction of these tribal groups with the Hindu migrants over the past five hundred to thousand years has resulted in a process of detribalization and the emergence of a peasant society. He notes that for much of this time the tribal groups were allowed to maintain their separate identity, and it has only been recent years that the central government has pushed reforms in an attempt to hasten the process of national integration.

Hitchcock (1966) describes that the Magars of Banyan Hill are accepting the Hindu values and changes are occurring gradually in their social life and cultural values. He also tries to show how the Magars of Banyan Hills are adopting to their immediate environment with various socio-cultural mechanisms. Oppitz (1982, 1983) is another foreign scholars who took interest in the study of society and culture of Magar community living in Rolpa and Rukum. He tries to describe the origin of Northern Magars (Buddha Magar and Gharti Magar) with the help of three different stories having more or less same about them. He further studies the death and kinship pattern among the Northern Magars (Oppitz , 1982).

Lecomte-Tilouine (2000) elaborates how the Magars of Nepal take part in state rituals and Hinduism. The encouragement of Brahman settlement and institutions of Hinduism as the state religion led the government to take the special measures in order to make the tribal groups to respect Hindu principles. Gurung (1996) analyses relationship between natural resource management and local institutions and ritual practices of Tarami Magars of Tara Khola. Tarami magars have the communal worship of land, forest and water resources. They control and regulate these natural resources through the local institution like *Sathari* and various ritual practices like *Matri bhumi*, *Pitri-puja*. These rituals explicitly intended for religious purposes to operate to lesson and restrict the impact on natural resources (Gurung: 1996). This system of institutional arrangement of distributing resources on rotational and seasonal based have, however, been exploited by new political system and economic activities. A complex set of forces i.e. state policy of land appropriation, population growth, nationalization of forest resources and transformation of political power from the traditional village heads to the newly elected political leaders have lessen the communal unity and important mechanism of equitable and sustainable use of local resources.

Some Magars speak their Tibeto-Burman dialect as their mother language. Magar use four kinds of major languages; Kham, Kaike, Chhantyal Magar and twelve Mangrati language (Baral, 1992).

Originally the Magar religion was animistic and shamanistic but generally the Magars have been influenced by Hinduism and Brahmanism through the ages. Fortunately, although many Magars have lost their language and imitated Hindu manner, they have not fully absorbed into Hinduism as a philosophy of life nor a totally Buddhist way of living (Oestigoard, 1996) .

Khatri (1995) studies the adaptive system of Magar people of Argal VDC, Banglung from the ethno-ecological perspective to show how the adaptive system have developed by the local Magars to inter act with immediate environmental condition..

Bista (1999,2000) gives the basic ethnographic information of various ethnic groups/cast people and their general social promotion towards the single national main-stream, Nepaliazation as well Hinduisation. Sharma (1997) analyses the impact

of old legal code about caste and caste hierarchy among, various caste and ethnic groups of Nepal including Thakalis, Newars, Magars and others.

This chapter of literature review presents the theoretical framework of society and social changes. This also helps to understand the patterns of social changes among the Magar of Mareng village of Pyuthan district.

CHAPTER-THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the different tools and techniques which were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data in the present study. This chapter is divided into sub-section such as rationale of the selection of the study area, research design, and nature of data, techniques, methods, analysis and limitation of the study.

3.1 Rational of Selection of the Study Area

Magars are traditionally settled in the western part of Nepal and this study has been focused on the Magars of Mareng village of Pyuthan district. The Magars of this village are close contact with the Brahman and Chhetri over many years. I was interested to identify the social and cultural condition of Magars of the village. Therefore I selected the village where I had frequently traveled during my field work.

3.2 Research Design

The study is focused on to obtain the real living style and socio-cultural changes of Magar community. This study has adopted explanatory as well as descriptive research design. The study is descriptive because it has described the people and their culture. It is explanatory because it has attempted to explore the patterns of social change and their consequences.

3.3 Nature and Sources of Data

For this present study primary as well as secondary data have been used. Primary data have been collected during field study with direct and indirect observation, field work and especially key informant interviews. Secondary data have been collected from published sources of DDC, VDC and other governmental offices and publication. This study includes quantitative as well as qualitative types of data to support the arguments in the study.

3.4 Study Population

Maranthana VDC of Pyuthan district is divided into 9 wards. According to the Census of Nepal 2001, the total population of Maranthana VDC of Pyuthan district is 5651 with 1222 house holds. But for the present study the 50 Households of Mareng village of ward no. 4 of Maranthana VDC of Pyuthan district has been selected. The 50 household's heads were interviewed for the present study.

3.5 Techniques of Data Collection

Both, qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques, has been used in the present study. The data has been collected using different method as stated below.

3.5.1 Universe and Sampling

For the present study data has been collected from Mareng village of Maranthana VDC. The data has been collected from all the 50 Households and its' 340 population. Therefore census method was applied for collecting the required data in this study.

3.5.2 Interview

Both structured and non-structured interview was used to get information about origin stories, economic organization and social organizations of the Magar people of Mareng village of Maranthana VDC. Interview has also been used as a source of information about socio cultural taboos and rituals and their changing patterns.

3.5.3 Observation

To collect data Participatory and non participatory observation have been used by frequently visiting the field. The data related to social and cultural system such as birth death and burial rites, marriage and festivals were collected by participatory observation. Non participant observation to collect data related to economic activities and social organization has also been used in this study.

3.5.4 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Three FGD sessions, two with mixed participants and one with females only, were organized through participatory approach in order to explore prevailing issues and status of women in Magar community.

3.5.5 Analysis of Data

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected for this study. The quantitative data about population, economy and distribution of settlement pattern are presented in tables while the qualitative data .Social organization, Kinship and socio-cultural features have been qualitatively analyzed.

3.5.6 Limitation of the study

This study has been conducted in Mareng village of Pyuthan district. Since the study is focused on a small area of Mid-western Nepal, the conclusion might be difficult to generalize in the wider context of Nepal. The limited time and resources for the study have also constrained the study.

CHAPTER-FOUR

THE SETTING

4.1 Geographical Location

Pyuthan district lies in the Rapti zone of mid-western region of Nepal. It is bordered in the East by Arghakhachi, while to west lies Rolpa district. In the north, Pyuthan district is bordered by Banglung and Gulmi district. It shares its border in the south by Dang district. It is located between 27° 52' N to 28° 21' North altitude and 82° 30' to 83° East longitude. The average altitude of the district is 1293 m.

The no. of VDCs of the district are 49. There is not any municipality in the district. The district head quarter lies in Khalanga VDC.

Ethnic composition of the district is heterogeneous. Magars are predominant group found widely spread in the district. Chhetri, Brahmin and other occupational casts are also distributed all over the district. Newars are found mainly in the Market side.

According to Census 2001 the total population of Pyuthan district is 2,12,484. The population of Magar community is 65032 which is the largest size of population of Pyuthan district in ethnic/caste base which is followed by population of Chhetri and Brahmin community. The other ethnic groups inhabited in Pyuthan district are Kumal, Gurung, Majhi, Dhimi, Limbu, Tamang, Muslim, Gharti Bhujel, Badi, Tharu, Kusunda etc.

4.2 Maranthana VDC

According to the district profile Pyuthan 2001, Magar occupy second highest position in population of Maranthana VDC. They contribute (21.77%) of the total population of the VDC. The following table no. 2 has describes the caste/ethnic wise distribution of population.

Table No.1: Ethnic Composition of Maranthana VDC

S.N	Ethnic/Cast groups	Population	%
1	Magars	1278	21.77
2	Chhetri	2420	41
3	Kamis	617	10.5
4	Brahamans	365	6.2
5	Damai	115	1.95
6	Sunar	104	1.77
7	Sarki	339	5.77
8	Sanyasi	259	4.4
9	Gharti Bhujel	55	0.9
10	Gurung	36	0.6
11	Newar	66	1.12
12	Kumal	146	2.48
13	Tharu	5	0.008
14	Others	66	1.12
15	Total	5871	100

District Profile, 2001.

The table shows that in the total population of Maranthan VDC Chhetri occupies 40 % of the population followed by Magar and Kami comprising 21.77% and 10.5% of population respectively.

4.3 The Village

Mareng village lies in the Northern part of the Pyuthan district headquarter. Most of the Magars in the village have been influenced by Hindu culture. This is more or less true for all over the Nepal.

4.4 Land

The entire land of Mareng village is hilly area. Maize, Barley and millet are the main crops of the village .The soil are not so fertile and it has no irrigation facilities. So the farmers have to depend on rain water. Most part of the upper land area is covered by forest and bush and remaining part is *Bari* (dry field). That is why the people of the

area always face the crisis of food. Maize and millets are the main crops of the village. Oranges Guava, Banana and Arubhagada are the fruits produced in the area.

4.5 Climate

The village has mid-temperature climate. In summer the average temperature is 28⁰ centigrade so summer is not so hot in Mareng village. The winter in Mareng village is very cold and dry. The average temperature in winter is 20 degree centigrade the average rainfall in Maranthana is 120cm.

4.6 Settlement Pattern

The settlement pattern of Magar of Mareng village is divided into small clusters of houses. A house which runs short of things borrows from neighbors. During agricultural season they exchange labor. The neighbors are among first to be invited to weddings, birth, death rites and other functions.

CHAPTER-FIVE

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MAGAR

The Magars of Mareng village mainly follows Hindu religion. Although they practice shamanism, a big influence of Hinduism is found in some of their principal ceremonies like death, birth and marriage ceremonies. Influence of Buddhism has not been found among them.

5.1 History and Origin Of Magar Community

There are innumerable written and oral origin stories about Magars, none of them, however, traces the exact origin and directions of their migration. The first written reference to Magar community dates back to twelfth century. In Dhaulagari zone, a twelfth century *tamprapatra* (copper plate) was found with word *Magar Visays* (Magar chhetra or area) written on it (Khadka, 1997:26). This resembles to the stories that describe that there were many Magar states in Gandaki and Dhaulagiri zones before the unification of Nepal.

The main place of origin of Magar of Nepal is Kham region which lies north east of Lahasa and west of China. Magars of Rolpa and Rukum speak Kham language which is very similar to the language spoken in the Kham-region (Budha, 1997). Many scholars believe in the story that tribal people such as Magar, Gurung, Thakali and sherpas migrated to southern slopes of the Himalaya in central Nepal.

Baral Magar (1992) in his book 'entitled " Palpa, Tanahun ka, Ra Sayagja ka Magar Haruko Sanskriti " writes 'According to Kirant Mundhum, sin Magars first appeared in Nepal in the northern part of Himalaya under the leadership of sin Magars and chitu Magar, two groups joined to create the twelve regions of Magars.

While studying the northern Magars of Rolpa and Rukum Micahel Oppitz found their different stories; two oral and one written having more or less same theme. In an oral story they say they are of local stocks, born in the north-eastern sector of their present tribal territory (Oppitz, 1983:199). In another oral story Magars of Rukum declared that the ancestors-at least of the Budha group –immigrate to the area from Mongolia.

Oppitz writes; 'In fact, the two contradictory statements concerning the origin of Magar tribe, may each be correct in their own rights, if one admits the possibility of a multitribal composition of the Magar. It would then appear that one of the present subgroups, the Gharti, being connected with agriculture had their homes near their present day ones, where as another subgroups, the Budha, connected with semi-nomadic shepherd immigrated from the north, from a distant land in Northern Tibet, in Mongolia or even in Siberia.'

Dharma Prasad Shrees (1982) claims Magars arrived in Nepal in five distinct groups through different boundaries of Nepal. According to him, the first group of Magar immigrants arrived in the western Nepal after leaving the Medetarian region nearly 6000 years ago and they established their strong state in the Mahar valley of India. The second group found their way to mid-western region, eventually setting in the Magarat regions between Rapti and Narayani rivers. Their origins were traced to the Patak Patanjali of India. The third group arrived in Northern Nepal via Mustang gulf and eventually settled in Dolpa, Mustang, Myagdi, Parbat, Baglung, Pyuthan and Rukum. The fourth group of Magar entered in east Nepal via Sikkim when they were defeated by Tibetan King. The fifth group settled in Magadh area of India, a famous Mughal city.

Jiro Kawakita (1990) says that Magars are Mongolian people who mainly migrated from North to south and initially settled in low hill area near Terai, Butwal and Palpa. Due to close contact with Indian culture, they lost the Buddhist characteristics and attracted towards Hinduism. They are distributed to western and eastern Nepal after attack of Rajputs.

Despite of these diversities about the origin stories of Magar, most scholars believe that the Magars are the traditional inhabitants of the region from Gandaki to the Rapti areas.

Magars of Nepal have been divided into two groups and their various sub-groups. The two main divisions of Magars are *Bara panthi* and *Athara Panthi*. According to a story there were two males in the ancient time. The elder brother had eighteen sons and hence called 'Athara panthi' and the younger had twelve sons and called 'Bara panthi' (Baral Magar, 1992:31). The *Bara panthi* magars are found in Gandaki and

Lumbini zones. The language they speak is called Magarati language. The Atharapanthi Magars are found in Midwestern region Rolpa, Rukum, Salyan and Pyuthan etc. They speak Kham language which is different from the language of *Barapanthi*. *Atharapanthi Magars* claim that they are pure or '*Khati*' Magar. They do not practice Hinduism as their philosophy of life, they still eat beef from accidental death and they used to practice ox slaughter to perform their ancestral worship (Khatri, 1995:40). *Barapanthi Magars* are relatively more Hinduised and follow some Hindu mannerism in their life rituals. But the distinction between these two groups is not sharply observed. There is no clear-cut line to differentiate them from each other.

Both Atharapanthi and Barapanthi are further subdivided into different *Thars* (clan) and sub-clans. Baral Magar (1992) has listed the six clan names of Magars: Rana, Pun, Thapa, Ale, Budha and Gharti. The clans are further subdivided into 1022 sub-clans. The division is arbitrary. Same sub clan has been listed in different clans.

The entire Magar of Mareng village of Pyuthan district categorizes themselves as *Atharapanthi* according to elder persons of the community.

CHAPTER- SIX

SOCIO CULTURAL INSTITUTION AND CHANGES

This chapter describes the various social organization of Magars of Mareng village of Pyuthan district. It includes family, clans and kinship among them.

6.1 Family

The majority of Magar households in Mareng village belong to joint family. In the sample out of 50 families in study area, there were 19 nuclear families and 26 joint families. But the local senior citizen said that the number of nuclear family is increasing and joint family is decreasing.

Table No. 2: Types of Magar Families in Maranthana VDC

Particulars	Nuclear	Joint	Extended	Total
Number of families	19	26	5	50
Percentage	38	52	10	100

Source: Field Study, 2006.

The above table shows that more than half of the Magar houses in Mareng village are joint families. The sample survey shows that 52% of the family is joint and followed by nuclear and extended which comprises 38% and 10% respectively. It appears from the survey that the majority of the people are living in joint families.

In Magars family the status and role of male and female is not sharply distinct. In contrast with Brahman-Chhetri, the discrimination of women is not so extensive in Magar community. The gender role is balanced between them. Both male and female are engaged in household works and outside works as well. Usually male are thought stronger for harder physical works. They go for cutting grass, collection fire woods, plowing the fields, hunting and searching manual works inside and outside the country. The income source of the family is handled by the male persons. The cooking food, painting and plastering the walls, fetching water, milking of buffaloes

and cows are the main works related to female. Mother holds the kitchen activities of the family. Sister-in-laws are engaged in the household works out of the kitchen.

The Magars have a patriarchal or matrilineal society. Male are superior in every family and rule the family. The eldest male is supposed to be a head of the household. The descent is thought the male line. The son is supposed to inherit the property as well as to perform all the rites and rituals from birth to death. Traditionally, a woman can not inherit the property but men without sons may pass their property to their daughter. In some cases women conduct the family if her husband dies and the sons are younger. But the eldest son gets authority in social, ritual, economic as well as political rights. Though the women does not enjoy the rights as much right as male in the community, the female head or the mother looks after all domestic affairs.

Magar people of Mareng village are endogamous. They follow Hindu caste system and they marry within the Magar community. In Magar society, there is no caste discrimination but they do not tie marriage relation with high caste Hindus, Brahman and Chhetri and low caste Hindus Damai, Kami, Sarki , Sunar and so on. Magar people can marry anyone within the Magar community except the member of their own clan of partilineage. Marriage with Sali (mother's brother's daughter) is preferred marriage pattern among Magar community.

The tradition of partition of family is generally in sequence with the eldest son leaving first, followed by his younger brother as they marry and bring their wives to join them. Elder brother generally set up separate households with their share of property, within a few years after his marriage, while the youngest brother generally stays with his parents and inherits the house. Partition is not only the division of the family members but also the property, wealth and the debt. For division of family property, in most of cases, household head decides the way of division but sometimes the help of a group of gentle man called *Tessur* is taken. *Tessar* is a group of older and gentles to judge the important cases in the village. It is randomly chosen by the people. The decision of division of property is sometime kept written but in most of cases it is oral compromise.

During the partition, a portion of property called *Jiuni* which father puts aside for himself and his wife to sustain them in old age. That *Jiuni* may be as land or cash or

both. The *Jiuni* can be used by the son who looks after the parents. It is decided to share equally among the sons but in some cases the parents can determine who is to inherit this property after his death and that of his wife. When the parents die, the expenditure on their death rituals is recovered by the *Jiuni* they possess. If the *Jiuni* doesn't cover the debt the remaining debt is divided equally among the brothers.

6.2 Kinship

In Magar people both consanguineal and affinal kinship plays important role in their social life. Traditionally Magars were confined to cross maternal marriage system therefore their kinship was not wider. But the system has undergone changes now. Most of Magars do not consider good to marry their maternal sister now. Some fictive kinship like *Ista*, *Miteri*, *Soltini* etc. are also practiced by Magar people.

Magar people consider both consanguineal or lineage kinship and affinal kinship very important. The lineage brothers are called *Daju Bhai*, which has great social, economic ritual and political significance among them. A man acts as real brother and in some ways being regarded as one even though he is too distantly related to observe the pollution and ritual aspects of lineage membership. In certain situations, these *DajuBhai* become especially helpful. In cases of marriage death, sickness, festivals and other financial misfortunes, they give active assistance. If somebody dies, *Dajubhai* are the first to touch the dead body. These lineage brothers make all the arrangement for death rites and ceremonies. In marriage and death, they collect money, food grains, vegetables, drinks and clothes to help their brothers. This process is called *Bhai-Saghaune* (Helping to brothers).

Besides lineage, Magar people have another set relative- Affine. These are the persons who have become relatives as results of marriages. They are called in-laws, Magars call *Chelibeti* to the married daughters and sisters.

Magar people highly respect their *CheliBeti* and *Juwain chela* who married their *chelibeti*. They often invite them in different auspicious occasions and festivals. They are worshiped in *Dashain*, *Teej*, *Tihar* by their fathers and brothers. During marriage and death, their *Chelibeti* and *Juwain chela* play very important role. On this occasion they co-operate with foods *Roti*, *Raksi* and *Chickens*. They are offered money, clothes, cow, utensils and bed sheets in the final day of the death pollution.

They are worshipped as a Brahman priest. The *Juwains* (son-in-law) necessarily not a *Bhanja* performs important ritual role in the marriage of his wife's brother and their sons.

6.3 Ista

This kind of relation is established between the two families rather than by individuals. This is typical and traditional relationship between Magar families of Mareng village.

The Ista relation is based on economic activities rather than ritual . They help each other during agricultural activities , rituals ceremonies and in time of shortage of food.

6.4 Miteri/Soltini

Miteri is the ritual friendship made between two males and such rituals friendship between females is called *Soltine* or *Saina*. People can not establish such relation with opposite sex and with their kins.

To perform *Miteri/Soltine* relationship Brahman priest is invited and in most of cases it is performed with group of friends and family members. The persons exchange money, clothes or other goods and become *Mit* (fictive bond). On that day, they organize feast and feed their friends. This bond is supposed to be real and sacred. Their family members also follow such relations. The new kinship terms like *Mit Ama*, *Mit Ba*, *Mit Dai*, *Mit Bhai* etc. are used to address their kin. The relation remains even after the death of the Mits. Their generations follow this kinship. The marriage is prohibited between these relations. Whenever any person of *Miteri* family dies, they mourn and avoid salt for three of five days.

6.5 Kinship Terminology

Magars of Mareng village use the different kinship terminologies mostly derived from Nepali languages and partly from the Magar language.

Ego's Generation

In ego's generation, the most important kin are the sibling. The natural siblings and step siblings are not distinguished, nor are the siblings from consanguineal and affinal addressed by specific terminology. No specific terms are used to refer other affine of ego's siblings with whom ego has no direct relationship.

6.6 Ego's First and Second Ascending Generations

The first ascending generation of the ego includes mother's and father's consanguinal kin. The terms are *Ba* (father), *Boi* (mother), *Jetha Ba* (Father's brother), *Jethi Ama* (Father's brother's wife), *Kancha Ba* (Father's younger brother), *Nini/Phupu* (Father's sister), *Pusai* (Father's sister's husband) and *Mama* (Maternal uncle). The second ascending generation includes the kin relation related to grand parents. They are *Baje* (Grandfather) and *Bajai* (Grandmother). The brothers and sisters of the grand parents are addressed by the same terms.

6.7 Ego's First and Second Descending Generations

The first and second descending generations of the ego is his sons and daughters and their children. Magar people use the terms *Chhora* (son) and *Chhori* (daughter). The sons and daughters of the ego's brothers are called by the same terms. The second descending generation are called *Nati* (Grandson) and *Natini* (Granddaughter).

Table No. 3 : List of Magars Kinship Terms

Generation	Terms of reference	Referent
Second ascending	Male or Female Ego	
	Baje	Father or mother's father
	Bajai	Father's or mother's mother
First ascending	Ba	Father
	Ama/Boi	Mother
	Jestha Ba	Father's Elder brother
	Kancha Ba	Father's younger brother
	Kanchi Ama	Father's younger brother's wife
	Nini/Fupu	Father's sister
	Pusai/Fupaju	Father's sister's husband
Ego's	Dai	Elder brother
	Bhai	Yonger brother
	Didi	Elder sister
	Bahini	younger sister
	Bhauju	Elder brother's wife
	Buhari	Yonger brother's wife
	Bhana	Elder sister's husband
	Juwain	Yonger sister's husband
First Desending	Chhora	Son
	Buhari	Yonger sister's husband
	Chhori	Daughter
	Juwain	Daughter's husband
Second desending	Nati	Son's or daughter's son
	Natini Buhari	Son's son's wife or son's daughter's wife
	Natini	Son's daughter or daughter's daughter
	Nati Juwain	Son's daughter's husband or daughter's son's husband

Source:Field Survey, 2006.

Table No. 4: List of Terms for Personal Affines

Generation	Term of reference	Referent
First ascending	Male or Female Ego	
	Mama/Sasura	Wife's father or husband's father
	Maiju/Sasu	Wife's mother or husband's mother
Ego's	Male Ego	
	Patni/Srimati/Budhi	Wife
	Jethan/Sala	Wife's elder brother/wife's younger brother
	Sasu/Sali	WiEsi/WiYSi
	Female Ego	
	Pati/Sriman/Budha	Husband
	Jethaju/Dewar	Husband's elder brother/ Husband's younger brother
	Amaju/Nanda	Husband's elder sister/ Husband's younger sister

Source : Field Survey, 2006.

The above tables show the same kinship terminology specifies more than one kin relation. For example *Baje* is used to specify father's father and Mother's father as well. Similarly *Buhari* denotes son's wife and Brother's wife both. *Nati* is used to denotes both son's son and daughter's son where as *Natini* denotes both son's and daughter's daughter of an Ego. Some terminologies of Magar language had been found for example *Boi*, *Nini* and *Dei* but most of the terminologies have been derived from Nepali language.

6.8 Life Cycle Rituals

Various rites and rituals are performed in different occasions in their own traditional ways and in Brahmanical models as well by the Magars of Mareng village. The most

important are birth, marriage and death rituals which will be discussed in this chapter in brief.

6.8.1 Birth

Birth of a child in every society is the joy of life for the parents. When a woman becomes pregnant, she is cared by every family member. Sons are particularly considered auspicious and therefore greatly desired by the -parents and other family members. Under the rules of patrilocal residence and patrilineal inheritance, it is practiced duty of son to look after their parents in their old age. When a first son is born, families have a feast and invite relatives and neighbors on the sixth day called *Chhaithi*. In the day a candle or *Dio* is born near the mother and infant child so that the *Bhabi* (fate writer) find the child and write the fate on the forehead of the child. The band of *Damais* (local musicians) come and a dance party enjoy the people whole night. yet despite this performance daughter also are highly regarded and are treated with much affection in Magar community of Mareng village of Maranthana VDC. Unmarried girls of the family and lineage have high rituals values. They are worshiped in different festivals and religious ceremonies and gifts are given to them .

Child birth causes *Sutak* (rituals pollution) to the woman's family and some kin of the husband. During the pollution no religious functions like Pooja, marriage etc are done by lineage. on the 11th day of the birth of the child a *Nawran* (name giving ceremony) is performed by a Brahman Pandit. This name given ceremony can be held on third, fifth, seventh, or ninth day in special condition.

The name giving ceremony is the beginning of child life as a unique named individual. It is also permits mother to become active and remove the pollution of birth and frees her husband and the members of her husband lineage. When the Brahman come to perform the naming ceremony on the 11th day following the birth, he first purifies the house by sprinkling a little cow urine inside and outside and he gives a little to each family member so that they can purify themselves. He conducts a pooja on the verandah of the house with the father of child if not, grandfather and other male of the family. Following the Pooja, he draws a name from his *Patro* (astrological calendar) according to the date and time of the birth. The name is very important because *China* is written on the basis of it which is often widely used

during different situations to determine the state of stars, fate or sometimes in correlating the marriage relation..

The name giving situation is very interesting. While a male of the family (Father or grandfather of child) hold the baby, the Brahman roles up the leaves on as tube, then he flows the repeating name into the baby's ear along with a spell in Sanskrit. Then the baby by his family member is run around the home twice or thrice and the baby is exposed to sun. Brahman then ties Dora (sacred thread) in the hands of the child and his father and mother. The father of the child gives *Tika* and some money to Brahman and married or unmarried sisters, daughters, of the father lineage members who may be present on the occasion.

6.8.2 Rice Feeding Ceremony or Pasni/ Bhatkhuwai

When the child becomes six month old, some wealthier Magars families organize a rituals functions called Pasni/ Bhatkhuwai giving the baby the first taste of rice. A priest finds a suitable day for this ritual. They invite their relatives and neighbors for a feast on this day. In the ritual function all the sister of the child try to taste the food to the child then it is done by each members of the family in turn. The baby is given tika and other presents by the relatives. The baby's parent offer a pair of a new clothes to baby. From now the child will be given solid food. If the child finds the first teeth in eight months of the birth, it is believed bad luck to the Mama (mother's brothers) of the child. To make auspicious, they should offer the baby new clothes and the *Balo* (Bracelet) on hand.

6.8.3 Hair Shaving and Chewar

The hair cutting ceremony of the boy is called Chewar, though the Magars of Mareng village don't use this word. Actually they don't have specific word for it. The ritual is also not popular however it is only done by some families. The hair cutting is generally done at the age of three or five years. The first hair cutting is usually done by the *Mama* or mother's mother. The boy is taken to cowshed where the baby is put on wooden stool facing east. *Damlo* (rope used to tighten cow) is placed around the boy's neck thus associating him with the holy animal -cow. After knotting the rope at the *Tupi* (crown of the head), the hair is shaved with the blades. Then *Mama* rubs some mustard oil into the child's scalp and put new short on him to symbolize the new

status .The boy is also given *Tika* by the *Mama* with money. The boy then gives 'Tika' and money to his sisters and daughter of the lineage.

6.8.4 Marriage

In Mareng village of Pyuthan district, Magars are highly influenced by Hindu pattern of marriage system. Although they practice various marriage rites in their own way, the entire marriage system is practiced according to Hindu religious faith and customs. Magars marry in two ways by *Magi Biha* (arrange marriage) and by *Chori Biha* (theft of an unmarried girl). The later types of marriage was highly popular among them in the past. In Magars community the young boys and girls are given full opportunity to make their own choice. The marriage partner can be found both inside and outside the home village. Then the marriage may be both by mutual agreement of the parents or by love.

Marriage in which the boy takes the girl to his home or relatives home without the permission of girls parents' called capture marriage was highly practiced in the past. They used to go in fair and festivals where young boys and girls gather. The boy and his friends used to capture the girl and they take her to and house belonging to one of the boys relatives keep her under strict guard until the approval of her parents has been secured.

The arranged marriage is quite linger and more expensive economically than capture marriage. In such marriage the parents of the boy take the initiation by sending their representatives to the girl's parents with or without the boy. In some cases the Brahman Astrologer is asked to match the stars of the boy and girl by watching their *Janma Kundali*. If their stars are seemed auspicious and matched, the marriage process goes ahead. Most of Magars do not use astrologers now. The persons of both families can decide the relation.

In both arranged or theft marriage, the girls are taken to the boy's home before the formal marriage rites starts. Only very few families follow the Brahmanical system of marriage, where the girls goes to the boys home only after the final process of marriage. They organize *Kanya Dan* (bride giving ceremony) and use Brahman priest for it.

After the girl is taken to the boy's home, the first rite is entrance of bride to grooms home. The Brahman astrologers find a date and time for them. On that time, the main door of the home is closed with the help of new Shawl by the younger sister of the groom or his lineage sister. The girl should pay some money to the sister then only she opens the door. Then the bride and groom both enter the home. Until this rite is not done, the bride and groom can't enter the main home though for very long time. *Damai* and other dancing groups may come to celebrate the functions. After two or three days of entrance of the bride, a group of relatives of the groom's side (The leader of the group is only *Join Chela*) are sent to the bride's home with a bottle of *Raksi* (liquor). This process is called *Sodhani* (Asking) if the marriage is arranged, they decide the day for the next stage but if it is by capture the groom's side must get approval of the bride's parents. The bride's parents may not accept the relation and in such cases the marriage can be interrupted to further formal rites. Whenever it is approved they decide another important rite of marriage called *Theki*.

Theki is the most important procedure in the Magar marriage. It establishes the legal and ritual relation between boy and girl. They become finally husband and wife and the relation can't end without social precautions. On *Theki* grooms side sends different presents. The present includes 10 bottle of *Raksi*, a soli of *Roti* (approx. 300 pieces), dried fish or meat with a wooden *Theki* filled with *Dahi*. The *Theki* is opened by the *Mama*. The lid is open only after the grooms side pays a coin of rupee, *Roti Raksi* to the opener *Mama*. The date is fixed for the *Dhogbhet* (final process of marriage) and the amount of *Khajana* (*Raxi, Roti, Goat, fish and Achar*) are fixed by the girls side. Mostly boys and girls are not invited in *Theki* but the final process of marriage is not to be held earlier due to various causes like death of family members, absence of parents and brothers are asked to come with *Theki* group so that the bride can come frequently to her natal home.

The final step of Magar marriage is called *Dhog-Bhet*. The date of the *Dhog-Bhet* is initially fixed in the time of *Theki*. Before a day of *Dhog-Bhet* a group of men and women are sent to girls home with the *Khagana* (Goods) demanded by the girls parents. The *Khagana* takers are called *Bhatkhauro*. They carry the goods including the presents for different relatives of the bride as *Rit*.

Table No. 5: The List of Rits and its Contents

Rits	Receiver	Contents
Dhudhauri	Mother	A sari, cash
Mawali sar	Maternal uncle	10 bottle raksi, A pathi of roti, head of goat,
Phupu sar	parental aunts	A sari, Cash

Source: Field Survey, 2006.

On the day of *Dhog-Bhet*, the bride groom and the groom's relatives go to the bride's parents home as *Janti*. The bride is accompanied by the girls of the groom's side. The groom holds a *Theki* filled with curd and he makes an intimate friend called *sang* who helps him during the marriage process.

On reaching *Biha Ghar*, the bride and groom are given *Tika* by their relatives with some money (*Daxina*). The groom pays all the rit to the bride's relatives. He has to pay another rit to his *Sali* (wife's younger sister). *Sali* generally hides something of the groom. The groom gives her *Sali Khasto* (clothes like shawl) or equivalent money so that he could get back this thing. The following day the groom is met with all the relatives of the bride, which is called *Dhog -Bhet*. Then the *janti* finally moves towards the boy's home with bride. The pay is to be paid by the groom's side on the way near the bride's parent's home. The friends of girl offer different things for bride and *Roti, Raksi* to *Janti*. They demand some money equivalent to those things. This process is called *Bato-chekni* (blocking the way). After paying the cash money to bride's friends, the *janti* reaches the groom's home where the relatives are given feast.

After two or three days the couple returns to bride's parents home. The rite is called *Dulhan Pharkaune* (returning the bride). They live two or three days and return to groom's home. In *Dashain* the bride and groom come to *Maiti* with different *Khajana* (Presents) like *Roti, Raksi* and in some cases goat. The couple meets each family of bride's relatives of maternal sides with the presents.

6.8.5 Death

When the death occurs naturally or unnaturally the dead body is put on the *Ghara* (bambo-carriers) and covered with white and yellow cloths. The body is taken outside the home if the death occurs inside in most cases when a person becomes serious he/she is brought outside because the death inside the home is supposed to be inauspicious. If a death occurs in late evening or night, the body is guarded by the groups of people whole night. The body is prevented to touch by the animals like dogs, cats and chickens. It is believed that if the animals touch the body it prevents the dead man soul from salvation.

The dead body is mostly carried by sons and lineage brother towards *Ghat*(Crematory). In front of the dead body carried towards the cemetery a person with long white long clothes directs the root to the crematory. Another man disperses rice, money and *Mass* in different parts of the way. The body is followed by the relatives and neighbors carrying firewood with them. While reaching the funeral ground, the body with bamboo carriers is set touching water of the river by the feet of the dead body.

The dead is put over the *Cheeta* (logs of the fire wood). The dead body is made necked putting off the clothes. The sons are saved their head by *Bhanja* (dead person's sisters son). They wear white *Dhoti* and *Pheta* (scarf). They revolve round the *Cheeta* with flames three times and put fire on the deceased man's mouth called *Dag-Batti* (giving flame). All the people there pay homage to the deceased person and through dry mud towards *Cheeta*. This is called *Matti Dine* (Giving mud).

On returning home they are kept in separate room with a rice straw's bed. The woolen rugs are given to them to use. They are restricted to touch, to eat food and drink with other members for thirteen days. They go to bath every day in river or tap and prepare food themselves. The Brahman and *Bhanja* are used to perform various rites and rituals. Such restriction is also followed by the wife, daughter in laws, married daughters and their husbands. *Daju Bhai* observed pollution of 10 days taking no salts.

On the last day of mourning a feast is given for *Malami*. *Chelibeti* bring *Roti* and *Raksi* to help the brother. Different household goods, clothes and cows are offered to

Brahman priest as well as *Bhanja* who performs the ritual function from the initiation.

After a year of the death, the sons worship the deceased person as *Pitri* Which is called *Pinda Daan*. Sons are shaved their head and perform worshipping of their ancestor deities with the helps of Brahman priest. They give money and different goods like rice, clothes utensils to Brahman as *Daan*. They invite their *Cheli Beti* and *Jawain Chela* to have a feast. They offer *Tika* and *Daksina* to their daughter, sisters and *Cheli-Beti*. This process of *Pinda Daan* is done once every year by the sons on the date of *Tithi* as determined by Brahman as the death date.

6.8.6 Festivals and Traditional Rites

Magars of Mareng village of Pyuthan district observe a number of local and tribal festivals and traditional rites in addition to national festivals like Dashain and Tihar. They celebrate their own tribal festivals which consist of worshipping a number of spirits and some Hindu Deities. Here are some important festivals and traditional rites and rituals of Magars of Mareng village.

6.8.7 Ancestor Worshipping

The ancestor worshipping of Magar people generally consists of two types of pooja like *Kulpooja* and *Pitri pooja*. *Kulpooja* is traditional rites of Magars clan which is performed in their identical ways while *pitri* pooja is Brahmanical model of ancestor worshipping. In *kulpuja*, Magar clans worship their clan deities at a special annual observance in different ways while *pitri* pooja is Brahmanical model of ancestor worshipping.

In *kulpuja*, Magar clans worship their clan deities at a special annual observance in different ways. On the day of *kulpuja* all clan members gather at the *Kulan than* (temple of ancestor) either inside or outside the house. Their clan deities do not have clear picture. They are symbolized by statue of rock or clay or dung. They offer chickens or goats to sacrifice. Then the clan members join together to have a feast.

In the day of *Kul* pooja all the clan members are gathered in the eldest male person's home with rice, money, and chickens or goats to offer their clan deities. The goat is

bought by collecting equal sum of money from every clan members. This is the collective offering to their ancestor. Apart from this, every household offers goats or chickens. Whenever a son marries, or a son is born or a boy is joined to army, a household offers a goat to their ancestor and they are sacrificed in this occasion.

The worshipping or pooja of the clan deities is performed in the *Kulanthan* which is either inside the house or outside in the fields. The temple is symbolized by small houses of stones. The Pooja is made by an older person or shaman of the clan. He bathes in early in the morning and wears of clean clothes and keeps fasting until the pooja is over. After cleaning the ground with cow dung and water he winds string around the stones and the *Linga*(long stick of bamboo). The string represents the ancestor God's new clothing. The main purpose to perform this ceremony is to please the ancestor gods who would bring good omen in the village if they are happy.

Just before the sacrifice, the priest makes an incenses of butter and prays for whatever boon he wishes, pointing out that he is about to offer a sacrifice. The animals to be offered are sacrificed by putting water and rice on its heads until it nods its head as a symbol of acceptance by the gods. Then it is waved in the incense and beheaded. The head is placed before the stone and the blood is sported about the shrine. After the sacrifice the *poojari* gives *tika* by pressing small amount of mixture of rice and sacrificial blood on to the foreheads of those who are presents as gifts, he gets the head of the sacrificed animals and whatever things like rice, ghee, money has been brough as an offering. The final act of the *pooja* is cooking and eating the meat that now has been shared with the ancestor god.

Besides *Kulpooja*, Major people of Mareng village worship different kinds of ancestor spirits. The main kind of ancestor spirits is called *Bai*. *Bai* includes those who died accidental and unexpected deaths, who did not perform religiously good deeds during the course of their lives, those whose dead bodies were touched by some polluting animals such as dog, cat, chickens or crow and those women who were witches and shamans. The *Bai* are accompanied by different spirits such as *Lago*, *Banaskhandi*, and *Murkutta*. These all are worshiped regularly with sacrifice of chickens.

There are various other fare and festivals which are widely celebrated by Magar people of Mareng village. They celebrate *Teej*, *Maghe sankrati*, *Saune sankrati*, *Shree panchmi*, *Budha purnima*, *Holi purnima*, *Krishna Ashtmi*, *Janai purnima*, *Nag panchami* etc in their own way. They invite their *chele beti* and offer food as well as *tika* with *Daksina* during these celebrations.

CHAPTER- SEVEN

ECONOCMIC INSTITUTION AND CHANGES

Economic organization is the infrastructure of any society. It influences every aspect of social life. This chapter presents the subsistence economy that has been sustaining in the Magar community of Mareng village of Pyuthan district. It will analyze the various assets of Magar people and the undergoing changes in it.

7.1 The Village Economy

The contemporary economy of Magar people is based on combination of field agriculture, animal husbandry and foreign employment. But major economic base of villagers is agricultural production.

The Magars have traditionally been depending upon land, army-recruitment in Britain and India as well as manual work in India. The agricultural production and animal husbandry are the means of survival as well as sources of household income. Most of families however do not sell their grain because they produce no sufficient food grain for their all families. Animals are sold for cash income occasionally.

Third major traditional source of household income is salaried employment in India, Arabian countries and some other developed countries. They work for wages in cash and kind, as domestic servants, migratory labors as cooks in the foreign countries. The income is generally converted into land after they return home or send money for their families. Very few people are engaged in government services in Nepal mainly as teachers. Magars do work for daily wages as agricultural labor and construction labor as carpenter and masons in the village.

7.2 Agriculture : Land and Crops

Magar people do not have adequate agricultural production to meet their food requirements. It is very difficult to maintain their level of consumption and meet minimal social obligations without resort to borrowing from some wealthy Magars and Brahmans. The agricultural system no longer represent the sole means of

livelihood for Magars, but traditional system of cultivation, unfertile soil and difficult irrigation channels all limit agricultural production of food grain. Most of Magars families suffer from *Anikal* (lack of food grain) and they have to buy from other places.

7.3 Land

Land is the main economic base in an agricultural community. It is the prominent property of an individual and wealth is measured on its' form of reference. The social role and status is determined on its' bases.

All of the land in Mareng village is mostly *Pakha* (dry and slopy fields and grassy lands). These are non-irrigated terraces. Agricultural land holdings in Mareng village is relatively small. It ranges from 0-150 ropanis but most of the land is unproductive and with lack of irrigation facilities. In general land holding of the Magars has decreased as sons have split off dividing the ancestral property into smaller units. Only very few Magars have migrated to terai or other cities of Nepal. That is why pressure of land is increasing day by day.

7.4 Crops and Seasons

The main crops in Mareng Village are maize, millet, wheat and *Phapar* buck-wheat. Potatoes, soybeans, beans, pumpkin and pea are the major vegetables. The crops as well as vegetables are divided into two categories according to seasons. Maize and millet, etc are summer crops as they are planted during summer seasons. Soybeans, beans, cucumbers are summer vegetables which are inter-cropped with maize in dry fields as well as irrigated fields. Wheat and mustard plants etc are winter crop. The radish, garlic and onion are cultivated during winter seasons whereas potato can be produced during both seasons.

Another busy season starts during late October when the paddy is harvested in the fields. It falls just after *Dashain* festival and before *Tihar*. People cut the paddy plants and dry for two or three days. After drying the paddy and collection rice-straw, the rice is stored in *Bhakari*, a big storage made of bamboo. *Dain* (the rice straw's threshing work) to make fodder for buffalo, cow and ox as dry grass. After *Tihar* people are engaged for cutting millet in dry fields. The grain is collected in *Thunse*, a

basket made of bamboo and dried in the sun light in courtyard for some days then people thresh it in freshly mudded courtyard by hand with long wood sticks. The stalk of the millet is directly used as grass for livestock. At the start of November wither crop wheat is harvested in paddy fields. Sometimes mustard plants are also harvested in the fields. If it rains properly the wheat is harvested in dry fields also.

7.5 Animal Husbandry

Animal husbandry is another important economic activity in the Magar community of Maranthana village. There livestock consist of buffalo, cow, goat, chickens, pigs and pigeons etc. cattle are kept in separate *Goth* constructed generally near their residence. Chickens are kept either inside the houses or in *khori* (pen) situated tied on the side of the courtyard. Buffalo are kept tied in the cattle sheds but cow and goats are driven to graze in the pasture and grass land near the village. Chickens are left free in the ground.

Agricultural is supplemented by animal husbandry. Cattle reared up for the production of manure for use in fertilizer and bullocks are used in ploughing and terrace preparations. That is why ox are economically valuable than cows. Cows are kept for bullock production than the milk purpose.

Goats are raised for manure and meat purposes. Magars keep pigs and use pork. The pork is also sold to Magars of neighboring village.

Chickens and pigeons are kept for purpose of meat by the villagers. They are used to sacrifice during Dashain, Kulpooja and other rituals occasion. Magars offered chickens for their most of their ancestral deities. If anybody gets sick a shaman is called and he generally demands chickens for healing. They are also easy source of meat whenever a guest comes, chickens are immediately ready to cut and prepare meat dish. The local chickens are however very scarce and expensive now a days.

The cattle produce manure, which are compost fertilizers in the fields. The buffalo, cow and goats are the main producers of dung, which after mixed with leaves of plants becomes compost fertilizer. The fertilizer helps to increase the production of food grain. The relation between agriculture and animals husbandry seems closer.

7.6 Hunting and Fishing

Hunting is an interesting activity in Magar society, which is for adventure rather than the economic purpose. It has been means of recreation among them since long time ago. Magars go to hunt the animals like *Kaliz* (Jungle chicken), dove, rabbit etc. They make a group of hunters called *Airibhai* (Hunting brothers). This group consists of any person from the village who has to contribute during the hunting regularly except in the emergency cases. The *Airibhai* gets his parts of meat even if he is absent in the time of hunting. The *Airibhai* collect money and other things to worship *Bandevi* (the Goddess of the jungle). They offer a chicken sacrificing to the *Bandevi* every year before the starting a new hunting group.

Hunting is done mainly with the help of the dogs which are comparatively more capable and trained than any other ordinary dogs. These dogs are called *Airkukur* (hunting dog) are kept with good care. The day for hunting of *Rabbit* is normally chosen the following day of a rain as the foot print of the animal is easily seen on the ground. The people are divided into groups in the jungle before starting the hunting. The persons who can shoot properly are called *Bathane* as they sit at the point (Bathan) through which the animal escapes. That is a kind of ambush for the animal. The other group of people is for shouting and chasing the animal. The other group of people is for shouting and chasing the animal with the dog. The shouters and the dog follow the *Rabbit* until it reaches at the point ambush where the guards (Bathane) shot the bullet. If the case is not favorable always as the *Rabbit* hides it in the bushes or misfiring may occur. If the *Rabbit* is killed, the dead body of the animal is slide down many feet below. The person who find the animal first, he gets a separate parts of the meat while division. The *Rabbit* is un-leathered. A small part of heart and liver is cuts and offered to *Bandevi*. Then the shooter who kills the *Rabbit* gets a dorsal limb of the limb. Other hunting brothers get equal parts of the meat divided. Dogs also get same amount of meat which is observed by their masters.

7.7 Women Entrepreneurship

Liquor Making

Liquor making is the important women entrepreneurship among Magar of Mareng village which is valuable both economically and socially. Women earn so amount of

money by selling liquor which provides support in the small scale household expenditure like purchasing shop, sugar, tea, school fee of children, cigarettes etc. on the other hand Magar used liquor in different important festivals and ritual ceremonies. They offer drinks to their ancestor gods, send liquor as present to their relatives and serve the guest.

In Magar community *Pewa* (women's personal fund) is mainly created by liquor making. Most of girls also conduct this profitable activity. Young girls are usually given some grain to start a business of liquor making and selling by parents. The profit is used as capital and the initial input is never repaid to the families. By the money they buy their own clothes and other necessary goods and also take some strain off the household. The women conduct *Dhikuri* with the income in liquor selling.

Liquor is made from a variety of grains which might be from household grains or purchase in bazar or neighbouring villages. Most of common liquor grain is corn, wheat and millet. Now day rice is also used to prepare liquor by some rich families. Millet is considered the best grain for fine liquor. Occasionally the Plum fruit and *Chautari* are also used to prepare liquor when they are fund a lot of in June and July.

7.8 Organization of Labor

Labour is very important means of economic activities of every society. Traditional agricultural system and animal husbandry generally requires a considerable amount of human labor which is used as active means of production. Like most societies in which household is the basic unit of economy for production and exchange Magars of Maranthana village depend upon labor intensity in the household generate surplus or simply to meet subsistence needs. A large family is, in most of cases, as asset rather than an economic burden among them. Labor is needed for varieties of activities: agricultural, animal husbandry, maintaining household activities and outside employment. Landholding is small and land is relatively low in yield. In the absence of irrigation and the use of improved seeds or high grade fertilizer, increasing production depends upon labor intensity. In household with large landholding, a large amount of labor is needed to make full use of families holding. If there is shorts of family labor there is surplus wealth in wealthy household to hire additional labor. In

Maranthana families of a middle and low economic status supply the labor for wealthier families.

7.9 Division of Labour

Division of labor is the basis of economic activities in every society. Gender, age and sex the basis units of labor division in a society. In Magar people of Mareng village, the division of labor is marginal. Men, women and children are the source of labor in the village. In the agricultural work and animal husbandry, no particular division of labor is found. Generally the children and older persons do easier works than the other. They are relatively engaged to home caring and child rearing. The children mostly help mothers in ordinary kitchen works as washing pots, fetching water from the tap. They care the infants when the elder persons are busy in outworks from the homes. They put the infants into a wooden or bamboo made basket and swing to make entertain and sleep. They carry the infants on their back and wander about the courtyard or sometimes about village. Older person's grandfather and grandmother of the family take care of the children older man and women are assigned the task of watching the drying grain. They sit most of the day by the mat to scarce away village children who come to eat the grain. In the nuclear families, the infants are left in the care of the children otherwise mother must carry him/her and sets around near the working fields.

In Magar community, there is not a distinct labor division between male and female. Most of the agricultural works are done by both male and female together. The cooking foods, washing pots, cleaning homes etc are the works related with women. The male thus the household economy and the difficult works like carrying strong carpentry, machinery etc. In the busy agricultural seasons both men and women work together. Men ploughing and planting the seeds. Besides the household works, women are very much attached with production labor in the agricultural fields which includes the agricultural works such as post harvesting which are performed in the fields or in the courtyard of the house. Collecting fodder, litters, grasses, milking them etc are done by both male and female in the Magar community. Both male and female go to graze the cattle like goats, cows, ox etc.

7.10 Supply of Labour : Hired and Labour Exchange

Magar Community of Mareng village is the agricultural community, which need a large amount of labor during agricultural seasons. The people can afford the entire need of labor by themselves that's why they require the further supply of labor. There are two ways that a household deals with his labor problem. One is the use of *Khetela* (hired labor) and the other most important is traditional system of labor exchanges. The wealthier families which have got large amount of land and animals hire persons in daily as well as annual wage. The construction and maintenance of the houses and other ordinary work are done by hired labor. For such labor which require carrying large quantities of share, wood and other things, the skill performing works like carpentry, machinery etc. the man are hired in daily wages. The long term hired labor in some cases is paid annually. The lower castes *Kami* and *Damai* mostly are hired in such works. The *Hali* is one of such hired in which the *Hali* plough all the land of the landholder for all the years round. He is paid a fixed amount of grains like millet, rice, maize, cereals in addition to cash *Jela* (wages).

The importance source of labor supply as Maranthana village in labor exchange systems. This is traditionally long standing system among the villagers. They are actually in use until to day there are mainly three kinds of traditional labor exchange system among Magars of Mareng village.

7.11 Hudda

Hudda is the prominent labor exchange system among Magars. It is a system of rotating labor among the participant members of the *Hudda* group during agricultural season, during plantation, weeding and like harvesting the crops in the fields. The Magar man and women create a *Hudda* group consists of 5-15 persons both male and female. There are huge them one *Hudda* group doing these season. *Hudda* members mainly collect the manure in the fields, sow the seeds, or plants, brave the clouds of the fields. They also go to cut the *Khar* in the high hill during the autumn season which one them land to thatch the houses, cattle sheds or as the grass to feed the cattle. *Hudda* group, sometimes are invited by the fields of members rotationally until agricultural workers of members households is finished. They finally gather to organize a feats (party) and the group is finally dissolved.

7.12 Parma

Parma is another important system of labor exchange villagers. For households who can't afford more than occasional hired labor and have no bullocks for drafting the land, it is very useful system. In Parma system, if a man/women goes to a neighbor works, he calls the members to work in the own fields. A man and women who is leisure can go to his neighbor fields and can get equal amount of labor in return. If a pair of bullock is taken by somebody, he must go for work to pay parma. Then it fulfils the labor requirement during the agricultural season in easy way.

7.13 Free Labor (Helping Labor)

It is a kind of labor exchange system in which the man of any family is asked by the neighbors in ceremonial functions or in emergency cases to work as cooker, helper and any other working. Magar supply free labor of one day to their neighbors while constructing a new house, thatching roof. Magar people help their neighbor during various ritual functions like marriage, death and other fair and festivals.

In this table those who can read and write are literate. Here 64 .5% above the age of 5 are illiterate . The illiteracy rate in women is nearly 70% which is higher than male literacy rate. Among those literate most of the women have learnt from Adult Literacy classes and the table shows that as higher level of education there is decreasing no Student enrollment this is because of the lack of awareness of education among Magar community and other is the child have to work as child labour to feed them and their family.

CHAPTER- EIGHT

SOURCES OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGE

Social change may be defined as the process of significant alterations in the structure and functioning of particular social system. It includes the change in social behavior, social institutions and social cultural values thus transforming the social cultural economic organization of a community.

In previous chapters we have discussed and analyzed various features of social and cultural life of Magar people of study area. By the previous discussions we can conclude that the society and culture of Magar people are changing and the causes of which are Hinduisation, Sanskritisation, modernization and westernization etc. In this chapter I will try to discuss how these causes have changed the social life of Magar as well as the patterns in which social change is undergoing and these consequences.

8.1 Change in the System of Marriage

Magars marry in two ways by *Magi Biha* (arranged marriage) and by *Chori Biha* (theft of an unmarried girl). The later types of marriage were highly popular among them in the past. In both types of marriage girl used to stay in her husband's home in some years before the marriage ritual and after staying in her husband's home for some years the marriage process was practiced socially. There are even the married couple who's marriage process was practiced even after they had children. But now all of the Magars practice arranged marriage or love marriage. But once girl had gone to husband's home there is not practice of marriage process.

8.2 Adaptation of New Fashion

In the past all of the male Magar used to wear Bhoto , Kachhad and Gado and female Magar used to wear Choli, Dhoti and Gado. Today majority of the Magars of Mareng village wear new types of clothes such as Kurta and Suruwal for female and Pants and Shirt for male.

Table No.6 Dressing Style of Magar of Mareng Village

S.N	Dressing style	Number of individuals					
		Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1	Typical Magar Dress	2	4	3	6	5	10
2	New Dress	19	37	16	33	35	70
3	Mixed Dress	4	8	6	12	10	20

The above table shows that dressing of Kumal of Mareng village has been changed . Only 4% of male and 6% of female use typical Magar dress . 70% of Magar people especially youngsters have adopted new fashion of clothing .

8.3 Sources

The spread of Hindu civilization throughout most of south Asia has taken place over many centuries. An important aspect of this process has been the manner in which the Hindus advancing here by military conquest there by migration, have interacted with the tribal communities laying on the route of their progression (Xalpan:2000:1). Due to close contact with Brahman and chhetri, Magars of study area have been adopting various Brahmanical cultural values. Hindu religion has become the most important agency to change their social cultural and economic life. Similar impact can be absorbed due to western model of education. Development of communication technologies, economic and political changes among the Magfars.

Social life of Magars is changing due to various factors of modernization and westernization towards modernity. The high use of *Raksi* in different religious occasions has been minimized. The traditional wears of Magars have been totally changed to modern clothes. Their traditional woman wears like *Guniya*, *Cholo*, *Ghalek*, *Tenki* and ornament like *Phuli*, *Mundri*, *Kantha*, *Hammal*, *Raya*, etc are not used today. They wear T-shirts and *Lungi* and use ear rings as ornaments. Nose piercing has been stopped among girls. The male wear T-shirt, Pants, coats nowadays.

Magars practice Hindu caste system but not in orthodoxy way. They do not establish social relationship with lower caste of the Damai, Kami and sunar as they are considered as untouchable. Even among Magars, they do not prefer such relations with Bhayer, Bhujel. It may be the reason of sanskritisation as they think they are superior to them. Magars think them as Vaishya (The caste group upper than Dalits but lower than Brahman and chhetri).

In the past Magars used to worship different sources of power (Shakti like sun, water and fire. They used to worship the rock, water fountain and river as the source of power. They still worship different gods of own but various religious functions are dominated by Hinduism. They follow Hindu religion and its' directions during different occasions. They worship Hindu goddess Mahakali and sacrifice the chickens, goats and buffaloes to please her. They celebrate Dashain, Tihar and Tee and Ram Nawami which are directly related to Hindu gods and faiths. Magar women take different Brata(fasting) for well being and prosperity of their husbands. Magars organize different Hindu Pooja Like *Swasthani Brat* a (Story of Shiva and his wives), *Satya Narayan Pooja* related to lord Bishnu. They call Brahmans for pooja and give them different things as Daam to improve their *Graha-Dasha* (horoscope).

8.4 Patterns of Change

Change in social organization has changed the social life and out look of Magar people. The preference is increasing towards nuclear family. This pattern has caused the traditional function of family. The enculturation and socialization of the child is not performed in nuclear families as the older generations are absent. This process of modernization and westernization has made an individual self sufficient. Economically independent and active but prevented the development of personality according to it's traditional customs and adage it has changed the relation between parents and children.

The gender relationship as in change due to impact of both modernizations as well as westernization. The gender issue and movement have increased women awareness to their rights. The girls go to school with boys and they enjoy same economic, social and political rights more or less same to their brothers in the families. The status of women has improved and they play decisive role in the family as well as in society.

They take part in income generation skills and participate in different social, political and rituals functions. They take part in national and local elections and are elected as executive members of local bodies like VDC and DDC. The girls have got properties rights on their father's property. The traditional patterns of child marriage, unequal marriages and polygamy have been diminishing due to impact of modernization and educational attainment. Although in some cases, daughter in-law are subordinated by her husband as well as mother in-law. Educational status of girls is improving as both girls and boys are treated equally by their parents. The want of son however is highly found among parents as a result of Hindu domination.

Traditional kinship system of Magar people have been changing. They used to marry their *Sali* (maternal cousin) and it was preferred marriage pattern among them few years ago. But nowadays the marriage relation is established with any body within the Magar community except their clan members. Some educated boys and girls have established marriage relation out of community with Brahmans Chhetris, and others. This pattern of marriage has widened their kinship relationships and new kinship terms have been developed among them. Some of their traditional kinship has been replaced. For example, father in-law are called only by father and mother in-law only mother other traditional form of kinship relationship like miteri, Soltini, ista etc are not in effect nowadays as in the past.

Economic activities of Magar people in Mareng village has been changing traditional form to modernity. The people are traditionally based on agriculture but new economic activities have also been practiced by them. The improved agriculture tools, seeds, fertilizer and other technical aspects have changed productivity of land. They grow better food grains now. They produce green vegetables and fruits and sometimes sell them to bazaar so that it supports the household expenditure. People get better food with balanced diet and calorie now and that is why their health condition is better than past. The child mortality and mother mortality rate are decreasing. Changes has been occurred in food and drinks. Magar food was mainly *Aanto* (food made from maize) and vegetable. They prefer rice and Dal today. Utentials are made of metals like coppers and brass. Besides traditional foods they use noodles, chocolates, and biscuits nowadays.

Large number of youth are engaged in manual works in various foreign countries. They are working in India, Gulf countries, European countries as labour and Army. It has supported their family economy however the Gurkha recruitment is decreasing because the enlistment of boys has been made scarce and limited by British and Indians governments. Hunting has been banned by the government. Traditional forms of labour organization like *parma*, *Hudda* etc. are not practiced in the present. The hired labour is preferred labour system nowadays so that people get cash money daily.

They follow various *Sanskaras* (Hindu rites) from birth to death, addressed by Hindu Puranas. Northern Magars who are less Hinduised use their *Bhanja* as the priest in different rites and rituals but Magars of study area widely use Brahman Pandits. When a child is born a Brahman Pandit draws his *Janma Kundali* (fate line) which is used in different occasions during his life. Magars worship cow as Laxmi, therefore they do not eat cows meat rather use its urine to purify the pollution of birth and death. Magars have changed their traditional marriage patterns. They do not prefer to marry the *sali* nowadays. Brahman and Chhetris call their Mama's daughter as sisters, same tradition is followed by Magars nowadays. They use Brahman priest to find the marriage relation and Brahman pandits to perform marriage ceremonies. Wealthier Magars, as due to Sanskritisation, organize *Kanyadaan* during marriage. Some Magar women use *Sindur* (Vermilion powder) on their forehead and *Mangal Sutra* (Necklace) on neck. Marriage pattern of Magars have changed on the other way to love marriage. Most of Magar boy and girl prefer love marriage. In Magar community, widow marriage is not accepted socially but it is not thought bad. A woman is free to marry if her husband dies. Marriage with more than one man was considered normal among Magars but is not preferred at present.

Magars has also been influenced in death rites by the Hinduism. Traditional Magars used to cremate the corpses but they burn the corpse on the bank of river in the Brahmanical way now. Now Magars follow the Hindu practice to observe the death pollution for thirteen days. They use Brahman priests for all death ritual. They offer them different things as *Daan* according to Hindu scripts.

8.5 Consequences

The issues related to ethnicity, language and religions of various ethnic people has been arising by the indigenous people like Mager, Gurung, Rai, Limbu etc. They are opposing the Hindu domination on administration, statehood, Political, economical and cultural institutions in Nepal. They have started to adopt cultural traits of Buddhism and various rites and rituals of Hindu religion are given up by them. The process of De-Hinduisation has made Magar people aware towards their language, religion and cultural identities. They are interested to learn their language and script, their religious and cultural values.

To conclude: social change among Magar society of Mareng village has taken them at cross-road. They are, in one hand, deserving their own traditional social and cultural identities and on the other hand, observing cultural traits, habits and customs of different religions and societies.

CHAPTER-NINE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

9.1 Summary

Magars are an ethnic group of people who are residing in the western part of Nepal since the very beginning. They still comprise various social and cultural traditional, customs and values. The present study was conducted as an ethno-sociological study of Magars community in Mareng village of Pyuthan district. The objectives of the present study were to explore the social changes among them.

The area of study was Mareng village of Maranthana VDC. The village has a significant number of Magars and the Magar households. The village lies surrounded by Brahman-Chherti communities and they have adopted various Brahmanical ways of living. These were the reasons of my decision to undertake the village as my study area.

The chapter two presents the relevant literature of the study. The review has discussed two types of studies. The theoretical framework of review focuses on the various theories of social changes proposed by contemporary sociologists and social philosophers. August Comte, Herbert Spencer and other thinkers of nineteenth century have emphasized on the evolution processes in society propounded by Charles Darwin which assumes that in society also there is a cosmic progress from undifferentiated homogeneity to differentiated heterogeneity and progress takes place whether the people will it or not. Karl Marx on the other hand has tried to analyze and explain whole history as a struggle for a revolutionary reconstruction of society. He asserted that economic condition and economically oriented actions constituted the base of social structure and profoundly influenced all the other aspects of human activity. It is the relation of production which constitutes the economic structure influence on all human activity and social institutions. Srinivas is the pioneer sociologist to present a unique theory of social change in India and termed it Sanskritization.

The studies on Nepal analyze the changing patterns of social and cultural life of various ethnic groups of Nepal : Due to process of social changes by Hinduisation,

Sanskritization Westernization etc, the changes has undergone in their social organizations, life cycle rites and economic life.

The setting of the study area is located at the Eastern parts of Pyuthan district. On the study area (Mareng village), the ethnic composition is dominated by Magars. The main natural resources found in the study area are forest, land, and water. The distribution of natural resources is not equal in all areas. Land is the main natural resources and villagers have used it to support their subsistence economy. Land and the local people are inseparable from each other. Forest and pasture land and the local people are inseparable form each other. Forest and pasture land are the renewable natural resources which are generally used for firewood, fodder, timber, grazing facilities and fruits and vegetable. With a few exceptions, water has neither widely used for agriculture production nor for production of large scale hydro electricity power. Water is costly used for drinking and bathing purpose and irrigation in less.

The Magars are Tibeto-Burman dialect speaking Mongoloid group of people. In the study area there are 50 Magars households. The settlement pattern is compact rather than scattered. The people speak Magar language and the religion is mixed with Hinduism and Shamanism as well as Hinduism. They worship their ancestor deities, nature like hills, river, stream, tree as their protectors. They make promises to offer chickens, pigeons and goats during the years whenever they had some difficulties or asked for special favor such as birth of a son, recruitment in Army etc. They slaughter these animals in different occasions. Their social and cultural life has been influenced by Hinduism of the middle hill.

Social organization of Magars in the study area consists of no Political and legal values. The clans have equal social status and cultural rite. Generally oldest male person of the clan group is respected most and different rites and rituals are performed through him. These are nine clans in the study area each has got its *Gotra*. The *Gotra* plays important role in determining social as well as kinship. All clans observe strict clan exogamy. They are free to marry with any member of the Magar community except with the member of the same clan. They do not marry their father's sister's daughter but mother's brother's daughter is preferred to marry. The kinship is based on affinal, consanguine and fictive relations. The relation of *Daju-Bhai* and *Cheli-Beti* is

considered valuable in social and rituals occasions. The joint family system is spreading down to nuclear family.

The village economy is heavily based on agriculture and husbandry. Agriculture is primary occupation of all the villagers. The main group produced by the local inhabitants are paddy, millet and maize and subsidiary group and wheat, Buckwheat, potatoes etc. They also produce green vegetable and legumes. Animal husbandry is widely practiced by the villagers who provide them meat, manure and shaft power in agriculture seasons the most important economy sources of Magars family is from pensions and salaries of those who become soldiers.

The Magars of the study area have copied some life cycle rituals from the high caste Hindus but with different form. They do observe birth pollution, name giving ceremony, rice feeding ceremony, hair cutting ceremony, marriage and death ceremonies. Compared with the Brahman especially in observing pollution periods, Magars rituals are not so elaborate neither in days nor in numbers of people involved. The Brahman Pundit is used during all religious occasion. Marriage as a rule is monogamous and partilocal and descent is patrilineal. Most marriage is arranged by the young people themselves. The young people enjoy absolute freedom of premarital sexual activities. The marriage arranged by parents has been new trend for them. They observe death pollution like Brahman and chhetri when someone dies. They cremate the death body beside a river. They observe death pollution for Nine to thirteen days and perform various rites with the assistance of Brahman priest. All important festivals such as Dashain and Tihar are observed by Magars in addition of their own local festivals like *Saune Sankranti* and *Maghe Sankranti*

9.2 Conclusion

Inter-caste harmony or unity in diversity is a main feature in Nepalese society. It comprises ethnic diversity which includes high caste Hindu like Brahmans, chhetris, Thakuris etc, and various ethnic groups of people like Magars, Gurungs, Thakalis, etc.

Although these ethnic groups of people differ from one another in many details for the most part they share significant values and social institutions in common. They each have their primitive culture and social features, they dwell in definite traditional home lands and politically they are less powerful in compared with high caste Brahman and

chhetries. These ethnic people due to influence of Hinduism have been changing their models of life and patterns of culture. Brahman and Chhetries have exercised dominance in Nepal; they have enjoyed ritual pre-eminence particularly in that society in which religious believes are strong. They are in minority and their value system among the prevalent of the people is Nepal. But they are powerful in Politics, economy, government administration as well as civil services. This all conditions have ensured their hierarchal had ensured their hierarchal superiority in the social order in Nepal. Thus the process of Hinduisation and Brahmanistoin has been a major process of social and cultural change in Nepal.

Magars are the largest ethnic group of Nepal with one and half million individuals recorded in the 2001 census. Their modes of social life and cultural values have been highly influenced by Hindu religious faith and believe. Most of them speak Nepali as their mother language and use dress in Nepali ways. They use Brahman priests or the Pundits to perform their religions and cultural rites and rituals. They follow Hindu religion and its various dogmas. The social organization like family, and kinship, their structures and functions, economic values are directed towards Brahmanical way. The influence of westernization and modernization are however, not regrettable for the social change among Magars but these can be considered recessive at least for the present context.

9.3 Recommendation

Due to limited time and resources this study couldn't explore in-depth situation of socio cultural changes of Magars of Maranthana VDC but if detailed study is done there are various factors which can be revealed that will help to know more about this ethnic community. .

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Annex 1. Categories of Indigenous Nationalities of Nepal

Endangered group		Highly Marginalized groups		Marginalized groups		Disadvantaged groups		Advanced groups	
1	Kusunda	1	Majhi	1	Bhujel	1	Gurung	1	Newar
2	Raute	2	Siyar	2	Kumal	2	Magar	2	Thakali
3	Bankariya	3	Lohmi	3	Sunuwar	3	Rai		
4	Surel	4	Chepang	4	Tharu	4	Limbu		
5	Hayu	5	Thudan	5	Tamang	5	Tangbe		
6	Raji	6	Dhanuk	6	Ranjbansi	6	Chhainton		
7	Kisan	7	Santhal	7	Dhimal	7	Sherpa		
8	Lepcha	8	Jhangad	8	Bhote	8	Yakkha		
9	Meche	9	Thami	9	Gangai	9	Tingaule Thakali		
10	Kuswadiya	11	Bote	10	Darai	10	Baragaule Thakali		
11		12	Danuwar	11	Tajpuriya	11	Chhantyal		
12		13	Baramu	12	Pahari	12	Jirel		
				13	Topkegola	13	Byansi		
				14	Dolpo	14	Yalmo		
				15	Fri				
				16	Mugal				
				17	Lerke				
				18	Lohpa				
				19	Dura				
				20	Walung				