

## Thangmi questionnaire:

### 1: Description

#### 1.1: Name(s) of society, language, and language family:

- Thangmi or Thami, Thangmi, Sino-Tibetan, “In everyday speech the Thangmi call their language Thangmi Kham or Thangmi Wakhe, and refer to themselves as Thangmi, but in elevated ritual language some shamans use the term Thani. The Nepali designation for this group on the other hand, is Thami.” (1 p.2)

#### 1.2: ISO code: thf

#### 1.3: Location:

- Nepal, other various locations such as, “...Suspa, Sundrawati, Lapilang, Kalinchok, Babare and Alampu...” (2 p.6)
- “The Dolakha and Sindhupalchok districts of central-eastern Nepal are home to the largest concentration of Thangmi, but there is also a substantial population in the Darjeeling district of India's West Bengal state, as well as in the neighboring Indian state of Sikkim.” (6 p.2)

#### 1.4: Brief History:

- “There are mainly two oral traditions/stories attached to the origin and migration of Thami. First assumption is that Thami were the successor of the Kirati who ruled in Kathmandu for several years until encroachment of the Lichhavi rulers. After downfall of Karati rulers, one group of Karati headed toward eastern part of the Kathmandu valley through the route of Koteswar-Thimi, Sanga and Benighat. Finally, they settled in Kira chhap area (near by Charikot Bazar) of Dolakha. However, this hearsay is not supported by other oral traditions. Another oral tradition is more convincing than previous one. According to their mythology based on their oral tradition, they are the successors of Yappati Chhuku and Sonari Aaji traveling along the River bank of Tamakoshi river in ancient times, from Simangadh and Kumangadh of Sindhuli and Bara districts to arrive at Nagdah near Dolakha. After downfall of Kirati rules in Nepal, they scattered and moved towards in eastern part of Nepal through the banks of different rivers. One group led by Limbu headed towards Rawa khola and another group led by Khambu towards Mewa khola carrying piglets. Others traced other different rivers. Another brother Yapati Chhuku, (Thambu) who was carrying a goat traced the Tamakoshi River and traveled towards upper part of it along the river bank. According to one mythology, of the successors of karatis entering the Koshi area, those tracing along the Tamor river became Limbus, those tracing along the Arun became Rai/Khambu, those tracing along Dudhkoshi became Sunuwar, those tracing along Sunkoshi became Hayu, and those Kirati who traveled along the bank of Tamakoshi became Thami.” (2 p.7)

#### 1.5: Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

- The Thami people have a sore past of their land being taken from them, and are now, for the majority, too poor to feed their families on their own crop, so have to migrate to work.
  - “Along with the unification, other castes mainly Chhetri and Bahun deliberately immigrated and encroached over the khat land areas of Thamis.” (2 p.17)

#### 1.6: Ecology:

- The Thangmi live in many different areas in Nepal. The climate in Nepal can vary very highly, “...five climatic zones in Nepal based on altitude: the tropical and subtropical zone of below 1,200 meters in altitude; the cool, temperate zone of 1,200 to 2,400 meters in altitude; the cold zone of 2,400

to 3,600 meters in altitude; the subarctic climatic zone of 3,600 to 4,400 meters in altitude; and the arctic zone above 4,400 meters in altitude.” (4 p.1) So as you can see, the climate for the Thangmi is going to vary greatly depending on where they are living.

Also if you are interested, here is a link to an ethnobotanical article by Mark Turin:  
<http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/atlas/qt/climateNepal.htm>

1.7: Population size, mean village size, home range size, density:

- The total population of the Thangmi people is believed to be well over 30,000 in Nepal “Thamis are mainly found in Suspa Chhemawati, Sundrawati, Khopachagu, Alampu, Bigu, Kalinchok, Lapilang and Lakuri Danda villages of Dolkha District. According to National Census 2001, there were 2874 households and population 12,468 in Dolakha district and 22,998 population in Nepal (CBS, 2003). However, the population of the Thamis is estimated to be well over 30,000 in Nepal. There are about 1800 households and 10,000 populations in six VDCs: Suspa, Sundrawati, Lapilang, Kalinchok, Babare and Alampu...” (2 p.6)
- The mean village size is estimated to be anywhere from 2-3000, since this group is heavily overlooked ethnographically by most, there is no accurate census information on this, only those who have researched them personally have a decent idea of what the real numbers of the population and mean village size actually are, “In some Village Development Committees (hereafter VDC) there are 2,000 to 3,000 Thangmi inhabitants. By this reckoning it would take only five VDCs of this size to make up the alleged 14,000-strong Thangmi population. The reality is that there are many more VDCs, perhaps 15 to 20, with such sizeable Thangmi populations.” (1 p.3)
- The mean home population is about 6 per household. (2 p.6)

2: Economy

2.1: Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- Maize
- Millet
- Some paddy or wheat, if the land is good enough
- “Most of the households harvest mainly maize and millet

once a year. Some households hold small pieces of terraced paddy field, khets which are irrigated during monsoon. Those households who have owned irrigated khets as well as dry terraced land can produce food grains such as paddy, wheat, maize and millet.” (2 p17)

2.2: Main protein-lipid sources: N/A

2.3: Weapons:

- Don't have any particularly stapled to their culture, they are integrated in “modern” or “western” society and have been mostly peaceful throughout known history.

2.4: Food Storage: N/A

2.5: Sexual division of production:

- “Men and women more or less equally participate in household chores and agriculture works. However, women are found to be engaged in household chores such as fetching water, cooking, washing utensils, washing cloths, smearing floor and wall and take care of young children. Men also help women in household chores when they have time to stay at home. “Women are responsible for household chores because men usually have to go away from home for earning cash. We men and women equally participate in household chores and agricultural works when we are at home.” Said an informant from Babare VDC. Men are usually involved in

wage labour for earning cash where as women (usually wife of labouring men) collect cash from their husbands and sons and spend it for running household activities. “We women equally participate in all kinds of agriculture works except ploughing khet bari besides household works. Obviously burden of work is higher in women because Women have to carry out both household and agriculture works.” (2 p15)

#### 2.6: Land Tenure:

- Thangmi people tend to stay where they are once they are settled, much more sedentary group of farmers. They mostly have to be swindled out of even selling their land.

#### 2.7: Ceramics: none

#### 2.8: Specified sharing patterns:

- There is not too much trading between people in the village that can be found recorded, aside from the traditions of marriage, which are described later.

#### 2.9: Food Taboos: N/A

#### 2.10: Canoes/Watercraft:

- Coming from the mountainous region of Nepal the Thangmi people have no need for watercraft, so there are no such works from this culture.

### 3: Anthropometry

#### 3.1: Mean adult height (m and f): N/A

#### 3.2: Mean adult weight (m and f): N/A

### 4: Life History, Mating, and Marriage

#### 4.1: Age at menarche: N/A

#### 4.2: Age at first birth: N/A

#### 4.3: Completed family size:

- The mean size of a household in a Thangmi village is about 6 people. (2 p.6)

#### 4.4: Inter-birth-interval: N/A

#### 4.5: Age of first marriage:

- The average age to get married is about 15 years old, “Most of the people above 15 years of age were married (75.6%), followed by unmarried (20.1%), and widow and widower (3.7%).” (2 p.6)

#### 4.6: Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- There are very few, but there are almost no cases of divorce, less than 1 percent of the marriages in this ethnic group end in divorce, “Most of the people above 15 years of age were married (75.6%), followed by unmarried (20.1%), and widow and widower (3.7%). Four women and three men were reported to be divorced.” (2 p.6)

4.7: Percent of marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- No polygamy in this group.

4.8: Bride purchase, bride service, dowry:

- “Most marriages are arranged by between mutual agreement between parents of the boys and girls. When a boy reaches in adolescent stage, his father finds a family having daughter in the same village or next village. Then, boy’s father along with two lamis (marriage brokers) carrying rice beer in a long bamboo vessel visit the house of girl’s parent and hang the vessel of rice beer at the side of door as signal of marriage proposal. They also verbally put forward marriage proposal to the parent of girls. Then girl’s uncles and relative gather for taking decision on marriage proposal. Both parties sit together, discuss and decide about it. Girl’s parent accepts the rice beer brought by marriage brokers as indication of positive decision. The parent asks the marriage broker to bring one liter wine from boy’s house as first sagun. The wine is shared among the brothers of girl’s father. This activity confirms that marriage will be held between proposed girl and boys in future. After that boy’s parent must send lisar consisting of mainly several liters of local beers to the girl’s house at least three times. Accepting and consuming lisars for three times confirms the marriage between the boy and girl. After these event, both girl and boys are socially/legally not allowed to marry to any one else. Formal marriage ceremony can be arranged after few months to some years based mutual agreement between both sides and auspicious occasion.” (2 p.12)

4.9: Inheritance patterns: N/A

4.10: Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: N/A

4.11: Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: N/A

4.12: Patterns of exogamy (endogamy): N/A

4.13: What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized?: N/A

4.14: What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly?

- The provider of the womb in which the fetus grows

4.15: Is conception believed to be an incremental process? N/A

4.16: Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape: N/A

4.17: Preferential category for spouse:

- “Thamis do not allow cross-cousin marriages, a practice common among Gurung and other ethnic group. A clan member must marry outside his own clan, but not outside the group as a whole. The Thamis have typical marriage practices distinct from the marriage practices of other ethnic group.” (2 p12)

4.18: Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

- While not specifically mentioned in any texts, it is known that there are not big issues with gender discrimination among the Thangmi peoples, so females may enjoy the same sexual freedoms as males do.
- “According to Thami women and men informants there is no a big issue of gender discrimination in Thami community because women are not oppressed and dominated by men and men alone in majority of the households do not make decision in major transaction of households. Men and women more or less equally participate in household chores and agriculture works.” (2 p15)

4.19: Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring:

- No extramarital offspring

4.20: If mother dies, who raises children?

- No particular answer found, however since the families are in clans, and they have marriage (in the traditional western sense that places like USA have) the father would most likely be next to take care of the children, past him the clan.

4.21: Adult sex ratio:

- 1.02

4.22: Couvades:

- “The pregnant women deliver their babies at home. In a few cases, delivery takes place in farmland because the pregnant women have to carry out their routine work until the labour pain begins. Elder woman (mother-in-law), women relatives and neighbors assist the delivery. They also seek help from Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA) if she is available in the village. In complicated cases, they may approach the nearest health facilities or staff of the nearest health facility. However, most of the complicated cases were reported to be dealt by TBAs in the village. After birth, mother and newly born baby are kept inside house in a warm room. Only woman who involve in caring of them are allowed to touch Sutkeri (delivered) mother for a few days. Birth pollution is observed for five days in case of birth of female and seven days in birth of male. It might be due to the influence of Hindu rituals. However, they do not observe birth pollution strictly like Chhetri/Bahun. After delivery, chickens soup, rice beer, hot ghee, dal and rice are given to the Sutkeri women. Birth purification and nomenclature rites are performed by Jhankri priest, called Khami. Khami prepared sacred yellow color water using yellow powder extracted from turmeric like herbal plant’s tuber and sprinkle it over mother and baby as well as inside the house in order to purify birth pollution on fifth or seventh days of the birth. Sacred yellow threads are tied around neck, the wrists, ankle and waist of the baby in order to protect her from evil spirits.” (2 p.11-12)

4.23: Different distinctions for potential fathers:

- None in this group, no multiple fathers potential.

4.24: Kin avoidance and respect? N/A

4.24: Joking relationships? N/A

4.25: Patterns of descent? N/A

4.26: Incest avoidance rules:

- Do not marry inside same clan. (2 p12)

4.27: Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

- Yes, “The bridegroom along with wedding party goes to bride’s home to bring her on wedding day. Marriage ceremony is performed in the courtyard of bride’s home as soon as bridegroom reached there. Before offering tika, worship is done as per their custom and tradition which is quite different from Hindu marriage rituals. After worship, bride’s parent offers tika on forehead of both bride and bridegroom who are sitting on a mat in the courtyard. All the marriage rites and rituals performed by Khami. After having completed marriage rituals at bride’s parent home, the groom and bride wedding party go to the groom’s home. Marriage ritual and worship are performed in the courtyard of bridegroom house as soon as they reach there. After worship, bridegroom put vermilion powder on the head of bride. Then wedding party and guest participated in the wedding feast. A group of dancer performs traditional maruni dance at the evening of that day. Maruni dance is integral component of marriage ceremony. On third day, newly married couple visit the bride’s parent home carrying local wine and beers, bitten rice and sel roti. This is the end of the long marriage process of the Thami community.” (2 p12-13)

4.28: In what ways does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

- Named at birth. (6 p.454)

4.29: Is marriage usually within the community or outside community?

- Inside the community, “Thamis do not allow cross-cousin marriages, a practice common among Gurung and other ethnic group. A clan member must marry outside his own clan, but not outside the group as a whole.” (2 p12)

- Conflicting with this however: “... four to seven generations showed that about 75 percent of marriages over time were with non-Thangmi.” Usually non-Thangmii women becoming Thangmi. However this was in the past and was at a time when the population of the ethnic group was very low so was a necessity to marry outside of the community. (6 p.471)

4.30: Are marriages arranged?

- Yes, “Most marriages are arranged by between mutual agreement between parents of the boys and girls. When a boy reaches in adolescent stage, his father finds a family having daughter in the same village or next village. Then, boy’s father along with two lamis (marriage brokers) carrying rice beer in a long bamboo vessel visit the house of girl’s parent and hang the vessel of rice beer at the side of door as signal of marriage proposal. They also verbally put forward marriage proposal to the parent of girls. Then girl’s uncles and relative gather for taking decision on marriage proposal. Both parties sit together, discuss and decide about it. Girl’s parent accepts the rice beer brought by marriage brokers as indication of positive decision. The parent asks the marriage broker to bring one liter wine from boy’s house as first sagun. The wine is shared among the brothers of girl’s father. This activity confirms that marriage will be held between proposed girl and boys in future. After that boy’s parent must send lisar consisting of mainly several liters of local beers to the girl’s house at least three times. Accepting and consuming lisars for three times confirms the marriage between the boy and girl. After these event, both girl and boys are socially/legally not allowed to marry to any one else. Formal marriage ceremony can be arranged after few months to some years based mutual agreement between both sides and auspicious occasion.” (2 p12)

4.31: Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: N/A

Warfare/Homicide: This group is not one that is at war, or has been in their known, or recorded history, so all of these questions don't apply to this group that have to do with warfare in particular. (6)

4.31: N/A

4.32: N/A

4.33: N/A

4.34: Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies:

- “Thamis who live in Lapilang, Sudrawati, Babre and Suspa Chhamawati VDCs have critical relationship with Chhetri Bahun. Today, Thamis have been aware of tricks and strategies used by Chhetri Bahun and other castes to seize their land property in the past. They are still suspicious about the behaviour of Bahun Chhetris. However, they have compulsion to work as wage labour in the farm land and other construction activities of Chhetri and Bahun because of desperate poverty and lack of selfemployment opportunities in their community. Villagers said that Chhetri, Bahun and other castes still attempt to oppress and exploit Thamis using different tricks. Thamis supply work force as well as some bamboo products to other castes. Chhetri Bahun supply food grains and cash as wages of their labour force. Sometimes, Bahun priest is used to perform Hindu Pooja like Satyanarayna Pooja as per Hindu culture. But this practice is very rare and unusual in Thami communities.” (2 p16-17)
- “Thamis who live in Lapilang, Sudrawati, Babre and Suspa Chhamawati VDCs have critical relationship with Chhetri Bahun. Today, Thamis have been aware of tricks and strategies used by Chhetri Bahun and other castes to seize their land property in the past. They are still suspicious about the behaviour of Bahun Chhetris. However, they have compulsion to work as wage labour in the farm land and other construction activities of Chhetri and Bahun because of desperate poverty and lack of selfemployment opportunities in their community. Villagers said that Chhetri, Bahun and other castes still attempt to oppress and exploit Thamis using different tricks. Thamis supply work force as well as some bamboo products to other castes. Chhetri Bahun supply food grains and cash as wages of their labour force. Sometimes, Bahun priest is used to perform Hindu Pooja like Satyanarayna Pooja as per Hindu culture. But this practice is very rare and unusual in Thami communities.” (2 p17)
- “Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multicultural state where 102 castes and ethnic groups coexist and 92 languages and dialects are spoken (Gurung, 2003). The government has recognized 59 ethnic groups referred to as *adibashi Janajatis* in Nepali and *Indigenous Nationalities* in English and enlisted them in Nepal government's official Gazette of 2058 B.S. National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) Act 2058 BS has defined *janjatis* as “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.” *Janajatis* comprise about 38 percent of the country's total population of over 24 million. Due to discriminatory state policies over the last 237 years, most of the *Janajatis* have been economically exploited, culturally suppressed and politically excluded. The *Newars* and *Thakalis*, have had advantage over other ethnic communities by being city dwellers and being involved in trade and commerce. In Nepal, the high caste Hindus i.e.

Brahmins and Chhetris mainly from the hills, who together comprise about 31% of the country's total population, dominate politically and culturally ... As a whole, 24 out of 59 Janajatis, who are the most disadvantaged and deprived groups, are on the verge of extinction. They have been identified by NEFIN as Highly Marginalized Janajatis (HMJ) in the project document (NEFIN, 2004). Surel and Thami of the eastern hill and Dhanuk of the central Terai belts are prominent among these HMJs. The most distinguishing features of these communities are their miserable economic condition, food insecurity, limited or no access to educational and health services, low educational status, extreme socio-political disempowerment and exclusion and restricted access to resources and opportunities.” (2 p.1-2)

#### 4.35: Cannibalism:

- None known of or at least recorded.

#### 5.1: Mean local residential (village) group size:

- 2,000-3,000 per village (1 p.3)

#### 5.2: Mobility Pattern:

- Fairly sedentary group, in state level society so have steady places where they live. They usually do not migrate anywhere within one lifetime. They are spread out a little across India and Nepal but they do not have a particular mobility pattern. (2)

#### 5.3: Political System:

- They have clans within the groups but I do not believe that they are a symbol of power, more a symbol of family than a symbol of any kind of political power. No specific examples given in any of my sources if this is the case. However Identity as a Thami is seen through which clan you are in, so belonging to one is quite important. Before marriage ethnic identity is seen as relatively flexible. (6 p.429)
- “The Thamis who have been struggling for hand to mouth problem have poor understanding about social, economic and political rights of ethnic groups and women. Most Thamis have no idea about rights of indigenous peoples and constitutional and legal provisions of the state. Only a few key informants who are associated with their organization, Nepali Thami Samaj can explain some rights of indigenous people such as rights to education in mother tongue maintain ethnic identity and protect and practice their socio-cultural and religious activities freely. Some of the men and women participating in group discussion mentioned that they should get opportunities to protect their language and culture which have been on the verge extinction. Regarding women rights, villagers said that men and women are equal and they should be treated equally. They further stated that there is unequal wage between man and women even in same nature of work.” (2 p.23)
- “Participation of the Thamis in local governing bodies and affiliation to political parties are still low. Many villagers have no clear idea about importance of political participation and representatives in local governing bodies. Participants of focus group discussion in Lopilang said; “we are majority in number, but our representation in VDC, school management committee, Health Post Management Committee and Forest Users Groups. Chetri, Bahun and other castes groups attempt to exclude us from decision making process. Our representation in local governing bodies is symbolic as we cannot influence decision making process. In many cases they do not consult us.” (2 p.23)
- “Other key informants of Lopilang, Sundrawati, Suspa Chhamawati and Babre expressed similar views. Thamis are found to be involved in all local governing bodies in Kalinchok

and Alampu where existence of other community is negligible. But they have no strong affiliation to major political parties and poor relation and network with District Development Committee. Bahuns and Chhetris were elected in the positions of Babare and Lapilang VDCs where majority of people belong to the Thamis. It indicates that Thamis are still backward and weak in political activities. Villagers believe that pervasive illiteracy and poverty are major obstacles for getting involved in political arena.” (2 p.23)

#### 5.4: Post Marital Residence:

- The bride moves to the grooms home. (2 p.12-13)

#### 5.5: Territoriality:

- No active territory defense. Only the boundaries as drawn by the state in the villages. (2)

#### 5.6: Social interactions and divisions:

- Clan identity is passed down from the same sex parents, so two opposite sex siblings from the same biological parents have different clan affiliation. However, “ This makes it sound as if the practice of clan exogamy in choosing marriage partners...would be very easy, since all men and women are already members of different clans. To the contrary, it becomes more complicated, since the clan affiliations of both the potential marriage partner and his or her sisters or brothers are considered, and ideally there should not be any shared clan affiliations through either the male or the female line for seven generations. This suggests that although clan affiliation passes from same-sex parents to children, it is not entirely bounded by gender. Similarly, in theory, women should inherit and use their mother's clan name exclusively, but in reality women often identify themselves by their father's, and in some cases, husband's, clan name as well.” (6 p.438)

#### 5.7: Special Friendships/Joking Relationships: N/A

#### 5.8: Village and House Organization:

- They are organized within the context of the nation-state in which they live, so it is difficult to say whether or not how they organize is a choice of their own culture or the one which controls most of the political power in the areas they inhabit, which would be Nepal and India.

#### 5.9: Specialized village structures: N/A

#### 5.10: Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- Have homes, but nothing specifically discussed about where they sleep in any source found. (2,6)
- “There were about 2874 household and population 12,468 in Dolakha district...There are about 1800 household and 10,000 populations in six VDCs...” (2 p.6)

#### 5.11: Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

- They operate with a clan system
- Origin: “In Rangathali Ya'apa and Sunari Ama had seven sons and seven daughters. But there was no one for these sons and daughters to marry, except each other, which was impossible since they were brother and sister. So ya'apa and Sunari sat down to discuss the situation. They decided to assign each of the children separate clans, after which they could marry each other. They gave arrows to their sons and held a shooting event. Wherever each son's arrow landed, that place or thing would become

his clan name. Then they went to see what kind of work each daughter was doing, and that became her clan name.” (6 p.436)

- “In contemporary practice, those children born to Thangmi parents are recognized as having an incipient clan affiliation at the time of birth based on descent from their mother or father depending on their gender, but still these memberships are only made socially explicit and meaningful at the time of marriage.” (6 p.437)
- Supposedly you get your clan name as discussed earlier from your same sex parent. However this is not true in practice. Many women use their husbands or fathers clan names. (6 p.438)
- Male Clan Names:
  - akal akyangmi
  - kyangpole akyangmi
  - areng akyangmi
  - dumla akyangmi
  - danguri akyangmi
  - mosanthali akyangmi
  - jaidhane akyangmii
- Female Clan names:
  - budati
  - yante siri siri
  - calta siri
  - alta siri
  - khasa siri
  - bampa siri
  - khatu siri
- The clan names are not so much status symbols however, they are much more a way of telling what family you are from and who you can marry. Used primarily to avoid incest. (6)
- “...there are equal numbers of male and female clans, and the names themselves are not inherently gendered. None of the female clan names refer to gendered activities... In this respect, the clan structure instantiates a so-called “egalitarian” model of social organization...” (6 p. 445-446)

#### 5.12: Trade:

- No trade with outside groups spoken of aside from other people trying to take their land from them: “Thamis who live in Lapilang, Sudrawati, Babre and Suspa Chhamawati VDCs have critical relationship with Chhetri Bahun. Today, Thamis have been aware of tricks and strategies used by Chhetri Bahun and other castes to seize their land property in the past. They are still suspicious about the behaviour of Bahun Chhetris. However, they have compulsion to work as wage labour in the farm land and other construction activities of Chhetri and Bahun because of desperate poverty and lack of selfemployment opportunities in their community. Villagers said that Chhetri, Bahun and other castes still attempt to oppress and exploit Thamis using different tricks. Thamis supply work force as well as some bamboo products to other castes. Chhetri Bahun supply food grains and cash as wages of their labour force. Sometimes, Bahun priest is used to perform Hindu Pooja like Satyanarayna Pooja as per Hindu culture. But this practice is very rare and unusual in Thami communities.” (2 p.16-17)

#### 5.13: Indications of social hierarchies:

- None found or indicated however it is showing that the female clan names are becoming less important and the male clan names are becoming more important. (6 p.449)

- Also they tried to use the clan names to claim certain pieces of land, but having trouble doing so without affirming the incest within their origin myth so have yet to act on or create any inequality between the clans. (6 p.451)

## 6: Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

### 6.0: Time allocation to RCR:

- No daily practices talked about, aside from one major religious festival and life and death rituals, there is no allocated time every day to religious practices. They do however make offerings at times to assure a deity's approval or forgiveness. (6 p.143)
- “In the absence of written religious text, all religious functions and ceremonies are organized by khami (jhankri) based on their oral text and tradition. Their sacred text, Paloke is based on verbal tradition. They have no their own religious organization and institution like church of Christian and Monastery of Buddhist. Bhume pooja, the main religious functions as well as festival of the Thamis is organized systematically. Some people of the village get organized under leadership of khami and village leader in order to worship and celebrate bhume pooja: Ubhaulti and Udhaulit. They collect half kg flour of rice and wheat from each household in order to make big statue like structure, called solmu using the flours. All the households have compulsion to participate in bhume Pooja. After the bhume pooja, small pieces of prasada extracted from solmu are distributed to each household. Likewise, people informally get organized in order to carry out marriage ceremony and death rites as per their religious beliefs and cultural tradition. Main performer of religious activities and ceremony is Khami who is a traditional healer, priest and socio-religious leader of the Thami community. Khami can be considered as religious and social institution in the Thami community.” (2 p.14-15)
- Conflicting with what was said above: “The central figure of Thangmi ritual practice is undoubtedly the guru. Often referred to as guru apa, meanin “guru father”...” However this guru is called the Khami as stated above during *bore* or marriage rituals. (6 p.143)

### 6.1: Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- There is according to one source, a Khami, which is a group leader that organizes religious events. (2 p.14-15)
- There is according to another source, a guru, whom many people consult for things such as how to arrange a funeral, when to make offerings to “secure a deity's good graces” (6 p.143) These gurus only oversee funerary and marriage rites. (6 p.143-144)
- There are also Thami *Jhankri* who conduct curative rituals. They are what we would call “faith healers.” (6 p.144)

### 6.2: Stimulants:

- Exchange of rice beer and wine during the deciding of who shall marry who in the marriage rituals: “Most marriages are arranged by between mutual agreement between parents of the boys and girls. When a boy reaches in adolescent stage, his father finds a family having daughter in the same village or next village. Then, boy’s father along with two lamis (marriage brokers) carrying rice beer in a long bamboo vessel visit the house of girl’s parent and hang the vessel of rice beer at the side of door as signal of marriage

proposal. They also verbally put forward marriage proposal to the parent of girls. Then girl's uncles and relative gather for taking decision on marriage proposal. Both parties sit together, discuss and decide about it. Girl's parent accepts the rice beer brought by marriage brokers as indication of positive decision. The parent asks the marriage broker to bring one liter wine from boy's house as first sagun. The wine is shared among the brothers of girl's father. This activity confirms that marriage will be held between proposed girl and boys in future. After that boy's parent must send lisar consisting of mainly several liters of local beers to the girl's house at least three times. Accepting and consuming lisars for three times confirms the marriage between the boy and girl. After these event, both girl and boys are socially/legally not allowed to marry to any one else. Formal marriage ceremony can be arranged after few months to some years based mutual agreement between both sides and auspicious occasion. After several years of lisar consumption, marriage date is fixed when auspicious moment for the performance of marriage ceremony comes." (2 p.12)

- There is also a smaller amount of wine given and beer offered in their death rites as well: "Dead person's sons change their cloths and cover head with white piece of raw cloth. They abstain eating some food items and offer some pieces of meat and wine in the name of the deceased person each day for initial three days in order to observe small Ghewa. Previously, collective Ghewa was used to get organized in the month of Poush whenever they passed away. Now days, most of the Ghewa is completed on the thirteenth day of the death. Actual Ghewa rituals begin just three before the Ghewa ceremony whether it is organized in the month of Poush or on the thirteenth day. The deceased person's son's hair is shaved and covered with a white piece of cloth. They mourn for only three days abstaining different food items and eat only plain rice brought by their relatives. They also offer local beers and meat in the name of the deceased person each day for three days." (2 p.13)

### 6.3: Passage rituals:

- Birth: "The pregnant women deliver their babies at home. In a few cases, delivery takes place in farmland because the pregnant women have to carry out their routine work until the labour pain begins. Elder woman (mother-in-law), women relatives and neighbors assist the delivery. They also seek help from Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA) if she is available in the village. In complicated cases, they may approach the nearest health facilities or staff of the nearest health facility. However, most of the complicated cases were reported to be dealt by TBAs in the village. After birth, mother and newly born baby are kept inside house in a warm room. Only woman who involve in caring of them are allowed to touch Sutkeri (delivered) mother for a few days. Birth pollution is observed for five days in case of birth of female and seven days in birth of male. It might be due to the influence of Hindu rituals. However, they do not observe birth pollution strictly like Chhetri/Bahun. After delivery, chickens soup, rice beer, hot ghee, dal and rice are given to the Sutkeri women. Birth purification and nomenclature rites are performed by Jhankri priest, called Khami. Khami prepared sacred yellow color water using yellow powder extracted from turmeric like herbal plant's tuber and sprinkle it over mother and baby as well as inside the house in order to purify birth pollution on fifth or seventh days of the birth. Sacred yellow threads are tied around neck, the wrists, ankle and waist of the baby in order to protect her from evil spirits." (2 p.11-12)

- Death: "Death ritual of Thami is quite similar to that of Tamang. Death ritual is called Ghewa in their language. Death ritual begins immediately after death of a person. First, corpse is removed from the place/bed where s/he died. A small iron hook which can be used in plough is buried under place of a deceased person and then Jhankri blows mantra sprinkling local wine in order to drive ghost from that place. The corpse is tied with rope

on two poles of bamboo. Then Jhankri walk first on the way to cemetery, spraying paddy and carrying katro, white raw cloth that is tied as flag on a bamboo stick. Some carry the corpse on their shoulder and move toward cemetery located on the top of hillock. The corpse is placed over the arranged wood to burn it. After having burnt it, all people involving in funeral procession returned to their village. Dead person's sons change their cloths and cover head with white piece of raw cloth. They abstain eating some food items and offer some pieces of meat and wine in the name of the deceased person each day for initial three days in order to observe small Ghewa. Previously, collective Ghewa was used to get organized in the month of Poush whenever they passed away. Now days, most of the Ghewa is completed on the thirteenth day of the death. Actual Ghewa rituals begin just three before the Ghewa ceremony whether it is organized in the month of Poush or on the thirteenth day. The deceased person's son's hair is shaved and covered with a white piece of cloth. They mourn for only three days abstaining different food items and eat only plain rice brought by their relatives. They also offer local beers and meat in the name of the deceased person each day for three days. On the thirteenth day, special Ghewa function is organized in the courtyard. Different solma and items prepared using millet, rice and wheat flour, and big soybeans, yam and chicken meat are offered to the deceased person. Previously, it was compulsory to sacrifice cow and offer it head to the soul of deceased person. Now days, a small piece of cow leather is offered as symbol of cow head/meat. Since cow sacrifice is illegal, some Thamis offer goat head and meat to the soul of deceased person in Ghewa. All the functions of Ghewa from beginning to end are performed by Thami Jankri. The death rites and rituals are quite different from Hindu death ritual which is performed by Bahun priest.” (2 p.13-14)

#### 6.4: Other rituals:

- One major festival practiced twice per year: “Bhume Puja, worship of land and earth is the main festival of the Thami people which is celebrated twice a year. Ubhauhi is celebrated in full moon of Baishakh and Udhauli is celebrated after harvesting major crops in full moon of Mangsir. Besides this, they also celebrate major Hindu festival such as Dashain, Tihar, Maghe and Saune Sankrati. People living in Suspa Chhamawati and Sundrawati visit the Bhimsen Temple of Dollkah and offer curd, vegetables, fruits and uncastrated goats to god Bhimsen. But they do not celebrate Dashain as magnificently as other caste people.” (2 p.14)

#### 6.5: Myths (Creation):

- Believed that in the beginning there was only water and then the gods had a meeting to decide what to do with this vast space. Then fish and insects were created. Then a lotus flower sprouted and with it came ants. The ants killed the insects and created land. Because it was still dark the sun was created. Eventually the gods decided they wanted to make people to fill the vast amount of land that the ants created. They tried making metal people but they could not talk. Then they successfully created a person that could talk and told him to go and die, so he did. His spirit roamed and 1000 years later it went into a cow and the cow birthed three people. The cow then told its children to eat it. (6 p.161-162) (EXTREMELY PARAPHRASED, much too long to write down)
- “The narrative does not take for granted that the Thangmi are at the center of the world; to the contrary, it assumes that the Thangmi are peripheral, at the edge of every system of ethnic classification with which they are associated.” (6 p.165)

#### 6.6: Cultural Material: N/A

#### 6.7: Sex differences in RCR:

- Women cannot be gurus. (6 p.143)

6.8: Missionary effect:

- none

6.9: RCR revival:

- Not applicable never lost.

6.10: Death and afterlife beliefs:

- Believe that if you possess a clan name then you become a Thangmi “ancestor” and that you become a spirit and roam the earth. No specific stories on how you become a spirit after death. (6 p.145)

6.11: Taboo of naming dead people? N/A

6.12: Is there teknonymy?

- No

6.13: Briefly describe religion:

- “This shows that Thamis are neither Hindus nor Buddhists. However, their religious rites and rituals are based on oral traditions and performed by their own priest Jhankri. They worship the nature such as Bhume, Vayu deuta, and other deities. Actually, they are nature worshiper, Animist and follower of Kirat.” (2 p.10)

7: Adornment

7.1: Body paint:

- none (6)

7.2: Peircings:

- none (6)

7.3: Haircut:

- Men shorter hair, but not always. Women always longer hair. (6)

7.4: Scarification:

- none (6)

7.5: Adornment:

- none (6)

7.6: Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- During the wedding men usually wear some kind of hat, possibly body paint, and an intricate necklace. The women usually wear some kind of intricate veil with beads or stones decorating it and a dress. (6 p.464)

#### 7.7: Sex differences in adornment:

- “Dress and ornaments are essentially linked with ethnic identity. Majority of the respondents mentioned that they have their own ethnic dress and ornaments (64.1%). Their traditional dress for men is bhangra, a kind of overcoat made up of allo (nettle) fibers and the women wear gunew also made of allo. This sort of dress is worn by a few Thami people because most people had given up their skill required for weaving bhangra. Thamis living in Alampu area still wear bhnagra and lakuni made of sheep wool. Due to modernization, the men have begun to wear the daura suruwal or pants. The women also wear phariya, cholo, patuka and lungi. Thangmi women also wear ornaments of gold and silver such as ear ring, knecklace, nose pin, phuli and silver chain attached to coin around chest.” (2 p.14)

#### 7.8: Missionary effect:

- None, went and attempted to convert them to Christianity, but to no avail. (6)

#### 7.9: Types of clothing:

- “Dress and ornaments are essentially linked with ethnic identity. Majority of the respondents mentioned that they have their own ethnic dress and ornaments (64.1%). Their traditional dress for men is bhangra, a kind of overcoat made up of allo (nettle) fibers and the women wear gunew also made of allo. This sort of dress is worn by a few Thami people because most people had given up their skill required for weaving bhangra. Thamis living in Alampu area still wear bhnagra and lakuni made of sheep wool. Due to modernization, the men have begun to wear the daura suruwal or pants. The women also wear phariya, cholo, patuka and lungi. Thangmi women also wear ornaments of gold and silver such as ear ring, knecklace, nose pin, phuli and silver chain attached to coin around chest.” (2 p.14)

#### 8: Kinship systems

##### 8.1: Sibling classification system:

- Siblings defined by who your mother and father are. Also those in your clan are considered family, however they are not necessarily siblings, but sometimes are depending on chance of actual relation with them. (6)

##### 8.2: Sororate, levirate: N/A

##### 8.3: Other notable kinshp typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology: N/A

#### 9: Other interesting cultural features:

- The Thangmi have been very resilient to outside forces coming in and trying to shut down their religion and tradition, and as a result have a very independent culture in their religious beliefs and marriage ceremonies. (6)

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