

The Rhythms of Drum (Chyabrung), the Performance and Significance in Limbu Society

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Abstract

The rhythms of Chyabrung is not only the drum for musical instrument, different rhythms of sacred drum produces the sounds, rhythms and symbols that acts as the socio-cultural-religious mechanism in Limbu society. The rhythms of Chyabrung either in happy, sorrow, sacred and profane that instruct, socialize, interact and mechanize the individual or institutions or social structures of Limbu society in which one can understand the Limbu world, their everyday life, their rituals and their various micro-social institutions like marriage, family, kinships and their associates. In Limbu traditional rites, rituals and ceremonies their ethnic music, dances which is only possible through Chyabrung that play central role through which they successfully reduce the tensions, conflicts, stresses and misunderstanding among them. In this article Chyabrung is presented as key instrument through which Limbus employ great deal of music, dance, socialization and cultural interaction with their members from birth to the death. So, Chyabrung manifestly performs the functions such as to participate in various activities, rituals, and festivals through the entertainments in one hand and functions of uniting, harmony among members with their identities. Chyabrung helps to create the wider spectrum interactions of communities, families, kin's and society. Chyabrung stands as musical instruments or dance for outsiders but it functions as the complete mechanism for the Limbu world for the maintaining governance among the insiders.

Keywords: Chyabrung (Drum), Rhythms, Ethnic Group (Limbu), Sacred, Culture, Festivals, Tension Resolution, etc.

INTRODUCTION

Limbu is one of the ethnic groups of Nepal, live in Eastern part of the hilly region of Nepal. The lives of *Limbu* are socio-culturally rich but economically subsistence patterns of live they have spent. In every socio-cultural and religious functions they need drum called Chyabrung. Either happiness or sorrow Limbu use drum that makes the acts, activities and symbols- sacred or profane or pure or polluted. These language of music or sounds or symbols are special language or means or structure that relates the language, music and culture with human activities. However, the music is the refection of society, human behavior and their associates (Dahal, 2019). It is because of this kind of relationship between deep and surface structures that we cannot regard language as a matter of fitting words into grammatical slots according to learned patterns, regardless of the cognitive processes that underlie the patterns.

Socio-cultural Settings of the Study Area and People

Limbu is indigenous ethnic group, residing far eastern hilly region of Nepal. This community has their own language, costume, culture and tradition. *Limbus* are the second-largest tribe of the *Kirat* people, who live in Nepal in the easternmost region of the Himalayan ranges, east of the Arun River, as well as northern India, mostly in the state of Sikkim, West Bengal, and Assam (Bista, 1967). They mostly live in the eastern highland districts of Nepal, such as *Taplejung*, *Panchthar*, *Ilam*, and *Jhapa* in the *Mechi* region, and *Sankhuwasabha*, *Tehrathum*, and *Dhankuta* in the *Koshi* region, which are traditionally known as *Pallo Kirat* or *Limbuwan*, their native homeland. In the early twenty-first century, the population of *Limbus* is over 400,000 (CBS, 2021) and *Limbus* can now be found across the nation, even in the Kathmandu valley. *Limbus* are the ethnic group residing in eastern hilly region of Nepal. Especially the main settlement areas of *Limbu* community are *Taplejung*, *Panchthar*,

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Ilam, Terbathum, Dhankuta and Sikkim of India. But at present they live in other parts of the country and out of the country such as Hong kong, UK, USA. They have long history of residing these areas (*Taplejung, Panchthar, Ilam, Terbathum*) with their own culture, language, costume, religion and *Mundhum* (Bista, 1967). All rituals are guided by *Mundhum*.

***Limbu* Society and Culture through Rhythms of Drum (*Chyabrung*)**

Chyabrung is founded not for the sound to produce, it varies according to the occasions, festivals, situations, nature and purposes, but rhythmical stirring depends on the occasions is on happiness, progress, festive celebrations and entertainments or sorrow, to express heartfelt condolence and more. Therefore, to understand *Limbu* society and culture is to understand in which *Chyabrung* ; when, how, what, why and where the sacred drum is playing, dancing and singing. What kind of sounds, rhythms signify in the particular context; there are two facets in *Chyabrung* melody or sound or rhythms; **happiness**, or **sorrow**. *Chyabrung* is socio-cultural, religious that it is performed in a verity of social, cultural religious, political contexts, often for specific purposes. It is complex whole that it may involve people in a powerful shared experience within the comprehensive framework of their cultural experiences and social interactions and thereby make *Limbu* society more aware of themselves and of their responsibilities; communal and individual.

Chyabrung is not away from reality of *Limbu* life, it is an adventure into reality, the reality of world of the spirit. It is an experience of becoming in which individual *Limbus* consciousness is nurtured within the collective consciousness of the community and hence becomes the source of richer cultural forms. So, *Chyabrung* and *Limbus* are reciprocal interdependent with one another, without one's identity other is in verge of crisis.

Chyabrung is a symbol itself and is connected with every aspect of *Limbu* community. It is worthy to investigate *Chyabrung* according to Anthropological point of view because *Chyabrung* is connected with history, culture, identity, socialization, tradition and cultural interactions of *Limbu* community (Subba, 1998). Thick description is needed to understand the meaning, role and significance of *Chyabrung* rather than thin one. This research helps to get the knowledge about *Chyabrung* and its importance in some extent in this regards for *Limbus*. *Chyabrung* is most essential for *Limbu* culture, tradition and its significance in wider horizon. It is connected with history, culture, tradition and rituals (Subba, 1995, Chemjong, 1967). It is played and danced in wedding, before entering new home, *Chautaro*, and other programs such as worshipping of god, celebrating fest and festivals. To know the meaning of playing the rhythm of *Chyabrung* in newly constructed home, marriage and welcome programs. Dancing people with *Chyabrung* use different signals while dancing and how it is connected with *Limbu* culture and community (Lawati, 2005, Subba, 1999). The problem is that *Chyabrung* is going to be extinct day by day. This culture is gradually being influenced by the western culture. New generation should know this culture to preserve it. There is no in-depth research on *Chyabrung* till date. Necessary steps should be taken to preserve and promote this culture and tradition.

Chyabrung has very important role in *Limbu* community. Most of the cultural and tradition such as wedding, opening of new home, fest and festival of *Limbu* community are incomplete in absence of *Chyabrung* (Lawati, 2005). How does it come into existence? Why is it danced in wedding, inauguration of new home, joyful and happy and programs, festival? What are the other things that are used in this dance? To know the answer of these questions from reliable resources, it is to prepare an academic article so that it could help some extent to study and to gain knowledge and ideas about the *Limbu* culture of *Chyabrung* and *Chyabrung* dance for future generation.

Chyabrung (musical drum) as cultural means to deliver the various messages that includes the traditional cultural dance of *Limbu* that is performed in marriage, feat, festivals and fair etc. Since ancient time *Limbu* community people are living east of the Arun River (Chemjong, 1967). They are called *Limbu*, *Yakthungba*, *Subba*. But *Subba* is elite named by Gurkha ruler (Lawati, 2005). These words regarding to *Limbu* community don't have single view, however, these words are related with whole *Limbu* community. *Limbu* communities have their own typical language, musical instrument and dresses. They have musical drum which is called *Chyabrung* (musical drum) is most essential, sacred and holy for *Limbu* communities. It is related and connected with most of the cultural and traditional belief system or religious belief system since ancient age. *Chyabrung* is of cylindrical shape made of hollow wood covered by goat skin on both sides (Subba, 1995). It is made up of a kind of special tree called

khamari (Gmelia Arborea). It is covered by goat skin from both sides and played by two hands hanging on body with the help of a string. One side is played by finger of hand or palm of hand and is called *Huksagay* (played by hand) and another side is played with the help of a stick and is called *Sinsagay* or ke chari (stick used to play one side of *Chyabrung*) (Chemjong, 1967). This drum is played in each and every enjoyable program such as wedding ceremony, festivals, newly made house etc.

Rhythms of Drum (Chyabrung) in Limbus

Music creator or composer has a basic cognitive system that represent the spirit of the society and features of the cultures that sets its stamp on his major works, regardless of the ensembles for which they were written or singing. So, the cognitive system of music is an accurate and comprehensive description of particular music in which society and culture reflects, therefore the music mostly, folk music or instruments or melody provides the fundamental and powerful explanation of patterns of that particular music of particular society and culture (Blacking, 1973).

Ethnomusicology is to identify characteristic musical styles in their own terms; how they play instruments, how they produce melody and how they combine all in a lyrical patterns that society and culture feel emotions, feelings, happiness and many more that I have found during the course of fieldwork in study area. The musical style has its own terms; its terms are the terms of society, culture and people who listen to it, perform it and create it (Merriam, 1964).

The musical styles are based on what *Limbus* has chosen to select from nature as a part of his cultural expression rather than on what nature –culture- nurture has imposed on him (Dahal, 2021a). Ethnomusicology's claim to be a new method of analyzing music and music history must rest on an assumption not yet generally accepted, namely, that because music is humanly organized sound, there ought to be a relationship between patterns of human organization and the patterns of sound produced as a result of human interaction.

If I describe some of the functions or significance of rhythms of drum (*Chyabrung*) in *Limbus* society, perhaps the new knowledge may stimulate a better understanding of similar processes in other societies and culture, and of the bodies of the human beings who listen to it, and create and perform. *Chyabrung* as drum creates the rhythms is sound that is organized into socially accepted patterns, that sound making may be regarded as a form of learned behavior, and those musical styles that are basis for the *Limbus* to express their feeling on society, human, culture, religion, nature, occupations and surroundings.

The main objectives of this study is to explore how the *Chyabrung* helps to maintain the social order in *Limbu* community through the entertainment, dances, singing and another important part of the study is to identify the socialization patterns, everyday life, harmony among *Limbus*.

Theoretical Overview

Cultural anthropologists like Clifford Geertz, Victor Turner, Marry Douglas, D. Scheider have made their valuable contribution in development of the symbolic theory. Among them the Geertzian model focused on social events, social context and context of the society, where symbols play key role to understand the socio-economic system as well as cultural sources (Dahal, 2020a,). Every action is guided by the interpretation and that interpretation involves the things that are ideal framed by its culture in one hand and the activities that are material which we can easily observed. That's why symbolic anthropology focused on religion, cosmology, ritual activities as well as the customs that are expressed mythological or by the performing arts, forms of socio-political organization including various social forms through the help of symbols in the everyday life of people (Des Chene, 1996).

The crucial point, stressed by Seeger, is that music creates and constructs reality rather than just reflecting or mirroring social structure or 'real life.' As put forward by Seeger in his monograph, the musical experience is a social context to be regarded as equally important as other such context. In principle, the musical experience cannot be thought of as substitution with other areas or kind of experience. It is argued that musical engagement represents an aesthetic experience conceived of full for its own value. This does not indicate that the musical

experience is valued within a base in other areas of experience. Its meaning is realized through its relation to real life, as a part of that life, and not as separated from the general field of cultural experience.

However, in certain cases it may come to challenge the common; the well known; the acceptable; the dominant views of a culture and discourse. In western art discourse (from Burke and Kant to Lyotard), the aesthetic is thought to have its counterpart in the concept of the sublime. From an anthropological point of view, to take such exalted categories as the basic starting point of description is too problematic. This is because processes of cultural experience, along with the discursive representations of emotional categories, seem not universal but, rather, inherit cultural and heterogeneous. As such, there is obviously an intrinsic relation between the aesthetic experience and the cultural context from which it emanates. Anthony Seeger's monograph, Martin Stokes argues, is a powerful argument which, amongst other things, "overcomes the theoretical divide between the study of music and the study of society (Stokes, 1994).

In Seeger's view, the way in which music performance is a part of the construction of social process and experience is often not fully realized, neither in the anthropology of music. In this context Seeger is also contrasting his own work to the anthropology of music as outlined amongst others by Alan Merriam: "anthropology of music looks at the way music is a part of culture and social life. By way of contrast a musical performance creates many aspects of culture and social life. Rather than studying music in culture (as proposed by Merriam 1960), a musical anthropology studies social life as performance. Rather than assuming that there is pre-existing and logically prior social and cultural matrix within which music performed, it examines the way music is part of the very construction and interpretation of social and conceptual relationships and processes" (Seeger, 1987).

The crucial point stressed by Seeger, is that music creates and constructs reality rather than just reflecting or mirroring social structure or 'real life. "The more I came to know about Nepalese ritual life, and in particular that of *Chaybrung* of *Limbu*, the more I have also known the impact of diversity regarding the ritual, cultural and musical activities. The particular religious festival do have their own rules and meaning, however, their contents, symbols, and local meanings, seem to vary a great deal in detail not only from ethnic group to ethnic group but also from place to place and neighborhood to neighborhood and from gender to gender (Dahal, 2019, Dahal, 2020b).

In Nepal, music performance is very central to the ritualizing of time through religious, social, and ritual activities. A central question to be raised thus is how is the relation between music (especially message) and society to be conceived? My reflections around the topic of Musical socialization, harmony and entertainment via lyrics of songs, melodies of folk tunes, combination of sounds of instruments as a ritualized activity may be seen as very much influenced by the work of Feld, and also that of Anthony Seeger.

According to Seeger, music is not just something which happens 'in' society. A society, Seeger argues, might also be usefully conceived of as something which happens 'in music'. As argued by Seeger, it is through music and dance performance that fundamental aspect of Suya, social organization is recognized: social time is ritually articulated. Such is also the role of music and ritual among the women and a vast number of other Nepalese peoples. In Nepal, music performance and the celebration of auspicious and inauspicious events and festivals are ritualizing time, inhabiting time, giving time its collective and individual meaning.

In principle, the musical experience cannot be thought of as substitution with other areas or kind of experience. Musical engagement represents, an aesthetic experience conceived of fully of its own value. This does not indicate that the musical experience is valued without a base in other areas of experience. Its meaning is realized through its relation to real life, as a part of that life, and not as separated from the general field of cultural experience (Dahal, 2020c). However, in certain cases, it may challenge the common; the well known; the acceptable; the dominant view of a culture and discourse. In the Western art discourse (from Burke and Kant to Lyotard), the aesthetic is thought to have its counterpart in the concept of the sublime. From an anthropological point of view, I have found it problematic to take such exalt categories as the basic starting point of description. This is because processes of cultural experience, along with the discursive representations of emotional categories, seem not universal but, rather, inherently cultural and heterogeneous. As such, there is obviously an intrinsic relation between the aesthetic experience and the cultural content from which it

emanates. Anthony Seegers's monograph, Martin Stokes argues, is a powerful argument which, amongst other things, "overcomes the theoretical divide between the study of music and the study of society" (Stokes, 1994).

So, in case of Chyabrung in Limbu society and culture, various rituals, occasions, festivals etc or say from birth ceremonies to death rituals, Chyabrung is essential, without Chyabrung, Limbu rituals became incomplete. It is one of a small number of recent ethnomusicological monographs of remote 'tribal' peoples, in which our own distinctions between the ritual and the technical, the cultural and the natural, music, dance, speech and other forms of communication have to be rethought from scratch (Feld, 1982). Ritual is a process where the stories of the past are re-created, or may be more preciously created, and a kind of performance (processes) which enhances what I in this article will term 'ritual time calendar.' Concerning the relation between myth and ritual as an essential point is that because the past can only be seized hold of as memory myth and predecessorial beliefs are not memory created and maintained once and for all. In fact, myth and ancestral stories have to be repeated over and over again to exist. This is the purpose of all rituals and *Limbu* society and culture are not exception.

Ethnographies on *Limbus* as parallel with the ethnographies of interpretation that propounded by the Geertz aims to begin the interpretation of *Limbus* as participants with the issues on what they understand about their cultural elements, artifacts, their behavior, their values, norms, attitudes and how they systematizes these issues with the help of cultural celebration, rituals, processes and phenomena (Geertz, 1973). In this context, no one can test the role of these cultural artifacts and ritual acts as a mechanism, but these cultural and ritual actions act as the control mechanism but cannot scientifically proved. So, the belief system of the community both in case of Balinese through cockfight and *Limbus* through *Chyabrung* similarly acts as the interpretation and misinterpretations like any others and such ethnographic descriptions are not privileged, just particular and another society heard from (Geertz, 1973). Every event of society function as the means of entertainment organized on the occasion of different festivals, manifestly, and latently, it creates the opportunity of interactions of different humans from varieties of society. It also helps to unite new couple, makes bond of relationship, it also acts as the place of exchange commodities, norms, values and sentiments among the people of diverse groups (Dahal, 2020a).

Rhythms of *Chyabrung* and Cultural Context

Mundum is holy texts that glorify the life pattern of *Limbus* as the religious text has great significance in everyday life. Parallel with the Geertz it can be juxtaposed when anthropologist visualize the culture of *Limbus* is an ensemble of texts, themselves, which the anthropologist or ethnographer strains to read over the shoulders (Dahal, 2023) of those to whom they probably belong in their respective cultures in *Pallo Kirat* or in Bali (Geertz, 1973). The holy text holds wider and critical scope in socio-cultural, political, economic and every sphere of life of *Limbus* from birth to death. It is a kind of constitution among *Limbus*, which help to combine the empirical investigation and subsequent subjective understanding of all human phenomena of their society (Dahal, 2021b). *Mundum* is a kind of symbolic system to try to understand the ways that people "understand and act in social, religious and economic contexts" (Woodward, 1996). *Mundum* stands as the socio-rituals forms of control mechanism of *Limbus* whereas *Chyabrung* as the mechanism to socialize, people, tools to reduce tensions, forum to participate diverse elements or members.

***Chyabrung*; Rhythms, Dance and Performance**

Chyabrung has great significance because it is associated with all holiness, happiness, joyful and delighted events, phenomena and performances that *Limbus* performed. *Chyabrung* is an instrument that plays in all socio-cultural and religious functions, celebrations or performances in everyday life or in rite de passage. *Chyabrung* as dance is a kind of performance which is spontaneous unit of social process of cultural socialization of community through participation in *Limbu* (Dahal, 2020c), like social drama (Turner, 1988), occurs within a group that shares values and interests and has a shared common history. Parallel with the concepts of Turner, I like to compare *Limbu* community with *Nedembu* as both societies can be divided in to four acts which Turner defined in explaining social drama. The first act is rupture in social relations of *Limbus* because of mobility, migration and hierarchical order within the community for the purpose of power, prestige, property and privilege (Dahal,

2020a). The second act is a crisis that cannot be handled by normal phenomena that they were performed. The third act is a remedy to address the initial stage of their problem for the re-establishment of social problem. The final act has two ways; reintegration or the return to the status quo, or recognition of schism, an alteration in the social arrangements (Turner, 1988). The rituals acts as the means to resolve their socio-cultural problems offering feasts and festivals with *Chyabrung* dance.

It is believed that the *Chyabrung* (musical drum) was invented as a traveler was passing through a dense forest, he spend night there under a hollow tree. When he woke up in the morning he heard a buzzing sound of bee and the traveler imagined to make a drum (Yamphu, 2014, Chemjong, 2003) that instrument is known as *Chyabrung* which is essential holy instrument in *Limbu* cultural world. There are various festivals in which single instrument with different sounds can unite and harmonize the whole society with producing sounds (Khamdhak, 2011, Subba, 1995).

***Chyabrung*; Etic and Emic**

Chyabrung stands as drum, musical instrument or cultural phenomena as etic perspective and functions as mechanism and stands as the key role to resolve the various problems of the *Limbus* as emic perspective. Obviously, *Chyabrung* is musical instrument for *Limbus* through which various social, cultural and religious functions were performed within Limbus. Simply it stands as instrument and it rhythm created environment to dance for the outsiders. But, it functions as conflict resolving mechanism for the *Limbus* in their cultural world by offering various cultural, religious, social events, mechanism and functions. *Chyabrung* functions as the unified forms of beliefs and cultural practices of *Limbus* (Dahal, 2020d). The socio-cultural bonds that *Chyabrung* often transcend the personal and diverse forces of *Limbu* world and *Chyabrung* provides the societal glue by offering *Limbus* meaning and purpose for their lives that gives them ultimate values and end to hold in common by being *Limbus* identity culturally.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is analytical as well as descriptive. This research has focused on qualitative research than quantitative one and mostly focused on descriptive research design on the basis of narration, stories, folk tales, and articles, related to the research topic. The cultural facts and cultural events were tried to interpret through thick description.

Both primary and secondary data have been used in the study to make the study qualitative rather than the quantitative. The data were collected from field work and verified with help of key informants those lived in study area of Limbu community(details in annex-1). Similarly, previously published books, journals, articles, news papers, folk tales have been studied to get secondary data.

Various data collection tools and techniques were used to collect data from study area. Mostly, field based survey, participants' observation, interviews were conducted to find out the facts and collect the data as per the need of the research. The raw data were translated, tabulated, interpreted and analyzed as per the need.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

About *Chyabrung* Rhythms

It is heard that *Chyabrung* was first manufactured by ancestors named *Sapri* and *Lembri*. The rhythms of *Sapri* and *lembri* were very slow and sound lazy, so, priests were discussed about the rhythms of such drums of Limbu community (*yeba, samba*). As time passed on they thought that to make it in large size. They made such large size of *Chyabrung (ke)* in *kedhing temme* which lies in Taplejung district. The developed form of toy made by *sapri* and *lembri* is present developed form of *Chyabrung*. *Sapri* and *lembri*, *sakpharibang lemeribang, sapriba* and *lembriba* whatever we say these all are same.

Cultural Importance of *Chyabrung*

Chyabrung and culture of *Limbu* community has very intimate relation. The role of *Chyabrung* in *Limbu* community is very important as some rituals are incomplete without *Chyabrung*. It is used in wedding ceremony, opening of new *Chautra*, inn, opening of new home, fest and festivals. In *Limbu* society, *Mundhum* forms as important part

of rituals or without *Mundhum* no rituals can be performed or practiced, rather understood among the *Limbu* community. The *Limbu* shamans or ritual specialists; *Phedangma*, Samba, Yetchamba, and *Yeba/Yema* who are the main source of such *Mundhum* act as medium or mediator between visible and invisible world, between ancestral and physical, and in between deities and human being. Hence, the *Mundhum* cannot be overlooked by the scholars; needs thorough investigation and understanding through practical knowledge. The text of *Mundhum* can be understood only with the practice of *Mundhum*; it has emotional attachment with ritual practice and community. The recitation of *Mundhum* as part of any *Limbu* ritual; recitation of *Mundhum* and practice has to go hand to hand.

Chyabrung and Inauguration of New House

Chyabrung is danced in the new home. Main ritual of dancing *Chyabrung* in the new home is to protect the home from termite which is called *muthak thak thama* in *Limbu* language. It is believed that if *Chyabrung* is danced in the new home than termite do not damage the wood used in that home. Such believe system is guided by *Mundhum* of *Limbu* community. Some rituals have to be completed at the time of dancing. According to the ritual they have to round up the home three to seven times with *Chyabrung* and dancing with it. It is called tie up the home (*himkhengma*). Then four corners of house and in the main entrance door is pressed by hill of the right foot. The meaning of doing such is to destroy any kind of evil sprite coming out from the earth. It is destroyed by pressing the hill of right leg. It is said that in *Limbu* community that *khambu/khamlung larang* (pig like creature come out from earth to destroy the home) and *yahak* destroys the house making tunnel inside the earth. It is believed such kind of devil and natural disaster is stopped by dancing the *Chyabrung* and pressing by foot. Such kind of belief is prevailing in the *Limbu* community. It is believed that *seri* (thunder), *sambiksurit* (wind), *wabiktubik* (heavy rainfall) are stopped with the tempo of *Chyabrung* and different movement with sign of hand. *Chyabrung* is danced by using different sign and movement of feet and hands making circle around the home. According to believe system based on *Mundhum* people of *Limbu* community still practice such rituals and traditions in their community.

Festivals, Performance and Rhythms of Chyabrung

Ritual is the narrative aspect of the archetypal phase follows only because ritual is defined as a recurrent act of symbolic communication. Thus, for a traditional *Limbu* society time is cylindrical and a season repeats annually. Overall it is a festival of worshipping earth as well as other nature divinities before initiating works in the field. In the context of festivals, we can mark various symbols for study. The festivals of the traditional *Limbu* community are identified through the nature. The blooming of peach or Nepali cherry makes the community aware of the celebration of festivals. Here we can notice that blooming of peach or cherry are the symbol of productive season. Whereas the worshipping of nature, earth or nature divinities has also the symbolic theme. In the *Limbu* traditional myth while creating the Universe, the supreme god *Tagera Ningwavamang* created various kinds of gods for the assistance to create the Universe. The supreme god created god of soil/earth.

The folkdance and the folksongs are sung and dance according to the occasions. In the *Limbu* society Paddy dance, well known as *Dhaan naach*, in Nepal and known as *Yalang/Yarakma* in the community is performed in the rhythm of *Palam* (folksong) in the marriage or mela (market organized once a year/month). And another most popular dance is *Kelang dance* known as *Chyabrung* dance. The purpose of this dance is to save the house from various kinds of insects that may destroy the wooden portions of the house or to save the house from evil spirits and ghost and from natural calamities. There are also ritual dance where shamans beat the drums and brass plates and dance vigorously, whereas *Manglang* is a devotional folk dance to make supreme god/goddess happy.

Folksongs such as *Hakpare Samlo* is a verse in *Mundhum*, *Palam Samlo* is sung during *Dhaan nach* (paddy dance), *Nisammang Sewa Samlo* is a invocation to god/goddess, *Khayali Samlo* is a song of jokes where jokes are cracked among the singers, *Swapma Samlo* is a cradle songs for babies, *Tamke Samlo* is sung during cultivation of maize and paddy crops, *Pang Samlo* is sung in remembrance of friend in loneliness, *Kesham Samlo* is sung in happy anniversaries and celebration and *Hamlakwa Samlo* is sung during the death of someone so it is a lament song.

Generally various festivals of Limbu society are celebrated in according to the seasons. Such as *Chasok- Thisok* is a festive occasion to offer the food grains and other agricultural products to natural deities, Supreme goddess, Yuma are worshipped ceremoniously in her various forms and roles by offering newly ripened food grains and fruits. The season is marked by blooming of Nepal cherry tree. Likewise *Yokwa* is also a worship ceremony of ancestors as well as nature divinities before getting involved in agricultural activities. It is usually conducted when the peach starts blooming. People gather at the top of the hill or at suitable place from where they can see their cultivation and pray for water or rain, favorable weather and bumper crops as well as avoidance of accidents or wounds and bruises while working and flood and natural calamities.

Therefore people of this community worship the soil/ earth god and ask the permission to sow or harvest crops through celebration of festivals. They complete the performance through various rituals and they are still in practice of such festivals. The soil/ earth is the symbol of god where they get production for their living. Nature represent as the symbol of life which provides us everything. Rain, water, good weather, bumper crops, avoidance of natural disaster and good health are asked with the natural divinities. Nature is the archetype of the universe which symbolically represents the life and the giver.

Significance of Rhythms of *Chyabrung* in Limbu Marriage

It is believed that first wedding ceremony was held between *Pajagewa Tenthumyanwa* and *Warupli Wadangnama*. *Pajagewa Tenthumyanwa* went to search bride to the *taena nangen tembe*. He met *warupli wadangnama* there and he purposed her to marry with him. She accepted his proposal as he proposed but she put one demand to him that was he had to make new home before marry with her. As her demand *Pajagewa Tenthumyanwa* made new home at *sagnyakma kopiyakma* before marry with her. After that *Pajagewa Tenthumyanwa* married with *Wadangnama*. it is said that *Chyabrung* was played in their marriage ceremony. The reason to dance *Chyabrung* in their marriage is *Warupli Wadangnama* denied marry with *Pajagewa Tenthumyanwa* without making new home and marriage is performed with dancing *Chyabrung*. *Chyabrung* dance is performed in the new home, in marriage ceremony too. It is connected with new home and marriage since ancient time. It is also said that when *Pajagewa Tenthumyanwa* made first home but that home was destroyed by termite than *Chyabrung* was danced to keep away to protect the home from termite.

The *Yalakma* is characterized by men and women dancing in a slow circle, whereas the *Kelangam* consists of complex footwork synchronized with the beat of the drums. Anyone can join the dance, which can last for many hours. The *Yalakma* can also be a celebration of the harvest season or other social occasions.

Chyabrung is most essential musical drum which is symbolically connected with Mundhum. It has long history about *Chyabrung* dancing in the wedding ceremony of Limbu community. *Chyabrung* group is invited in the first day of the marriage. They come playing *Chyabrung* in group. Group is formed by male and female. Alcohol, beer, and other food items are offered to them before reach home to some distance. It is called *lamlakma* in limbu language. After taking offering things they move ahead playing drum *Chyabrung* to the wedding home and they dance in the yard where decorated by different types of decorated things such as one pole of bamboo is erected in the central of the yard with different types of colorful garlands of flowers.

The second day is the most important day of wedding it is the major day of wedding ceremony. In this day all the relatives, neighbors, friends are invited for wedding ceremony. In this day bride and bridegroom are decorated with their traditional dress and ornaments. They carry bride and bridegroom in carriage turn by turn with playing *Chyabrung*. After carrying them in the carriage they are kept on the carpet and given delicious dishes to them. After serving to bride and bridegroom, all the guests, neighbors, friends are served delicious dishes.

In the evening of that day some special rituals are done before give entry permission to the bride. Mother in law takes her daughter in law inside the home after performing rituals. After entering her they do special rituals, which is one of the major parts of wedding. Blessing is given by *Chyabrung* dancer group by playing *Chyabrung*. Third day morning, they invite neighbors for fest which is prepared by new daughter in law. At end of the third day guest, relatives and *Chyabrung* dancing groups are departed to their home with alcohol, head of buffalo

and some money with due respect. After accepting these things they give blessing playing the Chyabrung and set for their home playing the Chyabrung.

Chyabrung is most essential musical cultural drum in Limbu community. Ritual of Limbu community is not completed without Chyabrung. It is slightly different on the basis of area. Chyabrung is danced in wedding ceremony. Playing and dancing Chyabrung is most essential ritual of Limbu community. In the first day of wedding Chyabrung dancing group come from different areas with Chyabrung. They perform their performance group wise.

Marriage is incomplete without Chyabrung drum and dance in Limbu community. Chyabrung is important in every activities of Limbu community. It is symbolic also. It has symbolic meaning but normal people could not understand it without thick description. It has its own meaning. Every step has meaning on the basis of movement of feet, hands and its tempo of playing it. Chyabrung is supposed as a symbol of history, symbol of Mundhum and symbol of culture and tradition. Wedding ceremony of Limbu community is not complete without Chyabrung. Chyabrung and Chyabrung dance is cultural ritual of Limbu community. After lagan of bride and bridegroom Chyabrung is danced compulsorily. At the time of lagan Chyabrung is danced with differ ritual at the place of sitting place of bride and bridegroom. That type of dance is called *mekam* meaning of this word is to stay bride and bridegroom happily forever. At this time Chyabrung is danced in pair. Without this Chyabrung wedding of Limbu community is incomplete. Chyabrung is danced in wedding ceremony from starting day to ending day with important cultural rituals. Chyabrung dance enhance the attraction of wedding along with giving entertain to the guest, relatives, neighbors. Chyabrung is most important and most value oriented cultural ritual of Limbu community.

Chyabrung and Worshipping of Tundunge (God)

Tundunge is the god of Limbu community and is worshiped as the power centre or main god of the Limbu community. It plays constructive and destructive both types of character. According to Mundhum, he was very powerful and having giant physical structure so that no one could dare to do fight with him. He always used to search bad person to kill them and good person to make friends. One day he was wandering at that time, he met *phago*, *chongbang*, *thopra* and *thalang*. But they did not talk with him. He met *miktendang samwa*. He understood about the work, generosity and power of *tundunge sammang* (god). He made sacred place for *tundunge* god and placed him with due respect. It is said the *tundunge* is god of *saba* cast of Limbu community. History connected with it is the god was roaming in different places at that time *sababang* gave first name to it. After that it is called god of *saba*. *Saba* a caste of Limbu community called at first and did *samsoyaming* (gave name). Now a day's statue is made from rice flour and is placed it on the worshipping place. Heart of the he goat and cock is taken out from live he goat and cock and placed it on the statue made from rice and millet flour. Different color of flower and pieces of clothes and different types of weapons are also placed on the worshipping place. Gun is fired during the worshipping time of this god. This god gives power, life, and success if we could make happy but he gives torture to human such as being faint, mental problem, dumb, ugly and even problem of infertility.

Tundunge said I am *samyangdangba*, *yuppadangba* (owner of silver and gold) *hanwa muedangba* (god of blessing), *aaplung tansepdangba* (god of security). This types of sound is utter by unseen person at that time. At the time of speaking of unseen power, *savahangwa* asked question to him, who are you? At the time of question was asked, a kind of sound came from the left side of chyabrung (*sinjange*) sound like *tungtung....tungtung....* Then this god was named after hearing this soud *tungtung....tungtung....* and started to worship as a *tundunge* god with due respect.

Tundunge is the most dangerous god of Limbu community. It is believed that if we worshiped this god with due respect it provides happy, peace and prosperous but if this get angry it is more destructive god of Limbu community. Effect of this god is to make dumb, out of sense, even suffer from infertility. It is believed that person who holding this god, has high temper and sometimes goes beyond control.

In this way Chyabrung is most essential to hang on at the time of worshipping of *tundunge* god. Rice, buckwheat, flour of millet, at the time of worshipping of *tundunge* chyabrung is played at the side of singchange in a single bit like *tungtung....tungtung....*

At the time of playing chyabrun in the worshipping of tungdunge samba, yeba chant ritual words like: *chigro nagro sansanlo...tungtung...tungtung..., khappu puthya sansanlo...tungtung...tungtung..., ome pema sansanlo...tungtung...tungtung..., paraji kakaaji sanchbolo, sulumvi selunvi wasthalla taplung sunahopma kangekin kyabo thilliki chyangthum makechyaki yangmu phichyaki tham sanchbolo tungtung...tungtung...* chyabrun is played in such a way chanting rituals matras by *yeba, yema* and *samba* at the time of worshipping *tundunge mang* (god).

Chyabrun and Epung (Chautaro)

Making *Chautaro* is prevailed in the Limbu community. *Chautaro* is constructed in the name of dead person at the junction of the road where passerby takes a rest for short time keeping their baggage on there. Stone and clay is used to make *Chautaro*. Wall is constructed having one step where passerby put their luggage for short time and take a rest. Planks are also used to make *Chautaro*. Now- a- days most of the *Chautaros* are constructed cemented. One stone inscription is placed in the centre of the *Chautaro* where all details are written about the dead person on it. The stone inscription is placed by tumyahag (person out of same clan). Tumyahang read this stone inscription loudly so that all relatives, guests, neighbor and relatives could hear and understand it. The special fest is organized by demise person's family to all guest, relatives and neighbor. They dance *Chyabrun* for whole night gathering relatives, neighbors and senior citizens without sleeping. Banyan and *Pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*) is planted in the side of the *Chautaro*. Neighbors, relatives, brothers and sisters are invited organizing fest for them dancing Chyabrun after it is completed.

Formal ritual of *Chautaro* is completed only after performing Chyabrun dance. Chyabrun is danced from left side to right side walking around the *Chautaro*. In Limbu community, it is just opposite to perform rituals such as from right side (*phenchhangba*) for live person and left side (*chupsangba*) for the dead person.

Making *Chautaro* is the positive thing, it is constructed to take a rest for passerby at the time of feeling tired but it is constructed in the name of death person or it is connected with the death person's name. So Chyabrun dance is performed covering from left side to right side in the *Chautaro*. Limbu community has culture of making *Chautaro*, Inn, or anything constructed in the name of death person. *Chyabrun* dance is most important in such program. It has cultural value in Limbu community. It is constructed from wood plank, wall of stone. Now a day cemented *Chautaro* also constructed in the name of death person. This is supposed as a good culture to make *Chautaro* and inn because passerby to take a rest. It is important for environmental aspect too because banyan tree and people tree is planted at the side of new *Chautaro*. These trees are supposed to be good for human being from environmental point of view and religious point of view.

Chyabrun and Rituals of *Lung Phusingma* (Death Rites)

Limbu community has many important culture and traditions which are performed in birth, wedding, and death. Among them *melung phusingma* is one of the important ritual of Limbu community. It is given to the daughter, sister after marriage but in Limbu community it is not given immediately after marriage. All power is reserved in the birth home side such as brother, father after marrying also. All power and authority is contained with brothers of birth home. It is not allowed to do death ritual in death of sister if this custom is not done from bridegroom side. According to *Mundbum*, there is saying that Limbu sister remains virgin until this costume is not done. To take authority, bridegroom should take authority with groom side with rituals and tradition. In some places, father and brother of groom call their sister to take *melung phusingma*. If son in law comes to take authority to do all ritual, it is called *melung* and if it is given from birth home of lady than it is called *bagdad*. Chyabrun is danced at time of *melung phusingma*. The Chyabrun dance at the time of *melung* is called *aangura* dance. Other type of dance of Chyabrun is also danced at the time of *melung phusinma*. The value of Chyabrun is very important in *melung phusingma*. So it is danced compulsorily at the time of *melung phusingma*.

Chyabrun has high value and importance in some special program, cultural program and celebration of festivals. These festival, program and rituals are incomplete without Chyabrun and its dance. It is not limited to dance in different festival and rituals, it is danced to welcome guest, and inauguration of different programs too. Now a day use of Chyabrun is found in Nepali music.

Using Chyabrun in Limbu music and song is very nice to listen as the typical local Limbu version. It is found, Chyabrun is used in the Limbu song and programs. This musical drum is looked simple in its appearance but

culturally and traditionally it has very wide range of cultural meanings which is connected with origin of Limbu community since primitive age or age of god. Chyabrung explains each and every aspect of Limbu community along with history, culture, tradition and livelihood of this community. So we can say that it is not only hollow log of wood covering with goat skin, it is the backbone of Limbu history, culture, tradition and daily activities or livelihood.

Migration and Chyabrung

Limbu have migrated from their original place to other areas of the country and the world because of globalization. Limbu have migrated to abroad country for military job especially Singapore, United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Brunei. As they migrated they took their culture with them and practice there on the occasion of different programs and festivals. They have got facility to live permanently as the name of settlement visa in UK. They organize different program such as singing competition, Chyabrung dance competition etc. they felt that, what is the importance and value of culture when they became far from their place of origin. In present days they are organizing and celebrating different Tangnam such as Chasok Tangnam, Kakphekwa Tangnam, Yakwa Tangnam and Sisekpa Tangnam wearing their cultural dress and playing Chyabrung in foreign land gathering friends and relatives. They have established different organizations related with Limbu. In this sense the cultures and traditions are going in positive way to the new generation even in the foreign land of Diaspora.

Chyabrung has been playing since ancient time among Limbus in occasion of weeding, festivals such as Chasok Tangnam, Balihang Tangnam etc. from happy or joyful moment. As time changed Limbu community people migrated to the foreign land for job, business and study, and they start to settle to the foreign land such as Hong Kong, UK, USA etc. they start to celebrate their culture gathering together in the new land. In this way Chyabrung also start to play as their culture in new land. So Chyabrung is prevail in the native land since primitive age and it is prevail in the foreign land too.

Significance of Chyabrung Rhythms and Dance

Chyabrung dance is famous cultural dance of Limbu community. There is no fix date when this dance is started in the Limbu community but according to Mundhum of Limbu community it was started since ancient age. It is said that in the ancient age there were persons whose name was Ldenhangba and Phudenhangba respectively performed Chyabrung dance at first in this land. Another saying is Bajaeba made first home in the earth and they made Chyabrung than they performed Chyabrung dance on the occasion of constructing new home.

Sodinhangba came to performed Chyabrung dance with Chyabrung made up of wood Dhupi found in high altitude and Khamari tree found in low land on the occasion of new home built. But house owner was in sad moment as their sister was killed during the time of house construction. So they did not respect them properly. After that the wood used in the new home was destroyed by termite and whole house was destroyed at last by the termite. They started to find out the reason of destroying the house. According to the advice of Sodhungenlepmuhang, they went to meet Phungiri Phungkapo Phedang ba and requested to find out the reason of destroying the house. As they requested Phung Kapoba performed some rituals of worship and said that you did not respect Chyabrung dancer formally or performing all rituals systematically (faksara lamlak) and they got angry. They cursed you and your home so that it was damaged by termite as they gave course. They asked him than what is the solution of that? How we can get rid of this problem? They requested to Phedangba. According to the advice of Phedangba they rebuilt a new house and invited the Chyabrung dancer with respect and all rituals were done systematically. They started to dance Chyabrung happily. They called Temlana lakrakna(a kind of bird) and it ate all house destroyer termite. After that house was not damaged by termite and they live happily in that house for a long time with their family.

Chyabrung dance is culturally connected with Limbu community since ancient time. It is performed in group the and female combine is performed in different occasions such as festival, new house, welcoming the guest and other joy full moments. Chyabrung dance is performed in new home as mention in the Mundhum. It is believed that if Chyabrung dance is not performed in new house it will not last for long time and another belief is that if we performe chyabrung dance, the evil sprites and all invisible harmful sprites or devil sprite will

destroy by the sound of Chyabrung drum. If we perform Chyabrung dance termite will not destroy woods used in the house. It is called Thak Thama.

Chyabrung dance is performed in wedding ceremony. it is mandatory to perform Chyabrung dance in the marriage ceremony of Limbu community. According to Mundhum believe system marriage is not possible without Chyabrung and its dancing. As Chyabrung dancer once come in the wedding home at that time they should have welcomed with providing beer and alcohol prepared locally at home. If they accept it and they offer to their musical drum at first and drink themselves as their interest. After that they start to dance Chyabrung in yard of wedding house where a bamboo pole is placed in the centre of that yard with decorating with different colorful flowers and other decoration things. They dance in group making circle mixed with male and female. There will be a leader of dancer; other members of dancer should follow the instruction of the head.

They perform different sing language while dancing such as feeling hungry, feeling thirsty, time to show bride groom to the public, it is time to food, feeling tired.

At the time of lagan (bless giving time) it is mandatory to dance *Chyabrung*. They give blessing to the bride and bridegroom such as live long life, be happy whole time of your life, happy conjugal life. Respect to the seniors always .never get angry, speak with smile always. Without playing and dancing of Chyabrung, wedding is not completed in Limbu culture. So its role is very important in wedding of Limbu community.

Different festivals are celebrated in Limbu community, among them Chasok Tangnam, Kakphekwa Tangnam, Yakwa Tangnam and Sisekpa Tangnam. Chasok Tangnam is famous in which Chyabrung dance is performed in group. The main rituals of Chaksok Tanam is offer first ripe crop to the Yuma Mang that is associated with the agriculture and it signify greatly among Limbus. According to the Mundhum it is not allowed to take crop without offering to the god Yuma.

Chyabrung dance is performed in many occasions such as Chasok Tangnam, Balihang Tangnam, newly built home, wedding ceremony and other happy and joyful moments. This dance is connected with joy and happiness. Alcohol, beer and pork are mandatory in Limbu communal fest and festivals.

Chyabrung and Chyabrung dance is interrelated because dance is not possible without Chyabrung and it is not played without dancing also. It is symbol and identity of Limbu culture. it shapes Limbu culture and it is connected directly with Limbu community because without Chyabrung dance Limbu culture is not completed such as wedding, festivals, entering new home, worshipping of gods, offering fist ripe crop etc.. Chyabrung stands as musical instruments or dance for outsiders but it functions as the complete mechanism for the Limbu world for the maintaining governance among the insiders.

CONCLUSION

Limbu community is one of the ethnic communities, residing far eastern part of Nepal. They live in some states of India and other countries too. They have their own language, costume, ritual and tradition. They are nature worshipper and nature lovers. They worship nature as their forefather. Mundhum is backbone of Limbu community. All cultures, traditions and rituals are guided by Mundhum. There are bundle of cultural and rituals practices prevailing in the Limbu community. Chyabrung is culturally very essential for Limbu community. It is played in different fest, festivals and programmers such as Tangnams, wedding ceremonies, entering in new home, chautaro, palaying deusi and bhailo in tihar. It is played in happy moments only.

Different traditional musical drum, murchunga, binayo etc. are used in Limbu community. These traditional musical instruments are using since ancient time. It is connected with Mundhum, history and culture. Limbu community has many traditional musical instrument among them Chyabrung is more important than other musical instrument. Some rituals are not completed or impossible to complete without using Chyabrung. Chyabrung is used in wedding, inauguration of chautaro, new home, welcoming the guest in feast and festival. Chyabrung is danced in deusi and bhailo too. Chyabrung has its own history. Human invented this drum by imagination. There are different views and saying. But we can say that it has its long history since human came in this earth.

Chyabrung is worshipped in Limbu community has great significance and is supposed as the god. High Cultural value is given to Chyabrung and Chyabrung dance. It is followed since ancient time to till date as a livelihood of their community. Chyabrung is medium to continue cultural, tradition and its development. Traditional rules and regulation should be followed while performing Chyabrung. Chyabrung is supposed as a sacred object and given high value to the Chyabrung dancer such as to welcome, respect and farewell. It is said that if they do not welcome, respect and farewell systematically they will not be happy. They may curse if they give curse it will harm the house owner and his progress.

Chyabrung is a log of hollow wood covering both sides in simple way but it is a symbol of Limbu community that all the cultural activities can't go beyond the Chyabrung. Limbu culture and chyabrung are two sides of a same coin. Chyabrung is most important and most necessary traditional musical drum of limbu community. It is connected with history of Limbu and Mundhum. Limbu community's rituals are in complete without Chyabrung. I found that the originality of Chyabrung is going to be extinct day by day. It is played as an entertainment and for seemingly only. It is not found now a day how it is connected with Mundhum because it is not performed as per its core value of rituals and their celebrations and steps are not performed properly and systematically before playing and dancing Chyabrung. Its original assumption and meaning is changing in the name of modernization day by day. Chyabrung stands as musical instruments or dance for outsiders but it functions as the complete mechanism for the Limbu world for the maintaining governance among the insiders.

Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest relevant to this article was reported. The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest. The research is about the issue of human that should not be granted permission from the concerned authority and the data used in this research is public and the ethic is maintained while using data.

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Annex-1

One of the Limbu Settlement of Pallo Kirat(Study Site)



Annex-2

Drum(Chyabrung) of Limbu



Annex- 3

Dancing women on Rhythm of Chyabrung during marriage ceremony in Limbu society.



Annex-4

Playing Drum (Chyabrung) in Chasok Tangnam



Annex-5

Limbu man playing Drum(Chyabrung)

