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Tambas' Role for Social Harmony: Reading Tamang Marriage Ceremony

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By

Sirjana Tamang

Roll No.: 133

Symbol No.: 6183

T.U. Regd. No.: 9-2-737-0109-2012

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

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Tribhuvan University

Central Department of English

Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "*Tambas' Role for Social Harmony: Reading Tamang Marriage Ceremony*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Sirjana Tamang, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head

Central Department of English

Date: _____

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Sirjana Tamang

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Abstract

The research paper entitled "The Importance of Tambas: A Performative Reading of Tamang's Marriage Ceremony" make a contextual study of the significant roles of Tambas. Tambas as ritual specialist and their performance during marriage ceremony of Tamang community is analyzed through the light of performance theories. Tambas' performance during a marriage ceremony is a cultural event which is led by Tambas. They narrate stories about the origin of human lives, myths and inform about the structure of nature through the performance and every witness community people relate their life. It provides the lesson about human responsibility in the relationship, in the family and in the community. The base of their performance is past histories, myths and ancestors so they are rooted with new creativity. Such forms of ritual performance thus connect past and present with future of human life. Hence, this research paper argues that ritual performance like Tambas and Tamba's performance during marriage ceremony is the performance of human settlement and plays significant role to achieve communal and social solidarity through the symbolic ideologies, forms and features of Tamba's performance.

Key Words: Tamba's performance, ritual theory, communal solidarity, order, discipline

Tamangs, one of the most culturally rich communities of Nepal, have multiple forms of folklores; one of them is *Tamba's performance*. *Tamba's* performance is such performance which shades a light on socio-political, economical and cultural aspects of the then community in artistic form. *Tamba's* performance is ancient ritual performance performed by *Tambas* of *Tamang* community. '*Tambas*' are the genealogist and historian in *Tamang* language. They are ritual specialists who know

about their history, myths and perform their rituals in a artistic way in various occasions like during birth of baby, marriage ceremony, funeral procession etcetera. Especially, they play significant role during marriage ceremony. *Tambas'* performance is also an icon of the Tamang community which interlinks their entire way of life as ritual specialists. The essence of this ritual and *Tambas* as ritual specialists is that it has power to bring the community people together that works for social harmony. In this regard, as Catherine Bell the anthropologist, the sociologist and the historian of religion states, "the persistent notion that social solidarity is the goal of any and all ritual mechanisms" (187). Thus, the purpose of all the rituals is associated with solidarity of community and society. Similarly, the purpose of this performance is not just entertainment but to project moral lesson of humanity to many people at the same time. Even though with the advancement of modern social security and ordered social system, rituals like *Tamba's* performance has been playing major role for the integration and unison among the *Tamang* community people. It is a sample of such rituals which symbolically reflects several aspects of *Tamang* community. Consequently, as Victor Turner opines, "a single symbol, in fact represents many things at the same time; it is multivocal, not univocal. It's referents are not all of the same logical order but are drawn from many domains of social experience and ethical evaluation" (52). Hence, this performance is not merely an art of dance, song or just a performance for the sake of entertainment but it is a portrayal of the distinct living pattern of *Tamang* community and their ideologies as a whole through its symbolic performances in the unique forms and features. *Tamang* identity, history, norms, moral values and rituals are associated with *Tambas* from ancient time which could be accessed through *Tamba's* performance during the marriage ceremony.

Etymologically '*Tambas*' refers to the genealogist and historian of *Tamang* community in *Tamang* language. *Tamba* is one of the major cultural institutions of *Tamang* community. There are three such institutions namely; *Tambas*, *Bonbo* and *Lama* in *Tamang* community. They are specialists of different field. *Bonbo* comes from the field of Shamanism. They serve as a healer or doctor in *Tamang* community. Similarly, *Lama* belongs to the religious field i.e. Buddhism. They serve as spiritual Buddhist monks. And *Tambas* belongs to the historian who is ritually informed. They play vital role during life to death rituals like; birth, marriage, death and so on. It is therefore, *Tambas*, *Lama* and *Bonbo* are significant institutions of *Tamang* community. Their performance shapes human life experience accordingly.

Moreover, *Tambas* provide a structure to performance of marriage ceremony. *Tambas* also provide continuity to the already existed roles of conducting marriage ceremony while performing their role. *Tambas*, they are also performing the role given to him by the tradition. In this regard, performance theorists like Richard Schechner, Victor Turner, Roy A. Rappaport and Catherine Bell support for the contextual study of this ritual performance. As Richard Schechner views "ritual performances involve acting out shared social values often involving the family in relation to a larger community" (Schechner 245). Schechner's notion of ritual performance is that ritual performances are very powerful performance of a member of a family which can share social values with large number of community people at the same time. Ritual performances are the spaces where humans are getting chance to exercise for maintaining order and harmony of the community. As '*Tambas*' are ritual specialist they have paramount role in *Tamang* rituals. Each community people's identity comes with their history, rituals and traditions. And as their practice of cultural norms and values they have certain structure of their community. *Tamba's*

performances have been one of the means to give lesson about nature and have power to unite *Tamangs* through their artistic performance. People of *Tamang* community however follow different occupation and specially they live around the Kathmandu valley but they invite *Choho* (president of community), *Mulmi* (leader of community), *Ngaapta* (yoga instructor/devotee), *Dopta* (scholar), *Ganba* (experienced/old person), and *Tamba* in each and every occasion and follow their direction.

Invitation of *Tambas* in Marriage Ceremony

Tambas are the ritual specialists. *Tamangs* invite them in their every ritual. *Tambas* have most significant role during marriage ceremony in their community. There are three institutions in *Tamang* community, they are; Lama, *Bonbo* and *Tamba*. And *Tambas* are taken as one of the significant ritual specialists' institution of *Tamang* community. Santa Bir Lama puts, "*Tamang* community peoples did not used to sing whenever and wherever they want as today in ancient time. Either there should be auspicious occasion like marriage ceremony or ethnic gathering, community people appeal for song and their other performance by lighting incense and keeping omen in front of them who knows song" (Lama 4; My trans.). As Lama mentioned that *Tambas* do not perform whenever and wherever they like, that shows they take their role very seriously. There are *Tambas* who knows the song about origin of air, fire, sun, water, universe, nature, experience of their life and findings from the ancient time in *Tamang* community such experiences are something that one can relate during marriage. It is therefore, they invite *Tambas* for their performance during marriage ceremony. *Tambas* do not come to attend marriage ceremony without invitation and they must be invited with *sagun**. These ritual specialists and ritual processes share the distinct facets of *Tamangs* living pattern and their values.

*especial invitation i.e. organic wine to *Tambas* to invite them in marriage ceremony

The *sagun* for *Tambas* can be different according to the place and their tradition, among other things there one sample picture of *Sagun* for *Tambas*:



Fig.1: *Sagun* for *Tamba*. (PC Dawa Wangel Moktan)

However, bride side and groom side of *Tambas* have their own roles in marriage ceremony and they have certain structure of their performance. *Sagun* is a organic wine which is used to provide *Tambas* as invitation in marriage ceremony. It is a system of Tamang community. As Roy A. Rappaport believes "a ritual performance is an instance of the conventional order to which it conforms... Participants enliven the order that they are performing with the energy of their own bodies, and their own voices make it articulate. They thereby establish the existence

of that order in this world of matter and energy; they substantiate the order as it informs them" (125). Ritual performance is one of the significant aspects that supports to maintain world order through the performance. In this regard Catherine Bell states, "Relatively little attention has been paid to how the presence of specialists affects ritual practices. Their presence or absence is usually taken simply as an index to the importance of ritual or the stratification of society "(130). Though marriage is the relationship making process between two individuals, but the community loves to take part in the ceremony. Through the involvement of their community, there is the regulation of ideologies. Khojraj Gole, one of freelancer and a *Tamba* himself, marked that "*Tamang* community people believe that marriage is a community event. It is not an individual event. And it is a contribution to the community for regulation of norms, values, tradition and rituals" (Personal Conversation, 2 May 2019). So this shows distinct beliefs according to the communal values. Still marriage is not only the ceremony of two people, but it is the ceremony of entire family members, relatives thus the entire community participates. Maximum relatives and community people take part during marriage ceremony. In such huge participation of community people *Tamba's* performance presents moral values.

Tambas begin their performance together by lightening incense, prayers to the god, greets scholars and relatives attending ceremony. And they forward their performance through the genealogical information of bride and bridegroom, narrate stories and myths about nature and origin of universe, sing duet songs , gives advice to that couple, share their experience, bless them for their prosperous life ahead through their performance. So that marriage is a ritual ceremony of *Tamang* community where *Tambas* perform their performance as a ritual specialists.

Sang Serkem (Invocation to the God)

Tambas light different incense in the name of different gods and goddesses.

As Lama puts, "We light *Srikhand* incense for *Madhesh's* god, *Sunapatti* incense for *Bhot's* god, ... *Malaagiri* incense for clan god for your pleasure" (My trans. 12). Very consciously, they offer incense to the gods and goddesses of each region.

Furthermore, Lama says "We are offering this sacred food in a pot made up of clay of *Khopang (Bhattgaun)*. Oh god and goddesses of heaven please accept it with pleasure.

Please be satisfied with our prayer and take it as panacea" (My trans. 12). As Lama states *Tambas* light different incense, offers sacred food and pray god for success of the marriage ceremony. *Tambas* worship to god, invokes to the ancestors for the success of marriage ceremony and for the prosperity and success of that new couple.

In this regard, Mathieu Deflem argues that "whenever ritual is inspired by a religious belief in supernatural beings or powers, its status is different from other, inner-worldly forms of knowledge. I concur with Turner that, for the people involved in many ritual activities, religious beliefs has some kind of "surplus value" over and above other..." (12). It indicates that human have faith upon supernatural power and it ties human in discipline and morality. It is a power that can control human activities.

Through the help of such faith and belief system regulate human psychological aspect with moral values. And it also can be result of communal bonding which leads toward the communal solidarity. In the same way, rituals give communal solidarity a world view. Likewise, Catherine Bell states "ritual is a functional mechanism or expressive medium in the service of social solidarity and control" (197). Thus, *Tamba's* performance of *Tamang* community is not only a dance and song but it comes with lots of implications. It should be taken as sources for gaining knowledge for communal harmony and solidarity. As such while rituals associate with religion that

matters more than any other. It is more about religion and more than that it is significant aspect of this ritual that it supports to tie the community with moral values and discipline.



Fig. 2: *Kilkhora* (Mandala) in the beginning of marriage ceremony (PC Dawa Wangel Moktan)

In the beginning of marriage ceremony, *Tambas* prepare for *Kilkhora* as mentioned in figure no. 2. In the picture, *Kilkhora* is decorated with different colors and there is symbolic meaning of each color and direction. According to *Tambas* Sang;

White color is in the east of *Kilkhora* and it symbolically represents knowledge which protects from greed. Similarly, yellow color of south represents knowledge to protect from jealousy, red color of west represents knowledge to protect from anger, green color of north represents knowledge to protect from arrogance and blue color in the top of *Kilkhora* represents knowledge and skills as wider as sky." (87; My trans).

Here, *Tambas* invoke to god and inform the participants as well. As *Tambas* sang define the meaning of colorful *Kilkhor* (Mandala), Hindu makes *Mandap* during the marriage ceremony. Symbolically, *Kilkhor* has various meaning in *Tamang* community. It shows *Tambas* share various kinds of knowledge, which is important in human life and for relationship. Through the *Tamba's* performance bride and groom can learn various knowledge and skills for their further life. As such, *Tamba's* performance is very significant during marriage ceremony.

Moreover, Dawa Wangel Moktan describes etymologically, "Sang refers to purify and *Serkem* refers to offer sacred food and drink with respect and pray. In this way each and every related aspects of occasion like place, materials and participants will follow this purification process for the success of the event known as *Sang Serkem*" (Moktan 43; My trans). Here, as Moktan says, the process of purifying the things and place and peoples shows the religious aspect of *Tamba's* performance but it is also another effective process of seeking attention and support of the participants of the event. As Moktan mentions *Tambas* pray to god and offer drink to achieve success of the event. And in the same way, *Tambas* prepare sacred fruits for the relatives and participants of the event.



Fig. 3 Sacred flowers, fruits and drinks for the participants. (PC Dawa Wangel Moktan)

Similarly, *Tambas* offer sacred drinks and fruits to the participants of the event as well. And participants are also equally important aspects of event and their support also requires for the success of event. Above shown figure no. 3 is the picture of sacred fruits and *sagan* for all the participants of the marriage ceremony. In this regard, Nicholas M. Hobson et al. adds that "in rituals, the most ordinary of actions and gestures become transformed into symbolic expressions, their meaning reinforced each time they are performed" (260). As Hobson et al is of the opinion ritual actions and gestures play effective role to transform their meaning in ritual ceremonies. So *Tambas* offer fruits and flower to everyone with due respect and this action of *Tambas* inform equal value of everyone. Here, *Tamba's* act of respects to each and everyone equally supports to maintain discipline and harmony in the marriage ceremony.

Performers with *Damphu*



Fig. 4: *Damphu* very important musical instrument of Tamang community.

(PC Dawa Wangel Moktan)

Communal identities is constructed through ritual practice. Their ritual practice is base of identity formation. According to the *Tamang* myths *Damphu* itself as a symbolic instrument originated from love of *Pengdorje*, which is associated with *Tamang* identity and love. Amrit Yonjon Lama, one of the renowned linguists of *Tamang* language, marked that:

As origin of language played vital role to make human being different from other being. Similarly, invention of *Damphu* by *Tamang* ancestor played vital role to make *Tamang* performance more artistic and support ... Construction of *Damphu* is supporting till now from the ancient time to develop *Tamang* community people's thought, contemplation, literature and philosophy [...]

(Yonjan 61; My trans.)

During ceremony *Tambas* by beating *Damphu* start singing and dancing. There are various types of musical instrument and they have their own roles in the field of art

and occasion. In the same way, *Damphu* is one of the very popular musical instruments of *Tamang* community. Though it is used in many other countries as well, like; Pakistan, India, China and so on. In *Tamang* community of Nepal have their own myths and beliefs about *Damphu*. *Tambas* worship *Damphu* before their performance and they narrate its myth through the song. Amrit Yonjan Tamang quoted the song about *Damphu* by Santa Bir Lama;

Aamaile hoi aamaile*
 Somebody may ask
 Who made this Damphu
 Penjdorje, who was a hunter
 In the top ridge of Himalaya
 Took the skin of deer
 Made round wood of baubinia
 Cut down the bamboo of Medhesh
 Stick thirty two pins of bamboo
 It seems flat
 While playing it, sounds tap dhung, tap dhung
 It tells the history of Tamang
 It is made by Penjdorje (Tamang 61-62; My trans.)

Here, Amrit Yonjan Tamang quotes the song about the myth of *Damphu* and other *Tamang* scholars also have talked about this musical instrument. For example; Dr. Mukta Singh Thokar says, "in the beginning of *Tamba's* performance, *Tambas* use to worship and meditate for a while to *Damphu*. It is because they believe that it gives shape to their expression and voice through its art of music.

* Anaphoric line to remember mother

And it is their object of devotion so its origin, structure and importance is the part of *Tambas'* performance" (Thokar 92; My trans). As Amrit Yonjan's song is about the origin, structure and story of *Damphu*. And Dr. Mukta Singh Thokar clarifies the importance and reason of including the myth of *Damphu* in *Tamba's* performance. *Tambas* worship to the *Damphu* because they believe that their performance is incomplete without this musical instrument. However, *Tamang* community people do not take *Damphu* as musical instrument only but they take it as the source of knowledge in their life. It is therefore, they usually play it in every auspicious occasion of life. And this sort of performance empowers people to be more creative, contemplative, imaginative and philosophical not merely to the performers but each and every people who witness the ceremony.



Fig. 5: *Tambas* with *Damphu* for their performance. (PC Dawa Wngel Moktan)

Likewise, *Tambas'* performance reflects spiritual values of love, rejoice relation and marriage is a beautiful event of new beginning of new relationship. *Tambas* play *Damphu* while they have to perform, share their experience, thoughts,

feelings and philosophy. It is therefore, rituals like *Tamba's* performance has been playing major role for the integration and unison among the *Tamang* community people. *Tamba's* performance is not just a performance for entertainment but with unique beats and instruments (*Damphu*) narrate myths, history, and so on during *Tambas* performance.

***Tambas* narrate about the origin of nature and human life stories**

Tambas talk about 'Khams' (Panchatatwa) and connect its meaning with the origin of human life. And they talk about fetus which is the origin of human life. Here, *Tambas* believe that during the pregnancy, baby will grow with the combination of white seed and red seed of father and mother in the womb of mother. So that *Tamang* people highly focus on *Rhui* (cast). They make commitment in front of both side parents, relatives and *Tambas* that bride will not change her *Rhui* after her marriage also. And *Tambas* bring the reference of 'Khams' to clarify that human physical appearance is changeable and destroyable. Further these issues will clearly explain in *Char Tam* of marriage ceremony.

Furthermore, *Tambas* narrate stories about the origin of universe and structure of nature. As Santa Bir Lama puts, "if sun does not rises from east, snow of north would not melt and sun should not set in the west. Entire directions might remain dark" (Lama 48; My trans.). This indicates that *Tambas* show the structure and order the way nature regulates. In the large number of community peoples gather during marriage ceremony and in such place *Tambas* narrate stories. By telling the order and harmony of nature they also appeal for harmony of family and communal order. More importantly, they tell about the harrowing possible consequences of nature. A single order of natural imbalance darkness of entire direction shows possible fearful situation of nature to the listeners and teaches them to be lawful and responsible. This

narration informs the importance to maintain harmony in family, community and society.

***Char Tam* and *Tamba's* advice to bride and bridegroom**

In marriage ceremony, *Tambas* perform very artistically in various sections. Firstly *Tambas* give advice and blessing to bride and bride groom. Many *Tamang* scholars and writers writing can be found about the advice of *Tambas* to bride and bride groom. In the same way, Santa Bir Lama writes in his book,

When you see your wife wearing torn clothes, cutting woods and grass, carrying water, cleaning dishes and other's wife well dressed and well managed, never think other's wife beautiful and own wife is ugly. And When you see your husband carrying woods . . . other's husband . . . never forget your own duty and always maintain self discipline . . . Physically and spiritually you both are united from today... love each other and live longer as eastern sea and western sea. (Lama 16-17; My trans.).

Tambas usually sit nearby bride and bride groom. In this ceremony, *Tambas* share morality, responsibility, discipline and so many other things as well through their performance and that new couple is in the phase of new beginning their earlier. It is therefore, *Tambas* focus to make comfortably able to listen everything to them and tries to comfort, arouse consciousness about their duties and responsibilities. In every situation, respect each other and love each other *Tambas* advise. In this sense, it is all about making promises with each other and with the community.

Similarly, in this section *Ganba* (old person or leader) of *Tambas* will request to sing a song by providing them *Pagadi* (turban) and *Shyalgar*. *Tambas* start singing a song by sitting close to bride and bridegroom.

Aameile hoi Aamaile

Pigeon, common myna, sparrow

Dove, quail, partridge

Couple of Munal

Couple of forest birds...

Love each other for lasting

Love dazzlingly (Lama 1-9. 19; My trans).

Secondly, *Tambas* bless bride and bridegroom through song. Here they sing a song is metaphorical and dance by beating *Damphu*. They sing about love of the couple and their future. And *Tambas* appeal for their long lasting love with each other through the song. In this context, Santa Bir Lama's song goes like this " Pour ghee and oil of love /To light the lamp of heart /Tie each other with love throughout the era /Make your love pleasing for all" (My trans. 10-13. 19). In this middle phase of song they teach newly marrying couple to love each other. As their new relation begins from the date of their marriage and continue it throughout of their life so *Tambas* support them by giving them advice.

During this *Char Tam*, *Tambas* come from different area for their performance during marriage ceremony because *Tamang* community people live in various districts of Nepal. But they do not know about *Pho La* (clan god). So that there is different person to do *Pho La* and *Tambas* give permission to do *Pho La*. And those priests are different according to *Rhui* (thar) for instance; *Lopchan* priest is known as *Lapthaba*, *Bal's* priest is *Lopon* and so on. They are informed about clan god and they worship in their own way. During *Char Tam* of marriage ceremony *Pho La* is also one of the significant aspects. It is believed that they must remember to the clan god and ancestors through this *Pho La*. It is a process of *Rhui* purifying as well.

Moreover, bride and bridegroom commit they will respect each other

throughout their life, fulfill their responsibilities toward family, relatives and community. It is communal commitment also. There is not a culture of putting vermillion in *Tamang* community. As there are distinct cultural traditions according to the community and religion. Likewise, according to Hindu culture putting vermillion is a significant cultural tradition and Muslim people follow different cultural traditions of marriage, it is therefore ritual norms and values provides distinct worldview to human.

Furthermore, Mukta Singh Lama, indigenous expert Lecturer of Anthropology at Tribhuvan University, marks that "daughter's caste does not change after her marriage also in *Tamang* community. There is the natal importance of Rhui (thar) in *Tamang* community. In the marriage ceremony of *Tamang*, there is a ritual of Char Tam at that time *Tambas* talk about it." However, recently there is the system came about woman rights and they are allowed not to change their caste after their marriage also but in *Tamang* community it is in practice from hundreds of years ago.

Bride side of *Tambas* raise the issue death of as well. In this particular moment they talk about after death of bride, groom should return to her maternal brother. Similarly, bridegroom's side of *Tambas* reply them, in case, decease of the bride's respected brother should present in *Dajang* (the place where Lama recites the holy text). In the death ceremony to handover the cranium to daughter's paternal brother is also the responsibility of *Tambas*.

(Personal Conversation, 6 Jan 2019)

Likewise, it shows the notable role of *Tambas* till death ceremony. So as Mukta Singh Lama says, married woman's caste does not change and their cranium always remain with her maternal parents or with her brothers. According to Dawa Wangel Moktan, after this commitment, bride side of *Tambas* announces;

From today onwards maternal brothers have delivered the blood, flesh, soul essence and everything of the daughter's who endure with *Panchatatwa* to the bridegroom . . . But her Rhui will be remained on the hand of maternal brothers. The commitments heard by *Danphe*, Himalayas and *Taarnga* (fish) of ocean also but here presented all the respected people heard or not? At that time, all the presented people there reply together - Yes we heard! (Moktan 134; My trans)

Moktan's opinion reflects this ritual provides information about new relationship from mountain to the ocean. Here, *Tambas* include the origin of human life i.e. 'bride, who she is made up of *Panchatatwa*'. This is not only information but it takes closer to the reality that human physical appearance is changeable and destroyable. So that bride side of *Tambas* talk about her physical body is also changeable and destroyable. It reflects that she will not remain always young and active, she is though bride and groom should support, respect each other till the end of their life. It is therefore *Tambas* takes them closer to the reality, because they do not say that bride is beautiful and they do not claim that is the fact. And after that *Ganba* of bride and groom side request exchange their gifts as shown in the following picture;



Fig. 6: Bride and groom side of *Tambas* and *Ganbas* during *Char Tam*. (PC Dawa Wangel Moktan)

Duet performance

Duet performance is another section of *Tamba's* performance of marriage ceremony. In this section *Tambas* and *Damphures* entertain the atmosphere of marriage ceremony. Bride side of *Tambas* and bride groom side of *Tambas* ask questions and reply through the song with unique beats of *Damphu* and dance. Through their performance, viewers can also learn many things. They begin their duet performance. Here, Santa Bir Lama textualized the duet song, for instance;

A- Aamaile hoi aamaile

Aamaile hoi aamaile

Cut a swing-rope in the cliff

Think love is central purpose

Do not keep anger in your soul

Let's sing duet song. (My trans.1-6.23)

Tamba's duet performance energizes every person. However, bride's family members have to send her with bride groom and bride herself also becomes serious during her marriage ceremony. But these exciting performances of *Tambas* help to cherish the moment to them for a while. Here, especially *Tambas* sing and share their ideology, philosophy through the song. As Lama wrote, this duet performance *Tamba's* song is about the philosophical ideas about love, relationship and its values.



Fig. 7: *Tambas* performing duet performance. (PC Khojraj Gole)

In the *Tamang* marriage ceremony, *Tambas* and *Damphures* take part in this duet performance. *Damphu* is a musical instrument, which is use by performers. While talking about *Damphu* at the same time *Damphures* also come. As figure no. seven and eight represent *Tamba's* and *Damphure's* performance. *Tambas* and *Damphures* are different with each other but many people have misunderstood about them. *Tambas* functions as an institution. *Tambas* are ritual specialist. And they have significant role in every ritual of *Tamang* community people. They talk about *Tamang* history, norms and values. Whereas, *Damphures* are only a person. Their

performance central aim is entertainment. They can sing and dance wherever they like but *Tambas* follow rules and regulations during their performance. *Damphures* cannot conduct any rituals as *Tambas* do. Thus, *Tambas* and *Damphures* are different.

Although *Damphures* also take part during marriage ceremony but their purpose is to entertain the people. *Damphures* dance very enthusiastically in marriage ceremony.

Through the dance they express their happiness and excitement.



Fig. 8: *Damphure* dancing with *Damphu*. (PC Khojraj Gole)

Furthermore, there is time to leave bride's family and bride should go with her husband. Bride's family members and bride's feeling and emotion are captured by *Tamba's* performance. "Though cucumber, pumpkin, citron / Orange-citron, grape fruit / we pick it up as violently / so dear of mother and father / This daughter is thread of heart of parents / We will take her now" (My trans. 24-30. 30-31). Though bride groom side of *Tambas* understand the emotion of daughter's family members but according to the ritual they should leave so that they request to farewell them and take care of themselves says *Tambas* through the song.

Blood, muscle and clan god

Being a couple

You have to go their home

And leave your mother's home ...

There will be piles of ashes

With respect of *Tamang* norms

All of my brothers

Attain all of you to ask for it. (My trans. 39-51)

Similarly here, bride side of *Tambas* perform such performance and they indicate that bride is feeling sad but as our ritual of human community she is going with her husband. In this section of marriage ceremony reveals another unique thing about *Tamang* community is that as *Tambas* say when a daughter marries, her cranium will be her maternal right. And her cast will not change. *Tambas* talk about entire human life during marriage ceremony. As they talk about *Pancha Tatwa*, what is made up of human body that is origin of human life and here *Tambas* reveal about funeral procession of *Tamang* community. *Tambas* play vital role during funeral procession also. As the ritual of *Tamang* community people's death ceremony, in the case of daughter, daughter's cranium will be asked by *Tambas* to her husband in funeral procession and handover to her brothers. This shows the gender balance as well. The way daughter root remains same as son does. In this regard Don Elger says, "to perform is to take a complex series of actions with this integration to produce a value result"(11). This ritual of *Tambas* performance brings community people together. And their every action represents their ideology in front of large number of community people which makes worth their performance.

Tamba as Ritual Specialist

Tamba's performance during a marriage ceremony is a cultural event which is

led by *Tambas*. *Tambas* are ritual specialist. Their presence and performance are ritually very important in *Tamang* community. Their performance is culturally informed. They play the role of informant. Their performance supports to make familiar with the society. In this regard, *Tamba's* performance supports to define community culturally. In one hand, they are open, as they try to give something new through their performance. On the other hand, the base of their performance is past histories, myths and ancestors so they are rooted also. In this way, their performance connects with past and adds creativity as well and that connect past and present to the future. In this regard, Elizabeth Bell argues that;

A performer is one who manifests performance consciousness. The consciousness or the reflexive awareness of oneself as performing works at many levels . . . performer is aware of the frame and pays attention to the relationship among performer, frame and audience . . . third level of performance consciousness involves how a performer pushes emotions ideas and attitude for the sake of audience. (43-44)

In this argument, Bell also argues ritual specialist perform their performance with lots of consciousness because their performance directly influence the witness of ceremony. Ritual specialist performs consciously and their action communicates with audience. Their action is the expression of their inner thoughts, faith and feelings. Through the ritual performance ritual specialists share their knowledge and feelings to the community people.

Moreover, while somebody gives blessing that is of course nice thing. But if somebody performs the same thing and bless then it would be more live and effective. People can easily relate themselves through performance. Because at first performers internalizes their idea or concept about performance to perform and it is associated

with infinite emotions. And there comes their emotions, sentiments and their own ideologies also through the performance. It is therefore, people can relate themselves easily with *Tamba's* performance.

Tambas are as a medium to transfer ideas, information and knowledge to the entire *Tamang* community. Their performance informs about the past histories with new creativity and connects to the future possible situation of life. Consequently, as Roy A. Rappaport states, "the import of performance is exactly the converse of that of an analytic operation" (253). This shows that they interact with logical meaning. It is not simply performance for joy. So that performances like *Tambas* do in *Tamang* community has logical communal goal. Thus, *Tambas* play significant role in *Tamang* ritual ceremonies. Through the *Tamba's* performance, they organize the community and maintain order.

Tamba's performance shows a sample that they do not prioritize materialistic things rather they focus to the relationship, morality, responsibility and thus it is about humankind. This performance relates human life to the nature and shows a sample of moral values and responsibility. As such, *Tamba's* performance is significant in *Tamang* culture because it brings reality, origin, history with creativity. For instance, invocation to the god, advice to bride and groom and so on, that interlinks the order of nature with human life and their relationship and it ultimately shows the social, communal reality. As such, these ritual spaces are as open universities. Because ritual specialists as *Tambas* share their knowledge, stories and experiences about their life and the visitors of the ceremony are as learners and relate their life. It is therefore, ritual spaces should not be taken as mere spaces of the entertainment, just to gather relatives, family members, and friends to enjoy. Rituals give communal solidarity. It should be taken as sources for gaining knowledge for communal harmony and

solidarity.

To draw the conclusion, ritual specialists like *Tambas* and ritual performances do not come alone. So many other aspects as history, identity, communal values, moral values and etcetera stand together. The advancement of modern and post-modern invention of technologies, revolutionary changes in human life style and other changes marginalize indigenous people and their own rituals and values. Pragmatic aspects of ritual performances need to be realized, work on it and follow its moral lesson for communal integration and solidarity. This is what, Catherine Bell states "ritual is a functional mechanism or expressive medium in the service of social solidarity and control" (197). Thus, *Tamba's* performance of *Tamang* community is not only a dance and song but it comes with lots of implications. It has a power of unison, power of bringing all history, tradition, cultural strength, love and all the cohesion of this group to materialize social harmony in *Tamang* community.

Marriage is the event which creates togetherness and cohesion of the society. And *Tambas* are ritual specialists of *Tamang* community who facilitate this cultural performance. Here, they are playing significant role to bring *Tamang* community together. It has power of unison, power of bringing all history, tradition, cultural strength, love and the cohesion of this group. In this way, researcher makes the contextual study of the significant roles of *Tambas* as ritual specialist and their performance during marriage ceremony of *Tamang* community. *Tamba's* performance during a marriage ceremony is a cultural event which is led by *Tambas* that signifies marriage as a pious ceremony that lays foundation for societal unity. As *Tambas* performance talk about clan god, bride and groom their genealogical history, publicize this event to the entire community during *Tamang* marriage ceremony. It is simply not only about fulfillment of their ceremonial requirement. It also relates with

current condition of society. In this recent context human trafficking is flourishing rapidly because of various causes. Among several causes, fake marriage is one of the vital causes which influence our social customs law and rule of nation. While going through this *Tambas* performance and their roles during *Tamangs'* marriage ceremony the researcher found that they are also concerned about this problem i.e. human trafficking. *Tambas* as local government started to provide marriage certificate in Makawanpur district. This is to say, *Tambas* performance also supports to control social problems like human trafficking. As a result, there is delimitation of research so researcher should follow and cannot go beyond. Further researcher can conduct on such issues for the growth of ritual significance.

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