

## Chapter I. Limbus, Limbu Folklore and Folktales

### Background of Limbus

#### 1. Habitant of Limbus

Limbus are one of the Nepal's ethnic group living in the eastern part of Nepal (the extended area from the Arun river in the west and Mechi river in the east) and spread as far as Sikkim, Darjeeling, Nagaland, Manipur, Assam, Bhutan and even in Myanmar. Limbus are limited not only to these areas but also have spread over other parts of the world too, especially in Hong Kong, Singapore and UK. Chaitanya Subba states in his book, *The Culture and Religion of Limbus*:

"Historically Known as "*Limbuwan*", this area lies between the Arun river in the west; the border with Sikkim and west Bengal of India in the east, the northern part of the plains of Morang, Sunsari and Jhapa in the south and the border with Tibet, China in the north, almost covering area of 11,655.Kms"(1).

Limbu actually refers to the ancient tribe of Nepal that are chiefly inhabited in their own land traditionally known as *Pallo Kirant* (far Kirant) that lies east from Arun river and west to India's west Bengal. Their land is known as *Limbuwan* which literary means the Land of Limbus. The Limbuwan covers nine districts in two zones of eastern Nepal which are Panchthar, Ilam, Taplejung, Jhapa in the Koshi zone and Tehrathum, Dhankuta, Sankhuwasabha, Morang, and Sunsari in the Mechi zone. According to CBS, 2001, the total population of Limbus in Nepal is 3, 59,696 which constitutes 1.5 percent of the total population in the country.

Historians and Limbu scholars believed that *Limbuwan* emerged in the sixth century. When *Shan Mokwan* people of Kirant Dynasty, settlers of the valley of north Burma, came to Assam, they found that the land had already been occupied by people of their own stock; so they

came further west to the Tarai land of North Bengal and from there they came up to the hilly parts of eastern Nepal which were under eight Kirat chiefs. *Shan Mokwan* people began to settle in the Kirat state. In the course of time, their families increased considerably. As a result, they felt some evils against them. So, the Kirat chief oppressed them so much so that children of these Shan Mokwan people could not live with them any longer. Thus they began to revolt against their rulers. According to Iman Sing Chemjong:

There eight kings were killed one by one in battlefield [...] the winners assembled in the holy place of Aambe Pojoma, Kanket lungma and Sumhet Lungma and thanked their God. [...] they discussed that who would be now the king in the state? What would be the name of the state? First they concluded that the country would be Limbuwan because it was won by the help of bows." (19)

## **2. Identities of Limbus**

About Limbu name I. S. Chemjong, in his book, *Kirat Itihas*, writes, "They won this land with the help of bow and arrow that's why they kept the name of this land *Limbuwan*" (19). Here, 'Li' means 'bow' and 'Aabu' means 'hit' and 'wan' means 'to keep name' or in Limbu language this is called Limbuwan because this land is won with the help of bow and arrow. Therefore Llimbuwan is known as archer.

According to Shiva Kumar Shrestha: the component *li* means 'bow' and *pu* means 'bird'. The Limbus were well-known archer and they might have called themselves as *Li? Pu* and later it might have become Limbu.

Limbus call themselves *Yakthungba*. People interpret this term variously. For example, Chaitanya Subba says: "*Yak* means fort and *Kedhumba* means brave or the brave man of the fort." (121). The first example shows that the *Limbus* were brave to guard their fort or it indicates

that they were brave, fierce, and brave soldiers and the second meaning indicates that they were known as good, hard working agriculturists in the past. This *yak?Kedhumba* later might have become *Yakthumba*. Chaitanya Subba states in his book *The Culture and Religion of Limbus*: “Some believe that Yakthumba is a derivative of Yaksa and some interpret its literal meaning as the Yaksa winner. In Limbu language, it denotes ‘heroes of the hills which bears the connotation of Kirant’ (20).

Limbus prefer to call themselves ‘Yakthumba’. According to Yahang Lawati: the term “Yakthumba” is derived from ‘Yaktumba’ which means very old or ancient (4).

According to Limbu scholar Chaitanya Subba: "[T]he descendents of three stocks of earlier *Kirats*—a branch coming through the north, known as *Lhashagotra*, a branch coming from south and south east, known as *Kashigotra* and autochthons known as *Khambongba-Lungbongba*" (21). The *Limbus* remained rulers of this land until the Gurkha ruler became their sovereign. *Limbus* fought against the Gurkhas for twelve years and finally the Gurkha ruler granted a commission, with certain ruling power to the chief of each districts or *thums* and land and tax privileges for his community members, which lead to the agreement for ceasing war. Vijaya Narayan (1584-1609) was the last king who ruled his kingdom with the close cooperation of *Murehang*, one of the *Limbu* leaders of *Phedap thum*. Locally we find the designation *Limbuwan* prefixed by *das*, as *Das-Limbuwan*, meaning the *ten Limbu Lands*, referring to the common belief that at one time in the early days there were ten *Limbu rajas*.

One of the terms of address for Limbus is *Subba*. They consider it flattering and therefore unacceptable. According to Bista: the title *Subba* was given to Limbu headman at the time the territory of the Kirat was annexed to the kingdom of Nepal some two hundred and thirty years ago (47). The *Subba* is a natural leader of his fellow villagers. There are usually eight or ten

*kipatiya* families under one *Subba*. A few *Rais* live and farm on *Limbu kipat* lands, but they are not considered *kipatiya*. Instead, they hold the title of *Raiti* and must pay land taxes to the *Subba*. Sometimes a *Subba* may have assistants to help him in carrying out his work. The office of a *Subba* is inherited by his eldest son in addition to a share of the parental property, which is divided equally among all the sons.

In ancient time, they were said to have been hunters for their livelihood, and later they became agriculturists. In the course of time, they became successful rulers. They were brave, fierce, warlike warriors too. Afterwards, they became *Subba* and common people. Despite these all things, we can say that they are an indigenous ethnic group of the *Kiranti* origin with distinct language, culture and religion.

### 3. Different Clans

The Limbus are divided into a number of clans (thars). Some of the Limbu clans are further sub divided with each sub-division having a separate name of its own. Most of the clan-members live together in more or less well defined locales. Some clans are identical with the place names of their residence of group. Each of sub-division is again divided into family groups which are strictly exogamous and intolerant of incest. Chaitanya Subba states in his book *The Culture and Religion of Limus*:

Limbu are found in several clans groupings. According to Khagendra Sing Angbuhang, there are several (218) sub grouping among sixteen major groups of Limbus. These are Mabohang (26 sub groups), Papohang (13), Thegim (11), Shreng (10), Phago (20), Sanwa (20), Bokhim (20), Khokhyahang (17), Thebe (5), Ijam (6), Yakpangden (16), Phedap (12), Nembang (14), Hukpahang (17) and Khewa (22)".

(25)

Thus, Limbus are divided into several types of clans (thars). These clans are further divided into sub clans, such as *Chikcho*, *Chongbang*, *Imusong*, *Kadi*, *Serma*, *Payango*, *Lawati*, *Lohorug*, *Lekuwa*, *Lewahang*, *Pargharri*, *Sanwa* and so on. More than 270 clans (including sub-clans) have been found among Limbus. But there is no distinction in the clan status or division. It seems that the clan is only the name of the particular ancestor.

#### **4. Culture of Limbus**

Limbu people are very rich in culture and tradition and its own distinct features. Observation of culture is situational, which is one of the typical features of the Limbu way of celebrating culture. The cultural performance is the unique features of Limbu community. It is said that Limbus are one of the benches of *Kirant*. That's why; it seems that there are some similarities between Limbus and Rai, another significant race of Nepal. Their culture, language and living styles are quite similar to each other.

They have a long tradition of narrating or reciting *Mundhums*, performing certain rituals and observing ceremonies in their own distinctive ways. *Phedangba* is the main priest who recites *Mundhum*. *Samba*, *Yeba* and *Mangdamba* are also the priests who can recite *Mundhum* which is a collection of legends, a folklores, prehistoric accounts, sermons and moral or philosophical exhortations in poetic language. It guides them in different ways. However, there is no evidence for it. According to Imansing Chemjong: “[T]he word *Mundhum* means the power of great strength and the Kirat people of eastern Nepal take it to be a true, holy and powerful scripture” (18). Madhusudhan Pande claims that, “as the Hindus have the Vedas as a holy text, they have the *Mundhum* which is used in both religion and spell” (109).

The Limbus observe traditionally handed down divergent forms of culture from birth to death and other numerous forms of cultures as *Yalang* (Paddy Dance), *Kelang* (Drum dance),

*Dungdunge, Sapokchpmen* (ceremonies preceding the birth), *Tangsing Takma, Yangdang Phongma* (naming the child), *Mekhim Thim* (marriage), *Mangena, Nahen Sakma, Nahangma, Akwama, Tappheng*, within Death Rites: *Yumsa Nakma* and *Khauam*. Limbus celebrate various festivals like: *Chasok Tangnam, Yakwa Tangnam, Balihang Tangnam, Kakphewa Tangnam, Sisekpa Tangnam*, etc.

## 5. Limbu Language and Literature

Limbus have their own language, script and literature. Limbus call their language 'Yakthumpan'. Limbu language is very old probably as old as their origin. There is no doubt that Limbu language is one of family members of Tibeto-Burman linguistic group. Many linguists and scholars agree with this view. According to Bairagi Kaila: "Limbu language is a member of Tibeto-Barman linguistic group. Limbu script was developed from Brahmi Script after sixth century A.D. (3-4). Gurung also agrees with this view: the Limbu language belongs to the Tibeto-Barman family and has a pronominalized in the early tenth century AD. It is restricted to the scriptural texts of the *Mundhum* tradition(67).

Limbu language has well developed and standard alphabets which consist of 10 vowels and 25 consonant characters. Most of the Limbus in *Limbuwan* area speak in Limbu language as their mother tongue. It is a chief lingua franca in eastern Nepal. Limbu language is written in 'Sirijanga' script. It is named after King Sirijanga. According to Chaitanya Subba, "in late 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. developed this script and taught the Limbus the art of writing by inventing a kind of character" (31). According to Subba: there are four major dialects of Limbu language. They are "*Panchthare* dialect, *Tamarkhole* dialect, *Phedape* dialect and *Chhatthare* dialect" (13). *Panchthare* dialect is spoken in Panchthar and Ilam districts. *Tamarkhole* dialect is spoken in most of the parts of Taplejung district where as *Pheape* dialect is spoken mainly in the north east

part of Terathum district. *Chhattare* dialect is spoken in the south west part of Terathum district.

Imansing Chemjong (January 1, 1904- October 9, 1976) is only one figure who made contribution to the development of Limbu (Kirant) language and literature. He made deep study and authored several books. There are so many scholars and authors who made contribution for the development of Limbu language and literature. But it is still in infancy stages as it was not encourage in the past. The enthusiasts of Limbu language and literature were always suffering and discouraged in the past because the cultural identity and language of any cast or community was taken as a threat to the national unity by ruling elites until the recent years. It was bended frequently in the past especially in the period of Rana regiment.

There are so many unwritten literary documents which are still in oral form. *Mundhum*, legends, prehistorically accounts, folklores, etc. have been transforming from the mouth of *Phedangba, yeba, Mangdemba*, senior family member to junior, exports of Lmbu literature, from parents to children.

### **Limbu Folklore and Folktale**

Charlotte S. Burne comments on folklore as; “the generic term under which the traditional belief, customs, stories, songs and saying current among the backward peoples or retained by uncultured classes of more advanced people, are comprehended and included” (i). The word is defined in terms of opposition to the upper class and urban center.

Folk occupies a kind of middle ground between the civilized elite and the uncivilized savage. Commenting on folk, Alan Dundes writers:

[T]he folk were contrasted on the one hand with civilization they were the uncivilized element in a civilized society- but in the other hand they were also

contrasted with so-called savage or primitive society, which was considered even lower on the evolutionary ladder” (3)

Scholars and folklorists have given different definitions of folklore, but in substance it is oral literature said and heard from generation to generation. It transmitted one generation to another generation from mouth to mouth. Concerning to the folklore Webster Encyclopedia of Literature defines as; "The sum total of traditionally derived and orally transmitted literature, material culture, and costume of subcultures within predominately literate and technologically nonliterate societies belong to the disciplines of ethnology and anthropology."

Dr. M. Kirti Singh says that “[f]olk culture is understood to be the expression of integrated social life as opposed to the urban life. It is the part of the integral culture of a people and as such has a mass appeal on accounts of its racial memory and historical values” (v).

Focusing on the tales Dr. Singh argues that “The various tales\ fables have the smell of the soil where they have originated though assailable by other groups and regions. They cover not only all aspects of human activity and experience but also the myths, cosmology, and cosmology drawing out obviously from race memory strengthened by a vivid imagination.” (i)

Folktales are traditional tales of no firmly established form in which supernatural elements are subsidiary. They are not primary concerned with serious subject. G. S. Kirk defines folktales as:

"[D]ifficult to [assign] to [...] specialized genres [in which] witches, giants, ogres and magical objects all are quite frequent; they represent the supernatural, but hero or heroine is a human being, often humble origin who has to achieve his or her human purpose in spite of, or with the help of such fantastic forces" (37).



About origin of Limbuwan, "land of Limbu", there is one folk believe. Here, Limbuwan can be break into three words that is Li+Abu+wan 'Li' means 'bow' and 'Aabu' means 'hit' and 'wan' means 'to keep name' or in Limbu language this is called Limbuwan because this land is won with the help of bow and arrow. Therefore *Llimbuwan* is known as archer. It has its own wonderful folklore. Limbu folklore are heart-teaching, sweet, practical and to some extent historical. No one can clam about its magic quality. Chaitanya Subba states in his book *The Culture and Religion of Limbus*:

Limbus are rich in their distinct folklore and because of their distinct folklore they have their own identity among ethnic and racial diverse groups of people in Nepal. Various factors including the right of leading life in their own ways and following own customs, traditions and religious practices guaranteed to some extent by their suzerains from time to time, isolation, alienation, unaffected by developmental activities, lack of opportunities of modern education for the masses, some authority to manage own affairs etc. played crucial roles to preserve their folklore. (48)

Limbus are rich in their distinct folklore and because of their distinct folklore they have their own identity among ethnic and racial diverse groups of the Nepali people. Limbu folklore is the tradition and culture of one of the various ethnic groups that constitute the Nepali nation. Their traditions, life style, eating habits, religious belief, social behavior and traits differ from other ethnic groups. The legendary Limbus are ever smiling people; their honesty, amiable disposition and habit of hard work are some of the inborn qualities of Limbus. Let us have a glance at their folklore in the following paragraphs: -

## 1. Limbu Folksongs

Exports of the Indian music briefly mention that Kirant, Savara, Pulinda, Kamboja, Vanga, Valheeka, Andhra, Drivada and forest dwellers used five or less notes to compose a classical melody (Deva, 1974a). Due to the lack of elaboration on Kirant music it is difficult to elaborate Limbu musicology. Chaitanya Subba writes:

"Limbu music is usually marked by a sustained singing in stated intervals. Tonal accent and glide; pitch levels, melodic movement, rhythmic subtleties and ethos of music based on its own acoustics have become interesting but uncharted area of ethnomusicology for the students of music" (48).

### 1.1. Hakpare Samlo

Usually elders and those who are interested or well versed in *Mundum* participate in *Hakpare samlo*. It is recited on the occasion of ceremonial recital of particular god and goddess. It is classical song. It carries the myths, analects and anecdotal memoirs from *Mundhum* and even of hoary past.

### 1.2. Palam Samlo

*Palam* is an improvised song accompanying *Yalang* (Paddy dance). When young men and women participate in *Yalang*, they sing a song almost in a form of contest on the theme of love, which requires prompt imagination for repartee. The subject matters of *Palam* are predominantly the love affairs, factitious romantic relationships, aspirations and frustrations, feeling of melancholy or separation and unsettled longing of life.

### 1.3. Nisammang Sewa Samlo

Simple hymnody or psalmody of Limbus is known as *Sewa Samlo*. It can be understood as a prayer to the God and Goddess just as *Bhajan* or *Bhaktiras gyan*. Traditionally, *Sewa Samlo* is

mostly associated with propitiation rite conducted on any occasion. *Phedangma* recites such *Samlo* in his or her own traditional style without the participation of his or her clients. So, it is confined in the community of *Phedangba*, *Samba*, *Yeba-Yemas* and *Ongsi*. But today it has been modified and popularized by *Satyahangmas* (the followers of the cult propagated by the Mahaguru Phalgunanda Lingden) in Limbu and Rai communities along the line of Hindu tradition of devotional songs.

#### **1.4. Khyali Samlo**

This refers to Jokes in poetical language. This song is a duel song between a boy and a girl; they ask and reply the question in poetical language. When this song is sung, the listeners listen with a sincere attention.

#### **1.5. Swapma Samlo**

This is a cradle song. In accordance with the *Mundum*, the first woman on earth Mujingna Kheyangna gave birth to a baby called Lalawehang Susuweyang. She put the leaves of rhododendron and bamboos in a cradle as a blanket and mattress and swung to make him sleep. The child was cried and unhealthy by birth. She sang cradle songs and swung but failed to make the baby son sleep. *Tagera Niwabhungma* appeared in dream and indicated her to sing the following cradle song to make the baby sleep.

#### **1.6. Tamke Samlo**

When the agricultural era commenced, people began to cultivate. A man called Sarokpa started to sing a song while planting paddy and maize. It was called *Tamke samlo*. This song is sung while planting paddy and maize. This song is also sung while weeding and harvesting. The song indicates that the cultivation should bear good fruit. During planting it is sung as a pray for good harvesting.

### **1.7. Pang Samlo**

This song is sung in remembrance of contemporary friends, or while working alone in a farm, or while collecting wood and grass in a forest. The loneliness (solitude) makes a man charm less (birahi). The beloved one is separated thus to refresh their remembrance this is sung with a tune.

### **1.8. Kesham Samlo**

An old man called Kasuruppa first sang and dance with *Kesam song*. This song is sung in happy anniversaries and celebrations. This song is not limited to young boys and girls in romance, but it is vitally important on the occasion of building a new house. *Ke* is played and *Kesam song* sung on the constructing a new house. After completing the construction of a new house *Ke* is played on the house-warming ceremony and sung all round the main pillar of the house. By doing this, it is assured that insects will not eat the pillar and other parts of the new house; and dust out the insects from the pillar.

### **1.9. Hamlakwa Samlo (Lament song/Mournful song/Melancholy song)**

Among all songs there is also lament song in Limbu culture. This is called *Hamkalwa samlo* (lament song). Women cry and burst in to tears much more quickly than men by nature. There are different ways of crying in Limbu culture. If someone has departed, the relatives won't cry, but express his/her sorrow in lament words. In Limbu culture it is called *Hamsikwa Maring Makwa* (Lament song). According to the *Mundum*, mother Tiyojongna cried with deep sorrow on the death of her tiger son Kesami. This lament cry took the form of *Hamlakwa* (Lament song).

## **2. Limbu Folkdance**

Limbus have unique traditional dances. These dances are performed in Limbu community. Most popular dances are categorized in the following ways:

### **2.1. Yalang or Yarakma (Paddy dance)**

*Yalang* is the most popular dance among Limbus. People ranging from teen-agers to late adults of both sexes participate enthusiastically in this dance without any hesitation. It is organized at night and is performed to the rhythms of *Palam*. Footsteps and ways of traversing are taken care of in the dance. Musical instrument is not used. The literal meaning of *Yalang* is 'paddy dance'.

### **2.2. Kelang (drum dance) (Chyabrung dance)**

Experts of *Kelang* say long-long ago Laden Hangba and Phungden Hangba danced *Ke lang* when Lokphedemba and Hangphademba built a house for the first time on earth. The purpose of dance was to save the house from various kinds of insects that may destroy the wooden portions of the house, from evil spirits and ghost and from natural calamities such as wind, storm, earthquake and fire. Besides house-building, *Ke lang* is also performed around the main pillar on a typical style *Mekham kam* (marriage ceremony).

### **2.3. Samba, Yeba, Yema and Yuma (ritual dance)**

There are some ritual dances as parts of the overall ritual performances which are performed by *Samba, Yeba, Yema, Yumas and Onsis* on some special occasions. They beat the drums and brass plates in frenzied state and shake and dance vigorously.

### **2.4. Manglang (devotional dance)**

It is devotional dance to gods and goddesses. It can be organized on various occasions. Various types of musical instrument are used in this dance. It is performed with *Sewa Samlo* (devotional songs). It is danced to win the favor of *Yuma Sammang*, the supreme goddess and other divinities for health, happiness and prosperity.

## 2. Limbu Folkdrama

Though there is no tradition of performing drama in a theater, the wonderful verses and dialogues together with acting out of certain roles by each member in a group of ritual performers (both clients and shamanistic priests) in certain rituals typically take the form of an excellent drama. About drama, Chaitanya Subba writes:

"[S]uch drama portions of the rituals performed in the open air or in real life situation have profound veering on the value system of its performers and spectators. Such performances turn into artistic production with gradual progression in climax that satisfy the aesthetic drives of spectators and participants. Such dramas are played by both the shamanistic priests and their clients." (64-65)

There are various types of dramatic productions occur in the Limbu communities during festive occasions mostly associated with rituals. He further adds:

"[O]ne of the best occasions is Tongisng ritual of three days. It is a sacred ritual, a great tradition and a festival also. By content, it is a myth or a legend, by style and mode of expressions, it is an epic and by live actions and action out of various roles in the course of ritual performance, it is a drama. In fact, it is an epic full of myths, prayers, worshipping rituals and series of drama" (65).

## 4. Limbu Riddle

Riddles are also used as a means of entertainment among young boys and girls and they become the constituent part of the competitive duet in *Palam*.

## 5. Limbu Proverbs (*Mukpan*)

"Proverbs are short sentences drawn from the long expressions" - Cervantes.

Limbus endorse on Cervantes' saying. Here we have some Limbu proverbs:

- Nahem mare khejekpok* (Jealousy invites conflicts).
- Sakmara mamre lunhithaok* (Scolding and curse invite bad luck).
- Ningwa hopmare tukkhe aja* (Ignorance leads to misery).
- Patmellemare samwan adha* (Offensive words lead to punishment).
- Samma ne gar samlingma* (If you have lost your sense, call it back).
- Yangwane gar yang chingma* (If you have money, hide it safely).

(Source: Darjeeling Times.com)

## 6. Limbu Folktales

Folktales are transforming one generation to another orally. It was in oral form from the very beginning of its origin. Now and then it is in oral, half written and written form. Oral tradition of Limbu is rich in folktales. Most of the folktales are related to *Mundhums* tradition, custom, origin and migration of Limbus. There are many stories in the form of almost unwritten memories related to certain class of Limbus. Some scholars systematically attempt to compile the folktales found around *Limbuwan*. The eminent linguist Imansing Chemjong compiled and edited- *Kiranti Dantya Katha* (Kiranti folk Tales) in Nepali language published by Royal Nepal Academy in 1963. After Imansing Chemjong, Shivakumar Shrestha compiled and published his book *Kiranti Lok Kathaharu* in Nepali language in 2047 BS. In the same way, *Kiranti Lok Katha* Vol 1 by Laxmikumar Sherma (Papo) (BS 2048), *Kirant Lokkatha Sangalo* by Shiva Kumar Shrestha (BS 2051), *Limbu Folklore* by Melanie Pappadis (AD 1994), *Sayapatri* (Multi language magazine) –Royal (the then) Nepal Academy, -*Nepal Limbu Bhasa Lokkatha Anka* Vol 6 No. 2

(Kartik-Chait 2057) Guest Editor: Bairagi Kaila, *Kirantka Gatha, Katha ra Lokkathaharu* by Chandrakumar Serma (BS 2064), *Limbuwanka Lokkathaharu* by Dhanahang Subba (BS 2065), etc were also compiled and published.

Many other folktales were published in local newspaper and magazines. But so many folktales are in the form of almost unwritten memories. So, Limbus duty is to make alive folktales by collecting and record for the past.

### **Classification of Limbu Folktales**

Though, folktales have collected from ancient time, there is no clear cut classification.

George Graham Belle classified folktales as:

1. fairy tales
2. hero tales
3. ballads
4. place legend

Finish writer Antti Aarne classifies as: animal tales, folktales and Jocks & Anecdotes (184). Another folklorist Stith Thompson classifies folktales as: tradition, fairy tales, animal tales, fables and myths (106).

Nepalese folklore scholar Tulsi Diwas has classified Nepali folktales into following types:

1. cultural-historical tales
2. advice and diadective
3. animals and birds tales
4. human nature and instincts religious tales
5. humanistic tales
6. stories of natural calamity



7. stories of fruits and flowers
8. tales of courage and braveries
9. religious tales
10. verity tales. (38)

Though Tulsi Diwas has already classified Nepali folktales, Kiranti (Limbu-Rai) folktales of the following types are also existence:

1. Folktales on Stone and Cave
2. Folktales on Flore and Fauna
3. Folktales on Pond, River and Fountain
4. Folktales on Demon and Demoness
5. Folktales on Ridges and Mountains
6. Folktales on Roads and Villages
7. Folktales on Aquatic animals/plants
8. Folktales related to certain clan of Limbu

### **Characteristics of Limbu Folktales**

Folktales around Limbuwan are about myth, tradition, customs as well as stone, cave, river, lake, animal, bird, tree, flower, hill and other variety. Chaitanya Subba writes:

"Oral tradition of Limbus is rich in folktale. Most of the folktales are related to *Mundhums*, tradition, customs, origin and migration of Limbus. They are in the forms of myths, fables, fairy tales, war stories, fictions biographies, etc. and present the vivid picture of Limbus material culture, social structure, economy, religious belief, history and way of life of the remote past often revealing their

aspiration, values, ambition and goals. There are many stories in the form of almost unwritten memories relating to relating to certain clans of Limbu" (68).

The subject matter of Limbu folktales are around Limbuwan and at the same time India's some parts. According to the multi language magazine *Sayapatri*:

The Limbuwan or Pallo Kirant of eastern part of Nepal and Sikkim-India where Limbus are living for many centuries (a) places of the exact geographical areas, (b) rivers and mountains-ridges of that area and even (c) description of the aquatic, trees, insects; are Limbu folktales' subject as well as characteristics(175).

(My own translation)

The stories of marriage, relationship, conversation between man and god are also the characteristic of Limbu folktales. Origin story of *Fedangba*, *Samba*, *Yeba* (male), *Yema*(female) and their prestige in Limbu community and their magical power are the subject matters as well as characteristics of the Limbu folktales. According the multi language magazine *Sayapatri*:

[F]rom folktales, we know about first home construction in Limbu clan, origin story of paddy dance, origin story of *chyabrun*(drum) dance, beginning tradition of painch (loan), human beings first marriage, beginning story of death rites, forbidden to exchange flower in Limbu brother and sister, beginning of offering birds and animals to the god in Limbu society. (176)

Limbu folktales are about Limbu *Mundhum*, Limbu religion, Limbu traditions and festivals. In the same way, Limbu folktales are about origin of Limbu clans- by the place name, by the name of trees, by family member's name, etc. Chaitanya Subba writes about the characteristics of Limbu folktales as:

Some fables, fairy tales and folk-stories are secular as well as religious in its theme and mostly concerned with good moral conduct, kinship cohesion, brotherhood, hospitality, physical strength and wisdom, truthfulness, taking care of parents, elders and children, respect for arbitrators(council of arbitrators or adjudicators) and so on. Another category of folktales are related with certain clans of Limbu. They seem just like some historical events or accounts, but are often colored by supernatural phenomena or guided by divinities. Such stories mostly tell about how the ancestors of certain type of Limbu came to a certain place and settled down, imposed, how certain customs developed etc. (69)

This is how, Limbu folktales somehow telling the historical events or accounts of Limbus but they are colored by supernatural phenomena. So, it seems like mixture of history and imagination.

## Chapter II. Structural Perspective on Limbu Folktales

### Vladimir Propp and Narrative Structure

Vladimir Propp (1895-1970) extended the Russian Formalistic approach to the study of narrative structure. On the Formalistic approach, sentence structures were broken down into analyzable elements, or morphemes, and Propp used this method by analogy to analyze Russian fairy tales. By breaking down a large number of Russian folk tales into their smallest narrative units, or narratemes, Propp was able to arrive at a typology of narrative structures.

According to free encyclopedia:

Folk stories around the world form a web of connections and the same or similar stories can be found in many more stories since and hence Propp's morphology is useful not only in understanding Russian folk tales but pretty much any other stories.

The 31 Narratives

Here are the 31 elements of stories that Propp identified, plus this symbol, interpretations and discussion. Note that some of these functions generally occur in pairs, such as departure and return. They may also be repeated.

Few stories contain all elements, but where they do contain elements, they will very largely occur in the sequence given here.

0. Initial situation

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Sphere: Introduction**

Steps 1 to 7 introduce the situation and most of the main character, setting the scene of subsequent adventure.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Sphere: The Body of the Story**

The steps (8-11) main story starts here and extends to the departure of the hero on the main quest.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Sphere: The Donor Sequence**

In the third sphere (13-19), the hero goes in search of a method by which the solution may be reached, gaining the magical agent from the Donor. Note that this in itself may be a complete story.

### **4<sup>th</sup> Sphere: The Hero's Return**

In the final (and often optional from 20 to 31 steps) phase of the storyline, the hero returns home, hopefully uneventfully and to a hero's welcome, although this may not always be the case.

Propp's theory is somehow syntagmatic. Narrative functions can be put into the order. They come in linear order. It means A comes then B comes but before B, C does not come. In every story, 31 narrative functions may not come. Characters may change but the narrative functions are fixed.

## **Narrative structure of Limbu folktales**

### **1. Creation myth of chyabrung (musical instrument) and dance**

Narrative Functions-

1. Absentation- Brother Kesingen leaves home.
2. Interdiction- Tigenjangna orders Namsami to be careful.
3. Violation- Kesami is sacking to eat Namsami.
4. Reconnaissance- Kesami wants to know about Namsami.
5. Delivery- Kesami knows about Namsami by his mother Tigenjangna that he is on the simal tree.

- 9. Mediation- Tigenjangna sends Namsami down.
- 10. Acquisition- Namsami decides to go and sits on the ninth branch of the simal tree.
- 11. Departure- Namsami departs from home.
- 15. Guidance- Namsami sits on simal tree being ready position.
- 16. Victory- Namsami kills Kesami by shutting his arrow straight into the tiger's mouth.
- 19. Resolution- Namsami saves his life.
- 20. Return- Namsami returns home.

## **2. Kesami and Namsami Mundhum**

### Narrative Functions-

- 1. Abstention- Brother Yukpuhag is absent.
- 4. Reconnaissance- Kesami asks Saranghangma about Namsami.
- 5. Delivery- Kesami knows from his mother Saranghangma about Namsami.
- 9. Mediation- Saranghangma sends Namsami down.
- 10. Counteraction- Namsami decides to go and sit on the ninth branch of the simal tree.
- 11. Departure- Namsami goes to Archale, Terhathum.
- 12. Testing- Sodhugenlepmuhang blesses to Namsami.
- 14. Acquisition- Namsami finds one powerful (mahankal) arrow.
- 15. Guidance - Namsami finds arrow in Shivapuri and goes to sit on the simal tree being ready position.
- 16. Struggle- Namsami and Kesami fight in the jungle.
- 18. Victory- Namsami kills Kesami by shutting his powerful (mahankal) arrow straight into the tiger's mouth.
- 19. Resolution- Namsami saves his life.

20. Return- Namsami returns home.

### **3. Sekmuru Fung**

Narrative Functions-

1. Absentation- brother Kesingen leaves home and goes to another country.
2. Interdiction- Kesami warns Namsami.
3. Violation- Kesami orders Namsami not to bring meat for mother Tigenjangna.
4. Reconnaissance- Kesami tries to know either Namsami brings meat for mother or not. So, Kesami tries to know about Namsami that where he is.
5. Delivery- He knows about Namsami by his mother that he is on the simal tree of Simang gadi.
9. Mediation- Tigengangna sends Namsami to the Simag gadi to fight with Kesami.
10. Counteraction- Namsami becomes ready to fight with his twin brother Kesami.
11. Departure- before the arrival of Kesami, Namsami leaves home.
14. Acquisition- Namsami brings poison throne from mountain to keep on arrow.
15. Guidance- Namsami sits on the ninth branch of the simal tree.
16. Struggle- Namsami and Kesami fight in Simang gadi.
18. Victory- Namsami kills Kesami. He shuts his poisoned arrow straight into the tiger's mouth.
19. Resolution- Namsami saves his life.
20. Return- Namsami returns home.

### **4. Mangmanglung**

Narrative Functions-

1. Absentation- Bijuwani's husband is absent.
4. Reconnaissance- male Nag checks Bijuwani's power.
5. Delivery- male Nag knows about Bijuwani's arrival to fight with him, so, he eats her son.

8. Villainy or Lack- male Nag eats Bijuwani's only one adult son.
9. Mediation- Bijuwani may die or kill Male Nag but Villagers send her to fight with Nag.
10. Counteraction- So, she decides to go to fight.
11. Departure- Bijuwani jumps into to the Male pond of in Banjho -9, Ilam.
12. Testing- If she cannot break the stone which is beside the pond, she cannot kill the Male Nag.
13. Hero's Reaction- Bijuwani breaks the stone by plate.
14. Acquisition - Bijuwanin uses her magic power to fight with Male Nag.
15. Guidance- Bijuwani jumps into the male pond.
16. Struggle- Bijuwani and male Nag fight in the Male pond.
18. Victory- Bijuwani kills male Nag in Warnag pond by hitting on the head of the Male Nag by the help of the plate in Warang pond.
19. Resolution- Bijuwani saves the life of villagers.

## **5. Yejuli Yema**

### Narrative Functions-

1. Absentation- father is absent.
8. Villainy or Lack- Nag eats Yejuli Yema's daughter Khedakna.
9. Mediation- Bijuwani may die or kill Nag but villagers send her to fight with Nag.
10. Beginning Counteraction- She decides to fight with Nag.
11. Departure- Yejuli Yema jumps into the pond.
12. Testing- Yejuli Yema sacks magic power from god.
15. Guidance- Yejuli Yema jumps into the pond.
16. Struggle- Yejuli Yema and Nag fight into the pond.



18. Victory- Yejuli Yema kills Nag in the pond of Taramdemba by cutting pond and bring water out..

19. Resolution- Yejuli Yema saves the life of villagers.

## **6. The Eagle God**

Narrative Functions-

1. Absentation- Eagle's parents are absent.

4. Reconnaissance- Eagle decides to eat men.

5. Delivery- Eagle sees children near in the village.

8. Villainy or Lack- Eagle eats children of the village.

10. Counteraction- Two young men decide to kill eagle.

11. Departure- Two young men make trap.

15. Guidance- Two young men finish the trap with glutinous substance.

16. Struggle- Eagle happens to trap on the glutinous substance under the tree and two young men attack the eagle.

18. Victory- Eagle is killed by the villagers with help of two young men using javelin, axe and stick.

19. Resolution- villagers save the life of their children.

## **7. Eagle God Muyasammang Mundhum**

Narrative Functions-

1. Absentation- parents of Muyaking are absent.

2. Interdiction- Sajuchung interdicts Pujuchung.

3. Violation- Sajichung tells Pujuchung it save life from Muyaking.

4. Reconnaissance- Muyaking seeds other men.

5. Delivery- Muyaking saws that Pujuchung is challenging him.
8. Villainy or Lack- Muyaking eats Sajuchung.
9. Mediation- Pujuchung knows that Muyaking will also eat him.
10. Counteraction- Pujuchung makes plan to take revenge with Muyaking.
13. Reaction- Pujuchung wants to take revenge by killing Muyaking
15. Guidance- Pujuchung makes glutinous substance to take revenge.
16. Struggle- Muyaking happens to trap on glutinous substance and Pujuchung comes to kill.
18. Victory- Muyaking is killed by Pujichang and villagers by using stick, axe, and Nepalese sword.
19. Resolution- Pujichang saves the life of villages.

## **8. Mukkubung and Ajarakpa**

Narrative Functions-

1. Absentation- Mukkuhang's and other family members are absent.
2. Interdiction- Yuma warns to Mukkuhang.
3. Violation- Yuma says Mukkuhang not to be angry.
4. Reconnaissance- Ajarakpa wants to know about Mukkuhang.
5. Delivery- Mukkuhang is delivered from a army of Morahang.
6. Trickery- Ajarakpa tries to trick to Morahang.
7. Complicity- Morahang gives command to Ajarakpa to kill Mukkuhang.
9. Mediation- Morahang gives order to Ajarakpa to kill Mukkuhag but Mukkuhang is his sister's son. So, he sends one army to early inform about the event.
10. Acquisition- Mukkuhang leaves home.

11. Departure- Mukkuhang leaves Wandhak with his wife Kanyak Lisikak Phanthak and his friends.

15. Guidance- Mukkuhang decides to fight with Ajarakpa.

16. Struggle- Mukkuhang and Ajarakpa fight for many days but no one can win.

19. Resolution- Mukkuhang and Ajarkpa make agreement and war is stop.

### **9. Story of Maksingbung**

Narrative Functions-

4. Reconnaissance- Thegimhangs wants to know about Ogyanghang's secret power.

5. Delivery- Thegimhangs know about Ogyanghang's secret power from his younger wife Selingma that he has avotung stone on his head which has to break.

6. Trickery- Thegimhangs want to kill Ogyanghang.

7. Complicity- Selingma helps to Thegimhangs by telling about Ogyanghang's secret power and giving to poisoned Tongba(alcohol) to Ogyanghang.

8. Villainy of Lack- Selingma turns towards Thegimhangs. Thegimhangs kill Ogyanghang by breaking avorung stone which is on the head of Ogyanghang.

9. Mediation- King Ogyanghang is killed by Thegimhangs and his relatives. So, his elder wife Bedhama decides to leave home.

10. Acquisition - Bedhama is pregnant. She wants to save her embed.

11. Departure- Bedham runs away and reached Tangloppa.

15. Guidance- Bedhama decides to save her newly burned child.

16. Struggle- Thegimhangs wanted to kill Bedhama's newly burned child Maksingbung.

18. Victory- Thegimhangs cannot kill Bedhama's newly burned child Maksingbung.

19. Resolution- Bedhama saves her newly burned child Maksingbung.

## **10. The Papoo Fish**

### Narrative Functions-

1. Absentation- Grandson's parents are absent.
4. Reconnaissance- Grandson checks if her grandmother is alive or died.
5. Delivery- Grandson knows that his grandmother is still alive.
6. Trickery- Grandson plays trick by asking his grandmother that if she is hungry.
7. Complicity- Grandmother shows her hand how hungry she is but she let go of the rock and carried down by currents of water.
8. Villainy or Lack- Grandson leaves her grandmother first in the jungle and then into the river.
14. Acquisition- Grandmother turns into the Papoo fish.
16. Struggle- Grandson wants to kill his grandmother by throwing into the river.
17. Branding- Grandmother turns into Papoo fish which has silver braided back.
18. Victory- Grandmother doesn't die but turns into Papoo fish.

## **11. Papoo Yuma and Ingnam Yuma**

### Narrative Functions-

1. Absentation- There is loss of family members except two grandmothers and two grandsons.
4. Reconnaissance- Changbahang wants to know about Papoohang's thought about his grandmother.
5. Delivery- Changbahang knows that grandmother has become burden to Papoohang.
6. Trickery- Changbahang makes trick with Papoohang by throwing duplicate grandmother into the Tamor river.
7. Complicity- Papoohang unknowingly believes Changbahang.
8. Villainy or Lack- Papoohang throws his grandmother.

- 14. Acquisition- Grandmother transforms into Papoo fish.
- 16. Struggle- Grandmother struggles to be alive.
- 17. Branding- Grandmother turns into Papoo fish which has silver braided back.
- 18. Victory- Grandmother doesn't die but turns into Papoo fish.

## **12. Budda Subba- 1**

Narrative Functions-

- 1. Absentation- Buddha Subba's two wives are absent.
- 4. Reconnaissance- Villain (destiny) tries to know how Buddha Subba's wives thought about him.
- 5. Delivery- His both wives refuse to give him food.
- 8. Villainy or Lack- Buddha Subba feels hungry.
- 9. Mediation- Buddha Subba decides to go to the jungle in search of food.
- 10. Counteraction- Buddha Subba goes to the jungle in search of food with his dog.
- 11. Departure- Buddha Subba leaves wives' home.
- 16. Struggle- Buddha Subba struggles with hunger (destiny) and dies.

## **13. Budda Subba- 2**

Narrative Functions-

- 10. Counteraction- Bhimwant becomes ready to bring pure mud from Chulachuli Mountain about five stairs bellow.
- 11. Departure- Bhimwant departure from home to bring pure mud about five stairs bellow from Chulachuli Mountain.
- 12. Testing- Bhimwant has to bring pure mud of Chulachuli Mountain about five stairs bellow which he has to do.

13. Reaction- Bhimwnat becomes success to bring mud of Chulachuli Mountain about five stairs bellow.

15. Spatial Change- Buddha Subba decides to commit suicide.

16. Struggle- Buddha Subba struggles with destiny.

#### **14. Buddah Subba- 3**

Narrative Functions-

2. Interdiction- Gorkhali interdicts Buddhikarna.

3. Violation- Buddhikarna has to leave his country.

4. Reconnaissance- Gorkhali wants to know about Buddhikarna.

5. Delivery- Gorkhalis know that he has become refuee in east India Company and at last they find him in Kathmandu (the then Nepal city).

7. Complicity- He takes help from east India Company.

8. Villainy or Lack- Gorkhalis imprison Buddikarna in Kathmandu (the then Nepal city)

16. Sturggle- Budddhikarn struggles with destiny in the prison.

#### **15. Buddha Subba- 4**

Narrative Functions-

10. Counteraction- Vartavir makes hunting as profession.

11. Departure- Vartavir goes to hunt with his sister Padhmawati and two helpers Dukkuhang and Bagsing.

12. Testing- The arrow left by Vartavir never mistake. So, he shuts his arrow to the deer.

13. Hero's Reaction- Vartavir shuts his arrow to the deer but cannot hit on the target.

15. Spatial Change- Vartavir decides to commit suicide.

16. Struggle- Vartavir struggles with destiny.

### Structural Change in Limbu Folktales

Different in narrative style is one of the characteristic of Limbu folktales. Different narrators narrate the same folktales according to their knowledge and in their own style.

Concerning about narrative tradition, Chaitanya Subba further states:

Narrators are usually senior member and audiences are the younger ones in the family. Myths, legends or stories relation to social values, norms and ethics are usually narrated by old fellow and tales of less serious themes or subjects but of common concerns are told by senior one or knowledgeable member among them. Jokes, satirical or humorous stories are confined among contemporaries of within the peer circle. Such stories are always terms of references for the dialogue between brothers and wives of elder brothers. (69-70)

Folktales are the product of especial clans' culture. But in the course of time, the character-name and place-name of the folktales change as narrator change. So, there are many versions of the same folktales. According to multi language magazine *Sayapatri*: [w]ithin one country, within one clan and within its sub-clans, one folktale; has many versions (165).

Folktales of different clans and countries have also the same theme and purpose. Many scholars have claimed human beings' similar experiences (when they are in similar natural situation) produce similar narratives and folktales. Other scholars claim is that like the human beings, narratives and folktales are also similar (from one place to another) and we can guess the similar origin and clan relation clans.

The folktales *Origin Myth of Chyabrun and Dance* by Muringla, B. B. in the multi language magazine *Sayapatri* (38-45), *Kesami and Namsamo Mundhum* by Sherma, Chandrakumar in his book *Limbuwanka Katha, Gatha ra Lokkathaharu* (69-74) and *Sekmuri*

*Fung* by Subba, Dhanahang in his book *Limbuwanka Lokkathaharu* (93-97) share the same narrative functions like absention, interdiction, delivery mediation, counteraction, departure, guidance, struggle, victory, resolution. According to multi language magazine *Sayapatri*: "[w]ithin one country, within one clan and within its sub-clans, one folktale; has many versions (165)." These three folktales have the same subject matter and the theme. These folktales tell stories about two twin brothers: one brother is tiger and the other one is a man. These folktales tell the origin of Limbu drum (*Ke*) or (*Chyabrung*) and it had made by the skin of tiger. The man brother killed his twin tiger brother, de-skinned it and made the drum in the memory of his brother. However, the differences of the time and narrators (collectors) cause the differences in the names of the characters, places and development of events. *Origin Myth of Chyabrung and Dance* by Muringla, B. B., the two twin brothers' name are Kesami and Namsami; their mother's name is Tigenjangna and her brother's name is Kesingen(38). But *Kesami and Namsamo Mundhum* by Sherma, the twin brother's name is same but the mother's name is Saranghangma and her brother's name is Yukpuhang. Subba(69), *Sekmuri Fung* by Subba, Dhanahang is similar with Muringla, B. B. In the case of place name, Muringla, B. B. the two brothers' fight on the simal tree and he does not give place name (41). Sherma, Chandrakumar, gives the two brothers' fighting place name as Archale, Terhathum. Subba, Dhanahang, gives the two brother's fighting place name as Simal Gadi (95).

The folktales *Mangmanglung* by Laxmikumar Sherma (108-113) and *Yejuli Yema* by Sujan Seling (142-146) have different place-names, character-names, situations but the entire elements and subject matter of the story is same. According to *Sayapatri*: "the story of *Mangmanglung* and *Yejuli Yema*, though the place name, character name and situations are different, the main element or the subject matter is same or these two folktales are the stories of



the magic power of Yuma and victory against snake.(165)" these two stories share some similarities and differences in the narrative functions like in absentation, lack, mediation, counteraction, departure, testin, guidance, struggle, victory, resolution. In the story of *Mangmanglung*, the place name where the Yuma lives is Banujho- 9, Ilam but in the story of *Yejuli Yuma*, the place name is given as Tharu,Thariba (now Tharpu, Panchthar) In the story of *Mangmanglung*, Yuma;s name is Bijuwani and in the story of *Yejuli Yuma*, the Yuma's name has given Yejuli Yuma. In the same why, the endings are situationally different. The folktale *Mangmanglung* by Laxmikumar Sherma ends with the death of Yuma:

Though she killed the snake, she also became injured. She was also going to die. Then, she told snakes of the Kyabung ridge and the villagers-"Now I will die. People, I had to face many difficulties to kill the snake. So, nobody be Yeba or Yema in my clan because they will have to face difficulties. Then, she died. So, it is believed that in Fiyak clan, no one becomes Yeba or Yema. (113) (My own translation)

The folktale of *Yejuli Yema* by Sujan Seling ends with the disappearance of Yuma:

Then, she killed the snake. Then, the villagers saw flower in the pond. She had two houses. Their roofs were joined. So, the villagers called them Jorghar and the residents were called Jorghare. Her only one son also died. So, she became very sad. She adopted on of the villagers of Chitok as her brother kept him in her home and she left home with her disciples. Then, villagers started to call her brother Kambahang because he lived in that joined home. Later, they became Kambang. Her name became famous. She disappeared beside the Tista River. (146) (My own translation)

In the same way, *Story of Maksingbung* by Janaklal Sharma in his book, *Hamro Samaj: ek Adyayan* (175-178) and *Story of Mukkuhang and Ajarakpa* by Budhahang Nembang in the multi language magazine *Sayapatri* 126-129) share some similarities in narrative functions like in reconnaissance, deliver, complicit, mediation, departure. They are different folktales of the same subject matter (importance of magic power) which we can find in the Thamsuhang clan of Limbu community. According to the multi language magazine *Sayapatri*:

*Story of Maksingbung* (Sharma, Janaklal. *Hamro Samaj: ek Adyayan*. Kathmandu: Sajha Prakashan, p. 175-178, 2039 and the collections story of *Story of Mukkuhang and Ajarakpa* by Budhahang Nembang in this magazine are the different folktales of the same subject matter (importance of magic power) same country and in the same clan. (164)

These two folktales are about the war. In the folktale *Story of Maksingbung*, the protagonist Mukkegumba has magical power and in the folktale *Story of Mukkuhang and Ajarakpa*, Mukkuhang and Ajarakpa have magical power.

Similarly, the folktales *The Eagle God* by Shivakumar Shrestha in his book *Kiranti Lokkathasongalo* (20-21) and *The Eagle god Muyasammang Mundhum* by Chandrakumar Sherma in his book *Limbuwanka Gatha, Katha ra Lokkathaharu* (99-102) share some similarities in narrative functions like in absentation, lack, counteraction, guidance, struggle, victory, resolution. These two stories share the subject matter of origin of eagle god in Limbu community. But because of the change of narrators (collectors); their narrative style, knowledge, and perception, we can see the difference in the plot. Nepali folklorist Chudamdi Bandhu is also agree in this point in his book *Nepali Loksahitya*: "The same story may be different if it is narrated immediately after by the same narrator." that's why, the eagle god's name is not given in

the folktale of Shivakumar Shrestha (20-21) but the eagle god's name is Muyaking in the folktale of Chandrakumar Sherma (99-102)

In a similar way, *The Papoo Fish* by Pappadis, Mailean in his book *Limbu Folklore* (79-80) and *The Papoo Yuma and Ingnam Yuma* by Dhanahang Subba in his book *Limbuwanka Lokkathaharu* (85-87) have also different narrative functions but the functions like villainy or lack, acquisition, struggle, branding and victory are same. It is because these folktales have been collected from different places about the Papo clan but the entire theme is the same (origin of Papo fish). Nepali folklorist Chudamani Bandhu, in his book, *Nepali Loksahitya* states:

To be dynamic is nature of folklore. The morphology cannot remain same in all the time. It changes continuously according to the time and place. Same story becomes different if we collect from different places. It changes on language style, narrative style, narrative and message, etc. (33)

In the folktale of Mailean Pappadis, the grandson's name is not given (79-80) but in the folktale of Dhanahang Subba, the grandson's name is Papohang (85).

The folktales of Buddha Subba have also different versions. The researcher has analyzed the folktales of Pappadis, Melanie. *Limbu Folklore* (84-85), Shrestha, Shivakumar. *Limbuwanko Aitihāsik Adhdhyan* (103) Subba, Dhanahang. *Limbuwanka Lokkathaharu* (141-143). The present researcher has found differences in narrative functions. Though there is difference in structure of the folktales, these all four folktales are about Buddha Subba of Bijayapur because there is similarity in narrative function like struggle. However, in the folktale by Shrestha, Shivakumar. *Limbuwanko Aitihāsik Adhdhyan* (103), Buddha Subba has thought to be Buddhikarna Rai and the folktale by Subba, Dhanahang. *Limbuwanka Lokkathaharu* (141-143) Buddha Subba has thought to be Vartavir.

### **Conclusion: A Gradual Structural Shift in Limbu Folktales**

Folktales are the product of especial clans' culture. But in the course of time, the character-name and place-name of the folktales change as narrator change. So, there are many versions of the same folktales. Within one country, one clan and within its sub-clans has many versions. So, those kinds of folktales help to redraw the history of that clan.

The folktales *Origin Myth of Chyabrung and Dance* (38-45), *Kesami and Namsamo Mundhum* (69-74) and *Sekmuri Fung* (93-97) have the same subject matter and the theme. They tell stories about two brothers: one brother is tiger and the other one is a man. However, the differences of time and narrators collectors) cause differences in the names of the characters, places, development of events and plots.

The folktales *Mangmanglung* (108-113) and *Yejuli Yema* (142-146) have different place-names, character-names, situations but the entire elements and subject matter of the story is same. These two folktales are the stories of the magic power of Yuma and victory against Nag (snake).

In the same way, *Story of Maksingbung* (175-178) and *Story of Mukkuhang and Aजारakpa* (126-129) are different folktales of the same subject matter (importance of magic power) within the same country and within the same place.

Similarly, the folktales *The Eagle God* (20-21) and *The Eagle god Muyasammang Mundhum* (99-102) are the same story of the origin of eagle god. But because of the change of narrators (collectors); their narrative style, knowledge, and perception, we can see the different versions of the same folktales.

In a similar way, *The Papoo Fish* 79-80 and *The Papo Yuma and Ingnam Yuma* (85-87) are also different versions of the same folktale. These folktales have been collected from different places but the entire theme is the same (origin of Papo fish).

The folktales of Buddha Subba have also different versions. The researcher has analyzed the folktales of Mailean Pappadi (84-85), Shivakumar Shrestha (102-103), Dhanahang Subba (141-143). The present researcher has found differences in place-names and character-names as well as structure, plot, theme, etc.

In conclusion, there are many Limbu folktales which have different versions. Because of oral and dynamic nature, Limbu folktales have many versions. Narrators' and listener's choice, rhetoric, carelessness, change of role and meaning, forgetfulness, translation, change in listener and narrator's age and sex play vital role in the twist of the structures of the folktales.

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