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The Representation of Limbus: A Discourse Analysis of Upendra Subba's "Dumb Hill"

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ABSTRACT

What is the literary value of representing the culture of common people and making cultural discourse of marginality? For what purpose do the writers represent everyday lives, experiences, and cultural practices of marginalised groups? To answer these questions, this paper attempts to analyse Upendra Subba's "Dumb Hill," the title story of the anthology Dumb Hill, aiming to explore the whole way of life of ethnic Limbu people of Panchthar district, the eastern part of Nepal, including their lifestyles, socio-economic conditions, cultural values, and practices. It tries to interpret the purpose of representing everyday lives and cultural practices of common Limbu people. To interpret the text, Michel Foucault's concept of discourse and power/knowledge, and Stuart Hall's concept of representation have been applied as the theoretical tools to achieve the objectives of the study. Foucault argues that there is no truth, but truths which are constructed by power/knowledge and defined by the discourse. Discourse produces, constructs and defines a body of knowledge or truths. Hall undertakes the representation as a process and practice of conveying the meaning using the material objects or images, which are selected and constituted by power. In this sense, representation is a cultural product rather than an autonomous process of constructing a meaning. From this light, the story as a cultural discourse of marginality produces and defines overshadowed body of knowledge about ethnic Limbu people through discursive representation of Limbu people, and their distinctive cultural practices. This study provides a new insight to see and understand Limbu People's distinctive ways of life that have been ignored and unheard in the dominant literary discourses.

KEYWORDS: Cultural discourse, Limbu culture, marginalised, power/knowledge, representation

INTRODUCTION

Cultural arts and artifacts including literary creations are assumed to be cultural discourses in which certain groups of people, their socio-cultural practices, and images are represented to produce and define specific meaning and body of knowledge. All these discourses and representations are constructed and constituted by power relations in the society as a process of constructing specific meaning. In this sense, discourse is defined as a systematic way of "all expression and use of language" which is produced in a certain context to make meaning (Nayar, 2016, p. 20). When cultural discourse represents lives and experiences of common people, which are ignored and marginalized

in the mainstream discourses, this system of expression is called discourse of the margin. It is defined as the cultural products constructed from the perspectives of those groups who have “the lack of power, participation and integration” in the mainstream power structures of the state (Bernt & Colini, 2013, p. 14). Moreover, this literary discourse favors those “individuals and groups” who are prevented “from full participation in social, economic, and political life enjoyed by the wider society” (Alakhunov et. al., 2015, p. 10). Literary discourse of the margin represents marginalized people and their cultural practices at the center.

In the context of Nepali literary discourses, the trend of constructing cultural discourse of marginality primarily emerged in the 2000s by representing marginalized common people, their everyday lives and experiences and cultural practices at the center. This changing paradigm was influenced by some factors such as the changes of socio-political systems, intensification of cultural consciousness, and shifting of power relations in the society. In this changing of literary paradigm, Nepali poets and novelists produced cultural artifacts concerning the representation of unheard people and their lives and experiences. Connecting to this point, Giri (2015) evaluates the new trend of writing: after the political movements of the 2000s, the writers have expressed and represented the experiences, desires, and consciousness of identity and existence of those marginalized people who have remained under the oppression of dominant culture for centuries (p. 144). Socio-political movements and cultural consciousness influenced the creation of Nepali literary discourse that represents day to day lives, struggles, and experiences of common people at the margin.

In the same way, Subedi (2015) elucidates the shifting of Nepali literary discourses: After the political changes in 2006, a new trend of writing appeared in literature in which feelings with strange mixture of anger are expressed; and celebration of marginalized class, women and Dalits are represented, mainly in the poetry (p. 27). Subedi has also confirmed that socio-political changes have played significant role to change the trend of creating Nepali literary discourse. In the same vein, Giri (2017) describes the issues that contemporary literary writings explore: the culture of lower class, exploited and indigenous nationalities groups have been expressed in contemporary Nepali poetry (p. 38). The writers who write in this trend have captured issues of marginalized people concerning to their representation and recognition of cultural identity.

In addition, some literary and cultural movements have also equally played a significant role to construct literary discourses of marginalized people and their representation. In this context, Mukarung (2015) points out some supportive factors that intensified the representation of dominated people and their voices such as the support from the ethnic communities, the writings of Shrawan Mukarung, Krishna Dharabasi, Narayan Dhakal, Budhhi Sagar, and Nayanraj Pande on the issue of socio-cultural justice, and Maoist movement of the country. These aspects of socio-cultural and political movements supported to produce cultural discourses from the perspectives of dominated and excluded voices focusing on the culture, identity, history, and existence (p. 166). These factors have changed the trend of creating Nepali literary discourse by producing and representing ignored and unheard voices of common people.

Taking the same thematic pattern of literary writing, Rajan Mukarung, Budhi Sagar, and other contemporary writers have constructed cultural discourses of the margin by representing marginalized people and their distinctive way of life, pains, hardships, and sufferings, which have never been documented in the mainstream literary creations. At this point, Baral (2016) presents the examples: Budhhi Sagar’s *Karnali Blues* captures the picture of hardships and difficulties of middle class people in Karnali region, Rajan

Mukarung's *Damini Bheer* and *Hetchhaakuppaa* raise the issue of Kirant culture, ethnic identity, and existence of indigenous community, primarily, Kirant Rai who have been marginalized by the state (pp. 403-404). These writers who write from the margin, on the one hand, have explored hardships of life, struggles and day to day lives and experiences of common people. On the other hand, they have raised issues of cultural identity, representation, and existence of marginalized groups who have been remained unheard at the margin.

Following the same thematic patterns and issues of marginalized people, Subba captures and explores issues of marginalized groups, mainly the question of representing marginalized people and their cultural practices. Subba's anthology of stories *Laato Pahaada* [Dumb Hill] presents the same theme and issues of marginalized groups; specifically it explores pains and sufferings of marginalized Limbu people such as illiteracy, poverty, hardships, oppression, exploitation, and alienation. The title story of this anthology "Dumb Hill" which has been analyzed in this paper represents innocent common Limbu people and their distinctive cultural practices by representing real setting, characters, and their everyday lives and experiences, and cultural practices. The story explores the common, illiterate and poor Limbus, their distinctive cultural practices and living culture of Limbu people who live in a remote village of Pachthar, a hilly district of eastern Nepal.

This paper concentrates on the analysis of the single story "Dumb Hill" in which attempts have been made to explore day to day lives and experiences of common Limbu people and their culture – "a particular way of life, a particular culture" of ethnic Limbu community (Williams, 1961, p. 57). This story is interpreted as a cultural discourse of the margin that produces and defines distinctive cultural identity and body of knowledge about ethnic Limbu people by representing innocent Limbu people and their culture – cultural practices, traditions, rites, and rituals, socio-economic condition and entire living culture – what Williams (1960) defines "the whole way of life" of Limbus (p. xiv). This study tries to explore and analyze the representation of Limbu people and their culture which is ignored in the mainstream literary discourses.

Since the story "Dumb Hill" is a cultural discourse constructed from the perspective of marginality, the representation of common Limbu people of remote village is distinct rather than the elite ruling class. No single character is literate, rich, and connected to the power structures of the state; rather all are illiterate, poor, and alienated from the state power. The story is replete with cultural values, traditions, rituals, belief systems, and living culture of Limbu people. These occurrences in the story create some questions and problems – why common people are represented, not elites, what distinctive cultural practices and ways of life are represented, how and why they have been represented.

This paper, thus, aims to investigate the reasons of representing the whole way of life of common Limbu people. Similarly, this study aims to uncover and analyze the meanings produced and defined by the discursive representation of Limbus and their cultural practices. In order to achieve these objectives and draw a conclusion, the paper has used secondary sources such as books the research articles, dissertations, and web pages. The paper has also used Subba's "Dumb Hill" as primary sources. For the analysis of the text, primarily Michel Foucault's concept of power and discourse, and Stuart Hall's concept of representation have been used as theoretical tools.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND REPRESENTATION: AN APPROACH

Discourse refers to expressions and use of language which are constructed by power and knowledge in a particular context to produce and define specific meaning or

knowledge. It is a systematic and contextual expression in which “power and knowledge are joined together” that produces and defines body of knowledge (Foucault, 1997, p. 100). Foucault uses the composite term power/knowledge to refer to a mutual relation between power and knowledge.

Foucault (1991) clarifies this mutual function of power and knowledge with an instance: “power produces knowledge . . . power and knowledge directly imply one another” (p. 27). Affirming to the Foucault’s idea, Culler (1997) further explains mutual constitution of power and knowledge: “power in the form of knowledge or knowledge as power” (p. 8). This vice versa relation of power and knowledge suggests that power/knowledge produces discourse, and no power is produced without discourse. Discourse is constructed to define and circulate specific meaning, knowledge, and truth in a particular context.

For Foucault, there is a circular relation between power/knowledge, discourse, and meaning or truth. Power/knowledge constructs discourse and discourse produces and defines meaning/knowledge. Then, discourse is not autonomous, rather a product of power. All types of discourses including cultural arts and artifacts and meanings that they produce are constructed and constituted by power as Foucault (1980) claims: “truth is not outside power or lacking in power” (p. 131). Since discourse is the product of power and power relations, it “constructs, defines and produces the objects of knowledge in an intelligible way while excluding other forms of reasoning as unintelligible” (Barker, 2004, p. 55). Thus, discourse produces meanings or body of knowledge by representing particular group of people or objects. At this point, Brooker (2003) explicates the function of discourse: “Discourse is now generally used to designate the forms of representation . . . producing specific fields of culturally and historically located meanings” (p. 78). In this way, discourse incorporates all those expressions and system of knowledge that produces and defines specific knowledge or meanings through the process of representation and signifying systems. These forms of representation are selected and represented creating cultural discourses which are not autonomous, but constructed and constituted by power.

Hall (1997) uses the concept of representation as the system of using language for the construction of meanings or representing people and objects meaningfully. He defines the term ‘representation’ as the “means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people . . . Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture” (p. 15). In this sense, representation is a system of using language for the production of meaning. Connecting to the same idea, Nayar (2016) further clarifies the concept of representation with an instance: “representation is the process of signifying (meaning-generation) . . . representation can be an image, a word, a sound or a concept” (p. 20). In other words, representation is the process of generating meanings through the use of language.

Hall undertakes representation not as an independent entity that simply reflects the reality, but as the matter of power relations. Since representation is linked to power and power relations, the process of selecting, organizing, and representing is restricted and conditioned by power. In this sense, all representations are the discursive forms of power rather than autonomous ones. In this context, Barker (2004) further explains that “since representations are not innocent reflections of the real but are cultural constructions, they could be otherwise than they appear to us” (p. 177). The forms of representations in cultural artifacts are inextricably connected to power relations that include and exclude people, objects, images, and concepts in the arrangement of representation. In other words, since representation is a discursive product of power, it is

“a practice, a kind of work, which uses material objects and effects. But the meaning depends, not on the material quality of the sign, but on its symbolic function” (Hall, 1997, pp. 25-26). Hall’s concept of representation suggests that representation is a process of signifying system which is not autonomous, but production of power and power relations, i.e. representation of people or objects are selected, arranged, and represented by power to generate a specific meaning and body of knowledge.

These concepts of power discourse and representation have been used as theoretical tools for the validation of the major argument of this paper: “Dumb Hill” is a cultural discourse constructed from the perspective of marginality that produces and defines the whole way of life of ethnic Limbu people – the culture (a particular way of life) of Limbu community through the representation of innocent and illiterate Limbus and their alienated world with their distinctive cultural practices. The representation of Limbus and their culture incorporate socio-economic conditions, living culture, and distinctive cultural forms and practices that they adopt in their everyday life. Since Subba’s “Dumb Hill” is in the Nepali language, the paper has used the English translation, which is translated by the author himself in order to cite the primary source in the paper.

DISCOURSE, POWER, AND REPRESENTATION OF LIMBUS

Subba’s “Dumb Hill” is a cultural discourse constructed from the marginalized perspective by representing innocent and illiterate Limbu people of remote village and their distinctive culture at the center. It was written in 2015 – the crucial decade of political upheavals and socio-cultural movements in the country; these factors not only brought socio-cultural transformation and cultural consciousness to the people, but also changed the existing power relations in the Nepali society. The changing power relations also changed the paradigm of constructing the literary discourse. It captured issues of marginalized people and represented their real lives and experiences. “Dumb Hill” explores the same issues of marginalized Limbu people as it is a cultural discourse of marginality that gives a voice to unheard and ignored Limbu people by representing and unfolding their distinctive cultural practices and experiences of their alienated life.

The story, a discourse of the margin, presents everyday experiences of the Limbu people and their distinctive way of life at the center. It explores lived culture of Limbu people who live in a remote village of Panchthar district, the eastern part of Nepal. This representation constructs cultural discourse of common people rather than elites as Easthope (1990) asserts: “the discourse of all members of a society should be its concern, not just those of educated elite” in the creation of literary discourse (p. 6). Common and illiterate Limbu people and their everyday lives and activities have been represented in the central space of the story, rather than elite ruling groups.

The entire story has been woven around the lives and experiences of illiterate, innocent, and poor Khadga Man Limbu Known as Kokmaa Thule and his family. They live in the remote village ‘Aangsaran Basangu, Panchthar’, a hilly district of eastern Nepal. The representation of remote village and its poor ethnic Limbu people signifies poor socio- economic condition and their marginalized situation. The pictorial images presented in the story reveal the regime of truth about Kokmaa Thule’s poor material condition and typical lifestyle – ‘dancing *Chyabrung*’ (a typical cultural dance), wearing cultural dress (*Daura Surwal*, waist coat and *Dhakatopi*), a house made of bamboo and straw, the *Marchaas* (homemade material that is used to make local wine) keeping on the front roof, a plank and stone grinder and worn clothes hanging on the wall (Subba, 2015, p. 148). All representations and expressions are discourses of the marginality that produce distinctive knowledge or truth about Limbu community in remote village as

Foucault (1980) states the terms as “truth effects” or “regime of truth” (p. 133). This discursive representation unravels knowledge or one of the truths hidden at the margin of mainstream cultural discourses.

The lifestyle of poor Limbus depends on farming and agriculture due to their illiteracy and inaccessibility to the state power. Consequently, they have to engage in activities like keeping domestic animals such as cows, goats, pigs, and chickens at home and doing physical hard works. They are compelled to involve in the profession of farming and agriculture because of their poverty, illiterate, and deprivation of participating in power structures of the state. The writer describes animals of Kokmaa Thule with pictorial images: “Goats and pigs are crying at home. The cow in the wretched barn supported with bamboo pillars is stretching to have a leaf of green grass” (Subba, 2015, p. 148). The images of crying goats and pigs, the wretched barn supported with bamboo pillars and a hungry cow stretching to have a leaf of green grass represent the world of poor Limbu people “in such a way that we can understand” it how they live (Nayar, 2016, p. 20). Since they are poor and illiterate, they have to depend on animal husbandry for their survival and existence.

Limbu people of this remote village are disconnected from the state power and its mechanisms because no single character involves in official jobs of the government and people depend on their local products. They have to depend on farming and agriculture and on the local products that they produce themselves to make money and run their everyday lives. They produce local goods such as bamboo baskets, ropes, local wine, pigs and piglets, goats, chickens, hens and so on. They sell them in the local market (*Panchami Bazaar/Hatiyaa*) to make money and fulfill their basic requirements for their livelihood. The writer represents the lively scene of *Panchami Hatiyaa* of the village where poor Limbu people are selling their local goods for making money. The writer represents:

A weekly local market (*hatiyaa*) is going on. Grandmother is selling *Marchaa* (a natural material product used in making local wine) keeping them on the shawl . . . goats, chicken and piglets are there to be sold. Birkhe Uncle is also there to sell rooster . . . Phaangjung goes to his father who is selling pork. (Subba, 2015, p. 202)

The depiction of people in the local market selling their local products and goods is the discursive representation of common people that defines their socio-economic condition. This discursive representation from the margin “transmits and produces power” to define the lifestyles and living culture of Limbu people having no access to and participation in the power structures of the state (Foucault, 1978, p. 101). It defines that poor Limbu people are disconnected from the mainstream economy and alienated from the mainstream politics of the state.

Similarly, illiterate and poor Limbu people who are alienated from the state power are compelled to go to the foreign land in search of jobs for their livelihood. Kokmaa Thule is making a plan of going out of country to earn money as he is in debt that he has to pay back within a month. He tells his plan to his wife: “I am thinking to go to the foreign country. How to pay back the debt otherwise” (Subba, 2015, p. 198)? His wife and mother do not let him go abroad because they have not forgotten about his father who came back from abroad being ill and aggravated health. He could not recover his illness and he passed away. This bitter experience of Kokmaa Thule’s family suggests that poor Limbu people have to survive their life by going to the foreign land and doing physical hard works. Ultimately, they have to face problems and sufferings such as diseases, illness, death, and hardships. The representation of Kokmaa Thule and his family is a discourse of marginality, and this discursive representation produces and

defines the lifestyles and living culture of poor and illiterate Limbu people who are alienated from the mainstream socio-economic and political structures of the state. It unveils the overshadowed and unheard tales of common people who are deprived of participation in the mechanisms of the state power.

CULTURAL REPRESENTATION AND THE IDENTITY OF LIMBUS

Subba's "Dumb Hill" presents distinctive cultural forms and practices of Limbus by representing and constructing discourses of cultural activities and rituals that they adopt in their everyday life. They have quite different cultural rituals in their day to day life. For instance, formal ceremony of newly built house (*Thakthaamthaam*), a ritual of *Mikaamkaam* in marriage ceremony, *Taksang Pujaa* (worshiping of nature and natural deities) and doing *maangena* (raising honor and dignity of persons) are remarkable cultural practices which are represented at the center of the story. These distinctive cultural practices and rituals are represented to produce and define typical cultural identity of ethnic Limbus.

Kokmaa Thule is an expert of *Chyabrung* dance as well as *Mundhum* (oral script of Kirant rituals) in the village. He is invited to every cultural functions and practices of the village. Maanjaabunge Kaanchhaa decides to do a ritual of his newly built house, which is called *Thakthaamthaam Naach* (typical cultural dance performed around the main pillar of a new house wishing for its last long) and he sends two old men, the senior persons of the village to invite Kokmaa Thule for the accomplishment of the ceremony. As the culture of making formal invitation in Limbu community, two old men follow the same typical ritual and cultural practice to invite Kokmaa Thule formally. For this, one of the old men offers some amount of money and a bottle of wine, and keeps them in front of Kokmaa Thule. Then, they inform about the house owner and his arrangement of the house warming ceremony (*Thakthaamthaam*) in detail. One of the old men moves forward and makes a request to Kokmaa Thule for his attendance as a *Chyabrung* dancer and an expert of *Mundhum* in the ceremony. The writer presents this ritual of making a formal invitation in which the old men use poetic language of *Mundhum* to invite Kokmaa Thule. One of the old men invites Kokmaa Thule in this way:

Maanjaabunge Kanchhaa, the grandson of Dalyaa and the son of Sukaa, decided to build a new house as he saw the nests of birds. According to the senior intellectuals, the house is not only made of soil and stone. So, he has decided to do the ritual of *Thakthaamthaam* (house warming ceremony) and we have been sent to invite you for your attendance. So, we invite you for your attendance in the ceremony. (Subba, 2015, p. 150)

The representation of cultural practices of ethnic Limbus exposes a typical ritual that reveals the cultural identity of Limbu community. The cultural practices depicted in the story are the discursive representation that generates meanings and "constitutes identity" (Nayar, 2016, p. 25). The marginalized Limbu community has been represented as really and lively as they are. Such a lively representation constructs cultural identity of Limbu people that is denied in the mainstream cultural discourse.

The lived experiences and cultural activities of Limbu people have been represented at the center of the story. The story presents how Limbu people celebrate the culture of house warming ceremony which is called *Thakthaamthaam*. In this ceremony, the house owner of a new house invites *Chyabrunge*s (Chyabrung dancers), *Mundhum* experts and other guests to come to his/her home. Then, the invitees and relatives of the house owner perform Limbu cultural rites and rituals. For instance, Maanjaabunge

Kaanchhaa conducts *Thakthaamthaam Naach* (typical cultural dance performed around the main pillar of a new house wishing for its last long) ritual in which some selected experts in *Chyabrung* dance perform their cultural dance. The writer depicts the performance of house warming ceremony: “The three-storey new house of Maangjaabunge is painted by white soil which is still wet. Kokmaa Thule, Kedang, and other four/five *Chyabrung* dancers are dancing around the main pillar of the new house (Subba, 2015, p. 151). Performing traditional *Mundhum* rituals and dancing around the main pillar of the new house are cultural discourses that “produce knowledge” about distinctive lifestyle and cultural identity of marginalized Limbu people (Storey, 2015, p. 134). This discursive representation or discourse of the margin unfolds and defines distinctive body of knowledge about the ethnic community, which is hidden behind the dominant discourses.

In the typical marriage ceremony of Limbu people, they perform their distinctive cultural practices and rituals. These typical cultural rituals have been represented to unveil distinctive cultural and social values of Limbus. In the marriage ceremony, *Saambaa* (an expert of *Mundhum*, particularly in cultural songs), a group of *Chyabrung* dancers and senior persons of the society are called to do formal rituals. In the story, the marriage ceremony of the son of Musaataare Kanchhaa has been represented. *Saambaa* gives blessings to the bride and groom in typical *Haakpaare* (typical song of Limbu community): “Anger takes you far away/ Love brings you a son/ may you walk together like ants/ have love like a couple of pigeon” (Subba, 2015, p. 164). The writer has exposed to the distinctive culture of marginalized Limbu community, representing the “culture as a whole and distinctive way of life” (Barker, 2002, p. 68). The representation of this cultural ritual counts and constructs a body of knowledge and cultural identity that has been denied to represent in the mainstream literary discourses.

In the course of representing the cultural rituals in the marriage ceremony, the writer has lively represented the pictorial images of cultural functions in the marriage ceremony of the son of Musaataare Kaanchhaa. The writer describes the formal rituals of marriage ceremony – ‘dancing *Chyabrung* moving four times around the main pillar of a house’ and offering the dancers a pot of wine with two thousand rupees’ (Subba, 2015, pp. 164-165). This ritual is known as *Mikaamkaam Naach* (typical rituals of Limbus to bless the bride and groom for their happy and last long conjugal life) in which a *Chyabrung* dance is performed four rounds around the main pillar of the house and; wine and some money is offered to *Chyabrung* dancers. The representation of these cultural functions not only reflects the real objects, but it “enables us to discover who” the ethnic Limbus are really (Fregoso, 1981, p. 663). The distinctive cultural practices and rituals represented in the story provide knowledge to understand ethnic Limbu community and their culture.

Limbu people have their own distinctive world where they live with their own distinctive cultural practices, social values, and philosophy of life. One of the remarkable cultural practices and social values is *Maangena* (a typical ritual to reinstate the honor of the humiliated or insulted person). By clarifying social value of *Maangena*, Pathak (2014) explains its philosophical aspects: Philosophical meaning of *Maangena* suggests that the head of human beings should never bow down. A critical situation is created in the society if a person gets insulted and humiliated. Society becomes unhealthy. So, the self-respect and dignity of the person must be raised and maintained in the society (p. 13). *Maangena* is a typical cultural practice and social value of ethnic Limbu community that is practiced for the maintenance of human dignity and self-esteem in the society.

The performance of *Maangena* has been shown in the story by representing an incident of quarreling between Kokmaa Thule and Manjite in which Manjite gets angry and breaks Kokmaa Thule's *Chyabrun* into four pieces. It is assumed to be humiliation and insult to Kokmaa Thule because his self-respect and dignity gets hurt in the public place. Hence, his *Maangena* is conducted to raise his moral dignity and self-esteem. For this cultural practice, two bottles of wine on the *Naaglo* (a flat and round object made of bamboo) and some money on the green leaf on the brass plate are kept in front of Kokmaa Thule. Then, the head of the village expresses his apology to Kokmaa Thule to raise his moral dignity and self-respect. He performs the ritual of *maangena*:

We apologize to you who have good name and fame from the respected family. We are unable to compensate your loss as we are poor. May your dignity and self-respect always remain as higher as mountain Kanchanjunga. We offer you this to raise your dignity. (Subba, 2015, p. 174)

The *Maangena* of Kokmaa Thule is a selected and represented as a discourse that produces and defines distinctive cultural identity of Limbu People and their philosophy to look at human life and society.

The culture of worshiping nature is very significant in the Limbu community. They have strong faith and inextricable relation to their land and nature as Mackay asserts: dignity and emotion of indigenous community is connected to natural heritage (as cited in Subedi, 2015, p. 26). The linkage to the natural heritage has been depicted through the representation of *Taksang Puja* (a ritual of worshiping Nature or forest) in the story. In this distinctive cultural practice, all the villagers gather together on the top of the hill. They offer eggs, chickens, and pigeons to the deities of forest as they do the ritual of this worshiping. *Phedaangbaa* (priest) recites *Mudhum* and prays to the deities of the forest. The gathering of the people goes for hunting to make *Taksang* (deity of nature) happy (Subba, 2015, pp. 207-208). The representation of cultural rituals, activities, and objects are the cultural discourses that do not simply reflect reality or innocently designated objects. Rather, they constitute them in specific contexts according to particular relations of power. It is the lifestyle and belief system of ethnic community, particularly Limbu people who have strong faith and belief to the nature.

The representation of *Taksang Puja* is a cultural discourse that defines not only faith and belief of indigenous community, but also expresses their strong bondage to the nature. Moreover, Limbu people do such rituals and cultural practices in order to ask blessings for their good health, prosperity, and protection of the village and its people. In fact, the writer has unfolded distinctive lifestyle and belief system of Limbu people through this cultural discourse as Lidchi (1997) argues: "Discourse is a group of statements which provides a language for talking about a particular topic, one that constructs that topic in a particular way" (p.185). This cultural discourse defines faith and belief systems by which Limbu people live with. Mainly, this discursive representation unfolds regime of truths or invaluable body of knowledge that has been overshadowed and marginalized in the mainstream cultural discourses. In short, the story as the cultural discourse produces and defines the "the social world" and distinctive cultural identity of marginalized common Limbu people (Spencer, 2006, p. 100). The story has represented the cultural practices, social values, and belief system of common Limbu people, which are ignored and unheard in the dominant cultural discourses of the ruling groups.

The discursive representation of distinctive cultural practices of Limbus unveils their lifestyles, socio-cultural values, philosophy of life, and belief system, which are quite different from the mainstream culture and social values. The cultural practices like

Thakthaamthaam, *Mikaamkaam*, *Maangena*, and *Tanksang Pijaa* are typical cultural forms and practices of ethnic Limbu community. The representation of these cultural rituals is a discourse of the marginality that constitutes cultural identities and social values of ethnic Limbu people who have strong faith and belief in nature.

CONCLUSION

Subba's "Dumb Hill" is a cultural discourse of the margin that constructs the whole way of life of marginalized Limbu people by representing innocent, illiterate, and poor Limbu people and their distinct culture, particularly the Limbu people who live in a remote village of Panchthar, a hilly district of eastern Nepal. In the story, the writer has provided central space to the common Limbus and their whole way of life such as lifestyles, socio-economic condition, traditions, everyday rituals, and cultural practices. He has represented a distinctive world of common people in order to construct cultural discourses of ordinary and voiceless people. The representation of *Chyabrung* dance, typical Limbu village, and its people, *Mikaamkaam Naach* in a marriage ceremony, *Thakthaamthaam* ritual in a newly built house (a house warming ceremony), *Maangena* and *Taksang Pujaa* (worshiping of Nature) are cultural discourses that formulate regimes of truths or a body of knowledge about the ethnic Limbu community that has been hidden behind the cultural discourses of ruling class. The story as a cultural discourse of the marginality gives voice to the marginalized Limbu community for their existence, dignity, and cultural identity.

In the same way, the story has represented the living culture that poor and illiterate Limbu people adopt for their survival and livelihood. They do farming and agriculture by keeping domestic animals and birds like pigs, goats, cows, hens and so on. They produce local goods such as bamboo baskets, ropes, local wine, local *Marchaa* and so on. They sell them in a local market to make money and meet basic requirements. Since they do not have access to the state power, they have to go abroad for their survival. The representation of this living culture constructs a powerful discourse that enables us to see and understand the socio-economic state of marginalized groups. It unveils the everyday lives and experiences of Limbu people and their difficulties, which are caused by having no access to and participation in the mainstream power structures and economic system of the state.

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