

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Subaltern Aesthetic consciousness in Deuda: A Thematic Analysis

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Letter of Recommendation

This is to certify that Mr. Laxman Bhatt has completed his M.A. thesis entitled Subaltern Aesthetic Consciousness in Deuda: A Thematic Analysis, under my supervision. He has prepared this thesis for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for Master of Arts in English from Tribhuvan University. I recommend this thesis for viva voice.

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Abstract

The present thesis is a description of Thematic Analysis in Deuda --a cultural performative art popular among the people of Far West Nepal with the concern of subaltern people. During the stuff from subaltern studies, it analyzes how Deuda becomes representative voice of marginalized group in this region. This research also focuses on how Deuda evokes aesthetic consciousness in the heart and mind of the people through different themes. In Deuda people of this region find flows of happiness/sadness, pain/suffering, and jealousy/hatred in different thematic discourses of Deuda. Deuda, thus, is the unifying force to all the people of Far West Region of Nepal.

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I. Deuda and Subaltern Aesthetics: A Study of Folklore

1.1 Deuda: A folkloric Performative Art

Deuda is a folkloric performative form of creative art popular in the subaltern mass of Far Western Region of Nepal. It is performed in a group by people in the Far Western region including the Karnali Region, Kumau and Gadwal of India. Deuda performance mainly takes place during special ceremonies of religious and socio-cultural significance where people's feelings and moods are reflected in terms of religious and spiritual values. As Deuda evokes deeper interest and emotions of happiness, the time of Deuda performance is serene, joyous, colorful and ceremonious. Though the singers of both sides discuss or complain against socio-political and cultural situations, pain and sufferings, joy and happiness including various upheavals of human life, the purpose of their complaints and pathetic expression is not to invite hostilities of life or to promote worldly miseries but to forget them for the time being to be free from the mundane world. Daily suffering in life and the pain and restlessness one has to undergo are purged out in the ritualistic setting of Deuda Khel. Ritualistic setting means setting in isolated cliffs, mountains and river sites.

The exact meaning of 'Deuda' is difficult to find out because it has embedded as the vivid performative folklore in this region for generations. Until now meager research has been carried out to determine the etymological meaning; rather its themes and significance are more emphasized. The word 'Deuda' is possibly derived from Sanskrit word 'Deva' which means God. But with the passage of time its phonological and morphological nuances have changed and it has become Deuda. Dharma Raj Thapa in his book *Hamro Lokgeet* writes: "Dhau' is a place in Khaptad area of Doti district; so Deuda is a name derived from 'Dhau'" (120). However, Thapa

appears to be hypothetical. According to Bijaya Chalise "The word Deuda developed from Sanskrit word '*Deuduraj* -- mean Supreme God--became *Deudura* and then Deuda over the time (45). Tej Prakash Shrestha in his book "*Achhami Lok sahitya* states, "Typical performative dance of far west is called Deuda or *Nyaule*" (95). Regarding the nomenclature of Deuda, Krisna Prasad Parajuli writes: "The name Deuda refers to a step forward and half a step backward that the Deuda singers take while moving in a circle" (386). He adds that in Deuda performance, participants move forward a step and backward half a step. One and a half step in *Doteli* dialect (dialect of Far West Region) is called *dedh*. So the name Deuda means a cultural performance in which participants move one step forward and half a step backward in a symmetrical way by joining hands. The main difference between folk song and Deuda is that folk song is simply sung, but Deuda is sung and danced simultaneously. The acts of singing and performing are the inevitable elements of Deuda.

Despite variation in views about the meaning of Deuda, it is obvious that the word Deuda is derived from Sanskrit '*dev da*' meaning given by God and thus giving the sense of the hymn of almighty. That may be a reason why every Deuda performance begins with an invocation of gods and goddesses. The question that is likely to arise is how long has Deuda been a part for folklore of the people of this region? It is believed that the roots lie in the cultural awareness of the people. Ever since cultural awareness took place, it developed as an inevitable oral folkloric tradition that serves as a performative medium to express pain and suffering of people in the Far Western region. People may be curious to know how this performative system came to exist. Generally, it is believed that people of this region start Deuda as a hymn or prayer of Gods and Goddesses to protect themselves from natural

calamities and disasters in a special ceremony. The following Deuda song indicates how it begins with the invocation of God.

Dadeldhura ugratara, khaptada Malika

Rakshya garei Bhagawati, daino bhayei Kalika. (O! Ugratara of Dadeldhura and Malika of Khaptad save us goddess Bhagwati, favour us goddess Kalika.) (Own Trans)

In this song we find invocation of local Goddess Malika, Ugratara, Bhagwati and Kaalika which are most powerful Goddess and generally believe to determine the destiny of the people. Local people in poetic form of Deuda sing hymns to protect the people from evil things and express best wishes for prosperous life of the people in the region.

With the passing time, Deuda has become a means for people to express the feelings of love, hate, happiness, sorrow, comfort, discomfort, poverty, death, decadence, upliftment, and romance.

Phaga khojjya jhurai Mauro, Pakhan khojjya bheri

Baali baisa janya houkki, saiko baato heri. (Like the domestic bee spending time looking for a hive and the wild one for a cliff to dwell, I wonder if my youthful days will be spent waiting for my love.) (My Trans)

Love is a dominant theme in this song as a young girl laments on the separation of her lover. She says that her life is passing in expectation of his arrival as the life of bees passes wandering around in search of a hive.

Generally, there is no certain place of Deuda performance. Depending on the nature of Deuda—religious or love, the place is determined. If Deuda is about love, romance and flirting, the place of performing is often isolated and uninhabited areas like hills, forest, big meadows, especially at night. But religious Deuda is often

performed in public places like temples where *jaat*, *mela* (fairs and festivals) and *Deukhala* (premise of the Temple) take place among a huge gathering of participants, players and spectators. The impact of Deuda in correcting social evils and promoting moral values and human love is immense. In Deuda, unity precedes separation; life is optimistically observed; death is forgotten. Anxiety coming into the interaction is avoided with an emphasis on charity and life.

Natural and social setting leaves an outstanding influence on the mode of communication. The setting contributes to the romantic universe of Deuda with an emphasis on spiritual values and norms.

Chori Deuda khelnya vaya, Aaya raati raati

Chaupatika Maltira aaya, Manilek dada mathi. (If you want to perform secret Deuda, come at night upto the Chaupati over the cliff of Manilek.) (Own Trans)

The setting of *Chori Deuda* (Deuda played secretly at night) is an isolated meadow of Manilek where people used to perform Deuda in the past at midnight.

Kholei jaat vaya pachhi, Ekai sath heraula

Dewata ka khalama basi, Deuda khel khelaula (If Kholai Jaat takes place, we will go together and will perform Deuda sitting on Deutaka Khala in the temple yard.) (Own Trans)

The setting of Deuda is premise of the temple. The theme of above Deuda Geet is religious and a friend invites his company to join Deuda Khel in *Kholei Jaat* (a festival celebrated in the month of November/December nearby Chaudi village of Dadeldhura district).

The participants of Deuda Khel are local people of the region who are familiar with their culture, society and surroundings. Married or unmarried men, women of all

caste and class gather to join their *Baulies* (arms). Participants in exalted moods and colorful and bright new clothes, and girls and women in gold and silver ornaments and flower on their heads freely moving on and around grassy meadows, forests, waterfalls, streams, brooks and small valleys seem to be the real ornaments of the ceremonial events.

While performing Deuda Khel, there are some social taboos: girls do not take part in Deuda with her father, brother, uncle, maternal uncle or any senior member of the family; it is, because of some degree of vulgarity involved in the Deuda Khel. *Brahmin* and *Thakuri*--upper caste-- girls rarely play Deuda in public; higher caste girls never play Deuda with lower caste boys. Deuda is hardly performed within *Thakuri* and *Brahmin* villages. Apart from this, no any lower caste boys are allowed to perform with upper caste/class girls. But upper caste boys are allowed to perform with lower caste boys or girls. These taboos signify that Deuda does have a subaltern origin. The seeds of subaltern sprouts in the caste based society where untouchables are deprived from performing Deuda with upper caste people. Feelings of Subalternity come up in the mind of lower castes when they are not allowed to perform Deuda. Upper caste--*Brahmins* and *Thakuri*--are socially privileged so that they can perform Deuda with anybody at any point of the time. We can find subaltern in social level because Deuda performance hardly takes place in *Brahmin* and *Thakuri* villages but it is obvious in *Dalit* and *Kshetri* villages. Since subaltern people are economically, socially and culturally under shadowed by egalitarians; Deuda is only source of expressing their suppressed and oppressed lives. It is a medium for the common mass, specially belonging to the lower strata of life and society, to express their emotions. Those who are rich and part of the higher class do not play Deuda, except religious Deuda which perform within the setting of religious sites.

In the past, most often *Deukie* were common properties of all caste and class. *Deukie* of this region are like *Devdaasi* of south India who are offered to the temples. They remain unmarried forever, but they are means of physical satisfaction for villagers, which has bit changed nowadays. Generally, young people are more curious to perform Deuda because they can share their hidden curiosities in front of the mass of the people (especially opposite sex). Even boys and girls try to win the heart of each other and get tied in a marital knot. After the completion of Deuda Khel, elopement is very common.

The performance of Deuda Khel involves two groups. Members of each group join hands and dance in a circle. Two groups can be distinctly seen in the Khel. Each group consists of a *Deudia*—a composer of the song. The participation of *Deudia* is inevitable. Every Deuda Khel consist at least two participants along with audience and performers. Tasks of *Deudia* are similar to the head of chorus in Greek theater. He is a person who mobilizes or guides half of the group of performers with highly competitive questions and answers in poetic forms. Half of the participants in circle follow one *Deudia* and the remaining half to another in reciting the song composed by them. All the people of Deuda Khel are conventionally carefree and acquire a lot of enjoyment and appreciation from the artistic performance.

The diction of Deuda Khel is based on a type of conversation which differs from day-to-day language because it is an interaction of inner feelings among participants. It is filled up with symbols, images and metaphors, but expressed in simple language for communicative purpose. Whether Deuda laments or celebrates in its tone, each word is filled with depth of life.

Dui barsa biralo playa, dudhaki tarale

Mari jau ta bali baisa, khau kaika bharale.

(I tamed a cat for two years feeding on milk eveom, but I have none to depend on. If I choose to die I am in my Prime youth.) (Own Trans)

A widow grieving in the sweet memories of her dead husband repents thinking about the deception of her destiny; she can neither die nor live in her lonely youth. The trouble of a woman's heart that has no chance for any physical association with her husband is pathetically described in above couplet.

After the Peoples Revolution of 2006-2007, the diction of Deuda is broadened in its tone and subject matters. It is mixed with socio-cultural and political situations. People of this region have started to search their cultural identity and issues of inclusiveness in the state through Deuda Geet.

Fagarni gauthin faga, rahena yo khela

Sanskirti harayo bhani, mera aashu bhel. (Ojha 8) (The singers used to sing, but now the play does not exist. Tears flow on the loss of my culture.) (Own Trans)

This song is filled up with nostalgia. A person who grown up in rich culture worries about the loss of Deuda and *Fags* (hymn of almighty sing on special occasions by a group of women) of his community.

Depending on the degree of seriousness in Deuda, participants move fast or slow in the circle. If Dueda Khel is about love, eroticism, flirting and romance, participants move fast in their circle. Deuda songs are fast in tones, such as:

Chhamakka Chhamakka, Hid saali bhinaka saath.

Chhamakka chhamakka, joi hunya joi sanga sina,

Chhamakka chhamakka, randa bunda kharka Bhinaju.

Chhamakka chhamakka, yekaloi ma kasye basu

Chhamakka chhamakka, yeti lama barkha bhinaju. (Boys who are married will sleep with their wives, t widowers and old people in the barn. How can I pass this rain season alone?) (Own Trans)

A boy is jealous of those couples who sleep together, when he is alone in the barn. He finds it difficult to spend time in long days of summer. We do not find any emotional and intellectual recollection of ideas, its just sharing of ideas. This song proves that most youngsters like Deuda in light tone as the boy in above song because light tones in Deuda are part of creating humour. Compared to light tones, serious Deuda songs comprise high diction and slow beat together with fillers indicating pathos.

Participants are often aged, widow and widowed, suppressed and oppressed people who have to releave themselves from deep pathos. While expressing pathos, they get sublime which lead them towards the satisfaction. Their movement is very gentle and slow like *Kathai Daina* and *Bhagga Linga*.

Kathai daina, Naani Gadhaka lama pula, tari sakinaina

Kathai daina, Laija Bhanya kaal lainaina, mari sakinaina. (As the bridge on the brook is long, it is difficult to cross. Neither can I die, nor does death me away snatch on my regret.) (Own Trans)

A girl who is betrayed by her lover wants to get her love back but it is as hard as to cross the bridge in Naanigadh (name of a stream which flows in Chaudai village of Dadeldhura). So, she can neither forget him nor can die for him.

1.2 Issues of Subaltern in Deuda

The word 'subaltern' denotes marginalized or oppressed people whose actions and deeds are not recorded in colonialist historiography during the colonial and post colonial India. As the subaltern people tried to raise the question against colonizers or

elite people, they were termed as second class people. Despite being co-operative to dominant authority, they were insulted. As a result, subaltern studies provide subaltern people with their own history and their own voices. Subaltern studies try to find out their real existence and their contributions in all aspects.

The marginalized and underprivileged belong to the subaltern group. Those people are unheard and their faces have to be represented in the society because they neither have strong voice nor society hear them. Gyatri Spivak has much consistently focused on [what is post colonial studies has come to be called the subaltern literally] the category of those who are lower in position or who in the military terms are always appropriate to the colonial situation. For Spivak the homeless, the unemployed, the subsistence farmers, the day labours and so on are the subaltern. "Literally, it refers to any person or a group of inferior rank and station, whether because of race, cast, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion." (228)

Subaltern people, thus, are those people who are voiceless and powerless. Even though they have voice, it is inaudible to egalitarians. Their suppressed voice bursts into audible sound and heard by everyone, when they expressed their identity through cultural activities. As Spivak argues, "By speaking out and reclaiming a collective cultural identity, subaltern will in fact re-inscribe their subordinate position in society." (96)

As Spivak says, subaltern make themselves heard by 'collective cultural identity, Deuda too is basic way of representing the subalten voices in the Far West Region of Nepal. Even though, a subaltern is an object of gaze from above, Deuda breaks-off such gaze by giving voice to the voiceless people. It is noticeable that whenever there is pain and suffering, Deuda comes out of the heart of the subaltern as a voice of consolation. Subaltern people are believed to be simple and innocent in

their behavior, expression and thinking. Hence, Deuda depicts their simplicity and innocence of life. Thus, Deuda functions as an effective means of consciousness in their day-to-day activities, thinking and living. Regarding the identity of subaltern, Chandra Talpade Mohanti held a bold view, “All the people of Third World countries are not subalterns. A group of people bowed down in front of masters--colonial powers-- are egalitarian but the second sex, oppressed, suppressed and poor people come under category of ‘silent subaltern’” (249). In this way, the word subaltern only includes voiceless people of Far West Nepal who are uneducated and marginalized from main stream of the country. Those people are often homeless, unemployed, subsistence farmers, workers and labors, women and lower caste people. Subaltern does not include all people of this region, because the rich and upper class people possess means of modern technology and mass communications as their ways of expressing ideas whereas Deuda is especially for voiceless people as their means of expressing pain and sorrow.

The term 'subaltern' as Leela Gandhi avers, "The general attributes of subordination [...] expressed especially in the terms of [...] caste, office and gender" (202). It refers to the subordination of people who belong to oppressed gender, caste and economic class. The term 'subaltern' denotes entire people who are subordinate in term of gender, (female), and class. Hence, the word subaltern denotes marginalized or oppressed people whose action and deeds are not recognized in the society. Subaltern studies, as Gayatri Spivak states, 'provides the subaltern people with their own history and their own voices'.

Apart from this, subalterns try to find out their real existence and contribution in all sectors of the society. In this context, it does not mean that Far West is marginalized in art and culture, but there are some voiceless people who are still

unheard from the back curtain. So this research focuses on how Deuda helps to bring out feelings and emotions of subaltern people. Veena Dash in her text *Subalterns as Perspective* defines, “[...] subaltern is a group of people who are cut- off from lines of social mobility” (235). While focusing on Deuda in relation to sub consciousness of subalternity, it brings awareness among subalterns and functions as the ideological unity.

Subaltern's consciousness in the specific cultural context of Far West is a gift of the Deuda. It is because Deuda makes all sorts of subalterns conscious, like economic, political, and social. This gift is not normal gift since it is packed with emotions and feelings of the people. Deuda, [a folkloric art] functions as a constitutive force in the daily life of subaltern people by crossing the boundaries of busy life. It functions as a teachable text because it includes socio-economic and cultural issues of local people. Deuda functions as an open book to those people who are still away from the basic needs. It depicts the subject matters of poverty, pain sufferings, happiness, sadness, love and hate dominant in their daily lives.

There has always been a debate regarding the subaltern consciousness when critics likes Antinio Gramsci, Partha Chattraje and Gautam Bhadra see the contradictory nature of subaltern consciousness; Javeed Alam sees the reverse. Javeed Alam, in his text *Peasantry, Politics and Historiography* avers, “The subaltern remain immune from the manipulations of dominate group. The ruling class may control themes and contents of politics or the source of history; but subaltern people will always manage to make themselves heard” (44). Even in the Deuda Khel, rich people or ruling class people rarely participate because they have other means of expression. But subaltern get themselves heard by means of Deuda in the isolated places like forests and hills.

Bhariya kamara garib, sabaile hepanya

Garib kisan aaimaika dukha, kasaile na dekhany. (Everyone undermines the porters, slaves, and poor. Nobody sees the miseries of the poor, farmers and women.) (Own Trans)

Joban gayo paurakha gayo, sabaile hepanye

Bhoko nango dekhyapachhi, sabaile chepanye. (Everyone looks down upon those youth and strength has lost. Everyone dominates the hungry and clotheless people.) (Own Trans)

Prajatantra raja hare, shosaka harenan

Rastrapati aaya pani, hamra din aayenan. (Democracy and king are defeated but not elites. Despite the replacement of the king by the President, our days have never come.) (Own Trans)

In these Deuda *Geet*, we can hear the voices of porters, slaves, farmers and female who are placed in the secondary category. These Deuda songs denote that people of the lower class are exploited by the higher class people. Whether it is democratic regime of 1991 or direct rule of King in 2006 or Presidential system in present Republic of Nepal, the plight of subalterns' has not changed in the region. There is a conflict between rich and poor but this cannot be seen on the screen because the people who are being dominated are not allowed to speak out. It is only through the medium of Deuda, they try to make themselves heard. Deuda, thus, is indirect medium of revolution. As Gayatri Spivak avers, "subaltern can't speak because they do not have any history with them to state. Someone there should function as representative figure. [...] the subaltern has no history and can't speak" (18). Deuda functions as representative form of expression for the subaltern people of the region.

Thus, subaltern people can speak through a means of Deuda as it functions a voice of subalterns reversing the privileged people.

Deuda raises issues of suppressed, oppressed and dominated people who do not have any access to speak out pain, sufferings and pathos. Even more, it represents double marginalized groups like women and untouchable castes. Double marginalized means discrimination by nation and by the local community. Women in this region are double marginalized, first by family and second by society. That is why Spivak opines female subalternity is very large and that women have “traditionally been double marginalized” (210). Even more, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak. The subaltern as “female is even more deeply in shadow” (212). On hearing some Deuda Geet, we can easily find the representation of women and their pathos in the society.

Pachfera dinma royau, pradesh jaanebela

Gharaki kamari bhayau, nagar ki hela. (I wept five times a day while you went to the foreign soil. I became slave of the family and was hated by the neighbors.) (Own Trans)

This Deuda Geet raises the problems of a woman in society after she is separated from her husband. Being economically poor, her husband goes abroad leaving her alone for many years. In her loneliness, the family and the society treat her as a stranger. In this period, we find double marginalization of females in term of social and cultural issues. The [double] marginalized groups--poor, suppressed and subaltern people--get conscious in two ways: first by their own and second by borrowing concept. Whether it is borrowed or autonomous consciousness, subaltern raises resisting voice against the ruling class.

Gramsci categories subaltern consciousness into two categories: autonomous and borrowed. Autonomous consciousness is real consciousness [of the marginalized people] which comes independently out of their minds. Borrowed consciousness is not their own, because it is taken from the ruling class. He further argues:

The social groups in question may indeed have its own conception of the world, even if only embryonic; a concept which manifests itself in action, but occasionally it flashes, when the group is acting as an organic totality. But this same intellectual subordinates by adopting a conception of another group (280).

As mentioned above, subaltern do have both consciousness but the borrowed consciousness is dominant. Even in the context of Far West, this kind of consciousness is dominant in marginalized people who remain submissive and subordinate. Such consciousness can be seen in Deuda duet as follow:

Malik mera bhagawan, pujari hun bhatta

Banjangal affai jaulo, afai jaulo ghatta. (My almighty is the master and Pujari is the Bhatta (high caste Hindu). I will go to forest and fodder to the water mill myself.) (Own Trans)

In this song borrowed consciousness is dominant because the role of women is set as per the ideology of the ruling system. She is conscious but her words like master, God, priest--refers to her husband--show how a woman inferiorised herself. She requests her lover not to go abroad for the sake of money. In his presence, she is ready to work; she is willing to go to the forest to cut grass, collect firewood and go to the mill too.

We find expression of 'autonomous consciousnesses in the Deuda Geet. With passing time, subaltern people of this region became aware of their rights and duties. In order

to get their common participation in society, community and country they raise their voices against inequality, untouchability, exploitation and domination through means of Deuda which are:

Sarki daile jutta siyo, lwayarle hatauda

Parki daile doko bunyo, dholile kapada. (The cobbler stitched shoes and ironsmith made the hammer. Parki Dai (who makes bamboo baskets) knits a wicker basket and tailor stitched clothes.) (Own Trans)

Yo kholiko paani nakhau, chhoyeko hu maile

Afulai maljaati bhannya, sudharne hau kaile. (Do not drink water of this stream as I have touched it. When will you improve yourselves who claim to belong the upper caste.) (Own Trans)

Raato ragat sabaiko hunch, bhujha sarasari

Koi rahena naanathula, sabai barabari. (Everyone's blood is red, we must understand this fact. None remains upper and lower caste. All are equal.) (Own Trans)

Lower caste people in these verses articulate their state of mind. The first verse denotes that cobbler stitches shoes, iron smith makes hammer, and tailor sews clothes for all the people but we discriminate them. Second and third couplets denote that the water of streams is polluted since *Dalit* touched it. Hence, do not drink the water touched by them. This is direct threat to the *Brahmin* and *Kshetri* (upper caste). Voices of equality come out from the voiceless people by saying that color of blood is red in everyone. There must not be any discrimination. This is not only an expression of agony but rather a challenge which threatens the upper caste society. They are not singing only rather they are revolting against the ruling class. The subaltern people

express their angers, pain and sufferings through the means of cultural folklore, Deuda.

1.3 Aesthetic Consciousness in Deuda

Deuda holds the appreciation of art and beauty in Far Western Region where people of all communities enjoy a performative art of Deuda. Aesthetics entails the view point that art is self-sufficient and needs service no other purpose than its own end. In other word, art is an end in itself and does not need to be didactic or politically committed or such that it is judged by any non-aesthetic criteria. “That may be the reason defining aesthetics as the study of feelings; emotion and judgments arising from appreciation of the art or the wider class of object which considers the source of sublimates”(Baudelaire 21).

This movement started by focusing on the power of visual art and beauty to regenerate social life and ended by insisting on the complete independence of art and the alienation of the artist from society. So, aesthetics signifies its pretence to the critics of beautiful or to the theory of taste. By dealing with the philosophical principle of beauty, aestheticism emphasizes beauty and simplicity in design, sincerity in materials, craftsmanship in execution and beauty and emotionality in use. In Deuda, subalten's feeling and emotion are free from world of misery and fly in the beautiful world of imagination. This means imagination creates the world, which is beautiful, free from material possession and miseries of real world. Thus, aesthetic consciousness can be found in following Deuda:

Hal bauju todika tela, fattka nada kesa

Gaura, bisu aaunalagya, ham janmeka desa.

(Sister-in-law apply mustard oils in your hair to cumb it. Gaura parba and new yera

eve are approaching near to my birth place.) (Own Trans)

Subaltern aesthetic consciousness is described in above verse in which women get relief from householding works by enjoying *Gaura* and New Year Eve.

Aesthetic theory emphasizes that art is self-sufficient and independent from any matters; that is why Deuda is a part of an aesthetic element complete in itself and has nothing to worry about participants, settings or tones. As Jaya Raj Pant writes "Deuda is timeless, placeless and settingless. Whenever people feel to liberate their heart from burden, they join their arms in Deuda..." (95). Duda is free from social, political burdens because it concerns less with social values and systems.

Phu pholo silingi phula, lanka pugi basa

Suwa mero paradsha, usai ko chha aasa. (Smell of *silingi* flower has reached throughout Lanka. I have faith in my lover who is in abroad.) (Own Trans)

As [mentioned above] the smell of flower is unlimited, the setting and participants in Deuda too are huge in number. We cannot destroy the fragrance of the *silingi* (a highly smell flower), in the same way joy in Deuda performance is unlimited.

Art for Oscar Wilde is "neither moral nor immoral" rather it is free from social and ethnic bond. Supporting this idea Walter Peter avers, "Art is an abstract, invisible and independent". Art--at present--attempts to represents the literary and cultural life of a work; avoiding Platonic and Mediavel ideas. Oscar Wilde further writes:

Purpose of an art is 'to create beauty in mind of the audience' and such beauty changes into the 'Intellectual express...' there is nothing tha 'art

cannot express...,'the harmony of the soul and body is created by aestheticism... The essential function of art is to produce 'a totality and unity of impression or effect' that a poem is a poem only in so far as it 'uplifts' the soul that poetry has no other goals than itself" (9-18).

The main spirit of Deuda is to create aesthetic pleasure by including common interests of the people. Main motto of Deuda as Dharma Raj Thapa says is to create ecstasy in people. Art has no reference to the reality of life; therefore, Deuda does not have anything to do with morality, culture, religion and social norms. Its primary purpose is not to deliver moral lesson or to promote social awareness but to create a consciousness in the mind of marginalized people of this region. Hence, purpose of art is what Immanuel Kant says, "Purposiveness without Purpose" in his essay "Critique of Judgement" (376). Here, Deuda has purpose despite its indifference towards socio-political and cultural factors. Thus, like the principle of aesthetic theory, Deuda too should not be judged with other non-aesthetic elements because it has its own end. It has its worth for its own account.

Deuda khela bahuli jodi, ramro banau mana

Dukhaka kuralai chhadi, aai halya tama. (Keep your heart joyous to perform Deuda. All of you (subaltern) forget your miseries for a moment and come to perform Deuda.) (Own Trans)

This Deuda appeals subaltern mass of people to forget mundane world to get aesthetic consciousness by performing Deuda. A.C Bradley in his essay "Poetry for Poetry's Sake" writes:

The words *poetry for poetry's sake* recalls the famous phrase art for arts ...the formula art for art will be found to attach not to the doctrine that art is an end in itself, but to the doctrine that art is the whole or supreme end of human life [...] The formula *poetry is an end in itself* has nothing to say on the various questions of moral judgement which arises from the fact that poetry has its place in many-sided life

(qtd.in Adams 701).

Deuda, like aesthetic theory initiates the view point that performance and creation of Deuda is free from rules. According to their wish, subaltern mass of this region creates their simple rhyme and rhythms in Deuda. It is because Deuda in simple verse creates more consciousness in them.

Paisa vaya ista mitra, navaye ta tadha

Dukhari manisha kana, din bitauna ghadha. (Swar 65) (If you have money, everyone wants to be your relative. To spend a day is difficult for poor.) (Own Trans)

As mentioned above, subaltern of this region emphasizes form of Deuda over content/meaning, meaning over medium, ornament over utility and end over usage to create aesthetic pleasure in them. In *The Sense of Beauty* George Santayana avers:

The most remarkable and characteristic problem of aesthetic is that of beauty of form where there is sensuous delight; like that of a color and the impression of object is in its elements agreeable, we have to look no farther for an explanation of the charm we feel. So aestheticism is a genuine search for beauty and a realization that the beautiful has an independent value (82).

In above quotation, Deuda also enables subaltern mass of people to have such an experience resulting in realizing the beauty within and awakening to more of the surrounding beauty. At every moment, beauty of a person or a sense; some emotion or intellectual excitement is realized and the movement of such realization is an end in itself. Subaltern Aesthetic consciousness appreciates both emotional and intellectual factor giving voice to the voiceless people through means of setting, structure and tones of Deuda. Deuda Geet has such emotional elements that it gives more sublimity to the subaltern. Walter Peter in his essay "Studies in the History of the Renaissance" states:

[---] Aesthetic to burn always with this hard gem like flame, to maintain this ecstasy is success in life ...high passion once quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, political or religious enthusiasm...poetic passion, desire of beauty, love of art for art's sake has must be there. Art come to your profession frankly to give nothing but the high quality to your movements and simply for those movements' sake (643).

Deuda is very rich in its tone, language, theme, diction, gesture and discourse and focuses on feeling and emotion of the people of this region. It has no purpose to teach or indoctrinate, but to delight the people. Deuda in its language or semantic issues carries a kind of consciousness in the heart of all participants; they may be *Deudia* (main singer) or audiences. Deuda Geet is very powerful in its aesthetic issues like love, emotions and feelings. Aesthetics is a theory based on the beautiful things of past like dreams, fantasies, myths and legends. Deuda too focuses on beautiful past of the people and inspires them to regenerate social life by insisting on the complete independence of Deuda world from life or on alienation of the people. Either Deuda is

highly loaded with happiness and miseries or seriousness; it optimistically shows the hopes in people by its structural beauty. Deuda duet evokes subaltern consciousness in following points:

1.3.1 Aestheticism in Rhythms and Sounds

Voice and rhythm are significant properties while performing Deuda Khel. Sometimes, the singers choose a slow and gentle rhythmic pattern with the reiteration of the ending part comprising six or seven letters. The space and time are determinants of rhythms and songs. In addition to these, age of the singers and their excitements also helps performers to choose either a slow and reluctant rhythm or a short and quick one, because they must harmonize their speed of singing with the movement of their feet. Generally, old people move languidly, so their singing becomes slow. If they are adolescent, the voice and rhythmic patterns are very fast in proper harmony with their dance.

The space and numbers of audiences also influence the choice of rhythm. If there is an open space around the circle in which they are moving, they sing speedily and dance accordingly. Sometimes, there is a large audience in and out of their route elbowing, shouting and pushing each other to come near to the singers. The route of singer is, then, so narrow that they cannot swing their bodies back and forth and are compelled to be slow in voice and in moving feet. Artists and participants both are amateurs who give birth to disturbance. Another possible reason of changing rhythm is to avoid monotony of the same rhythmic pattern throughout the whole night. Apart from duet performances, the Deuda accords in a lyrical form which produces unhappy or distressed feeling of human self. Dance in the other festive traits even in music or in words are avoided. There is a sheer unity of tragic feelings among sound, rhythm and physical situation. Such song occurs in isolation without listeners

Na pairi oilana lagi, suntalika bota Dosh maile kasailai dinna, karma paapi khota. (The orange tree is withering away without being tasted. I do not blame anybody since I am unlucky.) (Own Trans)

The singer in her reality is tired of worldly sufferings; her rhythm becomes serious, emanated from her pathetic heart. She says that orange trees wither away without her adornment of it. Thus, she is regretting her passing youth without having a life partner. She also scolds the death and her destiny which took her heart away forever. In such song, [mostly] the young married women purge out their distress and feeling of loneliness with serious music and it makes the listeners sad.

1.3.2 Aesthetic consciousness in Language

Language of Deuda is first and foremost loaded with aesthetic qualities; it is highly innovative, figurative and adorned with musicality. That is why people of this region are well familiar with the language of Deuda. Despite various regional dialects--*Dadeldhuri, Bajhangi Achhami, Baitadeli*--language and formation of words in Deuda Khel attract everyone. Language in Deuda is loaded and reloaded with feelings and emotions of the people. Symbols and images are like two eyes of Deuda in which figures of speech are real vocal. The main objective of symbols and images in Deuda is similar to Victor Shklovsky's idea of "Deautomatization" and "Defamiliarization." (qtd. in Habib 350). Deuda, does not convey its deeper meaning through 'practical language, straightforward words, but with highly uncommon and unfamiliar words in the form of poetic language (day-to-day language), so that the listener has to be more attentive to the meaning of Deuda.

Ko hallachha kheta paani, ko ho phul ko mali

Tipele phuleko phul, paunya huki gaali (Chaulagain 35).

(Who irrigates the land and who is a gardner of this garden? If I pluck a flower in bloom, shall I be scolded?) (Own Trans)

Language of Deuda is highly defamiliarized or deliberately made unfamiliar to the listeners. Instead of saying “you are so beautiful” and “I want be be your company,” a boy deautomatizes the language comparing a girl with agricultural land, beautiful flower and asks her, "Who is the gardener/lover of the flower." He desires to pluck the flower but scares whether she will scold him. Here, these remarks are sheer lie but they intensify the emotion and feeling of the people.

The language of Deuda is filled up with abstract ideas, so the abstract ideas do not represent object in realistic way but express the feeling of common people.

Language is highly symbolic and figurative in its forms. Boys and girls never address their counterparts in Deuda Khel by their names but by the names of birds' *Baja* (hawk), *Parewa* (pigeon), *Maina* (small weak bird brown in colour) and Peacock.

Ma hu tero man padne baja, ta hai meri Maina

Kaiki hai tu chelibeti, kaiki hai tu baina. (Chaulagain 35) (I am your loving hawk and you are my maina. Whose daughter and sister are you?)

A boy is asking a girl for her introduction by saying that they both are birds of same category but only difference is that he is ‘hawk’ which bears male quality of violence which preys other birds and girl is as ‘Maina’ which is very weak bird that possesses the quality of female. Thus, symbolic representation is a unique device in Deuda for the production of a good aesthetic effect on the audience.

The language of Deuda is highly figurative, decorative, and poetic in tone and figures of speech often flow smoothly in songs of Deuda to convey aesthetic expression of the people.

Boy: *Kaiki ho suntala bhadi, suntala pakeka,*

Phal chakhna paenya ho ki, rasai rasa sacheka.

(Whose orange garden is this full of ripe oranges? Can I taste juicy fruits or are they reserved for anybody.) (Own Trans)

Girl: *Rasa matara khanya hauki, suntali daniko*

Phal chakhnya bhamara chhaina, suntala bhadiko. (Will you only take the juice of the orange? Is there no any bumble bee to taste the fruits of the orange garden?)

Boy: *Ta hai meri suntali dani, ma tero bhamara*

Rasa chusna kosis arau, bhadauki gamara. (You are an orange of mine; I am your bumble bee. Let us try to suck juice on the occasion of Gaura Parva in the month of Bhadra.) (Own Trans)

Girl: *Rasa chusi chhadanya hauki, bhamaraka bhesa*

Suntali khai bhadima chhadi, janya hai ki desha. (Will you leave me after sucking the juice in the form of a bumble bee? Will you depart to a foreign country after sucking the orange juice in the garden?) (Own Trans)

Unknown boy and girl try to be acquainted to each other by means of similies and metaphors. A girl is compared with an orange garden and her youth with ripe orange of the same garden. The boy is bumblebee who sucks juice of orange; it means (symbolically) he wants to win her heart and be friend of her. Finally, the boy assures her to marry on the occasion of *Gaura Parva*, but she doubts that he will leave her alone after marriage. In this way, sensuous image in the Geet helps in creating the complete and concrete aesthetic pleasure of Deuda. In above Deuda, we find images like olfactory (smell of ripe orange) and visual (ripe fruit/youth of girl). Aesthetic

pleasure is achieved in figures of speech like personification of ripe orange with young girl. Thus, we can find what Horace says "Urbanity" or "Decorum" that is polish, grace, lucidity and unity in the expression of Deuda by means of well managed words and figures of speech. These symbols are more aesthetic, pictorial, and sensual and the visual details appeal to our sensation of aesthetic beauty. This depiction creates visual images with aesthetic feeling and excitement regarding beauty of the Deuda Geet.

1.3.3 Aesthetic consciousness in Themes

Aesthetic consciousnesses in themes of Deuda have healing effects in minds of the audiences. The term aesthetic consciousness refers to a kind of awareness which any piece of art brings in the people. Baudelaire thinks "Aesthetic consciousness is autonomy in human behaviours which concerns to consciousness in the people" (92). Deuda emotionally and intellectually engages participants. This consciousness is often a combination of pleasure, pain, pathos and sufferings of common people. While performing Deuda Khel pleasurable expression changes itself into aesthetic enjoyment and sufferings of people changes into consolation. The enjoyment and consolation are possible when pre-existed ideas are replaced with sublime aesthetic consciousness in participants. Sublime consciousness is extreme point of joy when soul and spirits flows in deep sea of freedom. This freedom neither concerns with rules nor socio-cultural systems like caste and class, it only concerns with the intensity or the ecstasy of the people itself. Deuda produces ecstatic effect in the hearts of participants by depicting their sentiments.

Sath chhadi sangeni chhadi, kathai paapi saala

Mera baaj baseko thauma, laiija malai kaala.

(This year has looted me from the company of friend and husband and left me alone.

O! Sinner year, take me too in the place of my husband o! Death.) (Own Trans)

We find healing effect of Deuda having serious themes where a widow in her extreme loneliness and disappointment tries to console herself. She tries to pacify her floating mind telling about the true and ultimate end of life -the death. The widow has nothing to achieve but simple liberation from her burning of heart.

Deuda makes an aesthetic appeal to the people of this region when loving voice resound the sweet melodies in the form of duet. More aesthetic pleasure is achieved, when Deuda is happy in themes, because imaginative projection generates aesthetic pleasure and delight to the people by creating beautiful images. Imagination as P.B. Shelley says is 'real source of delights'; young boys and girls flow in the deep sea of imagination to get aesthetic enjoyments in Deuda:

Baisakha Jethaka maina, pipali chhayama

Duniya sara bhulli gaya, hamara mayama. (In the month of *Baishak* and *Jestha* under the shadow of Peepal tree. All the people in the world forget themselves after seeing our love.) (Own Trans)

Beautiful flights of imagination create ecstasy of aestheticism in lovers who dream to enjoy under the peepal tree where everyone will be inspired to see their pure love.

Sense of liberation is only possible in the world of Deuda Khel in which impure soul purgates from the impure spirits. Deuda Khel shares imagination and expression of hearts and creates aesthetic beauty. Thus, the aesthetic consciousness exists in Deuda.

1.3.4 Aesthetic Consciousness in Dictions

The term 'diction' signifies the kinds of words, phrases, and sentence structures that constitute any work of art and literature perfect. Diction of Deuda is filled with special arrangement of words which provide Deuda as appropriate means of an excitement. This kind of excitement is not easy to create; God gifted talent is

needed to make people laugh and cry. The composers of Deuda are spontaneous most of the times. Singers generally have energetic and dynamic mind to produce words which are most appropriate in the context of Deuda Geet. Diction is a sharing of the inner feelings of *Deudia* and their sensation. To talk of diction, images with symbolic continuity of local association come first. The two lines of each couplet may not match in the sense of semantic meaning but occur for the purpose of rhythm, rhyme, alliteration and image creation. Generally, the first line of couplet seems to be semantically out of meaning but syntactically harmonious and obligatory. The main aim of diction in Deuda is to achieve the aesthetic consciousness in the mind and the heart of people. Mainly, from this kind of aesthetic consciousness we can find birth of two dictions in Deuda; one is free diction and next is unified diction. In free diction, first verse of Deuda is irrelevant to next line. First line is just like auxiliary line because main ideas are given in the second line in verse form.

Dal chamal sangai rakhei, masina dharsama,

Joban laijanya bhaya, garidinchhu pharsyama. (Keep pulse and rice together on [thinner] tattered cloth. If you take me away, I am ready to register my life in your name.)

As shown above, the first line is irrelevant semantically but maintains the rhythmic flow. A *Deudia* orders to put rice and pulse together and machine have to be put on the transparent tattered cloth *dharsa*. It is not the message of the *Deudia*. His message is expressed in second line of the couplet in which a girl is ready to dedicate herself if any boy desires to take her away. Though the line seems to be irrelevant in many cases, it creates an imagist Geet; a mental picture in the hearer's minds. In this way Deuda performers get aesthetic consciousness.

Unified diction creates aesthetic feelings in audience when two lines become unified through a strategy of parallelism.

Thulo kholo sukanya bhayo, Pani Phutto lisyako

Tera jiuma yo parani, ragata missyako. (The precipice of Lissya has crumbled, so the muddy river has not been transparent. This life has mixed into the blood of your body.) (Own Trans)

These lines give sense of the crumbling of precipice, Lissya and a landslide has made the water in the river misty and it does not become transparent. In the second line, the boy confesses that his blood has mixed in the body of his beloved. The image of the mixture of something in liquid and the lump of solid is toppling downs the river have impressively potent relationship with the love relationship of a girl and a boy. When the hard and solid precipice crumbles, it loses its original shape, but it also color to the stream. The stream incessantly flows and continues its existence as parallel in this song; the boy topples down his body in her like blood that enables life and its existence. The solidity of soil in him and the continuity of the stream and life in her stand at parallel level. Diction of Deuda depends upon the skill of *Deudia*. If he is skillful in arranging the words in proper rhythmic patterns; the audiences achieve pleasure very easily. As Kant says, "Beauty is not a beautiful but a beautiful representation of things" (qtd. in Habib 373). Deuda too is not unique whole in itself rather it depends upon ability of composer.

1.3.5 Aesthetic Consciousness in Tones

Deuda varies in tone; it can be didactic, satirical, panegyric, humorous or amorous depending on the mood or situation of the people. The tone of Deuda has nothing to do with the universal validity of seriousness or humorous, because, we can find harmony between the heart of audience and the mind of *Deudia*. Tone of Deuda

can be serious or deductive, it does not concern with the object but with the feelings of pleasure and pain. Wilde opines, "Art has no aim beyond its own perfection..." (35). Deuda also is well equipped with perfect tones; whether it can be ironical and humorous or philosophical, it stands complete in itself. But it does not mean that Deuda in various tones have same aesthetic effect on the audience. A widow who has lost her husband and a son in her youth is very serious and her tone in Deuda is more pathetic than that of the boys and girls in love who longs to win each other's heart.

Thuli gadhaki lami pula, kasaile tardaina

Chelo maryo baikan maryo, ma paapi mardaina. (No one dares to cross the long bridge of big river. why do not I die when my son and husband have passed away?) (Own Trans)

A widow wants to live no more since she has lost her husband and son. But to kill herself is as difficult as to cross the dilapidated bridge of Thuligadha (big river in Chaudi village of Dadeldhura district). Serious tone, in Deuda creates a kind of seriousness in mind of people by touching inner feelings and emotions. But witty tone creates happiness or pleasure in the audience.

Aaaj samma pabitraichhu, umer bhayo satra

Satra saalki kori kannya, ma ekali matra. (I am virgin till the age of seventeen. I am the only girl who has remained untouched in the village up to this age.) (Own Trans)

A girl says that she is still virgin and unmarried even in the adolescent age of 17 who is only virgin girl in the locality. But a boy responds her in the most satirical way:

Pach bera poela gayee, kati sundar kannya

Chha choti ma lagi janchhu, kumari hau bhannya.

(O! pretty girl, five times you have eloped. I will take the sixth times if you are virgin.) (Own Trans)

A boy wittily responds to a girl by accusing her that she had already eloped five times with somebody and yet she dares to say that she is still virgin. In this kind of Deuda Geet, we find more pleasure and happiness.

1.3.6 Aesthetic Vision Embedded in Settings

The basic aesthetic vision lies in the beautiful settings of Deuda. When the setting of Deuda is in open green meadow of hilly area, the moon and the arches of rainbow give pleasure to the participants of Deuda Khel. The aesthetic pleasure is less in young participants when setting of Deuda is in public places like *Jaat* and *Parva*. It is because young people are often delighted in Deuda having light tones. Generally, Deuda with light tone is set in isolated areas of performance, such as in green mountains, hills, on the banks of the rivers, under big trees and near waterfalls. It is because nature has power to create ecstasy in the hearts and the mind of the people. When people are away from native soil, beautiful scenic settings become so much nostalgic that it haunts every individual.

Chaudi mero janma bhumi, Dadeldhura jilla

Sath chhutyo sangini chhutyo, pheri kaile milla. (Chaudi is my birthplace, Dadeldhura is my district. I have no more friends and kin. When shall we reunite again?) (Own Trans)

The setting is Chaudi; native soil of a singer who, at present, is away from it. The singer continues it by remembering the world of fantasy, dealing with beautiful sloppy cliffs and its folklore, friends and kin that no longer are with him. Deuda is fusion of fact and fiction, personal and impersonal subject matters. Beautiful native

place and enchanting scenes of its nature fill the hearts of the singers with aesthetic beauty, loveliness and charm. Beauty and charm of Chaudi and Dadeldhura magnificently functions as a source of joy and delight to mitigate sorrow of separation and pain of loneliness.

Sights and scenes of nature exist for their own sake but they are means of adding aesthetic beauty in audiences. The series of natural beauties create sensuous pleasure in the mind of the people. In proper setting of Deuda Khel, participants receive aesthetic softness, delight and genuine. That is why Oscar Wilde writes:"[...] Even the beauty of woman becomes stable with frequent glances, but natural beauty seized by imagination remains fresh and everlasting..." (35). Depictions of beautiful settings in Deuda are as follow:

Hajari phul phuli gayo, Apika chhayale

Saipal sari pabitra man bhayo, sai tamra mayale. (Marigold has bloomed under the shadow of Api mountain. My heart becomes as happy as Saipal mountain because of your love and affection.) (Own Trans)

There are beautiful [pictures of] mountains Api and Saipal where flowers bloom its side by. These kinds of series of natural beauties create different sensation in the mind of audience. Observation of nature is so performed that everything receives aesthetic softness, delight and genuine sensation. Above verse seize the aesthetic delight and experience by drawing vivid and concrete image of sensuous beauty. In real life love and beauty decline and fade but love and beauty painted in the heart or expressed in Deuda remains fresh. Thus, Deuda possess the power of beauty to awake the imagination which is aesthetically vivid than reality.

1.3.7 Aesthetic Issues Embedded in Discourse and structure

The tradition of performance is not a kind of arbitrary contrivance of an individual singer but a structured discourse in which a singer produces his songs within the certain system. This system [mostly] creates aesthetic elements in the audience. There must be fifteen letters in a verse line and each ending word must rhyme with the ending word of the next line of the couplet. But, the singer is free to make his own lines more decorative in the suitable context. The repetition in Deuda is the pivot around which the whole Deuda Khel circulates. The repetition in the Deuda Geet plays a significant role with functional consequences in articulation of the song and in regulating performance of the Khel. Since it is a two party conversation, all discourse structure relating to such conversation is useful. The structure in Deuda is full of musicality and a true ecstasy is finding in its structural beauty and pleasure of the words, images and symbols.

Jaino gairo woino pairo, jayera gaskida

ki phul pairanu hoejau, ki phul makkija (Landslides often take place on sloppy terrains. Yoy are a flower. Either bloom or fade away. Otherwise yoy will face the destiny of the sloppy land.) (Own Trans)

The structure of Deuda is rhythmic and the singer wishes a lower either adorable or such that it fades away. The use of flower however is symbolic.

1.3.8 Aestheticism in Kinesics and Body Language

Deuda Khel is based on verbal and non-verbal actions according to the discourse and situation. Ideas are expressed by letters imprinted in mind of *Deudia* or verbal signs as their proper medium for expression from one attitude to another. Gestures like facial expressions, winking of eyes, twisting hands, play a vital role in

the development of further relationship among the individuals while performing Deuda.

Deuda Khel (generally) is a dance and a public performance before massive audiences. Hence, verbal sense and non-verbal action are equally important to apprehend the meanings in totality. If it were only a verbal action, say, recorded singing, the repetitive lines of Deuda Khel would be wearisome. But at the same time, audiences enjoy their moving around and pointing hands or smiling faces. An effort is made to shed light on this important faculty of Deuda Khel. This is in a circle, a part of the rituals, where rhythm determines the quickness in lifting feet of the performer. Such twisting of the bodies and lifting of the feet is a feature that hints a joyous and pleasant mode of the *Deudia*. Various folklores of Nepal like *Ratteuli* (a song sing by women on the occasion of marriage in Western Region of Nepal) or *Dohori Geet* (two way singing) comprise less sorrow and happiness because it is more lightened in themes. In *Rattuli* and *Dohari Geet*, singers only sing songs which are often not performative. But, in Deuda Khel singing and dancing take place at the same time in a circle with the movements of footsteps. All the participants in Deuda Khel are singers and dancers, but it' is not same in *Rattuli* and *Dohari*; because few members of people actively take part. The outcome of this proves the discourse or the song of any Deuda Khel to be either satiric with mild humor or romantic in which *Deudia* (both male and female) purge out their suppressed emotions of love complaining against social evils and barriers. Lifting feet and stamping them on the open ground and swinging bodies back and forth function as the song of happiness which guarantees the friendly affinity among the people. The singers of two groups put their arms on each other's shoulders. Their action promotes scene of aesthetic pleasure and solidarity.

Protagonist attributes attached to the singers are noticeable with their own behaviour and others with them. Males and females are addressed in their own way. If it is a girl she often comes to the ground with her team in uniforms, full of cosmetics. When they commence the performance, eye contact and smiling faces are meaningful in further creation of the song conjecture. When the singers, whether they are male or female, light a cigarette and twist it, they indicate that they are interested individuals for Deuda Khel. When a *Deudia* addresses, all participants carefully listen to him or her, particularly his interlocutor, so that he can reply appropriately. During the repeated singing, the singers look down and mediate on the possible couplets for their turns when the singer addresses, as he moves round the circle pointing his hand to his counter parts. At the same time both of them smile. Whatever biting and insulting remarks a speaker utters is not reacted with any bad feelings but appreciates his wit and aesthetic ingenuity. Aesthetic consciousness comes in audiences when two *Deudia* express accusation and defence by means of Deuda Geet.

Ki bhayo swani ka chela, kyakilai hai runya

Swaniki darale haiki, ueiko petticoat dhunya (What has happened to you, son of your wife? Why are you weeping? Are you scared of your wife? Why are you washing her petticoat?) (Own Trans)

We find one *Deudia* accusing another by saying why a cuckolded fellow like him is weeping and he also pinches him by saying that he washes petticoat of his wife because of her fear. But another *Deudia* does not get angry, and responds wittily:

Tu jasto naamarda hoina, joie bhaneki joieho

Tu pani kapada dhunchhai, mata ueiko poie ho. (I am not a eunuch as you are. Wife is a wife for me. You too wash your wife's clothes; I am the husband of my wife.) (Own Trans)

The responding Deudia replies that he is not a eunuch like him who washes his wife's clothes. He loves his wife, but not acts as a servant like him. Here, the gesture is to show the weakness of the husband.

Another kinetic feature of Deuda Khel between girls and boys is stamping the feet of the boys when the girls assert a proposal by singing emotional lines. If a sexually appealing line is expressed by the boys, the smiling girls turn their head sideways and cover their faces with hands. Back and forth movements become quick in such a situation. Though the lyrical lines of Deuda may be indirect, the audience can easily perceive it. Stamping feet is only possible in the quick movement of dance. Seeking refuse in front of Deuda Khe, draws aesthetic pleasure and delight from the beauty and glory.

Mukhale bhanya matra haiki, sindura launya hai

Jindagi gujadya haiki, bichai bagaunya hai? (Do you just gossip or will you put vermilion on my forehead? Will you accompany me throughout life or throw me in the over flooded river.) (Own Trans)

A girl doubts her counterpart whether he will put real vermilion or vermilion of words on her forehead. She questions whether he will keep her company forever or leave her alone after marriage. The more aesthetic facts are that the songs do not only focus on the issues of conjugal life but also consequences after married life.

Besides these, the audience sitting in and standing up outside the circle also show their smiling faces or evaluative gestures that induce the singer to choose proper couplets. Anyway, this overlapping interplay between verbal and non-verbal expression retains performative power to attract amateur audiences and artists.

The human world is full of suffering, weeping, and harsh realities which Deuda portrays on its aesthetic lines. Aesthetic consciousness in this regard inspires

and motivates various people to enjoy freely and frankly in the celebration of Deuda.

Beautiful girls who are bored with household works take help of Deuda Geet to

liberate themselves from the burdens of human world and want to escape for a

moment with birds in the imaginative world of eternity.

Nika nika phul phulla chhan, raajaaka bhansara

Malai suwa udaie lai ja, tai tera sansara. (Beautiful flowers bloom in the royal garden. O! My beloved, fly me up with you in your eternal world.)

(Own Trans)

Thus, in Deuda Geet we can find the great aesthetic charm as a girl in above song gets.

The real vision of aesthetic pleasure is possible if there is artistic honesty and true

vision in composition of Deuda Geet. Deuda is an incarnation of beauty; it is not only

a medium for expressing religious, socio-cultural and philosophical ideas rather it is

an integral part of *Doteli* culture (a typical culture of Far West Nepal).

II. Thematic Analysis in Deuda

From the outset of human civilization to the present time, performative art has spanned over an incalculable time and space as stimulant of the fundamental human sensations. From the centuries, Deuda for the people of this region has been a voice of the inner heart. As people of this region are not accustomed to writing and reading, they dig out basic human emotions through performative folkloric art of Deuda. Deuda with its enchanting healing effect to the human soul in the times of burden, unhappiness and suffering had been in the past and still is a powerful expression of truth moving more or less in everyone's heart. Deuda duet retains a unique quality of persuasion adhering to inner refinement of the self. This is a unique quality with magical power of Deuda, which expresses all the human sentiments like feelings and emotions, pain and sufferings, happiness and sadness.

Thematic analysis of Deuda can be described on the basis of its subject matters. If the Deuda is loaded with pain and sufferings, thematically it becomes serious and sentimental whereas, Deuda having light themes often is filled with erotic passion. The dominant themes of Deuda are, as Upadhaya says, "Religious, cultural and seasonal ...also focuses on the themes of love, emotions and sex..." (45-75). "Direct Deuda, indirect Deuda, personal Deuda and impersonal Deuda are some of the categorization of Deuda by Kali Bhakta Pant. Dharma Raj Thapa in his book *Hamro Lok Geet* categorizes themes of Deuda "General Deuda and ceremonial Deuda (145). But thematic categories of Deuda as mentioned by these writers are incomplete at present scenario, because the time of their categorization has been changed with the changing of culture, society and human values. Thus, themes of Deuda have also been broadened in categories. These various themes of Deuda can be categorically analyzed as followings:

2.1 Religious Themes

Religious themes from very beginning of centuries are most popular in Deuda. In such hymns, glorifications of *Karmakanda*, *Veda* (Hindu ritualistic activities) and heroic deeds of god and goddess are mainly focused. As mentioned in the introduction; Deuda mainly originated with invocation of god and goddess. Thus religious theme is dominant in Deuda on the special occasions and the religious ceremonies like *Krishna Asthami*, *Ram Navami*, *Holi*, *Jaat*, and *Dashain*. Religious Deuda is of two types, one focuses on religious places and another to God and Goddess.

Dwarika, badari Gaya, gaya Kedarnath

Rameswrum darshan gari, pharki aaula satha. (We shall go to Dwarika, Badrinath, Gaya and Kedarnath. After praying in Rameswrum, we shall come back together.) (Own Trans)

This verse focuses on religious places of Hinduism. *Char Dham* (Four most Holy shrines), Dwarika, Badri, Kedarnath and Ramesworum are places all Hindu wants to visit for purification of their soul. In this Deuda Geet, glorification of four Hindu shrines is described.

Another focus of religious Deuda is to describe glory, deeds kindness as well as aggressiveness and cruelties of god and goddess over evils and demons. In this verse, the glory and deeds of gods Ganesh, Bhageswar, Ghanteswar, Kafleswor and goddesses like Malika, Ugratara, Saileswari and Kalika are more often focused. Religious Deuda, about kindness or bravery of god, is performed on the occasion of

religious festivals like *Gaura Parva*, *Holi Purnima*, *Ram Navami* and *Krishna Asthami*.

Manma basne muday deuta, bhumika bhumiraja

Jagannath sabaika deuta, samjya salai sala. (Mudya Deuta sits in the heart, Bhumiraj in the earth. Jagannath is common to everyone, remember it every year.) (Own Trans)

Glory of gods like Muday Deuta, Bhumiraj, Jagannath (local gods of Chaudai village, Dadeldhura) is remembered as the path pointer of people. In Far West Nepal, on the occasion of *Gaura Parva*, women sing *Sagun* and *Phag* (special hymn of god and goddess sing by a group of women in Far West Nepal). They perform *Gaura Naach* holding statue of Maheswar (creator of world) and Gaura (name of goddess). Even though, this performance is not a Deuda performance but is similar to religious Deuda.

2.2 Mythical and Legendary Themes

Myth in Deuda is a part of the oral tradition. Deuda is composed on the performing spot without any written materials. It is because depending on the issue of Deuda; songs are immediately created. In mythical Deuda, myth of god, goddess, origin of shrines, bravery of god, and victory of god over evils are beautifully decorated. Myth and legend make folkloric tradition richer in its themes. Since, mythical Deuda emerges out of a core of traditional stories of people, place and action, it is popular among the [subaltern] mass of people. A question is likely to arise, why mythical themes have been dominant in Deuda? One reason is that these Deuda are about subjects that people of this region have to read or hear about. Another reason is that it explains much about human nature and their existence.

Agaasha garudi bolyo, didika sarapa

Sarka didi paani bhani, aranchha bilaapa. (The eagle cries in the sky because of his sister's curse and laments asking his sister sky for water.) (Own Trans)

Above Geet depicts mythical story of a sister who curses her brother. He is ordered to bring water for her but sister later learns to have urinated into the pot and given her to drink. After knowing the facts sister curses him saying that all the rivers, streams and wells will turn into blood for him. As a punishment, the brother turns into a bird *Garudi (eagle)* whereas, the sister becomes the Sky. It is supposed that eagle cannot drink water even if it feels thirsty, from rivers and streams but quenches its thirst when there is rain falls.

Legendary themes in Deuda are based on life, bravery, popularity of the legendary figures in the society. Deuda of this kind helps to inform good acts of our ancestors whom we respect much. This can be seen in following Deuda Geet:

Naagmalla ajaymeru kota, naamudi hun raaja

Pyara raaja gaddi base, khusi bhaye saara. (Nag Malla of Ajaimeru palace was a famous king. When the loving king took the throne, everybody became happy). (Own Trans)

Popularity and heroic deeds of Nag Malla--a king of Ajaimeru Palace (located in Dadeldhura district) when Nepal was ruled by *Baaise Chaubise Rajaya* (before unification, Nepal was divided into 22 and 24 Kingdoms) -- is mention in above lines. Generally, kings of that period were cruel and barbaric but Nag Malla of Ajaimeru was so kind and popular among the people that even on occasion of his ascension to the throne, all the people gathered to celebrate the event.

Thus, Deuda depicts traditional beliefs of people in the form of legend and myth. Mythical and Legendary themes in Deuda explain natural events, heroic deeds [of king or legendary figures] which are greatly admirable.

2.3 Cultural themes

Cultural themes in Deuda depict the richness of local customs and traditions which are very close to day -to-day life of the people in this region. It includes customs like marriage, *Mundan* (head shaving ceremony), *Nwaran* (feeding ceremony) and festivals like *Jaat, Parva and Melaa*. Cultural themes of Deuda also focus on glory of the local temples and myth associated with them. These myths are guiding forces to the people. For instance, *Mundan* is necessary because it is believed that after the death males are not tortured by *Yamraj* (God of death), if they did *Mundan*. The richness of culture in this region is shown as:

Telya leka dharma sala, kati thanna paani

Saubhagye ho sudurpashim, sanskirti ko dhani. (Pilgrims stay in

Tellaya Leka and drink the cold water. Far West is very proud of its cultural richness.) (Own Trans)

Richness of local places like Telya hill, cold water quenching the thirst of trackers is focused in this Geet. Cultural richness reveals the richness in local festivals like *Gaura Parva* and others. *Gaura Parva* is considered to be unique in this region because it carries up a cultural identity of Far Wester Region. Furthermore, participation of people, from all communities, class and caste helps to perverse for future generations.

Deuda functions as a medium to preserve *Doteli* culture by performing folklore popular among the people of this region. Deuda is such a performative art which is critique of hybridization and modernization of *Doteli* culture [rich in its customs and traditions]. While talking about these cultural evils, we find the tone of lamentation.

Ketaa bannya keti jasha, keti bannya ketaa

Daura suruwal gaman chhodi, baadan lage fetaa. (Boys look like girls and girls look like boys. They began to fasten themselves with short clothes leaving Daura-Surbal and gown-blouse.) (Own Trans)

Evils of modernization and its impacts in modern youth is main focus in this Geet. In the past, people [of this region] used to wear traditional dress: *Daura- Suruwal* and *Gawan- Choli* with a great cultural pride, but now in the name of cultural modernity boys grow long hair, and put on ring and bangles like girls. Girls also behave like boys and cut their hair, wear pants and smoke cigarettes. In this way, Deuda pinpoints weakness of the people and helps to preserve the fundamental cultural realities of Deuda.

2.4 Historical Themes

Historical Deuda focuses on the past events which stand as monumental stance for the people of future generation. These historical events are beneficial for action and struggle of people who are inspired in conservation and reverence of our past heritage or beliefs. Historical themes of Deuda help to preserve and respect history, -- roots and origin as the guiding force of life.

Bhimdutta Dasrathchand, Jayprithivi jasaa chela

Janmauchhin sudurpashim, aaipadeka bela. (Ojha 18) (Far West gives birth to the sons like Bhimdatta, Dasharatachand and Jayaprithivi when there is a need). (Own Trans)

The recollection of historical figures that made great contribution in socio-political, educational reformations is described in above verse. Bhimdutta Pant fought for rights of landless people and later was assassinated by *Panchayat* (was a system, in which small group of people ruled) regime of Nepal. Dasrath Chand, a great martyr of Nepal fought against Rana regime in 1950s; and Jaya Prithvi Bahadur Singh, was an educational reformist and a human rights advocate. Such figures are recalled in above Deuda.

Another historical theme dominant in Deuda is about historical events having great value in the history.

Dui saye chalisa barsa, rajtantra chalyo

Jantako sangarsale, tanaashahi dhalyo. (Swar 59) (Monarchy ruled over this country for two hundred and forty years. With the people's movement, dictatorship crumbled down.) (Own Trans)

Two hundred and forty year old monarchy was overthrown by the people's movement with difficulty. This Deuda couplet mentions about the Peoples Movement and abolition of monarchy. With the downfall of autocratic monarchism in Nepal, it has become Federal Republic State.

2.5 Political Themes

Political themes in Deuda are important vehicle for social transformation, focuses on political changes and modulation of society in new directions. Political

Deuda focuses on the subject matters like unhealthy activities of politician, corruptions and selfishness of the political figures. Political Deuda is almost ironic in its theme. The irony is used as a tool to improve rotten political systems by establishing healthy political norms in the society, community and country as a whole. Far Western Region of Nepal is still away from the development; people have been suffering with dual policy of the country because the state puts them in the category of secondary citizen. When poor people die of hunger and epidemic diseases, they take the help of Deuda with political themes to blame rulers of this country.

Raaja hate raana hate, hamra dukh hatena

Janta madda bhokbhokai, bhau kaile ghatena. (King and Rana have been thrown away from the country, but we still face the troubles. People die of hunger, but the price of commodities has never gone down.) (Own Trans)

Plights of the people, after the end of Rana regime and abolition of monarchy even have not been changed. Their conditions are same as before. The price of daily commodities goes up leaving people in the death bed of hunger and scarcity. For this, they blame political system and its policy makers by means of political Deuda.

Apart from these political themes, Deuda also highlights corruption and atrocities of leaders. After the historical election of Constitution Assembly in 2008, people of this region were obviously happy and optimistic for the betterment of political system but their aspirations did not fulfill due to the failure of lawmakers to draft inclusive constitution within two years.

Yekai desa dui senaa chhan, satta luchhaa chudi

Jantako janades bhuli, neta bhadda bhudi. (One country has two armies, politicians quarrel for portfolios. By forgetting the mandate of people, they only fill up their stomach.) (Own Trans)

The transitional phase of Nepal is described where two armies (Nepal army and Maoist army) are in the country and politicians always fight for power politics. By forgetting the people's mandate they earn black money.

2.6 Themes of Economic depravity

Deuda also focuses on the economic imbalance between rich people and the poor. Unemployment, lack of educational facilities and socio-cultural situations affect life of the people. To join hand-to-mouth, many poor people go to India by leaving family and small children, whereas, rich people enjoy at home by dominating the poor people. The country has become a bower for the rich only. There is the big gulf between rich and poor. Poor are losers and never get anything in their lives. In the Marxian terminology, subalterns are called 'have not' groups who are always in the eclipse of the elites. Even though, subalterns always remain under shadowed by elites, Deuda unites these suppressed and oppressed people under a banner to resist against the rich. Deuda singer Dilli Raj Fulara picks the voice of subaltern high unto the strand of mainstream making unable to speak, speak and unheard heard.

Pulis aaie khedya bhaya, sukumbasi haru

Jagga bala thau thau hunye, hukumbasi haru. (Fulara 'A' side)

(The Police come and chases away the landless people. But the landlords are everywhere to order the poor people.) (Own Trans)

It focuses on atrocities of authority, police and rich people towards the poor and landless. Singer Fulara depicts an atrocity of the police who displace the landless people and guard the landlords.

Poor people hardly get morsel of food, but rich people enjoy big parties in the star hotels. The poor and subaltern people of remote districts of Seti, Mahakali and Karnali Zones hardly get anything to satisfy their hunger. They have been surviving in great social and economical problems.

Kasiki basmati bhaata, kasi ki kodya nai

Kasiki kampani maala, kasiki pottya nai. (Swar 61) (Some people eat Basmati rice (a variety of rice), and while some others do not even have the millet. Someone possess silver coins made into beads while others do not even have ordinary beads to wear as ornaments.) (Own Trans)

In this Deuda Geet, we find hierarchy between privileged and those who are dying in search of food. As mentioned above, rich people always have high quality rice (basmati), whereas poor people hardly get even millet to eat. In the same way wife of higher class use *Pothaya* (a readymade ornament) but wife of poor never gets simple hand made ornaments. In this way Deuda depicts economic depravity prevailing in the community of Far West Nepal.

2.7 Women's Sufferings

Deuda evokes all kinds of pathos, sufferings and dominations of women in the society where male domination is still prevalent. A sense of suffering comes in the mind of women when they know the destiny to be a woman in their early age. Even in

their childhood itself, they are placed in the secondary category within the family while comparing with their brothers. Girls are treated indifferently in the educational, social and cultural sectors. They are not sent out side for better education and they do not get chance to involve in the social works. They think that no one can fight against fate because they are begotten as daughters to suffer in this world.

Ram ram bhannu kaile lekhyo, pipalu paatama

Parai ghara jaanu raichha, chhori ka jaatama. (Who wrote a word 'Ram, Ram" (Hindu god's name) on the peepal leaf? It is written in the name of a daughter to go to other house). (Own Trans)

In this song, the destiny of female is expressed as their pre-determined life which they have to lead. They have to leave parents for another home after their marriage, where they have to consider their bridegroom as their lord but they are merely sojourners.

Pain and sufferings of a woman increase when she becomes the victim of domestic violences. She neither gets solace from her husband nor do from-in-laws, rather she gets bitter taste in her life with mental and physical tortures. A married daughter explains her situations with help of Deuda when she finds no destination at her home or her parent's house. Her words pathetically depict the peculiar characteristics of our society where a daughter-in-law is made to work a lot but is deprived from basic needs and emotional supports.

Dada jau charkyallo ghama, kholi jau ta airi

Maita jau sauteli ama, poila sasu bairi. (Joshi) (The parching hot sun troubles me in a hilly area; thorn of *Airi* (a thorny bush) troubles me on the

bank of a brook. Step mother troubles me in father's house, mother-in-law at home.) (Own Trans)

The world of a woman is surrounded with miseries and sufferings. Her attempts of getting solace in the isolated hill are destroyed by the hot sun lights, and thorns of *Airi* torture her in the brook side. Neither has she got solace from her parent's house [because of step-mother], nor from her mother-in-law, who is like real enemy for her.

Finding no other way to pacify her troubled mind, a widow invokes her dead husband and asks if the sense of love rules in the Heaven too, as it does in the mundane world. She is pretty sure that love is like a net that traps every one. She inquires herself if there is any way to get rid of the sense of love by beating or defeating the other way round.

Mayajal manako jalo, hanya bhagde chhaki

Saibaja swarga kaloga, maya lagdo chhaki. (Joshi) (Love relation is a net that traps the heart. Can it be beaten away? Dear! Does love torments you in heaven?) (Own Trans)

Apart from these sufferings of women, other contributing factors are social values, cultural norms, male chauvinism and male dominated ideology. Social system of Far West adds more pain to a woman during period of menstruation cycle and the time of delivery. During these periods women are believed to be impure so they are not touched. They are kept in the ground floor of house where cattle are kept or else they have to live in *Chaupadi Goth* (a small hut far from house where women are kept separate for five days of their menstruation cycle) which is especially built for them.

During these periods many women face untimely demise, because of snake bites or over bleeding but no one even touches them since they are considered impure.

Saasu sasura kaa dukha, lognye pitai garne

Chhuie bhaye suttkeri, bhaye, aklamai marne. (Mother-in-law and father-in-law trouble me and the husband beats me. In the time of menstruation cycle and child delivery, death untimely comes to us.)

(Own Trans)

Thus, in this way depictions of the pain and sufferings of women can be expressed by means of Deuda Geet in the Far West Region of Nepal.

2.8 Social Themes

Deuda not only depicts themes of pain, suffering or love relations, but also portrays a vivid form of folkloric system focusing on social norms, values and systems which are dominant in Far Western Region of Nepal. There are various forms of social discourses which are important subject matter of Deuda Geet; like caste, touchability and untouchability, social hierarchy, domination and exploitation.

2.8.1 Caste

Caste system is dominant in the Hindu society and Far Western Nepal is not an exception. People in this region behaved on the basis of their caste. If someone is a *Brahmin* he is respected than *Sudra* (Brahmin is of the top in the Hindu caste hierarchy and *Sudra* is the lowest). Caste system has only not short term effects in this society but also it matters in the issues of love and marriage. Even loving boys and girls cannot tie in a marital knot if either of them belongs to untouchable or lower caste. Apart from this, untouchable people are strictly prohibited to enter into the temples, *Dharmasala*

(pilgrims' rest house) and *Deukhala* (temple premise). Untouchable people are even not allowed to fetch water from a water well (*Nwala*) which upper caste people use. For them small *Nwala* are provided which, often are constructed far from their villages.

Girl: Ekai Nwala pani khaaeu, ban pakha jantaka

Ka thiyo jaat bhaat ko kura, ras chusi khantaka. (We drank water of a same well, while going to forest and field. Where then was the matter of caste when we were taking the taste of life?) (Own Trans)

Boy: Suikardaina tallo jaat tero, chhaina meraa basha

Thaa bhayaina khanya belaa, kun falko ho rasha. (Fulara 'B' side) (I cannot accept your untouchable caste, because it is not under my control. I did not know at the time of tasting which fruit's juice it was.) (Own Trans)

After knowing the untouchable caste, a *Brahmin* boy denies to accept a *Sudra* girl as his beloved, despite their deep love relation. In the first *Deuda Geet*, caste system destroys and leaves pathetically to a girl away; who was physically and emotionally in love with the upper caste boy. She questions him why caste was not a matter when he enjoyed over her delicate body? And where was the issue of untouchability while drinking water of the same well? In the second *Geet*, the boy replies that he was unknown of her untouchable caste while drinking water of the same well and having physical contacts with her. The Hindu caste system does not allow the boy to accept the girl as his wife/beloved since she belongs to an untouchable caste. He fears to be ostracized if he marries her. Caste system has built up the mindsets of upper caste boys to be away from lower castes.

2.8.2 Untouchability

Untouchability is another theme of Deuda while depicting the social issues of this region. This system is based on a faith that *Dalit/Sudra* are not supposed to touch *Brahmins* and *Kshetri*. It is simply; because they are lower in caste who do dirty works like collecting skins of dead animals and working hard in the field. But with passing time, they raise voice against this system by means of Deuda.

Tallo mallo jaat hudaina, badaliya dina

Raato ragat sabiko hunchha, bhedbhab garne kina? (There are no lower and upper castes, since time has changed. Why is there discrimination if everyone's blood is red?) (Own Trans)

This Geet expresses ideas of *Dalit* who raises issues of equality between touchable and untouchable caste by reminding them that era of caste discrimination has been over now. Because there is no any scientific proof that claims somebody as pure and impure. All are equal because everyone's blood is red in color.

When social norms like caste discrimination stand as barriers on the way of lovers, their love ends with mere longings and expectations. They sigh in desperation and express their longings for union. The *Brahmin* boy -a bit bold then *Lwar* (iron-smith/ lower caste) girl, expresses his feelings saying that the union could be possible if he were an iron-smith or she were a *Brahmin*.

Ghar ko pakho patharie hunu, suna ko dwar hunu

Ki tuila bamani hunu, ki maile lwar hunu. (I wish the roof of the house were made of slate and the door of gold and that you were either a Brahmin girl or I were an Ironsmith). (Own Trans)

Thus, touchability and untouchability theme is dominant in the Deuda Geet which helps to depict social system based on the caste and class in Far West Nepal.

2.8.3 Hierarchy, Domination and Exploitation

Themes of Hierarchy are dominant in Deuda where especially privileged people are on the top position of society and poor people are kept in the lower rank. Privileged people like *Mukhya* (village chief), *Saukaar* (rich people) and *Phondaar* (messenger of authority) are in the level of policy making. While making rules, poor people are left in the dark corner. Thus, with hierarchical system in the society, subaltern people get no other way to express their pain, suffering, injustice and inequality except through Deuda Geet.

Mukhya saukaar ramekaa chhan, ghoda chadi chadi

Gariba lai niyama lagdo, pujjya hata Jodi. (The village's chief and rich people enjoy the ride on horseback. Poor people are tied to rule and thus they bow down to them.) (Own Trans)

This Geet depicts enjoyable life style of *Saukaar*, *Mukhya* and *Phondaar* in contrast to the poor people having no alternative except bowing down to power in order to the society. Privileged people spend daily life riding on horse back because they are allowed to enjoy over toils of poor people. Rules are appropriate to the rich whether they follow or not but the poor can do nothing with those rules since it is in favour of the rich.

Under the social theme of Deuda, domination is another issue. Domination of rich over poor, man over woman, powerful over powerless is some common phenomenon in our society. Deuda focuses on all sorts of domination; whether it is

caste, class, socio-economic or political. Apart from these, domination of a married daughter by her mother-in-law and husband is also most common. Her expression of dominations by patriarchy can be heard in the isolated hills or grass field of this region.

Pai hanne sasura hanne, sasu dini gaali

Annyaya attyachar bhayo, marchhu esai paali. (Husband and father-in-law severely beat me whereas mother-in-law scolds. Injustice and atrocity have been fallen upon me; I would wish to die this time.)

(Own Trans)

This Deuda Geet exhibits issues of victimization of a married daughter who is beaten seriously by her husband and in-laws, and even forced to death wish because she cannot tolerate atrocities anymore.

Deuda focuses on pain and sufferings of suppressed and oppressed people. Still, in our society higher class people threaten the poor people, confess their properties and belongings, because they have support of money, manpower and favourable rules.

Sosak, badmaas hunya, dhaati chori dhaniee

Hapkaaune dapkaaune adda, luti khaula bhani.

(Elites and wicked people became rich by cheating and deceiving. They undermine and dominate intending them to loot.) (Own Trans)

2.8.4 Themes of Social Evils and Public Awareness

Deuda brings out hidden social evils in the society and community. Social evils mean alcoholism, girls' trafficking, child marriage and *chaupadi pratha* which

push this region in back corner. Apart from these evils, corruption is another major problem which subaltern people express in the Deuda.

Ghus khayo paisa khayo, khayachha yojanaa

Mansa madda dabai napai, karmachari mojamaa. (Some people take bribe and black money from development projects. People die of diseases without getting medicine but bureaucrats enjoy.) (Own Trans)

Corruption is most dominant social evils in society, community and country.

Corrupted bureaucrats take bribe from the people and even do not hesitate to take profits from various development projects. But poor people die of diseases without getting a tablet.

Apart from exposing social evils, Deuda also extends public awareness about illiteracy, AIDS, alcoholism and gambling.

Jana khaya jaada raksi, jana khelya taasa

Samaajma bikriti aauchha, aafno banabaasa. (Don't drink alcohol; don't play cards as these lead you to social evils and self exile.) (Own Trans)

This Deuda Geet makes social appeal to those people who are trapped in bad habits of drinking and gambling. To avoid such habits [which are not beneficial for society and family] Deuda provokes a sense of awareness in the society.

Desa gai galat kaam nagar, aids rog saralaa

HIV positive bhaya, akaal mai maralaa.

(In a foreign land, don't do wrong tasks, because AIDS can be transmitted to you. If you became HIV positive, you face untimely demise.) (Own Trans)

This song tends to make those people who go to various parts of India to earn money and indulge in bad habits of visiting brothel houses and to be infected by AIDS. This verse suggests better not to go such places.

2.9 Thematic Dealing of Human Life / Philosophy

It is an undeniable fact that the Deuda as a folkloric performative art in the most parts is overloaded with local images, habits and customs, and it appears to be universal and logical in its association. Deuda as a whole focuses on philosophical aspects of human life which is overloaded with issues of love, separation, happiness, sadness, pain and suffering, human erotic and passion.

2.9.1 Themes of Love

Love theme is dominant in almost all the Deuda Geet. Here, love does not mean only physical love; it also can be parental love, love between husbands and wife, love for birth place, love between *Saali* and *Bhena* (brother-in-law and sister-in-law) and love for friends.

2.9.1.1 Parental Love

Generally, people believe that parental love is unforgettable because we neither can pay back the cost of their love nor can get such love forever from anyone.

Parental love in Deuda focuses on love for children and vice versa. When people go away from their parents, they wander for their love and affection. When married daughter or *Pardesi* (who has gone abroad to earn money) son cannot get other way

of expressing their love, Deuda Geet becomes medium of expression to catch the sentiments of parental love.

Aamaa baa umearka buda, khet sabai khandinu

Budi aamaa rune belaa, janarou bhandinu. (Mother and father are old.

So I request everybody to kindly help them to plough the field. When my older mother bursts into tears, tell her not to weep.) (Own Trans)

A son in these lines, [who has been abroad to earn money] laments in the memory of his parents, and requests neighbors to help his older parents to plough the field. He also says to his mother not to sob remembering him because it is his compulsion to leave them for the sake of money. Parental love is more obvious to a married daughter, who after her marriage goes to her husband's house and gets domination and exploitation. In such situations she remembers her parents. Parental remembrance of married daughter is deeper when her parents pass away. Her heart fills with agony when her friends go to their parent's house on the special occasions like *Gaura Parva*; *Bishu* (new year), *Jaat* (religious fair), *Dashain* and *Tihar* but no one is there to invite her. In this condition, tears roll down from her cheek and laments pathetically.

Kashay gaiee eeju meri, ekali ma chhadi

Bisu gora sabai chhutaye, aba kathai laadi.

(O! Mother how could you go away leaving me alone? No New Year eve, no Gaura Parva will I celebrate now onwards.) (Own Trans)

Married daughter laments in the memory of her mother who has left her alone helplessly on the occasion of *Bisu* and *Gaura Parva*.

2.9.1.2 Husbands and Wife's Love

When husband is far-away from his wife, Deuda unifies them together emotionally, if not physically. Boys in this region go to foreign country to earn money. But, their wives have most hard time to spend. Husband wants to come back soon to meet his wife but there is a big mountain in front of him which always blocks him. It means that there is a large amount of debt which he has to pay back to *Mahajan* in his village. When husband goes to foreign land by leaving his wife's inner ripped youth; she has to face many problems in the family as well as in the society. In our society husband is regarded as 'whole' but wife (who is left alone) as 'part'. She doubts her husband whether he still loves her more as he used to or not.

Pidalu patako paani, khau khau bhandu talki

Baaja gaya parai desa, joban gayo dhalki. (Water on an arum leaf shines while attempting to drink. Dear husband, you have gone abroad, my youth has passed.) (Own Trans)

The trouble of a wife's heart that even her youth has no time for any physical association with her husband is very pathetically described. She wants her husband to come back soon because she is growing older without his union. After this, husband replies to his wife:

Khani rahai, launi rahai, paisa diulo bharu

Man rakhei pabitra tero, joban arei pharu. (Keep yourself eating and clothing properly; I will send Indian currency for you. Keep your heart pure and youth longer.) (Own Trans)

A husband replies to his wife saying her to eat and dress well without worrying of

money because he will send *Bharu* (Indian currency) for her. He convinces her that one day they will reunite. Hence, husband requests his wife to keep body and spirit pure.

2.9.1.3 Lover's Love

This theme is popular in Deuda since participants are young and unmarried. As stated before, hearts are won and lost; lovers separate; relation develop and cease to be; unknown girls and boys fall in love instantaneously and choose to be life partner while performing Deuda. Their first meeting changes into infatuation in Deuda Khel and then unknowingly changes into love affair. Then both hearts long to meet in an isolated place as stated below:

Boy: *Kaha aaulo kasari aaulo, aba kaa bhetaula*

Kakhi basi pirati laula, tirshna metaula. (Where and how shall I come to meet you? Where shall we make love and quench our thirst of love.)

(Own Trans)

Girl: *Teta beyaulo yeta bayauli, jagyamaa bhetaula*

Sai kaa ghara sangai jaaula, tirkha metaulaa. (You and I as bridegroom and a bride will meet at the altar. We will go together to your home and satiate our desires.) (Own Trans)

In the first Deuda Geet, a boy who has fallen in love with a girl, (without knowing much) inquires her where and how he can reach to the physical union with her. In the second verse, the girl replies that their physical union is only possible if he is ready to put *Sindur* (vermillion) on her empty forehead on the *Mandap* (atar) as her bridegroom.

2.9.1.4 Love of Birth Place

The memory of birth place haunts everyone when they go far-away from it. To cool the burning heart, Deuda sprinkles drops of hope to solace. Memory of hills, rivers and forests vividly reflects in Deuda as follow:

Noon bhanya dumar koti, chamal bhanya chauki

Pahadai kaa thanna khola, kaafal khanai chhauki? (Pant 10) (The best salt is of Domarkoti (a variety of salt found in Domarkot area) and rice of Chauki (rice cultivated in Chauki village). Have you still been having berries in the cold valley of the mountainous area?) (Own Trans)

A person remembers his birth place; a hilly area where he used to quench his thirst with cold water and berries in the forest. The description of hilly area of Far West Nepal is beautifully given in above lines.

2.9.2 Themes of Happiness

Deuda deals with the ecstasy of human life humor, pleasure, enjoyment and love affairs. Deuda with the themes of happiness is very powerful to create ecstasy in the human heart, mind and soul. Generally, Deuda encompasses the theme of happiness when people in huge numbers gather in the public place like *Deukhala* on the occasion of religious festivals; *Chaitali*, *Holi*, *Bishu*, *Jaat*, and *Dashain* to share their feelings and emotions happily with their nearest and dearest ones. When a group of girls and boys participate in the Deuda Khel, at the isolated places like mountain side, river side and thick forest; boys persuade girls to elope at night time from the Deuda performing place. But girls challenge them to defeat in Deuda before their

elopement. At the time of performance, all participants try to pin point each others' loopholes, so that they can make such weakness a strong issue in Deuda Geet. A sense of happiness comes in Deuda when a group of boys tease the group of girls on the subject matter of their look, dress-up and hair style. Happy theme in Deuda is more joyous when quick beat in music (whispering sound of tree, musicality of waterfall etc) and act of performance is in proper harmony with the human sensations, feelings and emotions.

Duy mutu ekai bhaye, bachula saathama

Sworga ma basekai bhayo, pahillo raatama. (Pandaya 118) (If two hearts become one, we will live together. We will get heavenly pleasure at the first night of our meeting.) (Own Trans)

After winning the heart of loving one, lovers unite and this union gives them heavenly pleasure and enjoyment throughout the night.

Deuda with happy themes also imbedded in cultural ceremonies like child birth, *Chhati*, (a Hindu ceremony held six days after birth of a child) *Annappasan* (feeding ceremony) and marriage. On these occasions, Deuda stands, as an emblem of happiness for neighbors, friends and family. In a Chaudi village, on the occasion of *Kholai Jaat*, young people of twelve villages play *Dain* and *Damau* (traditional drums). With big cheering sounds of happiness, people support their group of *Dain* and *Damau* players. In this time, a sense of competition comes in the mind of people regarding whose *Dain* and *Damau* can make loud sounds. People of twelve villages meet each others' group with their *Chalo* (groups of twelve drum players) nearby the temple of Jagannath. After this, all people join their *Bahuli* by expressing happiness.

Bahra gun jamma bhaye, khola ki jaatama

Chalo milai deuda khelau, sabi chhan saathama. (Twelve villagers came together at the fair of Khola; let us play drums and meet at the place of performing Deuda since all of us are together.) (Own Trans)

The happiness of people on the occasion of Kholai Jaat and performance of Deuda altogether is cheerfully recorded.

2.9.3 Themes of Sadness

Life in the Himalayan districts of Far Western Nepal is troublesome, horrifying and pathetic that oblivion is more welcoming than existence; death is more opted than life, because living is not at all better than dying.

Koi sukhi koi dukhi hunye, bhabini dui chhanki

Aaija kaala lai ja malai, majale suckh chhanki?

(Some are happy, others sad. Are there two Gods? Happiness is not easily available. O death! Come and take me.) (Own Trans)

Karma (destiny) is blamed by the people for making somebody rich and other poor. Whatever problems they have: poverty, death or separation of spouses, death of parents and scarcity of daily supply, they blame their destiny.

People are very disappointed with the way they spend their life without basic needs; medicine, food and clothes. Government is basically blamed as a cause of their sufferings, because policy makers put this region in second category of Nepal. Neither anybody hears voices from this region, nor are their matters of problem addressed. They make themselves heard by means of Deuda depicting a sense of sadness.

Sundai jaanu bhandai jaanchhu, ei manaka katha

Sunne sabi bhujena koinai, pashima kaa betha. (Keep on listening, I am telling a story from my heart. Everyone hears but no one understands the pain and suffering of the people of Far West.) (Own Trans)

This Deuda is overloaded with pain and suffering of the people. They expose their sadness dragging the attention of the rulers of this country to listen and act in the favour of this region. Everyone hears the pathos of people but no one understands inner feeling, poverty and hunger of the people.

2.9.4 Themes of Pain and Sufferings

Deuda depicts pain and suffering of women, elderly people, poor people, farmers, porters and ploughman who are victimized by poverty and social domination. A woman who is widowed in her prime youth shares the troubles of her heart on her failure to enjoy the pleasure of wearing beautiful dress and passing her days alone in the absence of her husband.

Koi anna chhan rato chola, koi anna chhan sari

Tui re mai ghamale sukau, dheki phula bhdi. (Joshi) (Some husbands bring red blouses and some saris. But both of us are losing our youth like flower in the garden.) (Own Trans)

A widow in these lines shares her pain and sufferings with her widowed friend saying that young husband of some young women bring beautiful clothes to adore their wives, but they are unfortunate to get any of those opportunities. They feel old and find in sharp loneliness without their loving husband. Moreover, their youth is sun

dried since they do not get that opportunity to enjoy the warmth of love from their husband.

Bharia, halia kishan, runchhan raat dina

Launa khanai kei aathina, lagay kochha rina. (Porters and ploughman burst into tears day and night. They neither have clothes and nor food because they are in debt.) (Own Trans)

This couplet depicts deep pain and suffering of the farmers and porters. The porter is carrying things on his back and searches for the shadow of a tree. Sitting on a platform under a tree, he thinks that he does not have any meaning of life. He neither can live happily in present nor in future but in poverty and exploitation. Pain and suffering of farmer is no different than porters' because they both are treated as slaves. Being a poor farmer, he has to depend on rain fall for implantation and irrigation. But flood and mud slide often sweeps away his crops; leaving him helpless. The plight of ploughman (who is always busy in ploughing landlord's field) is also similar to porters. In our society, ploughing field, carrying goods on back and working in the fields are taken as less reputed jobs because they are always regarded as a mere ploughman, farmer and porter. Moreover, these are not regarded as job rather they are slaves to satisfy the needs of owner.

2.9.5 Separation and Loneliness

Subaltern people cannot live happily, because poor economic condition forces them to depart away from their family. Poor people do not have chance to stay together because they go abroad to earn money. Days of separation and loneliness come in the lives of wife and husband. In our society, wives take care of the

household works and husbands go far-away from house for better settlement of family. Wife bids good bye to her husband when he goes to abroad for long periods of time. While leaving loved one, they both have great hope to improve the economic condition, but wife's dream shatters when she does not get any message from her husband. Then, she explains physical and mental states as follow:

Din thula samjhanale, raat thula runale

Aashu le sirani bhijyo, suina bheet huale. (Days are longer because of your memory, nights are longer of weeping. My pillow gets wet, when we meet in dream.) (Own Trans)

Wife expresses her pain [of separation and loneliness] through the means of Deuda. A lonely wife thinks that her days are longer because of her husband's haunting memory, and nights are longer because of her cry all over the night. Her pillow gets wet with tears when she saw him in her dream.

Because of the poverty, newly married couples get separated by bearing pain and sufferings as mentioned in above song. This Geet gives a sense of poverty that paralyses human sentiments; love, sex, enjoyment and leaves people in a pathetic condition.

2.9.6 Jealousy and Hatred

Human life is not always happy; Pain, suffering hatred, jealousy, meeting and separation are inevitable. After the long relation, if a boy leaves his lover, she became so jealous of him that she does not want to see his face. In this region upper caste boys do not suppose to elope with a lower caste girl. After deep being acquainted to

each other, their love relation grows up. If their relation breaks down or either of them chooses another company, there comes a sense of jealousy and hatred.

Rubasa joban dheki, aaie gaada tarai

Phal chakhi bichai ma chhadi, ahila to ka mari? (You crossed the flooded river seeing my beautiful youth; where have you gone leaving me on the way, after tasting the fruit.) (Own Trans)

This couplet focuses on angry mood of a girl. She scolds her dishonest lover who in the past even was ready to cross the river in flood to meet her, but after physical exploitation she is being left in the pathetic conditions. Such exploitation underscores a reason of the girl's hatred and curse.

2.9.7 Satirical and Humorous Themes

Deuda with satirical and humorous theme is most popular among the youngsters, who perform Deuda for pleasure instead of expressing pain or sufferings. While performing this kind of Deuda, boys and girls try to find out loopholes so that they can crack jokes. But, everybody cannot create situational funs, special *Deudia* is needed in both the sides for that purpose. While creating such jokes, there is no bitter sense, rather each party accepts it and replies with mental alacrity. Ironical and satirical Deuda is performed at night where boys and girls try to persuade their favourite ones for elopement. In following Deuda Geet, a sense of humor and satire is expressed.

Bailee maile masu khaye, bakeri ko boso

Motai raichhai bailee bauju, bayune chhau ki kaso? (Pandaya 25)

(Yesterday, I had had goat's fat as meat. Infertile sister-in-law you have become fat. Have you conceived a baby?) (Own Trans)

A boy while performing Deuda Khel doubts a plump girl to be pregnant. She is ridiculed by the satirical question of the boy and motivated to respond ironically, satirically and humorously.

Latthi katye ghanaru ki, tuppa rakhya chholee

Bayune chhu bigauti khali, junga rakhei molee (panday 25) (I have cut a stick of *ghanaru* (a thorny bush) keeping it sharp at its top. I am pregnant and will produce *bigauti* (the milk of a mother just after bearing a child) for you. Be ready to apply it on your moustache.)

(Own Trans)

A woman ironically accepts that she is pregnant, almost on the verge of delivering a child. She invites him to have *Bigauti*, the dish prepared from the milk begotten immediately after child birth, specially meant for cow's or buffalo's milk. She also invites him to lubricate his long mustache with a fresh cheese she produces after child birth.

2.9.8 Themes of Erotic Passion and Nudity

Generally, the theme of erotic passion is dominant when youngsters participate in Deuda performance. The setting tends to be isolated places like hills, meadows, plateau, or open field with bright moon light. Participations of the young boys and girls are big in number because Deuda of this kind focuses on eroticism. Erotic passion is a subject matter of Deuda for both male and female participants. Males try to pursue females for physical love and females, after thinking deeply upon

such a proposal, replies wittily in Deuda. Boys generally praise girls for their good dress-up, get-up and hair style. Girls' body parts are metaphorically compared with other beautiful things. For instance, their breasts, thighs and waist are compared with natural objects and erotic words are given to address it. Girls also use erotic and vulgar words to boys. After a long performance of Deuda, if either side accepts the proposal, newly introduced lovers go to separate place for a secret talk. Relatives are strictly prohibited to gather together and setting too is isolated place away from their homes.

Rupa ranga kaya mileko, kasha fukayaki

Gaun choly bhitra rakhi, kya chha lukayaki. (What a beautiful match of your look in your loosed hair. What have you kept inside your gown and blouse? What have you hidden there?) (Own Trans)

After long time of introduction and sharing of the ideas in the isolated hills, a boy, sexually excited, asks a girl what she has hidden inside her petticoat and blouse. He asks as if he does not know what mysterious things girls generally hide. Indirectly, he points out his erotic passion of mating with the girl. Then girl erotically replies:

Darshan garna wara aaija, e mera hajura

Chola bhitra mandira chha, hashyeko gajura. (Come near to me to pray, O my dear! I have hidden two temples inside the blouse and a shrine inside the gown.) (Own Trans)

Girl respond with great erotic passion that she has hidden two holy temples inside the blouse (two breasts) and smiling 'holy shrine' of god inside the petticoat (swelled

vagina). She invites him to pray by coming near if he at all wants to fulfill his desires. Girls become ironically ready to let him go and roll in the hay stack.

2.9.9 Themes of Luck and Fate

Luck and fate are most common issues in life of the people in this region, because if anything goes wrong with them--may it be because of superstition, suppression or other social evils--they simply blame their destiny. Poverty, death or separation of spouse, death of parents and scarcity of daily supply are things for which the blame goes to destiny in the form of Deuda.

Phul phulyako bot layako, mala pairanu chha

Abhagi karmaka lagda, dukha sairanu chha. (A flower has bloomed on the plant. I am unfortunate not to have the joy of wearing these flowers as I have to bear all sorts of miseries and sufferings.) (Own Trans)

This song depicts fate and luck. One who plants flowers has to wear garlands when they fully bloom or use them otherwise. Similarly, one has to bear troubles if his luck or destiny does not favour him. People of this region believe that nobody and nothing can stop what happens except fate or luck of an individual.

2.10 Themes of Best Wishes

Deuda begins with the invocation of God/Goddess and ends with best wishes and farewell. Whatever the themes of Deuda may be, it ends with well wishes. The separation of the company of Deuda performers ends with fare well to each other and a promise to reunite for the next time.

Kati ramro malika thaana, uimathi gajura

Aaba maila bahuli chhadya, bida pau hajura. (Pant 156) (What beautiful shrine of Malika temple and the steeple on its top. Now I dissociate my arms, leave the Deuda and want to depart.) (Own Trans)

By remembering goddess Malika and wishing the best for all participants, the sense of farewell is expressed in above lines. Performers optimistically hope to reunite again on other special occasions like *Gaura* and depart happily.

III. Giving Voice to the Voiceless People through Deuda

Conclusion

Deuda as a folkloric performative form of creative art is very popular among the subaltern mass of Far West. It focuses on emotions, passions and sentiments of the human self. The pain and sufferings of suppressed group emerges in various tones of Deuda. Sometimes tone in Deuda is satirical, ironic, and serious, but sometimes it turns out to represent happy, erotic and emotional moods. Deuda, as a rich cultural folkloric performance of art, depicts pain and sufferings of the subaltern mass of this region. Even though, Deuda is rich in its oral tradition, its significance and life have been imprisoned within the geographical boundaries of the Far Western hills. Subaltern people are always behind curtain from where they cannot express their ideas. Deuda as a folkloric art speaks on behalf of the poor and suffering people, by consistin different subject matters and crossing boundaries of themes in performance. Being a folkloric performative art, it reflects the folk literature; we can see the socio-political conditions of the people of western part of Nepal. In Deuda Geet, experiences of marginalized, underprivileged people and women are mainly focused. Being a part of folk culture, Deuda Geet reflects happiness, sadness, miseries and excitements of the people in this region. Deuda, an oral performative art refelects socio-political and cultural condition of people by means of various discursive forms. Even though, Deuda is the inner voice of all the people of Far West Nepal, the subaltern voices embed in the Deuda because suppressed and oppressed voices of the people do not get any other way of expressing their pain and suffering, scarcity and starvation.

Deuda creates aesthetic consciousness through the means of various tones. It is aesthetically loaded with different themes like pain and suffering, happiness and sadness, miseries and enjoyments. Aesthetic quality is embedded in the rhymes, sounds, language, themes, tones, dictions and settings of Deuda. Deuda is always in rhythmic form, because poetic language is embedded in the rhythm to make an appeal to the human heart and mind. Aesthetic beauty of Deuda lies in the language use. Metaphorical language is often used because such language gives more attention to the audience. For example, a boy addresses his loved one as *Baja*, *Maina*, *Suwa* and a girl address her loved one as *Swami* and *Sai*. Aesthetic theme focuses on hidden aesthetic issues such as happiness, sadness, pain and sufferings. When somebody is in great problem, one takes help of Deuda for solace. Whether it is political or social Deuda, it provides aesthetic satisfaction to the people. Diction of Deuda is aesthetically arranged in such a way that people find beating of their heart in first line of every Deuda Geet. But second line gives actual meaning of the whole Geet. Tones of Deuda can be serious or flippant. It does not concern with the object but with the feelings of pleasure and pain only. When a tone is serious, tears roll down from the cheeks of girls but light tone in Deuda creates humor and happiness in the mind of the young audiences. Real setting gives aesthetic pleasure to the Deuda performing people. Special settings like mountains, rivers, valley and open ground (near the forest and under the full moon night) make peoples' heart overjoyed. Musicality, melody and sounds of insects, birds and waterfalls fill up the heart of the people with unerasable imprints. When somebody is away from his native place, he has a sense of nostalgic feeling about those cliffs, mountains and waterfalls where he has grown up. Then Deuda becomes means of his expression. Deuda carries aesthetic pleasure by the means of its unique rhyme, tone and setting. People of all classes, castes, societies,

communities and gender take pleasure with the aesthetic beauty of Deuda. Even though, Deuda Geet begins with invocation of god and goddess; it ends for a search of beauty, pleasure, and voice of consolation.

Thematic domains highlight various themes in Deuda. Themes, here, mean various subject matters and issues suitable to the daily living of the people. Deuda with its enchanting healing effect to the human soul at times of burden, unhappiness and suffering; had been and still is a powerful expression of truth moving more or less in everyone's heart. Deuda duet; with all of its themes, thus, retains a unique quality of persuasion adhering to inner refinement of the self. In Deuda various thematic discourses carries different philosophical aspects of human life. Most dominant themes are religious, socio-political and cultural, economic, women's suffering, social evils, philosophical aspects of the life; love, hate, separation and loneliness. Religious discourse in Deuda focuses on the glory and deeds of god and goddess. On the special occasions, *Jaat, Parva and Mela*; religious Deuda frequently is used. Mythical Deuda has themes of oral tradition which give moral guidelines to the people. Such Deuda explain natural events and heroic deeds of the god (in the Mahabharat and the Ramayan) and legendary figures like kings and martyrs whose ideas are admirable. Historical and political themes focus on historical events, acts and behaviors of the past which still matters to the people. In the historical Deuda, monumental figures who have given great contribution for the welfare of people and the betterment of the country are focused. Bhim Datt Pant, Dashrath Chand and Jaya Prithvi Bahadur Singh are considered as the monumental figures. Their sacrifice for the people and country still stands as the source of inspiration. Political themes of Deuda are important vehicles for social transformations. Deuda focuses on political changes and modernization of the society as well as social evils like corruption and forgery of

political leaders. Deuda Geet tries to guide society on the path of 'light and progress' by pointing the loopholes prevalent in the society.

Deuda as believed by many people is not only performed for merrymaking on special occasions but also for physical, mental and spiritual solace, social reformation and political consciousness. Voiceless people through means of Deuda express happiness, sadness, miseries, poverty, hunger, pathos and plights of the people of Far Western Nepal. That is why it is soul and whole in the life of people. Issues of economic depravity; rich and poor, 'haves' and 'haves not' along with labours and masters meet at the nexus of Deuda Khel. Exploitation, domination of porters, bond labours and farmers are engraved in means of Deuda. Rich people enjoy luxury life and poor people suffer with hand- to- mouth problems. Deuda also stands as the protesting voice of marginalized and subaltern people who are treated as citizens of second category within Nepal by the rulers of this country. Pain and sufferings of women is more when they lose husband in their prime youth. Society regards them as commodities and has not given any rights in decision making level. Women are pushed behind far and limited within four walls. Deuda captures a bleak picture of children and old who dies of cholera and diarrhoea. In such hard times, Deuda nurses their worsened wounds. It provides an axis of life to sympathize their hearts and souls in the situation of victimization and marginalization.

Deuda also encompasses with the social problems of untouchability and caste system. In our society *Sudra* -though human beings like us, are not touched because they are believed to be the impure. In the name of caste, upper class people like *Brahmin* and *Kshetri* undermine so-called *Sudra*. By creating social hierarchy, rich people, who generally belong to upper caste, dominate and exploited the poor ones.

Deuda also creates social awareness in the life of people demanding reformed better education system, social equality and equity in all public spheres of the nation. In hilly districts of Far Western Region, though many NGOs and INGOs work in the field of social awareness; like *Chhaupadi*, STD diseases and poverty alleviation, but issues of subalterns has not yet been addressed. Philosophy of Deuda is not a mere philosophy, it is a philosophy of sufferege, dominated, victimized and marginalized groups of people who collectively come in the common 'space' to seek their way in the main stream.

Last but not least, Deuda is a folkloric performative art performed in Far Western Region which gives the voice to a voiceless people and forms a collective consciousness shared in and among the exploited and dominated people. The world of body is equipped with sophisticated means of science and technology, such as cell phone, TV, camera, videos and cassette player but the subaltern people creates Deuda as a means of expressing pleasure and pain. Deuda is common voice for all the people of this Region. Encompassing with social issues, Deuda creates its unique aeathetic philosophy, which invokes into hearts and spirits of subalterns. Deuda has its own 'aura' and own principles in the life of the people. Though, local people are habituated with national aesthetics, Deuda has formed their own local identity and subjectivity with which they demand their representation in the flow of mainstream having eradicated all the narrow walls of demarcations between voiced/voiceless, egalitarian/subaltern and center/margin.

Glances of Deuda Performance



Premise of Jagannath temple in Dadeldhura where Religious Deuda is performed.



People Performing Deuda in Kattya Dango, Chaudi Dadeldhura.



Males performing Deuda on occasion of Gaura in Tudikhel, Kathmandu.



A group of girls performing Deuda in Chainpur, Bajhang.



A group of women performing Deuda in Dipayal, Doti.



Males performing Deuda on occasion of Gaura, in Tudikhel, Kathmandu



A group of girls Performing Putala Naach (sub-genra of Deuda) in Achham.



Two Deudia guiding their group in Tudikhel, Kathmandu.



Women performing Deuda.



Women performing Deuda Khel in Pokhara, Kaski.



A group of girls performing Deuda on occasion of Chaitali.



Women enjoying Deuda in Tudikhel, Kathmandu.

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