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Bhuwo Nāch: A Multifaceted Ritual Performance of Sudurpaschim

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Abstract

This paper aims to explore the multifaceted theatrical performativity of ritualistic *Bhuwo Nāch* on the occasion of *Bhuwo Parva*. To reflect on the performative diversity of this dance, the researcher has observed the performance during the festival, especially in Bajhang. *Bhuwo Nāch* is a traditional folk dance of the people dwelling in hilly regions, especially in Bajhang, Achcham, Bajura, and Doti districts of Sudurpaschim Province of Nepal. The research is based on participant observation, interviews, and focus group discussion. The findings of the study show that *Bhuwo Nāch* is a ritual performative folk dance which imparts diverse facets of social interaction, religio-cultural performance, regional identity, oral tradition, fits of valorous display and tactics of survival against the natural odds and human intolerance. The dance is performed to carry ritual significance through theatrical performance, shape social identity, display valorous community standing, reveal social reality, maintain harmony among the community people, give continuity to cultural orality, and enhance survival strategy.

Keywords: *Bhuwo Nāch*, *Bhuwo Parva*, folk dance, religio-cultural performance,

Introduction

Bhuwo Nāch (dance) is a traditional folk performance performed in hilly districts of Sudurpaschim Province of Nepal. It starts on the last day (*aūsi*) of the dark fortnight in the month of Poush, the ninth month according to the lunar calendar corresponding with December/January of the Gregorian calendar. The first-day program, *bhakharojagaune*, involves ritual prayers to *Bhu* (the performance site) deities followed by performance itself. From the second day, the first day of the light fortnight, *Bhuwo* is performed depending on the duration of the light fortnight days left in the month of Poush, normally ranging from

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three to fifteen days. *Bhuwo* is performed especially in Bajhang, Achcham, Bajura, and Doti districts as a religio-cultural group performance (Joshi, 2016, pp.200-211). Recently, it is also celebrated in Kailali and Kanchanpur districts by the migrants from the hilly district. *Bhuwo* is also called *Bhasso* in some areas.

Bhuwo parva is believed to be celebrated on the victory of the Pandavas over the Kauravas in the battle at Kurukshetra in the Vedic age (c. 1500 – c. 500 BCE). The 18-day war is described in the epic Mahabharata. It is waged between two families - the Kauravas, led by Duryodhana, and the Pandavas, led by Yudhisthira as the result of a succession struggle for the kingdom of Hastinapura. The decisive, final battle occurred at Kurukshetra, located in the modern-day state of Haryana, northeast India. Following the tradition of Pandavas, traditional Nepali musical instruments such as *Damau*, *Tamkya*, *Jhaali*, and *Binai* are played during the *Bhuwo* festival. Men perform dances with traditional weapons such as *Khukuries* (swords) and *dhaals* (shields) in their hands. A vigil is kept through the night with the singing of traditional songs that narrate the stories of the battle between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. According to Bhatt (2020) *Bhuwo* is believed to be a devil force having negative influence on human beings (p.1). It is therefore performed to chase the devil and its influence from the human body.

This festive performance is believed to have been organized by Pandavas to forget the loss of fratricide in the battle of Kuruschhetra between the Pandavas and Kauravas as mentioned in the Mahabharata. After getting victory in the battle, Pandavas come to Haridwar for rituals of the dead on the day of *aūsi*, still remain shocked, numbed and afflicted by sorrow on the loss of the near, dear and the revered ones. They then organize the *bhuwo* celebration that involves massive bodily movement to escape the horrific memory, revive themselves from that unimaginable loss of their near ones like their great grandfather, Bhishmapitamaha and develop firmness in their dwindling body and mind (L. Adhikari, personal communication, May 28, 2023). Pandavas are credited for setting the tradition of celebrating the *Bhuwo Parva* in the form of ritual with the intent of forgetting the nightmares of the war and gaining self-restraint through the exhibition of valorous performativity.

Bhuwo Parva that is believed to have been initiated in Haridwar of India by Pandavas is believed to have been performed by them on the way of their pilgrimage to Kailash Manasarobar through the gateway of Brahmadev in Nepal leading through the mid-hills to Uraibhanjyank linking Tibet (L. Adhikari, personal communication, May 28, 2023). Thus, this performance is believed to have been transferred to the hilly regions of Sudurpaschim as an innate popular religio-cultural performance of the mass and it does have

a certain purpose. According to Bharata Muni (2018), in his *Natyashastra*, the function of performance is taken as:

A comprehensive repository of knowledge and a very powerful vehicle for the expression of emotions. It teaches duty to those who have no sense of duty, love to those who are eager for its fulfilment, and it chastises those who are ill-bred or unruly, promotes self-restraint in those who are disciplined, gives courage to cowards, energy to heroic persons, enlightens men of poor intellect and gives wisdom to the learned. This gives diversion to kings, firmness (of mind) to persons afflicted with sorrow, and (hints of acquiring) wealth to those who are for earning it, and it brings composure to persons agitated in mind. (p. xxxiv)

The *natya* or drama or performance employs the constructive role on the people teaching them the essence of humanity with the multiplicity of the functions, and gives the life skills to prosper their livelihood. *Bhuwo Nāch* also shares the property of *natya* setting the ritualistic and performative tradition to guide people into the right path of life.

Similarly, Achilles' act of burying his friend Patroclus who was murdered by Hector in the holy epic, *The Iliad* by Homer (1991) portrays a ritualistic performance conducted to forget the worries of the great loss of his friend. After following the burial of Patroclus's bones, Achilles holds a series of competitions in Patroclus's honour. Marvellous prizes are offered, and both the commanders and the soldiers compete. The events include boxing, wrestling, archery, and a chariot race, which Diomedes wins with some help from Athena (pp.567-587, chapter 23). The ceremony performed by Achilles exhibits the role of rituals and performances on the grieving people to release them from the trauma of war or the loss of the beloved ones.

Likewise, Sedgwick (1998) opines that performative writing as liminal act redraws the "boundaries between genres, between 'critical' and 'creative' writing, between private and public address, between argumentation and performance, between individual and collaborative production, and between literary and nonliterary texts" (p. 104). Having the quality of reflexivity, the ethnographer makes the art visible through act. It is the empirical style of writing which then becomes a way to connect with the reader and the subject matter as concurrently reflexive and political. Sharing the property of reflexivity, *Bhuwo Nāch* also connects the community people with the performers. It is performed by males only, however others partake as onlookers. The participants follow the leader who chants the *Māñā* (songs) with the perfect tune matching the dancing like footsteps exhibiting the khukuries and the dhaals. It is celebrated with great enthusiasm and fun. According to the Hindu mythology, *Bhuwo Nāch* is the ritual practice of males for the preparation of war following the battle

between the Kauravas and Pandavas in the Mahabharata. For this reason, as females lack this skill, they do not participate in the performance, but observe it as an audience. On this festive occasion, some traditional food stuffs such as homemade bitten rice, *Babar*, and *Lwaun* are offered to the deities. *Bhuwo Nāch* is ritualistic performance through which it expresses male's valorous act and creates various identities. Since *Bhuwo* festival involves *Bhuwo Nāch* which reflects multifaceted ritual performances through the aesthetic art form incorporating theatrical ritual performativity, enhance survival strategy, valorous act, transmission of orality, religio-cultural performance, social interaction leading to unique social identity of the regional people of Sudurpaschim Province.

Methods

This study is based on ethnographical approach. It follows the principles of the qualitative research to look into *Bhuwo Nāch* as a multifaceted folk-cultural performance. The researcher has utilized interviews, participant observation, and focus group discussion as the data collection tools. What is more, to meet the requirements for the project, field visit of the performance site during the festival has also been made. Along with the empirical study, the researcher has also used the opinions and criticisms of the scholars from the library collections and documentaries. Likewise, the communication with the elderly people, the practitioners' experiences and their knowledge have been taken into consideration during the research. Based on the responses of the participants, the researcher has analyzed data and drawn the findings.

Results and Discussion

The results of this study show that *Bhuwo Nāch* carries ritual significance through theatrical performance. It undergoes preperformance, while-performance, and postperformance stages. Preperformance stage involves gathering of male members of the society at the leader's house to discuss about the venue, time-duration, dress, musicians for the performance. The male participants carry the *Ranka* (burning flames) in their hands to notify the villagers about the approaching time of *Bhuwo* on the light fortnight, fifteen days earlier of *Pusheausi*. The participants bring *Khukuries* and *dhaals wearing daurā, salwār, coat, and dhākātōpi* as the ritual dress of the region. On the occasion, people prepare traditional and ritual food items such as *Babar, Lwaun* and bitten rice to offer their deities and celebrate it as the festival (L. Adhikari, personal communication, May 28, 2023). Similarly, while-performance stage incorporates the actual performance of *Bhuwo Nāch*. To perform the *Bhuwo Parva*, the performers as well as the audiences come to the *Bhakhādā* (public place), then decide to go to the noble people's houses. The males participating in the dance are the characters and the people coming from various territories to watch the

communal dance are the real audiences. The characters use different props such as swords, shields, and cultural dress of the region with the perfect amalgamation of verbal and nonverbal interaction such as *Māñā* (chanting songs), rhythmic footsteps, and gestures. This is played in the open playground which becomes a performative ground with full theatricality and performativity. The songs create music appealing to all the sensory organs of participants. The theatrical performance has the proximity between the art, artists, and the spectators. To validate this, Kenneth Burke (1969) argues that “The [written] record is usually but a fragment of the expression...omits all telltale record of gesture and tonality” (p.185). This line shows the importance of *Bhuwo Nāch* as ritualistic theatrical tradition of folk literature in the graphic record. Likewise, Raymond Williams’s (1997) critique of scriptocentrism also supports the idea of theatrical aspect of folk literature where he takes this written world as the arrogance of the highly educated people. Although, the written literature dominates the world, the oral tradition creates the holistic approach to address the feelings and connectedness between the participants and the audiences. After the performance, the participants return to end this performance playing *Deuda* at the *Bhakhādā* each time. In the postperformance stage, the performers play *Deuda* for their entertainment before they bid farewell to each other. Then, the performers change their dresses, take back the equipments used in the performance to their house. In some occasions, he-goats are sacrificed to the deities to please them for the good health of the people, good harvesting, and favourable weather condition.

In the similar vein, *Bhuwo Nāch* contains pragmatic significance to enhance survival strategy against the natural odds and human intolerance. This ritualistic performance drives away bodily cold through physical theatrical involvement or dance at a fast pace at a time when the weather is extremely cold in the mountainous regions during the time of winter. From this perspective, *Bhuwo* appears to be a survival strategy adopted by the males of the society either from inimical counterparts or from the fearsome devilish forces or from adverse climatic condition (L. Adhikari, personal communication, May 28, 2023). This ritualistic dance performance teaches people the skills of war to defend themselves from their enemies. Moreover, it also prepares people to overcome the fear created by the devilish forces or build up the self-esteem to encounter the adverse effects of weather disaster. Moreover, *Bhuwo Nāch* enhances survival strategy against human intolerance which divides people into fragmentation. This ritual performance brings diverse people into one string of brotherhood combating intolerance playing the crucial role in promoting understanding, empathy, and respect for diversity. It is important to foster open-mindedness

and intercultural communication to challenge stereotypes and discrimination prevalent in the society.

Likewise, *Bhuwo Nāch* is the cultural, social collage which units the diverse strata into peace, and belongingness. The participants wear *daurā*, *salwār*, *coat*, and *dhākātōpi* and line up in the circle to perform the dance chanting the *Bhuwo* songs. Since it is the communal interaction in which the leader begins the song and other fellow participants follow him reciting the last words of the *Bhuwo* song as “ए भस्सी रे भस्सी”, which means the *Bhuwo* song is repeated to maintain the rhythm not only in the song but also in the relationship in the society. In the tune of the music, the participants bend their body left and right demonstrating the skill of war holding the sword and shield. Through their song, the participants tell from where *Bhuwo* starts its journey, travels through various places and finally reaches there. After the performance comes to an end for this year, people farewell it, and promise to return the following year with new aspiration.

The *Bhuwo Nāch* reflects the male’s valorous act indicating the readiness and activeness for accomplishing any task assigned. Since the *Bhuwo* dance is performed in the month of Paush, the ninth month of lunar calendar, the participants line up in the circle around the fire in the *Bhakhādā* in the presence of different age-group people with the festive mood. In the center of the play, the fire is made to provide the warmth to the old people from the bitter cold of the season. The performers keep their body warm through the performance itself. It also makes their body intact such as digestive system, mental health, and heals the body physically, mentally, and spiritually. *Bhuwo* dance accompanying the song, depicts multifaceted ritualistic aspects of performances in the regional landscape of Bajhang, Bajura, Achham, and other parts of the far western region.

Generally, valor is the strength of mind or spirit that enables a person to encounter danger with firmness. Valorous acts are awarded since traditional society to the present to keep the spirit of any work alive and more effective. Bhatt (2020) says “भुओ खेल्दै प्रत्येक खेलाडीहरू वाजाके तालमा मिलाएर, तरवार खुकुरी इत्यादि लिएर साहासिलोपनको परिचय दिँदै वीरत्व प्रदर्शनको अभिनय गर्दै उत्साह र उमङ्गका साथ कदम कदम मिलाएर नाच्दछन्” (pp.27-28). This Devanagari version portrays how the participants of *Bhuwo* dance match their footsteps with the rhythm of the musical instruments exhibiting the valorous act holding the swords and shields with full excitement and enthusiasm. In a way, the absence of indecision even in the face of death exhibits the sense of valor, which exceeds any kinds of trials and tribulations at the time of hardships. Moreover, valor is the continuity of the fearlessness, courage, and heroic deeds of the archetypal heroes like the Pandavas of ancient

Hindu mythology who got victory over Kauravas, the symbol of evil forces of the society.

In his *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell (1973) portrays the valorous act of common narrative of archetypal hero's adventurous journey into the supernatural world, who returned home being victorious, knowledgeable, and transformed. He says:

Furthermore, we have not even to risk the adventure alone; for the heroes of all time have gone before us; the labyrinth is thoroughly known; we have only to follow the thread of the hero-path. And where we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a god; where we had thought to slay another, we shall slay ourselves; where we had thought to travel outward, we shall come to the center of our own existence; where we had thought to be alone, we shall be with all the world. (p.25)

Like Campbell's valorous archetypal hero, the performers in the *Bhuwo* dance who collectively display their valorous performance turnout to be more courageous after the performance in the chill winter, they gain knowledge as how to face the adverse forces, may they be devilish or environmental and emerge as transformed fearless, brave and courageous heroes freed from the imminent threat. Campbell's narrative work also depicts the maze that exists on the way to the supernatural world that can be tackled with the heroic pursuit to make the survival meaningful in this world. The hardships may exist on the way, but strong determination makes its own way.

Aligning with the crucial aspect of valorous act depiction in *Bhuwo Nāch*, most of the cultural performances give high value to the oral tradition as being the part of folk literature. Oral traditions can be understood as an integral part of human culture serving as a vehicle for preserving and transmitting cultural values, rituals, and myths playing a crucial role in shaping and maintaining the collective memory and identity of communities and societies. According to de Certeau (1984), the oral tradition has been dominated by the so called scriptocentric arrogance despite having its own richness and novelty. The field of oral tradition is wider to explore various forms of cultural expression to enhance the horizon of understanding. The *Bhuwo parva* turns out to be a great treasure of oral literature. Based on this, oral tradition helps increase the literature adding the new dimensions of knowledge with new meanings. To justify the richness of oral tradition, Ong (1982) presents his views regarding the understanding of oral and literate communication with a very distinct way as, "The term 'orality' gives a kind of validity to the non-written material. Its aim is to understand primal human cultures. This has helped us to turn our attention to the voiceless, the poor and oppressed that were often unheard and marginalized by oppression

in communities” (p.145). Orality includes the voice of the marginalized group; however, it is getting popularity in today’s context along with the emergence of new studies conducted by various scholars of subaltern and folk literature. In the similar line, Scott (1990) adds up his concern regarding oral tradition as, “The ‘oral texts’ have been subjugated under the written text... oral art that reflects the struggles in memory of marginalized communities, in the form of political protest songs and satires” (p.246). The marginalized communities use these folk songs as the medium of satire showing their struggle and protest their perpetrators. However, the oral tradition seems to be shadowed due to the influence of the written text, the richness lies in the performance in the theatricality through oral tradition.

The concept of orality is further justified through and authenticated in the explanation of Rubin (1995) in his argument of orature as:

In primary oral cultures, mimic, and gestures, together with memory, play a crucial role in affirming their traditions, customs, values, and ways and life which are ingrained through regular practice in daily activities, for example, religious festivals, ceremonies, and rituals (initiation rites) stored in the memories of people and passed on from generation to generation. Oral discourse builds up and repeats; it reinforces the same themes. Simply put, both the form and function of oral discourse maintain tradition by telling coherent and organized tales. (p.15)

The transformation of these stored memories from generation to generation through this oral tradition is crucial to keep this tradition alive. The Script and orature are two different forms of literature. Writing is an autonomous discourse that can be written in one social context and can be read in another. However, interestingly, in an oral culture, the elders are the resources, and therefore, respected and appreciated for their indispensable memories to benefit from the acquired wisdom of one’s culture. All these legacies of oral literature in the face of Scriptocentric world, *Bhuwo parva* as the performative art form through the *Bhuwo* songs has been able to keep itself intact for long.

Similarly, in accordance with the preservstion and transmission of oral tradition reflected in *Bhuwo Nāch*, religio-cultural performance is also crucial aspect in this ritual performance. Riligio-cultural perfomances contain artistic and expressive activities that combine elements of both religion and culture conveying religious teaching, celebrate cultural traditions incorporating the idea of community and spirituality at the center. The essence of *Bhuwo Māṇā* (songs)¹ involves glorification of the deities. The song of the *Bhuwo* that has been sung is the eulogy of various gods and goddesses performed by the participants reciting it in the group. The *Bhasso* as a tribute glorifies various deities and people from

higher rank to the lower. The *Bhasso* is commenced from the heaven in the praise of God Brahma first, then of God Bishnu, and of hundred Kauravas. After that it travels to the lower ranked deities and gods. The chief of the *Woghari* (a higher ranked person) is also being praised with the *Bhasso*. The participants chant the line saying it is their *Bhasso*. As the participants sing the song, they request to play *Bhasso* by moving the chest right and left holding the swords and shields. The participants perform the dance in the *Bhakhādā*. Then, they have to begin the *Bhasso* by making fire at the center. *Matho* (forehead) is raised while playing *Bhasso*. Then it is the *Bhasso* of God's king Indra. The participants bend the knee and chest while playing it.

Bhuwo Nāch as the ritualistic practice that can be taken as the performative art form to enhance social interaction and rapport building. From this festivity, the territorial community people get opportunity to gather at one communal ground for sharing their sorrows, grieves, on the other hand, it unites people of various social strata into one communal ground to express their feelings, emotions, happiness, day to day activities, and the sense of belongingness. Bhatt (2020) states that “गाउँमा रहेका दुःखिलाई सुखका गीत गाई हसाउने तथा हसाउनेलाई पनि रुवाउने गर्दछ अझ समाजका बुढापाका व्यक्ति आदिलाई समाजमा एकताको भावनाका लागि अगुवा मान्नु जस्ता कारणको विकास गराउनु भुओ गीतका प्रमुख आधारहरू हुन”(pp.28-29). These Devanagari words mean *Bhuwo* dance and song comfort fellow people of the village to come out of the grief, and make them laugh with the attribution of due respect for the elders maintaining social integration through social interaction. The audiences are there to celebrate the aura of this ritual festivity performance. In this regard, Richard Schechner (2003) defines rituals as:

Rituals are performative: they are acts done; and performances are ritualized: they are codified, repeatable actions. The functions of theater identified by Aristotle and Horace- entertainment, celebration, enhancement of social solidarity, education (including political education), and healing- are also functions of rituals. (p.613)

Unlike professional interaction, social interaction primarily happens through dance, songs, and rituals. The platform of this ritual brings the people living different locations under a single umbrella. Thus, this occasion creates an environment of solidarity and social unity.

Likewise, ritual action is to be understood as a social process, attaching the individual to society by the means of symbolic actions of believers toward their gods. In this connection, Turner (1969), together with literature scholar Richard Schechner, also compares ritual to theater and establishes the ritual drama, initially by teaching students to act out rituals. This concept explores the performative effect of drama on the solution of crisis in the daily life of the theater audience: the seriousness of play. Performativity is the central

concept in the ritual treatises by Sri Lanka-born anthropologist Stanley Tambiah (1979). This author suggests that rituals are necessary for maintaining a cosmology, so that the world will not end.

Likewise, *Bhuwo Nāch* glorifies unique social identity of Far Western territory and its people. As performance art, it reflects multiple domains of the identity such as linguistic, religious, regional, and cultural and so forth. There are multiple aspects of identities, which Stuart Hall (1990) concisely puts as, “identities are names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past” (p.225). Identities are the positioning of the people in the narratives from past to the present embodying various names. Since the mostly practiced religion of the Far West is Hinduism, this ritualistic practice is performed by the Hindu religion practitioners. The festival represents religious unity of the Far Westerners. Analogously, this performance art marks the cultural identity of the people residing in the districts of Far West such as Bajhang, Bajura, and Achham. In the same vein, the festivity reflects regional identity of the region. The festival brings the people under a solo platform for the celebration of the occasion. What is more, this festival exemplifies the linguistic unity of the people living in the western part of the nation. Interestingly, there are varieties of Sudurpaschimeli dialect- *Doteli*. However, during the course, this festivity, the dialectic varieties of the language practitioners become unified.

Bhuwo dance can be taken as spectacular performance. It is a performance art performed in western part of Nepal. It is a restored behavior as Richard Schechner (2003) states that “Performances- of art, rituals, or ordinary life- are restored behaviors, twice-behaved behaviors, performed actions that people train for and rehearse” (p.28). Performance is the rehearsal of what has already existed in the form of restored behavior performed again. In this regard, people are characters, playground functions as stage, and dance is made to the accompaniment of song. Among the audiences, teenagers, middle aged, aged people view the spectacle from the distance. It is performed at center part of the ground with passion, and enthusiasm. The costumes to be used by the participants during the performance of these rituals are *dāurā*, *salwār*, *dhakātopi*, *patuka*. In this way the spectacular performance of this dance gives the taste of theatrical show.

On the contrary, *Bhuwo Nāch* is performed in various locations² with slight variations in these respective regions. There are locational variations in the performances of *Bhuwo* dance. In Bajhang, the *Damai* (so-called lower caste group) play the traditional musical instruments such as *Damau*, *Tamkya*, *Jhaali*, *Binai* sitting around the fire at the center of the circle to make the participants dance in the *Bhakhādā*. Other participants join the group as the spectators. Music and song along with the gesture give the theatrical

form. Joshi (2019) states that “भुओ खेलमा तरवार, रुमाल, गलबन्दी, ढाल र दमाह बाजाको प्रयोग गर्ने गरेको पाइन्छ” (24). This Devanagari line portrays how the participants use various traditional musical instruments along with swords, handkerchief, scarf, and shields. But these commodities reflect the modified version of *Bhuwo* because original *Bhuwo* players invariably used swords and shield during the performative play. These things exhibit a typical identity of the region and its people.



Pic.1: People performing *Bhuwo Nāch* in Bajura district



Pic.2: People performing *Bhuwo Nāch* in Bajhang district



Pic.3: People performing *Bhuwo Nāch* in Achham district.

Source: AP1HD Television

Though there are ample commonalities in the *Bhuwo* dance in all the regions, there are some linguistic and performative variations in Bajura, Bahjang, Achham, Doti, and other parts of Nepal. Bajureli dialect uses the dictions which are common to the people of that locality such as ‘ए बाँहोइभुवोमार्तडी आयो’, this means the *Bhuwo* has come to their region called Martadi. In this line the place and the words are different from other places. These differences show uniqueness of people of that particular place, which embody the shared feelings of people of that landscape with the sense of togetherness. Moreover, while analyzing the Figures 1, 2, and 3, the costumes seem a little varied. The Bajhangi wear the *dāurā*, *salwār*, *topi*, and coat, whereas the Bajureli wear the white pants, shirts, *dhakātopi*. The Achhami’s wearing is quite different. They wear white long gown like *bhoto*, *salwār*, *pagadi*. These costumes portray locational, cultural, and ritual variations exhibiting locational identities. Moreover, the performance structures seem a little different in these regions. The Bajhangi face towards the center, holding the swords and shields, and the Bajureli face outward without holding the shields whereas the Achhami dance in group without lining up in the circle. These photos demonstrate that there are minor variations in the performances, however, they reflect unity, belongingness, and transmission of oral tradition, social interaction, valor, identity, and other social aspects.

Conclusions and Implications

To sum up, rituals through orality depict ethnographic identity of any particular cultural group along with performativity. *Bhuwo* dance accompanied with song of *Bhuwo parva* is celebrated in the Far Western part of Nepal as the form of oral tradition. It portrays one of the theatrical dimensions of ritualistic performance of oral tradition. It is the ceremony

performed collectively by sharing and expressing emotions gathering at one common place in the winter season. It reveals the lifestyle, thinking pattern, customs, rituals, identities of the regional people. Moreover, it exhibits the micro aspects of human life dwelling in a particular locale with cultural, social, economic, religious, and gender diversity. Despite the diversity, it is celebrated to integrate people with the sense of brotherhood and togetherness. From the theatrical perspectives, this art form meets the requirements of performativity with the participants performing the dance and chanting the songs in the field which functions as a stage in the presence of the audiences partaking as the onlookers.

The research work will be useful for new generation in preserving the *Bhuwo Parva* of Sudurpaschim Province as a cultural and ritual performance in the graphic form. In addition, it also gets national and international recognition exhibiting cultural heritage and its diversity as a literary property in the academia. It has opened the threshold of further discussions through other literary and social perspectives. The research is expected to supply the lack of academic and scholarly pursuits in the field of cultural studies in general and Far Western region in particular.

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I–XXVII.

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(Endnotes)

- 1 This writing presents the translation and interpretation of Bhuwo songs found in, Bhim Bahadur Thapa' collection, *Bajhangi Samaj Ko Aaitihasik Tatha Sanskritik*.
- 2 The figures given show varieties in the performances in these regions in terms of customs, movements, and performativity in far western landscape.