

**B. P. Koirala's Vision of Modern Nepali Self in Selected Short Stories**

Komal Prasad Phuyal

-ephuyal@gmail.com

-Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal.

-Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5928-3111>

Suman Pokharel

-sumanpokharel@gmail.com

-Nepal Open University

-Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-8431-4540>

Mansun Lawati

-bidhyalawati92@gmail.com

-Nepal Open University, Lalitpur

-Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-3219-517X>

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Abstract

Modern Nepali novelist and short story writer B. P. Koirala (1914-1982) draws on historical contexts to invent characters and plots in his short fiction. He places his protagonists at the crossroads of the intense personal, psychological desire and the political responsibility to the collective. Koirala's political reading manifests in his fiction, such as "Shweta Bhairavi" and "Ek Raat" [A Night], collected in *Sweta Bhairavi* (1983). In the fiction, the author seriously contemplates the nature of the modern Nepali self by bringing both the personal and the political together into a single frame of the narrative. This paper critically analyzes "Sweta Bhairavi" and "Ek Raat" to explore the meeting of the personal and the political at the crossroads, enabling the author to reflect on the nature of modern polity. Koirala advocates for the liberal quest of the modern self through his protagonists in both short fiction. This paper reads the two fictions through the Foucauldian lens of new historicism and argues that the seemingly personal narratives carry the utmost political undertones in Koirala's writings, as he contemplates social history through his fiction. This paper concludes that Koirala's fiction challenges the oppressive order in ethics and politics in the quest for a modern, liberal self.

Keywords: agency, freedom, free will, modernity, oppression, self.

Introduction

Modern Nepali writer, Bishweswar Prasad Koirala (1914-1982) historically derives the self of people in his fiction and presents the soul as a negotiated reality. His people struggle against the dictates of time and space in quest of both personal and collective liberation from the structural imposition on their freedom. Writing in the 1930s in Nepali society, Koirala has explored the political meaning of such a struggle, with implications that extend beyond the power centers,



reaching out to people residing away from them. For instance, his short stories, such as "Ek Raat" and "Swet Bhairavi," draw on contemporary politics or his personal memories to weave narratives that explain the suffering of people stemming from structural causes. This study situates the characters in Koirala's personal life alongside his broader national political setup to examine the formation of self and Koirala's projection of modern human beings who treat themselves as agents.

Literature Review

Various critics have approached B.P. Koirala's short stories from different perspectives. His stories are observed mostly through psychological realism, social conformity and feudal order, common sense, power and ideology, gender and Hindu socio-cultural constraints, body rhetoric and subjectivity. As this research aims to analyze Koirala's two stories, "Ek Raat" [A Night] and "Shweta Bhairavi," written in Nepali, the researchers have translated the relevant sections from the Nepali sources into English themselves. The paper has benefited from the sources in both Nepali and English. Sharma (1992) has analyzed the subject matters and styles in Koirala's writings. As he argues, "Koirala's contribution to modern Nepali literature is significant. By introducing psychological realism in his short stories and existentialism in his novels, he brought a new awareness to a traditional-minded people" (1992, p. 217). The critic claims that Koirala paved the way for modern Nepali literary writing by intervening in Nepal's traditional literary landscape in the 1930s.

Koirala's short stories feature revolutionary characters, as he was a freedom fighter involved in the country's social transformation. Koirala's inner self is presented in his writing, as he intended to raise awareness among people through his literary works and encourage them to actively participate in establishing democracy in the country. Koirala continuously fought for the independence and democracy of Nepal without taking rest, and his jail stay was as difficult as his character in his short story "Ek Raat." Phuyal (2025) examines Koirala's selected short stories through a political lens and analyzes how they can be read as the fall of the feudal order. As Phuyal states, "Koirala's fiction gradually builds the tension from the conflict between the conformist and the nonconformist persons and helps the readers identify a window to the crumbling political order" (2025, p. 118). Koirala creates conflicting situations in his stories to show the deteriorating political system in contemporary society and to challenge the political order, but he ultimately fails.

Koirala creates revolutionary characters in his fiction. He declares that puppets, like the characters in Koirala's stories, play a significant role in exploring and exposing the autocracy of the social and political sectors of contemporary society. As Phuyal (2025) states, "The practical quest for life and liberal attitude of Koirala leads to the formation ... of rebels. At the same time, the puppets emerge in his stories to show the overpowering impact of the oppressive social and political institutions" (p. 114). This assessment underscores that minor characters also play an important role in Koirala's stories, helping establish freedom for common people. Also, Ramesh Gyawali observes the story "Ek Raat" from a new historicist perspective. For him, the story itself is the representation of history rather than a literary work. As Gyawali (2025) writes,

"Koirala's short story 'One Night' uncovers the historical events in multifaceted ways, which can be situated against the historical event of the beginning of the Panchayat system. The Youth symbolizes Durgananda Jha, who was arrested on the charge of throwing a bomb at the vehicle of King Mahendra. (p. 42)



Koirala's portrayal of youths in the story as a revolutionary force, and the state's punishment of the rebellion, are similar to the political events of the historical period in Nepal.

Parajuli (2023) reads "Ek Raat" as a story of the repression of human agency during the Rana Regime. People were deprived of basic agencies; they were not given freedom as human beings, fundamental rights, or education. People were not allowed to express their free opinions in those days. As he states, "Kishor... when asked for his final wish before his execution ... fearlessly expresses his wish for freedom, dignity as human beings, and well-being of all the citizens. His demand is for nothing but human agency in the true sense" (2023, p. 26). The young prisoner wants to take the initiative to challenge the ruling system. He wants society to enjoy human agency. Koirala identifies epochal expressions in Koirala's stories. He discusses how Koirala (2014) presents a sense of period consciousness in his character. As he observes, "'Ek Raat' has laid bare the inner and outer essence of that phase of Nepali politics which we also known as the Panchayat era... From a serious perspective, Koirala seems to be a master of satire" (p. 15). He minutely looks after the performances of the characters, i.e., the commissioner, the soldiers, the doctor, and the government officers in the story. All of them have their children, but as parents, they want to keep the secret about their deeds.

Dixit (2017) disagrees with those who describe Koirala's work in relation to Freud's psychoanalysis. He argues that Koirala's writing does not match the ethos of Freudian psychoanalysis. Koirala shows his character's openness in his literary writing, as in "Karnelko Ghoda," "Pabitra," "Madeshtira," "Hod," and "Shweta Bhairavi," even in a traditional setting of Nepali society in the 1930s and beyond. As Dixit states, "Sweta Bhairavi can only be a girl from a story that can only be found after much searching and created by reading Da Sade's books" (2017, p. 2). He does not find that Sweta Bhairavi can be a typical Nepali character from the traditional Nepali society. Dixit dislikes the representation of women as inferior and vulnerable characters who work to satisfy the sexual desire of the superior male in Koirala's work. Likewise, Mohan Raj Sharma approaches "Sweta Bhairavi" as a story from a subaltern perspective. He finds Lelaha and his daughter, Phaguni, to be subaltern characters in this story. As he writes,

Lelaha's daughter, Phaguni, is also a sixteen-year-old girl from a lower caste (Kewat) living in the same small and precarious hut. As a member of a small farming family, she should be considered a character from the lower economic class. Apart from this, based on her own identity, she is also an inferior. (2017, p. 27)

Phaguni helps in the household of upper-class people in her society. She speaks less in front of others because she belongs to a low-status group.

Koirala (2014) studies "Sweta Bhairavi" and "Ek Raat" from a Marxist perspective. He asserts that Koirala does not believe literature should contain only one ideology, so his writing features many experiments. He adds that Koirala creates the plot to show the class conflict in Nepali society. As he observes,

...Phaguni is forced to live in sexual frustration because she cannot perform the Guana ritual due to poverty. In this way, the storyteller shows that there is conflict or discrimination between the upper- and lower-class characters due to economic factors, revealing that the condition of the poor is miserable because of the economic exploitation by the rich. (2014, p. 53)

This observation evokes sympathy for Phaguni as a member of her society. She cannot even visit her husband's house due to economic constraints. The critic describes "Ek Raat" as a



conflict between the ruled and the ruler, stating, "In 'Ek Raat,' a revolutionary youth who opposes an arbitrary, authoritarian, and anti-democratic regime is sentenced to death by the ruler..." (p. 53). This perspective emphasizes that Koirala has created rebellious characters in his fiction in order to show the tension between the upper class and the lower class.

Subedi (2014) uncovers Koirala's multidimensional quest in his political and literary imagination. He states that Koirala's literary imagination explores ordinary characters from Nepali society: such people strive for a lifestyle that requires no complex ways at all. Koirala identifies the issues of their struggle for physical survival through his writings. His political observations of Nepali society led him to incorporate the simplicity of people and their concerns into his literary writing. Observation of real incidents has also become a central concern in Koirala's short fiction. Subedi presents the historical context of writing Koirala's "Ek Raat" as the critic asserts,

In 2020 B.S., Koirala heard the news of the execution of young Durganand Jha at the Sundarijal Rajbandi Home. He wrote a story called 'Ek Raat' in the Winter of Magh. It is a very intimate and understandable depiction of the human condition. It is a story, but as Koirala said, it is not a fantasy separate from his politics. (2014, p. 48)

The critic claims that the people who enter Koirala's political and literary imagination are not different from those in society. They are combined in the same frame as Koirala seeks a dignified and respectful life for everyone in society.

According to Subedi, Koirala celebrates the Koshi River in his writing. In his literary imagination, the river and women completely complement each other in their flow and ability to sustain the hardships of life. For instance, his female characters feel deeply connected to the river. As Subedi (2014) argues, "All of his female characters' revelations are portrayed in the Koshi River. Shweta Bhairavi, Falguni, and the young man meet and recognize that they were in the same river at the same time" (p. 48). The critic notes that other women characters, such as Munariya from *Narendra Dai*, the daughter of Sumnima, Yuba in *Sumnima*, and Uma in *Babu Aama Ra Chhora*, are also deeply connected to the Koshi River and its spirit. Subedi concludes that Koirala reflects on the quotidian hardship in search of political emancipation of the people at the bottom of society.

Methodology

This paper reads the two short stories, namely "Ek Raat" and "Swet Bhairavi," in the context of Nepal's transitions in the 1930s and 1960s to examine the tension between historical forces and the protagonists' personal circumstances. We have embedded French philosopher Michel Foucault's (1926-1984) critical insights of new historicism in the interpretation of the texts. For instance, this study builds on new historicist perceptions of power and knowledge to the extent that both are available to make meaning and negotiate with the structural forces in life. However, we have adopted the humanistic line of argument, which holds that humans can cope with historical circumstances through personal choices. In this sense, this paper appropriates a Foucauldian understanding of power and human agency to interpret Koirala's texts in the modern Nepali context.

Agency and Social Circumstances in Koirala's Fiction

B. P. Koirala evokes the fighting spirit of modern people through his stories, "Sweta Bahiravi" and "Ek Raat," in which he explores the socio-political landscape of contemporary



society. In “Sweta Bhairavi,” Phaguni’s struggle in life and her expression of psychological desire challenge the social and moral ethics of her society. Considered lower class by society, she and her father, Lelaha, live near the Koshi River. Phaguni has recently learned how to present herself to society. She mostly appears as calm as the Koshi River, but sometimes she changes her nature as fiercely as the same river during the rainy season. In that sense, the story presents Phaguni as the representative of free will and agency in forming the modern Nepali self. “Ek Raat” shifts the focus from personal desire to collective political responsibility. The protagonist of the story “One Night” sacrifices his life for the nation's welfare and the common people. He challenges the ruling system of his era and stands as a revolutionary figure against the oppressive rulers. He is seeking a modern rule of law that provides equal opportunities for people's overall development. Throughout the story, Koirala creates such a character to show the society's social, historical, and political systems.

“Sweta Bhairavi” continues by telling of Phaguni's childhood, how she was raised near the river, and how she was as natural as the Koshi River. It says, “Lelaha and her daughter Phaguni used to live endure near that stream for three months during the rainy season. Today, that stream is as peaceful as calm, gentle, clean, and beautiful as a shy village girl” (p. 40). Phaguni has been the only father figure in her life since childhood; she was raised motherless. She grew up playing alone with soil under the mango tree. She used to bathe in the Koshi River. As the River Koshi used to be calm, gentle, and pure in its season, so was the girl Phaguni. She developed a lonesome nature due to her grown-up environment. People generally internalize their surroundings and the locality in which they grow up, which shapes their habits and nature. In Phaguni's case, too, her natural surroundings make her a shy and lonely girl. Now, she is neither a child nor fully grown up, and seems very innocent at the moment. Koirala’s “Ek Raat” begins with a dark, cold, and deadly peaceful night, in which the protagonist is inside the prison awaiting his death sentence. The story makes us curious why the boy is in prison; what crime has he committed, and why is he locked up there? The reply of the protagonist while asking his last desire, “May human dignity and happiness be possible in the lives of all youths and adolescents” (p. 29), makes the readers understand that the boy is not an ordinary person. He is not fighting for his personal benefit, but rather for his nation. In his last moments, he does not express his personal desire or benefit; he thinks about Nepal's youth's bright future. It makes clear that he is not imprisoned for his own benefit. He is a freedom fighter and wants positive changes in people's lives. He is against the suppressive ruling system, so he is kept in prison, and the government officials are preparing for his hanging. The person who fights for the betterment of society cannot be a criminal; he is the founder of the modern self, and we consider such a person a real hero.

Phaguni's physical appearance has also made her unique. Her skin complexion is fairer than that of other people. The whiteness of her skin is not as attractive as that of other village girls. This same physical feature and her quiet nature have made her a strange girl in her society. Due to her surroundings, physical features, and calm nature, she grew different from her peers. Later, she starts to work as a housemaid. The narrator of the story provides this information: “Phaguni used to work in our house. Since we had a large family, Phaguni would spend her day doing small chores in our house. Sweeping the rooms, smearing, filling the water, and doing other small household chores” (p. 41). As the story features the major characters, the narrator tells us where he first met Phaguni. She worked as the housemaid at the narrator's house and was busy with household chores. She was quite good with households. The narrator was a boy of ten to eleven



years at that time, and Phaguni was a teenager. Here, the boy represents the upper class, and Phaguni, the servant at his house. Through this event, Koirala creates a clear picture of the repressive nature of society at the time, where power shapes society's structure. When Phaguni works in the narrator's household, she comes to understand the discriminatory nature of society. She becomes aware of her own 'self' and seeks agency in her survival. She learns to talk and behave in ways that meet the demands of the situation. Her frankness with the narrator boy helps her to express her psychological desire.

The long-awaited death penalty has made the boy mentally strong but physically weak. As the young prisoner states, "This is the death that he has awaited for many days - especially after the death sentence was confirmed by the palace - counting the days on fingers, waiting for death" (p. 29). The boy waited so long for his death sentence because the discussions in the courts and the order from the royal palace were delayed. The waiting was boring and painful for him. He remembers his home and family, which makes him sad, but his determination for political change in Nepal and his dream of establishing democracy make him mentally strong. He is well prepared to sacrifice his life for democracy. "Defenders of the modern project cannot ultimately escape these kinds of self-contradictions since they are committed to a unitary, progressive, foundational vision of modernity" (Gluck, 1993, p. 220). In this sense, he is the hero for the underprivileged people of society, but the government wants to suppress his voice with a death sentence.

Phaguni feels quite entertained and romantic, talking and teasing the boy about matters of love and marriage. She talks strangely and behaves in such a way that she has never seen before. She is feeling excited about getting married soon. It can be easily guessed that she is expressing her unfulfilled sexual desires while talking with the narrator. However, she cannot express her desires openly due to societal norms. "As both the source and destination of ethics, freedom may not be even interpreted as a value, but as a meta-value, which constitutes the ethical sphere itself, or, rather, the framework of its actualization in human society" (Laniuk, 2020, p. 205). When the narrator asks Phaguni about her husband, she replies, "I have only had *Chumaun*. *Gauna* is not done yet" (p. 43). When she reveals that she has only done *Chumaun* with her boy, the narrator confuses *Chumaun* with kisses. He internalizes the idea of kissing and feels shy; his childish understanding sees it as a secret, shameful activity. Later, Phaguni makes the boy even more confused by claiming he was her husband, which scares him, but Phaguni takes pleasure in such talk. She does not keep the secret any longer from the narrator and reveals what *Chumaun* really is:

We perform *Chumaun* in childhood, the blood of the bride and groom is mixed - they make a small wound on the little finger of both and rub it between their fingers. Later, when they grow up, the groom takes the girl away with *Gauna*. (p. 44)

Different regions of Nepal have distinct marriage traditions. In the Terai region, *Chumaun* and *Gauna* are common forms before performing marriage. *Chumaun* is considered an engagement between a girl and a boy in their childhood. This system is unique in that blood is mixed by making wounds in the fingers. Phaguni is waiting for her groom to complete the *Gauna* ceremony; however, he has not yet come to take her. By creating such picturesque scenes in his story, Koirala brings to life the traditional and societal realities of the Terai region of our country.

Koirala introduces the protagonist in "Ek Raat" not only as a freedom fighter but also as an advocate of modernity. He wants a change in traditional beliefs from his family, society, and the whole nation. The story gives a beautiful example of it, "When he came from abroad on



vacation, he had brought a pair of colorful cotton salwars and kurtas. He had created a big stir at home and made his sister go out in this attire" (p. 30). The person who is conscious of progress knows that the change should start from within, with their own family. The protagonist sets this example by making her sister wear a salwar and kameez and go into society. At that time, the society was extremely traditional and could not accept this attire for its daughters. The protagonist is progressive and revolutionary, teaching society to move forward and revise traditional beliefs. Similarly, he is equally conscious of the importance of education in bringing change and modernity to society. When he was married and found his wife uneducated, he said, "I will teach her too, read and write, and present her to the outside world as my wife" (p. 31). The protagonist of the story is educated and knows the value of education in human life. He thinks that only educated people can move forward for progress and change, so he has educated his sister. He plans to educate his wife in order to help her understand modern ways of life.

When the narrator asks why Phaguni's husband did not come to take her, it disturbs Phaguni in "Sweta Bhairavi." Sudden physical and behavioral changes occur within her. She becomes terribly sad. The possibilities behind her sadness can be that her husband might have denied taking her as his wife because of her extremely fair complexion, lonesome habits, or her poverty. Though Koirala keeps it secret to make readers ponder the reasons behind it, Phaguni's sudden change in her physical expression and behavior when she talks about her husband indicates a lack in social institutions that has made her suffer in this way. She is in her puberty, she feels the physical necessity, but there is no one to satisfy her physical (sexual) needs, and the person to whom she is waiting is also not taking her away. So, her sensual feelings nearly bring her to hysterics. However, in a traditional society, she is not allowed to express her unfulfilled desires. It leads to Phaguni's dreadful behavior, as Shweta Bhairavi possesses her, prompting the narrator to shout in fear. The story tells:

She had wrapped the *dhoti* around her waist. With a fierce rage in her chest, the marks of her youth from the black robe became hard and sharp like the horns growing on the head of a deer. She came rushing like a whirlwind of wind that suddenly rose on the strange sandy shores of Koshi. 'You are my groom!' A hot breath like that whirlwind of wind, a sigh that trembled the heart of some insatiable, incorporeal creature in that strange place. (pp. 44-5)

Phuguni expresses her unfulfilled sexual desires to the narrator. Since the narrator is a child, he does not understand her desire. When Phaguni wants to be sexually intimate with the boy of ten, it scares him, and he starts to shout and run here and there inside the room. Phaguni wants to quench her sexual thirst, but the boy is not a suitable partner for her. She wants to catch him and make him play with her body, but the scared boy runs. Phaguni looks like Sweta Bhairavi with her dreadful look at that moment. Uncontrolled physical desires make her behave in such a way that she cannot differentiate between adult and child. The narrator feels the situation is the nightmare of his life. "The belief in free will differs from other constructs in regard to the conceptualization of the person and the environment" (Feldman, 2017, p. 5). At this point, Koirala creates Phaguni as a revolutionary figure who breaks ethical boundaries, follows a modern self with free will, and resists the oppressive rules of society.

The young boy wants to break the traditional barriers of society and move forward as the people of a new era. The boy says to his wife, "...according to the new era, we should also get used to walking, Radha!" (p. 32). The boy thinks that if people only follow the traditional way of



life, it leads nowhere; rather, it makes people go backward in life, and life will end without reaching a progressive destination. He teaches his wife many things to be a person of the modern era. He dislikes the traditional way of life of society and the country's traditional ruling system. Therefore, he intends to change society and the country toward a progressive/new era. He thinks that change and modernity come from the support of all the sectors of society. However, without changing the ruling system, it is impossible to enjoy the freedom of modernity, so he becomes an extreme revolutionist. He is ready to take any steps to bring about a change in the country's ruling system. The story includes, "The revolutionary seminar in college had decided that the dictator should be threatened and warned by throwing a bomb, and the boy had voluntarily taken on the task. He then came home with the bomb" (p. 32). The change in the ruling system is not easy. The dictators are not ready to modify or change the ruling system with the soft voice and the soft protest of the common people, so there needs to be a strong blow to collapse the autocratic ruling system. According to the decision of the college-student seminar, the protagonist is ready to take the risk. He wants his direct contribution to the change in the ruling system at any cost. "...the social resisters are those actors capable of organizing resistance to autocratization at the grassroots level..." (Tomini et al., 2023, p. 123). He is not afraid of his own life. Democracy and people's freedom are the main concerns of his life.

The boy wants to foster political consciousness among college students, so he has formed an association to discuss Nepal's political system. He thinks that youths can play a vital role in changing society and advancing progress, bringing modernity. The story further states:

He had also formed an association of college students abroad where various topics were discussed - democracy, Marxism, freedom, society and the individual, etc. Moreover, all the students, despite the boy's enthusiasm, stuck to their own opinions, but in their hearts they desired Nepal to embark on the modern path of progress and to end the old system of authoritarian rule. (p. 33)

The boy knows that progress and positive change in the country are possible only when the youth are conscious of it. He had formed student associations in his college days and had them actively discuss various political matters, including the autocratic rule in Nepal. All the students supported the boy's further steps toward changing the ruling system and establishing democracy for the progress and start of the modern era in Nepal. Later, the story reveals that the boy was accused of a bomb attack and was kept in prison. He fearlessly accepts his deeds, "I threw the bomb. But not to kill, but to warn the young people that the situation was becoming unbearable. ... But if the murder had to happen, it was inevitable, for the rights of the people" (p. 34). When the boys discussed the necessity of violence in political change, they concluded that a bomb attack might help precipitate the recent shift in the political landscape, and the protagonist takes on this responsibility. He is not guilty of what he has done. He proudly claims that it was all done to make the people powerful and give them their rights. The boy is a revolutionary and exemplary figure for others because he is even willing to sacrifice his own life for the betterment of all and the establishment of democracy in the nation. At this point, Koiral sketches the parallel lines to convey, through this story, how Nepalese youths fought against autocratic rule to bring political change and establish democracy in Nepal, thereby providing freedom and a path to modernity.

When the boy was found guilty by the tyrannical government, it decided to give him a death sentence. He is taken to hang in the middle of the night for his deeds/revolt against the rulers. As the story further narrates,



And suddenly the boy saw that the end of the journey had come - outside the prison and the scaffolding of the wall, two long pillars stood on the right and left, like a small stage, and on top of those pillars was another pillar placed horizontally, from which a rope was hanging. (p. 35)

During the night of his death penalty, the boy observes everything so carefully. He does not hesitate about his death. He internalizes that whatever happens is for the sake of the people and the nation. For the progress and prosperity of people, he is always ready to sacrifice his life. He sees the hanging rope, which will take his last breath, but he is not frightened by it. His commitment to the modern, bright era in the country will cost him his life. After a few moments, he is hanged mercilessly to suppress the voice of those people who want change in the ruling system. Autocratic rulers are cruel; they do not listen to the common people. They are never ready to modify their ruling system.

Conclusion

Koirala envisions the rebellious spirit of modern Nepali people, drawn from diverse geographical locales, in his short stories. "Sweta Bhairavi" and "Ek Raat" foreground a rebellious self who aspires to bring about transformation at both personal and national levels. The characters have invented ways to cope with the collective's repression. The repressive polity and its ethics do not want to provide the rights for the common people of the country. Moreover, when people become aware of the country's autocratic rule, a revolutionary figure, like the protagonist of the story, is born. They spread knowledge among the people to promote change and served as exemplary figures in the country. The boy has a thirst for the progress and freedom of people. He wants to show the people the bright light of democracy. He continues his efforts to better the nation. Unfortunately, the rulers kill him mercilessly, and the bright star of the nation disappears in the early morning.

Koirala's stories challenge contemporary tradition and seek to introduce newness into their society. Phaguni's form, "Shweta Bhairavi," violates existing ethical norms and expresses her suppressed psychological desire. Similarly, the young boy in "One Night" opposes the country's autocratic rule and seeks positive change for the common people. Both characters observe their society and resist the repressive traditions. Phaguni wants a change in ethical values, whereas the young boy wants a new political system to rule the country; both, however, share the real intention of establishing modern norms and values in their society and advocating for a modern Nepali self. Koirala presents intense examples of social, political, and historical matters through his simple-looking personal narratives. Through these characters, Koirala himself advocates the search for modernity and the modern Nepali self.

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