



## **Political Spirits at the Dawn and Dusk: Exploring History Through Literature**

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### **Abstract**

The introduction of democracy in 1951 brought the enjoyment of fundamental rights for the citizens and the spirited election environment. However, the spirits could not last longer as an encroachment on democracy was forwarded by King in 1960, which altered ecstasy into resistance and rebellion. The research explores the political spirits prevalent at the beginning of the first decade of infant democracy and the rise of agitation against the despotic regime at the end of the decade, which covers the period of 2007 BS to 2017 BS through Govinda Bahadur Malla's "Chunab" and B. P. Koirala's "Ek Raat." The data on political aspects have been purposefully selected and situated against the historical document. Since this study employs the exploratory qualitative approach, primary data from the short stories are approached from the lens of new historicism, the theory of power and resistance, and the concept of state apparatus. However, literary data provide a broader horizon of historical events. The themes of election and rebellion are contrasted to discover the contrary spirits of the same decade. The results indicate that the dawn of the infant democracy is full of enthusiasm with the spirits caused by the fervor of election. In contrast, the dusk of democracy is full of despair and agitation, giving rise to resistance and rebellion. The results indicate that approaching history and historical documents through the lens of literature set simultaneously can broaden the horizon of understanding of historical events.

**Keywords:** Infant Democracy, Election, Political Spirits, Power and Resistance, Independent Candidate, Dawn and Dusk



### **Political Upheavals in the Early and Latter Part of the Infant Democracy**

The infant democracy witnessed the contrastive consequences within the first decade of the advent of democracy. When the Rana regime was overthrown in 1951, a new enthusiasm and ecstasy prevailed throughout the country, resulting in individual freedom and equality. Regmi (1976) beautifully captures the consequences of changes of 1950-51 as those changes ensured rights such as equality before the law and equal protection of the law irrespective of religion, caste, or sex (p.10). The change in 2007 BS marked the beginning of the rule of law to some extent. Referring to Kamal P. Malla, Baral (2023) presents a vivid picture of the changed situation as "woke up on one fine morning from the sleep of the Middle Ages and found themselves exposed to the neon lights of an electronic age" (p. 5). The change was a drastic transformation from the dark to the democratic modern age. The changes brought democratic activities, primarily political, through the environment of elections and other political activities. However, the enthusiasm and ecstasy could not last longer because the government led by the Nepali Congress, with a two-thirds majority, was dismissed on the charge of corruption, abuse of power, and lack of proper management of economic affairs, leading to the introduction of the Panchayat system (Regmi, 1976, pp. 9-10). The imposition of the Panchayat system caused agitation among the citizens and political parties.

This research article critically examines and analyzes the fervor of democratic enthusiasm manifested in the form of election following the advent of democracy in 1951 in Nepal and how such enthusiasm turned into the dark days of an autocratic regime curtailing the rights and freedom gained through the sacrifice of martyrs of mother Nepal in the name of Panchayat system. To fulfill the purpose of exploring the dawn and dusk of infant democracy, the research encompasses Gothale's 'Chunab,' hereafter 'The Election,' and Koirala's 'Ek Raat,' hereafter 'One Night,' as the primary texts under consideration for navigating the first decade of infant democracy. The Election reveals the scenario of enthusiasm for election, debate about candidacy, qualification of candidacy, women's voting rights, and the increasing popularity of independent candidates for the municipal election. On the contrary, One Night exposes a bleak aspect of the regime twisting the neck of infant democracy to impose the Partyless Panchayat system in the name of beginning good governance and development.

This research examines how the democratic enthusiasm of the beginning of the first decade ended with the autocratic regime that King Mahendra commenced, giving rise to rising resistance and rebellion from civilians. As this research reveals the democratic enthusiasm expressed in the form of election, it demonstrates the hitherto unexplored aspects such as the popularity of independent candidates, voting rights of women and their enthusiastic participation, and the tactful election campaign in The Election and fearless resistance and rebellion against the autocratic regime from the youths, and oppressive regime's merciless treatment and the puppetry of law in the hand of a tyrannical regime. Therefore, this research provides a unique avenue for interested scholars to explore infant democracy through literary texts based on historical events.



### **Koirala and Gothale to Capture the Spirits of the Decade: A Review**

Although numerous reviews are available on B. P. Koirala and his works, there are scant reviews on 'One Night.' All the available literature on Koirala's 'One Night' is discussed to determine the direction of exploration in this research. Nonetheless, these reviews are available in the Nepali language, so the researcher has used the tool of personal translation, keeping in mind the spirit of the reviews is appropriately translated as reviewed by the reviewers. Pantha (2077BS) illustrates with glory while reviewing on 'One Night':

Koirala has ... grounded... a glimpse of a despotic governance system in which rulers' arrogance and pride have victimized the martyrs in the story 'One Night.' The Youth character has been presented as determined and dedicated to achieving democracy. ... The characters assigned to hang the Youth are submerged in the realization and remorse of their crime, implying that those involved in hanging could not live peacefully. As the accurate reflection of dedicated Youth for the attainment of democracy without capitulating in front of the Rana regime and the cruel punishment system of the Panchayat system is depicted, the inherent consciousness of freedom in the author and the decaying system is lively manifested in the story. (pp. 30-31)

Pantha's reading of 'One Night' reveals that through the story, Koirala has attempted to demonstrate the autocratic governance led by King Mahendra, victimizing numerous innocents in the name of nationalism and good governance. According to him, the character in the story is a true advocate of democracy who fights against despotism, and his firm determination and lack of repentance make the order followers of the King remorseful for what they have done. Therefore, Pantha shows both sides, such as the grim and victimizing efforts by the despotic regime in the Panchayat system and, on the other hand, the firm determination of the youths to revolt against such regime in his reviews.

On the other hand, Koirala (2071BS) examines 'One Night' from the psychoanalytical standpoint. He thinks that the psychology of rulers and the ruled are presented differently, as though rulers have a sense of superiority and the ruled have a sense of inferiority. He has put it vividly:

The psychoanalysis of politically exploited and oppressed characters has been depicted in the story. There is a sense of superiority in the ruler and a sense of inferiority in the ruled. The Youth to be hanged does not have any repentance for his misdeed, and his heart is fearless and selfless. But instead, in rulers, there is a sense of repentance, mental conflict, and fear. In this way, there is a reflection of the declining morale of rulers, whereas the high morale of the ruled and strong protest against the rulers are reflected in the indomitable courage of the ruled. (p. 129)

Koirala's elaboration of 'One Night' reveals the psychology of both rulers and the ruled. Although they appear superior, the rulers feel repentance, whereas the ruled are firm in their determination to revolt against the autocracy.



In both of the readings of 'One Night,' the reviewers agree on the power imposed on the ruled by the monarch and the ruled raising the voice and actions against the autocratic Panchayat regime, demonstrating the declining morale of the ruler with repentance and rising or high morale of the ruled with their firm determination and dedications for the sake of democracy and freedom that the people were irresistibly willing. Although the literature available on 'One Night' is adequate to expose the political environment of the latter part of the first decade of democracy through the revelation of brutality, such as the decree of hanging and imprisoning the innocents because of the fear from the side of civilians and civilians' endeavors to revolt against the Panchayat system, these literature lacks the adequate discussions on political spirits such as the use of power from the monarch and resistance from the civilians in an appropriate way, incidents of bombing and the enthusiasm of Youths for the rebellion, trial process to the imprisoned and sudden change in the law to fulfill the interest of the rulers. These issues broaden the horizon of exploring historical events; duly, the literary texts can provide an avenue to reach the multiple dimensions of history.

As the reviews on 'The Election' are rarely found, it is almost impossible to discuss the reviews for the purpose of determining the gap and situating the direction of research concerning 'The Election.' However, while reviewing Gothale's stories, Pradhan (2023) argues that Gothale is a champion in the psychoanalytical study of characters. He states, "As a prominent story writer, Gothale gave a new dimension to the psychoanalytical study of characters. Gothale's stories show the mental conflict of his abnormal characters" (n. p.). Since reviews on 'The Election' are unavailable, this research explores the context of the election campaign, the failure of political parties, and the rise of independent candidates, which the previous research lacks. Therefore, the research tries to trace history through the literature situated in the contemporary time to redraw the boundary of historical understanding.

### **Exploring power and resistance through co-reading of the texts with New Historicism**

Literary texts succinctly unveil the unknown corners of historical events. To study the contrastive political spirits that prevailed at the beginning and the end of the first decade of infant democracy, I have adopted the exploratory qualitative approach, in which historical texts are set against the backdrop of literary texts to reveal multifaceted deeds and doers. While situating historical documents against literary texts, I have approached them through textual analysis, bringing insights from new historicism and the concept of power and resistance.

New historicism firmly believes that history is of the victors, not the vanquished. So, what we believe to be accurate and authentic, as well as facts about history, comes within the circle of suspicion. History cannot provide the objective truth and an accurate portrait of deeds and doers (Bressler, 2011, p. 1). What is considered the factual portrayal of history must be reexamined. For this re-envisioning, the role of literature is unquestionable. Similarly, historical documents should be examined against the backdrop of literature to uncover whether the deviations exist (Ankersmit, 2010, p. 3). Ankersmit (2010) agrees to situate historical documents against the literary to bring the issues of fact and fiction. Similarly, Banerjee (2021) argues that co-reading the literary and non-literary texts of the related historical epoch can



contribute to the critical approach of presenting historical events as co-text, not mere context (p. 2). Banerjee's views on exploring history are slightly different from others, as he proposes to read the historical and literary texts together to achieve the actual exploration of the past. However, Lamichhane (2016) accentuates the importance of studying every text against historical context (p. 79). Two schools of thought are dominant in this context, one emphasizing the reading of literary texts against the historical and vice versa. Since history is not coherent, chronological, and singular, the ruptures can be met with alternative texts, such as literature, which dig out the unknown corners and dark sides. Amid these schools of thought, co-reading the literary and historical text provides a way to explore the historical past. Gao (2019) is of opinion:

New historicism claims that history is a text, a story, and a narrative. This indicates that historical events exist only in the form of textual imprints. We can understand history in both textual and textualized form. What we learn is not real historical events but descriptive construction of historical events. In fact, in the course of historical revision, due to the different backgrounds and personal preferences historians need to revise the disorderly events employing exclusion, emphasis, and subordination. In this way, the same historical events may have different or opposite meanings through various treatments. They carry the personal imprints of the historical creators. (p.192)

Gao's assertions about New Historicism are inclined to the view that every history is found in the form of text or narrative, which is the product of the textualized or narrativized intentions of the producers of the texts, resulting in numerous meanings and interpretations. Thus, he implies the need to reexamine such texts, figuring out exclusion and subordination inherent in every historical aspect. Since New Historicism provides the theoretical lens to explore the literary texts through historical texts and vice versa, this research aims at applying the co-reading of the literary and non-literary texts to disclose the historically unexplored events through literary texts, especially Koirala's 'Ek Raat' and Gothale's 'Chunab' and tries to situate the events mentioned in literary texts against the actual historical events.

On the other hand, political spirits are often associated with power and resistance. Power and resistance are two sides of the same coin. The use or abuse of power provokes resistance. Resistance refers to the "ability to say no" (Brumlik, 2017. p.19). According to Brumlik (2017), resistance enables one to deny the positive cause rather than promote servitude. Furthermore, quoting Michel Foucault, he argues that resistance is inevitable in the context of the use of power (p.34). The ability to say no begins as the consequence of using or abusing power. The protest, resistance, and change result from violently imposed power (Kona, 2018, p. 60). The intensity of resistance relies on how violently the power is used to do or not to do something. Thus, power and resistance are two sides of the same coin. Meanwhile, the concept of power and resistance provides the basis for analysis of the literary data to situate against the historical events to explore the political spirits of the decade. This article brings insights from the ideas of power and resistance to uncover the enthusiasm for election and the



use of power and resistance in return in 'Chunab' and demonstration of power and resistance in 'Ek Raat' because the concepts of power and resistance provide avenues to analyze the historical reality of the first decade of infant democracy in Nepal. Data related to power and resistance and political spirits such as bombing, youth spirits, trial process and the political environment from 'One Night' and election context and campaign, failure of political parties and rises of independent candidates, and implication of election symbols are selected purposefully to suit the objective of exploring political spirits of the decade concerning the theory of New Historicism and the concept of power and resistance. The selected data are set against the historical data, eventually approaching with theories of power and resistance and other relevant theories such as Althusser's ideological state apparatus. The research adheres to the research ethics through appropriate referencing and crediting to the sources.

### **Political Spirits at the Dawn of the Infant Democracy**

The election event mentioned in 'The Election' relates to the second municipal election held in Kathmandu municipality. Gothale (2016 BS) demonstrates the political spirits at the dawn of the infant democracy regarding Kathmandu municipal elections held "On September 1, 1953 (Joshi & Rose, 1966, p. 112)" through his short story "The Election." He vividly sketches the election context through his female character, Babarani, who "hears about the candidacy in municipal elections (Gothale, 2016BS, p.1). Babarani's husband Krishnabhakta reads the "government announcement and rule and regulations (p. 16). Babarani participates in the voting process on the day of voting, where she stands in line for her turn to vote for her husband as an election candidate. There, she sees people whispering to each other. Gothale (2016 BS) creates the picture of election context and fervor as:

There, some policemen appeared. To the one side were males, and the other females were in line...Nyucha, with agility, advanced toward one woman, forwarding to the place to cast a vote, and fled, whispering near the ear. (p.23)

Political fervor can be witnessed as a woman takes part in the election and whispers among the people standing in line to cast a vote, which provides evidence of women's voting rights and the election's impact. For the first time in franchise history, women got to vote in the Kathmandu Municipality elections in 1953 (Mishra, 2022). Mishra's acceptance confirms the voting rights of females in Nepal's election history.

The debate of honor through politics and anxiety about livelihood adds an interesting turn when Babarani and Krishnabhakta talk about the consequences of winning the election. Babarani believes that politics, especially winning elections, provides the opportunity to serve the country at the cost of livelihood. She does not want her husband to participate in the election but instead seeks a way to earn income and livelihood. Nonetheless, Krishnabhakta endeavors to persuade her, saying that after winning the election, he will become a great man and Babarani will be honored. Gothale (2016BS) states:

Later, she also heard that winning the election provided an opportunity to serve the country, not a single penny of income. She was stunned... and said, what will you get after being elected in the municipality?... How much salary do you



get if you are elected as a member of the municipality?... Oh, my heart! I will become a great man, and so will you. Everyone will look at you with honor while walking on the way, pointing to you as "She is the wife of Krishnabhakta". And women will die of burning...Ramdai was saying to me- you are not caring for a job. Otherwise, why would you not get it when others who do not deserve it are getting it?... This country service does not feed us. (pp. 1, 9, 11)

Historical data about the economic situation of the freedom fighters are rare. Gothale's *The Election* picturizes the unchanged economic condition of revolutionists in a changed political context. Krishnabhakta and Babarani are representative figures to denote the grim picture of the struggle for livelihood. However, Krishnabhakta consoles himself and his wife for the betterment of society.

The revolution brought about a change in political phenomena; however, it could not alter the attitude of people. The practice of servitude and kinship continued even after the advent of democracy because the legacy of the Rana oligarchy was still a dominant force in the society. In '*The Election*,' Gothale (2016BS) presents the innocent character Babarani to contrast freedom fighters and opportunists. Babarani is stupefied to see her brother-in-law rewarded in both scenarios, during the Rana regime and even in the democracy. This demonstrates the devaluation of the sacrifice made by revolutionists to overthrow the Rana oligarchy. He puts:

That glittering face with the cap of Subba batch, even after the revolution, the clear, slippery gleaming face of the secretary, pleased and proud with earnings...It is yet mysterious how her brother-in-law, Dhanbhakta, became Subba so fast in the epoch of the Rama regime. But her husband went to prison. She still cannot understand that whoever comes to her brother-in-law's home provides money, serves him, and is beneficial only...Revolution concluded. People used to tell- who have gone to jail, will become prominent. Chakari will end, and people who go to jail will run statecraft. The dictatorship ended, and the husband came out of jail. But still, now he is the same. Brother-in-law ascended from Subba to Secretary and was more powerful than before. (pp .2-3)

The excerpt shows that the opportunists took advantage in both situations, whether it was the Rana regime or the democracy. The literary data on servitude and kinship can be situated against the historical data. Brown (1996) explicates that despite the historical upheavals of 1950-1, the composition of the elite remained unchanged, continuing their prominence in socio-political forces manifested in the post-Rana period. Ranas held senior positions in the bureaucracy and the army (p. 23). Moreover, Subedi (2016) argues that complete failure and uninspiring performance are caused by myopic attitudes, corruption, nepotism, factionalism, favoritism, rent-seeking tendency, and intra and inter-party conflict (p. 199). The advent of democracy did not turn favorable to the civilians because either Ranas or opportunists took advantage of the liquid situation.



There is no doubt that political parties are the primary actors of the democratic system. Although political parties are the fundamental forces in democracy (Biezen, p. 83), due to their internal undemocratic practices, they lose popularity among the people, giving rise to independent candidacy in the elections. The disenchantment towards political parties attracts attention to the role of independent candidates (Congress of Local and Regional Authority of the Council of Europe, 2022, p. 12). When the political parties cannot fulfill the promises made, it automatically leads to the attraction of independent candidates. The Congress of Local and Regional Authority of the Council of Europe (2022) clarifies that independent candidates' nominations are not endorsed by any political party (p. 14). Gothale (2016BS) poignantly presents the declining charm of political parties in the post-revolution era. Krishnabhakta is the mouthpiece that implies disenchantment towards political parties. He believes that political parties do not have courage and capacity and are submerged profoundly in corruption and selfishness. Duly, he has stood in the election as an independent candidate. He says that even if he is small, he is free from deception, and he does not know the difference between principle and practice. Gothale (2016 BS) visualizes:

Political parties do not have that gut. The public does not believe in parties. All parties became corrupt with selfishness. I have stood in the election based on what people are saying. I believe participation in revolution will not be wasted...I took part in politics and am still taking part in being independent. I witnessed after coming out of jail that there is no benefit to becoming a member of Congress. That party was already fulfilled. I participated in the opponent party; all said- the opponent party is needed to preserve democracy. I was enthusiastic; perhaps the opponent party came into power...? ... but I am small, without wisdom, don't know deception, and could not stand the opponent party. The leaders' principles are towards one side, but I absolutely cannot understand the greed of becoming a minister to others. ... Then, I became independent, leaving the party. (p. 8, 14, 15)

Historical data also verify the issue of the declining charm of political parties in the post-revolution era. The beginning of the post-revolution witnessed the broken promises expressed in the revolution (Hoftnu, Raeper & Whelpton, 1999, p. 28), which caused ideological and organizational digression, resulting in a lack of "coherent thinking, organizational solidarity, and ideological clarity (Baral, 2023, p. 52). Joshi & Rose (1966) confirm that in the Kathmandu municipal election, most candidates were independent among seventy-three (p.112). Manifestations of failure of political parties and turn to the independent candidate are the significant revelations of 'The Election' by Gothale.

The debate on the candidate's qualifications provides a fascinating portrait of the municipal election. Krishnabhakta believes that going to jail for democracy and his friendliness are adequate qualifications for standing in an election. Furthermore, he thinks that he is committed to the service. Although he is not a scholar, he believes he has working knowledge. On the other hand, Dharma Bahadur thinks that one should have the capacity to stand on one's





own legs and settle in one's own home, which, he believes, opens the way for the development of the country. These two candidates' opinions are concisely demonstrated in *The Election* by Gothale (2016BS):

The trouble I endured in jail will not be wasted. Citizens know me whether I am friendly or not. Yes, I am not a scholar. I could not study; I had worked in politics and still serve the people. But I have a working intellect...What has Krishnabhakta done? Nothing. It cannot be said that merely going to jail has the capacity to develop a country. One can develop the country, clean the way, arrange convenience residing in the city who has stood on his own legs and settled in his own home. ... only worthy people do not go to jail; unworthy also go. (p. 9, 19)

When the campaign begins, candidates use various measures to influence the voters. Candidates are often threatened and frightened. Micing and pamphlets are done from the candidates' sides to persuade the voters. The supporter of Krishnabhakta, Nyucha, insists on beating the opponent for his act of distributing money to influence the voters. However, Krishnabhakta declines the undemocratic way. He believes the reply to the pamphlet should be the pamphlet, not violence. Accordingly, he prepares the pamphlet claiming that voting against his own will is a sin and an assassination of democracy. Gothale (2016BS) beautifully captures the campaigning and undue influences:

Many requested Dharma Bahadur not to stand and tried to threaten and frighten them. But Dharma Bahadur stuck on his insistence...The sound of the mic echoed in each and every locality. Political parties run the flagless jeep to support the candidate... Pamphlet distributing and sticking began...Nyucha shouted... Dharma Bahadur should be beaten bitterly, then only... Thin teacher said- no! should not do so; that is not the democratic system. The reply to the pamphlet should be from the pamphlet in decent language...Can Dharma Bahadur win the election by distributing money? ...Husband, laughingly and being zealous, read the pamphlet. "Consider while voting. It is a sin to vote against your own will, the assassination of democracy. It is moral to decline to vote in others' influence. ...should place a hand on heart and think who is patriot, fellow, worthy and worthless... writing this way influences and this is an urge to give me vote in a crooked way. (p.17-22)

Surprisingly, the election symbols and their implications were discussed in the municipal election in 1953. The reference to cow and spade can be traced in '*The Election*.' Dharma Bahadur has a cow, whereas Krishnabhakta has a spade as the election symbol. Babarani thinks that believing in a cow is believing in a god, so people cast votes for Dharma Bahadur. It would be better for Babarani if the cow were of her husband. On the other hand, Krishna Bhakta thinks that the spade symbolizes peasantry or working-class citizens. Gothale puts:



Why choose the symbol of a spade rather than a god? Dharma Bahadur's cow and ours spade. A cow is the God. We do not win the election in the disguise of religion. We make the world heaven with spades. Spade is a citizen. (p.18)

The political spirits of the beginning of the first decade of democracy, after the revolution, appear enthusiastic and ecstatic. Such political enthusiasm is presented in the context of the Kathmandu municipal election of 1953, in which women were provided voting rights for the first time in the history of Nepal. Political spirits are revealed as election fervor, the debate of political goal versus livelihood, unchanged condition of freedom fighters and the practice of kinship and servitude, the irrelevance of political parties and rise of an independent candidate, the debate of qualification of the candidates, election campaigning and undue influences, and use of election symbols and implications. Historical documents are inadequate for exploring the dynamics of political spirits, which the literary texts can provide. So, literary texts can provide a new dimension and enable digging out the underlying events in various periods.

### **Political Spirits at the Dusk of the Infant Democracy**

The neck of infant democracy was twisted by the monarch with the dissolution of the B.P. Koirala-led government after eighteen months of its formation. The step taken by the king was inspired by the intention of absolute monarchy, putting a ban on political parties and imprisoning prominent leaders, which gave rise to the spirit of political dissent and resistance from political parties and citizens in general. The dusk of the infant democracy witnessed the absolute power of the monarch and resistance and political dissent from the political parties and the citizens, paving the way for the political spirits of the time because "political dissent is the essence of the democratic system" (Baral, 2023, p. XXII). Koirala (2039 BS) presents a youth politically inspired against the panchayat system who takes responsibility for throwing a bomb on the king. As he makes an unsuccessful attempt, he is caught the next day and put in prison. Koirala (2039 BS) puts:

It is a few days before the incident of the bombing, a revolutionary meeting in the college had decided to threaten and exasperate the dictator by throwing a bomb, and the youth, with his willingness, had taken responsibility. Then, after he had brought the bomb at home... The next day, he was caught... In the corner of the prison... the youth... sleeping in a bed. (p. 29, 32, 33)

Historical data can be situated against the events of the story. "It was Jha. When the vehicle slowed, Jha hurled a hand bomb wrapped in a garland towards the jeep. The rear part of the vehicle was slightly damaged before the jeep stepped away (Rana, 2023, p. 70-1)". According to Joshi & Rose (1966), a dramatic incident occurred in the Terai of Nepal in January 1962 when rebel activity was observed directed with the motive of the assassination of King Mahendra (p. 427). Such rebellion is the consequence of the agitation provoked by the forceful imposition of tyranny. Haider (2002) argues that "rebellion liberates stagnant waters and turns them into a raging torrent" (p. 118), so Durganand Jha's attempt to assassinate the king was



inspired by the motive of challenging the Panchayat which can be precisely explored in literary data and the historical texts.

The unimagined coup of the king brought the country-wide agitation and rebellion. The infant democracy faced a doomed fate. "The era of multiparty democracy (1951-60) ended, but the new struggle for democracy began with anger and a sense of vengeance (Baral, 2023, p. 60)". Especially, youths' involvement in the rebellion heated the political atmosphere. In 'One Night,' Koirala (2039 BS) captures the spirits of youth for the sake of a democratic cause. Students' unions, even in foreign colleges, played the platform to discuss democracy, often advocating peaceful means and the use of violence. When the commissioner asks the youth about his last will, he valiantly replies with his will to maintain human dignity and happiness in the lives of all the youths. Koirala (2039 BS) portrays:

He had formed a union of students studying in foreign colleges where discussions were held on various subjects such as democracy, Marxism, freedom, society, and individual...The debate of violence and non-violence used to be in great zeal among them...Again, the commissioner, in a temperate voice the last time, asked- "what is your last will? Anything to tell?...he said – May human dignity and happiness be possible in the life of all youth." (p. 29, 33)

Historical events can be situated against the story as Brown (1996) clarifies that the introduction of democracy was experienced as a restoration rather than a revolution because, after a century's condition of political figureheads, the monarchy began to accretion of power, eventually imposing direct monarchical rule in 1960 (p. 23). However, historical data are scant to reflect the spirits of youth for the democratic cause. Nonetheless, the concept of resistance and social movement can contribute to a better understanding of the spirits of youths. Haider (2002) depicts that resistance is an impulse to dissent from domination and paves the way for action to reaffirm the boundaries of the self, so "the moment of rejection is the event of resistance" (p. 126). Such resistance manifests in violent and non-violent measures and sometimes in social movements. Conway (2017) argues that social movements are directed against authoritarian regimes to expand rights and democracy (p. 5). The Youths, the students' Union, and the Citizens participating in the revolution are a form of resistance and rebellion against the Panchayat regime.

The trial process of the youth and the use of the ideological and repressive state apparatus are striking in the story. The youth is taken to the place of hanging, which symbolizes the effects of repressive state apparatus, and the manipulation of the judicial process and amendment of the law refers to the effect of ideological state apparatus. All the state mechanisms are abused for the trial and sentence to death. Koirala (2039 BS) beautifully creates the portrait of terrifying events:

Abruptly, the youth saw that his journey's end was near. ... two poles were standing to the left and right...over the poles, a horizontal pole was placed from where a rope was hanging down...This is not an ordinary death in which life



fades away slowly or disappears; it is not a death tied to the natural law of death. Neither is the sudden death in a war where the soul flies away with the hot bullet. The bullet strikes the chest unknowingly, and there, the human body turns cold in a sudden surprise. Here, it is the long-awaited death after the death sentence is verified by the court, counting the fingers each day. It didn't come from natural law, neither suddenly. Many projects were organized in the post, private judicial meetings, immense discussions took place in the court and interpreted of justice extracting the articles from laws. Yet, the project for death has not ended. Offices might sign on the remaining papers; final orders might be written (p.29, 30, 35)

The Excerpt above portrays a very inhuman picture of a despotic regime led by King Mahendra. The portrayal shows the Youth being taken to be hanged with a sudden change in the law that restricts the hanging or capital punishment. Hoftun, Raeper & Whelpton (1999) succinctly stage the event as they state that the National Law Code was enacted not only for the progressive consequences rather to silence the radical opponents resulting in loss of immunity for Brahmins from capital punishment, especially targeting Durganand Jha. The bomber was sent to the gallows in the cold month of January 1964 (p. 143). Brown (1996) vividly depicts the historical time to suit the event of the story as the media were censored, political parties were outlawed, and dissenting voices were silenced. The activities against the Panchayat were declared illegal, while the supporting press was subsidized financially (Brown, 1996, p. 43). Althusser (1971) thinks that repressive state apparatus functions through violence, whereas ideological state apparatus functions through non-physical forms (p. 79). Both apparatuses are used in the context of the trial events and the act sentencing from the story.

The dusk of infant democracy witnessed the end of ecstasy and exhilaration in political spirits, resulting in agitation and rebellion. Within a decade, celebrations altered into rebellion. Youths' involvement against the despotic regime was out-broken as a reaction that posed a challenge to the Panchayat. On the other hand, with the discourse of stability and nationalism, the King celebrated unrestrained authority. The king's manipulation of repressive and ideological state apparatuses helped to substantiate and sustain the party-less Panchayat system.

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 Durganand Jha, who was arrested on the charge of throwing a bomb at the vehicle of King Mahendra. The story beautifully juxtaposes literary and historical facts with literary creation and digs out the unknown aspect of history. Koirala justifies the spirits of the youth in the changed scenario in the political domain, which surpasses the mere history. Such spirits include bombing and confinement, youths' involvement in rebellion, manipulation of state apparatuses, and capital punishment.



### **Political Enthusiasm Turning into the End of Democracy and Resistance Against**

The above discussion shows that the first decade of infant democracy witnessed a great upheaval in political activities. As the advent of democracy brought the enjoyment of fundamental rights for the citizens and the atmosphere of the election, King's coup turned the enthusiasm into agitation and rebellion, shifting from peace to violence. This research explores the political spirits of the first decade of democracy through Koirala's 'One Night' and Gothale's 'The Election.' Political events demonstrated in the stories represent the facts of history. Moreover, the works of fiction expose how the spirits of politics were expressed in a particular period of history and cover the aspects that mere history lacks. While exploring the political spirits, the study compares and contrasts the events of the beginning and the end of the decade. Meanwhile, the study has a broader horizon of the period, making striking connections between literary and non-literary texts that refer to the same time. While doing so, literature provides a window to look into historical events.

This research provides an avenue to situate literary texts against historical documents and, simultaneously, opens a new opportunity to look at history from the lens of literature to capture the broad happenings. However, this study confines itself to the spirits of election and rebellion as the political spirits. Embracing a broader framework can provide a profound understanding of the political spirits of the age.

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