

Complexities and Dynamics of the Popular Movement of 1990 in Nepal

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ARTICLE INFO	<i>Abstract</i>	
Article History: Accepted Fixed Approved Keywords: <i>Nepali Congress; Political Parties; Communist Parties; Voices- Central role; Democratic Change</i>	<i>After decades of autocratic control, Nepal's political landscape saw a dramatic change in 1990 when the democratic revolution brought multiparty democracy back. This article examines the tactics, difficulties, and final success of political parties in launching and maintaining the movement. Utilizing historical narratives, primary materials, and academic examinations, it offers perspectives on how political parties evolved into catalysts for transformation, galvanized the populace, and engaged in negotiations with the king to usher in a novel phase of democracy in Nepal. The complex dynamics influenced by many social, political, and economic elements led to the movement's success. In the face of authoritarianism and popular discontent, the study explores the intricacies of the movement and sheds insight on the interlocking dynamics that drove Nepal toward democratic reform</i>	
	Abstraks	
Kata Kunci: <i>Kongres Nepal; Partai Politik; Partai Komunis; Suara- Peran Sentral; Perubahan Demokratis</i>	Setelah beberapa dekade berada di bawah kendali otokratis, lanskap politik Nepal mengalami perubahan dramatis pada tahun 1990 ketika revolusi demokratis mengembalikan demokrasi multipartai. Artikel ini mengkaji taktik, kesulitan, dan keberhasilan akhir partai-partai politik dalam meluncurkan dan mempertahankan gerakan tersebut. Dengan menggunakan narasi sejarah, materi primer, dan kajian akademis, artikel ini menawarkan perspektif tentang bagaimana partai-partai politik berevolusi menjadi katalisator transformasi, menggembleng rakyat, dan terlibat dalam negosiasi dengan raja untuk mengantarkan fase baru demokrasi di Nepal. Dinamika yang kompleks yang dipengaruhi oleh banyak elemen sosial, politik, dan ekonomi menyebabkan gerakan ini berhasil. Dalam menghadapi otoritarianisme dan ketidakpuasan rakyat, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi seluk-beluk gerakan tersebut dan memberikan wawasan tentang dinamika yang saling terkait yang mendorong Nepal menuju reformasi demokratis.	
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INTRODUCTION

The Popular Movement of 1990 in Nepal, which included large-scale demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience, and diplomatic discussions, signaled a dramatic transition from absolute monarchy to multiparty democracy. Years of unrest and concerted opposition to authoritarian government, during which rural communities suffered from poverty, marginalization, and a lack of access to essential services, gave rise to the movement (Gautam,1989). Urban areas became epicenters of political action, scholarly conversation, and nascent social movements, propelled by the dissemination of global education, media, and democratic ideals. The movement was characterized by a wide range of players and interests, as well as by the intricacies and dynamics resulting from the interaction of political, social, and economic forces. The movement brought together many political parties, civil society, and there was clear political fragmentation and unity (Adhikari,1999).

Maintaining momentum and conquering obstacles required strategic movement and adaptability. To increase their power and accomplish their objectives, political parties changed their strategies, formed coalitions, and engaged in negotiations with the monarchy. Activists and organizers used both official repression and resistance to get around government control and make their opinions heard (Pradhan,1991). Through international pressure, diplomatic initiatives, and solidarity activities, the People's Movement of 1990 also made waves on the international scene, garnering attention and support from people all over the world. These elements affected the opposition's and the regime's calculations, determining the movement's result and shifted from absolute monarchy to multiparty democracy (Gurung, 2022).

The Himalayan nation of Nepal has experienced a dramatic political upheaval in the last few years. John Locke thought that individuals might govern themselves in society in accordance with natural law for the benefit of everyone, with the same level of virtue, reason, and tranquility that existed in nature's paradisiacal state (Marini, 1969). Another description describes it as a collective decision-making process in which all members are treated equally. Some experts argue that democracy evolves between the collapse of an autocratic administration and the results of the first democratic elections. Others refer to it as the early stages of liberal reforms launched by authoritarian governments or when structural changes made

them vulnerable enough for opposition parties to seek democratic reform. The democratic movement and democracy lack a universal concept (Gurung,2022).

The democratic movement in Nepal began as an anti-Rana movement against the authoritarian state of one family control in the late stages of the Rana administration. It began in 1852 when Captain Bhotu Singh and Lakhan Thapa rebelled against Jung Bahadur (Manandhar, 1992).

In the latter days of Jung Bahadur, a Magar inhabitant of Gorkha Bunkot began preaching that he had the right to govern Nepal by killing Jung Bahadur in Mankamana Bhagwati. He formed a military force that had 50-60 persons, including soldiers and citizens. Around the Chaitra of 1876 (Manandhar, 1992). Devidatta battalion attacked Lakhan Thapa's monastery, arresting eight individuals, including him. In 1852, Sripati Gurung fought Jung Bahadur and was murdered by the Gurung platoon. Shukdev Gurung and Supati Gurung defied Jung Bahadur by calling themselves Buddhist rulers over nine kingdoms (Manandhar,1992). The Nepalese democratic movement, which began as an anti-Rana movement, saw multiple ups and downs before evolving into the current federal democratic republic.

According to Locke, men live as equals among themselves, free to act and dispose of their property as they see appropriate (<https://www.google.com>). Marx believes that class strife will persist until homogeneity is achieved. Native and international experts, including Samuel P. Huntington (1993), Uddahav Pyakurel and Indra Adhikari (2015), Surya Mani Adhikari (1999), Rajesh Gautam (1989), T.N. Manandhar, and Niranjana Sharma (1999), have undertaken several studies on various facets of the democratic movement. Neither native nor international authors have discussed the role of political parties in Nepal's democratic revolution.

Samuel Huntington (1993), an American political scientist, described three phases of democracy. The first lasted from 1826 to 1926, the second (1943-62) came at the close of World War II, and the third (1974) began with the collapse of Portugal's military administration. Over the following 25 years, democracy spread rapidly around the world. Uddahv Pyalurel and Indra Adhikari (2015) successfully address a wide variety of topics that occurred in Nepal, notably following the formation of democracy in the 1950s, in their book *State of Conflict and Democratic Movement in Nepal*. The book tried to bridge the gap between the

past and the present by viewing current events through the perspective of historical truths. Surya Mani Adhikari (1999) sought to document the complete democratic movement of 1990 in his book *History of Democratic Movement in Nepal*. He had covered all episodes, participants, and the complete scene at the time, but he had not addressed the role of political parties in the democratic movement. In his book *Role of Praja Parishad in Nepal's Democratic Movement*, Rajesh Gautam (1989) sought to examine the 1950 democratic movement through the prism of Praja Parishad. His contributions to understanding the 1950 democratic movement are outstanding. His work concentrates solely on Praja Parishad and the Nepali Congress party, neglecting other participants in Nepal's democratic process. He does not explore the involvement of other parties in his work. The book *Political History of Modern Nepal (2007-2019)*, released by CNAS in 1997, is an important contribution to comprehending Nepal's democratic movement from 1990. The writers, T.N. Manadhar and Niranjana Sharma, are Tribhuvan University scholars. They sought to handle the overall issue, but did not address the function of political parties in the democratic struggle. Because of the authoritarian monarchial regime, it was common practice until 1990 to write the history of the nobles. The state did not respect the history of common people or political parties. Earlier research in the region has only acknowledged Nepal's democratic movement, but earlier studies have not explored the role of political parties in the democratic movement. Although several articles, books, and newspapers have been published on the subject, they are incomplete. No one has conducted in-depth study or research in this field.

This article aims to find the answers to the following questions:

- To track the democratic movement in Nepal.
- Evaluate political parties' roles in Nepal's democratic struggle.

The Popular movement of 1990 in Nepal, a

METHOD

This article is a qualitative investigation of the complexity and dynamics of Nepal's People's Movement in 1990. It is a historical study that employs both descriptive and analytical methods. This article focuses on both primary and secondary sources. For primary data collection, an in-depth interview (with open-ended questionnaire) was conducted with University Professors and specialists. In addition, secondary sources such as

political movement, is a complex and diverse phenomena that necessitates an interdisciplinary approach. Resource mobilization theory, developed by scholars like Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, focuses on the role of organizational resources, networks, and tactics in shaping the trajectory of social movements. It explains how political parties, civil society organizations, and other actors mobilized human, material, and symbolic resources to challenge authoritarian rule and advocate for political reform. This includes the mobilization of activists, supporters, financial resources, media coverage, and international solidarity strategies employed by movements to navigate challenges and seize opportunities for change (Marini, 1969). In the case of Nepal's 1990 movement, this might include shifting protest methods, forging alliances with other social groups, or leveraging international support to pressure the regime for concessions.

Resource mobilization theory is a valuable tool for understanding political movements like the People's Movement of 1990 in Nepal. It provides insight into the organizational dynamics, strategic decision-making processes, and structural conditions that shape social and political change. Political parties, such as the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist) and seven party alliances played a crucial role in coordinating protests, disseminating information, and engaging in strategic negotiations with the monarchy. Human resources, including activists, volunteers, and supporters, were vital for the success of any social movement. Material resources, such as funding, infrastructure, and media access, were essential for sustaining and expanding social movements. By effectively mobilizing these resources, the movement was able to overcome logistical challenges, amplify its message, and withstand state repression. Strategic adaptation is also crucial in social movements, as political parties and activists employed various tactics to maximize their impact and effectiveness (Crossman, 2023).

research articles, published newspapers, unpublished records, and unpublished dissertations were employed as reference materials in this study. In particular, an attempt has been made to analyze the role of political parties in Nepal's democratic process.

The study's findings can be generalized to a broader environment. The framework for evaluating political movements is based on Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, and it stresses the significance of

organizational resources, networks, and strategies in defining the course of social movements. It describes how political parties, civil society groups, and other players used human, material, and symbolic resources to oppose authoritarian government and promote democratic reform. This article focuses on the role of politics in the democratic movement from 1950 to 1990 B.S. This article does not examine the contributions of other players in the democratic struggle.

DISCUSSION

Historical Context:

For much of its history, Nepal was controlled by an absolute monarchy. However, disillusionment with authoritarian control has led to an increase in demand for political rights and representation. Later in the twentieth century, the democratic movement had substantial growth. During the 1990 People's Movement, political parties such as the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal organized rallies, strikes, and protests against the monarchy, which was a watershed moment. Following the establishment of a constitutional monarchy and the establishment of a multi-party democratic system, their coordinated efforts pushed the monarchy to concede to demands for political reform (Gurung,2022). Nepal, under the autocratic Shah monarchy for centuries, experienced limited political freedoms and socio-economic disparities. In the latter half of the 20th century, democratization gained momentum, leading to the rise of political consciousness and reform demands. Under the monarchy's restrictions, political parties became the vanguards of the democratic struggle, advocating for civil liberties, social justice, and law rule (Karki,2008).

Context:

The Popular Movement of 1990 emerged from the Shah monarchy's authoritarian rule, marked by political repression, economic inequality, and social injustice. With global democratization and growing discontent, mass protests and calls for political reform emerged. The emergence of underground political parties provided an organizational backbone for resistance against the autocratic regime (Karki, 2022).

Key Actors and Movements:

The 1990 movement in Nepal saw the convergence of various actors and movements, each contributing to democratic change. Political groups such as the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal

(Unified Marxist-Leninist) mobilized the masses for political freedom and human rights. Civil society organizations, student groups, and marginalized communities also contributed to the call for social justice and inclusive governance (Karki,2022).

Role of Political Parties:

Political parties played a crucial role in mobilizing diverse segments of society, including students, intellectuals, workers, and peasants, in support of the democratic movement. Through grassroots organizing, public rallies, and dissemination of information, they galvanized public opinion against authoritarianism and rallied people behind the cause of democracy. Parties such as the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) emerged as influential actors, leveraging their organizational networks and ideological appeal to mobilize mass support (Gurung,2022).

Strategies and Tactics:

Political parties employed a range of strategies and tactics to challenge the entrenched power structures and press for political reform. These included organizing protests, strikes, and sit-ins, as well as engaging in clandestine activities to evade state repression. Despite facing censorship, arrests, and crackdowns by security forces, parties continued to defy the authoritarian regime through resilience and collective action. Their ability to adapt to changing circumstances, forge alliances, and sustain momentum proved instrumental in keeping the movement alive (Mishra,2023). The success of the Popular Movement of 1990 was not merely a result of spontaneous uprising but rather a culmination of strategic planning and tactical maneuvering by various stakeholders. From mass rallies and strikes to civil disobedience and underground resistance, a diverse range of strategies was employed to challenge the entrenched power structures and press for political reform. Moreover, the ability of the movement to sustain momentum amidst state repression and crackdowns underscored the resilience and determination of the Nepali people in their quest for democracy (Karki,2022).

Challenge, Negotiations and Compromises:

As the democratic movement gained momentum, political parties engaged in negotiations with the monarchy to seek a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Recognizing the need for a political compromise, King Birendra eventually acceded to popular demands and agreed to establish a constitutional monarchy with provisions for multiparty

democracy. The signing of the 1990 Popular Movement accord paved the way for the promulgation of a new constitution and the holding of democratic elections, marking a historic victory for the democratic forces (Mishra,2023). The path to democracy in Nepal was fraught with challenges and complexities, including internal divisions within the democratic movement, external interference, and the specter of violence and instability. The negotiations between the monarchy and the democratic forces, culminating in the signing of the 1990 Political Movement Accord, reflected a delicate balance of power and interests. While the accord marked a significant breakthrough, it also necessitated compromises and concessions on both sides, laying the groundwork for the transition to multiparty democracy (Mishra,2023).

The People's Movement of 1990 had far-reaching implications for Nepal's political landscape, ushering in a new era of political pluralism, civil liberties, and democratic governance. However, the transition to democracy was not without its challenges, as evidenced by subsequent periods of political instability, ethnic tensions, and Maoist insurgency. Nevertheless, the legacy of the 1990 movement endures as a beacon of hope and resilience, reminding Nepalese of their collective power to effect change and shape the course of their nation's history (Karki,2022).

CONCLUSIONS

The Political Movement of 1990 in Nepal epitomizes the complexities and dynamics inherent in the struggle for democracy and social justice. From its humble origins to its profound impact on the nation's political trajectory, the movement encapsulates the resilience, determination, and collective agency of the Nepali people in the face of adversity. By unraveling the intricacies of the 1990 movement in Nepal underscored the indispensable role of political parties as catalysts of change and guardians of democracy. Through their concerted efforts and sacrifices, parties mobilized the masses, challenged authoritarian rule, and negotiated a peaceful transition to democracy. While the journey towards consolidating democracy remains fraught with challenges, the legacy of the 1990 movement

serves as a reminder of the enduring power of collective action and civic engagement in advancing the cause of democracy and social justice.

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