

## **Socio-structural Causes of Rise of Democracy : With Reference to 2006 Democratic Movement of Nepal**

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*Democracy neither rises nor falls spontaneously. The rise and fall of democracy does not solely depend on the desire of some actors, parties and leaders. The construction, destruction and reconstruction of social relation and social structure play a crucial role in the rise and fall of democracy. Democracy is born and matures in a specific socio-economic structure while it falls in others. Similarly, the nature of international relations also affects democracy. The bourgeoisie or the middle class is the main agent behind democratization process. In this paper I shall attempt a quick and preliminary discussion of the major socio-structural factors for the rise of democracy. In 2006, an important democratic movement took place in Nepal. This movement gave rise to democracy by abolishing both the autocratic monarchical regime and the Maoist insurgency which strongly believes in people's republican regime. Strong bourgeoisie and town people who engaged in commerce and industry played the major role to the rise of democracy. The town dwellers engaged in private jobs and business played important role for the political change. Increasing urban population, loyalty and commitment of bourgeoisie middle class people of cities towards the democracy, new education system, expanding facade of capitalism are important factors for the rise of democracy in Nepal in 2006. Similarly, international factors like globalization made democracy inevitable. Around 40 years ago, more than 90 percent of Nepalese people were depended on agricultural sector; it has been decreased to about 65 percent in 2000s. In 1970, the contribution of agriculture in the Gross National Product of Nepal was 75 percent while it has been decreased to 33 percent in the same time. The decreasing importance of agriculture and involvement of people in the new economic activities has aided for the rise of democracy in 2006 in Nepal.*

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## **1. Introduction**

Democracy is a system of government by the whole population or all eligible populations of the country, typically through elected representatives. Regular and contested elections, alternation of governments, rule of law, freedom of speech, association press are the fundamental component of democracy. Similarly, pluralism, separation of powers are also important components of the democracy.

In the field of comparative-historical analysis, many scholars have sought to learn about the origins and workings of democratic regime, without the comparative historical literature, we would also know far less about the origins of democratic regimes. We might still have valuable statistical findings concerning the relationship between democracy and readily quantifiable variables such as economic development, education etc. However, we would have much less knowledge about other kinds of explanatory variables such as social classes, the state and international structures. These factors responsible for the establishment of democracy are discussed in this article.

How does the democracy rise? What are the changes in the society which helps rise and fall of democracy in a particular country? Do political parties, civil society members and political leaders only can establish democracy or are there any other socio-structural factors? What are the hidden causes that construct political parties, ideology and leader? Such issues are discussed in this article.

In this paper I shall attempt a quick and preliminary discussion of the major factors for the rise of democracy. This article is specially divided into four chapters. The first is the introduction. Second discusses about the main factors for the rise of democracy. Similarly, third one is the assessment of these types of concepts and the lastly the discussion about whether these factors contribute to the Democratic Movement of 2006 in Nepal or not and if yes which factors are responsible for what sort of impact.

## **2. Major Factors for the Rise of Democracy : A Theoretical Analysis**

Basically the rise of democracy in the world history is in the nineteenth and twentieth century behind which there were various reasons. The combination of increased urbanization and factory employment may have been a key factor in initiating the wave of democratization in nineteenth- century in Europe. Similarly, changes in structure of society and the economy during the early nineteenth century altered the balance of political power. Thus the impact of democracy spread all over the world. At that time various intellectuals studied broadly about the factors and components for the rise of democracy.

Democracy does not rise spontaneously. The rise and fall of democracy does not solely depend on the desire of some actors, parties and leaders. The construction of relations, destruction and reconstruction of the lower levels in the society plays a crucial role for the rise and fall of democracy. Democracy born, and

grows in a type of economy while it falls on the other. Similarly, the international structure also affects this. Democracy is correlated with some factors while others have only casual relationship.

Moore (1966) argues that a strong bourgeoisie, mainly as town people engaged in commerce and industry was important to the establishment of democracy. Furthermore, Peasant and bourgeoisie' strong alliance is another important factor for the rise of democracy. Moore's structuralism drew on Marxist political economy in emphasizing class relationship as the driving force of modernization. Modernization is one of the most important factors to raise the democracy. At the same time, many scholars have extended Moore's emphasis on classes to other kinds of social relationships, including especially state structures and international structures. Moore argued that the timing of the onset of political crises in agrarian -bureaucratic state relative to agricultural commercialization was of crucial importance. When political crisis occurred after the development of commercial agriculture, Moore hypothesized that the bourgeoisie would be stronger and thus democracy would be more likely to emerge.

James Mahoney (2003) presented the considerable evidence in his article, that the working class was one of several important actors in many historical and contemporary processes of democratization. Likewise, there is good evidence showing that the working class has been a consistently pro democratic class actor. Mahoney (2003) argues that when the military force and landed elites get weakened, this gives rise to the democracy. Luebbert (1991) argues that alliances between liberal parties and the labor movement before World War helped facilitated liberal democracy during the interwar period. Rueshemeyer et al. (1992) identified that capitalist development is important factor for rise of democracy.

The bourgeoisie or the middle class is the main agent behind democratization. Some researchers argue that democratization is fundamentally an urban process in which rural classes have little role to play as well as some researchers considered the factors such as the autonomy of the state from the dominant class can influence the democratization process. The working class played a major role in pushing forward democracy. The working class mobilization in developing countries often immediately precedes a regime change. International events may sometimes directly force a regime change like post war Japan.

Huntington (1991) proposed a complex web of factors that influence democratization, and he argued that these vary according to which "wave" of democracy one considered. For instance, with respect to the first wave before the World War I, he emphasized modernization, urbanization, creation of a middle class and decreasing inequality. In the second wave, his emphasis shifted to the impact of the World War II and the collapse of empires. In the third wave, he lists five factors as being important. a) A crisis of authoritarian legitimacy created by economic recession induced by the oil shocks of the 1970s and the international debt crisis of the 1980s. b) The income growth and increase in education

experienced in the 1960s. c) The change in the attitude of the Catholic Church d) the changes in the attitudes of international institutions, the US and the Soviet Union e) The “snowballing” or demonstration effects led to contagion and the international dissemination of democracy.

Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) have included various factors for the democracy in their article. Democracy is associated with a particular set of institutions, such as free and fair elections, the accountability of politicians to the electorate and free entry into politics. They presents two figures, these figures show that most famous correlation about democracy, rich countries tend to be more democratic. Both figures show the strong positive relationship between income and democracy. Another two figures show correlation between education and democracy, more educated countries also tend to be more democratic. Economic prosperity and the level of education will naturally bring a process of democratization. Democratization leads to the incorporation of poorer groups into the polity and consequently, results in policies designed to favor such group. Democracy tends to promote equality; non democracy tends to promote inequality.

Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) developed the theory, many factors influence to democratization, these are; a) Intergroup inequality b) Political institutions c) Structure of economy d) Nature and extend of globalization. The writer’s central idea is that the distribution in a democracy depends on many factors including the structure of political institutions. If Capital accumulation is changed in the structure of society’s assets that may be crucial to changing the costs and benefits of democracy to the elite which in turn leads to democratization.

In this way, some intellectuals have included the macro factors for the rise of democracy. Besides, micro factors play equally important role for the rise of democracy. Linz (1978) has studied about this. A quite different research program has its origin in the famous “Breakdown of Democratic Regimes Series”. Linz emphasized the considering the actor an important factor for rise of democracy. This is related to rational choice theory which studies by considering the individual’s choice for the establishment of democracy. Linz had defined the individual choice as an important factor for the rise of democracy.

### **3. The Assessment of Theory of Rise of Democracy**

The various factors and bases responsible for the rise of democracy can be studied and understood by historical comparative method and macro perspective method. Two articles which are the bases for this article are also based on these perspectives. These include about what is the background for the rise of democracy which constructs the particular party, leader, view and perceptions, establish democratic regime by demolishing the autocratic regime.

The perspectives of intellectuals on the factors for the rise of democracy were also included in this study. The common understanding of the intellectuals cannot be found in this. It is found that various intellectuals have been increasing their

knowledge on the factors for the rise of democracy by incorporating other's perspectives on their own. Collection of the knowledge spread in the form of small packages is known as "Knowledge Accumulation" which helps finding out the factors, correlation and casual relations of democracy with other sectors in a systematic way.

Moore (1966) has discussed that strong bourgeoisie or town people engaged in commerce and industry and peasants and bourgeoisie's strong alliance against the landed elite were important to the establishment of democracy while Mehoney (2003) critique the Moore's concept. He argues that when the military force and landed elites get weakened, this gives rise to the democracy. Similarly, international and domestic conditions are the key factors of democracy. Dahl (2006) has stated that democracy rises where the extent of inequality is lesser but Bollen and Jackman (1985 citation in Mehoney 2003) found no relationship between measures of inequality and democracy. Different intellectuals have different concept and idea about key factors for rise of democracy.

Luebbert (1991) argues that alliances between liberal parties and the labor movement help facilitate liberal democracy. Huntington (1991) lists twenty-seven different factors that he claims have been said to promote democracy, e.g. modernization, urbanization, creation of middle class, collapse of empires, growth and increase in education, change in the attitude of the Catholic Church etc. Linz (1978) has described individual choice as an important factor for the rise of democracy. Besides the examples stated above, other various intellectuals have stated that high rate of redistribution, economic development, expansion of education, decreasing the inequality is also important factors for it.

Thus, there are various intellectuals who study, understand and analyze the democracy. Some have the similar views while the others show dissimilarities. Some consider the strong bourgeoisie as the reason for rise of democracy while others consider the development of capital. Some of them analyze by focusing on the macro issues while the others consider micro issues. In this way, Colomer (1995) has included two approaches to study understandings and analyses of the intellectuals regarding the democracy. He emphasize that "two basic approaches can be distinguished in the literature on regime change and transitions to democracy. One emphasizes the structural, socio-economic or cultural requisites of democracy. The other approach looks at political regimes as outcomes of strategic processes of change. The main role is given here to choices and interactions by the actors.

Similarly, Mahoney (2003) and Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) have stated various factors which give rise to the democracy but both have not addressed some of the aspects. For example, the role of development of technology means of communication like radio, television, internet and newspapers have not been given importance. The nation with adequate press freedom and freedom for speech is more democratic and the media has an important role to alert for any challenges to the democracy. Similarly, some intellectuals have stated that the nation with more

income exercises excess and strong democracy. But though China has more income, is the democracy exercised adequately there? Another important aspect is that all working class over the world are not in support of democracy. There are many examples of autocratic regimes established with the help of working class. Thus, though some of the aspects are not given importance, both the articles give adequate knowledge for the factors that give rise to the democracy which is important in itself.

After studying the given two articles about the factors for the rise of democracy we can reach to some conclusions. There are few preconditions for the emergence of democracy; however, there is no single factor sufficient or necessary to the emergence of democracy. This, in a country, is the result of a combination of several causes and the causes responsible are not the same as promoting its consolidation. The combination of causes promoting democratic transition and consolidation varies from country and the combination of causes generally responsible for other waves.

#### **4. Major Factors of 2006 Democratic Movement in Nepal**

In 2006 an important democratic movement took place in Nepal. This movement raised democracy by abolishing the autocratic regime of King and controlling Maoists' faith on Peoples' republican system. In this Democratic movement, did the factors we discussed above play the role? Or were there other factors? This chapter tries to give answer to these questions by including the factors for the rise of democracy considering this democratic movement.

Moore has considered the strong bourgeoisie as the main reason for the rise of democracy; further he has emphasized on town people engaged in commerce and industry. This factor had an important role for the rise of democracy in 2006 in Nepal. The town dwellers engaged in private profession and business had played important role for the political change. In the last decade alone, the population of urban area has increased in a remarkable number. Table 1 shows the growth in urban population and urban places in Nepal from 1952/54 to 2001.

**Table-1 : Growth in urban population and urban places in Nepal, 1952/54 - 2001**

<b>Census Year</b>	<b>Urban Population (in '000)</b>	<b>Number of Urban Places</b>	<b>Percent of Population Urban</b>
1952/54	238.3	10	2.9
1961	336.2	16	3.6
1971	461.9	16	4.0
1981	956.7	23	6.4
1991	1,695.7	33	9.2
2001	3227.9	58	13.9

(CBS, 2003)

Population has been increasing considerably in the cities formed with the extension of East-West Highway and the regional cities. The people residing in the cities and involved in business and industry presented themselves supportive to the democracy. In my opinion, as said by Moore, the loyalty and commitment of these strong bourgeoisie middle class people of cities towards the democracy is an important factor for the rise of democracy in Nepal in 2006.

The rise of middle class is another important factor to rise of democracy in Nepal. Only 7 percent people were middle class in 1995-96 in Nepal. However, it is rise on 22 percent in 2010-11 (World Bank, 2016).

The alliance between urban middle class and peasants is also important to raise democracy. Mahoney gives the example of democratization in Denmark and Norway where the rise of democracy was possible by the strong alliance of middle class and peasants. In Nepal too, this kind of alliance between middle class and peasants was found. The movement started by the urban middle class was immediately followed by peasant who came to street with agricultural equipments. By raising the voice against autocratic rule people from villages and cities participated in the movement. The organizations related to agriculture associations, agriculture committees, dairy cooperatives disseminated the press release by supporting the movement started by the urban middle class people. Further, they participated formally with banner in the movement. I think this kind of alliance between middle class people and the peasants is another important factor for the rise of democracy in Nepal.

Rueschemeyer argues that capitalist development and democracy are correlated. The expanding facade of capitalism helps for the rise of democracy. I think, as said by the Rueschemeyer, capitalist development has played important role for the rise of democracy. In Nepal, the capitalism has been increasing in the recent years (Bhusal, 2016). The expanding facade of capitalism has made the democracy unavoidable. The feudalistic mode of production and processes started weakening due to the entrance of capitalism in our neighbor in the name of East-India Company. After that time the practice of going to the foreign countries for employment started. Internal and external migration got increased. People started to go to work in the multi-national companies in the places like Sikkim, Meghalaya, and Darjeeling and started residing in those places permanently. This seems to be simple but in my opinion it was an important incident for the rise of democracy in Nepal. This brought a drastic change in the primitive lifestyle of village people. After this people started understanding that they could leave their place and survive outside, leave primitive agricultural profession and survive by working in companies and doing business. This was possible with the development and expansion of capitalism.

Besides, more capitalism development took place in Nepal in last recent years due to globalization. After 1990 capitalism developed in greater extent with the open market economic policy of governments. This type of capitalism development

played important role for the rise of democracy in Nepal. As said by Moore, the middle class and urban people do not accept the autocracy of King or others. In my opinion, the youths leaving the primitive culture, thoughts, and beliefs and approaching to capitalistic and individualistic ideology needed the freedom of speech as said by Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson in their article. This could be achieved only in democracy. They supported for the democracy understanding that to make rules and regulations for establishing right of individual freedom, free and fair elections and multiparty system of competition among the parties was needed. Thus, capitalist development itself is an important factor for the rise of democracy in Nepal in 2006.

Some scholars have said that social relationships help for the establishment of democracy in which they have included that the domestic condition and international scenario plays an important role. This view seems to be relevant in context of Nepal. The speed of infrastructural change in Nepalese society has been increased noticeably in recent years. The migration of people from hills to Terai and villages to cities started constructing new infrastructures by destructing old ones. Similarly, the new bases of living, culture, religion, and relations started with the ending of old ones. The generations brought up with new infrastructures started residing in the city areas. They became equipped with modern skills. Not only from schools, had they started getting educations from abroad too. Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson have developed hypothesis that the more educated nations are more democratic. I think their hypothesis is relevant in context of Nepal. The new national education system in 1970 has played an important role for the development of education in Nepal. Education developed with this system in Nepal has made possible for more than 95 percent of Nepalese children to reach school in less than half an hour (Mishra, 2067 B.S.). This has reformed the educational status drastically. The involvement of private sectors in education also increased noticeably. The boarding schools are spread all over Nepal from villages to cities. It has contributed for the quality of education. The two generations who got education with the new education policy in 1970 created pressure for state structure to be democratic not the autocratic. The democratic movement of 1990 and 2006 is the result of this. Similarly, extension of capitalism, modernization, and urbanization brought changes in the equation of state structure and contributed for the rise of democracy.

Similarly, international factor has also played an important role in the movement. Basically at that time, globalization made democracy unavoidable. The international situation after the dismissal of Soviet Union was supportive to the democracy and if any nation would be against the democracy it was not possible for this nation to be in isolation. Not only this, but also India has played further more important role for this in my opinion. India is known worldwide for the strong democratic country which has bounded Nepal from three sides geographically. We have open border with India. In this situation, the governing system of Nepal has



become major subject of concern for India. In the democratic movement 1990, India had supported for the establishment of democracy by blockade. Likewise, in 2006 democratic movement too, though it is unseen, India has played an important role for the establishment of democracy in Nepal. The visit of Indian ambassadors in Nepal during the peoples' movement and the different incidents following these visits makes clear for this. Similarly, the role played by India in the contemporary period, for the 12 points agreement between seven parties and the Maoists also support for this concept (Ghimire, 2015). Beside this, the economic development of China and India has got speed in the recent years. This speed in the neighboring countries has encouraged Nepal to be democratic.

Some intellectuals have stated that the democracy rises in the nations where military force and landed elites are weak. The mobilization of military force against the Maoist insurgency could not create good result for military; instead they had to bear great loss. When military force could not win over Maoists both militarily and ideologically, at the same time India also stopped sending military materials and equipments, the army force of Nepal became more weakened. Likewise, the Maoists killed and displaced many landed elites from villages and cities during the insurgency which weakened those landed elites. This situation also aided for the rise of democracy in Nepal in 2006.

Acemoglu and James Robinson stated the various other factors like, intra-group inequality, economic condition, and redistribution and so on. If we study the situation while the Maoists insurgency was advancing and the King took over the power and started his autocratic rule, the intergroup inequality can be found to be increasing. The Gini coefficient has shown the wide difference between poor and rich ones. This kind of difference encouraged lower class to go for the democracy. Similarly, the change on political institutions also played important role. Acceptance of republic system by Nepali Congress who were deeply supportive to Constitutional Monarchy and acceptance of Maoists for the multiparty competitive democracy is the important factor for the establishment of democracy. Similarly, the structure of economy also has played an important role. Around 30 years ago, more than 90 percent of Nepalese people were depended on agricultural sector, at this time it has been decreased to about 65 percent. In 1970, the contribution of agriculture in the Gross National Product of Nepal was 75 percent while it has been decreased to 33 percent in 2010 (Kantipur, 2014). Among all men workers only about 48 percent are involved in agriculture sector. In my opinion this has direct relation with the structure of economy. This shows the decreasing importance of agriculture. The involvement of people in the new kinds of economic activities has aided for the rise of democracy.

Similarly, the writers have stated nature and extend of globalization as the fourth factor. The entities such as World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been affecting in the economic liberality. In the recent years with the formal entrance of Nepal in the World Trade

Organization (WTO), Nepal has been affected by globalization. This enforced for privatization of public entities and knowledge on economic liberality. These types of international entities can work in democratic countries easily and it is hard in the autocratic countries. For this reason, it was not possible for autocratic rule to remain anymore. Thus this led for the rise of democracy in Nepal in 2006.

These are some macro factors which gave birth to the agencies such as Nepali political parties, leaders, and civil society members. These factors had affected the rise of democracy in Nepal in 2006. As stated by Linz, micro factors also called as agency also play an important role for this. We find political parties, civil society and political leader also have equal role. Particularly, alliance among seven major political parties constructed a common understanding on democratic movement. The democratic movement got speed on the basis of this alliance after the 12 points agreement with the Maoists' armed insurgency.

After this, with the withdrawal of commitment on constitutional monarchy by Nepali Congress and acceptance of multiparty democracy by the Maoists, the more bases for democratic movement were constructed. Monarchical system and People's Republican both are the perspectives against the democracy. When the parties came out of their non-democratic belief, basically the middle class started to support and participate in their movements. After this peasants also supported for that. Working class and poorer group also started participating by supporting the movement. Urban intellectuals, civil service employees, businessmen, students and professional organizations also started showing their active participation. The Individual choice has played role for this. We also find that some leaders, civil society members and political parties have aided for the bases of the rise of democracy. I think we can see this through the rational choice theoretical perspective as stated by Linz. This theory studies by taking individual's choice as an important factor for the establishment of democracy. In my opinion individual choice of middle class, peasants, working class, elites, businessmen and other people has also played an important role for the rise of democracy in Nepal in 2006.

Lastly, micro factors or the agency have equal role for the rise of democracy as the macro factors. In my opinion, the study of rise of democracy becomes incomplete if the role of micro factors are not combined and studied, as stated. Agency or the political parties, leaders, civil society members also play important role for the rise of democracy. Their strong willpower and belief on democracy also aid for this. In South Africa, Nelson Mandela's commitment, struggle and belief on democracy played most important role.

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