



# Aragalaya: A Journey in Progress

Kaushalya Kumarasinghe



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## **Aragalaya: A Journey in Progress**

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# Aragalaya: A Journey<sup>\*</sup> in Progress

Kaushalya Kumarasinghe

## Introduction

Within the political common sense, *Aragalaya* is widely recognized as an event that culminated on July 9th with Gotabaya Rajapaksa's resignation. However, this paper suggests that understanding *Aragalaya* as a process that evolves beyond its spectacular moments—where people occupied the stage of history—provides a more nuanced reading of the social transformation Sri Lanka has been experiencing since March 2022. That said, this paper does not overlook the substantial and enduring effects of the event where masses marched in millions to declare that the social contract between the ruling elite and the common people had ceased to exist.

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This paper argues that *Aragalaya* continued to evolve, transforming its tactics and incorporating new actors onto a different stage. In this stage, the direct democratic methods of the initial phase were replaced by representational democratic means. This second stage culminated in the victory of the NPP in both presidential and parliamentary elections. Furthermore, this paper conjectures that, to achieve the expectations imagined in the first and second stages of the *Aragalaya*, a subsequent stage needs to be emerged, where new participatory democratic methods are experimented with.

This paper is based on data gathered through formal research methods<sup>1</sup>, as well as informal means such as participation of the situations<sup>2</sup> discussed here. Additionally, election results provide rich data that can engage dialogically and dialectically with the other types of data collected through formal and informal methods.

Before delving into the stages of *Aragalaya*, it is significant to briefly examine the recent local history of political action that fueled the transformations it later brought into being. This history can be reduced to two main phenomena—not because other occurrences were unimportant, but because these two remain the most influential for later developments. The first is the 2015 presidential election, and the second is the internal transformation of the JVP. Despite its apparent relevance to *Aragalaya*, I will not address Gotabaya Rajapaksa's victory or subsequent decision-making here.

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1. As part of the aforementioned research, I conducted unstructured interviews in Seruwila, Matale, Suriyawewa, Kurunegala and Negambo, with ten interviews conducted in each location.

2. I have been physically present in the *Aragalaya* in Colombo Galleface, more than 50 consecutive days from the April 9<sup>th</sup>

By 2014, before Maithripala Sirisena's crossover to the opposition to become the common candidate for the 2015 presidential election, the Mahinda Rajapaksa regime appeared invincible. Therefore, the common candidate's victory in the election marked a rupture in the Rajapaksa regime that could not be sutured. The way Rajapaksa was accumulating power—undermining democratic political and economic institutions as well as the rule of law—suggests that his regime could have evolved into a truly totalitarian one if the 2015 defeat had not materialized.

Although the Sirisena-Wickremesinghe administration tragically ended in 2019, paving the way for a figure like Gotabaya Rajapaksa to succeed, certain changes during this period should not be overlooked when evaluating history. One such significant moment was the introduction of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which replaced the 18th Amendment. The 18th Amendment had enhanced the powers of the executive presidency in numerous ways, including removing the limit on the number of terms a president could serve. The 19th Amendment reduced the powers of the executive presidency to a certain extent—until Gotabaya Rajapaksa introduced the 20th Amendment to increase those powers once again. However, the 19th Amendment created an impasse for Mahinda Rajapaksa, preventing him from contesting the 2019 presidential election and compelling the party to nominate Gotabaya, who had no prior political experience, as their candidate. His lack of experience, as history suggests, exacerbated existing issues.

Between 2015 and 2019, the quality of freedom of speech also improved significantly. Social media, in particular, transformed into a site for free deliberation, where people expressed their

frustrations with politicians and their decisions through humorous memes. Even though Gotabaya initially appeared as a tough leader, he could not fully reverse the relative freedom of social media, which ultimately became a catalyst for the *Aragalaya* that ended his rule prematurely, before its constitutional term was completed.

Meanwhile, under the new leadership of Anura Kumara Dissanayake, the JVP was preparing to transform itself after facing serious setbacks in the recent past. As a cadre-based leftist political party established in 1969, with a history of two armed struggles that led to violent state repression, the JVP faced inherent limitations in transcending its position as a small opposition party to a larger political force with the potential to govern the country. While the JVP was widely perceived as uncorrupted, it only garnered significant electoral support when it aligned with traditional elite political parties.

To address the need for a broader appeal and to gain the support of social classes it had not yet reached, the JVP leadership formed the National Intellectuals' Organization (NIO). This platform provided university academics and professionals critical of the main political parties with an avenue to engage with JVP politics. Although the JVP spearheaded the NIO, it operated as an independent organization, attracting numerous intellectuals and professionals. This marked a significant milestone in the party's transformation.

An earlier indication of this transformation was the involvement of Aluth Parapura, a civil society organization comprising popular artists and activists, which had supported Maithripala Sirisena in

the presidential election and later backed the JVP in the 2015 general election. During this period, the JVP demonstrated a willingness to form new associations with groups and individuals who did not fully align with its traditional ideology. For instance, initiating dialogue with the LGBTQ+ community exemplified the party's ideological expansion. This openness to civil society groups, intellectuals, and professionals ultimately paved the way for the formation of the NPP, which contested the 2019 elections.

During this time, the JVP shifted its rhetoric from a leftist and nationalist framework to one that embraced social democratic and cosmopolitan ideals. While the party had traditionally relied on the support of rural, subordinated social classes, it now began to appeal to the urban middle class as well. Despite these transformations and its emergence as a populist progressive force, the NPP only secured 3% of the vote in the 2019 elections. The strong patronage networks underpinning elite politics and Gotabaya's post-Easter attacks popularity hindered the NPP's rise.

Nonetheless, the NPP continued to mobilize people, particularly as Gotabaya's decision-making alienated various social groups. Rather than functioning as a conventional political party or alliance, the NPP established itself as a people's movement, especially during the period when *Aragalaya* reached a deadlock after Ranil Wickremesinghe replaced Gotabaya as president.

These two phenomena, I suggest, fueled the larger social transformation initiated by *Aragalaya* in March 2022. In the subsequent sections, I will focus on the three stages of *Aragalaya*,



which illustrate the development of political consciousness among citizens and the transformation of methods of political engagement.

### **First Stage:**

#### **From Resistance to the Imaginations of System Change**

As many Sri Lankans witnessed, the *Aragalaya* began in March 2022, when the economic crisis became evident in the common person's daily life through fuel queues, gas shortages, lack of basic goods, and power cuts. Initially, social media posts emerged from individuals claiming they would stand in public places with placards demanding the government provide basic necessities. These individual initiatives gained support from hundreds of people and led to the formation of new groups organizing regular protests.

Until the protest near the president's residence, these seemingly harmless demonstrations by middle-class citizens—many of whom had never been politically active—were largely ignored. However, the protest near the president's house marked a turning point, signaling the transformation of these small, peaceful resistances into a much larger solidarity movement fueled by widespread anger against the president and the government. Unlike earlier protests, this one did not merely demand basic necessities. It unequivocally called for the government to step down, marking a qualitative shift in political consciousness.

Therefore, this moment marked a qualitative transformation of political consciousness. The transformed political consciousness no longer demanded the restoration of the status quo; it required

more. From this point onward, however, the demand remained incomplete. Demanding the government to step down was an act of pure resistance that did not envision a material solution. For instance, there was no answer to the question of who would occupy the locus of power once the government stepped down. This protest, therefore, signaled the potential for moderate demonstrations to transform into an angry crowd driven by pure resistance consciousness.

For the first time, certain disruptive tactics were employed in the protest movement. In the study of social movements, one of the key questions is whether disruptive tactics lead to greater success or, conversely, invite repression (Guigni, 1999). According to Gamson (1990), disruptive tactics are often more associated with success than moderate ones. This was evident in the Sri Lankan protests: as they shifted from moderate methods to slightly more confrontational tactics, the government was compelled to take them seriously.

Disruptive tactics persisted as the government imposed curfews, which people defied, marking a significant breach of the social contract between the state and its citizens. As Guigni (1999) notes, "It is likely that when regimes are vulnerable or receptive to challenges, disruption works, whereas when they are not, disruption invites repression." The resignation of the cabinet following civil disobedience exposed the vulnerability of the regime but did little to calm the protests.

Instead, a widely shared social media post called for one million people to gather at Colombo's Galle Face Green on April 9th, demanding the president resign with the slogan "Gota Go

Home.” On April 9th, an unprecedented multitude materialized. Protesters occupied the front gate of the presidential secretariat and part of Galle Face Green. This date marked a significant moment in the movement's evolution, as it unified scattered protests into a single, sustainable space. As Kumarasinghe (2023) remarks,

*The heteroglossia was unmistakable here, and it stood in stark contrast to the monotony of placards in past protests organized by political organizations. There were groups of people with painted faces and bodies singing “Go Gota Home” with drums, guitars and saxophones. The soundscape of the protest did not echo that of past demonstrations. A center or leadership to dictate the crowd was noticeably absent. Even so, waste was appropriately collected in bins, and water was distributed when needed. In the evening, hundreds of Muslims ended fasting collectively with prayers, and Christian priests marched next to them. The national flag, visible everywhere, seemed to lose its Sinhala Buddhist nationalist connotations. Because this multitude celebrated heterogeneity, people weren’t hesitant to find new ways of expression and modes of resistance.*

The fine balance between the tactics of disruption and moderation was well evident in the occupied territory. Every single disruptive tactic remained non-violent, which strengthened the legitimacy of the protest movement. Protesters gradually set up makeshift facilities, such as a community kitchen, toilets and washrooms, a medical center, and a media center. They also constructed a citizens’ assembly, library, cinema, open-air theater, art studio, open mic spaces, public university, and children’s activity center.

Once the movement became a part of the everyday life of the people, the occupied territory ended up being less populous. However, sloganeering continued 24/7, along with cultural events and discussions, making the space vibrant and energetic. While the main slogan, 'Gota Go Home,' remained intact, there were other slogans demanding a corruption-free country, system change, a racism-free society, and so on. Hence, the term 'Gota' acquired many meanings beyond its literal sense of being the name of the president. This shift can be seen as a marker of how political consciousness gradually transformed during the period. It was not simply about demanding the president and the government to step down; it became an imagination of a new country functioning within a new system. However, this imagination remained vague, and there were no considerable efforts to present a political program to materialize it.

Due to diverse political stances within the movement, it was impossible to reach a consensus about the future. As a result, 'system change' remained an empty signifier that could only be filled by a serious hegemonic intervention through which differences were articulated within a political ideology.

The occupation of Galle Face Green, however, became a living experiment in direct democracy, where people learned and practiced democratic principles in real-time. Protesters organized themselves into committees to manage resources, maintain order, and make collective decisions. The protest site hosted public discussions, lectures, and cultural performances, which educated citizens on issues like economic policy, good governance, and human rights. The use of social media played

a crucial role in shaping and amplifying political consciousness. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok became spaces for sharing information, mobilizing support, and documenting events in real time. Social media narratives helped challenge state propaganda and expose the failures of the ruling class to a wider audience. One can conjecture that this participatory process expanded political consciousness, helping people see democracy as active and participatory rather than limited to periodic voting.

It was not until the 9th of May that people understood how the citizens who were not present at the occupied territory were connected to the spirit of the movement. When government allies attacked Gotagogama, the island-wide response was immediate. Not only did people from surrounding areas gather to attack the goons, but crowds in their own villages were waiting for their return. Many houses and private offices of government politicians were attacked and burnt. Even though these angry reactions were geographically widespread, the number of people who took part in the actions was not clearly visible. Hence, the efficiency of the powerful response had a mysterious air that allowed the government to form conspiracy theories about the JVP being the force behind the attacks.

The quantitative nature of solidarity manifested on the 9th of July, when millions stormed the president's house.

The first phase of *Aragalaya* culminated with the stepdown of the president and the government. When Wickramasinghe took over as a successor, a fringe section of society supported him, but the majority felt disappointed. In the narratives of *Aragalaya*, while marking the positive effects, many people tend to say

that, in the end, it wasn't successful. However, the confidence acquired by expelling a president through means of resistance was unmistakable in the narratives of *Aragalaya*.

## **The Second Stage:**

### **System Change as a Political Programme**

The second stage began as people gradually started investing the aspirations of the *Aragalaya* in the National People's Power (NPP), a political party-cum-social movement that had never before managed to secure enough votes to govern the country. This phase could be described as a silent one, lacking spectacular events. The resistance consciousness of the first stage slowly transitioned into a political consciousness that placed renewed faith in representative democracy. This process was facilitated by the continued presence of Wickremesinghe and his government, who epitomized the corrupt remnants the *Aragalaya* had sought to eliminate.

As mentioned in the introduction to this essay, the evolution of the JVP into a party-cum-movement capable of mobilizing various social classes and groups became a critical turning point during a period when a sense of incompleteness troubled the citizens who had participated in the *Aragalaya*. The NPP's intervention was therefore situated on fertile ground to transform the political consciousness of the people, offering a political programme aimed at materializing the imagined goals of the *Aragalaya*.

One can identify two significant spaces where this intervention was located: first, the ideological space where "system change" remained a relatively empty signifier; and second, the space of

political organizational networks that is essential for mobilizing votes. Needless to say, these two spaces are not mutually exclusive.

In terms of ideology, the NPP articulated that all traditional elite political parties and the ruling class were corrupt, insensitive, and incompetent - an idea that strongly resonated with the critiques propagated by the JVP throughout decades of its electoral politics. However, the NPP's election manifesto and speeches notably omitted the socialist jargon evident in its earlier campaigns. As Uyangoda observes, not only socialist but also other forms of standard political ideological jargon seemed to have been purposefully avoided. Instead, the language remained largely neutral, without signaling allegiance to any specific political ideological direction. Also, he further remarks, that traditional ideological categories are sort of outdated in terms of analyzing current political situation in Sri Lanka<sup>3</sup>. Despite this neutrality, the NPP provided substantial ideological content for the term system change, which had previously been an empty signifier during the first stage of the *Aragalaya*.

In the post-*Aragalaya* period, the NPP coined the term *nava punaruda yugayak* (a new era of renaissance) as the central motto of its election campaign. According to the *punarudaya* discourse, an NPP electoral victory would usher in this new renaissance, reforming every aspect of society - including education, health, the production economy, transportation, art, and culture - toward equality, accountability, and justice. The campaign promised that everyone, including politicians, would be subject to the rule of law and that all forms of corruption would be eradicated,

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3. He mentioned this idea in a discussion at Law and Society Trust on the 9th November 2024.

making economic prosperity achievable. By presenting this ideology as a political programme that could be realized under an NPP government, the party attracted widespread support. As mentioned earlier, the programme bore no signs of socialism and represented social democracy in a loose sense. It is plausible that, despite counter-narratives by other political parties framing the NPP as an ultra-Marxist group with a bloody revolutionary past and a dangerous political future, people voted for them because they perceived no extreme leftist ideals in their policies.

Additionally, as both a political party and a people's movement, the NPP claimed to operate through multiple wings. As a political party, it had established a network of committees that extended to the village level. The efficiency of JVP cadre networks in organizing meetings and publicity campaigns was a significant factor. New NPP structures were developed by incorporating JVP cadres who were already active in various areas. While the party mechanisms organized people, different wings of the movement - such as those for women, youth, artists, and university academics - contributed to its enhancement.

However, according to interviews conducted just before the presidential election, village-level NPP networks had not reached the people efficiently. While acknowledging that other political parties were less active during the election campaign, respondents in Seruwila, Matale, and Suriyawewa often complained that the NPP needed to engage more with the people. In these areas, respondents clearly indicated that there were individuals willing to support the NPP but who lacked access to establish a relationship with the party. Despite this sense of disappointment,



most claimed they would vote for the NPP and expected it to win. This disappointment is evidence of their desire to be part of the movement.

Many of these individuals had not only been active in previous campaigns for the SLPP and Gotabaya Rajapaksa but had also been positioned within the patronage networks that the SLPP had established to succeed in electoral politics.

It is important to understand how traditional elite political parties have mobilized citizens through the patronage networks they have built and strengthened over time. Peiris (2024), who has extensively researched the Sri Lankan voter-party nexus, states that:

*Recent literature on political parties highlights that parties engage with the electorate through a complex network of social connections, including funeral societies, credit groups, religious organizations, informal caste and family networks, and even networks supporting illegal/criminal activities.*

He further explains that, how leaders at different levels of each political party employ key actors within these networks in villages to deliver patronage benefits and organize votes; these intermediaries become significant agents in fulfilling the interests of both the party/politician and the voters (ibid). Following the marginal victory of the NPP in the presidential election, Peris speculated, relying on this analysis, that unlike the presidential election, where national-level propaganda played a decisive role, in the parliamentary election, the NPP would struggle to secure enough votes to form a government on its own. This was due

to the influence of traditional patronage networks that safeguard established parties. However, as we now know, the general election surprised not only political analysts like Peris but also the NPP's own sympathizers. The unprecedented island-wide vote, including support from the North and East - regions that had never before voted for a Sinhala-Buddhist majority party - revealed that the electoral mechanisms safeguarding traditional elitist parties had ceased to function in this election.

Revisiting interviews conducted with respondents provides critical insights into the disintegration of patronage networks during the *Aragalaya*. A notable case from Suriyawewa involved a respondent deeply embedded in the SLPP's patronage network. After the party's electoral victory, he was granted a lucrative sand excavation permit - a quintessential example of how political loyalty was rewarded within the patron-client framework. During the early stages of the *Aragalaya*, this respondent faced a moral and political dilemma. On the one hand, his connections to the SLPP demanded loyalty; on the other, the escalating fertilizer crisis and worsening economic instability directly impacted his livelihood and community. As the *Aragalaya* gained traction in his area, with more people aligning with the protest movement, his disillusionment with the SLPP's governance grew. Despite this, he initially refrained from openly participating, reflecting lingering hesitations about severing ties with the system that had once benefited him.

A turning point came on May 9th, following the Galle Face attack by SLPP-aligned goons. In a dramatic moment of instant subjectivation, he joined a crowd near a highway entrance to

confront and retaliate against those returning from the attack. This act marked a significant rupture in his political behavior. While some might argue that his decision was driven by pragmatic concerns - his business, like many others, was suffering under the economic crisis - it is clear that his actions transcended self-interest. Attacking SLPP-aligned individuals and distancing himself from the party's apparatus symbolized a bold and public rejection of the patronage system that had once sustained him.

This shift highlights a deeper and more advanced form of political subjectivity. His willingness to partake in direct, confrontational action against SLPP supporters signifies more than economic frustration; it reflects a growing alignment with the principles and momentum of the *Aragalaya*. This progression - from private disillusionment to active participation in collective resistance - underscores the transformative power of the movement. His narrative demonstrates how the collapse of patron-client networks during moments of crisis can lead to profound realignments in political subjectivity, moving individuals beyond self-interest toward broader identification with systemic change.

The events of May 9th, when government politicians' private properties were set ablaze, marked a critical and symbolic severing of these ties. As these ties unraveled, key actors within the patron-client networks found themselves politically marginalized. During the second stage of the *Aragalaya*, the NPP capitalized on this disarray to mobilize these actors into their transformative political agenda. Unlike traditional parties, which relied on promises of material rewards to secure loyalty, the NPP presented a fundamentally different model of political

participation. It succeeded in incorporating a considerable number of actors who had previously operated within the patron-client framework into its political mechanism. Stripped of their former privileges, these individuals actively joined the NPP's campaigns - not out of expectations for immediate patronage but due to an alignment with its broader vision of systemic change.

The erosion of patronage networks marked a pivotal transformation in citizens' electoral practices, signaling a profound shift in their habitus within electoral politics. This shift can be understood as a reconfiguration of the internalized dispositions and practices that had historically bound citizens to the dominance of the traditional political elite. For decades, electoral submission to these elites was shaped by deeply embedded structures of power, evolved through historical processes, rendering such patterns seemingly natural and inevitable.

While ideological interventions and the dissemination of political knowledge about the ruling elite's corruption were widespread, they proved insufficient to dismantle the cyclical reproduction of these power structures. This indicates that political awareness, when detached from collective action, cannot alone disrupt the mechanisms of symbolic domination that sustain elite control. The rupture became possible only through the emergence of a new political subjectivity forged within the *Aragalaya*. By cultivating a heightened political consciousness rooted in collective action, the *Aragalaya* challenged the internalized structures of submission and facilitated the reimagining of political agency, breaking the entrenched cycle that had perpetuated the electoral success of the ruling elite.

As a people's movement, the NPP managed to contain the collective dynamism within its purview and strengthened the political subjectivity forged during the first stage of the *Aragalaya*. Although Wickramasinghe and his government attempted to reverse the effects of the *Aragalaya*, the NPP as a movement succeeded not only in securing but also in enhancing its positive effects. While the broken networks were a direct consequence of the direct democratic collective practices of the first stage of the *Aragalaya*, in the second stage, the NPP intervened to build new political connections within this vacuum, making transformative electoral politics possible. This stage culminated in the NPP's victory in both the presidential and parliamentary elections.

### **Third Stage:**

#### **Materializing System Change**

To truly move toward systemic change, the transformation initiated by the *Aragalaya* must extend beyond political consciousness and into the structural dimensions of governance. This requires reimagining institutions, mechanisms, policies, and practices through which governance is exercised. The *Aragalaya* has created an environment ripe for such reforms, and under an NPP government, there is potential to develop a new model of governance that values and encourages citizen participation. This vision can be realized at three key levels:

#### **1. Incorporating Citizens into Village-Level Decision-Making Processes**

Village-level governance has the potential to become a cornerstone of participatory democracy. This can be achieved

through establishing participatory committees at the village level to deliberate on local issues such as resource allocation, infrastructure development, and public services. Ensuring that village-level budgets are made transparent and participatory, where citizens can have a say in how local funds are allocated. Creating platforms where local representatives can be held accountable by the village population through regular reviews, feedback sessions, and grievance redress mechanisms. Prioritizing the inclusion of marginalized groups such as women, youth, and minorities in decision-making to ensure that their perspectives and needs are represented.

This approach not only decentralizes power but also fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among citizens, embedding democratic principles at the grassroots level.

## **2. Incorporating Officials into Decision-Making Processes in Government Institutions**

Government institutions are often criticized for being overly hierarchical and resistant to change. Transforming governance at this level involves: Creating platforms within government institutions where officials at various levels can contribute to decision-making processes, ensuring that diverse expertise and on-ground knowledge are incorporated into policies; equipping officials with the skills to engage in participatory governance, emphasizing transparency, accountability, and responsiveness; reducing excessive centralization by empowering officials at different levels.

### **3. Incorporating the Voice of Civil Society Organizations in Policy-Making Processes**

Civil society organizations (CSOs) often serve as bridges between the government and the public, representing diverse interests and providing critical insights into societal needs. Their inclusion in policy-making can be achieved through: Establishing advisory councils comprising representatives from various CSOs to consult on relevant policy areas such as education, health, environment, and social justice; hosting public consultations facilitated by CSOs to gather inputs from communities before formulating or implementing major policies; creating working groups with CSOs focusing on specific issues, such as ethnic question, gender equality, or welfare of Malayaha Tamil community, to ensure that policy solutions are both innovative and grounded in reality; involving CSOs in monitoring and evaluating government programmes to ensure that they are effectively implemented and meet their intended objectives.

This collaboration can help bridge the gap between the government and the people, fostering trust and ensuring that policies reflect the needs and aspirations of society.

The *Aragalaya* has already reshaped political consciousness, but systemic change requires embedding these participatory principles into the fabric of governance. By integrating citizens, officials, and civil society organizations into decision-making at multiple levels, the NPP government can create a governance model that not only reflects the aspirations of the *Aragalaya* but also lays the foundation for sustainable, inclusive, and democratic transformation.

## Conclusion

This paper has argued that the *Aragalaya* did not culminate with the spectacular event of the 9th July but evolved dynamically, transforming its tactics and incorporating new actors onto different stages. The initial phase, characterized by direct democratic methods and grassroots mobilization, gave way to a second stage where the aspirations of the *Aragalaya* were channeled through representational democratic processes. This shift marked a significant moment in Sri Lanka's political history, culminating in the unprecedented victories of the NPP in both the presidential and parliamentary elections. These victories symbolized not only the culmination of the second stage but also the potential for systemic transformation within the country's political landscape.

However, this paper contends that the journey toward fulfilling the *Aragalaya*'s expectations is far from complete. The systemic changes envisioned during the first and second stages of the movement require a subsequent stage - one that experiments with participatory democratic methods. In this imagined third stage, governance will not simply replicate traditional hierarchical models but will actively engage citizens, officials, and civil society in decision-making processes at all levels. This shift would involve institutionalizing participatory practices, ensuring grassroots representation, and fostering collaborative policy-making frameworks that embody the principles of equality, accountability, and justice.

The *Aragalaya* thus represents not just a moment of resistance but a transformative process, one that continues to redefine Sri Lanka's political consciousness and its governance structures.



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