

The Praja Parishad Agitation, Abrogation of Article 370 and the Reshaping of India's Asymmetrical Federation

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Abstract

The abrogation of Article 370 on 5 August 2019 marked a watershed moment in the constitutional history of the Indian Republic, fundamentally altering the terms of Jammu and Kashmir's relationship with the Union. While contemporary discourse has predominantly framed this event as a project of the Bharatiya Janata Party, such an interpretation obscures the deeper historical trajectory of anti-autonomy politics within the region. This paper argues that the Praja Parishad movement, which emerged in the early years following the princely state's accession to India, established the ideological and political foundations for what may be termed the "integrationist turn" in India's approach to asymmetrical federalism. Through an examination of the Parishad's anti-autonomy stand articulated through the slogans like "Ek Vidhan, Ek Nishan, Ek Pradhan" (One Constitution, One Flag, One Premier). This paper traces the *longue durée* of centralizing impulses that culminated in the 2019 constitutional orders. Drawing upon theories of "holding together" federalism, constitutional asymmetry, and post-colonial state formation, the analysis demonstrates that the abrogation represents not an aberration but the logical endpoint of a centralizing trajectory embedded within India's federal design from its inception.