



Social movements and civil society in Modi-fied India

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ABSTRACT:

Until 5-6 years ago, India was considered among the places in the world with a diversity of creative and exciting social movements, and a deep and vibrant civil society. However, 3 years into Modi's government, which came on the explicit promise to "Modi-fy India", the social terrain is one in which social movements of long standing and international renown have little or no presence on the ground, and Indian civil society is under unprecedented pressure. This is happening at a time when the ruling party, the BJP, has blurred the line between party and social movements of the right, while that link is now ruptured for liberal and left-wing parties. The right-wing Hindutva movement, and affiliated organisations in the social and cultural spheres, now occupy commanding positions in 'society', changing its very constitution. This has had a profound effect on how contestations over the constitution of 'society' interact with, and shape, the domains of the 'economy' and of the 'polity'. This lecture explores the conditions that made possible such a decline of left-liberal social movements and civil society, and the rise of right-wing illiberal formations. To what extent are they sui generis, and in what ways can we see them as Indian variant of an increasingly global tendency? How is it related to questions of growth, development and security? In concluding I speculate on the futures of the spaces and modes of resistance to such 'Modi-fication' of India.

READING LIST:

Subir Sinha, On the Edge of Civil Society in Postcolonial India.

Alf Nilsen, "Real, practical emancipation"? Subaltern politics and insurgent citizenship in contemporary India, *Focaal—Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology* 76 (2016): 31–45

Anand Teltumbde, Two Years of an Ambedkar Bhakt and the Plight of Dalits.

http://lib.bjplibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/182/1/CL_LI_23_04062016_Margin_Speak_Anand_Teltumbde_0.pdf