



Universität
Basel

Research Project

A comparative Interpretation of Peoples' Movements: Actors, Democratic Imagination and Evolving Consciousness in India and South Africa

Project funded by own resources

Project title A comparative Interpretation of Peoples' Movements: Actors, Democratic Imagination and Evolving Consciousness in India and South Africa

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Organisation / Research unit

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Project Website <http://zasb.unibas.ch/de/forschung/phd-projects/bobby-luthra-sinha/>

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New social movements in India and South Africa have raised the rhetoric against the gap between the discourses and the practices of their democratic states. This research project studies how actors who have come together owing to a sense of socio-legal injustice weave a sustained politics of the marginalized into the discursive public sphere through their micro social movements (MSMs). What kinds of sites, symbols and frames to the participants use to challenge the hegemonic state? How do their narratives, interventions and alternative methodologies acquire public support and influence policy? The core concern is to see how democracy expands and deepens (or otherwise) in this background. Our main premise is that people engage in imagining democracies as attentive systems just as democracies imagine people as specific kinds of citizens. If people have to cope up with the absence of this 'imagined democratic attention' in their local contexts and life worlds what common subjectivities do they begin to share and what unique propositions do they forward? Case studies will be taken up from Rajasthan in India and KwaZulu Natal in South Africa.

Keywords Social movements and state, dialectics between emic and etic imaginations, frames and repertoires of protest action

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