

I will like to thank MCRG for inviting me in this very exciting workshop on Popular Movements in West Bengal and Bihar in 1950s-1970s. This was a very important phase in West Bengal's politics. But very little work has been done on this topic and also on this period. I would like to congratulate MCRG for doing this very important project.

Anwasha Sengupta's paper is informative and detailed. I congratulate her for such a thorough study of two very important movements of 1950s – the anti tram fare enhancement resistance movement and the teachers' movement. I have some question, mostly clarificatory, to her about her paper.

- a) Anwasha has said that the refugees played an important role in tram movement. Prafulla Chakrabarty has also argued in the same lines in his seminal book *Marginal Nations*. However, Anwasha has mentioned that not all the experts give the same importance to the role of the refugees in this movement. I will request Anwasha to elaborate this point further and reflect on the extent of refugee participation in this movement.
- b) Anwasha has highlighted the role of women in both Tram and Teachers' Movements, particularly the role of Mahila Atmaraksha Samiti. They were women who belonged to the Communist or other left political parties. Did ordinary women also participate/ sympathise with the movements?
- c) Manikuntala Sen has written in her autobiography that she later wondered how ethical was it to drag students into tram and teachers' movements. When these movements were on, many criticized the political parties on these grounds. Anwasha may mention the criticisms and oppositions faced by the agitators from a section of the common people.
- d) Bidhan Chandra Roy was in Europe when the tram movement shook Calcutta. However, during the teachers' movement Bidhan Roy was in Calcutta. Was there any difference noted in the way the government authority dealt with these two movements? Did Bidhan Roy's presence/absence had any impact in the movement?
- e) Shyama Prasad Mukherjee died immediately before the Tram movement began. There was a widespread protest in Calcutta against Mukherjee's death in Kashmir. Public anger against the Congress ministry was very evident in these protests. However, we do not hear about the role of right wing parties and their supporters in these movements. Were they absolutely absent?
- f) I will suggest Anwasha to reflect more on the class and social composition of the teachers who participated in these movements.
- g) The role of the press in both the movements also require more detailed analysis.

I have really enjoyed reading Anwasha's paper and I think this will be an important contribution to the understanding of popular politics of 1950s.