

***Of Resistances and their Interfaces***  
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**The Defining Moments of Left Popular Politics in West Bengal:  
The Food Movements of 1959 & 1966**

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The food movements of 1959 and 1966 have been identified by scholars as the foremost reason behind the end of two decades' Congress rule in West Bengal and the rise of the left as the ruling power. These movements can be seen as two *different* movements having many uniqueness in terms of immediate organisation, location and the nature of popular participation. At the same time, they can be also viewed as two movements having strong linkages, especially in terms of spirit and some organisational methods (like oppositional struggle within and outside the legislature). Following Tilly, we may understand the organisational dynamics of these movements; while, following Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the 'rhizome' we may understand the connectivity among them, despite temporal distance of six and a half years.

Another fundamental question that the present research seeks to address is how to define the 'popular movement'. Or, in other words, what is 'popular' in the 'popular movement'? How could we distinguish it from the party-controlled 'disciplined' one? Is there any 'autonomy', may be a 'relative' one, of these movements which take us beyond the organisational boundaries political parties, and involve a huge quantity of spontaneous 'action' of the common participants/masses? Following both the Tillyian and Deleuzeian insights the present paper seeks to connect not only the 1959 movement with '66 but also the two movements with the left political extremism (popular as the 'Naxalite' movement) in the later years of 1960s.