

## **Panel: Whither Left Politics in South Asia? Past, Present and Future in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

2018 marks the bicentennial year of Karl Marx, one of the founders of modern Social Sciences, who said, 'The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, the point, however, is to change it.' Taking inspiration from Marx, the fundamental question today for those in South Asia is: how to categorise or theorise the various attempts to change state and society over the last few decades? South Asian states have tried socialism, secularism, populism, fundamentalist Islam/Hinduism/Buddhism, parliamentary democracy, military rule, and even different variants of these systems and ideologies. Or is the answer to be found in violent revolution or even Sufism, which, perhaps, has been more successful in building progressive consciousness necessary for changing South Asia. This panel will review the legacy of left politics in South Asia over the past 71 years and its lessons for the present, and way forward for the future.

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