Learning and Self-Criticism

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Vol. 50, Issue No. 36, 05 Sep, 2015


With reference to my review of Manoranjan Mohanty’s book Red and Green: Five Decades of the Indian Maoist Movement (EPW, 29 August 2015), I must apologise to readers for not even mentioning Suniti Kumar Ghosh’s Naxalbari Before and After: Reminiscences and Appraisal (Kolkata: New Age Publishers, 2009). Indeed, this book is still crying out for an honest, full-fledged review. In the preface to his book, Ghosh, a member of the All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR), formed after the Naxalbari uprising in 1967, a founder-member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist–Leninist), and editor of what became its central organ, Liberation, from November 1967 up to April 1972, writes:

[O]ur reverence for our leaders is not uncritical. No sentiment will blind us to the negative aspects of the Party’s policies. We shall not gloss over the errors in their policies and deeds, their shortcomings and limitations; rather we shall expose them fully without sparing anybody’s sensibilities. We must ‘learn from past mistakes to avoid future ones.’ While criticising the erroneous policies of our leaders, we are making our own self-criticism (p v).

… Naxalbari held out a promise—the promise of the liberation of our people from oppression and exploitation. That promise is yet to be fulfilled (p vi).

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