



When the Rolling Pins Hit the Streets: Women in the Anti Price Rise Movement in Maharashtra

Nandita Gandhi

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For three years in the early 1970s, women from different castes and classes came together in Bombay to wage a sustained battle against rising prices. The anti-price rise movement (APRM) took even the leaders of socialist and communist parties - of which many of the women were a part - by surprise. People hailed the movement as the new women's movement, the media gave the protesting women and their chosen symbols - the rolling pin, the tin of ghee, the kitchen ladle - wide coverage. Spearheading the action, the Mahngai Pratikar Samjukta Mahila Samiti, a joint front of women from different political groups, led raids on traders, inspected ration shops, and fought to have hoarded goods released. In 1975, the declaration of a state of emergency brought this vibrant movement to an abrupt halt. This book traces the nature of women's political participation and militancy in the APRM, and relates it to their everyday experiences within the context of the broader political scene in India in the 1970s. It documents the movement and examines its genesis, its forms of protest, its structure and method of organization and raises key questions about our understanding of particular movements and their relevance to political practice.

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