

New Zealand India Research Institute

Integration and Anxiety in Modi's India

Professor Subrata Mitra

For many India observers, the surge in support for Hindu Nationalism, marked by the massive victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party in the parliamentary elections of 2014, and the appointment of Mr Narendra Modi as India's Prime Minister, are a setback for secular democracy in India. For the protagonists of this view, what appear like stray incidents of cow vigilantism, attack on Muslims and elevation of Hindu religious figures into high office, are in fact a setback for modern politics in India. These arguments, however, have deterred the voting public of India from endorsing both the BJP and the leadership of Prime Minister Modi in a string of key elections to regional State assemblies of India. I examine these arguments in terms of the key concepts of 'integration' and 'anxiety' in this lecture. Though contemporary India is the main empirical focus of this paper, I draw on historical parallels to give my analysis a comparative stretch.



Subrata K. Mitra, Ph.D. (Rochester) is Director, Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), and Visiting Research Professor, National University of Singapore. The dynamic interaction of culture and rationality has deeply influenced his research profile, which focuses on governance and administration, citizenship, hybridity and re-use, the evolution of the Indian state from classical to modern times, the transition to democracy and its consolidation, and security and foreign affairs of South Asia. He has published widely, with numerous books, journal articles and chapter contributions in each of these areas, contributing both to the theory of political science as well as empirical studies and comparative research in area studies. *Culture and Rationality* (Sage 1999), *The Puzzle of India's Governance* (Routledge 2005), *Re-use: the Art and Politics of*

Integration and Anxiety (Sage 2008), *Politics in India* (Routledge 2011, next edition due in September 2017), *Kautilya's Arthashastra: Classical Roots of Modern Politics in India* (Nomos 2016) represent different facets of his oeuvres.

Date: Friday, **24 November, 2017**

Time: 5.30-7.00pm

Venue: **RHMZ06** (Rutherford House, Pipitea Campus)

Limited seating – RSVP to india-research@vuw.ac.nz