

Two-day International Conference
 on
**Instruments of Intervention: Capitalist Development
 and the Remolding of the Indian State**

Organised by

**Australia India Institute and School of Social and Political Science,
 University of Melbourne
 Institute of Development Studies Kolkata**

**Date : 10-11 December 2015 Venue : IDSK Salt Lake Campus
 DD 27/D, Sector I, Salt Lake
 Kolkata 700064**

Programme

10 December 2015

10:15 a.m. Registration

10:30 -10:45 a.m. Welcome address by organizers

Session I *Chair* : **Anthony D’Costa** (University of Melbourne, Australia)

10:45 a.m. – 12 noon **Aditya Nigam** : *The Story of ‘Capital’ in Post-Colonial India: Theorizing the Politico-Economic Complex*
 (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi)

Sushil Khanna : *India since the 1980s: Emerging Capitalist Class and the Making of a “new” Political Economy*
 (HHL Graduate School of Management, Leipzig, Germany)

12 noon– 12:15 p.m. TEA

Session II *Chair* : **Manabi Majumdar** (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta)

12:15 – 1:30 p.m. **Archana Prasad** : *The Benevolent State and the Possibility of Subaltern Counterpublics: Re-examining the Working Class in Contemporary India*
 (Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi)

Salim Lakha : *Social Protection and the State in India: The Challenge of Extracting Accountability*
 (Department of Social and Political Science, University of Melbourne Australia)

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

LUNCH

Session III

Chair : **Prasanta Ray** (Institute of Development Studies Kolkata)

2:30 – 3:45 p.m.

P. Arun : *Retreaded Indian State : Symbiotic Relationship of Surveillance and Capitalist Development in 21st Century*
(Department of Political Science, University of Delhi)

Elizabeth Chatterjee : *Distinctively Dysfunctional: 'State Capitalism 2.0' and the Indian Power Sector*
(Frank Institute for the Humanities, University of Chicago, USA)

3:45 – 4 p.m.

TEA

Session IV

Chair : **Subhanil Chowdhury** (Institute of Development Studies Kolkata)

4 – 5:15 p.m.

Priya Chacko : *Emerging Regimes of Market Citizenship: The Politics of Social Policy in Contemporary India*
(Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Adelaide, Australia)

Babu P Remesh : *Rereading the 'Auto Revolution' in India with a Labour Lens: Shifting Roles and Positions of State, Industry and Workers*
(Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi)

11 December 2015

Session I

Chair : **Ratan Khasnabis** (Formerly of Dept. of Management, University of Calcutta)

10:30 -11:45 a.m.

Ranabir Samaddar : *Debt, Crisis and State Restructuring: Post-colonial Lessons from Greece*
(Calcutta Research Group)

Anthony P. D'Costa : *Compressed Capitalism, Employment, and the Structural Limits of the State*
(University of Melbourne, Australia)

11:45 a.m. – 12 noon

TEA

Session II

Chair : **Sushil Khanna** (HHL Graduate School of Management Leipzig, Germany)

12 noon – 1:15p.m.

Mathew McCartney : *Building on the NREGA: General Welfare in India after 2014*
(Contemporary South Asian Studies Programme, University of Oxford, UK)

Niloshree Bhattacharya : *Globalization, the State and Social Movements: A Study of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha*
(Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta)

1:15 – 2:15 p.m.

LUNCH

Session III

Chair : **Mathew McCartney** (Contemporary South Asian Studies Programme, University of Oxford, UK)

2:15 – 3:30 p.m.

Achin Chakraborty : *From Passive Beneficiary to 'Rights Claimant': What Difference Does it Make in Regimes of Intervention in India?*
(Institute of Development Studies Kolkata)

Anjan Chakrabarti & Soumik Sarkar : *State, Capital and Need: The Case of Food Security*
(Department of Economics, University of Calcutta)

3:30 – 3:45p.m.

TEA

Session IV

Chair : **Rajesh Bhattacharya** (Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta)

3:45 – 5 p.m.

Siddharth Sareen : *Interventions and Aspirations: Constructing Local Governance through Resource Access and Authority*
(University of Copenhagen, Denmark)

Tannen Neil Lincoln : *Political Regimes and Distributive Politics: A Study of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Contemporary Gujarat, India*
(Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore)

5 – 5:15p.m.

Vote of Thanks

ABSTRACTS

Retreaded Indian State: Symbiotic Relationship of Surveillance and Capitalist Development in 21st Century

P. Arun

Department of Political Science,
University of Delhi

Modern technological advancement brings about changes in the nature and functions of the modern state, which makes it essential for us to reconsider the relationship between the Indian state and the Indian democracy. Nowadays, data collection has begun to be treated as storable material in order to retread the state and, to rejuvenate governance, democracy and development. From the lens of surveillance studies, this paper shall explore the nature of Indian state which is being retreaded in the twenty-first century. Currently, surveillance needs to be regarded not just as a technological entity but as a grand narrative which has accreted as a cultural entity to reduce fear, insecurity, mis-governance, corruption and access to speedy public service delivery and welfare. However, in the production of such a cultural discourse, the utilization of surveilling technologies by the state for its ideological and developmental discourse is something quite apparent in Modi's era. It is deployed to observe, monitor, influence, support and restrain those who are the 'five-star activists' and 'five-star investors' of national development. This paper will focus on recent actions taken by the Indian state against two individuals - Priya Pillai (Greenpeace) and Christine Mehta (Amnesty International). The main focus here is to disentangle the nature of the retreaded state by exploring the symbiotic relationship of surveillance and capitalism in India. In such a context the surveilling mechanisms are deployed to stitch the counter dissenting voices. Finally, this paper will inspect the counter effects of deploying sovereign power in arbitrary manner on freedom of expression, human rights, democracy and citizenship.

Globalization, the State and Social Movements: A Study of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha

Niloshree Bhattacharya

Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta

In the era of globalization two interlinked changes can be observed – growing power of supranational institutions and the changing nature of the state. Globalization characterized by

processes of economic integration and greater flow of people, ideas and capital, has transformed both, the nature of the state and social movements. Several scholars have looked at the transformed role of the nation-state and the nature of social movements during globalization. The mutual relationship between social movements and the State has also been studied in social movement literature, using the political process model. Given that social movements and the state have been transformed somewhat, the purpose of this paper is to understand, the reflections of these transformations on the state-social movement relationship. This paper is based on my doctoral research with a farmer's movement, Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) and a transnational agrarian movement, La Via Campesina (LVC). By looking at two cases, land acquisition and genetically modified food, this paper will attempt to understand how a farmer's movement perceives and engages with the state. It has been seen that, with the changing nature of the State, social movements, besides addressing the State, consider it more crucial to engage with transnational networks, advocacy organizations and address supranational institutions.

Emerging Regimes of Market Citizenship: The Politics of Social Policy in Contemporary India

Priya Chacko

University of Adelaide, Australia

Contrary to expectations, many countries that have embarked on neoliberal market reform are also increasing spending on welfare programs. This paper argues that processes of neoliberalisation produce new forms of political contention around the terms of inclusion and exclusion in society which is reflected in the creation of contending citizenship regimes. This is not just the outcome of the negative effects of 'roll-back' neoliberal policies, but the result of civil society appropriations of the notions of accountability, localisation and participation that often accompany neoliberal projects. The paper examines new forms of political contention as they have taken form in campaigns for social and economic rights in India. It argues that civil society campaigns have sought to appropriate notions of accountability, localisation and participation to further a regime of social citizenship in India. Successive governments, headed by two different political parties, however, have reappropriated these ideas to push varied regimes of market citizenship which seek to reconcile social policy with market reform. These variegated regimes of market citizenship reflect distinctive political and ideological commitments as well as pre-existing electoral, institutional and political landscapes.

State, Capital and Need: The Case of Food Security

Anjan Chakrabarti

Soumik Sarkar

Department of Economics,
University of Calcutta

There are two objectives of this paper. First, we intend to present a framework to argue that the aspects of social needs and class process of surplus labor are intrinsically linked in a mutual relationship. Resultantly, the state must contend with and indeed be situated within this mutually constitutive relations as also the struggles over these. Secondly, we want to exemplify my point by intervening in the debate on food security from a Political Economy angle to highlight (i) that class matters for social need of food security and (ii) the Indian state remains caught within the contradictory pulls and pushes of class/capital and social need of food security as also struggles over them. Thus, we contend that the present transition of Indian economy must be understood in a framework that sees its structure as embedded within the state-class-capital-need complex.

From Passive Beneficiary to 'Rights Claimant': What Difference Does it Make in Regimes of Intervention

Achin Chakraborty

Institute of Development Studies Kolkata

achinchak@gmail.com

In the past decade there was an apparent shift in the Indian State's approach to welfarist interventions – from the earlier approach focusing on 'targets' and 'beneficiaries' to the so-called right-based one. Several Acts were passed during this time, ostensibly to allow citizens to make moral claims on the behaviour of the State and individuals, as well as on social arrangements in general. How important is this shift? In this paper, we develop an analytical perspective to interpret this shift, starting from a brief account of the series of events that culminated in such important legislations as the Right to Information Act, 2005, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, and the much contested Food Security Bill. While the normative discourse on rights and capabilities highlights the importance of the 'discursive practice' in shaping public policies, it throws very little light on how it influences and is influenced by the 'political practice'. The subsequent emaciation of the rights language in policy discourse with the change of regime in India vindicates the view that, in modern Indian politics, democratic struggle for positive rights does not turn out to be the dominant mode. The perception of disadvantage continues to be expressed in terms of social identity based collectivities rather than interest-based ones.

Distinctively Dysfunctional: ‘State Capitalism 2.0’ and the Indian Power Sector

Elizabeth Chatterjee
University of Chicago, USA

In India, state intervention has persisted but has proved far from immune to critiques of traditional dirigisme. Since 1991, waves of reforms have partially reshaped India’s crucial power sector to create a hybrid and regionally differentiated state-market system. Blurring the public-private boundary, this reinvented ‘state capitalism 2.0’ displays both refurbished modes of intervention and new governance arrangements with private players.

Nonetheless, as the power sector’s continually dismal condition suggests state capitalism 2.0 has not (yet) provided a coherent alternative to older dirigisme or the Anglo-American mode of ‘deregulatory’ liberalization. The paper argues that the ad hoc emergence of this state-capitalist hybrid has generated dysfunction. Coupled with competitive politics, its ever-increasing institutional complexity has rendered it internally incoherent. State intervention in India has therefore remained simultaneously indispensable and dogged by persistent administrative difficulties. This helps to explain the apparently contradictory nature of the contemporary Indian state: simultaneously business-friendly, populist, and often underperforming.

Compressed Capitalism, Employment, and the Structural Limits of the State

Anthony P. D’Costa
Australia India Institute and School of Social and Political Sciences,
University of Melbourne, Australia

This paper examines the nature of changing labor markets in India and identifies the severe structural limits of the state in creating plenty of meaningful jobs. The argument is follows: the instruments of intervention available at the state’s disposal are highly constrained due to a variety of structural endogenous and exogenous factors, whose cumulative and combined effect has been to generate a form of late capitalism that does not follow the classical capitalist transition pattern. Instead the uneven development resultant from this type of capitalism is unable to create neither desirable type nor high volume of jobs. This late form of capitalism is compressed due to both pre-mature stagnation and leapfrogging in specific sectors and industries and by which the classical or agrarian transition is either incomplete or stalled and thus unable to play its historic role of raising agricultural productivity to motor capitalist industrialization. Relatedly, the limited industrialization, albeit with some globally visible sectors, is suggestive of uneven development that comprises both capitalist maturity and a relatively structurally undifferentiated informal sector, where routine features of capitalism

such as the spread of wage labor, job security, and formal contracts are missing. If empirically it is shown that the significance of Indian agriculture in terms of its economic contribution has substantially decreased but workforce participation remains high with limited off-farm work, while industrial contribution has stagnated then employment remains a serious challenge. India's favorable position in tradable services is no panacea since services employment is largely in the informal or unorganized sector. All of these go to suggest that the very nature of Indian capitalism is something we have not witnessed before and it is in this context that state intervention for employment creation needs to be assessed. This paper examines changing labor markets in India by theorizing the structural nature of really existing capitalism and indicates the difficulties the state faces in inducing a transition on capitalist lines in which employment generation (or wage work) is an important milestone.

India since the 1980s: Emerging Capitalist Class and the Making of a "new" Political Economy

Sushil Khanna

HHL Graduate School of Management
Leipzig, Germany

To any casual observer of the Indian business scene, it is obvious that there has been a tectonic shift in the size and clout of the capitalist class in India. The (in)famous 20 families of Hazari's study¹ have faded from the national scene even as they still count amongst the old rich of India. These business groups, to cite D R Gadgil², had their roots in traditional trading castes of India like *baniyas* / *vaishayas*/*chettians* / *Parsis* etc,. Today, a new breed of entrepreneurs have emerged on the national scene and in every region and state³, controlling an increasing share of corporate assets an emerging among the fastest growing economic entities. Many belong to the more prosperous agrarian classes and regional social elites with political networks and connections. What is significant is also the rise of many professional entrepreneurs who have come to dominate new sectors of the Indian economy. Sectors like advertising, consulting, architecture and town planning, legal services, non-banking finance, information technology and also pharmaceuticals / bio-technology are today firmly under the control of professional groups often from qualifications from elite academic institutions (Institutes of Technology, Silicon valley networks) and foreign universities. Real estate has emerged as another area where the hegemony of such groups is clearly visible, as are its links to regional politicians.

Yet, this changing social base and composition of Indian bourgeoisie, its roots in regions and states and in most cases amongst communities, not thought to be entrepreneurial, and new elite networks has remained an under-researched area⁴. Baru also thinks that there is a big gap in our understanding of regional business groups and their role in development of capitalism in

¹ Hazari, R.K., 1966, "The Structure of the Corporate Private Sector: A Study of Ownership and Control, Bombay.

² Gadgil, D. R. (1967). *Origins of the modern Indian business class: An interim report*. University of British Columbia

³ Khanna, S. (1987). The new business class, ideology and state: The making of a 'new consensus'. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 10(2), 47-60

⁴ Baru, S. (2000). Economic policy and the development of capitalism in India: the role of regional capitalists and political parties. *Transforming India: social and political dynamics of democracy*, 207-230.

India. Though Baru focuses on agrarian roots of many new entrepreneurs, professional networks that are important in new emerging sectors like e commerce, information technology etc. are today even more important. This phenomenon, Baru argues has been ignored by social science research.

Simultaneously, there are equally significant shifts in the political economy. Nehru and the old guards who shaped the early state with the explicit objective of establishing `socialism', sought to craft a state to control micro decisions of private entrepreneurs - size, location, choice of technology etc. This state was led by old guards who were part of the freedom movement, and were often seen to be hostile to big business and landed elites, threatening the former with nationalisations and the latter with land reform bogey. By 1980s, we see the erosion of all-India hegemonic political parties, and rise of regional political formations. Without exception these new political forces clearly championed the interests of these rising regional business formations that found it difficult to deal with centralised bureaucracy and political patronage network of Delhi. Over the years, the relationship between regional parties (or even state units of national parties) and these powerful and rising regional business interests has been cemented. Today, a large number of legislatures are classified as `businessmen', a phenomenon that has gone largely unnoticed in academic research. Simultaneously, small enterprises numbering more than 5 million units and employing about 24 million workers/ employees, control significant part of assets, and account for 25-30 per cent of exports; these enterprises have emerged as an important site of capitalist accumulation and upward mobility in an expanding economy.

Our paper will explore the rise of the new class of entrepreneurs since 1980s and their role in rising private accumulation in India. They are also in the forefront of the diversification of the manufacturing and commercial sectors in the economy. Our study aims to analyse the extent of control exercised by such new entrepreneurs in some major sectors of the economy including organised large / public listed firm. We hope to delineate the sectors entirely under the control of such new business groups (e-commerce, retail, professional and IT-based services etc). In addition, we will attempt to identify regional groups whose rise is closely linked to their links with the regional political formations and politicians (like Reddy brothers of Bellary).

The paper will explore the changing composition of state and national level political representatives (MPs and MLAs) using data from Surveys of Association for Democratic Reforms and other state legislature websites. This we hope will demonstrate the shifts in the political base of emerging capitalist and business groups, many of them have also been "*democratically elected*" as people's representatives

Gadgil, D. R. (1967). "*Origins of the modern Indian business class: An interim report.*" University of British Columbia.

Social Protection and the State in India: The Challenge of Extracting Accountability

Salim Lakha

University of Melbourne, Australia

In the aftermath of the Asian Financial Crisis (AFC) some observers pronounced the demise of the developmental state. This view has recently been challenged by scholars who argue that rather than the demise of the developmental state, the role of the state has been reconfigured in the post-AFC period to meet new economic challenges and social demands. The provision of more inclusive social protection by the state is now a significant consideration. This presentation will examine the role of the state in social protection in India with reference to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) of 2005. There are two distinguishing features of MGNREGA: it guarantees employment as a legal right and through the provision for mandatory social audits by the beneficiaries of the scheme, it promises accountability from below. However, it is arguable whether the state has demonstrated a capacity to deliver effectively on its rights-based program. This paper raises the central question: What does the implementation of MGNREGA reveal about the capacity of the state to provide social protection and accountability in contemporary India? The paper cautions against viewing the state as a homogenous entity.

Building on the NREGA: General Welfare in India after 2014

Matthew McCartney

University of Oxford, UK

McCartney and Roy (2015) examined a long standing and well justified consensus about India that proved to be wrong. This view was that India would be unable to promote a regime of rules-based welfare and rather, schemes providing targeted patronage open to political clientelism and bureaucratic manipulation would remain the norm. Rules-based welfare targets people according to broad objective criteria such as poverty or illiteracy and welfare based on patronage or clientelism sees recipients trade their support for individualised benefits such as loan write-offs for small farmers and eligibility is associated with the discretionary decision of a politician or bureaucrat. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGA) launched in 2006 defied this consensus. NREGA was a large, rules-based welfare scheme based on self-selection among beneficiaries and clear economic criteria and provided broad based benefits, largely to those in poverty. The 2015 paper justified that the NREGA was indeed a paradox and constructed a number of hypotheses to explain it. These hypotheses related to information, political mobilisation and the changing nature of Indian politics after the 1990s. This paper will build upon the hypotheses suggested in this earlier paper and examine their implication for welfare more generally in India. Whether this transformation in the ability/willingness of the state to provide rules based welfare has important implications for the link between economic

growth and human development that has recently been debated between scholars such as Sen, Bhagwati, Panagariya and Dreze.

The Story of 'Capital' in Postcolonial India: Theorizing the Politico-Economic Complex

Aditya Nigam

Centre for the Studies of Developing Societies,
New Delhi

The paper attempts to present a preliminary outline of a way of narrating the story of 'capital' in post-independence in India that steers clear of two broad conventions of writing this story. One convention sees it as a story of 'the economy' and its supposed internal logic (in the name of which neoliberalism mounts its attack on the Nehruvian import-substituting industrialization model), and the other that seeks to bring in the centrality of the state's interventionist role in promoting capitalist development (various shades of radical and Marxist tellings, irrespective of whether they see it as a capitalist state or a relatively autonomous one that mediates between the interests of different sections of capital and or propertied classes). One of the more sophisticated attempts of the latter kind is that of the Gramsci-inspired attempt to theorize the story of postcolonial capital as one of 'passive revolution'.

The argument in my paper, while broadly sympathetic to the latter (in its passive revolution incarnation) moves away from the categories of 'capital' and 'state' and focuses on what I tentatively call the 'politico-economic complex'. I use the term 'politico-economic complex' to refer to specific historical configurations that emerge at different moments, when boundaries of the political and the economic are reconstituted. I argue that there are no fixed boundaries that define the two domains; rather they are constantly negotiated and renegotiated – and not simply because of the functional requirements of capital. Nor are they renegotiated and reconstituted because of the requirements of 'postcolonial governmentality', as an influential recent argument by Kalyan Sanyal suggests. Rather, both 'the political' and 'the economic', I argue, need to be understood not merely as the business of 'state', 'governmentality' and 'policy' but seen instead as deeply imbricated in the popular. Thus for instance, we can neither understand Indira Gandhi's populist swerve to the 'Left' (through bank nationalization, abolition of privy purses etc) and the new governmentality of the Emergency (twenty point programme etc.), nor indeed the successes of neoliberalism in enlisting wider support without reference to the popular. Nor indeed can it be understood with reference to the 'legitimation' problematic offered by both the Gramscians and Kalyan Sanyal.

The Benevolent State and the Possibility of Subaltern Counterpublics : Re-examining the Working Class in Contemporary India

Archana Prasad

Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi

The period of liberalization and globalization has witnessed the emergence of two contrasting theories on the role of state. Post liberalization period witnessed the growth of theories that argued in favor of deregulation (Chaudhuri 1996). They stressed on the withdrawal of the role of state due to the economic processes. The proponents of globalization argue that the market works best if left unattended by the state. State 'intervention' is seen to restrict and limit private initiative, strangles economic development on the basis of national protectionism and, ultimately, undermines bourgeois cosmopolitanism on the basis of nationalism and war (James, 2001). By and large, employers argue that excessive labour regulation hinders growth, and rigidity contributes to unemployment. The international institutions supported the deregulation of the labour market. The World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) designed non-intervention of state. Their policies and programme are supportive of the neoliberal ideology of free market. They therefore considered labour regulations as restricting successful reforms for economic growth. The second schools argue that in spite of market becoming strong the state would continue to hold its position. That is to say that the state has withdrawn but only partially. It has been observed that state as a meta-force is diminishing but at the level of local governance it is still active and the boundaries between state and society is not given, rather it is contested, constructed and reconstructed through everyday interaction. In its interaction, however, the state has arrived at a nexus with the capital. This is evident in the increase of violent labor unrest all over the world.

If we look at the literatures, there have been an innumerable studies and reports highlighting the plight of the workers in terms of declining wage, sweatshop working conditions, diminishing trade union, informalization and fragmentation of the working class not only in India but across the globe. My research emerges from the question- What next for the working class? That is to say that given the benevolent character of state and deteriorating condition of working class, what is the future for the workers? In order to arrive at any kind of an understanding the research intends to firstly map out the manner in which the role of state has transformed in the last decade. Today it appears that the three pillars of industrial relations-employer, employee and state, is altered into two pillars where the state has joined the employers. This symbolizes danger for the workers where the employers are capitalist and state supporting capital.

In Eighteenth Brumaire of Napoleon Bonaparte, Karl Marx, wrote, 'All great world-historic facts and personages appear, so to speak, twice... first time as tragedy, the second time as farce'. Looking at the series of labour unrest in India it can be said that it has both tragedy and farce. The tragedy is the increase in violence leading to death and homicide. In the earlier periods of labour movement in India there have been strikes, lockouts, protest but no violence. In the recent years there has been a series of labour unrest where either the employer is killed or the

employee is murdered and the farce being the connivance of both state and labour with the market allowing capital to rule. Members of trade union seizing to participate after their pockets are filled and state declaring strikes/lockout as illegal. So in today neoliberal economy, right to collective bargain is a law and order problem.

A historical examination of the emergence of the benevolent state would be carried by looking at the following:

- Reforms in labour laws-anti-workers law , non-implementation of pro-workers laws
- Making of new industrial policies for the establishment of SEZ/EPZ which declares the right to form trade union as illegal
- Non-functioning of state apparatus in terms of guaranteeing rights of employees which in turns allowed the entry of TNCs and civil society to initiate private labour regulations
- Modes of functioning where state is entering into a nexus with capital and the repercussion of working class.

The mapping of the nature of transformation from welfare to neoliberal state the research intends to explore its consequences on the lives of workers. This would necessitate the re-examination of two important sociological concepts of 'working class' and 'class consciousness'. The objective would be to understand their relevance in comprehending workers condition in neoliberal economy. As envisioned by Karl Mark and Karl Polanyi, working class has potential to take forward global capitalism. But then happens to this class? Is there the possibility of raising their voices? if yes, who listens to their voices and for what ? These are some of the question that the second part of the research would explore. By seeking answers to these questions, attempt would be to locate subaltern counter publics in understanding the working class in India. This would be analyzed at two levels- firstly understand the level of interaction among workers in their residential unit where workers working in different industry stay together. Secondly comprehend the response of workers on issues ranging from absence of trade union to large scale labour unrest.

The research would be qualitative in terms of doing ethnography of the workers living in city of Gurgaon, NCR, Delhi, India. The reason for selecting Gurgaon is that the city itself is the product neoliberal economy with large scale industrial production taking place. As a result the city is overcrowded with workers working in different sector of the economy but due to poverty and lack of house facilities residing together. Such heterogeneous group, in terms of their varied experiences of collective bargaining at their work place, is significant for the study. The research would make use of the techniques of interview, questionnaire, focus group discussion and case studies. Since the first part entails documentation of the transformation, literature review is integral to the study.

Rereading the 'Auto Revolution' in India with a Labour Lens: Shifting Roles and Positions of State, Industry and Workers

Babu P. Remesh

School of Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Studies
Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi

The paper critically examines the evolution of automotive industry in India and explains as to how the various industrial policies and specific policies concerning the sector have shaped the current state of labour affairs in the sector. It explains the 'tierisation' process in the automotive sector; traces the temporal transformations in the value chains and discusses the labour implications of these changes. It is shown that with the expansion and evolution of buyer driven value chains, the precariousness of work in the industry has also been on the rise.

The changing roles and positions of the state, capital and workers are critically examined by analysing the implications of various policy interventions. Alongside capturing the growth and pattern of evolution of industry, due attention is also given on establishing connections and linkages between a number of related aspects such as land acquisition policies of the state, growth of landlessness, distress migration and crowding in of migrant workers near industrial clusters, insecurity of transit labour in alien workplaces and so on. Eventually, the paper concludes that 'auto revolution' in India has been blooming at the cost of worsening labour standards, with growing job insecurities and dismal working conditions.

Debt, Crisis, and State Restructuring: Post-Colonial Lessons from Greece

Ranabir Samaddar

Calcutta Research Group

This paper reflects on the post-colonial nature of the Greek financial crisis and shows how this reflection is important for the much of the world including India. On this basis, the paper analyses the deal imposed by Brussels on Greece over fresh loan and debt repayment and suggests that the deal shows how the state is to be restructured in the neo-liberal age. The main purpose here is to examine in the light of twenty first century capitalism few notions such as debt, crisis, rupture, mobilization, neo-liberalism, war, and migration. The paper examines the nature of the debt crisis and the extent to which the issue of debt can work as a mobilizing focal point in social struggles, more importantly as a template for transformation of social consciousness towards political rupture. In this context the paper examines the hard nature of the debt obligations of a state and the consequent change in the nature of the state towards becoming a neo-liberal machine, paralleled by the illusions of the traditional Left regarding the possibility of a return to the old welfare model of a state. The paper also argues that in this age

almost no country can be free from currency crisis in as much as no country can be free from migration from outside and live as a sanitized territory free from the impact of war and devastation. The lessons from debt, crisis, and the restructuration of the state are valuable for India.

Interventions and Aspirations: Constructing Local Governance through Resource Access and Authority

Siddharth Sareen
University of Copenhagen

This paper interprets how capitalist development is remoulding the Indian state in its rural forestland, by contextualising multiple instruments of intervention within Jharkhand's village life. It deconstructs three empirical instances of access to and authority over resources, positing that despite poorly-functioning local governance, a grassroots 'capacity to aspire' engages with governmental interventions. The first instance concerns villagers' attempts to acquire title deeds over traditionally claimed land, the second addresses a traditional village-cluster's protest against regulation of wood access by one village, and the third handles extortion by a Maoist insurgent group from a corrupt local contractor under an anti-insurgency scheme. Interpretations are empirically informed by six months of ethnographic fieldwork conducted between December 2012 and January 2015 in Ho Scheduled Tribe communities in West Singhbhum district. Arguments theorise the state through the interplay of local governance, democracy, access to resources, and inclusive development. They show how marginalised groups' local engagement with the state, rather than being supported by democratic decentralisation, takes place sporadically and constitutes a frustrating relationship. This paper makes sense of the conundrum of villagers' involvement in state functions despite little working at present, arguing that enabling interventions' positive outcomes for such populations can build inclusive local governance.

Political Regimes and Distributive Politics: A Study of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Contemporary Gujarat, India

Tannen Neil Lincoln
Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore

How do political regimes create patron-client relations at the micro level and what is the rationale behind the establishing of these patronage networks? Surveying the literature on patronage, clientelism and distributive politics the dominant argument that emerges is '*the logic of contingent exchange of benefits for votes during elections*'. In this context, the central question around which this project is developed is, *what are the modalities through which the BJP regime has established a patron-client relationship with its expanding political base in the state of*

Gujarat, India? Drawing inferences from a primary level field survey at the micro (ward) level in two districts of the state of Gujarat, the study finds that the 'architecture of clientelism' is largely defined by the political gain of the regime rather than on constructs of ethnic and religious identity. This argument largely challenges the assertion that the BJP in its method of political control resorts to measures of ethno-nationalism, especially in Gujarat. In lieu of the confined approach to distributive politics, my research provides for an alternate line of reasoning that is largely rooted in understanding the micro aspects that define the larger context in which patron-client networks are established. Further, the methodological approach of 'political ethnography' adopted for the study has factored in administrative and political units such as taluks, wards and polling booths to analyze aspects of distributive politics at the micro level. This approach has largely been a 'hybridized' one that has not only contributed significantly to the entire endeavour, but in turn has provided a space for re-theorization of clientelism in general, and, in specific the contemporary nature of the BJP as a political party and a regime in Gujarat. Further, the study highlights the changing contours of the 'state' in lieu of the dynamism exhibited by the brand of politics and economic model of development that is popularized in Gujarat.

Instruments of Intervention: Capitalist Development and the Remolding of the Indian State

2nd Interdisciplinary Conference on Contemporary India

Organizers:

Anthony P. D'Costa, Chair and Professor in Contemporary Indian Studies Australia India
Institute and the School of Social and Political Science
University of Melbourne

Achin Chakraborty, Professor and Director, Institute of Development Studies, Kolkata

Concept Note

Most countries after World War II adopted some variation of state-led, Keynesian, social democratic, or outright “communist”-party driven economic coordination for development. For India it was no different. Five-year plans, planning commission, targeting of heavy industry through industrial policy, protectionism, and foreign exchange controls were some of the many instruments used by the Indian state to direct and shape India’s development trajectory. However, exhausted by the statist approach to development, by the 1990s India had again moved on with the rest of the world. This time it was through economic reforms, market liberalization, and a more purposeful reintegration with the world economy. Nearly a quarter century after the 1991 economic reforms, state intervention in economic management had definitively taken a back seat, or so it seemed with the election of Narendra Modi, who presented himself as a corporate-friendly manager ready to transform the bureaucratic lethargy of the state and usher in a boundless and energetic capitalist India.

How true is this broad trajectory of the Indian state and to what extent is the current administration reshaping the Indian state more narrowly? No doubt some of the old instruments of intervention, such as industrial licensing, have been dispensed with. Yet Modi’s “make in India” (MII) manufacturing strategy reads more like an industrial policy document where both domestic and foreign firms are encouraged to invest, transfer technology, and to source their products and services from India. The continuation (with some modifications) of the previous government’s National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), considered to be the world’s largest employment program, is another instrument through which the state wants to help those who do not have employment all year round. The modifications are double-edged: reduced allocations for central government programs but greater autonomy for local states to use the central government funds. Similarly, the Land Act of 2013, legislated by the previous government, while subject to revisions by the current administration, is another sign that the state has not given up on its farmers even as it facilitates land acquisitions for big business and infrastructure projects, including smart cities.

The broader goal of creating a modern and robust capitalist India is not new. Jawaharlal Nehru attempted it with the state at the helm of economic development, while Modi, more pragmatically and in a very different global setting, has pushed the idea of a more modern, confident, futuristic, capitalist India. In doing so, the state has not abdicated its societal obligations or economic intervention. However, for all practical purposes, the state remains two faced. On the one hand, for example, the state acquires land on behalf of capital, and on the other, designs laws to rehabilitate and resettle those dispossessed and displaced due to

land acquisition for non-agricultural purposes. The state also has a third face, namely, dodging that accompanies taking and giving. For example, by eschewing “privatization” or not reforming Indian “labor” laws, allegedly a principal barrier to investment, the Indian state today is neither neoliberal in a profoundly altered capitalist landscape nor dirigist as some of the contemporary industrial and employment programs seem to suggest. Rather, it is a state that constantly reinvents itself subject to the idiosyncrasies of Indian political economy and democracy and the broader capitalist dynamics of the world economy.

The Indian government’s various policies, strategies, and legal measures, when seen as instruments of intervention, raise a number of questions about the continuing role of the Indian state in development and transformation even at a juncture when it is ideologically unacceptable and instrumentally difficult, although it is financially practical. We pursue the following three threads, without foreclosing others. They are directed toward empirically-informed theoretical papers that document and shed light on the changing/unchanging character of the Indian state, its effectiveness in economic and social transformation today, and the evolution of instruments themselves in tackling India’s massive and myriad developmental challenges and opportunities, such as employment of youth or its role as the R&D back office of the world.

- The first thread deals with the changing nature of the relationship between state and capital and the mediating role of society in influencing developmental outcomes. However, given the internal heterogeneity of the Indian state, the variation in regional political forces, and the rise of Indian businesses in specific sectors, disaggregating this changing relationship demands deeper scrutiny. It also remains to be seen whether industrial, employment, and other interventionist policies work in the context of deregulation and international integration.
- The second thread calls for the assessments of major state-sponsored programs in terms of their internal logic, consistency across a set of related programs, and external referents vis-à-vis actual outcomes, acknowledging that the MII is very recent and the land act remains a work-in-progress. Relatedly, how regional variation in program outcomes relates to the working of the local state, making the interaction between government, business, and local communities another line of inquiry.
- The third thread poses the question of democracy and its relationship to the Indian variety of capitalism as seen through the lens of the various state-sponsored interventions that take, give, and avoid. At first blush, most instruments have a democratic sentiment attached to them, such as employment through manufacturing and rural development and protection of farmers from arbitrary dispossession and displacement. Yet the very same MII appropriates land and the land act dispossesses workers, peasants, and other marginalized communities. The de facto privatization through informalization and cutbacks also generate insecure employment. How to theoretically negotiate this ambiguous role of the Indian state calls for revisiting the on-going role of the Indian state in economic governance.

We welcome proposals that build on any one of these broad threads. We expect to have a balance of papers between the three threads, between the instruments chosen for analysis, and a balance between empirically informed theoretical and theoretically informed empirical papers.

Date of Conference: December 10-11, 2015 (two days)

Venue: Institute of Development Studies Kolkata, India