



HUMAN RIGHTS BEYOND THE LAW

Politics | Practices | Performances of Protest

14-17 September 2011

Sonipat and New Delhi, India

Organised by

Collaborative Research Programme on Law,
Postcoloniality and Culture at Jindal Global Law
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SCHEDULE

**DAY 1 – Wednesday, September 14, 2011 @
Jindal Global Law School, Sonipat**

9.30-10.30 am – Registration and Breakfast

10.30-11.00am – Inauguration and introduction to workshop

11.00am-1.00pm –

Opening Plenary: **WHAT IS INSURRECTIONARY KNOWLEDGE?**

This conversation will engage with questions regarding the role of critical theory within neo-liberal spaces of higher education, and what it means to engage with a theory of revolution under conditions within the academy where particular kinds of predatory knowledge and aggressive breeds of expertise are deeply entrenched. Can academic boycotts be a method of revolutionary practice within the university space? How do we imagine and practice a radical pedagogy of critical theory?

Participants:

B.S. Chimni, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Vinay Lal, University of California, Los Angeles

Saroj Giri, University of Delhi

Pankaj Jha, University of Delhi

Costas Douzinas, University of London [via video conference]

Wendy Brown, University of California, Berkeley [correspondence]

Moderator: Sunalini Kumar, University of Delhi

1.00-2.00pm – Lunch

2.00 – 4.30pm – *Parallel Sessions*

Session 1A: **THEATERS OF RESISTANCE** / Discussant: Nita Kumar,
University of Delhi

This panel explores theatre and theatricality as cultural resistance. Examples span the globe, from “agents of pain and shame” on the Indian stage, to cultural practices in micro-peripheral islands within the territories of the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia, to a reading of the performance of “sabotage” in the figure of the Indian Ladino in Latin America, to the revolutionary genealogies and current political deployments of agit prop theater.

RACHMI DIYAH LARASATI: Dancing Women and New Borders: A Response to the Global Network of Anti-Terrorism in Southeast Asia

ALEJANDRO JAVIER VIVEROS ESPINOSA: Sabotage and the Indian “ladino”: Towards a Judicial Reflective Modulation of Colonial Latin America

TRINA NILEENA BANERJEE: Antigone’s Claim? : Political Extremity and Performance of Pain by Women on the Indian Stage

SWATI PAL: From Russia With Love: Agit Prop in and as Theater

Session 1B: **UNRULY MARGINS**/ Discussant: **Rukmini Sen, Ambedkar University**

While oppression based on caste, class, tribe, and disability are not new, these are among the more recent categories to be translated into the formal language of "rights". The papers in this panel describe how ongoing attempts to contain claims and deprivations within the four corners of the law are frustrated by the unruly margins of experience.

MEERA JENSY MOORKOTH: Registers of Property and Spaces of Resistance: *Adivasi* Politics in Kerala

SAPTARSHI MANDAL: Legal Discourse and the Normalization of Manual Scavenging in India

JATINDER SINGH: Excavating the Political Economy of SC/ST (PoA) Act, 1989: Dissenting Voices and Narratives from the Field

PHILIP VINOD PEACOCK: Convert, Contest, Protest: The Contours and Politics of Dalit Conversion Movements

4.30-5.00pm – Tea/ Coffee and Break

5.00-6.30pm – Documentary Film: **MULLAITIVU SAGA: EXPLORING THE TEXTURES OF A PLANNED GENOCIDE** directed by **S.Someetharan**/ followed by a Q&A with the director

6.30-8.00pm – Music: **IMPHAL TALKIES** - **Akhu, Sachin, Riki and Raju**

8.00-9.00 – Dinner

DAY 2 – Thursday, September 15, 2011 @ Jindal Global Law School, Sonipat

8.30am-9.30am – Breakfast

9:30 – 11:00am –

Keynote Lecture: **HOMONATIONALISM GONE VIRAL: TRANSMISSION, AFFECT, ASSEMBLAGE**

Jasbir Puar, Department of Women's & Gender Studies, Rutgers University

Homonationalism as a concept and a term has emerged in relevance to numerous debates about sexual rights in various locations in North America, Europe, and the Israel-Palestine conflict. While homonationalism itself may well become reified as another identity formation, in this paper I connect the original intentions behind its theorization and trace its paths of transmission through various forms of technological innovation. With a focus on both the work of Palestinian Queers for BDS and the Dan Savage's It Gets Better project, I argue that these paths belie and undermine any stable identity formation and rearticulate homonationalism not as an accusation, a problematic subject positioning, or something to oppose, but rather an assemblage of affect, bodily forces, and discourses.

Respondent: **Ashley Tellis**, Jesus & Mary College, University of Delhi

11:15am – 1:45pm – Parallel Sessions

Session 2A: **THE (IN)JUSTICE OF RIGHTS**/ Discussant: **Rohee Dasgupta, Jindal School of International Affairs**

If universalism and particularism are both vulnerable to charges of essentialism, what kinds of critical engagement with the language of rights can lead to emancipatory goals? This panel draws upon fieldwork and political commitments to feminism, LGBT, food sovereignty and cultural rights, their links to protest practices and instances of engagement with rights and justice, and beyond the language of law.

M. MOHSIN ALAM: 'Religion' versus 'Rights': Why *We* are wrong about 'Defamation of Religions'

DIANNE OTTO: Pursuing Gender Pluralism through International Human Rights Law: Promise and Limits

DIANA SANKEY: Challenging liberal rights: the work of the Food Sovereignty Movement

VANJA HAMZIĆ: Unlearning Human Rights and False Grand Dichotomies: Indonesian Archipelagic Selves beyond Sexual/Gender Universality

Session 2B: **JUSTICE IN THE PERFORMATIVE**/ Discussant: **Shohini Ghosh, Jamia Millia Islamia**

This panel uses the analytic tools of "performance" and "performativity" to analyze art, rituals or ordinary life, with topics ranging from the performance of power by gacaca courts in Rwanda, to the cinematic imaginations of Constitutionalism, to the Pink Panty campaign and the practices of citizenship in the age of digitized development.

BISHAKHA DATTA: 3P: Perform, Protest, Play

LAWRENCE LIANG: Awara's Constitutional Amendment: Love and Justice in Cinematic Courtrooms

ANANDA BREED: Juridical Performatives: Public versus Hidden Transcripts

NAMITA MALHOTRA: Performing Citizenship in the Information State: Downloading the State

1.45-2.45pm – Lunch

2:45 – 5:15pm – Parallel Sessions

Session 2C: **THE POLITICS OF POLITICS**/ Discussant: **Ajay Gudavarthi, Jawaharlal Nehru University**

What is "politics"? This panel examines particular conceptions of "politics" (politics as power, solidarity, morality, democracy, or enmity) as well as possible conceptual opposites (politics against law, theory, or the dissident body). In order to re-evaluate the possibilities of politics, panelists draw from a variety of theoretical sources (Kant, Foucault, Chatterjee Butler, Ake, Spivak), as well as events (e.g., the death of Ramachandra Siras), and cinematic texts from Hollywood and Bollywood.

JARED LIST: Voices from the Periphery: Democracy and Abuse in the Global Context

KANCHANA MAHADEVAN: The Enlightenment to Resistance: From Foucault to Chatterjee

ASHLEY TELLIS: Re-configuring languages of Protest: Re-writing Human Rights through Culture

PRAEM HIDAM: Love of life and Dangers of Law in Sharmila's Fasting

Session 2D: **INVERTING VULNERABILITIES** / Discussant: **Sarada Balagopalan, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies**

Recent headlines concerning children in disaster-stricken Haiti, human trafficking, homophobia in Uganda, and the Anniversary of the Bhopal tragedy, each mobilize familiar narratives about vulnerability and victimhood. The scholars on this panel go beyond media accounts, drawing upon fieldwork to de-familiarize each of these narratives and restoring to them some of their complexity.

LISA KELLY: A Child of the Nation

RAHUL RAO: The Location of Homophobia

RENU ADDLAKHA: Disability Discourse Beyond the Law: Is it a Possibility?

SUROOPA MUKHERJEE: Literatures that Emerge from Within Social Movements: The Case of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy

5.15-6.00pm – Tea/ Coffee and Break

6.00-7.00pm – Contemporary Dance: **'LANGASUKA: POLITICS OF MEMORY'** by **Zubin Mohamad**

7.00-8.00pm – Music: **THE FORGOTTEN TRADITION: ITPA'S SONGS OF PROTEST** by **Sumangala Damodaran**

8.30-9.30 – Dinner

DAY 3 – Friday, September 16, 2011 @ Jindal Global Law School, Sonipat and Alliance Française de Delhi

8.30-9.30am – Breakfast

9.30 – 11.00am –

BOOK TALKS (presented in collaboration with **Oxford University Press India**)

Rahul Rao, School of Africal and Oriental Studies, University of London
THIRD WORLD PROTEST: BETWEEN HOME AND THE WORLD (OUP, 2010)

Anupama Roy, Jawaharlal Nehru University
MAPPING CITIZENSHIP IN INDIA (OUP, 2011)

Rajshree Chandra, Janaki Devi Memorial College, University of Delhi
KNOWLEDGE AS PROPERTY: ISSUES IN THE MORAL GROUNDING AS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (OUP, 2010)

Discussant: **Madhulika Banerjee, University of Delhi**

11.15am – 1.45pm – *Parallel Sessions*

Session 3A: **VOCABULARIES OF REVOLUTION** / Discussant: **Bimol Akojam, Jawaharlal Nehru University**

In India the discourse of "revolution" has typically been cast by all sides in the frames of public spectacle and public disorder, of violence and counter-violence. This panel re-situates three revolutionary movements—modern Maoist-advansi encounter, and the Naxalbari and JP movements of the 1970s— in the less familiar frames of everyday life, intimate memoirs, and poetry, casting each in unfamiliar light particular idioms and comparative insight.

UDAY CHANDRA: Remaking Leviathan: Rulers, Civilizers, and Rebels in Historical and Contemporary Jharkhand

SAMRAT SENGUPTA: What is an outside? What is a revolution without outside? What is an outside without revolution?

JHUMA SEN: Law, Violence and Mass Movements: Re-presenting Resistance in Chhattisgarh

RITA SINHA: Bihar 1974: The Poetry of Revolution: a very personal testament

Session 3B: **BODIES IN PROTEST** / Discussant: **Lakshmi Arya, Jindal Global Law School**

Tactics of resistance mobilize the body in various states of dress, undress, and undoing. This panel brings into conversation various case studies of the uses of the gendered body in protest: the use of the garment called the Phanek, uses of nudity in India and Nigeria, the liminality of the dancer's body and the limit case of suicide terrorism.

SHREEMA NINGOMBAM: The Politics of Phanek in Protest- An Interpretation of Its Symbolic Meaning

PREETHY ATHREYA: A Body? Free from Protest.

LIPIKA KAMRA: Embodied Resistance: Theorizing Female Suicide Bombers

IHEDIWA CHIMEE: "Our bodies have won the victory": Interrogating Nudity and Human Rights Protests in Nigeria

1.45-2.30pm – Lunch

2.30-3.30pm – Music: **Adi Dharm Samajh**

4.00pm – off to Delhi (snacks on the go)

6.00-8.30pm – Film Screenings at Alliance Française de Delhi

Film: **'ARRIVAL'** directed by **Mani Kaul** (In memoriam)

Film: **'STHANIYA SAMBAAD'** directed by **Arjun Gourisaria and Moinak Biswas** / *Introduced by:* **Brinda Bose, University of Delhi** / *Q&A with director moderated by:* **Prasanta Chakravarty, University of Delhi**

8.30pm-9.30pm – Dinner

9.30pm – bus back to JGU campus

**DAY 4 – Saturday, September 17, 2011 @
Instituto Cervantes, New Delhi**

9.00am – Bus leaves JGU campus (breakfast on the go)

11:00am – 1:30pm – *Parallel Sessions*

Session 4A: **DISSIDENT LOCATIONS/ POSITIONS**, Discussant: **Anil Persaud, Ambedkar University**

Dissidents find themselves in unexpected locations and subject positions; people in various locations sometimes find themselves in the unexpected position of being dissidents. This panel will describe disparate locations of dissidence, ranging from the tactical spaces occupied by human rights organizations during the War on Terror, to mechanisms of social vigilance and justice that were instituted in the military dictatorships in Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, to the dilemmas of “loitering” bodies in gendered public space in Mumbai.

GABRIELA GONSALVES: The Enemy Within: Othering and Surveilling during Authoritarian Regimes in the Southern Cone

AVIVA STAHL: Between a Rock and Hard Place: Cageprisoners and the Double-Edged Nature of Human Rights Discourse

SIDDHARTH NARRAIN: Seditious Laws and Strategies of Resistance

SHILPA PHADKE: Loitering Bodies: Some Dilemmas in Gendered Public Space

Session 4B: **VIOLENCE IN/OF THE CITY**/ Discussant: **Janaki Nair, Jawaharlal Nehru University**

The City has emerged as a major site for investigation of contemporary concepts of sovereignty, protest and citizenship. This panel brings into conversation scholars who are mapping the dilemmas and discontinuities of development in urban settings throughout the Global South, from Delhi to Luanda, from Kolkata to Bogota.

GARGA CHATTERJEE: Necropolitics and the Stubborn: Stories of Death and Dying, Between Homestead and the Divine

SUNALINI KUMAR: Chronicle of a Death Untold: The Lethal Geographies of Delhi's Periphery

LUIS ESLAVA: “I feel like a dog with the tail between its legs”: The Limits of Protest and the Pedagogy of Deception

CAIO SIMÕES DE ARAÚJO: Broken houses, Insurgent voices: the ‘right to the city’, human rights and the ‘politics of the governed’ in Luanda, Angola

1.30-2.30pm – Lunch

2.30-3.30 - Poetry Reading: **REVOLUTIONARY POETICS** - **Ashley Tellis, Amartya Kanjilal, Akshi Singh, Shad Naved, M.R. Adithyan, Sonya Gupta, William Stafford**

3.30 – 5.00pm -

Closing Plenary: **POSTCOLONIAL PEREGRINATIONS: REFLECTIONS ON SUBALTERN STUDIES IN SOUTH ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA**

Where is the here and now and where will be the then and there of “subaltern studies”? Where will a critical stocktaking of the future of “subaltern studies” in South Asia and Latin America take us? What are the ‘new’ directions in which “subaltern studies” scholarship has moved transnationally? Has “subaltern studies” outlived its relevance? Has its very success in reworking the idea of subjectivity made it redundant because an un-problematized notion of the subject no longer exists against which the subaltern can be counter-posed? How else to explain the end of Subaltern Studies Volumes from the original collective?

Participants:

Ileana Rodriguez, Ohio State University
Shail Mayaram, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies

Moderator: **Nivedita Menon, Jawaharlal Nehru University**

5.00-5.30pm – Tea/ Coffee

5.30-6.00pm – **Closing Comments by Conveners**

6.30-8.30pm –

Poetry: ‘A FEAST OF FLESH’ by **N.D. Rajkumar**

Third Theater: ‘SOAKED, STRETCHED AND SUBMERGED: A CHOREO-POEM’ performed by **Surjit Nongmeikapam, Gautam Bajoria and Parnab Mukherjee**

8.30-9.30 – Closing Dinner

EXHIBITIONS

@JGLS: **September 14-17, 2011**

Faultlines, Freaks and Frenemies: Protest Art between Identity and Alterity

Curated by: **V.K. Suleiria**

@Instituto Cervantes: **September 17-October 16, 2011**

Unframed: A Minor Memorabilia Collection from the Damned

Visual installation response to Pablo Neruda's Book of Questions and Jorge Luis Borges' The Gold of the Tigers

Curated by: **Parnab Mukherjee**