

**REPORT OF
A RESEARCH AND DIALOGUE PROGRAM**

on

Social Justice in India

**Calcutta Research Group
Kolkata**

January 2009

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Perspective

To appreciate the perspective against which the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group (CRG) took up a three-year research and dialogue program on social justice we have to recall in 2003 CRG had embarked on a research agenda on some of the critical questions facing post-colonial democracies, such as India. One of these questions was the issue of *autonomy* – a theme neglected in conventional studies and policy knowledge on democracy. The research and the dialogues on the theme of autonomy, conducted with the support of the Ford Foundation, investigated the constitutional, legal, financial, resource-centered, administrative, gender-just, and other possible forms of autonomies. Autonomy was viewed both as something that belongs to human beings and human nature and as something that is the source or basis of morality, that is, duty, and is bound up inextricably with the philosophy of our time. In the background of the anti-colonial movements the term gained new perspectives and meanings, which implied not only new rights but also new responsibilities. It became the emblem of group rights. In time the idea of autonomy became not only the standard of rights or responsibilities, but also a mark of how governments co-opt popular demands and turn them into characteristically official forms of administration and relating to others on the basis of set rules. Therefore the research and dialogues on autonomy repeatedly came up with the issue of governmentalised forms of autonomy, routine, officially sanctioned, bureaucratic, as against the demands and ideas of autonomies that sought to address the incipient demands for justice. The research and dialogue reports and the published volumes of this program (*The Politics of Autonomy*, *Indian Autonomy – Keywords and Key Texts*, and *Autonomy – Beyond Kant and Hermeneutics*) have brought out the fundamental point that autonomy cannot be seen as an exceptional principle (mostly for ethnic minorities), but as an essential democratic principle moderating all aspects of our public political life. It implies thus not one overarching model of autonomy, or autonomy of one people constituting the nation, but re-imagining the democratic space as the intersecting field of autonomies (hence, dialogic relation between autonomies), as a fundamental conflict resolution mechanism of the political society, as the field of accommodation. The program on autonomy also initiated the method of combining collective research and dialogues.

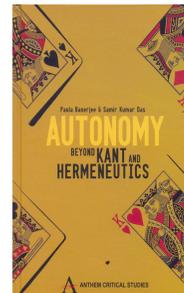
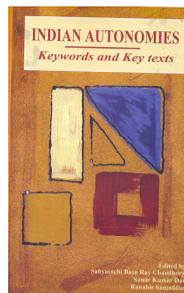
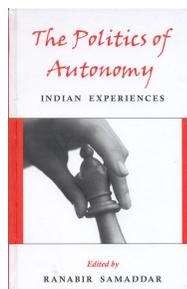
Publications

- *The Politics of Autonomy – Indian Experiences* / Sage, 2005
- *Indian Autonomy – Keywords and Key Texts* / CRG and Sampark, 2005
- *Autonomy – Beyond Kant and Hermeneutics* / Anthem, 2007
- *Report of a Dialogue on Autonomy* / CRG, 2004

The Program

This method has been put to further practice and development in the following research and dialogue program on social justice. The program on social justice combined to a greater extent the two components of research and dialogues in the process of investigation into the critical role notions of justice play in a post-colonial democracy, such as India. As a consequence, two features mark the ethnographic and critical legal studies that have ensued from the program on social justice: (a) There have been enormous collective inputs in the research findings; (b) These studies have been placed in a pronounced historical orientation.

To summarize the features of the second program: There have been efforts to identify various forms and notions of justice in Indian social life, such as, revenge as justice, instant forms of justice, restorative justice, allocative form of justice, gender justice, legal, moral, transitional, and minimal forms of justice, justice as constitutive of rights, justice in form of the right to claim making, justice as response to marginal situations, and finally justice as the supplement of rights. In this research and dialogue program nearly one hundred and fifty leading activists and thinkers participated, and shared their views and knowledge on social justice. In course of these researches and dialogues and in the ensuing reports and publications on the state of justice in India once again the issue came up – the interface of the opposing realities of popular notions and governmental notions of social justice. The research agenda deals a lot with actually existing notions of social justice, which have greatly influenced Indian democracy and governmental ways of delivering justice. On the other hand, the dialogues combined with public lectures in Kolkata and Darjeeling have immensely contributed to our collective knowledge on the state of social justice in the country, thrown up new ideas and questions, and have shed light on how collective struggles for justice go on in this country with or without the help of law. At a fundamental level, these social conversations have been instrumental in clarifying various notions about the relations between justice and law, ethics and justice, respect, restitution, and rights. They have also helped us in gaining knowledge about various repositories of archival material on justice, such as popular tracts, manifestos, legal materials, other popular writings, political declarations, and reportages that tell us a lot about various perceptions on justice. All these reports are available in print and are on CRG website (www.mcrpg.ac.in)



The program, planned as a rigorous multidisciplinary research on the concept and realities of 'Social Justice' in India, began in early 2006 with the support of Ford Foundation. The challenges in terms of research were three-fold: (a) Given the nebulous philosophical and experiential understanding of the word, to make concrete and practical sense of the word, "justice", which meant that the research program would at the end have to make sense of the many ideas, situations, concepts, expectations, mechanisms, and practices indicated by the word *justice*; (b) Likewise how to make a collective sense of the social context of justice, social content of justice, and the social sites of justice; (c) And, the challenge of holding dialogues between not only many persons and groups, but many senses also around the idea and reality of *social*, and the many forms of the reality of *justice*.

The four segments of the program were:

- Research
- Dialogues
- Public lectures
- Publications

The program was based on the main argument that there is no a priori formulation of the principle of social justice. Situations of marginality produce ideas of justice. Lack of access to means of representation, resources, and survival means such as education, health, etc. produces marginality. One of the implications of this manifold context is that while the issue of justice is studied only or mostly in terms of governance, its delivery mechanisms, and the various governmental forms of justice, social justice as different and distinct from governmental justice emerges as a distinct category of social reality to be inquired and appreciated in its own right. Such a study, it was argued, would have to concentrate on the forms of social justice indicated above, the impact of legal procedures on popular notions regarding avenues of ensuring social justice and law as a process contributing to the idea of social justice, the "justiciability" of social justice, and the significance of the particular relation between rights, capabilities, and claims in terms of the idea of social justice.

In this context, it was decided that a series of ethnographic studies would be undertaken to investigate and analyze the actually existing notions of justice among various sections of population and to find out if any broad idea of social justice emerges from those inquiries.

In brief, the points emerging from the study are:

- What constitutes the social of social justice?
- What constitutes the relation between marginalities and social justice?
- What determines the field of the interaction of command, order, law, and determination of the just?
- How do we relate the five dominant forms of justice – justice as the supplement of law, justice as the protection offered by the mighty, justice as order, justice as the end of exploitation; and justice as that which begins as response to injustice?

Research Segment

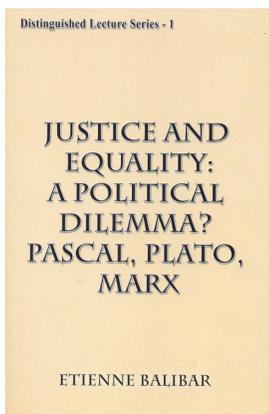
The research agenda took note of the significance of the idea of justice in the Indian national movement and in its associated ideas and thoughts, and the wide demand for justice from each of the underprivileged sections of the Indian society, and the recurring incidents of communities assuming the responsibility of delivering direct justice in the background of perceived delays and determining their own norms of justice, the proposed inquiry assumes significance. During the national movement there were several articulations of the idea of justice; similarly in the constituent assembly proceedings competing and complementary ideas of justice emerged. Likewise in the writings of several thinkers justice has been discussed from various angles. Apart from intellectual, theoretical, and literary exercises, other discursive and institutional exercises have been marked by popular thoughts and ideas. Various manifestos, leaflets, pamphlets, popular writings, sketches, songs, newspaper articles, speeches, etc. have been the other sites where ideas of justice at the popular level have been articulated. The research framework also took account of the fact that social justice is an arena only partly covered by law; rest is covered by social and political ideas and practices. Ethical ideas about honour, right, respect, autonomy, claim, share, revenge, and shame also play significant role in determining mores of justice. A sense of entitlements also has a role to play. Justice thus propels variety of forms – from social-economic rights, to the forms of justiciability, forms of redistribution of wealth, the form of due process, and most important the subjective experiences of justice as distinct from the attempts to construct certain objective tests of justice. In this context the research framework decided to take note of the parts played by social movements and social mobilisations in determining the popular concepts of justice.

Accordingly, the research segment of this enquiry decided to produce a series of reports on justice, which after due analysis would be collectively published in the form of a multi-volume series publication on 'Social Justice'. The segment contained three types of research – historical, ethnographic, and analytic. In all fifteen research papers were authored. Some were published under the research paper series of the CRG, and now as planned 4 comprehensive volumes are being published under a series on 'The State of Social Justice in India'. Once the research papers came in, CRG followed its system in place for their evaluation and improvement through peer reviews, collective discussion workshops on those papers, and internal editing before they were made ready for publication.

Two discussion workshops around these papers were held in Kolkata where these were extensively discussed. These workshops took place on 31 May 2007 and 4 July 2007 respectively. These one-day workshops were intensive, there were outside invitees who commented on the research papers, improvements and revisions were suggested for the authors, and the workshops were both evaluative and dialogic and made the research work in the full sense of the term participatory. CRG later on sent the minutes of these two meetings to all the participants of the workshops.

In brief the subjects covered in the research papers:

- *Indexing Social Justice in India - A Story of Commissions, Reports, and Popular Responses*
- *The Intertwined Destinies of Violence and Social Justice - A Story of Some Villages in Bihar*
- *Dalit Perceptions of Justice*
- *Origins, Subsequent Development and Current State of the Land Acquisition Act in the Perspective of Social Justice*
- *Courts, Law, Affirmative Actions, and Social Justice*
- *Marginality, Justice Seekers, Law, and the Courts*
- *Ethnographic Study on AIDS, Marginalities and Social Justice in India*
- *Case for Transitional Justice in India*
- *State of Environmental Justice in India*
- *Social Justice Matters in Local Development – Case Study of Some Villages in West Bengal*
- *Locality Matters in Perceptions of Social Justice - Case Study of Some Villages in West Bengal*
- *Social Justice Issues in a Plantation Economy – A Study of Tea Gardens of the Darjeeling Hills*
- *Institutional Dynamics of Social Justice for the Indigenous People in Central India*
- *Justice and Forms of Claim making – A Study of the Unrest over Land Acquisition*
- *The Founding Moment - Study of Social Justice in the Constitutional Mirror*



Etienne Balibar, *Speaking at the Valedictory Session of the Second Critical Studies Conference*

Dialogues and Conference Segment

Besides the two workshops which have been mentioned earlier, in all five dialogues and one conference were held under the program.

A series of three dialogues on justice marked the first year of the program (2006) where about seventy people took part from diverse backgrounds. These dialogues were combined with public lectures in Kolkata and Darjeeling. These dialogues helped clarifying different ideas, confusions, strengthening the research framework, and establishing the research network. They also contributed to the collective knowledge on the state of social justice in the country, threw up new ideas and questions, and shed light on how collective struggles for justice go on in this country with or without the help of law. Besides the Ford Foundation, the Lok Niti Program of the Centre of the Study of Developing Societies, the European Union and the International IDEA supported the third dialogue.

The first dialogue was held in Kolkata on 5 June 2006. It aimed to take note of the *trends in the developing literature on social justice*. Of these the two main trends, one consists of writings that focus on formulating or analyzing normative principles of justice, which governments and the states and other delivering agencies ought to follow in course of their administrative and welfare actions. The second trend is made up of ethnographic researches, which concentrate on how people negotiate their ways through different systems of justice – customary or modern – existing in society, and make their own meanings of justice. The highlights of this of this dialogue was identifying themes and case studies with special reference to West Bengal and eastern India, and developing an appropriate research design; understanding in this context the complex relationship between theory and ethnography; preparing a comprehensive, annotated bibliography that would include a list of texts of relevant policies, enactments, public interest litigations and relevant legal decisions, material relating to popular demands for justice, and popular tracts on justice and finally, identifying the institutional locations, resources and individual researches in the country particularly in West Bengal and eastern India.

The second dialogue was on “*An inquiry into the Conditions of Social Justice in India*” and was held in Darjeeling, on 26-28 June 2006. Continuing from where the Kolkata deliberations left, it noted in particular the situations of marginality that produce ideas of justice. Lack of access to means of representation /resources / survival means such as education, health, etc. produces marginality. Similarly displacement creates marginal situations. Likewise minority status engenders marginal existence. Hereditary discriminations have the same effect. Gender has the same role. These marginal situations have one thing in common – they speak of a matrix of power. It was also discussed as to how many aspects intersect to form the context of social justice – ethical ideas of the people, laws, the evolving nature of claims, and the pattern of collective claim making politics, institutional issues relating to the delivery mechanisms of justice, ideas about rights and entitlements, ideas among the citizens about responsibility of

the rulers towards them, plus many situations generating many conditions of justice. All these make the social context of justice, also the social form and social site of justice.

The third dialogue took place in Bhubaneswar, on the specific theme of “*Justice and Democracy in Divided Societies*”. It was held on 20-22 November 2006. The main objectives of the dialogue in this context were: To explore the dynamics of social divisions in contemporary South Asian societies that are compounded by governmental operations, and transform divisions into marginalities; To propose a possible agenda of social justice in the context of divided societies – an agenda that bases itself on marginalities and can address therefore the issues of justice in a new way; To suggest policy alternatives in terms of their bearing on democracy. The legal fiction of a homogeneous public immune from the operations of power in the society in the existing literature of justice and democracy was also noted. As the legal fiction subsumes governmentally produced social divisions – mentioned above, issues of justice get continuously sidetracked and pushed into the background. In other words, democracies of modern times bring into play a discourse where they produce injustice without being seen as such. Thus, it is not surprising, as the discussion emphasised, that marginalities, livelihood crises and hunger deaths do not get constituted as public agenda of social justice. Various participants emphasised the need to push democracy beyond the grids of governmentality by teasing out the implications of social divisions for issues of justice, and the need to bring them to bear on the functioning of contemporary democracies in a divided society, such as India. In this context the dialogue gave shape to the idea of minimal justice – justice that emerges out of dialogues across divisions in society.

The dialogue narratives were published in form of a combined report, titled, *Dialogues on Justice* (2007), which was subsequently put on the CRG website.

Second Critical Studies Conference

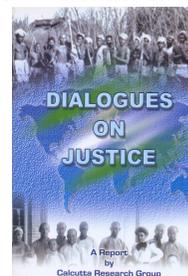
The yearlong discussion in various circles in the country set the theme and tone of the hugely successful and widely noted Second Critical Studies Conference on the theme of “*Spheres of Justice*”. The conference was organized as part of the public engagement that CRG had continued on the theme of Social Justice. It was held in collaboration with the International college of Philosophy (CIPh), Paris, as part of a three year collaboration on research and conference between CRG & CIPh. It was held on 20-22 September 2007. A public organizing committee with members drawn from various institutions of the city was in charge of the conference. A section of the CRG website was dedicated to the conference. Abstracts, full papers, comments, lectures, and details of the participants were put up there. On-line registration was encouraged. The aim was to assemble various views on justice and relevant ethnographic

In this three-day conference nine panels presented twenty-four papers dealing with various aspects, namely:

- **The philosophical and moral dimensions**
- **Feminist ideas and practices**
- **Cultural representations, marginalities and the issue of justice**
- **Juridical discourses on justice**
- **Various ways of collective claim makings, forms of violence, and the issue of responsibility.**

studies, and analysis of the legal and other theories and practices. The Conference achieved a high academic standard and scholars and intellectuals from across India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bulgaria, France, Argentina, Australia, Germany, Italy, Finland, United Kingdom, and Croatia were present during the Conference to present their views. Their presence led to an intense exchange of views and greater understanding of the commonalities and the variety of situations. The exchange led to the setting up of a network to continue the collective engagement in form of critical thinking on issues of democracy and justice, and an international editorial board to publish the papers in various forms. One of the appreciated features of the conference was the contribution by young scholars. The presence of college teachers on a notable scale throughout the conference was another feature that was appreciated. The noted philosopher Etienne Balibar delivered the public lecture of the conference on 21 September on the theme of Justice and Equality, and the text was subsequently published. The conference and the publication of the public lecture received help from the French Cultural Center Maison des Sciences de l'homme (MSH), Paris and the Prince Claus Fund, whose help in particular enabled the young scholars to come to Kolkata and participate. All other participants traveled on their own resources.

The Conference had a special feature. Just after the conference there was “A One-Day Workshop with Etienne Balibar. A select group of participants were invited to join the workshop. In the first half of the day, Etienne Balibar spoke on his recent research interest, current research work and reflections on his past work; and in the second half five commentators took up five important topics of Balibar’s work for discussion, and commented on it. The presentations were followed by interjections from the participants and created enormous thought provoking dialogue. The report of the workshop is on CRG website. The full report of the conference was prepared by Giorgio Grappi, a participant from Bologna, Italy. Grappi was the chief rapporteur of the conference. The report along with papers and abstracts is now on the website. CRG plans to publish a volume based on select papers of the conference, provisionally titled, “A Colloquium on Spheres of Justice”.



Subsequently on 14 March 2008 an Indo-French colloquium on *Experiences of Women and Social Justice* was held in Kolkata. It was held in the University of Calcutta. The program was organized with partial help of the ICSSR (eastern Region) and the MSH, Paris. Prof. Sonia Dayan Herzbrun and Prof. Dominique Fougeyrollas from University of Paris VII participated. Distinguished scholars from Kolkata and other parts of India also joined the seminar. Among the themes debated was how gender just are citizenship norms in France and India and the interface of violence and gender justice in South Asia. The dialogue program had a tremendous influence on CRGs network. It introduced over a hundred people to CRG. One of the most interesting aspects of the dialogues was the involvement of young researchers and college teachers. As a result of these dialogues CRG found a host of collaborators for its public lectures and film screenings. Among college teachers association with CRG is highly valued with requests to CRG members to give talks on issues of social justice coming in at high frequency. As a result of these dialogues CRGs programs are widely attended today. Among college teachers the discourse on governance and justice has become extremely popular.

More Exchanges of Ideas and Experiences: The Issues of Right to Food and Development, Governance, and Justice

The Right to Food

The issue of right to food came up repeatedly in these dialogues and discussions as one of the most significant in the field of delivery of justice in a developing country like India. Participants in two more dialogues specially convened in Bhuvaneswar and Kolkata (May and August 2008) on the issue of socio-economic rights and social justice repeatedly emphasized that in the light of the existing structure of vulnerabilities in the country the right to food could not be seen as merely an economic right, or, only a matter of food security. The awareness that the right to food is one of the most critical rights to be claimed in a post-colonial democracy such as India is one of the gains of the rights movement. Food riots particularly in the recent wake of globalization, structural reforms, rising inflation and food prices, have occurred in many parts of the globe, including Asia. The right to food has close links with entitlement patterns in society and their gendered nature, the disabling effects of persistent hunger, presence or absence of employment guarantee scheme, integrated child development services, mid-day meal schemes for children, public distribution system, presence or absence of land rights, starvation deaths, coercive displacement, forest rights, and social exclusion. All these have close relation with the quality of available social justice.

These two discussions have emboldened CRG to undertake a small pilot study on the right to food, especially on the role of rights bearing institutions in ensuring food security in West Bengal. The Kolkata discussion focused on the need to find out what has gone wrong with the Public Distribution System (PDS) in the state and the measures required for its resuscitation. Accordingly a small study was undertaken to look into the dynamics of the representation system involved in guaranteeing the right to food. The damage repayment method of working out food scarcity is also being investigated. The study hopes to point out how the concept of 'right' needs to be concretised at the level of villages, so that the right to food becomes a right in the sense of being accessible to people who need food. Associated issues such as vulnerability of an occupational community (such as fishing or artisan group) to food insecurity in the wake of a breakdown of the existing pattern of occupation, food and nutrition, re-definition of BPL (below poverty line) category, loopholes in the various forms of food entitlement and direct and indirect food distribution schemes in operation were also discussed at length in these two deliberations and are now being taken up for concrete study in the context of West Bengal. Both Bhuvaneswar and Kolkata discussions noted the persistence of hunger among significant parts the population and stressed the need to unearth ways of taking a fresh look into the issue of the right to food beyond what has been articulated in various forums and institutions. One of the aims of the study is to bring the findings to the notice of the National Human Rights Commission and the State Human Rights Commission.

Development, Governance, and Justice

These discussions, dialogues, and exchanges of views spread over two and half years culminated in a stock taking exercise involving intense deliberations over two days in Bhubaneswar on 24-25 May 2008 on the central theme of “Development, Governance, and Justice”. The meeting was premised on the fact, to which all the participants agreed, that the related issues of development, governance, and democracy enveloped all aspects of social justice and its delivery mechanisms. This concluding dialogue had another purpose, namely to chart out the path of further research, dialogue, and outreach activities based on the last five years’ work on autonomy and social justice – two of the significant issues in the working of post-colonial democracy. In all 22 participants shared their views, and among the participants were social scientists, jurists, human rights activists, development workers, and historians.

Studying governmental processes in a developmental democracy means focusing on the inter-relations between democracy, development, and governance in a post-colonial country such as India.

The participants in course of the discussions noted the massive “securitisation” of governance in the wake of developmental tasks. From taking over land to building oil and gas pipelines, constructing airports to guarding railway tracks, cleaning cities of lumpen elements, professional rioters, vagrants, suspected terrorists, militants, and urban refugees – the developmental discourse is now mixed with the security discourse. The aim of security administration is to provide cover for the developmental activities (Gandhamardan, Singur, pipelines, etc.), but more important, the developmental agenda has to be governed now in a military model – regimented, disciplined, command structured, hierarchized, carefully budgeted in terms of provisions. Guarding,

The dialogue was conducted on the basis of

- What are the continuities and discontinuities in governmental practices after the first transition, that is from colonialism to independence? Similarly, what are the continuities and discontinuities in governmental practices after the second transition that is from welfare orientation of government to a developmental regime instituted by a market state? In this context the dialogue inquired, what are the similarities and differences between the two transformations of governance?
- How have people responded to the particular governing processes and technologies?
- Or, how has the process of governing treated the people in this developmental conundrum? In other words, if development has required an appropriate administration, has it in the same measure responded to the requirements of democracy?
- And finally, what are the characteristics of a developmental democracy? Can we say that they collectively make a regime type? What are the implications of this formulation?

maintaining, and protecting the circulation of life in form of commodities, finance, information, and skill have become the most significant task of governance.

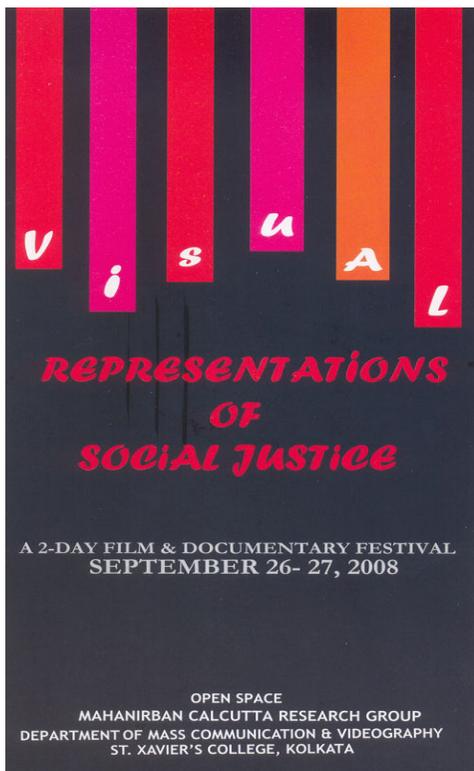
The dialogue also noted that governing in democracy, or governing a developmental democracy has a fundamental tendency of dividing up, rearranging, and reconfiguring the social and geographical space it governs. This has profound impact on the liberal traditions of freedom – freedom to reside, move, visit, work in a particular area, etc. Developmental agenda on one hand increases the governmental power to reconfigure the space continually, and on the other hand it decreases the liberal space of freedom. Participants argued that we needed to know how this began in independent India, its specific impact on the pattern of conflicts in society, and how it impacts on the relation between those who govern and those who are governed. The more we study conflicts around the issue of displacement of massive groups of population in the wake of riots, development, construction, militarization etc., and consequent loss of substantive citizenship, the more important it becomes to study the relation between governance and space. It was also emphasized that in order to understand the precarious nature of justice delivery mechanisms, we require today to probe into the dynamics of the institutions of governance, such as the Codes and Commissions, particularly the Administrative Commission Reports, in order to find out how the dualities of service/servitude, development/control, order/democracy, justice/its precarious delivery mechanisms, and regulation/freedom have played themselves out; also how governments have projected (themselves as) a continuous order (and here we have to take into account the necessity of legal continuity), which cannot allow any discontinuity and break. At the end the dialogue framed the following questions relating to development and governance that have enormous impact on social justice in India:

- The impact of the shift from the dynamics of a welfare state to that of a market state on the ways of governing;
- The new ways in which the political, social, and resource space of the country are being reorganized, and are making values of governance hierarchical;
- The impact of the special policies of the government for acceleration of development (such as Special Economic Zones) on the concept of democratic equality, and citizenship;
- The securitization of conditions of governing, resulting in making logistical considerations as the dominant priority for the government, with several other social considerations now turning into minor matters, and related population groups as minor peoples;
- The ways in which different popular organizations are emerging today to negotiate the changing relation between the government and the people;
- The ways in which these organizations are breaking the old distinction between the *civil* and the *political*;
- Finally, the ways in which these organizations create new trust networks and revive collective politics in demand of justice;

Film Screening and Discussion on the Theme of Social Justice

An interesting part of the program in its concluding phase has been two day film screening of feature films and documentaries on the theme of social justice. In all, about one hundred students from different colleges of Kolkata participated in the screening and post-screening discussion. The program was intended for college students, and was held in the St. Xavier's College. Noted documentary filmmaker Anand Patwardhan inaugurated the two-day program and initiated the discussion. In all ten documentaries were shown on the themes such as, peace, Dalit activism, environmental justice, displacement, social hierarchy, etc.

One of the crucial ways to approach the idea of social justice is to look at the popular notions of justice and how “justice” has been represented in the realm of the popular. This programme is an attempt at gaining a better understanding of the idea of justice.



Some name of the films

- Ribbons of Peace ; Director: *Ananda Patwardhan*
- War and Peace (Jung aur Aman); Director: *Ananda Patwardhan*
- India Untouched: Stories of a People Apart; Director: *Stalin K.*
- Aftershocks: The Rough Guide to Democracy; Director: *Rakesh Sharma*
- We are not your Monkeys; Director: *Ananda Patwardhan*
- Sadgati (Deliverance); Director: *Satyajit Ray*
- 12 Angry Men; Director: *Sidney Lumet*
- Tales from the Margins; Director: *Kavita Joshi*
- A Night of Prophecy; Director: *Amar Kanwar*

Public Lectures

In course of three years of the program several public lectures were held on various aspects of social justice. Several of them were held in collaboration with different institutions thereby acquainting of the research and dialogue program on social justice to many students, teachers, and social activists. Below is given a list of the lectures (<http://mcrgr.ac.in/pl.htm>)

- *Environmental Justice* / by Sanjay Chaturvedi, Professor and Coordinator, Centre for the Study of Geopolitics and Department of Political Science, Punjab University, Chandigarh, 18 July 2006 (CRG seminar room)
- *Eviction, Resettlement, and the Test of Justice* / by Professor Ranabir Samaddar, Director, Calcutta Research Group, 12 December 2006 (in Darjeeling in collaboration with St. Joseph College)
- *How Should We Respond to the Cultural Injustices of Colonialism* / by Rajeev Bhargava, Professor and Director, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, 13 March, 2007 (in Calcutta University in collaboration with the South and South East Asian Studies Department, Calcutta University)
- *The Scope of Transitional Justice in India* / by Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, Professor, Department of Political Science, Rabindra Bharati University, 13 March, 2007 (in Calcutta University in collaboration with the South and South East Asian Studies Department, Calcutta University)
- *Gender Justice and Muslim Women of Calcutta* / by Sanam Roohi, Research Associate, Calcutta Research Group, 20 April 2007 (CRG's seminar room)
- *Bangladeshi Immigration to Assam in India – The Print Media Discourse* / by Ksenia Glebova, Honorary Research Associate, Calcutta Research Group, 20 April 2007 (CRG seminar room)
- *Environmental Security* / by Robert Kaplan, Professor of Political Science, Naval Academy, Annapolis, U.S.A, 21 June 2007 (CRG seminar room)
- *Provoking Preferences by Changing Beliefs* / by Margaret Levi, Jere L. Bacharach Professor of International Studies, Director, CHAOS (Comparative Historical Analysis of Organizations and States), and previous president of the American Political Science Association, 25 July 2007 (CRG seminar room)
- *Justice and Equality - A Political Dilemma?* / by Etienne Balibar, Emeritus Professor of Moral and Political Philosophy, Paris X, Nanterre, and Distinguished Professor of Humanities, University of California, Irvine, 21 September 2007 (CRG seminar room)
- *Coolie Migration in the Colonial Era* / by Jan Breman, Professor of Amsterdam School for Social Science Research, 13 December 2007 (CRG seminar room)
- *Globalization, Inequality and Urban Health* / by Carolyn Stephens, Epidemiologist and Senior Lecturer of London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 18 January 2008 (CRG seminar room)

- *The Impact of Globalization on French Law: An Example of Relations between Democracy and Internationalization* / by Jean Louis Halperin, Professor of Law, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris, 28 April 2008 (Asiatic Society in collaboration with the Asiatic Society)
- *Dialogues on Justice* / by Vinay Lal, Professor of University of California, Los Angeles, 14 July 2008 (Presidency College in collaboration with the Department of Political Science, Presidency College, Kolkata)
- *Tolerance Established by Law: The Autonomy of South Tyrol in Italy* / by Eva Pfössl, Director, Istituto di Studi Politici S. Pio V, Department of Law and Economics, Rome University, 14 August 2008 (Rabindra Bharati University in collaboration with the Department of Political Science, Rabindra Bharati University); also 17 August 2008 (in collaboration with the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences at the WBNUJS)
- *Sociological Imagination: Situating Charles Tilly* / by Ranabir Samaddar, Director, Calcutta Research Group, 18 August 2008 (CRG seminar room)
- *Climate Change, Globalisation and Environmental Justice* / by Sanjay Chaturvedi, Professor and Coordinator, Centre for the Study of Geopolitics and Department of Political Science, Punjab University, Chandigarh, 22 August 2008 ((in Calcutta University in collaboration with the South and South East Asian Studies Department, Calcutta University)
- *The Citizen and the Migrant: The Politics of Justice and (Non) Belongingness* / by Ratna Kapur, Professor and Director, Centre for Feminist Legal Research, New Delhi, 30 September 2008 ((in collaboration with the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences at the WBNUJS)
- *Development, Justice and Governance* / by Ranabir Samaddar, Director, Calcutta Research Group, 22 December 2008, (in collaboration with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)

These public lectures hosted at different institutions to reach new audiences actually impacted on a wider range of policy makers and academic community, and the public at large. They created again significant impact on students and the teaching community. In West Bengal the three year long programme resulted in series of discussions in colleges and universities, and at the initiative of the students and teachers film and discussion sessions on relevant themes were organized on a wide scale through these three years resulting in significant expansion of CRG network, apart from directly contributing to public and institutional academic deliberations. In short, these dialogues and public lectures followed by stimulating exchanges generated a deeper understanding of the particularities of post-colonial democracy, as in India, and the realization that there is now a need greater than ever to study actual governmental processes as these processes interact with popular notions, institutions, and desires, and produce particular interface.

Publication

Research papers (Under the Policies and Practices series)

- *Flags and Rights* (PP 11) / by Ranabir Samaddar, August 2006 -<http://mcrq.ac.in/pp11.pdf>
- *Weapons of the Weak – Field Studies on Claims to Social Justice in Bihar and Orissa* (PP 13) / by Amrita M. Patel and Manish K. Jha, June 2007 – <http://mcrq.ac.in/pp13.pdf>
- *Towards a New Consideration on Justice for the Minorities* (PP 14) / by Samir Kumar Das, Paula Banerjee, and Sabyasachi Basu Ray Chaudhury, August 2007 <http://mcrq.ac.in/pp.htm>
- *Prescribed, Tolerated and Forbidden Forms of Claim Making* (PP 18) / by Ranabir Samaddar, April 2008 / <http://mcrq.ac.in/pp.htm>
- *Three Studies on Law and Shifting Spaces of Justice* (PP 19) / by R. Niruphama, Saptarshi Mandal, and Shritha K. Vasudevan, May 2008 / <http://mcrq.ac.in/pp.htm>

Reports

- *Dialogues on Justice – A Report* / by Samir Kr. Das, Sanam Roohi, and Ranabir Samaddar (CRG, 2007) - http://mcrq.ac.in/Dialogues_on_Justice.pdf
- *Report on the Conference on “Spheres of Justice”* / by Giorgio Grappi - <http://mcrq.ac.in/Grappi.htm> and http://mcrq.ac.in/S_justice.htm
- *A Report on a Workshop with Etienne Balibar* / by Samir Kr. Das and Sanam Roohi - http://mcrq.ac.in/Report_Etienne.htm

Distinguished Lecture

- *Justice and Equality – A Political Dilemma? Pascal, Plato, Marx* (CRG, 2007) http://mcrq.ac.in/Lecture_Etienne.pdf

Book Series

The four-volume series under publication aims is to bring out various forms of justice in reality – social claim as justice, attainment and the restoration of dignity as justice, end to discrimination as justice, retribution as justice, conciliation of claims as justice, social idea of minimal justice, positive discrimination as justice, protection of the vulnerable sections of society as justice, and finally autonomy as justice. Also the series demonstrates, justice can and does have strong gender implications.

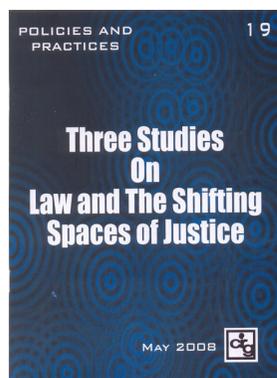
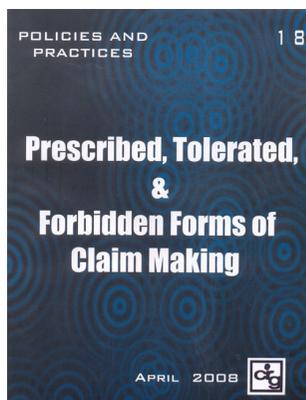
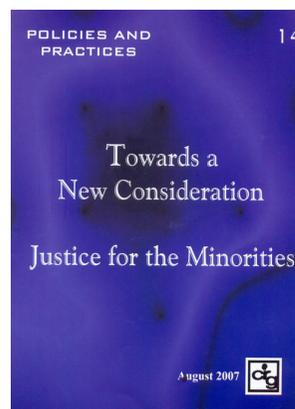
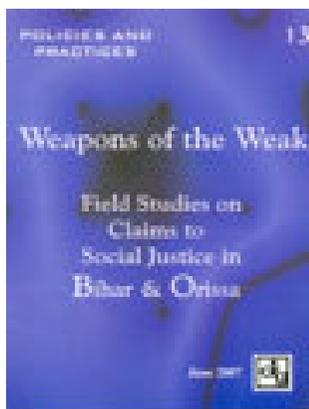
The series is strongly ethnographic in approach in place of being philosophical, though it does not hesitate to reflect on given philosophical truths in the light of its ethnographic findings. The studies bring out how social justice as an arena is only partly covered by law; rest is covered by social and political ideas and practices. Ethical ideas about honor, right, respect, autonomy, claim, share, revenge, and shame also play significant role in determining mores of

justice. In sum, the approach of the inquiry is in part historical, part ethnographic, and part analytic. The purpose is composite consisting of the following aims:

Below is a description of the four volumes.

- Volume 1: ***Social Justice and Enlightenment: What is happening in West Bengal?*** / Editors: Samir Kumar Das and Pradip Kumar Bose (Contributors: Kumar Rana, Amites Mukhopadhyay, Ratan Khasnabis, Roshan Rai, and Subhas Ranjan Cakroborty)
- Volume II: ***Justice and Law: The Limits of the Deliverables of Law*** / Editors: Bharat Bhushan and Ashok Agrwaal (Contributors: Oishik Sircar, Bharat Bhushan, Ashok Agrwaal, Samir Kumar Das, and Sabyasachi Basu Ray Choudhury)
- Volume III: ***Marginalities and Justice*** / Editors: Paula Banerjee and Sanjay Chaturvedi (Contributors: Paula Banerjee, Badri Narayan, Manish Jha, Amit Prakash, and Sanjay Chaturvedi)
- Volume IV: ***Key Texts on Justice - A Compendium*** / Editors: Sanam Roohi and Ranabir Samaddar

Ranabir Samaddar is the editor-in-chief of this 4 volume series.



Results of this program

- The inquiry enormously enriches our ideas of responsibility, rights, entitlements, and claims;
- The role of popular politics and extent of participation of people's organizations in welfare schemes for ensuring social justice is examined through select studies;
- Debate between rights versus welfare based approaches to development finds place in the study;
- The study also notes the impact of women's awareness of the justice discourse in India. Similarly, it notes the impact of the awareness of various marginal groups in a democracy which calls for differential notions, dynamics, and institutional operations of justice;
- It is also an investigation into two forms of social justice – justice as a function of government, that is to say, governmental form of justice, and justice as a product of dialogues in contested and differential situations, that is to say, dialogic justice;
- The research has been dialogic, and dialogues have been an equal partner to research in this program;
- A significant network of researchers, students, teachers, human rights activists, and social scientists has evolved through repeated exchanges of views; as a result with the network has developed a stake in the research program;
- Public lectures have drawn students and teachers of several educational centers in the city of Kolkata and elsewhere;
- Internal revision, rectification, and improvement have been possible because of collegial mode of the work;
- Publications have drawn wide attention;
- The 4 volume series on *The State of Justice in India* will become a catalyst in the field of studies on democracy, justice, and society;
- CRG website contains a sizeable material (papers, reports, documents, references, and a directory of contact material, institutions, and personnel) for open access to other researchers, students, and activists working on the theme of justice.