



EINLADUNG / AUSHANG

**The State of Globalisation: Legal Plurality, Overlapping
Sovereignities and Ambiguous Alliances between Civil
Society and the Cunning State in India**

by Prof. Shalini Randeria (Universität Zürich, z.Zt. WZB Berlin)

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Prof. Randeria's lecture addresses the issues of legal plurality, overlapping sovereignties, the consequent fragmentation of state action and the increasing unaccountability of international financial and trade organizations, transnational corporations as well as of states and NGOs which characterize the new architecture of global governance. Shalini Randeria introduces the idea of the cunning state in an attempt to shift the focus of study from a consideration of state (in)capacity measured against a Western ideal to a delineation of state strategies. It is argued that whereas weak states lack the capacity to protect the interests of vulnerable citizens, cunning states show strength or weakness depending on the domestic interests at stake.

The lecture focuses on the dynamic of legal politics against impoverishment and dispossession caused by the new global designs of intellectual property protection, biodiversity conservation and privatisation of the commons in India. The case studies reveal pragmatic issue-based alliances between civil society and the state, and point to the need to ground the study of globalisation in a fine-grained ethnography, linking the little to the large and to explore the specificity of various trajectories of legal plurality and its transnationalisation in particular contexts and cases.