

## **WORKSHOP 5: LABOUR**

### **11.15-13.00**

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#### **From Green Revolution to Industrial Dispersal**

I focus on the industrial transformation of a small-sized market town in Northern Tamil Nadu in the post-Green Revolution period. The town is in a rural district in which HYVs have been introduced in the 1960s, inducing a major impact on the local agriculture and on the town and transforming the latter in a manufacturing centre for the production of silk. I review this transformation in order to explore the 'variety' of capitalism that has emerged in the area and to assess its social sustainability in terms of living and working conditions. I have three aims. i) to review the industrialization of the town in the period 1973-2004, focusing on the emergence of manufacturing and service activities; ii) to show that in the post-Green Revolution period the town has become the centre of an industrial district for silk, including also the surrounding villages - i.e. the periphery of the district - that provide labor force and savings; iii) to show that the industrial district is a flexible and informal economic system being based on a strict hierarchy of workers according to their functions in the production process and to their personal features (caste and gender). The paper is based on a long-term field research (i.e. repeated surveys to households and business in the town and in the villages from 1973 to 2004) carried out by several teams from British (Cambridge and Oxford) Universities, from the University of Chennai (Madras) and the Madras Institute of Development Studies (MIDS).

**Rebecca Chamberlain-Creanga,**

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#### **Work as soul, work as money: transforming labour, self and 'culturedness' (kul'turnost') in a global factory in post-Soviet Eurasia**

New forms and relations of labour and work This paper examines changing meanings of labour and self, as linked to emerging capitalist relations and to processes of social-group identity formation in a transnational cement plant in post-socialist Moldova. The main social actors of the paper are the factory's Russian-speaking (Slav) minorities, the one-time bearers of Soviet modernization, now at the bottom of the factory hierarchy of power. The ethnography details how transnational management tries to produce individualized, ethnicized, competitive subjects out of workers based on the conglomerate's global-neoliberal vision of modernity. It disciplines and secures labour's cooperation through teaching 'self-gratification' ('to feel good about oneself') through goal attainment. However, the study shows how this 'sacrifice to self' runs counter to long-held Soviet notions of the person and work. The paper looks at how employees from the laboratory and control room organize their everyday work practices, social identity, labour values and inter-group relations in response. It addresses the tension of ethnic Slavs needing to feel bound to one other as Slav minorities, while at the same time wanting to be 'modern' and 'middle class', as embodied in controversial 'romanianness'. Through a range of methods, from shop-floor participant observation to semi-structured interviews, the paper finds that industrial workers embrace, localise and resist factory-disciplining 'cultural styles' by negotiating past and present ideologies of

ethnicity and labour. The study aims to be relevant to other developing economies penetrated by (and/or resisting) transnational, post-Fordist forms of capital. The research engages anthropological debates on neoliberalism (e.g. Collier 2003, 2006 versus Harvey 2005 and Comaroff and Comaroff 2001), and addresses how notions of neoliberal personhood are not divorced from, but constructed and embedded in social relations particular to time and place.

**Jaron Rowan**

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**Work, Economy and Cultural Production**

The 1990s saw the consolidation of a discourse that put the creative industries at the core of projects of regional growth, urban development, social regeneration and the 'tertiarization' of post-industrial sites. The small-scale and relatively ephemeral companies that made up the creative industries were welcomed by politicians and policy makers, but gradually it became clear that this optimistic picture of 'creativity-led economic growth' relied on flexible, casualised and under-remunerated work. In this grimmer assessment of what work in the creative industries actually entailed, it was seen to merge familiar separations between labour / leisure, life / work or productivity / unproductivity. Rather, life was now subsumed by work and was being understood as a great source of value. This paper discusses how the creative industries programme was demoted by many analysts and policy makers, in favour of a new notion of 'innovation'. Based on my research in two provinces of Spain, the Basque Country and Extremadura I argue that this discursive shift has the potential to extend to subsume the whole of society. But, what labor conditions will this imply? How are citizens going to capture part of the value they are helping to generate? How will it affect our notions of work?