

### *Call for Papers*

International Centre for Advanced Studies "Metamorphoses of the Political"/  
Georg-August-University, Göttingen

#### **Time and Money: Themes In Labour Relations**

International Workshop, 15 – 16 December 2017, Centre for Modern Indian Studies,  
Georg-August-University, Göttingen

This conference is designed to consider two central themes of work relations: labour time and wage payments. The regulation of the working-week, working-day, and working hour on the one hand, and the varying modes of remuneration of work on the other, have been the source of major struggles within capitalist production relations. They have impinged upon the everyday lives of workers, and shaped both working and managerial practices at the point of production. Working hours and wage-payments can be understood both as separate forces shaping worlds of labour, and also in terms of their links with each other. This conference seeks to stimulate discussion on both of these dimensions of time and money in working lives and work structures.

Labour-time and forms of remuneration vary widely, across different kinds of agricultural, industrial, and service work, as well as between formal and informal-sector labour. We intend this conference as an exploration of 'time and money' across the full range of work regimes and experiences in modern and contemporary societies. We, invite submissions that address (but are not confined to) the following themes:

#### **1. Measuring and Comparing Work**

Capitalist employers, managers and state agencies have frequently engaged in the measurement of labour along different lines. This has included the duration of work, as well as the mapping of effort and output per hour, day, or month. They have also been deployed to justify differences in payment, employer expenditure on workforces, and techniques of skilling and training. The construction and justification of work hierarchies on the basis of gender, race and ethnicity has often drawn sustenance from such projects of measurement and comparison. They have also influenced the setting of work norms 'appropriate' to their given contexts. What can the study of different regimes of time-discipline in workplaces, and variations in their measurement, tell us about the relations between capital, labour, and state authority? How have employer-led or state-led attempts to differentiate between different grades of work led to the establishment of different kinds of markets for labour? How, in turn, have such differentiations become a source of labour conflict and the formulation of workers' and trade unions' demands?

## **2. The working day and its limits**

The length of the working-day indicates a boundary, achieved through law and through patterned social practices, between the sphere of work and those of leisure and social reproduction. A key site of employer-worker contestation, this boundary has also played a key role in distinguishing different forms of work, endowing them with different conditions of social deployment and exploitation, different potentialities of resistance. But this boundary has not been static across time and place, and has also had determinate social and political consequences. Examining this involves attention to the working day as it has been postulated for different 'categories' of workers. How has the delimitation of working hours, in different industries and workplaces, become a way of securing or challenging exploitation? In what ways has it determined the line between the 'formal' and the 'informal' sectors? Can the study of working time shed light upon the ways in which certain occupations have moved in and out of the sphere of formalization? Conversely, how have differences between 'standard' or 'formal' employment, on the one hand, and informal, subcontracted forms of work, on the other, influenced the definition of a 'normal' working day?

## **3. Modes of payment**

The remuneration of work has taken a variety of social forms in different historical contexts. We invite discussions of modes of wage-payment as expressions of determinate social relations. How can we understand the variations in wage-forms in varying capitalist contexts, and do the changing equations between lump-sum payments, deferred or withheld wages, the payment of a component of the wage in kind, the determination of different kinds of bonuses, tell us something of significance about social relations? How might we study *rhythms* of wage-payment, so often irregular, fluctuating, or deferred (for instance, the retention of wage-arrears as a mode of discipline)? In other words, how has the wage been composed, internally differentiated, and balanced across different contexts? What specific pressures upon management or workforces have dictated the abandonment of certain forms of wage payment, and the adoption of others, as well as the specific intermixture of different elements of payment? How can non-monetary wages (wage-payments in kind in agrarian labour, for instance, or deferred wages in the form of social security) help us understand wage relationships in their historical variations and mutations? What light does the labour of women, within organized workplaces or in the domestic sphere, unwaged and waged, throw upon about the tensions embedded in the remuneration of work?

## **4. Money and Social Security**

There are contexts in which workers' mobilizations, as well as broader trade-union strategies, have foregrounded the deepening of the *stake* labour should have in its employment. Thus, a range of demands encompassing provident funds, pensions, job

security, 'the closed shop', education and schooling, have emerged within the problem of production. At other moments, workers' mobilizations have centrally foregrounded the problem of *money* – the need for money in hand on an ample and reliable basis, in a way that has at times overridden the declaration of a 'stake' in industry at large. This contrast has often appeared historically in the division between 'formal' and 'informal' employment. How have these two essential components of the work relationship – which we can provisionally term 'money' and 'security' – related to each other in different contexts? How have they shaped the repertoires of social practice available to workers as well as to employers and managers? In what contexts have demands for security been commuted into money, and vice versa? Can we postulate a basic or at least frequently observable *tension* between these two domains?

This workshop is convened by the Research Module 'Labour as a Political Category' on behalf of the newly established and New Delhi-based M.S. Merian International Centre of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences and Humanities ([micas-mp.org](http://micas-mp.org)). The Research Module is coordinated by Ravi Ahuja (Göttingen), Rana Behal (Delhi), Andreas Eckert (Berlin), Chitra Joshi (Delhi), Nicole Mayer-Ahuja (Göttingen), Prabhu Mohapatra (Delhi), Anna Sailer (Göttingen), Aditya Sarkar (Warwick), Christoph Scherrer (Kassel), Marcel van der Linden (Amsterdam) and Willem van Schendel (Amsterdam).

Proposals for papers, including an abstract of maximum 1,000 words, should be emailed by **15 June 2017**. The selection will be concluded by 30 June (conditional on the funding of the workshop). The papers should be submitted electronically by 10 November.

*Proposals for papers should be emailed to [indianhistory@uni-goettingen.de](mailto:indianhistory@uni-goettingen.de).*