

SEMINAIRE EPHEMERE DU LISE

'SUPER-MOBILITY' AND TRANSLOCALITY: IRREGULAR
WORKERS AND THE INFORMAL FARM LABOUR MARKET
IN RURAL TAIWAN

Salle 21 (1) 13
Accès par le : 292 rue
Saint-Martin, 75003,
Paris

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10am - 12pm

Please, **register**:

beatrice.zani@cnr.fr

GUEST LECTURE
with **Dr Isabelle**
Cockel, University
of **Portsmouth**



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This research is concerned with how small-scale family farmers in Taiwan recruit migrant workers who are either absconders from their legally contracted employment or visa overstayers whose employment is not legally permitted. Building on this concept of translocality, we propose a new concept of super-mobility that defines a situation where absconding guest workers are able to frequently take up casual employment in an informal labour market and increase their physical/geographical and occupational/economic mobility. The mobility regimes’ restrictions on their residency make them de facto single, living without the company of their family. As atomised human beings, they are free from the physical burden of caring for their family members, which is usually the cause of lower mobility. Because they are not governed by a legal contract, they are free from the mobility regimes’ surveillance of and limitation on their physical/geographical and occupational/economic mobility and are free to move frequently to wherever employment is available. Super-mobility is resourced by co-ethnic networking with the translocal migrant community and inter-ethnic networking with Taiwanese brokers and farmers, which develops over time (Baas and Yeoh, 2019). The cost of super-mobility relates to the prices paid for receiving employment information from nodes in the network, as well as for workers’ transport and accommodation. Super-mobility is by default made by the mobility regimes, but it clearly draws attention to the failure of regimes to use categorisation as a tool to regulate labour migration. Super-mobility is highly volatile and unstable, but it thrives on the vitality of translocality. However, that is also a fault, in that anyone who knows about super-mobility can easily cripple it by turning in an irregular worker to the state; the power to repatriate can terminate super-mobility.



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