

**Agriculture and migration in the European Union**  
**International seminar**  
**University of Bergamo (Italy), 24-25 October 2013**

**Abstract book**

**Thursday, 24 October**

*14.30-16.30, Session I: Patterns of mobility in rural areas of EU*

**Migrant labour and precarious employment in agriculture:  
Reflexions on new employment relations in rural Greece**

**Apostolos G. Papadopoulos**  
**Loukia - Maria Fratsea**

(Department of Geography, Hapokopio University, Athens)

In the last two decades, Southern Europe has attracted a large number of migrants due to its geopolitical position, the improved socioeconomic situation and the fact that it is part of the European Union, which is gradually transformed into a global economic and political power. The number of migrants pouring into Europe has increased tremendously, but the Southern European countries host a significant proportion of new migrant flows. The latter mostly include irregular migrants and/or temporary foreign labourers who aim at working for limited periods in the host countries and then return to their countries of origin.

Greece is a major destination country for migrants who aim at moving into Europe. Migration to Greece has demarcated a new era of economic development and societal evolution which brought about new challenges and opportunities. Both the older migration flows which originated from the Balkans and the new flows which originate from Asia and Africa have induced various challenges for the society, the economy and the political elites in Greece.

One of the characteristics of these migratory flows is the increasing engagement of immigrant employment in agriculture and the rural economy in general. Demographic decline, agricultural and rural restructuring as well as the increasing ‘multifunctionality’ in some rural areas, have effectively formed the socio-economic environment for the reception of immigrant labour. Non-agricultural activities like tourism and housing construction have developed, urban dwellers have returned to their land of origin, and new consumption patterns connected to leisure and recreation have grown demanding labour hands while the native-born population is not able to meet these demands for both demographic and social reasons.

In the midst of the most severe recession since the Second World War, migrants are among the most vulnerable groups and usually the hardest hit by the unprecedented economic crisis. Although the impact of crisis on migrant employment differs between sectors and local labor markets, rising unemployment rates are often accompanied by widespread xenophobia and racist attitudes towards migrants.

This paper draws from various research projects carried out in rural Greece concerning migrant labor and precarious employment in agriculture. More particularly the “Manolada” case will be given special attention, due to the fact it was the study area of one of the research projects. Finally, insights from

those research findings are contextualized through the use of secondary statistical data which were recently became available.

**The (sacred) cows' business.  
Narratives and practices of an "Ethnicized niche work":  
the Indian Punjab *bergamini* in the Pianura Padana**

**Vanessa Azzeruoli**  
(University of Padua)

The Punjab *bergamino* (dairy cattle farmer) has become part of everyday life imagination of the local ordinary people and of public discourse in the Pianura Padana (the plain of the Po). This voice echoed until it New York Times pages in 2011, when in an article was argued that a Punjabi strike in the dairy industry could disrupt the production chain of Grana Padano® (and Parmigiano Reggiano®).

But no signs of the strike came. On the contrary, the employers praised of the arrival of Punjabi migrants and describe it as a happy and profit-bearing encounter, while the Punjabi workers, on the other hand, report the common place "We do the jobs that Italians don't want to do anymore".

So, can we consider it a perfect match between supply and demand?

The analysis will follow three levels of analysis: a) The recruitment mechanism and the temporary informal agency b) The relationship with the employer between seclusion and proximity; and c) Landowners who become employees, transnational identity distortion and the investments in dairy farms in Punjab.

The ethnographic material consists of in-depth interviews and participant observation with both Italians and Punjabis. It is part of a three-year transnational PhD research in Social Sciences (University of Padova) realized between Indian Punjab and Italy.

The main thesis moves from the connection between the employment of the early Punjabi *bergamini* and the deep changes in the dairy farm production. The Punjabi *bergamino*, going beyond the supposed cultural inclination towards the adoration of the holy cow, guarantees a stable and continuous production because the network in which he is inserted acts as a temporary informal agency. The Indian *bergamino* in case of temporary or permanent unavailability provides for a substitute, thus ensuring the continuity of production. They are building up an "ethnic" niche profession. The employer is so satisfied with the work performance that in some cases he is inclined to entrust the management of the entire company to a Punjabi contractor to coordinate other workers.

The satisfaction comes from the fact that a Punjabi worker performs is performing his daily work takes on the employer's identity going beyond his job to ensure, or even improve, the production cycle. Ethnography shows that the Punjabi people in Italy come mainly from rural areas and are frequently landowners in Punjab, employers of seasonal workers (often internal migrants from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh).

The paper argues that Punjabi *bergamini*, through a multi-local labour identity, keep firmly in mind the entrepreneurial and managerial points-of-view in their relationship with the employer. Moreover, the possibility of getting new job positions for other Punjabis strengthens their role within the network: in the legislative framework of the Bossi-Fini law, which bonds residence permit to an employment contract. Having access to an Italian network allows migrants to overcome the saturated network well-known by fellow migrants. And this network, just as a temporary agency, it has an economic and/or symbolic price.

**Eternal seasonal or « combiner »?**  
**The “Arabics” farm labourers of Bordeaux vineyards**

**Chantal Crenn**

(MCF en anthropologie sociale Université de Bordeaux,  
Umi Cnrs 3189 Dakar et UMR 5115 Les Afriques dans le monde Bordeaux)

The workers and the farm labourers coming from the Maghreb met in the region of « Grand Libournais » in France belong to the seasonal workers’ old migratory generation. They arrived in the 1970s. Becoming permanents in the 1980s, they became seasonal again and especially unemployed persons at the end of 1990s with the new productivist orientations taken by the wine-making world actors and the internationalization of the wine trade . But in vineyards, « Arabics » are not the only ones to undergo the degradation of the hiring and the working conditions, the « national » do not avoid it. “The relocation at home”, as some bosses say, caused the arrival of more docile populations. Coming from Poland then from Spain and Morocco, these arrivals are lived as an unfair competition on the labor market. The popular racism thus became « a consensual mode of regulation » allowing to support the job insecurity, the difficulties staying in the black lived by most of the workers of this region that became one of the poorest in Aquitaine. Facing this situation, no collective protest movement is organized by the workers said « Arabic ». It is somewhere else that they organize their resistance unless their children made it for them?

**Specificities of the Caserta Province**  
**into the “seasonal wheel” of the Italian Mezzogiorno’s migrant farm workers**

**Romain Filhol**

(Université Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée)

This intervention aims at discussing the particularities of the “Campanian Plain” – i.e. the littoral plain which occupies the South and the West of the Caserta Province – for the Italian Mezzogiorno’s migrant farm workers.

In fact, although it is similar to other south-Italian regions (like Calabria or Puglia) in its use of a flexible and underpaid migrant labor force, the “Campanian Plain” is characterized at the same time by a certain centrality into the “seasonal wheel” of the Mezzogiorno’s migrant farm workers, particularly among those coming from the African continent.

This centrality, which makes Francesco Saverio Caruso (“La porta socchiusa tra l’Africa Nera e la Fortezza Europa: l’hub rururbano di Castel Volturno”, in C. Colloca, A. Corrado (eds.), *La Globalizzazione delle campagne*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2013) speaking about the Casertano as the “nevrlogical center of the migrant transhumance in the seasonal farm work circuit”, is not only due to the shape or even the features of the Campanian migratory fact in itself. More commonly, this centrality is in a major way linked to the story and to the socio-spatial characteristics of an agricultural production space which tends to be more and more inserted in a Neapolitan agglomeration in expansion, still maintaining in the same time rural features.

That’s why we will show how the Campanian Plain, due to its centrality and its privileged link with the professional and residential opportunities of the Neapolitan agglomeration, plays a particular role in the migratory trajectories of the African migrant workers in Southern Italy.

But far from considering these specificities as a fixed data, we will try to see how the combined effects of the economic crisis and of the influx of the East-European migrant workers in Campania could eventually revise the function of the Campanian Plain into the Italian migratory system.

**17.00-19.00, Session II: Agricultural labour markets**

**“We don’t have women in boxes”:  
Channelling seasonal mobility of women farm workers in Andalusia (Spain).**

**Emmanuelle Hellio**  
(University of Nice)

Women do not ‘come in boxes’ but they are part of a highly contained system of labour mobility that adjusts flexibly to serve industrial agriculture in the province of Huelva. In this agricultural region of Andalusia, Spain, an intensive monoculture of strawberries began to develop in the 1980s. Today, over 7,500ha are under cultivation in greenhouses. The production is export-oriented and capital-intensive. In order to plant one hectare of strawberries, a farmer has to invest between EUR 25,000 to 30,000 for necessary materials (e.g. plastic, tubes, phytosanitary products) and labour expenses. Labour is one of the most important factors of production, estimated to be up to 30% of the total cost. Driven by the strawberry industry, this zone of intensive monoculture has become a crossroad for international migration. There have been massive changeovers in the composition of seasonal labour over the past ten years: first North African and Sub-Saharan men were recruited; then Polish and Romanian women, followed by women from Morocco. The presence of this diversified workforce is the consequence of the employers’ preferences, shaped by European and national migratory policies, and business ventures linked to private initiatives and regional policy interests. It is embedded in the rearrangement of European spaces and the legal practices of the Spanish state towards undocumented migrants.

This presentation focuses on the recruitment of female labour from Morocco for Andalusian strawberry farming. I address the interplay of coercion and control inscribed into the constantly changing recruitment mechanisms shaped by production requirements on the one hand and the persistence of Moroccan women’s interaction with agricultural production and respective labour markets translating into an unintended empowerment for some of them on the other hand. I will begin by explaining how the ‘contracting in the countries of origin’ (*contratación en origen*) turned to Morocco and reveal how the flow of seasonal workers governs flexible forms of work organization. I address the gap between EU funding intentions and regional recruitment dynamics. Special attention is given to the social locations where control mechanisms are implemented, namely instrumentalizing female family attachment as means to guarantee the return of workers. I will, however, demonstrate how women within these omnipresent control mechanisms seek to direct and command their mobilities and develop their own positions.

**Making history  
Labour market and migrant workers in Piana del Sele’s agriculture (Campania, Italy)**

**Gennaro Avallone**  
(University of Salerno)

The Piana del Sele is a rich agricultural area situated in Campania, Southern Italy. Since the 80s it is characterized by a differentiated and intensive crop production, mainly based on the greenhouse system. These traits have deepened in the last fifteen years, spreading to the entire local farming activities (agriculture, livestock and *flower-growing*). The increased and differentiated production and the new technologies have affected the social organization of local agriculture and, then, its labor market. Because of these changes the agriculture activities have partially become productive all the year round, while a part of them has maintained a seasonal character. This change has transformed the

quality and structure of labor demand, oriented towards two areas of workers: a stable area of workers for permanent productions and a flexible area of workers for seasonal productions and daily unexpected activities. The labor demand has become more articulate than in the past and this differentiation has opened the doors to new workers, that have partially substituted the local population in the fields and in the plastic greenhouses. These new workers have been being migrant workers, initially especially from Morocco and other Northern African countries, and have become the new leading actors of the local agriculture. Migrants in Piana del Sele have an history, they have been making the local history, that is mainly a labor history.

The following notes have the aim to highlight this history, concentrating on the recent changes in the local labor market and the new forms of competition that migrants have to face. In particular, it will be shown as the general transformation in the migration trends have changed the local market, with new national groups and genders, especially for the entry of Romanian men and women in the agriculture labor market. It has produced some transformation and partially new social arrangements, influencing labor costs and conditions and the informal regulation of the labor relations built in the past and introducing new lines of division between the migrant farmworkers. This changes will be analysed and some questions will be posed about the future of labor in Piana del Sele's agriculture.

### **Strawberry fields forever**

#### **Supermarkets rule and consumers benefit, whilst migrant workers adapt to their employment situation, but does it have to be this way?**

**Pamela K. Robinson**

(Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham)

During the last decade or so, there has been a revolution in the way that fresh produce is sourced and supplied in the UK, with supermarket retailers emerging as the main actor in the market. These dominant players depend on a fully integrated supply chain to maintain product availability of fresh produce on their shelves twenty-four hours/seven days a week. However, such guarantees place certain pressures on producers that, inevitably, are passed down the chain to workers. In the agricultural sector this pressure most often falls on migrant labour. The employment conditions of this group of actors are influenced both by the specific product requirements of the supermarket and the cost/price ratio the producer/supplier must manage. The supply chain for strawberries, a highly perishable and extremely delicate product, is no exception. Fresh produce markets are characterised by the need to handle the product with care, speed and in hygienic conditions and by the seasonal nature of the demand for labour. Although there is some demand for year round labour, peak demand is during the harvesting period, which is May to August. The UK supermarkets will source as much product locally as available during these months, and as consumption increases, the harvesting process is carefully scheduled to match supply and demand. This requires a highly flexible and often temporary labour force that local factors largely prohibit. The need to ensure the necessary numbers of skilled and dedicated workers, in order to maintain a consistent supply of fruit, has driven producers to secure a seasonal labour force that mostly consists of migrant workers. The provision of these workers is managed through labour associations and gangmasters, and for recent EU accession states is regulated by the UK government's Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS). By drawing on a global value chain (GVC) theoretical framework, developed most notably by Gereffi and colleagues (2005), this paper examines the relationship between supermarkets and their suppliers, and explores the impact of their demands on a migrant labour-force. GVC analysis has two major contributions to make – firstly, in understanding governance in the value chain as a whole and the relationships between powerful companies (primarily buyers and producers) that dominate global supply chains, allowing them to impose conditions or

‘drive’ suppliers in different parts of the chain. Secondly, GVC analysis can contribute to understanding relationships at particular nodes in the chain in the extent to which they are of a market or committed nature. Gereffi et al. (2005:78) identified five ‘dynamic’ forms of governance – markets, modular, relational, captive and hierarchy – that can be categorised as having low to high levels of ‘coordination’ and ‘power asymmetry’. This paper examines a relationship that can be categorised as having high levels of coordination through a long-term relationship between a major supermarket retailer and a supplier, where nevertheless, there is a high level of power asymmetry and therefore pressure on the supplier to comply with the lead firm’s requirements in relation not just to product quality and price, but on labour quality as well. So the focus of the paper is the different forms of governance, both voluntary and legislative, which apply in a fresh produce chain, including: (i) the corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices of lead firms, i.e. supermarkets, (ii) the Gang Licensing Authority (GLA) Gangmasters Bill, and (iii) national and supranational schemes e.g. SAWS, that regulate the employment of migrant workers from EU recent accession states, allowing producers to recruit a well-educated labour force which returns each year to jobs which are unattractive to less-educated local workers.

### **Providing services of subcontracting labour?**

#### **Two cases of the European trend of private intermediation, in Germany and Italy.**

**Héloïse Claudon**

**Julie Rouan**

(Confédération Paysanne)

Since 2008, the French small farmers’ trade union Confédération Paysanne leads a study on migrant workers in agriculture in European and Mediterranean countries aiming at monitoring the impact of European agricultural policies on agricultural workforce and migrations. Main purposes of this work are to observe how agriculture and migration interfere and which are the labour transformations within food and agriculture economy.

From data collected during interviews, regular missions and networking, the phenomenon of formal and informal supply of migrant employees has been studied under several forms, from slavery to international subcontracting companies.

In 2013, two missions took place in Northern Italy and Germany. Those recent inquiries provided relevant information about different trends of intermediation of migrant workers in agriculture and food processing. The observed models of mediation were essentially performed by formal structures, benefiting from an administrative existence. Though their compliance with the law varies, we can clearly distinguish them from *caporalato* type systems as they are technically legally recognized and considered as legal businesses.

We decided to focus on them firstly to understand how can a legal supplementary intermediate develop and economically survive in an agribusiness chain that already knows severe cost cutting and a constant decrease of the workforce income (for both farmers and employees). Which practices, legal or illegal, are implemented by these intermediates? On which processes do they realize a benefit?

The second relevant aspect we tried to deepen is the compliance of the legal form chosen by the company regarding the laws on labour subcontracting. Labour subcontracting is regulated by specific rules and generally limited to certain forms of companies (interim employment agencies). Many of the companies we met play on the confused border that separates labour subcontracting from outsourcing. Beyond the social consequences of outsourcing (and while outsourcing is a common trend in every economic sector), it is relevant to understand if the particularity of agricultural work basically meets the law requirements that allow the use of outsourcing.

Two cases will be proposed:

- 1) The case of the *cooperativa di lavoro* in Northern Italy, particularly in the viticulture sector, questions the use of a cooperative form (commonly present in other sectors employing migrant workers) to provide workforce. We will try to describe the observed practices, the populations concerned and the level of legality within the agricultural sector in three areas (Veronese, Langhe and Emilia).
- 2) The services providers in the meat industry in northern Germany: on the basis of observation and testimonies related to an important slaughterhouse employing Rumanian workers in Essen/Oldenburg we will try to emphasize how do services providers entities organize the dependence of migrant workforce, through the supply of different services, housing and transport.

**Friday, 25 October**

**9.00-11.00, Session III: Migrant labour in agro-industrial supply-chains**

**“Just in time” immigrants.**

**The work of seasonal harvesting by sub-Saharan Africans in the commercial chain of citrus products in the Piana of Gioia Tauro.**

**Anna Mary Garrapa**

(Urban and Local European Studies, University of Milano Bicocca)

Rosarno, a small town in Piana di Gioia Tauro in Calabria, appeared in the national and international press following a revolt in 2010, which highlighted the degrading living and working conditions of African immigrants, working in local agriculture and mainly in winter harvest of citrus fruit.

Deportation of these immigrants from Calabria in the days following the revolt and inspections carried out by competent authorities and by the police on the farms in this region, have merely suspended the phenomenon while it has not been effectively eliminated.

During the winter of 2013 thousands of mainly sub-Saharan Africans lived in emergency tents provided by local and religious institutions and associations, shantytowns and abandoned country houses.

In November and December they picked clementines, on the illegal or semi-legal labour market, that is using false contracts or contracts where only some of the days worked are officially declared.

January and February are orange picking months, but there is less work, many are left unemployed and in any case the few days worked are paid illegally or semi-legally.

Italian and European immigration laws, by stipulating the conditions of residence permits and the process of international protection, create this pool of flexible, itinerant and low-cost workforce. Further the recent economic crisis and the increasing unemployment are pushing even those who have been resident in Italy for many years to look for few days of work in various agricultural areas in the country. The following of fruit and vegetables picking seasons, every year involve those areas which have a great need of unskilled and seasonally concentrated workforce.

In order to understand better the role of sub-Saharan African workers in the economic and social fabric of Piana di Gioia Tauro, we need to observe the current transformation of the local productive structure and the entire citrus fruit commercial chain.

The citrus production of the Piana of Gioia Tauro is typically fragmented and based on small properties, traditionally family run. And so it is a territory which differs from other areas, with a more intensive agriculture based on much larger properties, also well known for the extensive use of seasonal foreign workforce, for example the province of Foggia in Puglia. In the Piana of Gioia Tauro the

economy is concentrated at a higher level of the citrus fruit production chain, at the stages of commercial and distribution of the product.

Crops which used to be aimed at the juice industry are being progressively abandoned following the PAC reform, which in 2008 separated European contribution from the volume of production, drastically reducing the need for a workforce to pick oranges.

Clementines and oranges destined for the “fresh fruit” market, produced and picked in the numerous small and medium holdings, are concentrated in establishments of medium and large traders or O.P, organizations of producers. These are selected and sent to different types of commercial chains. A considerable part is sold to the supermarket chains, owned by Italians and foreigners, in packaging ready to be displayed on supermarket and hypermarket shelves, mainly in Northern Italy.

The remaining part is sent to central markets and wholesalers in other regions in Italy, sometimes to East-European countries and Russia.

Both commercial chains require large quantities of supplies, depending heavily on end consumer demand, in terms of reducing prices as well as efficiency in delivery times. In any case the need is for low-cost and flexible pickers, that is “*just in time*” immigrants.

### **Social sustainability and agricultural workers in agro-food industry in the region of Murcia**

**Carlos de Castro**

(University Autónoma de Madrid)

**Elena Gadea, Andrés Pedreño and Marta Latorre**

(University of Murcia)

The configuration of agricultural export production enclaves has been one of the strategies by which some Southern European regions have pretend to connect to the global economy. Given the centrality of migrant workers in the productive and economic springs of such enclaves, this paper aims to trace the transformation of the immigrant status in the context of the current crisis. The change of migrant status is an indicator of the social sustainability of a development strategy based on an intensive and globalized production of fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as indicates the contradictions between competitiveness and social cohesion. The presentation discusses the social sustainability of the development strategy followed in recent decades by the Region of Murcia and its influence on labor and migration.

Murcia has established as one of the global enclaves of intensive production of fresh fruits and vegetables for exportation to North European countries. Murcia is defined by an ineradicable tension in relation to work. On one hand, the development of the sector has created a lot of jobs in the region, but on the other hand, they are precarious. The problem, from the point of view of the whole industry and companies, is how to ensure a constant influx of labor for semi-skilled seasonal jobs, with harsh conditions and low wages. On the other hand, from the point of view of local society and workers, the problem is how to ensure a level of income which enables them to meet basic needs and agricultural wages do not. It is therefore necessary to ask what were the strategies followed by the different actors to ensure the social reproduction of a specific type of worker and to stay in the local territory being able to reach a basic standard of living.

The problem of labor supply has found a solution by the increasing immigrant population happened in the region since the late 1990s, just at the time of the first wave of growth in the sector. Thus it can be said that the development of intensive agricultural enclaves of Murcia has been based on the high availability of socio-economically and legally vulnerable migrant workers. The idea is that this development strategy agro-export sector depends on the social reproduction of vulnerable social



positions in the social structure of the local territory. This is something that depends not only on companies but, also and mainly, on the intervention of the network of local, regional, national and supranational institutions.

These strategies highlight the social unsustainability of a development model oriented to competition in global markets or, put another way, the incompatibility between economic competitiveness and sustainability of social life. In order to analyse this process, first, this paper will analyse the development of production enclaves and agricultural work in the context of globalization of the food system, focusing on the case of the Region of Murcia on which we have been researching for over a decade. Subsequently it will dissect the set of processes that have enabled the construction of migrant workers as a vulnerable and available subject for temporary workforce requirements in different agricultural developments of the Spanish regions. Finally, it will address the impact of the current crisis on immigrant farm workers.

**“That’s where my perceptions of it all were shattered”  
Oral histories of food sector employment in an English city region**

**Kaveri Qureshi**  
(University of Oxford)

**Ben Rogaly**  
(University of Sussex)

With high soil fertility and a long history of hand-harvested field crops, the Fens to the east of Peterborough have become a dynamic hub of industrial food production encompassing fields, packhouses, processing and distribution from giant depots. Lying on some of Britain’s main road and rail arteries, including the A1 and the East Coast mainline, the region now plays a pivotal role in the national food supply chain. Yet for all the dramatic changes in the technology and organization of food production, and the major demographic changes in the city since the 1960s, analysis of oral history interviews with Peterborough-based workers in the region’s food sector reveals continuity in workers’ employment and living arrangements. This paper draws on interviews with workers of diverse ethnic and national backgrounds to build up a picture of the city region’s private sector food supply chain institutions. Workers’ stories speak not only of insecure and temporary work, antisocial and uncertain hours, and sometimes abusive supervisors, but also of acts of agency and resistance, meaningful in themselves as assertions of dignity, even in a wider institutional context of limited, and grossly unequal, power.

**The ghetto and the district.  
A qualitative comparison between processing tomato supply chains  
in Southern and Northern Italy.**

**Domenico Perrotta**  
(University of Bergamo)

Among migrant agricultural workers all over Europe, the life and work conditions of manual tomato harvesters in Southern Italy – and especially in Apulia and Basilicata – are among the most precarious: during the harvest season, they usually live in uninhabited farmhouses or in large “ghettos” and shantytowns in the countryside, far from the cities; they can’t work without the brokerage of the *caporali* (farm labour contractors); they are paid cash-in-hand on a piece-rate basis and receive very

low wages. 700 km further north, in the provinces of Parma and Piacenza, the Italian “food valley”, an analogous quantity of processing tomato is produced, but the harvest has been mechanized since twenty years, and no trace of ghettos and *caporali* can be found. In 2008, the “Distretto del pomodoro da industria del Nord Italia” [Northern Italian processing tomato district] was created: in this organization, based in Parma, all the actors of the supply chain and the local administrations are represented. It is difficult to even think of a similar organization in Southern Italy.

This presentation aims at describing and comparing the processing tomato supply chains in Southern Italy (Apulia, Basilicata and Campania) and in Northern Italy (mainly Emilia Romagna and Lombardia). These supply chains differ one from the other in many respects: 1) the spatial distance between growers and processing plants (greater in the South than in the North); 2) the relationships of (mis)trust between these two actors; 3) the number and the features of the “Organizations of Producers” (these organizations have been created by the Common Market Organization of the EU, to commercialize agricultural products, but they have been “interpreted” in different ways in Southern and Northern Italy); 4) public administrations’ intervention in the organization of the supply chain; etc. This comparative analysis helps us to explain the over-exploitation of migrant harvesters in Southern Italy, and the total mechanization of the harvest in Northern Italy.

These differences may lead us to think that the two areas are characterized by dissimilar cultural, economic, social and political “models” (e.g. “amoral familism” or “broker capitalism” in the South vs. “Emilian model” in Emilia Romagna). However, if we look both at other agro-food supply chains in Emilia Romagna and at other levels of the supply chain (e.g. the logistics of big retailers), we can see that the issue is far more complicated.

The analysis is based on material collected during qualitative research – in particular in-depth interviews with farmworkers, growers, cannery workers, agronomists, trade union officials and institutional actors – conducted between 2010 and 2013 in the two areas.

### ***11.30-13.30, Session IV: Conflicts and forms of resistance***

#### **Emerging subjectivities in the space of exception: Affective composition and militancy of and with migrants in contemporary Italy**

**Irene Peano**  
(University of Bologna)

The paper investigates militant practices that revolve around the control of immigration and the exploitation of migrant labour in contemporary Italy. It is based on sustained engagement and participant observation in a number of militant contexts, and particularly with network 'Campagne in Lotta', which concentrates predominantly on the exploitation of agricultural labour through activities that aim at understanding forms of exploitation and repression; bringing solidarity to migrants; and breaking the isolation in which they are forced by a regime of *exception*, in Giorgio Agamben's formulation, in order to foster practices of self-organisation. If the migrants in question are formally deprived of their political subjectivity, in a system that confines them in ghettos or camps and denies them any opportunity to obtain regular work (regardless of their legal status and right to work), the paper asks how this militant political practice might begin to build alternative subjectivities out of the encounter between citizens and non-citizens across different locations. It does so by reflecting on the notion of subjectivity as it has been deployed in critical thought, putting it in dialogue, on the one hand, with the notion of exception (which is critically appraised), and on the other hand with analytical models that stress the trans-subjective, affective dimension, together with the militant notion of

*composition* as it has been re-worked outside the orthodox 'class' paradigm. Thus, the paper also reflects a militant stance towards the practice of research, which is the result of collective efforts and acquires the meaning not only of critical reflection, but also of creative experimentation with alternative forms of collectivity, sociality and work.

### **Resistance, ambivalence and agency of foreign workers in Brittany slaughterhouses**

**Simona Tersigni**

(University of Paris Ouest-Nanterre, Sophiapol)

Since 1840, the presence of "foreign workers" in the French rural context is characterized by dispersion and invisibility, and, as early as during the 1847-48 biennium, by uprising of "native labourers" against foreign competition. Therefore foreign workers have not always strain. On the one hand, many of these were temporary seasonal workers. On the other hand, these workers often occupied a temporary situation in the country before realizing their project to work in factories (or mines). This aspiration is still shared by newly migrants arrived in the French countryside.

Moreover, the presence of migrants was considered through the prism of agrarian ideological vision of society which, in the late nineteenth century and the 1950s, was shared by politicians as much as doctors, academics and senior officials. Thus, for more than a century, according to most members of the French elite, the "good immigrant" was a peasant, custodian of the good values that are the foundation of social cohesion and original agricultural activity. Therefore, the "good immigrant" has to be inseparable from the commitment to land, as the ideal instrument of assimilation. That is why in the period between the two world wars, but also in the Vichy period and to a lesser extent after 1974, agricultural immigration escaped the repressive quota measures against foreigners in France (Part 1).

Without confusing Brittany and countryside, we must contextualize the different forms of immigration that now touches the rural and peri-urban of Brittany. In Brittany, the hiring of foreign workers employed temporarily in the factories of the food industry at the same time as the recruitment of migrant workers to the most menial (3D jobs) tasks also led to a form of disengagement and disempowerment of the actors in the production. The "temporary" dimension made legally possible by the presence of the labour agency in an internationalized market, depoliticized and dehumanizes the presence of foreign workers. The special place taken by "indigenous jobbers" in Brittany slaughterhouses in terms of segregated work in the factory and pay proportional to performance has recently been reproduced in new forms of temporary and international services for the task of killing, boning and trimming meat. Thus, this « *délocalisation sur place* » (Terray, 1999) with the development of precarious jobs is done under the threat of machinisation and a factual relocation of all large farms and agricultural multinationals directed toward third countries of Europe. As part of a collaborative research (funding ACSE' between 2009 and 2010), interviews were conducted with human resource managers, trade unionists, labour inspectors and employees from Eastern Europe, Romanians, Polish, Ukrainians, "adventurers" (Pian, 2011) often coming from West Africa who tried to regularize their situation by obtaining a contract of employment; Moroccans living in France for several years prior to the hardening of the conditions of entry into the French territory; some asylum seekers deprived of their rights, but who managed to get a residence permit with the mention "work" because of their employment in "occupations of heavy demand" ("métiers réputés sous tension"). So this conference will focus on the postures of these foreign workers, often forced to accept fulltime or part time jobs in situation marked with the seal of ambivalence. Indeed, recruitment requires a selflessness that passes through the acceptance of personal suffering and racist humiliations (Part 2).

**Bodies at Work or Bodies' Work?**  
**The Case of Day Laborers in Vittoria (Sicily)**

**Valeria Piro**  
(University of Milan)

**Giuliana Sanò**  
(University of Messina)

The aim of this presentation is to discuss the first results of an ethnographic research conducted among the agricultural workers in the Province of Ragusa. This area is characterized by a massive presence of foreign workers, especially from Maghreb and Eastern Europe, employed in the production of fruits and vegetables. These workers appear to be quite different from the ones employed in the agricultural sector in other areas of Southern Italy. Since the 1960s, in fact, the landscape of the South-eastern Sicilian coast, the so called “transformed littoral strip”, has been totally modified by a progressive enlargement of the greenhouses surface. Moreover, together with a radical environmental and geographical transformation, the impressive spread of protected cultivations fostered a process of deseasonalisation within the agricultural sector. This implies that, in the province of Ragusa, the production of vegetables is not concentrated in a specific period of the year, but it lasts regularly from September to June, reaching consistent output peaks.

Taking into account the peculiarity of this system of production and the ongoing trends to industrialize agricultural work, we attempt to investigate, through a theoretical gaze and an ethnographic experience, in which ways bodies actually matter within the productive processes. Keeping in mind the epistemological necessity to inquire how incorporate subjects configure themselves within the different workplaces, we decided to focus on two peculiar environments, that we considered to be the most representative of the local supply chain: greenhouses and packinghouses. Inside these spaces we conducted two months of participant observation, in order to explore their inner logics and dynamics, and – more in general – to investigate the mechanisms governing the agricultural sector in the area. The opportunity to experience – through our bodies – what working inside greenhouses and packinghouses practically means, allowed us to elaborate some reflections concerning the bodies’ postures inside workplaces. In particular, we focussed on their extraordinary capacity to incorporate the concrete signs of the ongoing processes of mechanisation of the agricultural labour. Looking in this direction, we individuated and took into account several elements that assume a relevant interpretative value: the segmentation of the tasks assigned to the workers, the use of dispositives that tent to facilitate a permanent control over the workforce, the accelerated rhythms of production recalling the assembly-line cadence, the attitude to mark strictly the labour timing, and, last but not least, the repetitive coordination of the bodies’ movement, that suggest a mechanical and instrumental use of the bodies’ parts.

Our ethnographic research, therefore, can be considered within the frame of qualitative analysis regarding the practices of bodies’ subjugation, practices that, notwithstanding their disciplinant power, configure, in our understanding, as articulate dispositives able to bring out semantic and symbolic instances, conveying important examples of bodies’ agency.

**Migrant farmworkers in Southern Italy between crisis and riots:  
From Gramsci to the revolts of Castel Volturno and Rosarno**

**Francesco Saverio Caruso**  
(University of Calabria)

Castel Volturno (Campania), September 17, 2008: a group of Camorra killer walks into a store and kills six sub-Saharan migrants . The following day, a spontaneous march of migrants goes to the center of Castel Volturno to the shouting "Italian bastards", damages cars and buses, throws stones to shops and police.

Rosarno (Calabria), January 7, 2010: some unknown persons with airguns injure three migrant workers coming back from the fields. After a while, several hundred sub-Saharan migrants move from the "Cartiera" (an abandoned factory in which they used to live during the orange harvest season), and head up to Rosarno, vandalizing street furniture and clashing repeatedly with the police. The following day, in a few hours the revolt is replaced by the violent response of the local inhabitants , who occupy the square of the town, form armed patrols and start a "caccia al negro": dozens of migrants are shot in the legs and their shacks are burned in punitive expeditions.

In this presentation we do not intend to provide an historical account of these events, but rather to investigate their causes and their social and political effects. Firstly, we contextualize these two events within a more general framework of the imbalance that was determined, over the past few decades, between Mediterranean migrations and the development of an intensive agriculture that is very similar to the "Californian model".

Secondly, we investigate the results and the political consequences of the riots: we identify the substantial differences that occurred in the processes of subjectification that have marked the two riots, starting from the review of the postcolonial Gramscian dichotomy between civil society and political society.

Within this perspective, we show that: 1) in Rosarno migrants expressed in the space of civil society as a singular, individualized and categorized subject, and they entered into a relationship with organized groups within the logic of the "governance of the emergency", in order to find ways and possibilities to mitigate in some way the most dramatic aspects of their daily lives; 2) in Castel Volturno migrants have taken the power of subjectivity agents in the space of popular politics, and, through the disarticulation of devices harnessing of their freedom of movement, they are trying to overcome, through a common struggle, the condition of exploitation and social segregation in which they are forced to live.

***15.00-17.00, Roundtable: Research and practices of militant intervention***

Nicolas Duntze (Confédération Paysanne, France)

Fabrizio Garbarino (Associazione Rurale Italiana)

Network Campagne in lotta (Italy)

Marco Paggi (Associazione Studi Giuridici sull'Immigrazione, Italy)

Collectif pour la défense des travailleurs étrangers dans l'agriculture des Bouches-du-Rhône (*to be confirmed*).