

# Global Work and Employment

## Lecture 9



IT workers in India

# Lecture Outline

## Work and Employment Under Capitalism

- Biao
- Castelles
- Radhakrishnan

# IT in India

- Biao writes about the global network of IT labor and the movement of people that it generates.
- Capitalist competition incentivizes the global movement of skilled individuals. What is lost when people have to perpetually move locations?
- Body-shopping in the Indian IT sector takes informal IT labor and connects it to international buyers of IT skills.
- The socioeconomic structure of local India produces global labor force.
- Wealth movement from local to global

# Flexible Work

- Part-time and flex time work results from the communication revolution which allows for the severing of the connection between work and location
- Technologies allowed for decentralization and coordination simultaneously
- Different kinds of workers benefit more than others from connections created by IT
- “flex time” is a form of driving wages to subsistence levels?
- EU vs. US: Unemployment greater in EU, worker protections lost in US
- Friedman’s optimism of IT globalizing the world vs. Casetelles cautionary vision

# Interior Life and Life Trajectories

- Radhakrishnan investigates how the practices and work patterns created by Capitalism in an Indian IT industry conflict with traditional patterns, norms, and societal expectations
- For Shuba, global IT work provided an opportunity for independence from her conservative, rich, and high status family
- For Rani, it offered an avenue for self-actualization, and tied her even closer to her family, despite it causing her to move across the world to Silicon Valley
- For Bharathi, global IT forced her to adopt global cosmopolitan culture, that is a self-isolated, homogenous in thoughts, tastes, and aspirations.
- Globalization results in 'being Indian' being redefined in relation to the global. The professional workplace behavior is affecting the interior sense of self and culture.

# Summary of Lecture

- Work and Employment Under Capitalism
  - Biao
  - Castelles
  - Radhakrishnan

# Questions to Think About From Lecture

- Does Graeber's analyses of how capitalism operates explain patterns of employment and compensation in the modern economy?
- Castells writes about part-time and flex time work in a networked society. How does the single focus on productivity and efficiency in a capitalist system affect how long people work and other aspects of non-work life?
- What are some commodities that are not physical objects?
- Biao writes about the global network of IT labor and the movement of people that it generates. Think about how capitalist competition incentivizes this kind of global movement of skilled individuals. What is lost when people have to perpetually move locations?
- Radhakrishnan writes about how the values of capitalism create practices and work patterns that conflict with traditional patterns, norms, and societal expectations. Consider both the positive and negative repercussions.