

## **Recouping Masculinity: Insights from Undocumented South Asian Male Migrants In Greece**

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The talk is based on Dr. Kukreja's ongoing research in Greece among undocumented South Asian male migrants working in the agricultural sector there. This talk situates centre stage the process by which temporary labour regimes utilise culturally-specific masculine norms of undocumented migrant men to enforce labour docility and accumulate greater capital. It draws upon the example of Pakistani and Bangladeshi men working in orange orchards and strawberry fields who pit their masculinity against one another through contests to achieve the highest target of plucked produce within the shortest possible time. I argue that South Asian male migrants, emasculated and marginalised by their illegality and precarity of work, attempt to recast their masculine stature through such contests.

The exhibition of macho muscular masculinity, through such competitions, allows them to notionally transform themselves into indispensable mythic heroes. Self-valorization of their masculinity vis-à-vis co-ethnic males and Greek male workers enables them to shed off the failed masculine tag that dogs them from back home. Drawing on interviews with migrant male workers and supervisors, I contend that such 'manhood acts' result in the men's self-exploitation, erode worker solidarity, and allow for an easier extraction of value from their labouring bodies.