

OPEN SEMINAR SERIES

THE CULTURE AND POLITICS RESEARCH GROUP PRESENTS

**Tuesday 24 March 2009
10:30 – 12:00**

**SEERC Seminar Room
SEERC Bldg**

“Work and Social Change in Sicilian Agrarian Anti-mafia Cooperatives”

By

Mr. Theodoros Rakopoulos

PhD Candidate

Instructor

Humanities and Social Sciences Division

CITY College

ABSTRACT

This research is looking at an instance of social change through the lens of thick ethnography in Western Sicily. It discusses people's livelihoods, as they entrench with production in agrarian cooperatives founded on land confiscated by local mafia leaders. The change in the relations of production as well as the gradual fabrication of new social relations it evokes and the accommodation of such change in the everyday life of the cooperatives' members and their kin are at the focus of the research. The paper will present the particularities of “anti-mafia culture”, founded in work and material needs and will juxtapose this experience to the current debate on the “identity-based” character of new social movements. By investigating the legal aspect of the confiscations as well as the enactment of a “culture of legality”, the paper will also discuss the legal reproduction of the state on the ground and the actual people's discourses on the validity of laws on people's everyday life. Using work and production as analytical categories, the research brings forward the issue of political mobilization on the grounds of material urges, explored on the economic organization of a local community.

The seminar series is open to all members of staff and students of CITY and to any externals that wish to attend.