

MARCH 21, 2024

START: 2 PM

PSK (THIRD FLOOR)

ROOM 3A.1

GEORG-COCH-PLATZ 2, 1010 VIENNA

ISA INTERNATIONAL GUEST LECTURE

THE NARRATIVE OF SACRIFICE: THE THIRD FRONT AND THE LEFT-BEHIND

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Between 1964 and 1980, under Mao's lead the Chinese central government waged the Third Front Movement to develop industrial and military facilities for fear of the attacks from the Soviet Union and the United States. "Third Front" is a geo-military concept, referring mainly to the interior area away from the potential coastal war fronts. During the movement, millions of factory workers, cadres, intellectuals, military personnel, and tens of millions of construction workers flocked to the Third Front region. This is China's first wave of "migrant workers" under the planned economy. Starting from the 1990s, most Third Front factories were either bankrupted or relocated to the coastal regions. This talk, by examining the case of Kaili, a Third Front city in the Southwest where ten Third Front factories were located and more than thirty thousand people migrated to, demonstrates how the laid-off workers narrate and exhibit their past. This talk points out that by producing the narratives of sacrifice for national security, they reorganize their networks, reboot their sense of pride, and negotiate with the local government and social media for justice and welfare.



Dr. Fan Zhang is Associate Professor at Peking University's Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology. Following her BA studies at Peking University in Sociology and Arts Studies, she completed her MA thesis at Chicago University with a thesis (2010) on Wenren tea. Her PhD thesis project received the Marshall Sahlins Essay Prize 2018, and was completed in 2018 through the MPI Halle at the University of Leipzig ("Warlord, Emperor and Manjusri: Qing's Cosmopolitics, Tibetan Subjectivity and Power Translation in the Late 18th Century"). Her articles and book chapters have been published with Harassowitz, Brill, Routledge, with *Revue d'Études Tibétaines*, *Cargo*, *Istor*, *Folklore Studies* (chin.), and with *Positions: Asia Critique*.

