



# WEDNESDAY SEMINAR

15.06.2022, 17:00 Uhr, HS-C

IKSA, NIG, Universitätsstraße 7, 1010 Wien, 4. Stock

## Chandana Mathur (Maynooth University)

A Strike to Remember: Ethnographic Reflections on the Conditions of Possibility for Labour Resistance in the U.S. Heartland.



**Chandana Mathur** was educated at the University of Delhi and the New School for Social Research, New York, and teaches at the Anthropology Department of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

Drawing on anthropological political economy and political ecology, her research focuses on the United States, South Asia and the South Asian diaspora. A former Chair of the World Council of Anthropological Associations (2016-18) and the current Vice-President of the European Association of Social Anthropologists, she has received a Distinguished Service Award from the International Union for Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences and a Presidential Award from the American Anthropological Association.

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This discussion of organised labour in the US touches on themes that lie tangled at the junction of social memory and history. Drawing on extended fieldwork among industrial workers in Indiana in 1989-91 and a ‘focused revisit’ (to use Michael Burawoy’s phrasing) in 2015, it addresses the question of how collective memories of past struggles intersect with capitalist restructurings to enable or thwart the potential for labour resistance. Employing a serendipitously obtained archive, media accounts and workers’ narratives, I will look back at an exceptionally long strike at the local Alcoa (Aluminum Company of America) plant that took place in 1986, substantially before the first phase of my fieldwork. The argument that I will offer is that this strike was a key moment that cast a long shadow that was evident in the local labour practices, habits of thought and structures of feeling documented not only during my 1989-91 fieldwork but all the way into 2015 and beyond.

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### kommende Termine

22.06.2022 Madeleine Reeves

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