

Reengineering India: work, capital, and class in an offshore economy

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Abstrak

Reengineering India explores Indias post-liberalization transformation through the lens of the software industry. It is an anthropological study of work, capital, and class in the software industry, viewed as a key site where novel forms of work and worker-subjects, dispositions, and social identities are being fashioned, and new aspirations and social imaginaries are introduced, worked out, contested, and often transformed. It traces the multiple genealogies of software capital and its modes of value generation and explores the production, shaping, and circulation of Indian information technology (IT) labour. Drawing on ethnographic research in Bangalores software companies, the book examines the organizational practices of these companies to unravel the conjunctions of work, power, culture, and subjectivity in these global workspaces. It also maps the interconnections between IT labour and capital, social mobility, and the reconstitution of the middle class, and explores the diverse lives of Indian culture and middle class identity as mobile IT professionals pursue their projects of self-fashioning and social mobility within a transnational social field. Highlighting the agency of IT workers, organizations, and entrepreneurs in Indias post-liberalization reconfiguration, the author argues that the forms and modalities of capital, work, identity, sociality, and subjectivity that have been forged in IT workspaces are not just by-products of globalization, but have been deeply shaped by the social and historical conditions of their making. Although the software industry has been central to the fashioning of a new India, it remains deeply embedded in older structures of inequality and modes of accumulation.