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MACERATA 17 -20/09/2014

TITLE: GOLD MINING IN ERITREA: LABOUR DYNAMICS IN PAST AND PRESENT

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ABSTRACT:

After a close examination of the attempts to industrialize the mining sector in Eritrea during the Italian colonization, the paper focuses on the current situation, wherein the Eritrean Government makes a point of the mining industry for optimizing socio-economic development opportunities. Above all gold mining is a continuity with artisanal and industrial past activity, but today mining companies ride out the obstacles of the past through technology. The aim of this paper is the analysis of gold mining in Eritrea in order to understand if it can be considered a blessing or a curse, using few key points, such as the emergence of new skilled paid workers; the international solidarity mechanism that characterizes the mining sector all around the world; the decent work agenda in a country run through biopolitics. Furthermore, the mining sector is an arena for global actors like foreign exploration and mining companies, which exploit natural resources in Eritrea, affecting both the labour market and the working conditions, but also like United Nations and Inter-Governmental Authority on Development, which sanctioned to mining activities to safeguard regional stability punishing the Eritrean leadership's human rights negligence. As a result, the paper will provide a comparison between past and present in terms of job opportunities, labour composition and dynamics, working conditions; and socio-political issues concerning mining gold in Eritrea. Qualitative and quantitative data are based on fieldwork collection, representing original sources for studying the Eritrean mining sector.

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