

Corporate Social Responsibility in the Electronics Manufacturing Industry: the Implications of Soft Governance for Labor Standards

Final report

I. Abstract

In this research project, we have aimed to map the network of actors and tools involved in defining and resolving an emerging social problem: the problem of labor standards in the electronics industry in China and Taiwan. Our central research question was: *how do public and private players active in the definition and resolution of this problem cooperate and/or compete, and what effects does this have on labor standards in this sector?*

Our research identifies a “governance arena” structured by competition between key players (governments, corporations and NGOs) to occupy the moral high ground. This governance arena is not functionally integrated, as hypothesized by Abbott & Snidal’s (2009) model of the “governance triangle”. Rather, it is characterized by a blend of competitive and cooperative activities between key players seeking reputational, social and economic capital in this “market for virtue” (Vogel 2005). Furthermore, though dynamic and frequently well intentioned, the many activities that this competition for reputation produces do not significantly affect working conditions in the electronics sector, nor do they reliably provide Chinese workers with the tools necessary to assert their own rights. They do, however, produce other effects, such as providing new management tools for brands to exert pressure on their suppliers, and propagating notions of personal responsibility and development through “capacity building” programs in the area of workers’ rights. They also provide a new arena for public debate on the question of labor standards in this industry, incorporating a broad range of actors and raising important new challenges.

II. Executive Summary

The turn of the century witnessed growing popular awareness that the vast quantities of goods and technologies produced in the South and consumed in large part in the North come at a price: in the words of one best-selling title, “The China Price”. Asia in general and China in particular stand out in this popular account as a kind of no-man’s-land for human, environmental and labor rights, and have been the arena for repeated anti-sweatshop campaigns over the past thirty years. Numerous initiatives involving state, inter-governmental, corporate and civil society actors have been elaborated to address these issues, leading to a dizzying multiplicity of norms and standards, along with a plethora of tools and procedures designed to implement them. In particular, the rise of new forms of “soft law” in this area – loosely grouped under the rubric of “corporate social responsibility” (CSR) – have led some authors to conclude that we are entering a new era of global governance in which private, voluntary normative regimes will increasingly displace state-based “hard” law and regulation.

Assessing this claim empirically is difficult, requiring both breadth in perspective and depth in analysis. With this in mind, our project focused on the dense nexus of private and public norm-making activities around one particular issue – labor standards – in one particular industry sector – electric and electronics manufacturing (EEE) in China and Taiwan – a sector that is relatively new to CSR and particularly important in light of the world’s enormous and growing dependence on information and communication technologies (ICT).

We have identified four categories of actors in the EEE-CSR nexus. Particularly important is the Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition (EICC), the industry-wide consortium established in 2004 by many of the largest brands in the sector in order to respond to pressures from consumers, investors and the media. As its website states, “[t]he EICC is a coalition of the world’s leading electronics companies working together to improve efficiency and social, ethical and environmental responsibility in the global supply chain.” The EICC established a common “corporate code of conduct” (CCC), intended to clarify labor and environmental standards for the industry, and proposes standardized auditing procedures and other services for its members. In addition, many firms (particularly brands) have their own “social and environmental responsibility” units, with in-house experts in CSR and auditing procedures, who produce reports for management and for shareholders, and, in the case of firms that are members of the EICC, for the EICC accountability officers. We call this category of actors “industry-based CSR officers”.

NGOs are another key actor in this field. However, the broad category of NGOs must be further broken down to include three quite different kinds of organization. The first are Western or Asian-based non-profit NGOs, founded by social activists committed to promoting human, labor and environmental rights. These organizations are generally transnational, almost always underfunded and understaffed, and work on a number of related issues and sectors at once. The second type of NGO is domestic Chinese NGOs, often quite hard to identify as the Chinese government makes it difficult for NGOs to operate freely on the mainland. These organizations are also underfunded and understaffed, but are frequently in closer touch with the realities of Chinese workplaces than their foreign counterparts. A third category of “civil society” actors in this field are Western-based, corporate-funded or for-profit NGOs who work closely with industry and who generally have significant means at their disposal. Often, these three types of NGOs work together on specific projects, often hand-in-hand with CSR officers in firms.

A third category of actors is international organizations (IOs). The U.N. system has been very active in the area of social and environmental responsibility, with a major push coming from the U.N. Global Compact and the U.N. Secretary-General’s Special Representative on business and human rights. The ILO has also taken a number of targeted initiatives in this area, and we have profited from their insights.

Finally, unlike much of the research carried out in the area of CSR, our project also examined the role of state-based actors, notably local and national government representatives and representatives of the state-affiliated network of unions, the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU).

a. Research Plan

Our research takes its inspiration from the theoretical framework set out by the sociology of public problems. This body of literature highlights the fact that social problems do not simply exist: they are perceived, publicized, (re)framed and used as platforms advancing diverse interests by specific social actors. Social problems come to life in what anthropologist Olivier de Sardan calls an “arena”, in which differently situated players vie for attention, funds, legitimacy and “ownership” of the problem. It is through this competition for “the definition of the situation” that solutions – policies, programs, tools, statements – are elaborated, thus affecting the measures ultimately taken (or not) to resolve the original “problem”. Emerging in 2010 with a spate of suicides at Foxconn, one of the industry’s key players, the “social problem” of working conditions in the electronics industry in China provides a perfect, if complicated, example of the insights afforded by this theoretical perspective.

In order to determine the contours of this emerging social problem, our project applied a multi-disciplinary research design involving analysis of documents (legal and regulatory texts, websites, “gray” literature) and empirical investigation, both quantitative and qualitative. We set out to map the set of actors and tools involved in formulating, negotiating, implementing, monitoring and enforcing labor standards in this sector, correlating these activities with the different positions that actors occupy within the “labor standards arena”. In order to assess the relationship between the “problem” and proposed “solutions”, we also tried to gain an overall understanding of the effects of these activities on Chinese workers’ knowledge and use of governance mechanisms in the workplace.

Concretely, our empirical investigation involved three elements. First, through approximately 50 structured interviews with Chinese government officials, CSR officers within firms, and specialists in CSR at corporate-funded and civil society NGOs, we mapped the network of actors involved in one way or another in this governance arena. Secondly, through in-depth interviews and participant observation, we analyzed three particular governance tools: (a) the EICC corporate code of conduct and the related auditing procedures; (b) hotlines established by firms and by NGOs to provide mechanisms for worker voice; and (c) community service centers for workers established by a number of firms in conjunction with local Chinese NGOs. Finally, with the help of a team of industrial relations specialists put together by our partner at the International Labour Office, we conducted a broad-based questionnaire survey of electronics workers in Southern China in order to determine their levels of knowledge about and use of public and private governance mechanisms within the workplace.

Our research team included an anthropologist of law (Prof. Ellen Hertz, University of Neuchâtel), a sociologist of public problems (Dr., since Prof. Marylène Lieber, University of Geneva), an industrial relations specialist (Dr. Chang-Hee Lee, ILO Beijing and Geneva offices) and a specialist of international labor law (Prof. Nina Pillard, Georgetown University Law Center), to which were associated five experts in Chinese industrial relations (Profs. Liu Ming-wei, Liu Li-ping and Zheng Guanhuai, and Drs. Wang Kan and Wen Xiaoyi) active in the U.S. and in China.

b. Results obtained

CSR as an “arena”

As David Vogel (2005) and others have demonstrated, CSR has created a flourishing “market for virtue”, producing books, websites, guidelines, conferences, training sessions, multi-stakeholder initiatives, reports, audits, and so on. This market, and the competition for contracts, funds and legitimacy that it presupposes, structures CSR activities in the electronics industry as well. In this perspective, the “Foxconn suicides” of the spring of 2010 were a gift, providing firms, governments, and international and domestic NGOs and unions with an occasion to further publicize their concerns over the problem of labor standards, and to shed doubt on the efficacy of the EICC as a standards-enforcement mechanism.

A first sign of the emerging competition for place came in October of 2011 when the Dutch government, together with Dutch unions, transnational advocacy networks and three major brands (members of the EICC) launched the “IDH supplier improvement program” in Southern China. Even more importantly from a media perspective, the EICC was indirectly but clearly marginalized when Apple, the target of transnational advocacy campaign criticism with respect to its major supplier Foxconn, chose to work with the Fair Labor Association (FLA), a multi-stakeholder initiative that has its own code of conduct and auditing procedures, distinct from the EICC.

The reshuffling of the “labor standards arena” is also perceptible in the ways in which competing NGOs have faced off over the effectiveness of the FLA interventions within Foxconn. Many transnational NGOs have shed doubt on the legitimacy of the FLA’s approach, arguing that it papers over persistent problems at Apple and in Foxconn’s plants and, more generally, that it is overly friendly to corporate concerns. Nonetheless, most NGOs collaborate with brands in one way or another, and are frequently directly or indirectly dependent on brands for funding. Ideological and strategic postures are thus both important elements of organizational self-definition and signs of “branding”, marking positions in a competition for legitimacy and efficacy that has financial and institutional consequences for all involved in this arena. It is this competition amongst “civil society actors” for place and voice, rather than any inherent “complexities” within the electronics sector, that have thus far impeded the emergence of jointly held standards and common procedures for implementing them in the area of CSR in electronics.

This conclusion applies with even greater force to the brands themselves. As our interviews have revealed, competition is such within the consumer electronics market that brands have no interest in harmonizing their approaches to socially responsible production. Rather, in corporate reports directed at investors and consumers, brands attempt to distinguish themselves from the pack, highlighting the efforts and “innovations” that they have promoted in the area of CSR over and above those of industry competitors. This situation contrasts interestingly with other industries that have been the target of similar criticism by transnational action networks over the past decades (in particular, footwear and apparel), and that have put in place relatively stable and apparently somewhat effective multi-stakeholder frameworks for implementing CSR in their industries. This difference is may be attributed to the relative immaturity of the electronics industry’s entry into the field of CSR, but also to the lesser pressure exercised by activist networks, consumers, IOs and governments.

Taiwan / China: the many faces of CSR

Our comparative study of CSR policies in electronics firms in Taiwan and China has been invaluable in demonstrating the malleability of the concept of CSR, and the different interpretations and policies to which it gives rise. The Taiwanese firms interviewed in 2010-11 expressed a conception of CSR linked to notions of corporate philanthropy and cultural sponsorship. Many of them seemed only vaguely aware of the labor and environmental implications that this term connotes for firms based in the U.S. or in Europe (though this may have changed since the “Foxconn suicides” and subsequent media attention to these questions). Those firms that did sense the pressure to take measures to reassure investors or consumers about their socially responsible practices tended to engage in quite blatant acts of “cherry-picking”, selecting for attention those environmental problems that they considered to be easily handled (such as carbon emissions) and ignoring or denying the existence of those that were at the heart of their production processes (such as chemical pollution of the soil and OSH issues, which are, by all accounts, rampant and serious problems).

The situation in China is more complex, both because of the massive presence of Western and Japanese firms in the supply chain, and because the Chinese government has its own distinct discourse about the need to promote corporate social responsibility. Though originally centered on questions of philanthropy in a highly paternalistic vein, this discourse has evolved as the increasing social and environmental activism of Chinese workers and citizens has obliged the government to take a stance that is more critical of industry practices. Frequently, central and provincial governments mobilize a discourse resembling CSR in order to gain moral and legal leverage on local authorities, who are strongly tempted to ignore labor and environmental law violations by firms implanted in their regions in exchange for taxes and employment. However, our research also revealed a trend on the part of government officials to encourage hard law over soft law solutions, at least on paper: policies to promote the rule of law in China, as well as increasing leeway granted to the local offices of the ACFTU are examples of this trend, and directly contradict the predictions of those who see a generalized shift towards private governance in an era of global capitalism.

CSR: a new managerial tool

Private governance (notably CSR) has been presented alternatively as a challenge to national legal frameworks and as a positive movement for holding capitalists responsible for their actions. Recent scholarship, however, tends to be more nuanced, and has focused on the concrete instruments employed by regulating parties. As many have argued, measures classified as “soft law” in this developing area are not simply a milder or more flexible version of “hard law”, but a series of governance techniques with their own objectives and design that are best understood in the terms of industrial management, social control or “social harmony” (in the Chinese vocabulary). Thus, rather than opposing “private” to “public” measures, it is more useful to undertake detailed analysis of the particular tools involved in recent transformations, in order to understand the variety of functions and meanings that these instruments take on at different places and times.

This emphasis on instruments of governance, rather than larger, pre-defined categories of actors, has been central to our empirical work, focused specifically on the mobilization,

negotiation, interpretation and implementation of legal, regulatory or CSR tools. When examined in detail, many of the programs and policies designed to implement CSR actually work not so much to improve labor conditions as to improve production and management policies. Two of our detailed case studies clearly illustrate this tendency. In the case of auditing, we found that audits, particularly when conducted in-house, function as the moment when controlled violations of domestic law are negotiated between suppliers and their customers, suppliers insisting that if the brands want delivery at low prices, they must be willing to tolerate abuses in the area of overtime (OT), and brands tinkering with their purchasing orders (prices and dates of delivery) in order to avoid particularly flagrant violations of Chinese OT law. In the same vein, a dormitory visit that we observed did not end up in a discussion between the auditor and the audited plant over the living conditions of the workers, despite the fact that the company's code of conduct was quite explicit on this point, but rather on the necessity to add nets under windows to prevent suicides.

Our second case study was of worker hotlines, direct lines established at the behest of brands in order to provide workers in their supplier firms with answer to questions that they may have on the job. Here we found another instance of CSR "capacity building programs" functioning as a multi-functional management tool, serving at the same time as a source of information for workers on their rights, as an outlet for worker dissatisfaction and as an up-close-and-dirty monitoring tool that brands can use to survey the activities of their suppliers through weekly or monthly report that they receive from hotline operators.

CSR: from labor rights to personal development

Our final result concerns the effects of CSR as a discursive "frame-setter" for the question of working conditions in China. As our questionnaire survey demonstrated, only a small proportion of workers in electronics firms know of the presence of CSR policies in their factories, and a far smaller percentage (gender-biased in favor of women) actually use these instruments to register complaints about their working conditions. Interestingly, a significantly greater proportion of workers (a small majority) know of state-based policies and instruments for the protection of their labor rights (labor contracts, overtime provisions, the law on labor arbitration, union presence, etc.), although an equally small percentage say they have or would use these instruments. It seems clear that despite significant financial and personnel engagement by brands to foster responsible social and environmental practices in their supplier firms, workers are either not aware of or not convinced by these measures.

We cannot, of course, establish that CSR is of no importance to the improvement of labor standards in the industry, for we cannot say what firm practices would be in the absence of a CSR framework. The more important question for us, however, is what this framework actually produces under current conditions. Our in-depth fieldwork on auditing and capacity building programs suggests that CSR works to reframe questions of labor rights and standards into questions of personal development and worker happiness. Training sessions organized by firms to inform workers of their rights are a case in point. While no doubt interesting and well intentioned, these training sessions have a subtle "frame-setting" effect. Rather than establishing effective monitoring systems capable of identifying and sanctioning violations of their own CCCs – a costly affair that would amount to establishing a private system of labor

inspection within supply chains – brands resort to encouraging managers in supplier firms to “engage” with the compliance process, and even to help their workers to take what they label as “ownership” of the issue. In sum, the discourse of responsibility, perhaps because it represents a loosely defined moral precept and not a clear legal allocation of rights and duties, shifts the burden of responsibility from the brands to the managers of supplier firms and even to workers themselves, who are suddenly made the “owners” of the problem of systematic violations of Chinese law and corporate codes of conduct, and responsible for acting to protect their own interests.

This trend is even more evident in the case of other programs we have observed, such as those establishing community centers where workers can come to relax, inform themselves and receive various forms of counseling on questions ranging from romantic matters to how to advance their careers. The encounters fostered by these community centers are quite moving, providing a glimpse into the grinding world of factory work, and the Chinese social workers staffing these centers are clearly committed to their mission. However, our interviews reveal that many of the staff at these centers consider labor rights as “narrow”, “economistic” or “legalistic” responses to a much broader problem – the need to take into account the worker’s “whole person”. This discourse must be understood as fitting within a more general trend characterizing contemporary China, in which rural citizens are seen as uncivilized and in need of help in order to become proper citizens.

The most blatant example of this civilizing mission was provided by another “capacity building program” that we encountered, a dedicated hotline, funded by brands, to train migrant parents to “communicate” properly with the children they had left back in their villages. As the director explained, most parents have an “old-fashioned” way of thinking about communication, limited to scolding their children for not working hard enough. With the help of trained psychologists, hotline staff set out to teach rural parents how to adopt more “modern” communication skills, presumed to be the solution to tensions and conflict between parents and children. Thus, what began as programs dedicated to “building workers’ capacity” to exercise their labor rights evolves into a great number of programs for social assistance of one form or another, based on the tacit presumption that the “problem” at hand is that workers are not sufficiently “adapted” to their life in the cities, not that firms systematically violate workers’ rights to decent pay and the application of internationally recognized labor standards.

c. Relation to initial research hypotheses

As the previous discussion illustrates, our project was both ambitious and exploratory. Its principal strong point was also the source of our principal difficulty: we aimed to examine all of the different institutions and instruments that have come into being over the past ten years in order to improve working conditions in the electronics industry in China and Taiwan. The objects that we brought within our purview were numerous and varied, as were the kinds of questions they raised. This bird’s eye view of the governance “arena” has allowed us to ask new questions about the promotion of corporate social responsibility in this sector. By stepping back from a normative stance, we have been able to map the overall effects of this grab bag of public and private governance mechanisms, and to zero in on areas where further research is needed. However, it has also been a complicated project to put into effect, and has taken us quite a bit longer than we had expected.

As highlighted in our intermediary report, one result does stand out clearly, amidst the many new questions open for investigation. The “governance triangle” (Abbott & Snidal 2009) paradigm with which we began posits that governance in transnational contexts involves a combination of state-based, corporate-based and civil-society based regulation and monitoring. While the paradigm pretends to be descriptive, our research suggests that it suffers from an important prescriptive bias, positing as reality what is in fact a normative system that many observers wish to find on the ground. It is, in sum, a “*vue de l’esprit*”, with all of the advantages and disadvantages that normative/predictive paradigms offer. The “governance triangle” describes an ideal world in which market, civil society and bureaucratic rationalities would come together to provide their functional specialization, each operating in its own domain. This may very well be a laudable goal, but our research indicates that we are very far from such a situation in the area of labor regulation in the electronics industry in China and Taiwan.

In sum, while we do not find a cooperative regime of private-public governance in this transnational supply chain as posited in our project application, we do find a burgeoning industry of intermediaries whose job it is to pretend that such a regime exists. Though dynamic and well intentioned, the many activities that this competition for reputation produces do not significantly affect working conditions in the electronics sector, nor do they reliably provide Chinese workers with the tools necessary to assert their own rights. They do, however, produce other effects, such as providing new management tools for brands to exert pressure on their suppliers, and propagating notions of personal responsibility and development through “capacity building” programs in the area of workers’ rights. They also provide a new arena for public debate on the question of labor standards in this industry, incorporating a broader range of actors and raising important new questions.

d. Practical application of results

(See “Policy recommendations”, below)

e. Further questions

The new questions opened by this research point in two very different directions. The first of these comes out of the large-scale survey that we conducted with approximately 900 workers in 28 electronic firms located in Southern China (see Liu Ming-wei 2013, below). A first remark of general interest: our data reveals levels of illegality and exploitation in working conditions in this industry that, while not satisfying, are not quite as shocking as the reports one reads in the media would lead one to believe. This suggests that serious comparative analysis of working conditions in different transnational supply chains is necessary in order to counterbalance the often sensationalist reporting that highlights abuses in some contexts (China seems to attract undue attention in this regard) and ignores them in others (for example, strong anti-union policies in the United States).

Turning to the details of our survey, other interesting and more fine-grained questions emerge. In our questionnaire design, we set out to test two hypotheses formulated on the basis of our reading of the current literature on CSR and Chinese government labor regulation. First, we

hypothesized that workers' knowledge and use of *private* governance mechanisms would be significantly associated with their firm's position in the global value chain, while worker's knowledge and use of *public* governance mechanism would not be a function of where their firm was situated. Second, we hypothesized that workers' knowledge and use of private governance mechanisms would be significantly associated with the *location* of lead firms (brands) in the global value chain, while workers' knowledge and use of public governance mechanism would not be a function of where lead firms were located.

Both of our hypotheses turned out to be only partially validated, for reasons that it would be important to investigate further. Workers' *knowledge* of private and public governance mechanisms was relatively limited (though notably less so for public mechanisms), and did not appear to be a function of where the firm was located on the value chain. However, workers' *use* of governance mechanisms, public or private, was extremely limited, suggesting that these mechanisms enjoyed little legitimacy in workers' eyes. As for our second hypothesis, workers' in U.S. and European lead firms did seem to have slightly more knowledge of both public and private governance mechanisms than those in Asian firms (with important exceptions that merit investigation), but this did not increase their use of these mechanisms, despite the fact that (or because?) their objective working conditions were slightly better in these firms. Clearly, the relationship between knowledge and use of governance mechanisms is an area that calls for a far more detailed and careful investigation.

A second area for future investigation points in an entirely different direction: towards in-depth ethnographic investigation of the rise of "civilizational discourse" as a consequence, intended or not, of CSR policies. As our case studies indicate, the very openness of the key CSR concepts of "responsibility", "ownership", "participation" and "engagement" is a double-edged sword, working both as a more sociologically grounded conception of how genuine social change is effected, and as a tool at the disposal of more powerful partners to shift responsibility and costs for the problem to be solved to the shoulders of weaker partners. In so doing, CSR discourse creates new expectations, for self and for others, and interacts with the structuring categories and norms of the society at large. In China, these structuring categories and norms concern the "backward" or "low quality" nature of rural migrants to the cities, and the need to "improve" them by guiding them towards more "modern" attitudes towards their lives and their surroundings. If funding (and energy!) permit, we hope to undertake an in-depth ethnography of a workers' community service center in order to see how both staff and workers negotiate their understandings of these complex, shifting notions.

f. Policy recommendations

Our project has brought us into contact with a number of key actors in the area of policy making for CSR, most importantly the ILO and the FLA. Both of these organizations are interested in our results, though the direct policy implications are not clear. As our discussion demonstrates, we have tried to remain descriptive and not prescriptive in our analyses, mainly because so few studies take this approach. Most writing on the subject is either "for" or "against" CSR, based on the assumption that CSR does (or does not do) what it says it will – establish an alternative governance system to fill the gaps in state-based governance in complex, transnational supply chains. We start from the premise that we must first describe as objectively as possible *what CSR actually does in practice*: though CSR may not help to

protect workers' rights, it does produce other effects that are worth examining. We have mentioned a number of these above: establish a “market for virtue” in the area of private consulting in labor standards; provide a space for micro-negotiations between brands and suppliers; reframe the question of labor rights into questions of worker happiness. Other work associated with this project (see notably Prof. Pillard’s project, funded by the Woodrow Wilson Center and entitled “Reinventing Work Law: Codes of Corporate Conduct in the New Global Workplace”), set out to provide concrete legal and policy suggestions for creating a more robust system of private-public governance in this area.

g. Past and Future publications and activities

Publications

- Hertz, Ellen & Marylène Lieber. (2011). “Chinese Working Women Network (CWWN): militer dans les interstices”, *Nouvelles questions féministes*, vol. 30, no 2, pp. 126-133.
- Lieber, Marylène. (2012). “'Dagongmei', les petites mains de l'usine du monde”, in Angeloff Tania, Lieber Marylène (eds.), *Chinoises au XXIè siècle. Ruptures et continuités*, pp. 105-120. Paris : La Découverte.
- Lieber, Marylène (forthcoming 2015). “Nouveaux instruments de justice sociale en Chine. Du droit du travail au développement personnel”. *Sociologies*.
- Hertz, Ellen & Marylène Lieber. (forthcoming 2015). “Marginalizing the law: Corporate social responsibility, worker hotlines and the shifting grounds of rights consciousness in contemporary China”, in (S. Brandtstädter & H. Steinmüller, eds.), *Judging the State: Emerging Publics and the Quest for Justice in Contemporary China*.

Working papers and internal reports

- Liu, Ming-wei. “Governing Labor Standards in the Chinese Electronics Manufacturing Industry: Labor Market Institutions and Global Value Chain Governance – A Survey of 900 Employees in 28 Consumer Electronics Enterprises in the Pearl River Delta Area”, Report for International Labor Office, March 2013.
- Wang, Kan. “Project Report: Understanding Employment Relations of A Large Taiwanese-owned Electronic Manufacturing Company in Mainland China”, Report for International Labor Office, March 2013.
- Wen, Xiaoyi. “Investigation Report on Changing Industrial Relations of Japanese-invested Enterprises within the Electronic-manufacturing Sector in Guangdong Province”, Report for International Labor Office, March 2013.

Newspaper articles

- Hertz, Ellen. “Le petit cadeau tout propre”, *L'Express*, December 20, 2011.

Work in progress

- Hertz, Ellen (in progress). *The Great Shell Game. The Limits of Corporate Social Responsibility in Transnational Supply Chains*. (This book-length study is intended for a broad public, and will develop at length, and in easily accessible prose, the arguments developed in this report).
- Lieber, Marylène & Ellen Hertz. “La responsabilité sociale des entreprises comme arène : la faiblesse des liens forts”. (Article to be submitted in French to a leading journal in sociology.)

Workshops

- “Governing labour standards in electronics manufacturing in China”, International Labour Organization-Neuchâtel University Informal Workshop, ILO, Geneva, August 2013. Participants: E. Hertz (UniNE), C.-H. Lee (ILO), M. Lieber (UniNE), M.-W. Liu (Rutgers University), N. Pillard (Georgetown University), Z.-W. Sun (Shanghai Jiaotong University), J.-G. Zhu (Guangzhou Sun Yat-sen University). With observers from ILO, SNIS, Manchester University.

Presentations, conference papers, participation in colloquia

Hertz, Ellen

- “Made in China. L'émergence du droit mou?”, Assemblée générale UniNExt, Neuchâtel, May 3, 2012.
- “La ‘responsabilité sociale des entreprises’: vers de nouvelles logiques socio-économiques?”, Ecole doctorale CUSO en Sociologie, Neuchâtel, May 11, 2012.
- “电子企业劳动条件：以用‘社会问题’的社会学分析” (“Labor conditions in the electronics industry: a ‘social problem’ sociological analysis”, Center on Philanthropy’s Academic Salon, Guangzhou Sun Yat-Sen University, April 8, 2013.
- "Corporate social responsibility in China: from labor rights to personal development", Hong Kong Institute for the Social Sciences, Hong Kong University, April 24, 2013.
- Invited discussant for the International Workshop: “Disorder, Action and the Public Good”, University of Lausanne, December 6-7, 2013.
- “Hotline fever (*rexian re*): technologies of self and rights consciousness in transnational Chinese enterprises”, presentation on Prof. F. Weber’s seminar on contemporary China, Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris, March 25, 2014.

Lieber, Marylène

- “La fabrique de standards en matière des droits du travail dans l’industrie électronique en Chine : la place du genre”. Colloque “La Chine entre rupture et traditions : travail, genre, migrations”, Paris, October 8, 2010
- “ La promotion de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises dans l’industrie électronique en Chine : les programmes dits de ‘capacity building’”, Colloque de l’association française de sociologie, Grenoble, July 5th, 2011.
- “Hotline Fever (热线热) : technologies of self and rights consciousness in transnational Chinese enterprises”, International colloquium “Norms at the Margin, Margins of the Norm: the Social Construction of Illegality”, Tervuren and Brussels, October 25-27, 2012.
- “Du droit du travail au développement personnel. Réflexions sur les pratiques de la responsabilité sociale des entreprises en Chine post-socialiste”. Déjeuner sociologique, Université de Genève, December 12, 2013.
- “Travailleuses migrantes en Chine. Le genre de la globalization”, Université de Lausanne, May 15, 2014.
- “‘Dagongmei’. Les ouvrières chinoises, le genre et la production d’un système économique global”, Graduate Institute, Geneva, May 19, 2014.

Hertz, Ellen, Marylène Lieber, Yvan Schulz

- “Becoming a problem in electronics: how overtime has succeeded where occupational health and safety has failed”. Interdisciplinary conference “Mapping Environmental Cultures: Comparative Approaches to Waste in China”, Oxford University, September 16-17, 2013.

Follow-up projects

- “Circuits of value, streams of stuff: living off the global trade and treatment of e-waste”, Swiss National Science Foundation, Div. 1 grant n° 100013_149559, 2012-2015, CHF 424’000.