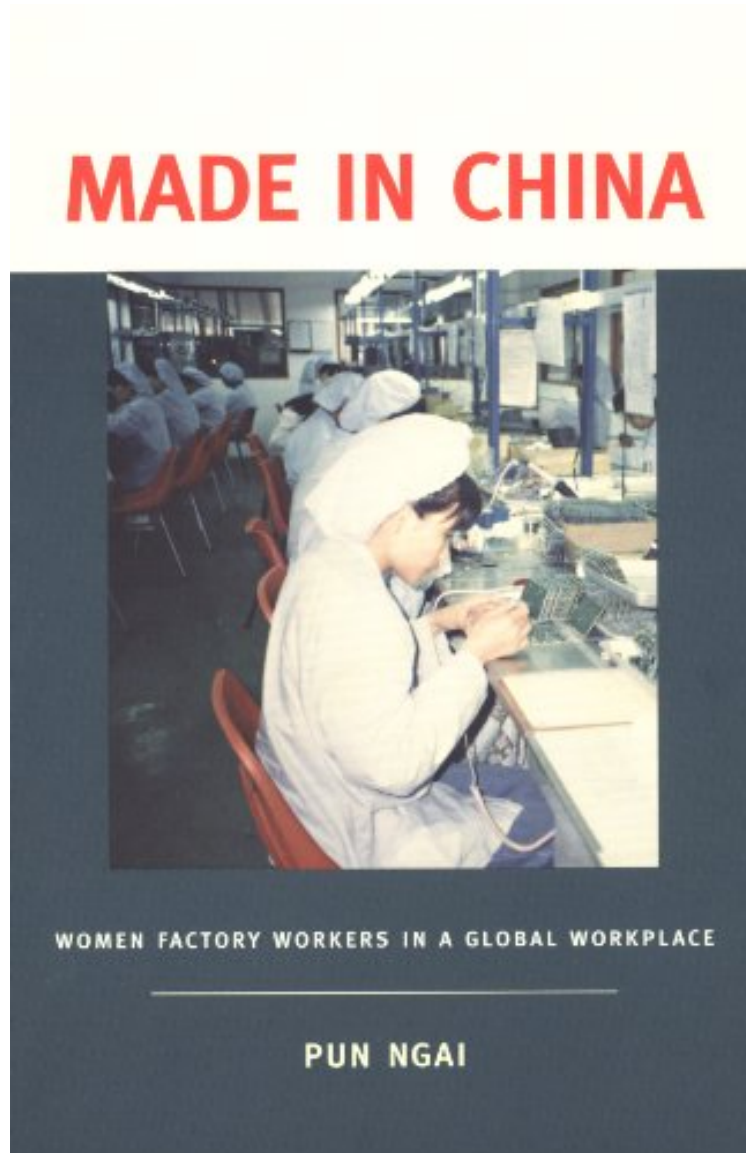


(Library ebook) Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace

# Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace

*Pun Ngai*

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**Pun Ngai : Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace:

11 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Treat workers as human beings for better resultsBy EthicallyInspiredAnyone working on CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), with NGOs, or otherwise on development issues in China and most developing countries should read this book. I only wish Pung Nai had a shorter version where she cut out all the intellectual references to supposed `great thinkers' of the past century and actually

kept it to its GEMS, which are her own insights into the true life realities for women factory workers. This book came from Pung Nai PhD as she tells us. This is unfortunate as it makes what is otherwise fantastic material hard to read and slow. But the well written sections tell us stories of individual workers' odysseys to Shenzhen from far away provinces, and explain social issues in China, and factory language providing insights few other writers have provided. To those working on improving factory conditions, there are a lot of great tips here about what Not to do. Pung Nai talks about worker slowdowns due to frustration at dogmatic authoritarian pressure to work faster, or have music turned off, etc, and of workers being less efficient and regularly fainting from working excessive overtime. Reading this book gives those of us working to encourage factory managers to give their workers more reasonable hours and wages, more force in our argument that doing so will improve productivity and quality. Regardless, Pung Nai points out the terrible toll on people's lives of excessive overtime, particularly the physical and psychological impacts on young women, who are not only burdened by the work pressure, but also familial pressures back home to marry and have sons. It helps us understand the value of programmes such as Nike's high school graduation programme for factory workers in Asia, to give workers a chance to gain self respect and pride in an environment in which the very essence of who they are, country girls, is looked down upon.

0 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Interesting read...By AZM This was a good memoir to read. I found it slow at times and choppy because the author moves back and forth from past to present constantly and then the book suddenly ends. There is no sharing of her actual transition from her Amish life into her "English" life, nor any details of how she actually met her husband. The end was far too sudden. Further, the information contained in the very back of the book about Amish facts regarding naming and so forth I found interesting and I was disappointed that they were pushed to the last few pages of the book when I felt they would have been best incorporated into the memoir throughout the book in order to help the reader get a better understanding of Amish tradition. Overall, a good read though and honestly written from the heart. I would recommend this book.

As China has evolved into an industrial powerhouse over the past two decades, a new class of workers has developed: the dagongmei, or working girls. The dagongmei are women in their late teens and early twenties who move from rural areas to urban centers to work in factories. Because of state laws dictating that those born in the countryside cannot permanently leave their villages, and familial pressure for young women to marry by their late twenties, the dagongmei are transient labor. They undertake physically exhausting work in urban factories for an average of four or five years before returning home. The young women are not coerced to work in the factories; they know about the twelve-hour shifts and the hardships of industrial labor. Yet they are still eager to leave home. *Made in China* is a compelling look at the lives of these women, workers caught between the competing demands of global capitalism, the socialist state, and the patriarchal family. Pun Ngai conducted ethnographic work at an electronics factory in southern China's Guangdong province, in the Shenzhen special economic zone where foreign-owned factories are proliferating. For eight months she slept in the employee dormitories and worked on the shop floor alongside the women whose lives she chronicles. Pun illuminates the workers' perspectives and experiences, describing the lure of consumer desire and especially the minutiae of factory life. She looks at acts of resistance and transgression in the workplace, positing that the chronic pains—such as backaches and headaches—that many of the women experience are as indicative of resistance to oppressive working conditions as they are of defeat. Pun suggests that a silent social revolution is underway in China and that these young migrant workers are its agents.

*Made in China* is a passionate, engaged ethnography. Pun Ngai provides us with a searing critique of how global capital, with the collusion of the Chinese state, is turning China into the sweatshop of the world. Her ethnography is a moving and angry description of the lives of young migrant women, who are the guts of this process. Through Pun's ethnographic eye, these women come alive as active subjects who confront the pain and trauma of the social violence inflicted on them in a complex poetics of transgression.

—Lisa Rofel, author of *Other Modernities: Gendered Yearnings in China after Socialism*