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978-1-107-03085-5 - Inside China's Automobile Factories: The Politics of Labor and Worker Resistance

Lu Zhang

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Inside China's Automobile Factories

In *Inside China's Automobile Factories*, Lu Zhang explores the current conditions, subjectivity, and collective actions of autoworkers in the world's largest and fastest-growing automobile manufacturing nation. Based on years of fieldwork and extensive interviews conducted at seven large auto factories in various regions of China, Zhang provides an inside look at the daily factory life of autoworkers and a deeper understanding of the roots of rising labor unrest in the auto industry. Combining original empirical data and sophisticated analysis that moves from the shop floor to national political economy and global industry dynamics, the book develops a multilayered framework for understanding how labor relations in the auto industry and broader social economy can be expected to develop in China in the coming decades.

Lu Zhang is an assistant professor of sociology at Temple University. Her research concentrates on globalization, labor and labor movements, and the political economy of development in East Asia, particularly China. Her work has been published in *International Labor and Working Class History* and the *International Journal of Automotive Technology and Management*. She has contributed to five books: *China & Global Governance: The Dragon's Learning Curve* (2015); *Workers in Hard Times: A Long View of Economic Crises* (2014); *From Iron Rice Bowl to Informalization: Markets, Workers, and the State in a Changing China* (2011); *Globalization and Beyond: New Examinations of Global Power and Its Alternatives* (2011); and, *China and the Transformation of Global Capitalism* (2009). She received the Thomas A. Kochan and Stephen R. Sleigh Best Dissertation Award from the Labor and Employment Relations Association, and the Best Dissertation Prize from the journal *Labor History*. She is currently researching capital relocation strategy and labor politics in China and Vietnam.

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The Politics of Labor and Worker Resistance

LU ZHANG

Temple University



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Lu Zhang
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

To Giovanni (1937–2009)

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Resistance
Lu Zhang
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>List of tables</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xv
1 Introduction	I
2 Industrial restructuring and labor force transformation in the Chinese automobile industry	23
3 The labor market and social composition in the automobile industry	49
4 Organization of production and factory social order	82
5 Hegemonic consent? Formal workers' compliance and resistance	114
6 Temporary workers' struggles and the paradox of labor force dualism	147
7 The State's response: The making of Labor Contract Law and boundary-drawing strategy	173
8 Conclusion	183
<i>Methodological appendix</i>	196
<i>Bibliography</i>	207
<i>Index</i>	228

Figures

Figure 1.1	Map of the research fieldwork sites	<i>page</i>	9
Figure 2.1	Annual output and number of employees in the Chinese automobile industry, 1990–2010		41
Figure 3.1	Changing social composition of temporary workers in the Chinese automobile industry		72
Figure 4.1	The Welding Shop at a Sino-Japanese JV, 2013		88
Figure 4.2	Workers of the state-owned truck maker SOE-2 assembling a truck chassis, 2004		90
Figure 4.3	Factory Hierarchy and the “Dual Career Path” Model		109
Figure 8.1	Dynamics of labor politics in the Chinese automobile industry		187

Tables

Table 1.1	General information on the auto assemblers selected for the study, 2006	<i>page 7</i>
Table 2.1	Changes in the Chinese auto industry before and after WTO accession	35
Table 2.2	Sales figures and market share for China's top-five auto groups, 2012	36
Table 2.3	Changing profitability in the Chinese automotive industry, 2003–2011	37
Table 2.4	Comparison of labor force dualism at the selected automobile assemblers	44
Table 3.1	Distribution of workers by segment and size of enterprises in the Chinese automobile industry, 2011	60
Table 3.2	Workforce composition at selected auto assemblers in China, 2006	62
Table 3.3	Skill level of production workers in China's auto assembly sector	65
Table 3.4	Average annual earnings of workers in the manufacture and transport equipment manufacturing sectors in China, 2004–2011	73
Table 3.5	Motor vehicles and other transport equipment hourly compensation costs in selected countries, 2008–2011	73
Table 3.6	Average annual growth rates in vehicle output, labor productivity, and remuneration in the Chinese automobile industry, 2006–2010	74
Table 3.7	USA-2 monthly monetary compensation for production workers, April 2007	75
Table 3.8	Monthly monetary earnings of formal and temporary workers at the selected auto assemblers in comparison with local average wages	77
Table 3.9	Social insurance commitments and benefits for formal employees at GER-1, 2010	78
Table 4.1	Organization of the shop floor in Chinese automobile factories	86
Table 4.2	Regular work schedules at USA-1, June 2007	92
		ix

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03085-5 - Inside China's Automobile Factories: The Politics of Labor and Worker
Resistance
Lu Zhang
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Table 4.3	Labor contract terms for formal employees by job classification at USA-1	101
Table 4.4	Position and wage grade by education level at GER-1	102
Table 4.5	Labor contract terms by education and work position at GER-2	102
Table 4.6	Career path of a team leader at GER-2	112
Table A.1	Numbers of interviewees, by enterprise and category	197
Table A.2	Age and seniority of formal workers interviewed	197

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03085-5 - Inside China's Automobile Factories: The Politics of Labor and Worker Resistance

Lu Zhang

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgements

The origins of this book can be traced back to a conference paper presented ten years ago with Beverly Silver at the “AUTO21 Conference: Workers and Labor Markets in the Global Automobile Industry” at McMaster University. The paper was entitled “From Detroit to Shanghai? Patterns of Capital Relocation and Labor Militancy in the World Automobile Industry from the 1930s to the Present.” It was an initial effort to explore labor relations in the fast-growing automobile industry in China, and to identify similarities and differences between key features of the ongoing Chinese transformation and previous phases of capital relocation and labor militancy. In subsequent years, the probing yet unanswered questions raised in the paper ultimately prompted me to write a dissertation, and now this book, on labor politics and worker resistance in the Chinese automobile industry.

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Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03085-5 - Inside China's Automobile Factories: The Politics of Labor and Worker Resistance

Lu Zhang

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03085-5 - Inside China's Automobile Factories: The Politics of Labor and Worker Resistance

Lu Zhang

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Acknowledgements*

xiii

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Lu Zhang
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

I dedicated this book to Giovanni Arrighi (1937–2009), my lifetime mentor. As an inspiring, dedicated, passionate, and beloved teacher, thinker, scholar, and fighter, Giovanni taught us to strive for perfection in research and writing, to remain humble and respectful to the people, to struggle for the cause we believe in, and to keep smiles and a sense of humor to live a good life and get through the tough times. He has been a continuous source of encouragement and inspiration for both my intellectual and personal development. It is to Giovanni that I dedicate this work.

Abbreviations

ACFTU	The All-China Federation of Trade Unions
AMC	American Motors Corporation
BAIC	Beijing Automobile Industry Corporation
CATRC	China Automotive Technology and Research Center
CBN	China Business News
CCP	The Chinese Communist Party
CCAG	China Changan Automobile Group (Chang'an)
CHERY	Chery Automobile Co., Ltd. (Chery)
CNHTC	China National Heavy Duty Truck Group Corp., Ltd
DFM	Dongfeng Motor Corporation (Dongfeng)
EPC	Enterprise Party Committee
FAW	First Automobile Works
FAW-VW	First Automobile Works-Volkswagen
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FESCO	Foreign Enterprises Service Corporation
GAIG	Guangzhou Automobile Industry Group Co., Ltd.
GM	General Motors
HRM	Human resource management
ILM	Internal labor markets
JIT	Just In Time
JV	Joint venture
LCL	Labor Contract Law
LDMAC	Labor Dispute Mediation and Arbitration Committee
MNC	Multinational corporation
MOHRSS	Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NPC	National People's Congress
PCM	Product cycle model
PLA	People's Liberation Army
R&D	Research and Design
RMB	Renminbi (Chinese currency)
SAIC	Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (Group)

SASAC	State Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council
SOE	State-owned enterprise
SDRC	State Development and Reform Commission
SPC	State Planning Commission
SVW	Shanghai Volkswagen
TAW	Temporary agency work
TPS	Toyota Production System
TQM	Total Quality Management
UAW	United Auto Workers
VQC	Vocational qualification certificate
VTE	Vocational and technical education
VW	Volkswagen
WTO	World Trade Organization