

Pun Ngai (China)

Unfinished Proletarianization: Self, Anger, and Class Action among the Second Generation of Peasant-Workers in Present-day China

As a result of open-door policies and thirty years of Reform, China has become the “world’s factory” and given rise to a new working class comprised of rural migrant workers. This process has underlain a path of (semi-) proletarianization of Chinese peasant-workers: now the second generation is experiencing *dagong* in industrialized towns and cities. What is the process of proletarianization of peasant-workers in China today? In what way does the path of proletarianization shape the new Chinese working class? Did the pain and trauma experienced by the first generation of *dagong* subjects gradually evolve into the anger and grievance that has conditioned the labor strikes and class actions of the second generation? In short, what continuity and change can we observe in the life struggles of this new working class? Is the second generation of *dagong* subjects compelled to take action as a result of long-endured pain and anger? Self, anger, and collective action among the new working class propel the narrative described in this paper.