

Disenfranchised: The Rise and Fall of Industrial Citizenship in China

Abstract

In the decades following World War II, factories in many countries not only provided secure employment and a range of economic entitlements, but also recognized workers as legitimate stakeholders, enabling them to claim rights to participate in decision making and hold factory leaders accountable. In recent decades, as employment has become more precarious, these attributes of industrial citizenship have been eroded and workers have increasingly been reduced to hired hands. No country has experienced these changes as dramatically as China. Drawing on a decade of field research, including interviews with both factory workers and managers, Professor Andreas traces the changing political status of workers inside Chinese factories from 1949 to the present, carefully analysing how much power they have actually had to shape their working conditions.