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Changing Workplace Relations in the Chinese Economy

Edited by

Malcolm Warner

Fellow of

Wolfson College, Cambridge





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Preface

This edited book attempts to come to terms with the many post-1978 reforms affecting the Chinese economy and workplace. Much has changed since the heady days of the Liberation in 1949. Indeed, in October 1999, the PRC celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

We have tried, in this volume, to bring together a set of informed and thoughtful contributions to the field which portray the way the work-unit (*danwei*) has evolved since Deng's reforms were introduced.

We see how, whether at macro- or micro-economic level, enterprises and the workplace have been transformed. Technological transfer has taken place; management has been modernized; foreign capital has taken root. In human terms, this has had both positive and negative consequences. Living standards have risen considerably; labour mobility has increased; job choice has increased. None the less, job security has been weakened and the mini-welfare state of the *danwei* increasingly undermined. We thus look beyond the 'iron rice-bowl' (*tie fan wan*) that characterized the workplace for so many years, to see what is now beginning to replace and supersede it.

The end of the last decade of the millennium saw the Chinese economy in the doldrums, unemployment rising and income inequality widening. The Asian economic crisis has not, however, hit China directly but its indirect effects are now being felt. As China faces the challenges of the new age of international competitiveness, it will have to see how far its reforms need deepening. It will have to balance the costs and benefits of modernization and create new institutional bulwarks, not only at the macro- but also at the micro-level, against the excesses of economic neo-liberalism, as it perceives them, yet avoid retreating into its recent past.

Cambridge

Malcolm Warner

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I must give them pride of place in showing my appreciation for their zealous application, their learned endeavours and for their research experience.

I should also like to thank the President, Dr Gordon Johnson, and Fellows of Wolfson College and the Director, Professor Sandra Dawson, Faculty and staff of the Judge Institute of Management Studies, University of Cambridge, for their institutional support. Professor John Child and Dr Sek Hong Ng have provided both helpful advice and encouragement in the development of this edited volume. Additionally, Ms Elizabeth Briggs was most generous with her time and administrative assistance.

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List of Abbreviations

ACFTU	All China Federation of Trade Unions
CAEFI	China Association for Enterprises with Foreign Investment
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CEO	chief executive officer
COEs	collective-owned enterprises
DGM	deputy general manager
DPEs	domestic private enterprises
FDRS	factory director responsibility system
FFE	foreign funded enterprise
FIEs	foreign-invested enterprise
FMCG	fast-moving consumer goods
FOCs	foreign-owned companies
GM	general manager
HCN	home country national
HR	human resource
HRM	human resource management
IJV	international joint venture
ILO	International Labour Office
JSC	joint stock company
JV	joint venture
JVC	joint venture company
MCA	Ministry of Civil Affairs
MLSL	minimum livelihood security line
MNC	multinational corporation
MOFTEC	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation
MoLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
PCN	parent country national
PM	performance management
PRC	People's Republic of China
RSC	re-employment service centre
SEZ	special enterprise zone
SOE	state-owned enterprise
SSB	State Statistical Bureau
SWRC	Staff and Workers' Representative Congress
TCN	third country national
TVE	town and village enterprise
WHO	wholly-owned subsidiary

Notes on the Contributors

John Benson is Reader in Industrial Relations in the Department of Management, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia.

Ingmar Björkman has been Visiting Professor in Management at the Euro-Asia Centre, INSEAD, Fontainebleau, France, and is a Professor at the School of Economics and Business Administration, Helsinki, Finland.

Nailin Bu is Assistant Professor of Management of International Business, School of Business, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

Anita Chan is a co-editor of *The China Journal* and an Australian Research Council Senior Research Fellow in the China and Korea Centre at the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

John Child is Co-Director of the Chinese Management Centre, School of Business, University of Hong Kong, on secondment, as well as Diageo Professor of Management Studies, Judge Institute of Management Studies, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK.

Sarah Cook is a Research Fellow of the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK.

Philippe Debroux is Professor of International and Comparative Management in the Faculty of International Studies at Hiroshima City University, Hiroshima, Japan.

Athar Hussain is Senior Research Fellow and Deputy-Director of the Asia Research Centre, London School of Economics, London, UK.

Niklas Lindholm, is a Consultant in Human Resource Process Development, Nokia Telecommunications, and has been a Research Associate at the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration, Helsinki, Finland.

Yuan Lu is Associate Professor of Management in the Business School at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

Sek Hong Ng is Reader in Management Studies, School of Business, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

Suzanne Ogden is a Professor in the Department of Political Science at NorthEastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

Jackie Sheehan is a Lecturer in the Department of History, University of Nottingham, UK.

Brenda Sun has been carrying out doctoral research at the Department of Industrial Relations, London School of Economics, London, UK, and in the Department of Labour Relations and Human Resources at the People's University, Beijing, PRC.

Malcolm Warner is Professor and Fellow, Wolfson College, Cambridge, and a member of faculty at the Judge Institute of Management Studies, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK.

Ji-Liang Xu is Professor Emeritus, Institute of Human Resource Management, School of Management, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai, PRC.

Masae Yuasa is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of International Studies, Hiroshima City University, Hiroshima, Japan.

Ying Zhu is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Asian and International Studies, Victoria University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia.