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Sexual Violence on Chinese Women Sex Workers in Cultural and Political Context

According to World Health Organization, sexual violence refers to any sexual act or any attempt to obtain a sexual act using coercion, and the forms of coercion can include physical force as well as psychological intimidation (Krug et al. 2002: 149). As the whole society paying more and more attention to sexual violence, it becomes much easier for victims of sexual violence to look for legal help than decades ago. However, for some women, like sex workers in China, it's quite difficult for them to ask for legal help after encountering sexual violence, unless the violence is so severe that has caused extreme harm. Thus in this essay, I'll discuss what kinds of sexual violence Chinese contemporary sex workers encounter, and how they narrate and treat their experiences under the impact of China's special legal context about sex.

Sex workers are the basic practitioners of sex industry, which can be considered as a 'dark' fruit of urbanization and industrialization. In the modern history of China, prostitution in cities always exists. For example, Shanghai already had a booming sex market before becoming a treaty-port, and being opened to foreign trade later helped create a more advantageous developing circumstance for prostitution (Henriot 1996). Prostitution also exists in other cities, including Beijing, Guangzhou, Tianjin, Suzhou, etc (Hershatter 1997: 31). However, since the PRC established and CCP took power, prostitution was prohibited, since it was labelled as a kind of backward phenomenon and feudalism residual of 'old' China (Liang and Cao 2013: 193). After Maoist Era (1949-78) and with the promoting of Chinese economic reform, prostitution revives again and even develops into a kind of 'underground' industry, as prostitution remains officially illegal in post-Mao era.

In the 1980s, sex workers were believed to be mainly rural women who were forced or tricked into prostitution when they were looking for work opportunities in cities, while in recent years, researchers find that more and more women following their own will to choose sex workers as their occupations (Jeffreys 2004: 98). Still, migrant women from rural areas occupies a great proportion in urban sex industry: as a Dalian police chief estimated in 2001, about 80 percent of migrant women took the work as hostesses in nightclubs of Dalian (Zheng 2012: 122). Prostituting places in contemporary Chinese cities include hotels, pubs, karaoke bars, health and fitness clubs, hair and beauty salons, dancing halls, cinemas, tea houses, small roadside restaurants, and some public places like parks, beaches, etc (Jeffreys 2004: 97; Zheng 2009: 55). These places have one thing in common: looking like regular business of service industry, there actually exists the illegal sex business which is under strict suppression by Chinese police and law.

The illegal situation of Chinese sex industry greatly influences the surviving condition of Chinese urban sex workers. Prostitution has not become an important problem until 1980s, as both the Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure Law of 1979 paid little attention to prostitution (Liang and Cao 2013: 199). In the mid 1980s, accompanying with the comeback of the sex business development, Chinese police started to take administrative sanctions towards prostitution (Jeffreys 2010). In 1991, the Decision on Strictly Forbidding the Selling and Buying of Sex (quanguo renmin daibiao dahui changwu weiyuanhui guanyu yanjin maiyin piaochang de jueding) was promulgated, which was viewed as a milestone of providing legal endorse for prohibiting sex industry. After that, more and more regulations and laws taken prostitution into consideration, rigorously forbidding all forms of commercial sexual transactions, and a series of campaigns—which are carried out by local government and the police—against pornography and prostitution following these legal and administrative changes are kept going on until today.

These backgrounds of legislation and regulation exert significant affects on narratives of sexual violence for Chinese urban sex workers. For normal citizens, law is something that can protect their rights when they get into troubles and face unexpected harms. However, for sex workers in China, the illegitimacy of their occupation makes it nearly impossible for them to look for legal help if the sexual violence they encounter is not extremely severe—in other words, the violence won't cause harms that may threaten their life safety. For example, in an upper-tier karaoke bar names Colorful Century in Dalian, hostesses often got injured on their legs, arms and breasts by some clients they serve (Zheng 2009: 83-85). And there are generally two ways facing this kind of sexual violence: one is to endure the pains in order to ingratiate themselves with their bad-tempered clients and get their tips, and the other is to quit midway without any tips for the services they have already offered. Both options are miserable, as the hostess needs to bear either physical abuse or income loss. Besides, if the hostess chooses the second option, she may also face the risk of being abused by the madams (older women who are in charge of a group of hostesses) of the bar, who might beat and insult the hostess because she makes the bar sustain business loss from losing a potential wealthy client. For instance, a girl was abused by her madam only because she leaves her client for a while to change her cloth (Zheng 2009: 83). According to a research, interviewees often use two terms to express their attitudes towards their own victimhood—give up and endure (Boittin 2013). They don't believe they have any right in front of the law, and many of them can only complain tearfully of their sufferings to their friends in the hostess community, so as to make themselves feel a little bit better and keep going in their current work.

The illegal situation for Chinese sex workers also has something to do with the sexual diseases. As is defined by the World Health Organization, refusing to use contraception and to take other protective measures against sexually transmitted diseases can also be viewed as a form of sexual violence (Krug et al. 2002: 149). However, in the severe competitions among sex workers, their being able to offer more 'direct' sex services

sometimes can contribute to their competiveness. As for many Chinese men, they don't like using condoms, and say that having sex with condoms is like "having a shower with a raincoat on" (Pan 2004: 51). Thus, in order to attract clients, some sex workers may be forced to accept having sex without condoms and sacrificing their own physical health, considering other sex workers might do so (Zheng 2012: 125-27). Apart from this, after the first time having sex with a client, the sex worker may also be required to not use condoms the next time she accompanies the same client (Zheng 2012: 127).

In a case provided by Zheng, a hostess Li tend to engage in condomless sex with her client lover (who has relatively longterm and stable sex relationship with her) so as to secure her income. Although she was eventually infected with an STD from one of her client lover, and it cost her 2,000 yuan to get the disease cured, she argues that she will still have condomless sex with the client if he requires, because she accepted his money (Zheng 2012: 130-31). Hostess Li is an epitome of many sex workers who don't use condoms with their intimate clients. In this respect, sex workers are somewhat alike to products in market, who can only be chosen by others rather than choose their purchasers by their own. In other words, they cannot make their own decisions: in a transaction relationship, they have to submit to their customers and try their best to grasp these men at the cost of sacrificing their bodies.

In another case of hostess Lan, who was made pregnant by her client lover, her story with the client seems to be more gentle. Her client lover not only paid her abortion fee, but also took good care of her after the abortion, bringing nutritious food to help her recover (Zheng 2012: 131-32). Zheng describes Lan's lover client as "feeling guilty and sympathetic", which plays an effective role in explaining the client's generosity towards a prostitute. However, I think it's still necessary to ask these questions: is this really a moving story, that a vulnerable girl met a conscientious man? Is sexual violence actually eliminated by the client's 'kind-hearted' behaviours after Lan's abortion? Can the sense of guilt of the client completely make up for the physical and mental sufferings that Lan has experienced from pregnancy and abortion? And finally, if the client really cares for Lan, why he didn't use condoms from the beginning of their sexual relationship? With the reconsideration of these questions, a persecution-victimhood mechanism can be found: although the persecutor may offer compensations to the victim, it can still not offset the violence that the victim has already suffered. To some extent, to avoid sexual violence in the transactions with clients, sex workers should not depend on the consciousness of clients, since not all prostitutes could be as lucky as hostess Lan.

In addition to the sexual violence from clients, sex workers sometimes also face violence from their employers and managers. In a low-tier karaoke bar named Romantic Dream in Dalian, the bar bouncer warned every hostess not daring to leave this bar, and threatened that he would beat them to death if they try to escape to other more prosperous bars (Zheng 2009: 90). In other cases, madams might require sex workers to entertain clients with whom they don't want to stay, and they will get punishment if

they refuse (Boittin 2013). These kinds of sexual violence, taking the form of forced prostitution against the sex workers' will, are difficult to be testified and be stopped. And the illegality of prostitution in China lead to this condition in some way, which unexpectedly indulges employers and managers in sexual industry to abuse sex workers, so long as their violence not being so extreme that may violate the penal law.

Despite all that sexual violence that Chinese sex workers may encounter, sex workers also find their ways to confront with the violence without the help of law. Some sex workers consider themselves to be quite fierce and domineering in their sex transactions with clients. For example, a sex worker explained: "Usually I am the one to beat a client. I'll just give him a beating and whack him in the face. I've beaten a bunch of clients, including with a beer bottle." (Boittin 2013) In this situation, perpetrator and victim exchange their seats with each other, as clients seem to become the victim of their sex relationships. And the 'violence' from the sex worker seems to be a kind of personal vindictive action towards several unlucky clients. However, it's quite hard to clarify if this kind of violence from sex workers is really used as confrontation to the violence from clients, or it's actually required by the clients as some men may prefer to be masochist in sexual activities.

Another way for sex workers to reject victimhood is to unit as a collective. Here's an example of the coalition among sex workers: hostess Hua's client lover mistreated her, and then Dee and some other hostesses taught the client a lesson as well as forced him to apologize to Hua. Under the pressure of many women, the client finally surrendered and did as they asked (Zheng 2009: 97). As a community with shared interests, some sex workers will form special close connection with each other, and thus if any of them meet difficulties and misfortunes, others in that community will help her overcome these problems. In this way, although the victim may not be able to entirely fire back the sexual violence she has experienced, the violence can still get solved to some extent, which is considered to be enough as long as the victim has vented her anger.

In conclusion, the sexual violence that sex workers in urban China encounter comes from various groups of people, like clients, pimps and madams of sexual business. The illegal status of prostitution in China affects the sex workers in many ways. On the one hand, being aware of not being able to seek legal help makes sex workers tend to take an attitude of putting up with sexual violence. On the other hand, as there's no regulations to supervise the sex industry, sex workers face with more risks of being infected with venereal diseases since they are forced to give up contraception methods in many cases. Also, managers and superiors of sex workers are less afraid to exert violence towards them without regulations in this zone. Nevertheless, it's still comforting that some sex workers manage to reject victimhood in sexual violence, either as an individual revenge or using the power of a sex workers' community. However, these kinds of weak revolt are far not enough. More solutions in protecting sex workers away from sexual violence still need to be figured out, and maybe setting a legal system on sex industry can be an origin for future process.

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The Sexualization of Chinese Factory Workers: Intertwining the Actions of Acknowledging and Revolting Together

Since the late 1970s Chinese economic reform, the women factory workers have become a growing group in the Post-Mao era. Different from the women factory workers in modern Chinese history before 1978, the new generations of women factory workers have witnessed the trend of industrialization and urbanization, as well as an increasingly disparity of social status. Being involved in these social changes, Chinese women factory workers are also experiencing a complicated progress of sexualization, because of their being both female and being in the bottom of society. This situation let them fall into plight, and potentially influences their recognition of their own identities. The plight drives Chinese women factory workers to seek corresponding strategies, such as speaking out their own voices and behaving like men. In this essay, I will mainly focus on women factory workers in the Pearl River Delta Economic Zone of China, and discuss the uniqueness of their gender identities, as well as their endeavor for their own lives.

From a national perspective, the total population of Chinese women factory workers has grown from 29.5 million in 1982 to 37.3 million in 2002 (Li 2004). The boom of Chinese women factory workers is closely related to the economic reform in late 1970s, and the floating population policy reform since early 1980s. In this migration tide, Guangdong province has become one of the most popular destinations for migrant workers thanks to its geographic advantages of being coastal and being close to Hong Kong, which plays an important role in international trade in the early 1980s. As the 1987 and 1990 demographic census by the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBS) show, Guangdong had a population of 2.2 million migrants in 1987, and in 1990, the population had increased to 3.29 million (Lee 1998: 67-68). Besides, the late 1970s Chinese economic reforms, especially the opening-up to foreign investment and the establishment of the Special Economic Zone in Southeast coastal provinces such as Guangdong and Fujian, have greatly changed the industrial structure in these areas. As a developing country, China soon attracted many labor-intensive industries and a lot of foreign investment from developed countries, and caught the opportunity to become a manufacturing country in the trend of global industrial transfer with its advantages of low labor price, low material cost, preferential policies, etc. This kind of industrial restructuring requires a lot of labors, which leads to the large influx of migrants and the rapid growth of the population of women factory workers. Women are found to be in a larger proportion of the total floating population in the tide of provincial migrating, who move from other provinces to Guangdong (Lee 1998: 67). The result of the huge population of young women factory workers in the Pearl River Delta Region of Guangdong is closely linked with the prosperity of light industry factories, as women labors are considered to be cheaper and easier managed than men, which fit those factories' requirements (Gao 1994: 93).

The occupational backgrounds of women factory workers in the Pearl River Delta

Economic Zone can be viewed from several aspects: age, education, work and region. In terms of their age, according to the demographic census of Guangdong in 2000, 86.2 percent of women factory workers are between 15 to 34 years old, whom are considered to be the youth in the definition by the NBS (Li 2004). As for the educational background, 68.8 percent of women factory workers in Guangdong get junior high school education, and only 11.1 percentage of them get education of high school and above (Li 2004). Moreover, about 90.5 percentage of women factory workers are working in manufacturing industries (Li 2004), in which there are no high educational background requirements, since many basic mechanical tasks in these industries are simple enough to be easily learned by most people. Another important aspect is the regional background of these women factory workers. In the Pearl River Delta Region, nearly 91.0 percentage of them come from provinces out of Guangdong (Li 2004), which means most of these people are migrants, while the native born workers only occupy a small part of them. And among these migrant workers, 93.2 percentage of them are from rural areas of China (Li 2004). As Emily Honing argues in her study of the Shanghai city from 1850 to 1980, birthplace has a significant influence on workers' recognition of their identities, and is also in some way the basis for regional prejudice and social conflicts (Honing 1992: 1-2). Migrant workers are considered to be outsiders, whom may feel inferior to local people. In addition to the regional origin, women factory workers' being both female and bottom workers make their situation even worse, having to suffering from more prejudice and more sense of inferiority compared to men and higher educated people.

As can be seen from the data above, young rural women from other provinces who have educational background of junior high school and above have composed the main part of the women factory workers in Pearl River Delta Economic Zone. In addition to this kind of identity which can result in their various sexualization plight that I will discuss later, suffering from various health problems are also a difficult position that Chinese women factory workers are facing. Four factors cause this situation. The first one is the long working time. In the 2000 demographic census, about 37.1 percentage of them work six days a week, while 43.1 percentage have to work seven days a week (Li 2004). According to the Labor Law in China, a worker cannot work for over 40 hours each week, but working overtime has become quite common in the Pearl River Delta. Secondly, the dormitory that factories offer to these women workers are also very bad: there are about eight to ten workers crowding in one room on average, and the room are too narrow as well as are in poor ventilation (Zhang 2014). Thirdly, many factories are lack of labor safety protection methods, and many women factory workers have to work in terrible environment, like being exposed to dust, harmful gas and noise (Zhou 2010). This kind of working environment would do great harm to those women workers' central nervous system, respiratory system, cardiovascular system and hematopoietic system (Zhang 2014). The forth factor is the incomplete social security system for migrant factory workers, as the current social security system is mainly concerned about the rights for urban citizens and rural residents, and migrant workers belong to neither side (Song 2006). In other words, they are in a crevice: on the one hand, they

don't have the households *(hukou*) of the city they are working in, which means they cannot have the same social security rights as the urban citizens; on the other hand, although they have rural households, the rural social security system is useless for them since they have left their villages.

These four factors all contribute to infringing women factory workers' health rights, and they might only become silent victims when they really meet with misfortune. For example, a Chongqing girl Wang Qin works in a ribbon factory in Guangdong, and in November 2001, she had worked over 16 hours every day for more than half a month because the factory was hurrying to supply its orders at that time. Wang was later diagnosed with nephrotic syndrome after continuous over-time work. However, the factory she had been worked in only paid her four-month treatment fee and refused to assume more responsibility (Lin and Xu 2004). It can be learned from this case that some Chinese women factory workers would only endure illegal situation like too much over-time working and have no idea about how they can assert their rights, which is common in this group of people. They either have not heard of the occupational disease ever (Cao 2017: 65-68), or not dare to leave the factory although having to suffer from the long-term mental and physical assault. The fact is that once they leave the factory where they are working in now, it will be difficult for them to find a new job， as few factories want to hire a worker whom is easily ill or has some disabilities. Besides, being female, women factory workers are under more severe discrimination than men workers because of their gender. To some extent, they are doing the men's work, while having to deal with their own female diseases and pains such as dysmenorrhea and other gynecological diseases.

Above I have talked about the background and living conditions of Chinese women factory workers since the late 1970s, especially in the Pearl River Delta Economic Zone of Guangdong province. In the following discussion, I'm going to focus on how women factory workers get sexualized under all those backgrounds, and how they recognize their gender-related identities. That is to say, how the "women" part of women factory workers be highlighted in various social contexts. In my opinion, the sexualization process of Chinese women factory workers can be divided into three kinds, according to whether they are spontaneously sexualizing themselves or not: one passive, one initiative, and another is half passive and half initiative.

In some situations, women factory workers could be forced to recognize their gender in some situations, which I call the passive sexualization process. This kind of process can be viewed from several aspects. Firstly, although the social security system is not complete enough to protect migrant factory workers' rights thoroughly, there are some clauses in the labor law of China that take women workers' different specificities from men workers into consideration. For example, China has promulgated the *Provisions on Labor Protection for Female Employees* in 1988, the *Provisions on the Scope of Women's Taboo Labor* in 1990, and the *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Women Rights and Interests* in 1992 (Sun 1995). According to these laws

and provisions, women should not be arranged to be engaged in particularly heavy manual work, especially when women are in their menstrual and pregnant period (Sun 1995). However, as Margaret Y. E. Woo argues, the "protective" legislation to some extent shows that women's problems are discussed more as a biological matter rather than a social issue (Woo 1994: 279). It can be viewed that by emphasizing the biological features of female in these laws, the distinction between women workers and men workers is simplified, which may conceal more deep gender problems.

Moreover, as women factory workers in the Pearl River Delta Economic Zone are mainly young women, they have become the targets of sexual harassment from men. For instance, in Zhuhai, some young women factory workers say that there are always some wretched men who are wandering around the dormitory area where women factory workers live, and harass young women workers on the road, touching them and saying obscene words to them, because these men think that young women factory workers are so humble and cheap that can be easily bullied by men (Tang 1996). In addition to this kind of sexual harassment from men outside the factories, good-looking women workers might also be harassed and even raped by their men factory managers. This situation is especially common in those small-scale factories, of which the managers' power is hardly constrained, and in some factories, women factory workers even have no choice but to suffer from sexual harassment from their men managers as long as they want to get promoted (Tang 2001). The sexual harassment that women factory workers are faced with to a large extent can be attributed to the society's attitude towards women factory workers, whom are considered to have a very low social status and have no power to fight back, especially those migrant women workers who are far away from their families and can hardly find someone to protect them.

Another passive sexualization process exists in the management of women factory workers. In Foucault's opinion, discipline is an effective way to "make" individuals by controlling their bodies, which can be viewed as a special technique to regards each individual as the objects of certain power (Foucault 1991: 170). And the management of women workers in factories also shows a special kind of discipline, with which factory managers can make those women workers obey the factory rules better. According to some factory supervisors, it's difficult to manage the rebellious young women factory workers, and thus managers have to articulate the submissiveness of female again and again, which is considered to be an ideal feminine identity (Ngai 2005: 143). It can be found that the imagined identities of female have influence the managers' minds so greatly that they would use femininity as an important method in supervising those women factory workers. And in reverse, women factory workers' accepting this kind of discipline without any condition shows their own acknowledgement of this discourse, in which they should be docile and quiet, and should always obey men's instructions.

However, the women factory workers' sexualization process of admitting their distinctiveness from manhood can also be an initiative one, which can be learned from

their forming female communities spontaneously as well as their attitude towards the consumerism culture. On the one hand, women factory workers like to gather together, and enjoy their "women's talk" as well as gossiping (Ngai 2005: 152-154). For example, a history of women's fate and life is clearly presented in a talk between several young women factory workers and two factory kitchen workers, the latter of whom are women over 40 years old and want to teach their own life experiences as a female to those young girls (Ngai 2005: 153). Besides, women factory workers like to gather together and talk about topics such as men, boyfriends, marriage and so on. In some way, the communities of female workers are limited to women of the same status, and it's almost impossible for those women who belong to the superior managing level to join them. It can be seen that women factory workers initiatively form their own communities, which is based on two conditions: one is their gender, which would exclude men workers from their communities; the other is status, which leads to a difference of power and thus they would consciously avoid women managers who are much superior than them.

In addition to forming communities of their own, women factory workers are also initiatively sexualizing themselves by cater to the consumerism culture. As women factory workers in Pearl River Delta Economic Zone are mostly young women, they like to spend a large part of their salaries on dress. According to a 2001 survey of seven factories in Guangzhou, women factory workers spend more on dress and cosmetics than on food (Shen 2002). Besides, almost every industrial park has at least one clothing market, where the dresses are modern and cheap, which are suitable for most women factory workers' consumption ability and taste (Zou 2007). Many women factory workers choose to wear feminine dress, either cute or mature, both of which accord with the social mainstream imagination of women (Zhang 2010). This kind of consumer preference of clothing shows their willing to dress more like a female, and take advantage of their body to attract men. Moreover, coming from rural areas and always feeling like being outsiders of the city which they live and work in, women factory workers also hope to improve their social position relying on their appearance, even if it's only superficial (Jacka 2006: 213). In other words, they are consciously put themselves under the process of objectification: body has become the embodiment of sexual desire and the symbol of social status, which drives them to dress and behave more femininely, and thus strengthens the process of self-sexualization.

Another kind of sexualization process is both passive and initiative, and this is mainly manifested in the love and marriage issue of women factory workers. As I have mentioned above, most women factory workers are from rural areas. And there are various reasons for them to leave their hometown and work in factories of more developed cities: the life pressure to earn more money and support their rural families, to make themselves have better lives, to see the bigger world and broaden their views, to escape from their painful lives before, to gain self-development and change their fate, etc. (Jacka 2006: 247-266) In fact, except for a few people who have little living pressure and just want to experience different lives, most of those women factory workers are forced to leave their home, driven by unfortunate experiences or the

poverty at their hometown. However, the motivation to make their own lives better might be utilized by the power relations of factories, especially the power which is firmly linked with gender. In factories of the Pearl River Delta Economic Zone, gender is an important factor in separating the world of workers and managers, and most management positions are taken by men. For example, in Hengjiang Sha Village of Dongguan, there are many women who used to be women factory workers for several years and now have get married with Hong Kong men, and also some factory girls who are kept as mistresses by richer men (Zheng 2012: Postscript). In the difference of power due to gender difference, women factory workers are used to satisfy men's sexual desire, and themselves are also willing to be utilized by men in a sexual way if they are able to meet the requirements of those men. For some women factory workers who care little about social moral concepts and want to change their lives as soon as possible by all kind of means, the transaction of sex and body could be a good way. In this situation, women's own recognition to take advantage of their sexual identity as well as men's sexual desire intertwine with each other, and both affect the sexualization process of women factory workers.

In all these kinds of sexualization process, women factory workers recognize their identities as female passively or consciously, and these recognitions are sometimes associated with the power difference which is derived from gender difference. Under the effect of their low social status as well as their gender, many women factory workers fall into a plight of both feeling self-abased and being despised by other people with higher social positions. Fortunately, in recent years, the mass media and the academia in China are paying more and more attention to women factory workers. The magazine *Working Sister* (*Dagongmei*) is a presentation of this process, which is mainly focusing on lives of migrant women workers in big cities (Jacka 2006: 71-75). However, it is necessary to keep in mind what Spivak has argued, that the evaluation of the oppressed has the potential danger of ignoring the real "signifier" that intellectuals are discussing about (Spivak 1988: 275). Therefore, despite the recent social progress, it's still necessary to reconsider how women factory workers are being talked openly, and how they bravely speak for themselves.

It's important for women factory workers to seek help from the society, like taking part in certain organizations, so as to solve the difficulties they have come through in factories. There are some organizations which are concerned about the rights of women factory workers, and become the place where they can meet with women workers from other factories and thus fit in communities broader than those they have in their own factories. For instance, in Beijing, there is an organization named "Home for Working Sisters" ("Dagongmei zhi Jia"), which is a club for migrant women factory workers and hope to provide them with a place of friendliness, community and harmony (Jacka 2006: 75). Moreover, this club also hold lectures regularly, which would talk about issues such as mental health, labor laws and the protection of migrant workers' rights and so on (Jacka 2006: 77). This kind of organizations create new communities for migrant women workers, and improve their consciousness of protecting their own rights, so as

to rebel against the male power and exploitation of the factories.

Sometimes, the revolting against factories might not involves outside support, but be expressed in an individual's removing the femininity from herself. In the case of Meteor Electronics Company provided by Ngai, there is a female worker who is nicknamed Fatso because she dresses and behaves like a man. Although most women factory workers in Meteor Company are tended to obey the factory regulations and submit to the ideal femininity that is required by male managers, Fatso refuses to feminize herself. Instead, as she likes to help her female colleagues and is always brave and straightforward, she is in some way treated as a man by other women workers (Ngai 2005: 250). Though not being able to overturn the inherent gender-power structure of the factory, Fatso can at least resist the factory managers by erasing the femininity from herself, which is almost impossible for other women factory workers. To some extent, the acceptation of femininity becomes a barrier for women factory workers to maintain their rights.

However, realizing the disadvantages of femininity and give them up cannot solve everything, nor would this strategy be appropriate for all women factory workers. If women factory workers want to make their sadness and bitterness be heard by more people, it's necessary for them to speak out their own voices. But because of the limited education, most women factory workers are not able to do so, and their rural background and life experiences make many of them even won't think of speaking out their sufferings. Thus someone may need to speak for them: the person can be a female factory worker who is one of them, and can also be someone not belong to their group, like news reporters and scholars. Here I want to mainly focus on the former kind of people, since for them the relations between the utterer and the people who are being represented are more complicated.

Zheng Xiaoqiong, the author of a poetry collection *Nvgong Ji* (*A Record of Women Factory Workers*), is also a women factory worker, and before she started writing about these stories, she had been collecting materials on women factory workers' lives for more than six years. As all the poems in the work are based on the true experiences of the women factory workers she has met, these poems can be seen as the vivid portrayal of women factory workers' lives. For example, in the poem "Yao Lin", Zheng writes: "You have already got used to / going to work, working overtime, sleeping, getting wages, and sending money home / returning to your hometown once a year or once every two years, and you are like a spring / which has get used to the rhythm of a clock…" (Zheng 2012, "Yao Lin"). The worker Yao Lin can on behalf of the tens and thousands of women factory workers, whose lives are so monotonous and humble. However, although Zheng says that she has been trying her best to get to know various women factory workers and to build close relationships with them (Zheng 2012: "Postscript"), the question that whether her narratives are reliable or not still needs to be pondered. The action of trying to know others can involve some preconceptions and imaginations more or less, and the representations in her poems are sometimes labeling

those women factory workers as well. It is still worth reconsidering how much someone can represent the others, and keeping in mind not to forget other individuals who are not included in those written words.

As previously stated, Chinese women factory workers are mainly migrants, who are young, low-educated, from rural areas of China, and many of them have to work in poor circumstance as the factories care little about their health. The ways how they sexualize themselves are closely related to these backgrounds, including the protections designed specially for female in the labor laws, the sexual harassment they encounter because of their being young and at the bottom of the society, as well as the discipline which always use the ideal femininity to regulate them. In addition to these passive sexualization processes, women factory workers are also sexualizing themselves initiatively, like forming their own female communities and catering to the consumerism culture. However, sometimes their willing to change their lives may be utilized by men, and this situation involves both their own acceptance of body capital as well as the power of men. Faced with these situations, women factory workers are also finding their ways to speak out their own voice, such as taking part in some organizations, erasing the femininity from themselves, and narrating their own lives. The situation of being both female and bottom migrant workers greatly influence their cognition of their own identities, and being able to make themselves heard by the society shows their awakening and reflections of the sexualization experience which they have encountered.

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