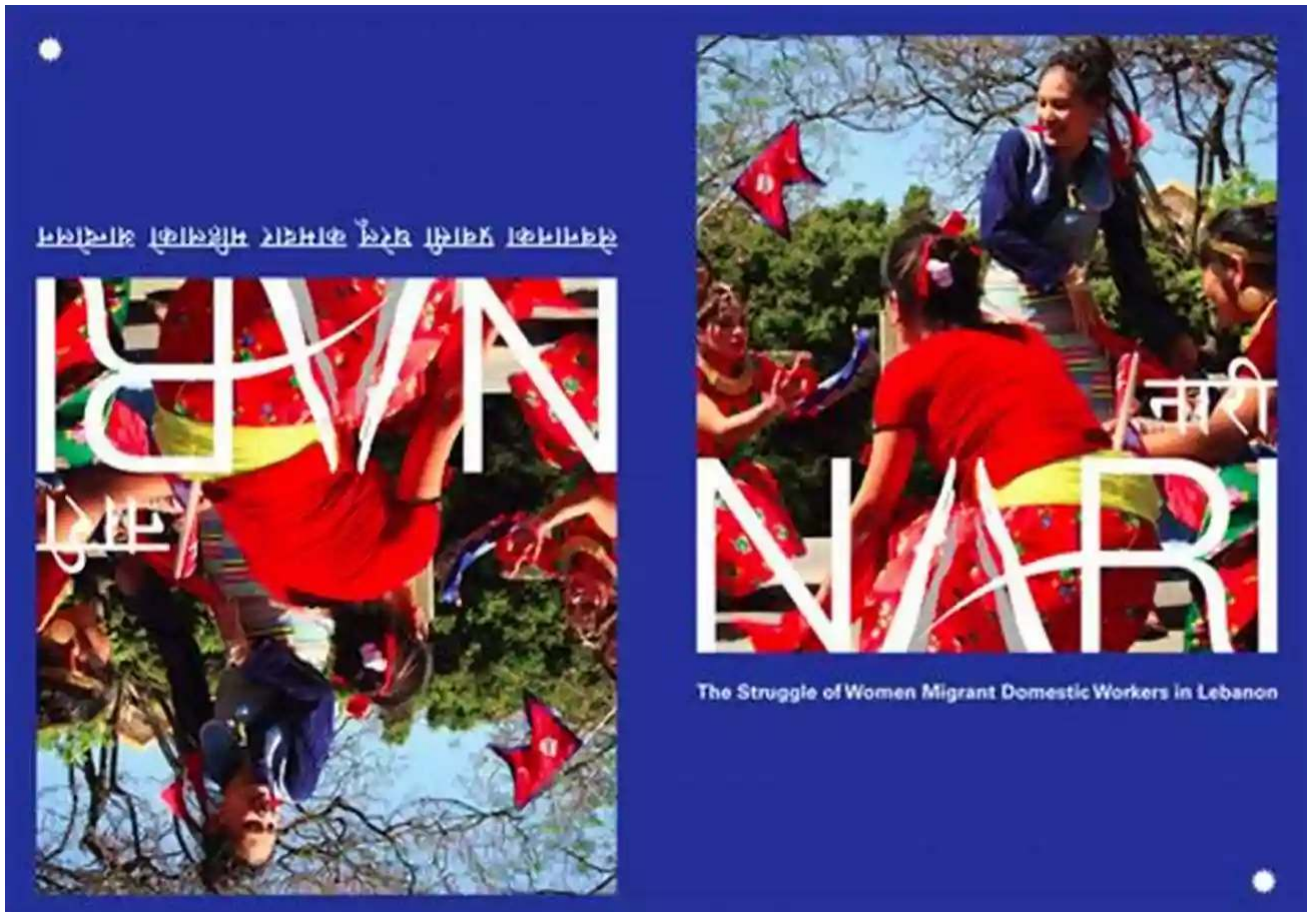


# Migrant Domestic Workers In Lebanon: A Tale of Struggle and Resilience



Lebanon, a small country on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, has been attracting migrant domestic workers from all over the world for decades. These workers, mainly women, leave their homes and families behind in search of better economic opportunities. However, their journey to Lebanon often turns into a daunting struggle for survival.

## The Promise of Better Futures

For many migrant domestic workers, the decision to leave their home countries is driven by the promise of higher wages and the hope of providing a better life for

their families. Countries like the Philippines, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, and Nepal are the major sources of domestic workers for Lebanon.



## Organizing the Unorganized: Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon: Cairo Papers in Social Science Vol. 34, No. 3 by Noah Brooks(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English  
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Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 146 pages



However, the reality they encounter upon arrival can be far from what they expected. Many find themselves trapped in exploitative and abusive working conditions, with limited legal protections and their basic human rights violated.

### **Excessive Working Hours and Unpaid Wages**

One of the most common issues faced by migrant domestic workers in Lebanon is excessive working hours. These workers often work long shifts without breaks, sometimes up to 15-18 hours a day. They are expected to take care of all household chores and cater to the needs of their employers without any regard for their own well-being.

Another major concern is the issue of unpaid wages. Many employers neglect their responsibility to pay their workers promptly or fail to pay them at all. This

puts the workers in a vulnerable position, as they struggle to make ends meet and send money back to their families.



## **Abuse and Exploitation**

Abuse and exploitation are unfortunately all too common experiences for migrant domestic workers in Lebanon. They often face physical, verbal, and sexual abuse at the hands of their employers. The power dynamics at play in these relationships make it difficult for the workers to speak up against such abuse, fearing further repercussions.

In some cases, domestic workers are confined to their employer's homes, isolated from the outside world. This isolation not only intensifies their vulnerability but also makes it harder for them to seek help or report any violations they might be facing.

## Legal Protection and Support

Although Lebanon has made some progress in terms of protecting the rights of domestic workers, there is still a long way to go. In 2012, the Lebanese government introduced the Kafala system, which aims to regulate the employment of migrant workers. However, this system has been criticized for its shortcomings and the gaps it leaves for exploitation.

Various organizations and NGOs are working tirelessly to provide support and assistance to domestic workers in Lebanon. They offer shelter, legal aid, and counselling services to those who have been victims of abuse or exploitation. These organizations also play a crucial role in raising awareness about the challenges faced by migrant domestic workers and advocating for their rights.

The struggles faced by migrant domestic workers in Lebanon are a stark reminder of the vulnerabilities many face in pursuit of a better life. It is essential for society to recognize their rights, provide better legal protection, and address the systemic issues that perpetuate their exploitation.

By shedding light on the plight of these workers, we can contribute to creating a more just and equitable society that respects the dignity and rights of all individuals, regardless of their background or occupation.



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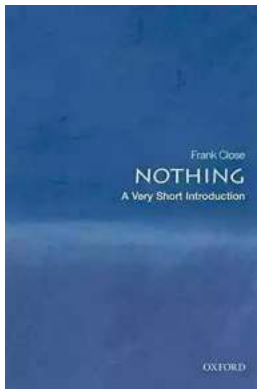
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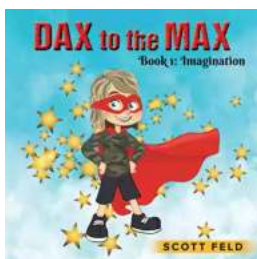


This study examines the process of unionizing domestic workers in Lebanon, highlighting the potentialities as well as the obstacles confronting it, and looks at the multiple power relations involved through axes of class, gender, race, and nationality. The author situates this struggle within the larger scene of the labor union 'movement' in the country, and discusses the contribution of women's rights organizations in rendering visible cases of abuse against migrant domestic workers. She argues that the 'death' of class politics has made women's rights organizations address migrant domestic worker issues as a separate labor category, further contributing to their production as an 'exception' under neoliberalism.



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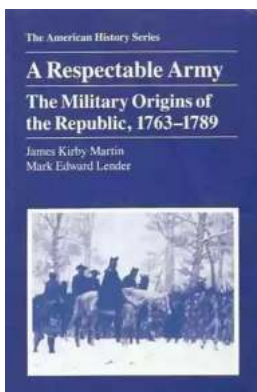
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