

Prostitution in contemporary China

The case of Shanghai Jiading

Niklas Dougherty
2006



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The case of Shanghai Jiading

(当代中国的淫业：上海嘉定的案例)

Master's thesis

by

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Abstract

Sex trade in China resurfaced with the economic reforms of Deng Xiaoping in 1978, and has since evolved to an industry of gigantic scale. This paper analyzes the prostitution in China in a social, economic, political, and historical context, with a special emphasis on Shanghai. The problem posed is how to strike a balance between the positive and negative effects of prostitution. The solution proposed in the final analysis aims at achieving this golden mean.

提要

自邓小平改革开放一开始，中国的卖淫行当立即死灰复燃，现在已经蔓延泛滥成为规模巨大的性产业。该论文以上海的情况为重点，从社会、经济、政治和历史等各个方面分析了中国的卖淫行业。该论文提出了如何平衡性产业所带来的正面及负面效应的问题。该论文声称其最终分析中提出的解决办法是达到这种平衡的最理想的方案。

Keywords

China, Shanghai, Jiading, prostitution, aids, economic reforms, economic disparity, traditionalism, legalization, decriminalization, harm reduction

关键词

中国，上海，嘉定，卖淫，艾滋病，经济改良，经济差异，传统主义，合法化，非罪化，降低危害

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有时爱情徒有虚名

(王菲／深白色／Kwan)

爱的路上谁在纵火
却没人人为它哭泣
雨滴来得太早也要感谢上帝
一声晚安说得太早
没有回忆怎么寻找
寻找记住你的东西

不知不觉进入
爱不释手的游戏
不知不觉发现
一切早安排就绪
点亮灯火站在
没有了你的领域
爱你的微笑
爱到担当不起

爱过几分倾诉多少
都没人为它感动
感动还是忘了最好

不知不觉进入
爱不释手的游戏
点亮灯火站在
没有了你的领域
不知不觉发现
一切早安排就绪
爱你的微笑
爱到担当不起

爱来爱去没了反应
灯火惊动不了神经
有时爱情徒有虚名

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陌上赠美人

(李白)

骏马骄行踏落花
垂鞭直拂五云车
美人一笑褰珠箔
遥指红楼是妾家



Shanghai's ten most famous courtesans at the end of the Qing dynasty

在水军宴韦司马楼船观妓

(李白)

摇曳帆在空
清流顺归风
诗因鼓吹发
酒为剑歌雄
对舞青楼妓
双鬟白玉童
行云且莫去
留醉楚王宫

1. Introduction

China has a rich and salient history of institutionalized prostitution in the patriarchal phenomenon of concubinage, as well as a legendary heritage of courtesans and mansion girls, as portrayed in much of the Chinese classic literature. The more recent decadence in the former treaty port of Shanghai, “the Whore of the Orient”, is also well-known.

But even more spectacular and infamous is the almost complete eradication of prostitution in the People’s Republic of China from 1949 and onward, a social experiment that lasted for almost three decades in self-inflicted seclusion from the world.

When China broke its isolation in 1978, prostitution resurfaced immediately, and has been growing steadily ever since. Prostitution in today’s China is still formally illegal, but nevertheless openly tolerated, as in most parts of Asia.

Prostitution in China, as elsewhere, serves as a means for poor and unskilled people to support themselves in times of economic restructuring, mass unemployment, and rural migration. In the upper tiers, it is an instrument to capitalize on bodily assets. For the male population, prostitution is a temporary relief from the gender imbalance. The scale of the prostitution is also such that it directly affects the national economy.

But if prostitution is a social buffer and a cash cow, it is also a menace to social institutions such as marriage, and it is potentially allied with crime and corruption. Most of all, it is a serious health threat, as the aids pandemic has begun to spread rapidly within China.

Mao Zedong is not coming back, however, which means that prostitution is back to stay for good. The problem given is, then, how should prostitution in China be dealt with to minimize the social damage? It is the intent of this thesis to address this problem.

Objective

In this paper, prostitution in contemporary China is analyzed in a social, economic, political, and historical context, with special emphasis on the prostitution scene in Shanghai.

Problem

Resurgence of prostitution in China in the wake of the capitalist reform policies necessitates a debate on what method is best suited for containing the inevitable negative consequences of prostitution. The analysis presented here aims at determining such a method from a set of three realistic candidate alternatives: legalization, decriminalization, or harm reduction measures in a continued formal prohibition of prostitution.

Constraints

As prostitution is a topic replete with heated debate and political dogma, and as a matter of practicality, many of the more esoteric and questionable arguments in the debate will be silently ignored, and the following axioms will be used throughout this paper:

- i) Prostitution is a trade profession, as in services performed for exchange of currency at market value
- ii) Prostitution is a freely chosen profession, as in services performed without physical force or threats by others
- iii) Prostitution is a marketplace driven by primitive human instincts and greed, and cannot be abolished in a non-closed society

Phenomena such as trafficking, child prostitution, and other forms of coerced sex labor are not covered in detail in this report, as they pose a different problem altogether. Male prostitution and other marginal types of sex trade are also left out.

Structure

In a straightforward linear flow, prostitution in China is analyzed by means of a historical outline, mapping of open tier prostitution in a smaller Shanghai community, an investigative survey, case studies, and complementary literature studies, eventually sewn together in a conclusive analysis.

Methodology

Results obtained by researchers in the field are extensively used to build a suitable framework for the analysis. Field studies are then conducted to concretize the situation, by mapping the open sex trade in a smaller neighborhood, and by presenting a survey questionnaire to a few select sex workers.

The survey is used to gather approximate data for a number of parameters, and to make a guestimate of reality. The survey is complemented by clandestine visits to brothels, in order to assess the conditions of the working premises, and to get acquainted with prostitutes, pimps and madams. The survey results are also enhanced with a few in-depth interviews with prostitutes, to estimate the credibility of the answers to the questionnaire, and to put a human face on the sex trade. Results from other surveys are used for correlation and further analysis, and various literature sources are used for the conclusive exposition.

Sources

Traditional literature sources as well as internet sources (checked as per publishing date) are combined with interviews, surveys, conversations, and observations of the physical reality.

Denotation and connotation

The word “prostitute” is inherently stained with doctrinary baggage, as it has invariably been used as a mild euphemism for “whore” in politically correct contexts.

“Whore” is a word of Germanic origin (*khoraz), meaning “one who desires”, and “prostitute” is derived from Latin “pro” (“in front of”) and “stare” (“to stand”). Both words originally had a more neutral connotation, but have inevitably aggregated derogative values over time.

Newer words like hooker, cocotte, harlot, bawd, trollop, streetwalker, professional, and courtesan exist in amounts, and although they usually designate different tiers of prostitution with different levels of stigma attached to them, they are basically synonymous or slang.

A modern term is sex worker, which is often used by social workers, pro-prostitution feminists, and the prostitutes themselves. The term sex worker has, however, a much wider denotation than prostitute, since striptease performers, nude models, adult movie actors, and phone sex operators are also elements in the class of sex workers.

The linguistic aspects of prostitution are fascinating, and will be covered in some detail throughout this paper, although only with respect to the Chinese language and the Shanghai prostitution scene. The Western terminology will be largely flattened, since the main objective is to analyze Chinese prostitution, and since it is pointless using euphemisms anyway.

Thus, unless otherwise noted, prostitute, whore, sex worker and other terms and derivatives used in this paper will interchangeably take on the very same neutral connotation, that is, a person who freely trades sexual favors for money or other valuable assets. Special intensions will be elaborated on when needed.

Ideology and science

Three “realistic” alternatives for minimizing the harm of prostitution are deliberated in this paper. Repressive measures such as prohibiting prostitution altogether are not considered, for the simple reason that a ban is an ideological approach rather than a scientific.

An ideology is a system of ideas, based on assumptions about reality that may or may not be true. In particular, such assumptions are always arbitrarily selected and adapted to fit the ideological model. This is why ideologies consistently fail at some points, and why there are so many competing ideologies. An ideology which would accurately predict reality would not be an ideology, but a scientific theory, which would be accepted by all.

An ideology takes as a starting point how it is, then states how it should be (according to some subjective norm), and finally suggests a plan for achieving the desired outcome.

Taking prostitution as an example, it can be noted that prostitution exists in abundance, and that it is a social problem. It can also be stated that prostitution should not exist, for emotional, egalitarian, or other reasons. A solution might consist in criminalizing it, and offering alternatives for the prostitutes. The problem with such an approach is that it does not reflect over whether it is possible or not; it is taken for granted that it is, or at least that the scale of it can be diminished. Any such solution often leaves out too many aspects, such as cross-border trading, criminal takeover, and other side effects, to be universally useful.

Proponents of a ban on prostitution belong to different groups. Socialist camps like the Chinese Communist Party want prohibition since the prostitutes are thought to be working class people exploited by a property-owning bourgeois class, and since prostitution is an unworthy occupation in an egalitarian socialist society. Sympathizing with such ideas is easy, although the actual implementations may be less attractive.

Radical feminist groupings want a ban on prostitution since the prostitutes are thought to be exploited by men in a patriarchal system. Many in this faction project their own emotions toward prostitution on the prostitutes, effectively stating that they speak for everyone, and that it therefore is unthinkable that anyone would freely choose to prostitute herself.

Examples of ideological twists in this latter group are that prostitutes lie to themselves if they claim to be prostitutes of free choice (the Stockholm syndrome), and that all prostitution is a form of trafficking, since the prostitutes have no other choice. But lack of choice is not the same as coercion, which is an essential element of trafficking. This feminist stance is therefore objectionable already at the outset, as it distorts reality to make it fit the theory.

Ideologies are used by politicians and others to make simplified maps of reality. Such representations can be shared collectively by a population, and such groupthink is necessary to reach majority decisions in many important issues, since most people will never have expertise knowledge. We all carry such mental maps, and some of them are culturally defined.

The expertise is found in the sciences, which have a proven track record of reaching valid conclusions and reliable predictions, as science is methodical and self-correcting on the collective level (but as subjective as ideologies on the individual level).

Soft sciences such as social sciences are usually less predictive than hard sciences, and they are also dealing with much more complex systems. Sociology and other social sciences are typically interdisciplinary, incorporating fields such as economics and history, and therefore deliver simplified representations of reality to the same extent as ideologies.

Nevertheless, empirical methods, statistics, and other scientific methods produce far better maps of reality than any ideology because science, as a system, is far more willing to alter its position in the light of new facts; it does not have an ad hoc position.

Ideologies are inherently fixed, as in religious ideologies that are set in stone and contain references to holy scriptures of divine origin, or they are inert, as in political ideologies. The Chinese Communist Party, for example, labels its capitalist market reforms “socialism with Chinese characteristics” in order to maintain the ideological base.

As this is a scientific paper, ideological aspects of prostitution will be left out of the discourse. Virtually all research in the field concludes that repressive measures against prostitution are counterproductive, resulting in driving the business underground, where monitoring and treatment of disease are more difficult.¹ Abolition is not a viable option in today’s globalized world—in fact not even in totalitarian regimes such as Iran or North Korea—and it remains a socialist and radfem pipe-dream without foundation in observable facts.

Furthermore, this paper is constrained to the prostitution scene in China, a turbulent society that is very different from Western countries. The conclusions reached for this region may not necessarily be valid in other areas, and are also limited in time.

¹ See for example “Prostitution Laws in Australia”, Susan Pinto, Anita Scandia and Paul Wilson, Australian Institute of Criminology, 1990–05, <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/ti22.pdf>

2. Historical outline of prostitution in China

Prostitution in pre-modern China

THE CHINESE SOCIAL SYSTEM

Imperial China was based on a patriarchal social system since its conception over two thousand years ago. As in the Occident, women were generally classified as less worthy than men, oftentimes being subjected to slavery in greater numbers. Relationships between men and women were controlled by various social mechanisms, foremost to preserve the prevalent system of male continuation of the blood line.

Women in ancient China were usually confined to five major traditional predestinations: wives, concubines, servants, nuns, and whores, in decreasing order of formal social status.² Women could assume other roles, but these were not mainstream.

The traditional Chinese wife (妻子, qīzi; 正妻, zhèngqī; or 大老婆, dàlǎopo) had to be well-matched to her husband and master (主人, zhǔrén), with a good family background, and with no previous record of marriage. She had to be fertile in order to continue the family line, preferably with boys, and she also had to be chaste so that the descendant blood line would remain unadulterated. A traditional wife had to be servile to uphold the patriarchal social system.³

As the main functions of the traditional wife were to reproduce and give status to her husband, she did not have to be beautiful. As a matter of fact, it was sometimes preferred that a wife was plain ugly, unsentimental, and without any talents whatsoever for lovemaking, as the wife was commonly seen merely as a tool for reproduction and fostering of children.⁴

Beauty and sexual talent were instead appreciated in the concubines, which were either bought by or especially married into richer families. The concubine (妾, qiè; or 小老婆, xiǎolǎopo, little wife) should be young and coquettish, and act like a spoiled girl, within the limits set by the master of the house. The concubines were often uneducated and from poor backgrounds, and they were used exclusively as toys by their masters. If the regular wife died, a concubine could replace her position and gain higher status.⁵

Servants (婢女, bìnǚ; 奴婢, núbì; 丫鬟, yāhuán; 丫头, yātou; or 女奴, nǚnú) were slaves or half-slaves that performed manual labor in the house and in gardens. Servants

² 潘绥铭 (Pān Suímíng), 存在与荒谬——中国地下性产业考察 (Existing and preposterous—investigation of China's underground sex industry), 群言出版社 (Qunyan Publishing House), 1999, (internet: <http://book.htpcn.com/bdown002/wxls/ts021089.pdf>), p. 3 (internet version)

³ Pan, p. 3

⁴ Pan, p. 3

⁵ Pan, p. 3

were usually untouchable by the master, but if he nevertheless insisted on illicit relations, a servant girl could be promoted to concubine, a procedure called “receive a room” (收房, shōufáng).⁶

Buddhist nuns (尼姑, nígū) were chaste women who did not acquaint with men at all, although they provoked men’s fantasy just as much as nuns did in the West. They lived in the materially worst conditions of all women, but did not have to compromise their dignity.⁷

THE FIFTH SOCIAL CLASS: THE WHORE

On the bottom of the social ladder were the whores, at least from a formal viewpoint. Whores (妓女, jìnyǚ; or 娼妓, chāngjì) were strictly tiered, and served everyone from the lowliest peasant to the highest-standing literati. Many of the whores were trained since early childhood in conversational and artistic skills, and they were sorted out after talent and beauty by the houses that usually owned them.

The poorest men had but to go to the dirty “whore huts” (娼寮, chāngliáo) in the red-light districts (烟花巷, yānhuāxiàng, or with a modern term 红灯区, hóngdēngqū), looking for “rotten whores” (烂娼, lànchāng). The middle class men went to the regular brothels (妓院, jìyuàn), which offered a cosy homelike environment with decent girls.

The highest stratum of prostitutes consisted of the girls of the mansions (青楼, qīnglóu). Although these girls, the qīnglóunǚ (青楼女, blue mansion girls), were formally ranked below wives, concubines, servants and nuns, they were in actuality considered among the most skilled and worthy women of society, well-trained in arts and conversational skills, almost similar in style to the Chinese courtesans and the later Japanese geishas.

The high-tiered prostitution in traditional China gave rise to a tradition of erotic literature, of which “Dream of the red chamber” (红楼梦, Hónglóu mèng) and “Jīn Píng Méi” (金瓶梅) have become classics.⁸

Prostitution in traditional China was a limited sexual freedom for men, limited in the sense that whore-mongering was tolerated as long as it did not wreck a marriage. A married man was allowed to enjoy his concubine or even slave-girls, but could not have a mistress outside of the family, because it could spoil his own marriage, or the future marriage of the yet untouched girl.

Traditional China also had other regulations in place for prostitution. Compelling women into prostitution was strictly illegal, and carried a heavy sentence. The land owners were among those who could afford playing with girls, but they usually lived on the country-

⁶ Pan, p. 3

⁷ Pan, p. 3

⁸ 张曼菱评点《红楼梦》：湘云与侠妓 (Zhang Manling discusses “Honglou meng”: [Shi] Xiangyun and chivalrous female performers), 科学网 (Science web), 2006-04-27, <http://www.sciencetimes.com.cn/col40/col106/article.htm1?id=72517>; Pan, p. 4

side and were satisfied with their wife and concubine. The literati in the towns had the desire, but oftentimes lacked the money to fulfill their needs. Because of this, the scope of the sex trade in Imperial China was limited, with the exception of the later international treaty ports.⁹

THE FLOATING CLASS: THE COURTESANS

Traditional Chinese courtesans were not really prostitutes, but formed a separate social layer of free-women.¹⁰ The qīnglóunǚ (青楼女) as well as the later Shanghainese flowers (花, huā) imitated them in style, but never reached their distinctive class. The courtesans were literary persons who assumed different roles at different occasions, leading free lives, often trained in the arts since early childhood by a personal mentor. They were frequently called míngjī (名妓), famous female artists, on which the later Japanese geishas were modeled.

The modern meaning of the character 妓 (jì) is simply prostitute, as in the compounds 妓女 (jì nǚ) and 娼妓 (chāngjì). The character is composed of the radical 女 (nǚ, woman) and the phonetic 支 (zhī, branch; support; dispatch). The character 伎 (jì), which is a composition of 人 (rén, man) and 支 (zhī) means performer or talent, why substituting with a female radical yields female performer, which is the original meaning of the character.

Indeed, the Chinese word for geisha is 艺妓 (yìjì), meaning female artistic performer. A Japanese meigi (名妓, famous geisha) or bigi (美妓, měijì) is the equivalent of the Chinese 名妓 (míngjì) or courtesan. The word has later become synonymous with prostitute, and it is thus a dysphemism, but it is of importance to keep the original meaning in mind when analyzing historical conditions. The modern derogative word for whore is 婊子 (biǎozi).

Famous courtesans in traditional China include the poet and Daoist teacher Yú Xuánjī (鱼玄机, 844–871) from the Tang dynasty capital Xian,¹¹ the poet Sū Xiǎoxiǎo (苏小小) from Hangzhou in the South Qi dynasty of the sixth century,¹² and the mother of Qin Shihuang, the first emperor of China, Zhào Jī (赵姬), in the third century before the common era.¹³

⁹ Pan, p. 5

¹⁰ Wikipedia contributors, "Courtesan", Wikipedia, 2006-05-11, <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Courtesan&oldid=52695430>

¹¹ 因嫉妒偷情折命的鱼玄机 (Yu Xuanji, who killed out of jealousy), 中华网 (China.com), 2006-02-27, http://culture.china.com/zh_cn/history/yeshi/11036692/20060227/13125564_2.html

¹² 陆明 (Lù Míng), 苏小小之死 (The death of Su Xiaoxiao), 嘉兴日报 (Jiaxing Daily), 2005-05-10, http://www.jxdaily.net.cn/gb/misc/2005-05/10/content_216013.htm; also see 张岱 (Zhāng Dài), 西湖梦寻 (West Lake dream search), 卷三, 西湖中路, 苏小小墓, 1671, <http://www.cnread.net/cnread1/gdwx/z/zhangdai/xhmx/>

¹³ 入主秦宫的战国名妓——赵姬 (Warring State courtesans entering the Qin palace—Zhao Ji), 历代名妓 (Historical courtesans), 盼盼 (Panpan), 2005-08-20, <http://www.panpan.org/wxarticle/articlehtml/lidaimingji/825.html>

Prostitution in treaty port period Shanghai 1842–1949

WESTERN IMPERIALISM AND THE RISE OF SHANGHAI

Although the city of Shànghǎi (上海) has been referred to in documents as early as the 11th century, in the Song dynasty, its formal history as a city began with the erection of a city wall in 1553. Even so, Shanghai did not become a major city until the Western powers got control of parts of it in accordance with the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842.¹⁴

The Chinese had a magnificent fleet during the Ming dynasty, and the voyages of Zhèng Hé (郑和) in the 15th century are infamous, although he was an admiral rather than a merchant. The costs of the imperial treasure ships were therefore greater than the tributes collected, and the great Chinese merchant navy died with Zheng He. China closed itself to the outer world, and never recognized the possibilities with trade across the oceans, instead concentrating on westward land expansion.¹⁵

Then came the Western powers to China, first the Portuguese, settling in Aomen (Macao) in 1557, leasing the territory from 1670 and onward. The British East India Company established a trading post in Guangzhou (or Canton, using a French exonym) in 1711, and Dutch, Swedish and other East India companies followed suite, trading silver for porcelain, tea, and silk.

Emperor Qiánlóng (乾隆) of the Qing dynasty maintained that the Qing empire was the center of the world, and declined trade with the inferior British. Failing to confine the trade with the Europeans to Aomen (Macao), he instituted the Guangzhou System (广州制度, Guǎngzhōu zhìdù), which limited trade to but a few specific ports. The system also specified that trade should be conducted with Chinese middle hands rather than directly with civilians, and although resented by the British, it was in effect until the Opium War broke out in 1839.

Opium was shipped from India to China, despite a longstanding Chinese ban on opium. The reason opium was traded, apart from the obvious profitability of such a commodity, was that the Chinese were unwilling to trade tea, silk, and porcelain for anything but silver, and the Western silver sources were rapidly being depleted.¹⁶

The British carried out illegal opium trade, and skirmishes with the Chinese broke out intermittently. As the British East India Company was provisioned with rights to acquire foreign territory and wage war, the outpost of Xianggang (Hongkong) was occupied in 1839 for

¹⁴ Wikipedia contributors, "Shanghai", Wikipedia, 2006-05-15,
<http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Shanghai&oldid=53264180>

¹⁵ Wikipedia contributors, "Zheng He", Wikipedia, 2006-05-15,
http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Zheng_He&oldid=53315376

¹⁶ Wikipedia contributors, "First Opium War", Wikipedia, 2006-05-08,
http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=First_Opium_War&oldid=52090862

further war preparations. The war ended in 1842, when the British navy seized control over the mouth of Long River (长江, Chángjiāng) and occupied Shanghai.

The unequal treaty of Nanjing was signed in 1842. China ceded Xianggang (Hongkong) to Britain, and agreed to open the ports of Guangzhou (Canton), Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo, and Shanghai for foreign trade. British citizens were also given extraterritoriality on Chinese soil.

A second opium war was later fought, which expanded the rights and the number of treaty ports, and also included France, Russia and the United States in the treaty port trade. These Western powers began to control larger parts of each treaty port, transforming them with Western technology and architecture. As a result, treaty ports like Shanghai quickly became major cities.

The brutal rape by the Western powers marked the beginning of the end of Imperial China. Internal riots, aggressions from Japan and the West, and a beginning realization that the Chinese society was largely obsolete, torn the country apart, resulting in a lengthy period of painful humiliation and finally rebirth.

Shanghai soon became China's biggest industrial and commercial city, and many foreigners made Shanghai their new home. It was in Shanghai that modern China was born, where the political forces to replace the dynastic system were formed, and it was also the birthplace of the Chinese Communist Party. The wealths and possibilities of Shanghai attracted people from all over the country. The city was divided into three regions, the Chinese City, the French Concession, and the International Settlement, all of which were governed independently of each other.

PROSTITUTION TIERS IN BOOMING SHANGHAI

Vices (or pleasures) such as gambling and prostitution naturally thrived in the big and growing entertainment industry of the city. Prostitution in Shanghai inherited the regular Chinese classification system, but as these structures gradually dissolved, new social ladders and tiers of prostitution were established, especially in the non-Chinese controlled areas. Whores still belonged to the bottom class of society, but their status varied considerably. Three major tiers arose, where the upper tier involved extensive and expensive social relations more than sex, the middle sex as a commodity, and the lower sex as a means of survival for the most unfortunate people in society.

Tier I: Flower courtesans: Singsong girls and long-threes

The highest tier of prostitutes in nineteenth century Shanghai consisted of the huā (花, flowers), or courtesans. Hua were in turn stratified into subgroups, where the shūyù (书寓, "book residence", girls who live with the books) were on top of the world. It is doubtful whether these shuyu could be labeled prostitutes at all, although they did have sexual encounters

with clients.¹⁷ They were the heirs to the traditional Chinese courtesans, but were nevertheless different.

The shuyu were similar to the mansion girls (青楼女, qīnglóunǚ), who had entertained the literati for more than a thousand years, although the shuyu performed on stage in front of a larger audience. They were educated, often to a greater degree than high class society women, and they entertained the educated class with storytelling in the shūlóu (书楼, libraries) or shūchǎng (书场, storytelling mansions).¹⁸

Individual shuyu were called nǚ shuōshū (女说书, female storytellers), jiàoshū (校书, “proofreader”), shūshǐ (书史, book official), or císhǐ (词史, poetry official).¹⁹ Note that 史 (shǐ, history or historian) is historically cognate with 吏 (lì, official).

Hua courtesans were often addressed xiānsheng (先生), which normally means “master”, but is also a traditional title for “bookkeeper”, and a courteous addressing meaning “miss”. The foreign label “singsong girls” derives from this title (using Suzhou topolect).²⁰

Shuyu courtesans were renowned for their beauty, but even more for their skills in singing, playing the pípa (琵琶), and reciting stories. They were the stars and celebrities of the time, and were reviewed in the newspapers. Legend has it that they considered themselves skilled entertainers who would not dare selling their bodies (只卖口不卖身, zhǐ mài kǒu, bú mǎishēn),²¹ although more moderate accounts state that they could be involved in sexual activities if the price was right, just as with the contemporary Japanese geishas.²² Terms for such uncommon activities were yèdù (夜度, spend the night), zhùsù (住宿, stay over), xiāohún (消魂, be overwhelmed with joy (or sorrow)), or hé yuānyang (合鸳鸯, unite like Mandarin ducks).²³

The shuyu were at their height around 1860–1870, but were then gradually degraded into the lower tier, the chángsān (长三, long-three; a domino tile with two threes), so called because of the price structure: three yuan for drinking company and another three for sex.²⁴ The name was independent of price, which naturally varied with supply and demand; it is the

¹⁷ Renate Scherer, *Das System der chinesischen Prostitution dargestellt am Beispiel Shanghais in der Zeit von 1840 bis 1949*, Freien Universität Berlin, 1983 (Ph.D. dissertation), p. 123

¹⁸ Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous pleasures: prostitution and modernity in twentieth-century Shanghai*, University of California Press, 1999, p. 42

¹⁹ Scherer, pp. 123–124

²⁰ Scherer, p. 124; Hershatter, p. 41

²¹ Scherer, p. 127

²² Hershatter, p. 42

²³ Scherer, p. 125

²⁴ Ye Xiaoqing, *Commercialization and prostitution in nineteenth century Shanghai* (Finnane & McLaren, ed., *Dress, sex and text in Chinese culture*, Monash Asia Institute), 1999, pp. 40–41; Hershatter, p. 43

principle that counts, and modern Shanghainese bar girls (陪女, péinǚ, escort girls) could charge 500 yuan for escort and another 500 for sex, in a similar fashion.

The changsan courtesans were a vulgarized version of the shuyu, and although they could sing and perform, they were not nearly as skilled. They were also sexually available for almost anyone, although only after a lengthy procedure (相识交谈, xiāngshí jiāotán, be acquainted with each other through conversation), making them true prostitutes.²⁵ Their main line of business was to arrange banquets and provide entertainment, and the literati who visited these changsan brothels did so mainly for other reasons than sexual encounters, just as with the qinglounü in the past.²⁶ The changsan became first tier prostitutes when the shuyu disappeared, and remained at the top throughout the republican period 1912–1949.²⁷

The changsan were nurtured from a young age in the brothels, which purchased them as foster daughters (养女, yǎngnǚ). As with most prostitutes, these girls came from poor conditions, but were elevated to a socially beneficial environment where they could earn their freedom or find a good spouse who would pay for their release.

Guangdong performers (粤妓, Yuèjì) were Cantonese courtesans, which usually catered to richer Cantonese businessmen. Their repertoire was also mainly Cantonese, and the Yueji were an odd group of prostitutes on the Shanghainese sex scene.²⁸

Tier II: Yao'er, salt-pork ladies, pheasants, and saltwater sisters

The middle tier below the changsan was naturally an extension of the domino concept: the èrsān (二三, two-three) and the yāo'èr (幺二, one-two). The ersan were too close in price to the changsan, and were soon immersed into the changsan tier. The yao'er tier, however, remained a more readily available group, charging some price for drinking company, but only an additional half of the price for “cutting the melon” (破瓜, pòguā, deflower a virgin).²⁹

Another middle tier of prostitutes in republican Shanghai was found in the dating houses (台基, táijī, stage foundation; or 韩庄, Hánzhuāng, “Han’s shop” or “Korean shop”). The girls in these establishments had no performing skills like the hua courtesans, and only offered sexual services on the spot.³⁰ Even lower in this regard were the salt-pork shops (咸肉庄, xiánròuzhuāng), where sex-on-demand was offered for a reasonable price. Dating houses and salt-pork shops have their modern equivalents in the many massage parlors seen throughout Shanghai and China. The name salt-pork refers to the fact that the meat

²⁵ Scherer, p. 130

²⁶ Ye, p. 42

²⁷ Hershatte, p. 44

²⁸ Scherer, p. 134

²⁹ Hershatte, p. 44; Ye, p. 43; Scherer, p. 136

³⁰ Hershatte, p. 45; Scherer, p. 147

offered in these shops may not have been entirely fresh, but perhaps came with a foul smell to it.³¹

Pheasants (野鸡, yějī; or 雉鸡, zhìjī) were street hookers at the bottom layer of the middle tier.³² They were the largest group of prostitutes in old Shanghai, aggressively advertising their services to people passing by on the street.³³ Pheasants in contemporary China are rarely seen on the streets, but are commonly found in public places such as hotels, restaurants, and bars. The term pheasant was originally used for uncontracted laborers, but was later exclusively associated with uncontracted whores.³⁴

A special group of Cantonese prostitutes, the saltwater sisters (咸水妹, xiánsuǐmèi), also belonged to the middle tier.³⁵ They specialized in foreign men, and the salt water term has to do with the fact that foreigners in Xianggang (Hongkong) would initially only be served by boat women, which were bringing their salty seawater taste. Origin thus played a crucial role, and the ideal was the Suzhou style on which the changsan tier was modeled.³⁶

Tier III: Opium prostitutes and dingpeng whores

In the bottom tier were the prostitutes found in the flower-smoke rooms (花烟间, huāyānjiān), where clients could smoke a pipe of opium and play with the flowers (花, huā, prostitutes). When opium was banned in 1933, these rooms disappeared or became ordinary pheasant houses. Brothels hosted in shabby sheds, so called dīngpéng (钉棚, nail shacks), were especially cheap places for instant kāipào (开炮, “open fire”, intercourse), catering to men of poor income. Quickly “nail” (钉, dìng) a woman could cost ten cents, and an entire nocturnal adventure a mere yuan.³⁷

Foreign prostitutes were also working throughout Shanghai, in particular Japanese and Russian women. The Russian girls were some eight thousand in the 1930s, compared to some two thousand other white prostitutes. They as well as the dingpeng prostitutes were most common in the northern parts of Shanghai, in Hóngkǒu (虹口) and Zháběi (闸北) re-

³¹ Hershatte, p. 46

³² Prostitutes are often referred to by bird terms in the Chinese language, for instance yějī (野鸡, pheasant) or zhìjī (雉鸡, pheasant) for street hooker. A general term for prostitute is jī (鸡, chicken). A young whore went by the name chújī (雏妓, baby bird prostitute), and the procuress of a brothel was frequently called bāomǔ (鸨母, bustard mother). Streetwalkers are sometimes called liúyīng (流莺, floating warblers).

³³ Hershatte, p. 47

³⁴ Scherer, p. 151

³⁵ Scherer, p. 161

³⁶ Hershatte, p. 54

³⁷ Hershatte, pp. 49–50; Scherer, pp. 164–165

spectively. The Japanese were mainly working on present-day North Sichuan Road (四川北路, Sìchuān běilù) in Hongkou, among them several geishas.³⁸

REGULATION OF SHANGHAI PROSTITUTION

The legal status of prostitution in Shanghai varied in time and by administrative division. All settlements had licensing systems, although the International Settlement sometimes had a prohibition on prostitution.³⁹ The unlicensed brothels by far outnumbered the licensed, and many also worked as private prostitutes (私娼, sīchāng) or unlicensed prostitutes (暗娼, ànchāng) outside the brothel system.⁴⁰

Estimates of the number of prostitutes vary considerably, but several independent sources give the figure one hundred thousand in the 1920s and 1930s, as well after the war. At the height of prostitution in Shanghai, somewhere between five and seven percent of the female population may have been involved in prostitution, the overwhelming majority on part-time.⁴¹ Becoming a prostitute, or whoring part-time, gave much more money than working twelve-hour work shifts in a factory, but also meant greater risks.

The many local governments of Shanghai also had economic incentives. Licensing of brothels and prostitutes was partly to contain the spreading of disease (which nevertheless was epidemic)⁴² and offer some protection for the prostitutes, but the main rationale was to cash in on the lucrative business. The sex trade ranked third in tax revenue, after hotels and restaurants.⁴³

As a new China formed after the fall of the empire in 1911, liberal, socialist, feminist, and other thinkers agitated for abolition of prostitution as well as the polygamist Chinese social system, but had little success eliminating prostitution because of the economic incentives. Therefore, it would take nothing less than a revolution to bring prostitution to a halt.

Prostitution in Maoist China and Shanghai 1949–1978

As Mao Zedong led the Red Army to a decisive victory in the civil war against the Guomindang (the Nationalist Party) in 1949, China was also liberated from its colonial invaders in the treaty ports. Shanghai, “the Whore of the Orient”, was about to lose its economic power and nostalgic past, facing an uncertain future under communist rule.

³⁸ Hershatte, pp. 50–52, 37

³⁹ Hershatte, pp. 271, 280, 56

⁴⁰ Hershatte, p. 39

⁴¹ Hershatte, pp. 39–40

⁴² Hershatte, pp. 295–296

⁴³ Hershatte, p. 206

In Marxist and socialist rhetoric, the prostitute is not a criminal, but a victim of ruthless class exploitation by pimps and brothel madams. The Communist Party was therefore determined to end prostitution once and for all, and to make men and women equal, in accordance with the equity ideals of socialism and the May Fourth Movement of 1919.

Beginning in 1951, prostitution in Shanghai was prohibited and gradually dismantled, until completely eradicated seven years later, in 1958. The radical tool at the disposal of the authorities was the Women's Labor Training Institute (妇女劳动教养所, Fùnǚ láodòng jiàoyǎngsuǒ), where prostitutes were gathered for reeducation. They were not formally prisoners, although they were not permitted to leave the premises until deemed fit for society. There were no guards, and escaping the facilities was not too hard.⁴⁴

The institute performed medical examinations of the prostitutes, of which 95% are claimed to have been infected with venereal diseases. After treatment, the prostitutes were to undergo training to get skills suitable for work. Group therapy sessions in small groups were held to make the prostitutes realize their situation and work on their mental scars. The objective was to bring these women back to a normal work and family life.⁴⁵

Many of the prostitutes found it hard to adapt to the new conditions, with daily routines beginning from early morning till late night. Some were also addicted to drugs, and the institute did not have a suitable detox program in place. Compared to their previous easy lifestyle, the relatively harsh conditions made many of the girls miss their lives as whores, and they revolted. The authorities were prepared for such reactions, however, and when realizing they had no alternative, the women accepted their fate, and began to cooperate.

The abolition of prostitution in Shanghai began two and a half years after the city had been taken by the Red Army, and business went on as usual until then. The authorities applied previous regulations, and issued new licenses to brothels, although prostitution waned naturally with the decline of old Shanghai. Many prostitutes moved away from the city.⁴⁶

When the authorities prohibited prostitution in November 1951, few of the brothels complied. A sweep was conducted, with massive arrests of pimps and madams, but many of the prostitutes fought with the police and refused to leave the premises. The following years, further sweeps (扫垃圾, sǎo lājī, sweep garbage) were carried out, and neighborhood committees were formed to keep an eye open. The attitudes toward prostitution became stricter with time, and the city was finally declared free from prostitution in 1958.⁴⁷

Pimps (皮条客, pítiáokè; or 鸡头, jītóu, whore bosses) and madams were treated leniently and were commonly not punished, despite the Party rhetoric about class exploitation,

⁴⁴ Christian Henriot, "La Fermeture": The abolition of prostitution in Shanghai, 1949–58, *The China Quarterly*, No. 142 (June 1995), pp. 476–478; Hershatter, p. 304

⁴⁵ Henriot, p. 478

⁴⁶ Henriot, pp. 469–473

⁴⁷ Henriot, p. 474

and they usually quickly disappeared into other branches of life after being busted and perhaps sentenced to shorter terms. Instead, the authorities set a pedagogical example (杀鸡给猴看, *shā jī gěi hóu kàn*, kill the chicken and let the monkey watch) by bringing five brothel procurers to the reeducation institute. In front of a panel with leaders from the institute, the police, and the judicial branch, the previous prostitutes denounced the crimes of the pimps and madams. Two of the brothel-keepers were sentenced to death and swiftly executed.⁴⁸

The prostitutes were usually released after one to three years of reeducation, and then sent to new missions in society, often doing labor on faraway state farms. Their previous records were put into their *dàng'àn* (档案, personal file), readily available for employers and other cadres, effectively marking them for life. Many of the previous prostitutes were castigated during the Cultural Revolution 1966–76, when people looked everywhere for scapegoats to save their own skin. The original intent of the Communist Party backlashed, and made the former prostitutes suffer the most horrible shame and punishment.⁴⁹

Prostitution in Mao's China was in fact eliminated almost completely, at least the visual prostitution. The state itself had prostitutes readily available for visiting foreign statesmen and envoys, and also for internal Party use and for other occasions, and there was an underground prostitution scene, but the public prostitution was successfully swept away.⁵⁰ This was possible only because of isolationism and totalitarian measures, at an unfathomable price for society as a whole.

Prostitution in contemporary China and Shanghai 1978–

As Deng Xiaoping seized power after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, China embarked on a new path of market economy capitalism ("socialism with Chinese characteristics"), leaving much of the planned economy behind. The country reformed the economy and opened up to the world (改革开放, *gǎigé-kāifàng*) with beginning in 1978, a process that is still in progress and that has transformed China enormously.

But as many leading Party cadres acknowledge, prostitution is more or less inevitable in a capitalist society. The head of the Civil Administration Bureau (民政局, *Mínzhèngjú*) in Shanghai at the time of liberation, Cáo Mǎnzhī (曹漫之), went as far as suggesting that even legalization of prostitution is inevitable in a capitalist society.⁵¹

Reports of reemerging prostitution (死灰复燃, *sǐhuī-fùrán*) first came sporadically, then more frequently, as soon as the reforms had begun. Foreign businessmen arrived with money to spend, and prostitutes were seeking clients in hotels and bars.⁵² Then many Chi-

⁴⁸ Henriot, p. 481

⁴⁹ Henriot, pp. 485–486

⁵⁰ Hershatte, pp. 331–332

⁵¹ Hershatte, p. 307

⁵² Hershatte, pp. 327, 330–331

nese became rich, and the domestic market grew exponentially, with a natural evolution in tiers in venues such as karaoke bars and massage parlors. Although arrests were made in great numbers, the police never had a chance of getting a grip of the exploding market, and interfering in prostitution also had negative effects. Prostitution was back to stay.

TIERS OF MODERN PROSTITUTION IN CHINA

Seven distinct tiers of prostitution in China have been defined by the Shanghai police, although these layers are far from exhaustive, and only valid as an approximative representation of the prostitution scene.

Tier 1 is the èrnǎi (二奶), meaning mistress or “second wife”. The ernai receives a monthly fee from a steady client in exchange for sex. She does not offer anything else, such as romance or family life, and is effectively a contracted mistress.⁵³

Tier 2 is the bāopó (包婆), where pó means wife, and bāo refers to the “indenture fee” (包身费, bāoshēnfèi) the pó receives for her services.⁵⁴ The baopo is similar to the ernai, although for limited times only. The two upper tiers correspond to the ancient concubine, although the ernai and baopo are mostly kept secretly rather than in the household. They are mostly catering to rich Chinese men and Party cadres, and are thus linked to corruption. It is doubtful whether concubines should be labeled prostitutes.

Tier 3 is the escort girls (陪女, péinǚ; 陪唱, péichàng), usually found in karaoke bars, where they are called KTV misses (KTV小姐, KTV xiǎojie), or in regular bars. They are similar to the older chángsān (长三) in that they charge multiple fees, first for sitting down and converse (坐台, zuòtái, sit at the place), then for escorting (出台, chūtái, leaving the place). Ultimately, they might suggest sleeping with the client (包夜, bāoyè, wrap up the night), with or without sex (打炮, dǎpào, fire the gun).⁵⁵ Escort girls are very popular in metropolitan cities like Shanghai and Beijing, and are usually also very expensive. It is not uncommon seeing businessmen putting a thousand yuan on the table just to have a chat. The bar girls are usually classy girls, and they are popular with foreigners on temporary visit (long-term expats usually do not associate with prostitutes, but have regular Chinese or other girlfriends).

Tier 4 is the dingdong ladies (叮咚小姐, dīngdōng xiǎojie). They operate from hotel rooms they rent themselves, seeking clients (拉客, lākè) at the hotel or elsewhere. If a client is interested, the dingdong lady will come knocking at his door, offering a deal on sex.⁵⁶ University students and others advertising their private services through the internet also belong to this tier of private prostitutes, as well as call-girls (应召女郎, yìngzhao nǚláng).

⁵³ Pan, p. 12

⁵⁴ Pan, p. 12

⁵⁵ Pan, p. 13

⁵⁶ Pan, p. 13

Tier 5 is the hair salon sisters (发廊妹, fàlángmèi), which operate in establishments that offer massage (按摩, ànmó), foot wash (洗脚, xǐjiǎo), hair wash (洗头, xǐtóu), and similar services, although rarely at hair salons, due to sweeps in the beginning of the reforms.⁵⁷ Mostly, such services are never performed for real, instead serving as a cover for prostitution. Some establishments do, however, perform additional services, at least during daytime.

The falangmei, or massage girls (按摩女, ànmónǚ), offer sexual intercourse or similar services on the spot for the flat market price of 200 yuan (negotiable), and may also escort the client home for the same price. All-night service is slightly more expensive. The hair salon sisters are the equivalents of the girls of the former salt-pork shops (咸肉庄, xiánròuzhuāng), meaning that the quality may vary considerably.

The falangmei are the most visible prostitutes in China, as they are easily recognized in their red-light shops, and they are also plentiful. They perform contractual work under a proprietress (老板娘, lǎobǎnniáng) or a pimp (皮条, pítáo), and do not make much more money than a worker, unless they receive tips from the customers. These prostitutes are often migrants from the countryside, and they are completely dependent on their employers.

Tier 6 is the street hookers (街女, jiēnǚ, street women; 街妹, jiēmèi, street sisters; or 流娼, liúchāng, streetwalkers), who solicit customers outside hotels, bars and other entertainment outlets. They may offer petting (上半场, shàngbànchǎng, first half) or intercourse (下半场, xiàbànchǎng, second half), usually for the same price as for massage girls.⁵⁸ Street prostitutes may be accompanied by a laobanniang, or may work on their own. They correspond to the pheasant tier of old Shanghai, and they are still frequently called yějī (野鸡). Street whores are those at greatest risk of being apprehended by the police.

Tier 7 is down-the-work-shack prostitutes (下工棚, xiàgōngpéng), who offer their services to poor migrant workers without proper accommodation. The xiagongpeng prostitutes are themselves often very poor, and unable to attract others.⁵⁹ Metropolitan areas have many migrant workers in such dire circumstances, and the xiagongpeng whores fill a social and sexual void, as the migrants usually have left their wives at home. They are the equivalents of the previous dīngpéng (钉棚, nail shack) whores, and are not visible to the public.

According to popular language, the last two tiers correspond to 卖屌 (mài bī, sell cunt), tiers four to five 卖肉 (mài ròu, sell meat), tiers two to three 卖俏 (màiqiào, flirt), and the top tier 卖骚 (mài sāo, sell smut), indicating that the first tier of cohabitating is as despicable as the lower tiers, and that tiers two to three are more or less normal activity.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Pan, p. 13

⁵⁸ Pan, p. 13

⁵⁹ Pan, p. 13

⁶⁰ Pan, p. 13

LEGAL STATUS OF PROSTITUTION IN CHINA

Organized prostitution is officially illegal in China, as per the 1999 revision of the criminal law (《中华人民共和国刑法》, *Zhōnghuá rénmin gònghéguó xíngfǎ*; see Appendices). Abducting women or children for prostitution carries a sentence of at least ten years in prison, or the death penalty (article 240), which underlines the seriousness of trafficking in China.

Other crimes relating to prostitution are detailed in the eighth chapter, on disturbance of public order. Organizing prostitution, or compelling others to prostitute themselves, carries a sentence of five to ten years in prison. If the crime is aggravated, or if a person under the age of fourteen is involved, or if it is a repeat offense, or if bodily harm is inflicted upon the prostitute, the sentence ranges from ten years in prison to the death penalty (article 358).

Luring someone to prostitute herself, or accommodating for prostitutes, or presenting prostitutes, carries a sentence of up to five years in prison, or detainment, or surveillance. Seducing children under the age of fourteen into prostitution carries a sentence of at least five years in prison (article 359).

Selling or buying sex when knowingly carrying syphilis, gonorrhea, or other serious sexually transmitted diseases, carries a sentence of up to five years in prison, or detainment, or surveillance. Whoring with a girl under the age of fourteen when carrying a venereal disease carries a sentence of at least five years in prison (article 360).

Managers of hotels, restaurants, bars, show businesses, and taxi companies, whose staff is involved in organizing prostitution as per articles 358–360, will be punished severely (article 361). If such managers try to bribe investigating authorities, the crime is considered extra severe (article 362).

None of the articles in the criminal law cover the primary parties, the prostitutes and the wenchers, other than if carrying a venereal disease. Selling and buying sex is instead covered in the PRC Regulations on administrative penalties for public security (《中华人民共和国治安管理处罚条例》, *Zhōnghuá rénmin gònghéguó zhì'ān guǎnlǐ chǔfá tiáolì*; see Appendices). Specifically, selling or buying sex is strictly prohibited, and may result in detention for up to fifteen days, a warning, an obligation to repent in writing, a fine of up to 5,000 yuan, and/or reeducation through labor (for up to two years). Whoring with a girl under the age of fourteen is considered to be forcible rape, and is punishable by criminal law (article 30).

Being a prostitute, or hiring a prostitute, is therefore not a criminal offense in China, but a misdemeanor. Even so, the authorities rarely interfere in the business, with the exception for occasional sweeps, or if there are aggravating circumstances. The usual punishment is a fine and a warning, and in some locales also informing relatives.

Prostitution is not decriminalized, however, since brothel proprietors and other third party organizers are formally at risk of stiff penalties under criminal code. This is the classic abolitionist stance.

3. Contemporary prostitution in Shanghai Jiading



Prostitution in China is in many regards homogeneous, with the same tiers and types of venues seen in most cities throughout the country. Metropolitan areas such as Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen are different to the extent that they attract many outsiders to the business. Such regions are also different in that they harbor many foreigners and many richer people.

Shanghai is different yet from another aspect, namely that it is the most progressive city in the nation. Whatever takes place in Shanghai is bound to happen elsewhere, sooner or later. Shanghai is the literal thermometer of China, and it is also the city which has the richest prostitution history of all Chinese cities.

The outer districts of Shanghai share some features with the rest of China. As a matter of convenience—the investigator having resided in such a suburb for almost two years—this study of prostitution will focus on Jiading Town (嘉定镇, Jiādingzhèn) in the northwestern Shanghai district of Jiāding (嘉定).

About Jiading

The district of Jiading covers 458.8 square kilometers of land, and has an administrative division into sixteen towns (镇, zhèn), two neighborhoods (街道, jiēdào), one smaller residential zone (小区, xiǎoqū), and an industrial zone (工业区, gōngyèqū).

The district has some 30,000 businesses, including 7,000 industries. Automotive industry is the base industry, with Volkswagen factories in the towns of Jiading and Āntíng (安亭). Anting is also home to the annual Shanghai Formula One Grand Prix.

As of 2003, the GDP per capita amounts to around 36,000 yuan a year, but the income disparity is huge. A total population of around a million, or 6% of all of Shanghai, was accounted for by the latest census in 2001, with 753,000 people in the steady population and 254,000 migrant workers.⁶¹ The gender ratio is 106.38 (women = 100) among permanent residents (excluding working migrants). Including the migrant population, the gender ratio rises to 133.56, since most migrant workers are men. Jiading Town has, by the same census, 90,128 permanent residents and 14,564 migrant workers (13.9%) as of April 30, 2001.

The name Jiading was coined in a lengthy period of turmoil and division some 800 years ago. Emperor Nìngzōng (宁宗), with the real name of Zhào Kuò (赵扩), was the 13th emperor of Song, reigning Southern Song between 1194–1224. It was in his fourth era, under the era name (年号, niánhào) of Jiāding (嘉定) that the district was named in his honor, in the year 1217.

Jiading's earliest landmark is Wuxing Temple (吴兴寺, Wúxīng sì) in the town of Wai-gang (外冈镇, Wàigāngzhèn), built in 511 at the banks of the Salt-Iron River (盐铁河, Yántiě hé). Most of the magnificent temple buildings were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution,

⁶¹ 上海市嘉定区第五次人口普查公报, 嘉定区统计局 (Jiading District Statistical Bureau), 2001–04–30, <http://tjj.jiading.gov.cn/tjgb/rkwp.asp>



Fahua Pagoda (法华塔) in Jiading Town (嘉定镇)

although parts of them were reconstructed in 1994. Wuxing Temple is open for tourism since 1995, and is a sight of eternal burning of incense.

Fahua Tower (法华塔, Fǎhuátǎ), the Pagoda of the splendid Buddhist law, or Jīnshātǎ (金沙塔), the Goldsand Pagoda, in Jiading Town was erected between 1205–1207. Legend has it that candidates in the imperial civil examination system in Jiading always failed their exams, and the tower was thus built to cast the wisdom of Buddhism onto each and everyone. It is said that the number of successful candidates grew year by year after the construction. Consequently, the city has an imperial examination system museum (嘉定科举博物馆, Jiāding kējǔ bówùguǎn), located in the Confucian city god's temple (城隍庙, Chénghuáng-miào), built in the years 1208–1224.

Jiading Town is the heart of Jiading District. The city is naturally defined by the waters, the north–south going Horizontal Drop (横沥, Hénglì) and the east–west going Lianqi River (练祁河, Liànqí hé). The two rivers are branched into a ring forming the artificial Jiading City River (嘉定城河, Jiāding chéng hé), historically used as a defense wall against aggressors, and nowadays adjoined by an outer modern ringroad.

Jiading City has its ancient core where the two rivers cross, with Fahua Tower in the old town as the obvious hallmark of the entire city, forming the Pagoda Town (塔城, Tǎchéng). From this point, history throughout the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties are present in



every direction, especially along the two old avenues stretching along the two rivers, the so called Zhōuqiáo-lǎojiē (州桥老街) or County bridge old town.

Most of the shopping and entertainment business can be found in this core of the city, which is usually packed with people dining, shopping, and having fun. Residential areas are located mainly outside the core, and also outside the City River, mixed with industrial zones.

Modern Jiading is dominated by automotive industry, with Volkswagen's transmission factory as the main employer in the industrial zone in the southern part of Jiading Town. Volkswagen also runs an industrial school in the western parts of the city, next to Shanghai Jiaotong University's medical campus. Shanghai University also has a campus in the town.

The mix of ancient and modern, the closeness and yet the distance to metropolitan Shanghai, and the relatively small scale, make this city genuinely Chinese, yet very modern. Tourists are few, and with the exception of a few students and teachers at the universities, there are virtually no foreigners in Jiading Town.

Although small businesses are thriving throughout the city, many people from Jiading Town work in metropolitan Shanghai, every day driving the twenty kilometers to the city core on the Hu-Jia Expressway (沪嘉高速公路, Hù-Jiā gāosù gōnglù), the first expressway in Shanghai. The subway system is being extended to Jiading to remedy the growing traffic problems.



Mapping the sex trade

Open prostitution in Jiading and other areas of Shanghai, except for tourist heavy districts, is commonly found at various small-scale leisure centers (休闲中心, xiūxián zhōngxīn), and regular services (real or fictional) offered range from massage (按摩, ànmó), foot wash (足浴, zúyù) or pedicure (足疗, zúliáo), hair wash (洗头, xǐtóu), beauty care (美容, měiróng), and chiropractic (指压, zhǐyā). Such venues for sex trade are plentiful all over Shanghai, and the market is over-satiated.

Regular beauty and massage parlors are usually bigger and more luxurious than the disguised brothels, and are often staffed with properly uniformed personnel. Even though selling of sex may occur at such and similar institutions (such as gyms and spas) and even if they may be located close to brothels, it is not their regular line of business. Similarly, a shabby-looking beauty parlor may not necessarily be involved in prostitution, as massage, beauty treatment, and washing activities are vastly popular and part of normal Chinese culture.

Brothels are often located in clusters in back alleys or less visible spots, usually far away from banks and other respectable institutions, forming miniaturized red-light districts, although brothels can also be spotted isolated, especially on the outskirts of the city. Such districts are often monitored by the zhì'ān (治安, public security), although they seem to be

deterring more than interfering. That they really are monitoring the sex trade is obvious from their choice of position.

Locales for prostitution are typically staffed with three to ten fàlángmèi (发廊妹, hair salon sisters), and are run either as independent collectives or, most often, by one or several procurers (淫媒, yínméi, prostitution mediators), usually a lǎobǎnniáng (老板娘, proprietress). The laobanniang is oftentimes easy to spot, being the classiest of the girls and not for sale, and she is usually Shanghainese. Presence of a pítiao (皮条, pimp) in a shop seems to have a discouraging effect on customers, which is the reason a laobanniang is in charge.

An entire cluster of brothels can be run as a cooperative unit, maybe a result of natural chaining. Brothels usually have easily recognizable hallmarks, such as mild disguise, night hours, suggestively dressed girls, soft red lighting, and an interior with isolated small booths or rooms, the place for sexual activities. It is common that prostitutes in these brothels call out for potential customers passing by.

Karaoke halls may also host prostitutes, so called bar girls or KTV misses (KTV小姐, KTV xiǎojie), but they have to be ordered from the waiters. Regular bars are scarce in Jiading, but are common in bar districts such as Màomíng lù (茂名路) in metropolitan Shanghai. Bar girls and KTV misses are commonly known as sānpéi xiǎojie (三陪小姐, misses of the three accompaniments, namely singing, dancing, and chatting), sāntīng (三厅, three halls, namely karaoke halls, dance halls, and restaurants), or péinǚ (陪女, escort girls). This tier of prostitution involves social relations, and is hard to police.

Hotels also harbor prostitutes, or dingdong ladies (叮咚小姐, dīngdōng xiǎojie), so called because they may offer their services to hotel customers and others by ringing the doorbell when visiting.

Street prostitution performed by jiēnǚ (街女, street girls) exists, but is not common in Jiading. When seen, a prostitute is usually accompanied by her lǎobǎo (老鸨, female pimp), looking for clients. The police will usually not tolerate street hookers, so they operate discretely. The lowest tier of “public wives” (公妻, gōngqī) is largely invisible to the public.

Other forms of closed prostitution consist of private prostitution through the internet, where services are offered in QQ chats, and as concubinage to rich men.

In order to map out the open prostitution in Jiading Town, the streets of the city have been walked over and over again, mostly in the evenings. Well over one hundred and twenty brothels have been found, unevenly spread throughout the city. For practical reasons, the mapping has been limited essentially to the parts within and just outside the ringroad surrounding the city core, covering a territory of approximately nine square kilometers. There are more outlets for prostitution on the outskirts of the city. For practical and budgetary reasons, only open and visible prostitution in the falangmei tier has been mapped. One hundred and sixteen brothels have been marked on the map on pages 26–27.

The pattern seen is that clusters of prostitution are predominantly located in the old town east–west center stretch and in the southern and northern parts of the city. The hori-



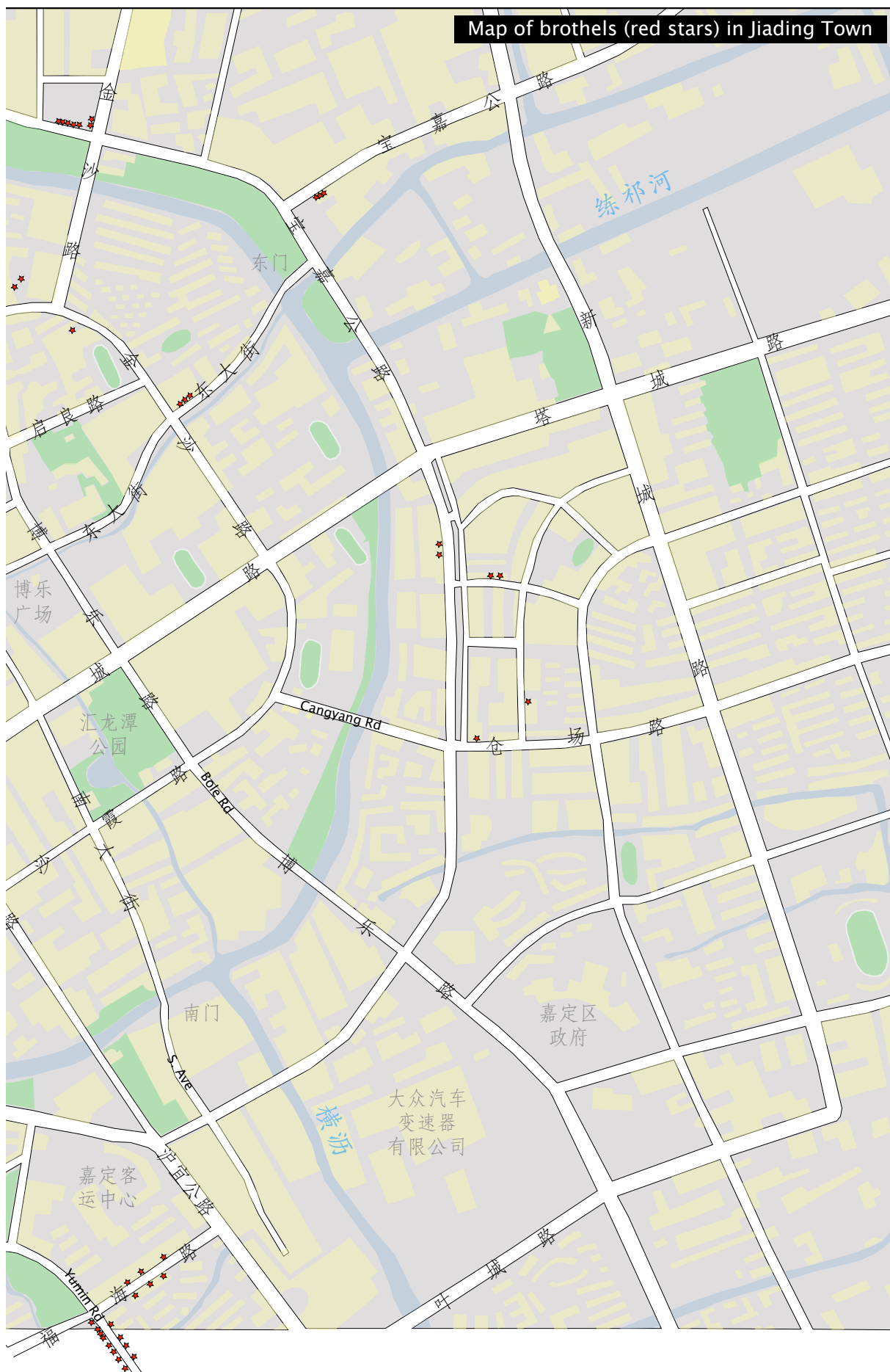
Brothel on Chengzhong Avenue (城中街)

zontal east-west stretch along the Qilian River is particularly populated with brothels, especially on the ancient People's Avenue (人民街, Rénmín jiē) with extensions, and also along the parallel Clear River Road (清河路, Qīnghé lù). The northern part of the City Ringroad (环城路, Huánchéng lù), and the area around the southern Fuhai Road (福海路, Fúhǎi lù) and Yumin Road (裕民路, Yùmín lù), are also hosting clusters of brothels. Other venues for prostitution are scattered here and there.

Local democracy as executed through gated communities has a detrimental effect on prostitution; the vicinities of most such gated communities are free from brothels. The residential areas along Qilian River are either very old and poor shacks (as on People's Avenue) or adjacent to business streets, where anyone is free to do their business. The more complicated zoning in the central parts, with ungated *lòngtáng* (弄堂, alleys), also invites red-light businesses. Industrial zones, where brothels are squeezed in between small tool companies, are other popular nests for prostitution. The immediate neighborhoods around universities (but not schools) are usually free from brothels.

An interesting observation is that one brothel (on Gāochāng lù, 高昌路) is found adjacent to the police station and close to the the city government hall. Another tidbit is that ordinary citizens bring their children and walk through the red-light districts at the Fahua Pagoda without a second thought about the business going on.





Studying a cluster of brothels, each shimmering with soft pink light, and each populated with lightly dressed girls eagerly yearning for customers, makes for a surreal experience, with each of these outlets looking as an entrance to Wonderland. Closely watching pimps as they keep post outside their shops, intermittently walking to and fro, is also an eye opener, but even more surprising is seeing these procurers sitting inside the brothels with their kids in the lap. Finally, observing the many potential clients as they walk the districts, some with ease and experience, others with careful movements and an air of shame attached to their expressions, is next to comical. It is not uncommon that groups of men check out the girls in the shops before going to the gambling house for a game of majiang.

Sex worker survey

Investigative field studies are necessary in order to better understand prostitution and the conditions under which prostitutes work in Jiading. Budgetary and practical constraints limit what is possible in this regard, and there are additional circumstances that make it extremely difficult to assess the situation in minute detail.

The first problem concerns choosing a target population. This can only be done using a nonrandom method, as there are no publicly available records of sex workers in Jiading. To this end, convenience sampling has been applied by studying and choosing what locations should be part of the investigation. Outlets for prostitution in Jiading are normally hidden in beauty and massage parlors, and such are easily found by inspection. Other venues are harder to track down, and may also require an entrance fee, as in karaoke palaces. Private prostitution by university students and others through internet channels presents an even tougher problem. Street prostitution exists, but is very rare.

The second problem concerns how to extract information from the prostitutes. The literature on this subject reveals that questionnaires and interviews have been the most utilized methods, which seems like a reasonable approach. Such studies have generally been conducted in custodies or reform camps, where the prostitutes may not have any alternative but participating in the investigation. Although such an approach is convenient and cheap, it is questionable how reliable the answers are under such circumstances.

Furthermore, self-report is rarely an accurate indicator of real conditions in any such study, why the informants have to be closely observed while giving away information. This is more true in China than elsewhere, because of the issue of “keeping face” no matter what.

This field study has utilized questionnaires, interviews, and inspection at outlets for open prostitution as the main methods of gaining information. A questionnaire (see Appendices) consisting of sixty-five questions has been presented to girls who have stated they sell sex. It is the girls who have been initiating contact with the surveyor, who has been taking on the role of a tourist, slowly walking around in the city, expressing no particular interest in or knowledge of the business. It is also the girls who have presented their type of business, before the surveyor has presented his.

A courtesy recompense of twenty yuan has initially been offered to anyone willing to fill out the questionnaire. As few have been willing to participate, this reward has eventually been raised to fifty yuan, which should be compared to the price of regular massage at thirty yuan or a hair cut at ten yuan.

The questionnaire takes twenty to thirty minutes filling out, is anonymous, and has clearly stated objectives in the prologue. It is designed to give a serious impression (including unauthorized use of a university logotype), reflecting the seriousness of the investigation. It states clearly that anonymity is guaranteed, and that the form will be destroyed as soon as the data is gathered and processed, in order to make the respondents feel more comfortable with being scrutinized—public availability of the data thus had to be sacrificed.

Nevertheless, most girls confronting the questionnaire decline to fill it out, the main reason being it is regarded as offensive to their persona. Even though these girls perform sexual services of virtually any kind to anyone willing to pay, they often flatly refuse to regard themselves as sex workers. It does not matter to them if no one will ever find out, and it is a matter of self-respect.

To this investigator, this attitude was known already at the outset of this study. Although the girls say they would not participate even for five hundred yuan, it is fairly evident it is merely a matter of just compensation, namely roughly corresponding to the price of two hundred yuan for sex, plus *xiǎofèi* (小费, tip), and this is the final strategy that has been put to use in a few cases, in order to obtain useful data.

Objections can be raised to the design of the questionnaire. One is that it is too massive and too broad in scope, but this can be justified with the recompense for the effort; these prostitutes spend most of their working shifts in passivity, as the demand for sex as well as beauty treatment and massage is much less than the supply. Thus, the extra income would normally be welcomed.

Another objection is that prostitutes, who often only have elementary education, do not understand the purpose of research and such a questionnaire; they regard it with deep suspicion. Sometimes, the prostitutes may have no education at all, why the questions have to be read aloud to them.

One prohibitive factor is that only part of the money goes to the prostitute herself for the services she performs (presumably also including filling out questionnaires), while the rest goes to the procurer. This share can vary considerably, but is normally restricted to the *xiaofei* (tip). If the *pitiao* or *laobanniang* is keeping all of the money, there is no incentive for the girls to participate in the study. Appealing to their sense of duty is useless.

Filling out the questionnaire can also be seen negatively by the pimp or *baomu*, and although procurers that have been present during the investigation have convincingly said they would not mind, there is no guarantee for this; the girls are dependent on these bosses for their income, and would not lightly jeopardize their position. There is also reason to believe that the procurers are far from being good employers, in most cases.

As a result, the strategy has been altered along the way. Initially, forms have been presented up front to the collective of workers, with limited success. Then the operation has been that of a client-to-prostitute conversation in order to extract as much information as possible, especially concerning fees and service types, number of workers and so on, before presenting the questionnaire. As this method has also had limited success, a third method of actually being a customer has been deployed, whereby the conductor of the survey has been allowed into the interior, where the negotiation can take place in relative privacy, save for regular surveillance. This method has been advantageous in many ways, partly because respondents have been more willing answering questions in private, and partly because the interiors have been revealed to the surveyor. However, this method is also very dangerous.

The questionnaire has been designed in two alternate forms, where the second version has certain options in fully reverse order. This is to compensate for the fact that survey respondents generally tend to choose early options before later ones. This applies to questions number eight (reasons for entering the profession), eleven (work places), thirty (professional self image), thirty-six (fears), sixty-three (legalization, tolerance, or prohibition of prostitution), and sixty-four (general self image), where such an early choice could have an effect on the net result.

SURVEY RESULTS

Although the number of respondents has been far too low—all in all a dozen fully completed questionnaires—to be useful for statistical purposes, the results of the questionnaire have generated a useful gross estimate in many regards. Bringing the questionnaire to the prostitutes has also been rewarding, in as much as it has given a sketchy comprehension of this local world of sex trade, access to the interior domains of brothels, and contact with the prostitutes and the procurers.

The survey results as well as scrutiny reveal that the girls selling sex are predominantly in their late teens or early twenties, rarely below the age of sixteen and rarely over twenty-seven. Most originally come from other regions than Shanghai, and usually only have elementary education or none at all. Some do have high school education. Most have been in the business less than a year, while others have worked for quite some time.

Most state that they have slipped into this line of work because they cannot find other jobs. At the same time, some claim that they indeed can find other kinds of work, mostly as saleswomen in stores, a type of work characterized by long work hours and low wages. A few have regular jobs, but prostitute themselves part-time to increase their income.

Some prostitutes found in beauty parlors regularly shift work places, or work freelance or on demand, but most are permanently bound by contract to a single establishment. Work is most busy in summer and on weekends, least busy in winter and on weekdays (this unsurprising result can be used to correlate truthfulness and honesty in filling out the form). Work time is from four to twelve hours a day, six or (mostly) seven days a week, usually from

noon to night. Most respondents think that the compensation for the performance is too poor.

When discussing sex with the girls—as a pretense customer—, they might initially ask for a price of two hundred yuan, which is the *táifèi* (台费, the stage fee, the procurer's part for offering a venue for the business). The rest, which is either negotiated upon or given as *xiaofei* (tip), is for the prostitute to keep. Most customers do not give tips, however, unless they want some special favor.

Service prices are very uniform throughout the market, although inexperienced customers, such as foreigners, might have to negotiate before arriving at the correct market price, just as with any other commodity. Since supply is much larger than demand, it is possible to negotiate on the price; one girl can go for as low as one hundred yuan, and two girls can be had for three hundred yuan.

Drug use seems to be very uncommon, based on the answers to the questionnaire. There are also no visible signs of drug use, and Shanghai is not known to be a big narcotics scene. Some girls report they have heard about colleagues taking drugs, but never seen anything.

According to the respondents, venereal diseases (性病, *xìngbìng*), including aids, are quite rare among prostitutes in Jiading, although existing. None of the respondents admit to ever having a venereal disease, although it is important to keep in mind that self-report is not a reliable method for such sensitive questions. Condoms are said to be used by virtually all clients, and some prostitutes charge more for unprotected sex, should the customer ask for it. Trafficking is completely unknown to all respondents. None of the respondents have children of their own, and none have become pregnant at work.

Wages range from 800 to 2,000 yuan, depending on work hours. At pure brothels, which do not really perform massage or beauty treatments—and these are in majority—the typical number of customers a prostitute has is around 15–20 every month, or roughly less than one client a day.

Customers are frequently ordinary people, neither rich nor poor. Very few are labeled perverts, and the rest span from pitiful to really good people. Customers sometimes become regular clients. Customers are not known to be violent. Most customers are in their twenties to forties.

Most prostitutes do not have a boyfriend or a husband. Those who do state they would not tell their spouse about their work, although most do not have boyfriends because it is impossible keeping work a secret. Prostitutes who have boyfriends say that work influences their sex lives, mostly by making them tired, although this is a remarkable statement if the prostitutes have less than one customer a day. All respondents have kept their work a secret to their parents.

Some prostitutes are largely unaffected by the work they are performing, and state that they are indifferent to it. The exception is that almost all are afraid of being looked down on

by others. Other prostitutes claim they suffer doing their work, regarding it as a lowly and disgusting trade.

Most respondents feel that prostitution should be struck down altogether, while others have no opinion in the matter. None have opted for legalization of prostitution, although this seems to be a less well-thought statement.

The prostitutes can influence their work to a varying degree, for instance by refusing treating a customer. Some have no influence at all, however.

Most respondents trust the police, and most also say they seldom interfere in the business. All of the respondents trust the medical authorities, although these do not provide any free services or information to the prostitutes. Most prostitutes regularly check their health at least once a month.

The self image of the respondents vary considerably. Some report their self worth is very low, and some also have low self confidence. Others claim they are not particularly unhappy or miserable, although none of the respondents would say they are completely happy or very good people.

Case studies

CASE STUDY I: ZHEJIANG GIRL

A typical instance of a falangmei prostitute in Jiading is this girl, about seventeen years old (born in 1989), raised in Zhejiang, a province south of Shanghai. She has no education at all, and is completely illiterate, although her level of Mandarin is quite good (Mandarin is not spoken natively in Zhejiang). Her family is very poor, and she has spent most of her life helping her mother working with vegetables. She began dating boys at the age of fourteen.

As her family tried to sell her off to an interested male party—a “feudal” Chinese usance still in common practice—, she ran away to Shanghai. With no education, no documented skills, and no connections in her new hometown, she was unable to find a regular job. She eventually turned to a massage parlor at Huancheng lu (City Ringroad) at the northern city gate, where she has been working for but a month at the time of this interview.

She states that she has only had one customer wanting intercourse during her time at the premises, and that most come for a thirty yuan *chábèi* (搽背, massage, or “back rub”, also used as a euphemism for sex), sometimes including masturbation; an obvious lie, con-



sidering her skilled behavior. The clients are not too many, as the establishment is located off-center. The shop is operated by three regular girls and a māmi (妈咪, proprietress). They keep open from noon or afternoon to around two at night.

Her base salary is 800 yuan. The massage parlor provides her with free housing, clothing, and food, and also pays for her cell phone and subscription. Whatever is given to her as xiaofei (gratuity) is hers to keep, which she states is about 400 yuan extra each month. All in all, her income from the establishment totals around 3,000 yuan a month.

She appears to be a normal girl in all respects, with no signs of drug use, psychological disorder, or other anomalies. She is pleasant and warm, and despite her stated inexperience in the business, she is aggressively trying to sell her services to the surveyor during the conversation. She does not seem to be a novice, and her self-confidence is strong.

She says she plans to work at the shop until August. She does not have a boyfriend, and her family and relatives are unaware of her whereabouts and state of affairs. Her greatest fear is being looked down upon by others, and she says people already do. She also fears venereal diseases and drugs, but to a lesser extent. She maintains she has never used drugs or caught a sexually transmitted disease.

She defines herself as quite happy and healthy, and she is not too pessimistic about her future, despite her poor background. The income and benefits she receive are enough to sustain a normal and independent life, although without too many extravagances, such as the jadestone necklace she is wearing, which typically comes at a cost of a thousand yuan or more.

The service in her store is performed in the interior, in a compartment separated by no less than three locked doors. The room has a complete bed set at floor level and air conditioning, and is adjacent to a small kitchen and a toilet. Secretly prying into a small notebook on the bed as she goes to the bathroom reveals that she has made an extensive net of connections, and also that she cannot write characters properly. Her cell phone is constantly active throughout the conversation.

Although the locked doors are to keep the police at bay (just in case), she says she has not seen the authorities bugging the business during her short time there, and that it supposedly is quite rare that they do.

She says she is ready to give whatever service the clients ask for, but anything beyond intercourse is available only for an additional fee. Regular intercourse is 200 yuan, but should include xiaofei (tip). Adding oral or anal sex is another 150 yuan, although she says she has never performed such acts (China has a chaste cultural heritage where such sexual behavior is still far from the norm, although existing).

Activities with customers may be monitored, especially at larger pimp controlled establishments (where the pimps can often be seen wearing head phones), in order to make sure the girls are not cheating the proprietor. There are no visible signs of such surveillance here, although a microphone can easily be hidden anywhere.

The girls outside start banging on the door after an hour, indicating the time is up. They seem unaware about what has been going on in the interior.

CASE STUDY II: GUIZHOU GIRL

In order to cross examine the claims from the first case study, a second girl from the same establishment is “hired” by the surveyor. This time, the girl is brought home for maximum level of privacy. The suspicion that the prostitutes are being monitored while meeting with clients is confirmed by this girl as we walk along the streets in the night.

When following customers home, the prostitutes are supposed to carry their mobile phones. This may seem like a safety measure, but is also a control mechanism for monitoring where the prostitute and the client are going and what they are doing. As she is not familiar with the neighborhood, she does not reveal the name of the community, and the pimp control is temporarily cut off, save for a few annoying phone calls.

She confirms most of what was told by the girl in the first case study, although she claims that the other girl has actually worked there for three years, since the age of fourteen. This cannot be properly verified, but it would explain the extensive contact list and the aggressive marketing previously depicted.

This girl is about eighteen years old (born in 1988), originally from a poor family in Guizhou in southern China. She claims she has been in the business for only two weeks, and that she recently arrived in Jiading. This is credible information, based on her further story.

She is illiterate, although she has been attending *chūzhōng* (初中, middle junior school), and the questionnaire has to be read out to her. She has never had another job, and does not believe she can get one.

Contrary to the previous case study, this girl claims to be very unhappy and having low self-esteem. She also considers herself being a whore (妓女, *jì nǚ*) rather than a masseuse, and doing this kind of work makes her feel very bad about herself. Her poor self-confidence is clearly visible when chatting with her privately. She has no contact with her parents, and she does not have a boyfriend.

Housing, clothing and food is provided for by the establishment, and she claims that she has a monthly income of about 1,500 yuan, which is the standard masseuse salary according to job offerings posted publicly.



Work time is from noon or afternoon until about two at night, seven days a week, which makes for up to eighty hours of work each week, although mostly idling in the establishment. She never has a day off. Furthermore, she is watched at home around the clock, preventing her from doing business on her own with established customers. The brothel is owned by two people, a couple, where the laobanniang (proprietress) is usually in charge of daily operations. The girl says she is not afraid of her employers.

Her customers are about two hundred a month, or about six a day, although most come for a thirty yuan back rub. She verifies that whatever is given as xiaofei (tip) is hers to keep, although she claims customers never give such gratuity; it is not customary to give tips in China. It is, however, a blow to this business model if the girls are not being rewarded; there is certainly room for improvement within a regulatory framework.

Service prices are as previously indicated, although she claims she would add a hundred yuan for oral or anal sex; she also never had to perform any such service, which means the price is just a guess on her part.

Her greatest fear is catching a venereal disease. She claims that the house is providing for a medical checkup once every week, using a visiting doctor, and also that virtually all customers use condoms. She also fears being stigmatized by society, and claims she is looked down on by others. Getting pregnant is another fear of hers, although this has never happened to her.

She says she has never caught a sexually transmitted disease. She also claims she has never used drugs, although she has seen other people using drugs in bars and such places; a believable statement, since Jiading's drug scene is foremost cocaine and acid in bars, karaoke halls, and private homes.

Like most prostitutes, she has confidence in the police, and says they have never interfered in the business. And as with most prostitutes in the area, she firmly believes prostitution should be struck down resolutely, echoing the common sentiment that it is an unworthy occupation.

Although she says she is very healthy, her health is affected by her work. She is often very tired, her body aches, and she is a bit depressed. She contradicts the first case study, saying she is not allowed to refuse a customer, that she has no influence at work.

She says she is unhappy and that she has been unlucky, but also that she is in rather good control of her life.

CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

The three girls of the house (the fourth is the proprietress) each bring in about 8,000 yuan every month to the establishment, which in turn pours out slightly more than one third of the total income to the sex workers in salaries and benefits. Deduction for rent, electricity, gas, water, television and equipment is unlikely to go beyond 3,000 yuan, which leaves approximately 6,000 yuan to each of the proprietors every month, assuming there are no addi-

tional charges, such as paying off bribes to authorities and others. This business model is comparable to running a small shop, where the wages are lower and the work time is similar but with a day off every week.

Pure brothels, without massage service, bring in around 4,000 yuan per prostitute, half of which is kept by the house. With approximately seven prostitutes on average in such establishments, the total revenue is comparable to establishments with fewer employees and combined massage and sex services.

If a prostitute is apprehended by the police, she will normally be issued a ticket of 5,000 yuan. It is unclear if this is covered by the establishment, as to avoid being charged for pimping. Such protection may or may not be offered as part of the deal.

The massage parlor whorehouse can be seen as an establishment of social relief. Girls with poor background, mediocre skills, and inadequate education may sustain an independent living through these institutions, with standard salaries and benefits in contractual work. Without these venues, the prostitutes would have no place to stay, and not even the right to get a place of their own, as they lack residence status without a job. Their alternative would be whoring on the street, committing crimes, or work in the black market. There is no lack of poor migrants sleeping under the bare sky in Jiading. Whoring is a ticket to Shanghai residency for poor country girls, and this is known throughout the country. Some pimps even go “shopping” in the countryside for fresh talents.

As disgusting as their work may be at times, their role as masseuses and prostitutes gives them a reasonably secure existence in a society in massive transformation. The unemployment rate in Shanghai for this age span is soaring. Most locals get by with the help of their spouses, families and friends, but migrants from other cities usually do not have anything or anyone to rely on. Therefore, they turn to harlotry.

It is unclear what happens if they contract a disease. It is quite possible they may be eliminated from work if they do, since knowingly whoring or whore-mongering with venereal disease is a serious crime in China. Prostitution in itself is a misdemeanor and is not covered by criminal law.

Insecure contracts and poor working conditions are not limited to the sex industry, but are the norm throughout the Chinese business sector. It is not uncommon for employers to rip off their employees before disappearing from the scene. The sex industry is much more reliable in this regard, since the establishments have physical locations and the proprietors cannot go in hiding.

Selection of the participants in these case studies was based on their inexperience. Although these girls are not as informed as older colleagues, they have enough knowledge to leak for this investigation, and they are also less prone to lying. The small scale of the shop, the isolated location, and the absence of a male pimp, also contributed to the choice being less risky. The girls agreed to a compensation of 400 yuan each for the publication of their photographs in this report.

4. Impacts of prostitution

Popular attitudes

Given the sheer volume of prostitution in Jiading Town, it is of interest to know a little bit about the general attitude toward this phenomenon. Jiading District Statistical Bureau (嘉定区统计局, Jiādingqū tǒngjìjú) conducts yearly polls to evaluate what the citizens regard as important in the development of society.

In the “2005 Jiading District survey report of central issues in society”, the following issues on public order were regarded as important, with relative seriousness expressed as percentages:⁶²

- i) Controlling theft, 41.7%
- ii) Crimes committed by outsiders, 25.3%
- iii) Road robberies, 8%
- iv) Drug abuse and narcotics trafficking, 7%
- v) Gambling, 6.2%
- vi) Youth crime, 5.8%
- vii) Gangster crime, 4.2%
- viii) Pornography, prostitution and whore-mongering, 1.8%

In essence, prostitution is not seen as a major problem by the Jiading population. Indeed, wasting money on a game of majiang is considered a far worse issue.

Social factors

Prostitution in Jiading can be seen as a socially necessary phenomenon. Because of the economic reforms, people migrate from the countryside to the cities, hoping to find seasonal or permanent employment. The migrants are used for cheap labor by companies and authorities to perform construction work, road work, transportation and so on. Most migrants in such contract work are men, and they usually leave their wife and children back home.

Obviously, many of the migrants do not endure the loneliness during the season of hardship, but turn to prostitutes to ease the pain. On the other hand, hiring a whore is very expensive for a migrant worker, who may have an income of only five yuan per hour; renting a prostitute is then equivalent to forty hours of work. In practice, however, migrants often turn to the bottom xiagongpeng tier of prostitutes, which could be had for much less than a hair salon girl. China has two hundred million such migrant workers in cities and towns.

⁶² 2005年嘉定区社会热点问题调查报告, 嘉定区统计局 (Jiading District Statistical Bureau), <http://tjj.jiading.gov.cn/tjfx/tjfx200605.asp>

Prostitutes in the three lowest tiers, the *fanglangmei*, the street whores, and the down-the-shack whores, are usually also migrants, which means that the entire low-tier prostitution scene is a migrant playground, although most adulterers are native Shanghainese men.

Lower tier prostitution is also the most problematic, from a social perspective; it is in these strata that disease is most commonly found and spread. The hair salon sisters and the street walkers make no fortunes whoring, but may sustain a normal living that would otherwise not be possible. The women in the lowest tier of *xiagongpeng*, often old and unattractive, remain poor, and have no prospects of finding a better existence.

The upper tiers, in contrast, are all about improving a lifestyle and making money beyond normal wages. Concubines actively pursue marriage with their lovers, which is why this top tier is so hated among ordinary women. Bar girls and *dingdong* whores lead lives on top of the world, with rich social environments, luxuries, and ample incomes. They are often educated, and are certainly not victimized. Luxury prostitution is less of a serious social problem, but nevertheless a moral challenge for many.

Economic aspects

With over one hundred brothels in Jiading Town, there is approximately one brothel per one thousand inhabitants. If each brothel is populated with five girls on average, one of every two hundred citizens in Jiading Town work as a prostitute. That is one percent of the entire female population, including young and old, but many times higher in the relevant age span (around five percent). In reality, there are more than five girls per brothel, since some work part-time and on demand.

But this is just one of seven tiers; the total prostitution in Jiading Town, when accounting for bar girls, down-the-shack whores, *dingdong* ladies, and concubines, the ratio far exceeds one percent. Assuming that two percent of the females work as prostitutes, and assuming Jiading Town is approximately representative for all of China, the entire country may have ten million or more prostitutes at any given time, in a conservative estimate.

If every prostitute brings in two hundred yuan each day on average—a conservative assumption—the daily turn-around is two billion yuan, or seven hundred billion yuan a year. This is of the same scale as the total Shanghai GDP in 2004, or five percent of entire China's GDP the same year, still in a conservative hypothesis.⁶³

Although the money is largely untaxed, most of it goes back into the economy through consumption. For this reason, and for the social benefits it provides for the many unemployed girls, the authorities have strong incentives to leave the prostitution be.

⁶³ An official 1997 estimate is four million prostitutes in China. Others estimate the total number of sex workers to twenty million, with an annual **income** of 25,000 yuan, corresponding to a total sum of five hundred billion yuan. According to the economist 杨帆 (Yáng Fān), fifty percent of this money is going back into the economy through consumption. 死水微澜：中国“性产业”透视, 钟伟, (Zhōng Wěi), Sina, 2004-08-24, <http://finance.sina.com.cn/financecomment/20040824/1709972411.shtml>

Sexually transmitted diseases

According to the Shanghai municipal health bureau, the city has around 1,500 cases of HIV infected patients as of 2005, an infection rate of seventy-five per one million inhabitants. Eighty percent of the carriers are men, and sixty-four percent have been infected through sexual intercourse.⁶⁴ The initial wave of aids in China was caused by unclean needles during intravenous drug use, and unsafe handling of blood at hospitals. Sexual intercourse is now the main vehicle, which means that prostitution is a potential high-risk mediator.

The city of Shanghai has a number of organizations carrying out free tests and consultation, and the city has also launched a number of campaigns to enlighten the population. Informative posters about aids and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases can be seen on billboards in universities, supermarkets, and other public places, and there are also regular reminders and propaganda on aids within the neighborhoods. According to the authorities, intravenous drug users are at greatest risk of contracting the disease.

Although aids poses a serious threat to any nation, there is an increasing awareness about the problem in China, not the least among prostitutes. According to the survey conducted in Jiading Town, most customers do use condoms, and the prostitutes themselves always carry condoms around. The prostitutes seem to have received peer education in the business, and they are well-informed about hygiene and sexually transmitted diseases.

This increased awareness is in stark contrast to the situation only a decade and a half ago. A 1990 Shanghai investigation of 122 detained whore-mongers revealed that only five of the men, or 4.1%, used condoms on a regular basis, while 87.7% never used protection at all. Furthermore, only twenty of the men, or 16.4%, had ever received any form of sex education. 26.2% of the detained men had been infected with a venereal disease, although just above one third of the infected men sought treatment. The investigation also revealed that 70% of the detained men were Shanghaiese, and only 25% of the men had an education corresponding to high school or higher.⁶⁵

Although there are signs of drastic improvement, it should be noted that the lower tier prostitutes are more prone to catching gynecological and venereal diseases than the upper, simply because they cannot afford buying prophylactic medicine and visiting hospitals for regular rinsing to the same extent as the profitable prostitutes. The lower tiers also have many more clients, also of a worse kind than those who seek the upper tier prostitutes.

Cynically speaking, venereal and gynecological diseases, other than aids, are a lesser problem in this context, and they also contribute to the economy by medicine sales and hospital visits; the jobs prostitution is creating are not just within the business itself.

⁶⁴ Shanghai Reports 356 HIV Cases in 2005, China Internet Information Center (Xinhua, 2005-12-02), <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/aids/150606.htm>

⁶⁵ 大扫黄 (Dàsǎohuáng / Big crack-down on filth), 何平 (Hé Píng, ed.), 上海市嫖客调查 (Shànghǎi shì piáokè diàochá / Shanghai City wencher survey), 团结出版社 (United Press), 1993, pp. 379-384

Crime

Abduction of men, women, and children for forced labor, forced marriage, or forced prostitution is a serious problem of trafficking in China. The Ministry of Public Security estimates that some ten thousand people are kidnapped and sold for various purposes each year.⁶⁶ In relation to the total number of prostitutes, this figure is still relatively small. Within the prostitution industry, violence, threats, fraud, and corruption are far more common problems.

An illustrating example is an electrician in Jiading who passed himself off as a police officer in order to blackmail a prostitute, agreeing to take a bribe of 5,000 yuan, corresponding to the normal fine for prostitution. As the woman did not have that much cash on hand, she phoned four friends to come by and assist. They soon suspected that he was not a genuine policeman, and followed him as he left the house. Eventually, his prank was seen through, and he ran away. The woman and the gang of four caught up with him, starting to kick and beat him mercilessly, and they also chopped off both his legs with an axe. He later died of blood loss and shock.⁶⁷

Pimps may also turn to violence against the authorities, if their economic interests are threatened. No less than a hundred pimps came to assistance during a brawl at a Shenzhen restaurant, when a restaurant guard tried to disperse pimps and prostitutes after customer complaints. The guard was beat up, and so was the policeman who was dispatched to the scene. Great damage was also done to the hotel and to cars parked outside before reinforcements could clear up the situation.⁶⁸

Exploitation of sex workers is common, as they are defenseless; they cannot go to the courts, as their occupation is neither legal nor recognized; if they do, they risk losing their job, and being punished by the judicial system as well. Pimps may take advantage of the prostitutes, effectively raping them under threat of dismissal from work. The illegal status of both prostitutes and procurers aggravates the risks of exploitation. However, it is a common misconception that all prostitution mediators are ruthless scumbags that assault, rape, and exploit the prostitutes, just as it is an urban myth that all prostitutes are victimized; in the end, pimps and prostitutes are dependent on each other.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ China [country report], HumanTrafficking.org, <http://www.humantrafficking.org/countries/china>

⁶⁷ 电工冒充警察敲诈卖淫女 被识破遭人围殴致死 (Electrician passing off as police blackmails prostitute; surrounded and beaten to death when exposed), QQ News, 2006-03-30, <http://news.qq.com/a/20060330/001992.htm>

⁶⁸ 深圳：百余“皮条客”公然聚众围攻民警 (Shenzhen: More than a hundred pimps gather openly and attack police), People's Daily, 2003-12-02, <http://unn.people.com.cn/GB/14748/2222661.html>

⁶⁹ 妓权主义综述 (Summary of "whorism"), 中国“性”研究通讯 (China Sexuality Research Letter), 中国人民大学性社会学研究所 (Renmin University Institute of gender and sexuality), 2005-08-20, <http://www.sexstudy.org/article.php?id=2076>

Legalization efforts

The official Chinese abolitionist stance on prostitution is a heritage of the ruling Party's socialist foundation. Legalization (合法化, *héfǎhuà*) or decriminalization (非罪化, *fēizùihuà*) is not on the Party agenda, and the abolitionist position (严禁卖淫嫖娼, *yánjìn màiyín-piáochāng*, strictly prohibit prostitution) is largely compatible with the United Nations' "Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women" (CEDAW), which in article 6 states that parties "shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women".⁷⁰

CEDAW, which is a fierce ideological opponent to all forms of prostitution, has, however, recommended decriminalization in China and a number of other countries where prostitution is rampant, the reason being that decriminalization would benefit prostitutes' health, curb the spread of HIV and other venereal diseases, and also bring trafficking to a halt.⁷¹

Decriminalization is the act of removing criminal penalties, often while keeping or instituting administrative regulations, such as licensing and mandatory medical testing of prostitutes. Legalization is a stronger measure still, giving full legal rights to prostitutes, at least in theory. In reality, state sanctioned prostitution is more limiting to prostitutes than decriminalization, and also makes the state the ultimate pimp, as it will exercise strict controls of and collect taxes from the business. Financial institutions such as banks may also not be willing to release capital to brothel owners, no matter what their legal status.

Most feminist branches are against legalization, as it would legitimize the commoditization of the female body and the male exploitation of it. On the other hand, the same organizations are usually against criminalization as well, since it would restrict women's right to dispose of their own body as they see fit. An extreme solution to this dilemma is seen in the Swedish prostitution law, which prohibits buying sex while tolerating selling it. The model has not been considered a realistic alternative by other governments. Decriminalization is mostly favored by liberal feminists, and also by most prostitutes.

Proposals of legalization or decriminalization in China are rare, but existing, especially among sexologists. Chí Sùshēng (迟夙生), a Heilongjiang delegate of the People's Congress, recommended legalization before the national congress in March 2006, with the written support of thirty other representatives.⁷² Specifically, he recommended lifting article 358 of the criminal code, allowing organizing of prostitutes, that is, decriminalizing third party organizers in the sex trade. The other articles would be modified accordingly, so that brothels

⁷⁰ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, United Nations, 1979, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

⁷¹ CEDAW: Women's Human Rights Treaty, National Council of Women's Organizations, <http://www.womensorganizations.org/pages.cfm?ID=57>

⁷² 全国人大代表迟夙生建议“卖淫嫖娼合法化” (Chi Susheng proposes: "Legalize prostitution"), 南方都市报 (Southern Daily), 2006-03-24, <http://www.law120.cn/ReadNews.asp?NewsID=1096>

without a permit or a health certificate would still be illegal. The issuing of permits is the legalization part of the proposal, effectively sanctioning prostitution as a legal business. The proposition is meant to protect the health of prostitutes, and prevent the spreading of disease, in particular aids.

The delegates who jointly signed the proposal were doing so hesitantly, as it would be an assault on “traditional Chinese moral ethics”, which is the chief obstacle in the Chinese prostitution debate (although traditionally, prostitution has always been legal in China). Needless to say, Chi Susheng was mocked and ridiculed in media for the initiative.

A chronicler in the People’s Daily questioned if prostitutes would really come out and label themselves whores, and also feared that many would go underground, especially those that were denied a license or had a license revoked.⁷³ He also doubted that Western legalization efforts had been successful in containing the spread of venereal disease, obviously ignorant of the factual evidence to the contrary. As a final blow, he recommended legalizing the trade of “selling an office” instead, stating that corruption and prostitution are vices of the same caliber.

Such sentiments are common, not only in the media, but also among the general public. There is not much popular support for making prostitution legal, an effect of the fierce Party propaganda for many decades. There are, however, some influential voices outside the traditional state-controlled media expressing dissent on the matter, especially in the blogosphere, which is revolutionizing the Chinese publishing tradition.⁷⁴

There is also support for a change in scientific circles. Lǐ Yínhé (李银河), a leading sociologist of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (中国社科院, Zhōngguó shèkēyuàn), has recommended decriminalization of prostitution for a long time, although he thinks it is still too early to take such a step in China, considering the political situation.⁷⁵ His main arguments are that prostitution exists regardless of what measures are taken against it, and that decriminalization will help reduce the corruption that is currently associated with prostitution, especially among state officials who carry a tier one mistress (包二奶, bāo èrnǎi).

⁷³ “卖淫合法化” VS “卖官合法化” (Legalizing prostitution vs. legalizing corruption), 人民日报 (People’s Daily), 2006-03-10, <http://opinion.people.com.cn/GB/1036/4185538.html>

⁷⁴ 我们必须让妓女合法化——回鲁国平《我们绝对不允许妓女合法化》 (We must let prostitutes be legalized—reply to Lu Guoping’s “We must absolutely not allow prostitutes to be legalized”), 流氓燕原创博客 (Liúmáng Yàn yuán chuàng bó kè / Indecent Yan’s original blog), 2006-03-16, <http://liumangyan.blogchina.com/4674373.html>

⁷⁵ 李银河：性贿赂等同于受贿罪 (Li Yinhe: Sexual bribery is as criminal as taking bribes), Xinhua, 2006-03-14, http://news3.xinhuanet.com/legal/2006-03/14/content_4302435.htm

5. Conclusive analysis

In the wake of the economic reforms, prostitution in China has not only resurfaced, but also expanded into a business of tremendous proportions, employing millions of people and representing a large share of the national gross domestic product. Prostitution is also deeply intertwined with other businesses.

Prostitution has become a means for young Chinese girls of peasant or other poverty-stricken origins to relocate to the cities, and to support themselves, leading relatively independent lives that would otherwise not be possible, had they stayed in their native places. For other girls, prostitution is a lucrative alternative to working in a low-wage profession rather than a lack of choice. For very large parts of the male population, prostitution serves as a means to reduce the negative effects of gender imbalance and rural migration, two phenomena that will take many decades to adjust.

Spreading of disease is intimately associated with prostitution, and prostitution has been the main vehicle of propagation of venereal diseases (other than aids) in China. Increased awareness through state and media information campaigns, as well as peer education, has reduced the transmission risks considerably, although prostitution remains a risk factor for the spreading of aids under the current ban on prostitution, especially among intravenous drug users. In regions where prostitution is decriminalized, as in parts of Australia, and also in most parts of the Western world, prostitutes who do not use intravenous drugs constitute a low-risk group with low incidence of HIV; this is not the case in Asia and Africa.⁷⁶ Enlightenment is thus a key factor for improvement.

Although formally illegal, prostitution in China is largely tolerated, both by the authorities and the general public. The primary parties in the sex trade are not under criminal law, but may nevertheless be punished under administrative regulations on public order. Third parties are at risk of criminal sanctions, although the authorities usually only interfere in politically motivated, periodical sweeps. Prostitution is in practical terms already decriminalized in China.

Ultimately, prostitution can only be reduced by removing the incentives for prostitution, that is, doing away with poverty by means of redistribution of wealth, implementing equity on the labor market, and providing realistic alternatives to prostitution. Prostitution cannot, however, be eliminated completely, since many prostitute themselves to make more money, and since there is a market demand for such services. Enforcing a prohibition of prostitution in China today would cast millions of girls into poverty and crime, increase the level of social unrest, and slow down the economy substantially, in particular because prostitution generates a substantial spin-off in other businesses, such as clothing, cosmetics,

⁷⁶ HIV/STD prevention in general practice, Elizabeth M. Proude, Ph.D. dissertation (University of Sydney), 2002, p. 46, <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/2123/838/2/adt-NU20021119.16072002whole.pdf>

entertainment, medicare, and transportation. Furthermore, the prostitution would go underground, making the problem worse, and substantially increase crime.

China cannot remove all incentives for prostitution at this time or in the immediate future, as the country is still in a developing phase, with a high and increasing degree of urbanization, continued gender imbalance, and with inevitable social and economic injustice. Therefore, prostitution will be a permanent problem in China for the foreseeable future.

China can, however, adopt a range of measures to further reduce the negative impact of prostitution in society, both within and outside a legal framework. The Chinese government of today is very pragmatic, and has recognized that AIDS is a very serious threat to China. There are, however, still remnants of rhetoric within the Party apparatus that are counterproductive to the development of the nation, such as references to tradition.

President Hú Jǐntāo (胡锦涛) has recently put forth the slogan “eight honors, eight disgraces” (八荣八耻, bā róng bā chǐ), of which the third set is “to uphold science as an honor, and stupidity and ignorance as a disgrace” (以崇尚科学为荣、以愚昧无知为耻, yǐ chóngshàng kēxué wéi róng, yǐ yúmèi-wúzhī wéi chǐ). This would be a good starting point in the debate on prostitution, since tradition has no place in scientific solutions.

Specifically, the Chinese government should not only recognize that prostitution is an inevitable consequence of the reform policies, but also actively work to minimize the consequences, and ease the conditions for those who are working in the industry. Three tools to achieve this objective are considered in the following.

Harm reduction

The state keeps the legislation as is, but does not enforce it, and also provides medical service and information to sex workers and other parties in the business. Keeping the spreading of disease to a minimum will save many lives, and will also be economically beneficial in the long run. With this approach, the government avoids facing a tarnished public image under a proposal of legalization, but nevertheless takes responsibility for the health problems associated with prostitution.

Harm reduction is already implemented in practice in China, mainly through non-governmental organizations providing basic services, but the scale is insufficient, and it is unofficial.

Decriminalization

The state removes relevant portions of the legislative statutes, and does not penalize prostitutes, clients, or third parties, unless the trade involves minors, drugs, or contagious diseases. Decriminalization should naturally include the harm reduction measures described above, and decriminalization is a harm reduction method in itself, generally speaking.

The advantages with decriminalization are that prostitutes are free to operate on their own, and that their bonds to the procurers may be dissolved. Prostitutes may also be less

reluctant to seek health care under decriminalization, and they may also report violence and abuse to the police and courts without risk of further harassment. The industry as a whole may operate under far better conditions, if there is no fear for government repression, and some of the corruption will likely cease to exist, especially corruption linked to the police. Under decriminalization, prostitution mainly becomes a private matter between consensual parties, and the money flow is private and untaxed; prostitution becomes an autonomous system.

The disadvantage is that the Party has to reverse its longstanding and ideological position on prostitution, and face criticism from the general public. The Party should be prepared to exercise such a leadership.

Legalization

As with decriminalization, but with full recognition, essentially trading one set of laws for another. The state may regulate, license, and tax the sex industry, and some of the money may be used to improve the conditions of the workers in the industry.

The advantage is that the state sanctions prostitution as a legal business, which is a relief and a recognition for many prostitutes. There is also an added influx of currency to the state.

The disadvantages are that the state may exercise too stringent control over the business, and that there will be more illegal and unlicensed brothels than legal ones; this has certainly been the case in the past, and it is a general experience from other parts of the world. As a result, corruption and crime rates may escalate with legalization.

Conclusion

The most viable option for China in the current situation is to decriminalize prostitution, and to implement harm reduction measures such as free or cheap medical service, free or cheap distribution of condoms, and directed information campaigns. There should be no licensing or registration of prostitutes, in order to avoid bureaucracy and corruption.

Status quo with harm reduction measures is also a workable solution, although prostitutes would still be subjected to pimp control under such a regimen. Although employees in China are generally powerless against their employers, this is even more true for prostitutes working in brothels with illegal status.

Legalization is bound to fail in China under current circumstances, because of the already high levels of corruption, and because most brothels are not fit for a licensing scheme; the illegal business will prevail, and the only advantages are that a new “healthy” tier will be created (the existing upper tiers already are healthy), and that the health levels among prostitutes may be improved in general. Legalization could be a workable option, provided the authorities have lax and realistic conditions on the trade. Legalization is mostly an option for already highly developed nations. The table below outlines the three options given here.

Effect/Method	Harm reduction	Decriminalization	Legalization
Stigmatization level	0 unchanged	+ decreased	+ decreased
Health level	+ increased	+ increased	+ increased
STD incidence	+ decreased	+ decreased	+ decreased
Corruption level	0 unchanged	+ decreased	– increased
Crime level	0 unchanged	+ decreased	– increased
Tax revenue	0 unchanged	0 unchanged	+ increased

In this paper, open tier prostitution in a small Chinese community has been mapped, portrayed, and analyzed in some detail. The analysis has been conducted in a context: who are these girls, where do they come from, where do they live, what are their hopes and fears, what do they wear, and what do they look like? What kind of places do they work at, how are they treated, and what are the general conditions of their daily lives? What are the characteristics of the place in which they subsist, the city, the people? What are the cultural traits, the historical forces, and the political mechanisms behind the prostitution as it exists in society of today? And finally, what can be done to improve the situation, given this context?

The results of this analysis have given a rough sketch of the situation, and it has been generalized and extended to encompass all of the country, on basis of earlier research, similar accounts, and fairly sound principles. The solutions proposed are simple in theory, but nevertheless require substantial political strength and elaborate administrative procedures to carry out in practice.

Further research

This paper and similar accounts could be expanded on, treating other tiers, cities, and viewpoints, and focusing on prostitutes and others without the usual drama that is all too common in the growing domestic literature on the subject. Such research could also focus on the connection to narcotics, especially intravenous drugs, which is a problem in southern China. Combined harm reduction methods could be of interest here.

Sex tourism is another topic of interest. China has been spared from the experiences of nations such as Thailand, and given the rapid advancement of society in China, there may never be more than a marginal sex tourism industry in the country. Nevertheless, the tourism that does exist or may exist in the future deserves attention from the scientific community.

Finally, although there is no immediate connection between pornography and prostitution, Chinese authorities usually maintain that there is such a link, and consequently pornography and prostitution are sometimes bundled in China. It would therefore be of interest to investigate the Chinese pornography scene, which really is underground, as pornography is seen as far more evil than prostitution.

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Appendices

Criminal law of the People's Republic of China (prostitution parts)

中华人民共和国刑法

(1979年7月1日第五届全国人民代表大会第二次会议通过
1999年3月14日第八届全国人民代表大会第五次会议修订)

第二编 分则

第四章 侵犯公民人身权利、民主权利罪

第二百四十条 拐卖妇女、儿童的，处五年以上十年以下有期徒刑，并处罚金；有下列情形之一的，处十年以上有期徒刑或者无期徒刑，并处罚金或者没收财产；情节特别严重的，处死刑，并处没收财产：

- (一) 拐卖妇女、儿童集团的首要分子；
- (二) 拐卖妇女、儿童三人以上的；
- (三) 奸淫被拐卖的妇女的；
- (四) 诱骗、强迫被拐卖的妇女卖淫或者将被拐卖的妇女卖给他人迫使其卖淫的；
- (五) 以出卖为目的，使用暴力、胁迫或者麻醉方法绑架妇女、儿童的；
- (六) 以出卖为目的，偷盗婴幼儿的；
- (七) 造成被拐卖的妇女、儿童或者其亲属重伤、死亡或者其他严重后果的；
- (八) 将妇女、儿童卖往境外的。

拐卖妇女、儿童是指以出卖为目的，有拐骗、绑架、收买、贩卖、接送、中转妇女、儿童的行为之一的。

第六章 妨害社会管理秩序罪

第八节 组织、强迫、引诱、容留、介绍卖淫罪

第三百五十八条 组织他人卖淫或者强迫他人卖淫的，处五年以上十年以下有期徒刑

刑，并处罚金；有下列情形之一的，处十年以上有期徒刑或者无期徒刑，并处罚金或者没收财产：

- (一) 组织他人卖淫，情节严重的；
- (二) 强迫不满十四周岁的幼女卖淫的；
- (三) 强迫多人卖淫或者多次强迫他人卖淫的；
- (四) 强奸后迫使卖淫的；
- (五) 造成被强迫卖淫的人重伤、死亡或者其他严重后果的。

有前款所列情形之一，情节特别严重的，处无期徒刑或者死刑，并处没收财产。协助组织他人卖淫的，处五年以下有期徒刑，并处罚金；情节严重的，处五年以上十年以下有期徒刑，并处罚金。

第三百五十九条 引诱、容留、介绍他人卖淫的，处五年以下有期徒刑、拘役或者管制，并处罚金；情节严重的，处五年以上有期徒刑，并处罚金。

引诱不满十四周岁的幼女卖淫的，处五年以上有期徒刑，并处罚金。

第三百六十条 明知自己患有梅毒、淋病等严重性病卖淫、嫖娼的，处五年以下有期徒刑、拘役或者管制，并处罚金。

嫖宿不满十四周岁的幼女的，处五年以上有期徒刑，并处罚金。

第三百六十一条 旅馆业、饮食服务业、文化娱乐业、出租汽车业等单位的人员，利用本单位的条件，组织、强迫、引诱、容留、介绍他人卖淫的，依照本法第三百五十八条、第三百五十九条的规定定罪处罚。

前款所列单位的主要负责人，犯前款罪的，从重处罚。

第三百六十二条 旅馆业、饮食服务业、文化娱乐业、出租汽车业等单位的人员，在公安机关查处卖淫、嫖娼活动时，为违法犯罪分子通风报信，情节严重的，依照本法第三百一十条的规定定罪处罚。

PRC Regulations on administrative penalties for public security (prostitution parts)

中华人民共和国治安管理处罚条例（修正）

（1986年9月5日第六届全国人民代表大会常务委员会第十七次会议通过 根据1994年5月12日第八届全国人民代表大会常务委员会第七次会议《关于修改〈中华人民共和国治安管理处罚条例〉的决定》修正）

第三章 违反治安管理行为和处罚

第三十条 严厉禁止卖淫、嫖宿暗娼以及介绍或者容留卖淫、嫖宿暗娼，违者处十五日以下拘留、警告、责令具结悔过或者依照规定实行劳动教养，可以并处五千元以下罚款；构成犯罪的，依法追究刑事责任。

嫖宿不满十四岁幼女的，依照刑法第一百三十九条的规定，以强奸罪论处。

Survey questionnaire

瑞典隆德市隆德大学东亚语言系

调查：上海市嘉定区性工作者的总情况



LUND
UNIVERSITY

瑞典隆德市隆德大学东亚语言系

调查问卷

调查：上海市嘉定区性工作者的总情况

调查负责人：倪阔乐 (Niklas Dougherty)

联系号码：137 0185 1170

您好！

下面的许多问题占瑞典隆德大学的一件研究调查问卷。该调查的宗旨就是研究上海市嘉定区性工作者的总情况。您的回答都会留存匿名和秘密。调查的结果都是统计。处理回答以后，该问卷都会被完全歼灭。

请您尽量真实地回答每个问题。请注意您诚意得回答非常重要。

多谢您的参与！

第一部分：个人资料

1. 我 19年生于.....省

2. 文明程度：没有教育 ☐，小学 ☐，初中 ☐，高中 ☐，大学 ☐

第二部分：工作条件

3. 我在这行业的经历：一年以下 ☐，一年 ☐，两年 ☐，三至五年 ☐，五年以上 ☐

4. 工作时间类型：专任 ☐，兼任 ☐，临时/零星 ☐

一。专任：每天工作.....小时，每个星期工作.....小时

二。兼任：每天工作.....小时，每个星期工作.....小时

兼任：有没有别的工作：有 ☐，没有 ☐

5. 工作时间：我经常工作的时间是：

一：白天：永不 ☐，有时 ☐，正常 ☐，经常 ☐，总是 ☐

二：晚上：永不 ☐，有时 ☐，正常 ☐，经常 ☐，总是 ☐

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三：夜里：永不□，有时□，正常□，经常□，总是□

四：变换：永不□，有时□，正常□，经常□，总是□

五：替身：永不□，有时□，正常□，经常□，总是□

6。收入：我每个月赚约.....元人民币

7。顾客：我每个月大概有.....客人

一：顾客最多的时间：

* 冬季□，春季□，夏季□，秋季□

* 劳动日□，周末□，别的：.....

二：顾客最少的时间：

* 冬季□，春季□，夏季□，秋季□

* 劳动日□，周末□，别的：.....

8。入行的原因：

一：收入比较高：是□，否□

是的话，您是否想要用钱与（多采用选择法）：

* 购买 □

* 学习 □

* 开店 □

* 买房子 □

* 储蓄 □

* 帮父母、亲戚 □

* 提供孩子前途 □

* 没决定 □

* 别的：.....

二：没有办法：是□，否□

是的话，选择一个合适的原因（多采用选择法）：

* 找不到工作： □

* 靠不了亲戚、朋友： □

* 有亏空： □

* 别的：.....

三：上瘾毒品：是□，否□

四：报仇：是□，否□

是的话，报仇谁/什么：.....

五：偶然地进入这个行业：是□，否□

六：觉得是个动人、有意思和不同的工作：是□，否□

七：是他人的建议：是□，否□

八：被逼迫：是□，否□

九：别的：.....

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9。我可以得到别的工作：是□，否□

是的话，什么样子的的工作（多采用选择法）：

- * 店里（如售货员）：□
- * 办公室：□
- * 服务（在饭馆等）：□
- * 打工：□
- * 农民工作：□

10。我以前有过别的工作：是□，否□

11。工作的地方：我的工作：

一：一直在同一个地方：是□，否□

二：在许多地方：是□，否□

是的话，在哪里（多采用选择法）：

- * 美容院：□
- * KTV：□
- * 在家里，个体生意：□
- * 个人访问顾客：□
- * 街头上：□
- * 别的：.....

是的话，我最喜欢工作在（多采用选择法）：

- * 美容院：□
- * KTV：□
- * 在家里，个体生意：□
- * 个人访问顾客：□
- * 街头上：□
- * 别的：.....

12。地方：我的顾客是：

一：本地人（上海或嘉定）： 永不□，有时□，经常□，总是□

二：劳工流移： 永不□，有时□，经常□，总是□

三：别的外地人： 永不□，有时□，经常□，总是□

四：外国人： 永不□，有时□，经常□，总是□

13。年龄：我的顾客：

15岁一下： 从来没有□， 很少□，有的□，很多□，大多数□

15至20岁： 从来没有□， 很少□，有的□，很多□，大多数□

20至30岁： 很少□，有的□，很多□，大多数□

30至50岁： 很少□，有的□，很多□，大多数□

50岁以上： 从来没有□， 很少□，有的□，很多□，大多数□

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1 4。婚姻：我的顾客是：

结婚：很少☐，有的☐，很多☐，大多数☐，不知道☐

未婚：很少☐，有的☐，很多☐，大多数☐，不知道☐

1 5。财富：我的顾客很：

穷：很少☐，有的☐，很多☐，大多数☐

富有：很少☐，有的☐，很多☐，大多数☐

不穷也不富有：很少☐，有的☐，很多☐，大多数☐

1 6。满意率：我的顾客欣赏我提供他们的服务：

永不☐，有时☐，正常☐，经常☐，总是☐

1 7。重返率：我的顾客回来：永不☐，有时☐，正常☐，经常☐，总是☐

1 8。我看，我的顾客是：

可怜的样子：很少☐，有的☐，很多☐，大多数☐

正常的人：很少☐，有的☐，很多☐，大多数☐

变态：很少☐，有的☐，很多☐，大多数☐

特别好的人：很少☐，有的☐，很多☐，大多数☐

1 9。我做我的工作做得：不好☐，比较好☐，好☐，蛮好☐，非常好☐

2 0。甜水：我喜欢我的工作：不喜欢☐，无所谓☐，喜欢☐，爱惜☐

第三部分：服务类型

2 1。我愿意提供这样的服务：

一：陪伴、陪酒、陪舞：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

二：按摩：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

三：美容：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

四：手淫：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

五：口交：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

六：性交：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

七：女同性恋性交：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

八：肛交：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

九：拍照（色情作品）：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

十：拍照（人体艺术）：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

十一：拍照（模特）：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

十二：录像：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

十三：虐待狂等：☐（价格：.....元每小时☐/每次☐）

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别的：

-：□（价格：.....元每小时□／每次□）
.....：□（价格：.....元每小时□／每次□）
.....：□（价格：.....元每小时□／每次□）
.....：□（价格：.....元每小时□／每次□）

2 2。服务的价格反映做服务的麻烦：不对□，一点点□，大概□，很相当□

2 3。服务的价格反映市场供求：不对□，一点点□，大概□，很相当□

2 4。顾客用不用避孕套于价格有没有关系：有□，没有□

2 5。我的顾客用避孕套：永不□，有时□，正常□，经常□，总是□

2 6。赚一百元，我得了.....元，老板娘（或老板）得了.....元（一般来说）

第四部分：关系

2 7。我父母知道我做性工作者：是□，否□
是的话：我父母还是支持我：是□，否□

2 8。我有没有老公或男朋友（或女朋友）：有□，没有□
有的话：

一：他（她）知道我做性工作者：是□，否□

二：我的工作影响我们的性生活：是□，否□

是的话，什么样子的影响（多采用选择法）：

我没有性欲：□

他（她）没有性欲：□

我累了：□

别的：.....

否的话：

我在工作时能不能得到蔫头蔫脑的状态：能□，不能□

我的对象完全了解：是□，否□

2 9。我有孩子：有□，没有□

第五部分：态度

30。我认自己为（多采用选择法）：

- * 妓女： ☐
- * 性工作者： ☐
- * 婊子： ☐
- * 花： ☐
- * 美术家： ☐
- * 美容师： ☐
- * 娱乐人员： ☐
- * 社会工作者： ☐
- * 自由职业： ☐
- * 别的：

31。我为我的工作感到羞耻：不☐，一点☐，很多☐

32。我为我的工作感到自豪：不☐，一点☐，很多☐

33。他人看不起我：很少☐，有时☐，经常☐

34。我的同事支持我：很少☐，有时☐，经常☐

35。我为我的顾客感到：憎恨☐，不喜欢☐，无所谓☐，喜欢☐，爱惜☐

36。工作时我害怕（多采用选择法）：

- * 暴力、虐待： ☐
- * 性病： ☐
- * 艾滋病： ☐
- * 他人看不起我： ☐
- * 被官方捕拿： ☐
- * 受怀孕： ☐
- * 被欺骗： ☐
- * 亲戚会知道： ☐

第六部分：问题

37。我有过性病：有过☐，没有过☐

有过的话，什么样子的性病（多采用选择法）：

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- * 疱疹: ☐
- * 淋病: ☐
- * 梅毒: ☐
- * 艾滋病: ☐
- * 别的:

3 8。暴力的顾客:

- 顾客们危险过我: 有☐ (.....次), 没有☐
- 顾客们骚扰过/打过我: 有☐ (.....次), 没有☐

3 9。官方措施:

- 我以前被捕拿: 有☐ (.....次), 没有☐
- 官方以前强迫我去恶从善: 有☐ (多久:), 没有☐
- 有的话, 有没有用: 没有☐, 一点☐, 很有☐
- 官方以前骚扰过我: 有☐ (.....次), 没有☐
- 有的话, 什么样的骚扰:
- 官方拒绝过帮我: 有☐ (.....次), 没有☐
- 有的话, 什么情况:

4 0。社会的态度: 我以前被拒绝服务 (在饭馆等): 有☐ (.....次), 没有☐

4 1。怀孕: 我在工作受怀孕: 有☐ (.....次), 没有☐

- 有的话, 有没有落胎: 有☐ (.....次), 没有☐

4 2。毒品:

- 一: 我现在用毒品: 是☐, 否☐
- 二: 我以前用过毒品: 是☐, 否☐
- 现在用或以前用过的话, 我用过 (多采用选择法):
 - * 镇静剂: ☐
 - * 大麻: ☐
 - * 可卡因: ☐
 - * 安非他命: ☐
 - * 海洛因: ☐
 - * 吗啡: ☐
 - * 别的类型:
- 用过的话, 我先用过毒品然后开始卖淫: 是☐, 否☐
- 是的话, 我为能买毒品而卖淫: 是☐, 否☐
- 用过的话, 我先卖淫然后开始用毒品: 是☐, 否☐
- 是的话, 我用毒品因受得了卖淫: 是☐, 否☐
- 用过的话, 我用毒品与我卖淫根本没有关系: 是☐, 否☐

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用过的话，我用或用过毒品的数量：不多□，很多□，太多□

三：我从来没用过毒品：是□，否□

4 3。健康：我的工作这样影响我的健康（多采用选择法）：

* 让我很累：□

* 让我忧郁：□

* 让我身体痛：□

* 让我苦恼：□

* 经常给我妇女病：□

* 我考虑过自杀：□

* 没有特别的影响：□

* 别的：.....

第七部分：工作条件的势力

4 4。我能不能拒绝给顾客服务：能□，不能□

能的话，我大概.....次拒绝过顾客

4 5。我能不能选择工作的地方：能□，不能□

4 6。我能不能建议工作常务的转变：能□，不能□

第八部分：官方

4 7。我信任警察：是□，否□

4 8。警察检查卖淫的事情：很少□，有时□，经常□

4 9。警察打扰卖淫的事情：很少□，有时□，经常□

5 0。我信任医务人员：是□，否□

5 1。我检查健康至少：每个月□，每个半年□，每年□，每年以上□

5 2。医务人员检查卖淫的事情：很少□，有时□，经常□

5 3。医疗官方为性工作者提供免费检查：是，有的方面□，是，完全□，否□

是，有的方面的话，什么方面：.....

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5 4。医疗官方为性工作者提供免费医疗：是，有的方面☐，是，完全☐，否☐
是，有的方面的话，什么方面：.....

5 5。医疗官方为性工作者提供免费的健康消息：是☐，否☐

5 6。官方控制好卖淫行业的情况：不☐，一点☐，大概☐，很好☐，完全☐

第九部分：卖淫行业普遍的问题

5 7。我看，嘉定大概有.....位性工作者

5 8。我看，嘉定镇大概有.....所娼寮（青楼、妓院等）

5 9。我看，嘉定的性工作者中性病：很一般☐，很希罕☐

6 0。我看，嘉定的性工作者中艾滋病：很一般☐，很希罕☐，没听说过☐

6 1。我看，在嘉定有姑娘被强迫充当妓女：很一般☐，很希罕☐，没听说过☐

6 2。可以选择的话我最好做这行业在：嘉定☐，上海☐
为什么：.....

6 3。我看，中国政府应该：
严重打破、消除卖淫行业：☐
如现在，依然禁止及同时姑息卖淫行业：☐
合法化卖淫行业：☐
为什么：.....

第十部分：自知之明

6 4。我认为自己（多采用选择法）：
一点也不对 完全是对

我很健康：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我很不快乐：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我是个失败者：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我的未来很幸福：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我真是倒霉：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我是个好人：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我控制好我的生活：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

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我是个受害者：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我很幸福：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我是个丧家犬：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我的运气真不错：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我很厉害：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
我对社会很有用：	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>

6 5。假如您觉得这件研究调查的负责人还应该知道些什么关于嘉定的卖淫行业和性工作者，请自由自在地描写您的看法、问题、意见等：

谢谢您的合作！