

2009

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Recommended Citation

Barbezat, Sean Michael (2009) "Trafficking of Women and the Harmonious Society: The Chinese National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Women and Children Within the Context of Chinese Patriarchy and Reform," *Human Rights & Human Welfare*: Vol. 9: Iss. 1, Article 36.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/hrhw/vol9/iss1/36>



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Trafficking of Women and the Harmonious Society: The Chinese National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Women and Children Within the Context of Chinese Patriarchy and Reform

Abstract

The Chinese National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Women and Children, an evolution of prior regional cooperative work in coordination with the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Trafficking (UNIAP), is a considerable accomplishment. It represents a comprehensive, practical foundation for counter-trafficking work, and addresses the most serious concerns raised by Chinese and international anti-trafficking research over the last dozen years. However, a statement of this magnitude produced by a state not known for its sweeping human rights instruments leads to suspicion.

Keywords

Human rights, China, Gender, Human trafficking, Prostitution, Gender norms, Patriarchy

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Trafficking of Women and the Harmonious Society: The Chinese National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Women and Children within the Context of Chinese Patriarchy and Reform

By Sean Michael Barbezat

Introduction

The Chinese National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Women and Children, an evolution of prior regional cooperative work in coordination with the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Trafficking (UNIAP), is a considerable accomplishment. It represents a comprehensive, practical foundation for counter-trafficking work, and addresses the most serious concerns raised by Chinese and international anti-trafficking research over the last dozen years. However, a statement of this magnitude produced by a state not known for its sweeping human rights instruments leads to suspicion. Anthropologist Tiantian Zheng, in her 1998 ethnography exploring prostitution, relates how Chinese officials warned that her research risked exposing government complicity and thus disrupting “the ‘superior socialist morality’ that China had endeavored to construct in the world” (Zheng 2009: 28-29). Is the National Plan part of such a façade or a genuine movement in China toward a “harmonious” state and greater international cooperation? By exploring the trafficking of women in China and their treatment under traditional Chinese norms of harmony, this paper will bring the National Plan into context with Chinese culture and the Hu-Wen administration’s recent “Harmonious Society” initiative, in order to examine the Plan’s legitimacy as a significant instrument of human rights reform.

The Trafficking of Women in China

The National Plan addresses internal trafficking of women and children, but no Chinese policy yet addresses the labor exploitation of Chinese men, internally or overseas. This failure has resulted in many outside observers criticizing the National Plan for its narrow focus. While data from international organizations operating in the region suggests that ninety percent of internal trafficking involves women and children, it seems doubtful that the dramatic skew of this statistic is not a reflection of an extraordinary lack of transparency in Chinese labor practices.

The National Plan also offers little acknowledgment of the plight of foreign nationals trafficked into China. Though China’s Mekong sub-region, where UNIAP’s main efforts are located, has been the focus of significant efforts to rescue and repatriate trafficked women from neighboring states, such concentrated effort has not manifested elsewhere in China. Most striking in this regard is the North Korean border. An estimated 100,000 migrants crossed from North Korea into China before 2004, fleeing starvation. More than 50,000 remain in China today. China identifies these people not as refugees, but as economic migrants, and subjects them to summary deportation. North Korea punishes returning migrants as “defectors,” seldom with execution, but usually by internment in detention centers or forced labor camps, where torture and murders are commonplace.

International refugee protocols, generally recognized as international customary law, mandate a review process for threatened refugees, leading either to asylum or to resettlement within a third country. China is a signed party to these protocols, but claims bilateral agreements with North Korea trump its international obligations. North Koreans in China are thus certain of severe

punishment if discovered, and this strips them of legal recourse against abuse. Understanding this helplessness, traffickers have capitalized on the situation by enslaving tens of thousands of North Korean female migrants in prostitution and forced marriages.

Forced marriage, or bride trafficking, is also widespread throughout China's other border regions and rural provinces, where the gender gap is prominent. This gender gap is caused by China's one-child policy, and is exacerbated by a trend among rural women toward urbanization. A significant number of Chinese women also transfer from poorer to wealthier rural districts, ensuring the gender gap is stratified not just by a rural/urban dichotomy, but also economically, with the greatest disparities impacting the poorest men. These men fuel the primary demand for bride trafficking.

For women kidnapped by traffickers, there is little chance of being found or rescued. Most have never traveled outside their villages, and many are illiterate. Without knowledge of their legal rights, how to contact their families, or where they are in relation to home, there is little opportunity to escape. Raised under traditional values of female subordination, most submit. Those who do not submit find little support within their new communities, as entrenched patriarchy combined with a strong imperative to find wives for unmarried sons has resulted in many villages supporting forced marriages, passively or actively—sometimes attacking investigators who arrive searching for kidnapped women.

Patriarchy and Prostitution

Practices resulting from patriarchy are a significant factor in the trafficking of women. Strongest in the countryside, late-Confucian traditions allowed the commoditization of unmarried daughters who, without worth outside of bride price, might be sold into prostitution to settle debts. After the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese government sought to end such traditions and to implement gender equality based on Marxism, but traditional hierarchies remained entrenched, reemerging with market reform in the 1970s.

Today, a mix of Dao and Confucian thought exists, in which natural harmony, partially achieved by adherence to gender expectations, is greatly valued. Sexual responsibility is expected of women, while both sexes express belief that the satisfaction of male desires is a natural need beyond male control. Inability to satisfy this need can result in the disruption of men's personal harmony. Rape, though condemned, is often seen as a product of male disharmony: unbalanced men respond to stimuli created by irresponsible women who dress or behave too provocatively.

Within marriage, men act with impunity, while women are expected to be dutiful. The use of domestic violence by males to reconcile loss of face is widely considered excusable. Until recently, wives could not legally refuse married sex. Since most men feel that condoms are not masculine, and China's one-child policy laws are severe, many women received numerous abortions. Spousal abuse, male infidelity, and female victimization are often perceived by the public and the authorities as the result of women's disharmony and failure to properly fulfill their gendered roles, including expectations of premarital chastity and post-marital fidelity.

Prostitution, embedded in modern Chinese society, is another product of patriarchy. It answers the social paradox created by expectations of female chastity, the imbalanced ratio of men to women, and the perceived inability of men to control their sexual impulses. Though the government has sought to eliminate prostitution in the past, it appears that the phenomenon is now being

tolerated. Prostitution in China comprises an informal institution; patronage has become part of conspicuous consumerism, a display of status. Frequent clients of prostitution include provincial government officials, successful entrepreneurs, and foreign businessmen. Research suggests that most sex workers who serve these upper echelons enter the profession by choice, but the institutionalization of prostitution in elite circles guarantees its prevalence in lower-tiered, less controlled environments, where trafficked women likely predominate. Complicating this situation is a government bureaucracy unforgiving of women perceived to lack virtue. Prostitutes thus lack recourse to legal protection, and trafficking victims, usually undereducated rural migrants, are faced with the daunting task of proving victim status in order to gain legal support.

Conclusion: The Harmonious Society

Since coming to power in 2002, the Hu-Wen administration, under President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao, has launched a series of significant reforms under China's "Scientific Development Concept." These reforms are meant to increase government control over the economic and social environment. In 2005, the "Harmonious Society" concept was introduced as the end goal of the reforms. This idea has become central to both Chinese international and national policy. The concept seeks to balance economic growth with social justice. A response to crime and corruption, it is also a promise of greater justice for those parts of Chinese society that have been marginalized by economic expansion; rural reform and women's rights have been significant points of focus.

Inclusive and appealing, the term "harmonious" is also vague, meaning different things to different interests, from entrepreneurial classes to poor farmers and foreign governments (Delury 2008). To the government, harmony prioritizes society over the individual: achievement of personal values comes through the realization of the social values identified by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Individual freedom, as addressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, remains a rejected concept. Instead, the Chinese leadership refers to human rights in the context of Chinese "realities," which allow for social harmony to be preserved through force.

Reforms that have followed from the Harmonious Society concept may be selectively based on the perceived interests of the CCP. The Harmonious Society seems to be an honest approach, as it is firmly rooted in traditional and socialist values, but these roots are likely to convolute reforms. Significantly, gender values embedded in patriarchy are a direct threat to the effectiveness of the National Plan. If ideas of social harmony are not carefully weeded of gender imbalances, the National Plan's outcomes will be nullified by traditional sexist practices.

Likewise, China's long efforts to enforce social harmony through information control have crippled institutional transparency and promoted the extensive use of propaganda. Civil society organizations, which have been essential to counter-trafficking efforts elsewhere, remain compromised by government control and mistrust in China. Ultimately, unless civil society is unfettered and transparency greatly increased, the National Plan will never become an effective instrument of reform.

If China is earnest in seeking solutions to its most pressing human rights issues, the government should demonstrate a willingness to face its shortcomings and engage international criticism with constructive responses. Adhering to international standards, protecting the rights of foreign trafficking victims, and increasing the value placed on the rights of all its citizens would result in international trust and cooperation, greatly enhancing China's global prominence.

Annotated Bibliography

Agarwal, Ritu. 2002. "Marriage Law in China Revised." *China Review* 38 (3): 407-413.

Annotation: This article covers marriage law reform in 2001, coinciding with a shift in government outlook toward the family, a clear move toward Hu's Harmonious Society. The legal reform and outlook shift ultimately conflict. Women's rights are legally strengthened, but government efforts to consolidate the family come at their expense. State pressure on women to leave the workforce and fulfill gender-specified roles within the family compromises the reforms by increasing the dependence of wives upon husbands, reinforcing traditional patriarchy. This strengthens the conditions that the Harmonious Society concept is meant to address. Zheng's writings (see bibliographic entry) illustrate how economically successful married men often keep mistresses in separate households. In an attempt to stem divorce rates, these reforms attempt to make such adultery a criminal offense. Agarwal states that, despite these measures, the broadness of the reformed law has caused confusion over its application, resulting in judicial inability to enforce it.

Broadhurst, Roderic G., and Jianhong Liu. 2004. "Introduction: Crime, Law and Criminology in China." *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology* 37 (Supplement): 1-12.

Annotation: The authors present a contrast in this article, comparing the evolution of law in China with the pressing needs of policing a state in the throes of rapid economic development. They conclude that, while there has been laudable effort by the Chinese government to take on new forms of crime and corruption, their efforts are stymied by a lack of refined institutions or government focus, as well as the fear of public and international scrutiny. Still, these appear to be transitory problems that will likely fade under continued government reform. The Chinese government acknowledges that the increase of economic crime, which includes human trafficking and transnational criminal networks, requires international cooperation and political responsibility. The Chinese have attempted to critically examine policy, to create a professional, formal police force, and to work with other nations to develop the critical research capacity they currently lack.

Chan, Ko Ling. 2009. "Sexual Violence Against Women and Children in Chinese Societies." *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 10 (1): 69-85.

Annotation: In this article, Chan reviews a wide body of research on sexual violence, spanning Chinese culture on the mainland as well as in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau. She triangulates analytical research with the findings of surveys and focus groups, resulting in strongly supported conclusions. Chan's data regarding strictness of household hierarchical expression and cultural emphasis on "filial piety" is reinforced especially by Zheng's research. Chan claims that "Chinese people have been reported to relate to others by first defining their relationships based on their cultural norms" (81). The government of mainland China still refuses to publicly acknowledge the existence of institutionalized prostitution or to publish criminal statistics regarding rape, but Chan notes a marked increase in the openness of the Hu-Wen administration toward research on social problems.

Davin, Delia. 2007. "Marriage Migration in China and East Asia." *Journal of Contemporary China* 16 (50): 83-95.

Annotation: Davin, former professor of Chinese Social Studies at the University of Leeds, pulls together a body of quantitative data to present a fact-dense examination of bride migration in China. Davin displays her statistical evidence and cross-references her data throughout the essay. Her conclusions are pertinent to the bride slavery aspect of sex trafficking. She demonstrates that bride migration is often parallel to labor migration, as a primary method Chinese women employ to gain upward social mobility. This migration pattern flows from poor to rich provinces, transferring "the shortage of brides down the social scale." Though ninety-five percent of Chinese people are married by their late thirties, those unmarried are disproportionately men, especially among the poor. Around one third of illiterate men remain unmarried by their late thirties. The problem is becoming worse, and is exacerbated by increased bride migration out of the country altogether, to places like Japan and Taiwan.

Delury, John. 2008. "'Harmonious' in China: the Ancient Sources of Modern Doctrine." *Policy Review* 148: 36-41.

Annotation: Delury's short article is an assessment of the term 'harmonious' as it has been used by the Chinese, historically and presently. A professor of Chinese history, Delury notes the attention the Chinese paid to foreign influences before choosing this present discourse. Singapore especially, he notes, was an illiberal model that inspired Chinese government thought on the subject. The ultimate choice of the modern Chinese government to build a paradigm around the term, Delury suggests, has to do with the "strategic ambiguity" of the notion of harmony, which at once appeals to disparate elements of society while reserving its ultimate interpretation for the government. While writers such as Dr. Ai Guo Han write of the humanism behind the term, Delury cautions that it is something of a velvet fist. "Leniency balances out harshness, and harshness balances out leniency," he quotes Confucius as saying. "This is the way for government to achieve harmony."

Han, Ai Guo. 2008. "Building a Harmonious Society and Achieving Individual Harmony." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 13 (2): 143-164.

Annotation: Professor Ai Guo Han reflects on the meaning of harmony within contemporary Chinese society. He believes that President Hu has centered a form of humanism within his policies, and Han appreciates this considering the disorder that is currently taking place within Chinese society. Han begins by noting that desire for harmony is centuries old in China. He then explores the disorder that has led to the urgency of President Hu's "Harmonious Society" introduction. Han examines harmony in terms of individual wants versus social wants, noting that in ancient Chinese traditions as well as modern traditions surrounding harmony, one must give up individual wants for societal

wants if individual wants are to be obtained. This tradition is 2,500 years old in China. Han also explores the clash of perceptions regarding harmony and scarcity, but ultimately he believes that harmony can be achieved when people modify their wants to reflect reality.

Hanser, Amy. 2005. "The Gendered Rice Bowl: The Sexual Politics of Service Work in Urban China." *Gender & Society* 19 (5): 581-600.

Annotation: Hanser, an anthropologist specializing in social inequality and gender identity, compares three conceptions of the feminine within the capital of Heilongjiang province in northeast China, Harbin, which is part of China's expanding industrial belt despite its remote location. To facilitate her study, Hanser practiced participant observation within three markets utilizing different classes of women. Her conclusions point to three distinct classes of the feminine: an older more robust feminine that exemplifies outdated Maoist ideals of gender equality; a mostly young rural feminine that is seen as uncultured, unproductive, and morally compromised; and a young urban feminine idealized as modest, subtly sexy, and upwardly mobile. This urban feminine represents the "commodification and sexualization" of women that is the socioeconomic ideal of modern China. The subtext can be sinister. Hanser reveals that rural women migrants, the demographic most highly at risk for trafficking, are seen by the urban classes as both socially worthless and sexually loose.

Lagon, M. P. 2008. "Human Trafficking in China." *DISAM Journal of International Security Assistance Management* 30: 40-41.

Annotation: This is a transcript from a briefing conducted by Lagon, the director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, for the Congressional Human Rights Caucus. Lagon summarizes Chinese anti-trafficking efforts and emphasizes that China hinders the situation as much as helps it, largely due to its complete lack of transparency. He highlights the brick kiln incident, in which one thousand Chinese, many of whom were children and teenagers as well as physically or mentally handicapped, were forced to work in deplorable conditions before their eventual discovery and rescue. He notes that the prominent sex trade in China has led to increased opportunities for the exploitation of women, and emphasizes the importance of civil society in global counter-trafficking work. China, however, continues to repress its civil society organizations, such as the highly successful All-China Women's Federation, despite the fact that these organizations are controlled by, and divisions of, the government.

Marshall, Phil, and Susu Thatun. 2005. "Miles Away: The Trouble with Prevention in the Greater Mekong Sub-region," in K. Kempadoo (ed.), Trafficking and Prostitution Reconsidered: New Perspectives on Migration, Sex Work, and Human Rights. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.

Annotation: In this essay, Marshall and Thatun, senior advisor and Deputy Regional Programme Manager for UNIAP respectively, concentrate on dispelling false ideas regarding migration and its relationship to trafficking. The issues here spring from the specific nature

of the problem in the Mekong sub-region, but are important to trafficking in general. One prescient conclusion is that anti-trafficking efforts are hindered by a lack of reform in migration policies. Typical attempts to combat the problem by preventing migration are at best misguided and at worst anti-migrant. Citing studies by prominent international organizations, Marshall and Thatun effectively make the case that historically, migration has continued unaffected and unabated despite attempts to control it. Anti-trafficking efforts are better suited to governing safe and effective migration instead of curtailing it. Marshall and Thatun also criticize the US TIP report for its emphasis on source states. They call for an increased emphasis on the culpability of destination states.

Mucio, Norma Kang. 2005. "An Absence of Choice: The Sexual Exploitation of North Korean Women in China." London: Anti-Slavery International. Available online: http://www.antislavery.org/english/resources/reports/download_antislavery_publications/trafficking_reports.aspx.

Annotation: Within a preponderance of surface reports regarding the crisis faced by North Korean refugees in China, Mucio's report for Anti-Slavery International, where she serves as Education and Advocacy Officer, stands out as a clearheaded and thorough effort. She describes the early history of the North Korean attempt for self-sustainability and how this effort eventually led the country into the famine that killed one tenth of its population in the 1990s. Mucio goes on to describe the personal motivations that continue to lead North Koreans over the border, their experiences in China, and the deprivations they face when caught and deported home. In conclusion, she examines the body of international law regarding refugees, in an attempt to advocate its use in pressuring China into adherence. The report is interspersed with firsthand accounts and quotes of the refugees affected, making this a very poignant and powerful piece.

Otis, Eileen M. 2008. "The Dignity of Working Women: Service, Sex, and the Labor Politics of Localization in China's City of Eternal Spring." *American Behavioral Scientist* 52 (3): 356-376.

Annotation: Otis, like Amy Hanser (also in this bibliography), explores the so-called "spring rice bowl" of Chinese society, the job market that focuses on attractive young women for customer service positions. The hotel workers in Otis's study are in a delicate position due to their status as ethnic minorities in China (natives of the tourist province in which they are working), and the prevalence of sex services within their province and place of employment. The article focuses on the ways these women retain self-dignity while navigating between severe and elitist non-local managers and racist and lecherous male sex tourists, who do not differentiate between prostitutes and the regular staff. As with Hanser's upwardly mobile subjects, the women here cultivate a sense of what Otis refers to as "virtuous professionalism." Otis's study reinforces the notions of gender imbalance between males and females and the institutionalization of the sex industry in China.

Schuckman, Emily E. 2006. "Antitrafficking Policies in Asia and the Russian Far East: A Comparative Perspective." *Demokratizatsiya* 14 (1): 85-102.

Annotation: Schuckman's essay focuses on the ability of international and national civil society sector organizations to effectively implement successful anti-trafficking efforts. She illustrates this through the organization "Tsunami" of the Amurski Oblast region of far-east Russia, as well as by portraying highly successful efforts in South Korea. Schuckman succeeds in making a strong argument for this kind of action, which has direct ramifications for China. Since the Tiananmen Square protest, government paranoia of grassroots movements in China has greatly hindered existing civil society and kept new civil society organizations from forming. Though Schuckman's primary focus is Russia, she also gives summaries of women's movements in several Asian states and notes the effect they have had on trafficking. The research reinforces evidence from other essays that China is a major destination point for trafficked Russian women.

Shelley, Louise. 2000. "Post-Communist Transitions and the Illegal Movement of People: Chinese Smuggling and Russian Trafficking in Women." *Annals of Scholarship* 14 (2): 15.

Annotation: Louise Shelley, director of the Transnational Crime and Corruption Center, presents a comparison between Russian and Chinese trafficking in this essay. In both cases, Shelley highlights that efforts to control the situation are hampered by dwindling state capacity moving away from their respective capitals. This is especially acute in China. Regional economic disparities and the subsequent effect on migration generation is emphasized, while the porous Russian-Chinese border is explored. Shelley, given her expertise, is primarily concerned with organized crime networks, and her study benefits greatly from cooperation with international organizations such as Interpol.

Shelley, Louise. 2003. "The trade in people in and from the former Soviet Union." *Crime, Law and Social Change* 40: 18.

Annotation: Shelley compares the Russian and Chinese trafficking situation given the regional ties between the two states. The most important difference is the investment nature of human trafficking. Criminal trafficking groups in the former Soviet Union are focused on humans as a short-term, disposable, high profit resource. This approach lends itself to sex trafficking. Chinese trafficking groups focus primarily on contract labor slavery as a long-term investment strategy. This necessitates outcomes that are more beneficial to the resource exploited, and also the need to retain the respect of source communities. Shelley further provides clear differentiations between trafficking and smuggling enterprises and regional variants. Her expertise on organized crime syndicates allows her to present a detailed description of target populations, techniques, and operational areas. Lastly, she gives detailed information on the root causes that developed into the current situations.

State Council of China. 2007. "China National Plan of Action on Combating Trafficking in Women and Children (2008-2012)." In *Policies and Plans, National*. Beijing: UNIAP China Office.

Available online: <http://www.notip.org.cn/article/Details.asp?LanFlag=2&NewsId=1109&classid=32&BID=41>.

Annotation: The Chinese National Plan of Action addresses key elements needed in counter-human trafficking, such as the call for increased focus on prevention and rehabilitation as opposed to more typical, costly, and ineffective attempts to address the problem through police action, as is done by many states. The plan also emphasizes a focus on poverty support, empowering vulnerable segments of the population, disseminating information to high incident regions and public spaces, and combating the buyer's market. The National Plan intends to mobilize China's immense bureaucracy in an integrated fashion, delegating clear objectives and roles to some two-dozen state agencies that will utilize their specific expertise and knowledge bases. These are to be coordinated under an umbrella organization headed by the Ministry of Public Security. China notes that the subject is "not to be viewed optimistically," as trafficking is becoming more covert, but nevertheless emphasizes the need for broad confrontation.

Tang, Catherine So-Kum, Day Wong, and Fanny Mui-Ching Cheung. 2002. "Social Construction of Women as Legitimate Victims of Violence in Chinese Societies." *Violence Against Women* 8 (8): 968-996.

Annotation: In this article, Tang et al. focus on a feminist perspective regarding violence against women. Violence is both condemned and condoned in the Chinese perspective, which values harmony and restraint but adheres to expectations of female familial duty. Traditionally, failure in this duty necessitates discipline. Even though physical discipline is now criminalized, expectations of female submissiveness usually lead to women not reporting domestic violence, since doing so is further violation of social expectation. The double standards applied to women and men regarding sexual norms and the notion of the "disharmonized" rapist are specifically highlighted.

Thatun, Susu. 2006. "Mekong sub-region committed to ending trafficking." *Forced Migration Review* (25): 20-21.

Annotation: Some of the conclusions reached in Marshall and Thatun, above, are seen in the COMMIT (Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking) plan, regionally implemented by the countries of the Mekong sub-region: China, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. This plan was implemented in response to the fact that "more actors did not necessarily lead to concerted actions but rather added to disarray in the whole spectrum of anti-trafficking initiatives." Thatun lays out the principles that the thirty-four articles of the plan are based on, along with their primary functions. The articles focus on labor laws, migratory policies, and victim identification utilizing a "rights-based and 'victim-centered' approach" while remaining committed to internationally recognized covenants such as the Palermo Protocol, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Tucker, Joseph D., et al. 2008. "Surplus men, sex work, and the spread of HIV in China." *AIDS* 19 (6): 539-547.

Annotation: This article by a team of medical and social scientists examines AIDS epidemics in China and predicts infection dispersal trends during the coming years. These trends are entwined with the population of unmarried Chinese males, especially the *guang gun*, "bare branch" segment: those males who, because of lack of education and income, are considered unmarriageable. The institutionalization of the sex industry and the infrequency of condom use all factors here. Less than thirty percent of sex workers report regular use of condoms, and more than fifty percent report no use at all (refer to the Zheng entry). Sex worker numbers have grown exponentially to between four and ten million as of 2001. The authors project internal spread based on the age and mobility of high-risk populations, but it is clear that these same populations will also contribute to external spread, through migration and business travel.

United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking. 2009. "The Trafficking Situation in China." In *Where We Work*. Beijing: UNIAP China Office. Available online: <http://www.no-trafficking.org/china.html>.

Annotation: This reference is a series of three sequential informational web pages from the main UNIAP website. Despite its informal nature, it is up to date and fact-heavy, an important preliminary information base or point of verification for statistics. UNIAP assists the governments of the greater Mekong sub-region. The organization also benefits from highly versed regional-topical experts (such as Thatun and Marshall) among its staff, as well as consistent field presence. It is one of few reference points available for assessment of Chinese National Action Plan progress. Unfortunately, a full critique cannot be assumed, given UNIAP's need to maintain close relations with the Chinese government. Despite this, UNIAP continues to prominently criticize lack of Chinese attention regarding the trafficking of male labor. Some of the statistics in their report include demographics and surprising ratios (at least ten percent of the Chinese population is migratory), brief cause identification, and current Chinese counter-trafficking efforts.

United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking. 2008. "SIREN Human Trafficking Data Sheet." In *Strategic Information Response Network Reports*. Beijing: UNIAP China Office. Available online: http://www.no-trafficking.org/siren_reports.html.

Annotation: SIREN is the data analysis branch of UNIAP. The SIREN data sheet on China is a summary of the trafficking situation in the country. It provides quantitative information on migration statistics, general information concerning what is known, and theories based on these facts. The data sheet also keeps track of China's annual efforts related to the COMMIT process (Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking), which includes the 2008-2012 National Action Plan. Quantitative data is summarized regarding prosecution and prevention efforts. From this, it appears China has taken the anti-trafficking

Annotation: The USCRI country report on China primarily focuses on the refugee situation at the North Korean border, though it makes clear that China is generally uncooperative in upholding refugee rights. A fact-heavy recent update, the report serves as a more conservative complement to the older but more detailed report by N.K. Mucio that appears above in this bibliography. While China has done nothing to meet its international obligations since Mucio's report in 2005, it has increased border security, installing fences and electronic sensors on its borders with North Korea and Mongolia, offered rewards for informants over the current bribe rate for safe passage, and encouraged Thai government complicity in capturing immigrants who make it over the border in the south. North Korea, meanwhile, continues to exacerbate the problem by making food and supplies inaccessible to "as much as a quarter of the population that it deemed hostile."

Wei, Bu. 2006. "Looking for the 'Insider's Perspective': Human Trafficking in Sichuan," in Maria Heimer and Stig Thogerson (eds.), *Doing Fieldwork in China*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Annotation: Bu Wei, a professor in the Institute of Journalism and Communication at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, presents a summary of her research on human trafficking, conducted in 1999 for UNICEF. Ostensibly, this essay is about qualitative field technique and the role of insider/outsider perspectives in field research, and is meant for the field research practitioner. However, it is also a useful ground-level account that summarizes trafficking from the perspective of vulnerable migrant women. In what is expressed as well as unexpressed, the rationale of various women for involving themselves in risky labor practices, as well as self-identification of risk and means of self-protection, are revealed.

Yu, Bin. 2008. "China's Harmonious World: Beyond Cultural Interpretations." *Journal of Chinese Political Science* 13 (2): 119-141.

Annotation: This article concerns international relations and theory, examining the global level of China's emphasis on harmony, the "harmonious world." Professor Yu argues against interpretations of China's actions by two schools of theory, the strategic cultural school and the more recent hierarchy-stability school. Both emphasize China's Confucian-Mencian inheritance, but the former believes this to be purely ideological, while the latter believes it retains predictive power for China. Yu rejects both viewpoints, arguing that tradition cannot be considered separately from present conditions. From this perspective, he sees much to suggest that China, having suffered through foreign ideologies of both socialism and capitalism, has shifted to a self-defined framework from which it hopes to prosperously engage the world. China, since the 1980s, has stabilized relations with its neighbors and kept within norms of the international institutional system, and Yu believes its recent shift from passive to active participation expresses an ongoing intention toward peaceful relations.

Zhao, Gracie Ming. 2003. "Trafficking of Women for Marriage in China: Policy and Practice." *Criminal Justice* 3 (1): 19.

Annotation: Zhao presents a comprehensive overview of bride trafficking in China. She gives careful definitions before summarizing its historical and present conditions, including government policies and reform needs. Zhao's emphasis is on the increasing demand for brides and the fact that the cost/benefit analysis of the situation is fueling its prevalence. For instance, extreme income differences exist between families of similar social standing between regions, and this fuels migration and desperation. Due to traditional views that hold women as resources while men are expected to produce progeny, traditional villages will often act as a unit to enforce marriages under duress, and have even attacked police investigators. Zhao's primary conclusion is that China would do well to encourage grassroots women's movements to deal with this issue. Doing so would help empower women against traditional female devaluation, aid victims over the long term, and greatly increase the efficiency of governmental top-down efforts.

Zhao, Linda Shuo. 2008. "Anomie Theory and Crime in a Transitional China (1978—)." *International Criminal Justice Review* 12 (2): 137-157.

Annotation: This article presents anomie, or strain-based theory of criminology in the context of China, a theoretical approach focusing on societal pressures that encourage criminal activity of citizens. The components of this theory are highly pertinent to understanding Chinese corruption and trafficking trends. Zhao also provides detailed descriptions of relevant Chinese cultural attitudes and social conditions, including the plight of the rural classes and internal migrants. The virility of Chinese government corruption is made plain. Following from strain theory, Zhao theorizes on the pressures placed on government officials by the rise of rich entrepreneurs who had begun to outclass them. Fearful of losing social prestige and comparative wealth, but fettered by set functions and salaries, officials quickly turned to corrupt measures. This eventually pervaded to the upper levels of Chinese government, and has cost China tens of billions of dollars annually, coinciding with epidemic crime rates in the general population that increased twenty-fold between 1978 and 2000.

Zheng, Tiantian. 2009. *Red Lights: The Lives of Sex Workers in Postsocialist China*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Annotation: In *Red Lights*, Zheng presents the core of her ethnographic research into the lives of sex workers in the city of Dalian in northeast China. Originally intending to research female factory workers, Zheng befriended various Chinese officials, one of whom took her to a karaoke bar where she became intrigued by the "hostesses," employed there. She switched her research focus and eventually (in non-sexual parameters) worked and lived with these women. In her study, Zheng illustrates their lives, as well as the men who were their clients, while weaving in her own personal narrative as an embedded anthropologist. Zheng's observations strongly support and are reinforced in turn by the greater body of research, but her perspective is nevertheless clarifying. Insightful, introspective, courageous, and empathetic, this book should be highly valuable to anyone interested or involved in Chinese

cultural research, sex trafficking research, anthropological field work, gender studies, or sociology.

Zheng, Tiantian. 2009. *Ethnographies of Prostitution in Contemporary China: Gender Relations, HIV/AIDS, and Nationalism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Annotation: In her second book, Zheng explores more specific themes based on her ethnographic research, regarding condom use, disease control, and power relationships between clients and sex workers. To illustrate her work while clarifying a statistic in Tucker et al. (see above), Zheng notes that sex workers in Dalian who insisted on condom use lost clients. The sex trade was highly competitive; plenty of women were willing to forgo condoms. Regardless, when a client relationship repeated itself, it was considered insulting by clients to be asked to use condoms. As repeat relationships were an important step toward establishment of “husbands,” long term client relationships which might lead to significant support (many Chinese men keep second homes for mistresses), there was powerful incentive to refrain from insisting on anything. Zheng’s work indicates that prostitution solicitation is as much about power as it is about sex.