

Chapter One Introduction

In his book “Forbidden Desires and unrestrained lust” , Talin Liu opines that “there is in this world an ancient profession, which is found everywhere, there is almost no country and territory without it; it is that resilient, sustaining itself against centuries of banishment, experiencing a great revival of late; many men criticize this profession with their lips, but wholeheartedly lust after it with their flesh, this refers to the profession of the prostitute.” (Liu, 1999) From this statement by Talin Liu, people can see just how old the industry of prostitution really is; from ancient days to the present it is like an uncontrollable weed whose resilience causes it to flourish no matter how hard one tries to suppress it. More importantly however is the fact of the revival of prostitution in this era. In China today there are more and more people engaged in the sale of their bodies as prostitutes.

Therefore, besides women serving as prostitutes, Men were also prostitutes, engaged in selling their bodies, as an indisputably integral and undeniably lasting part of Chinese history. From the Eastern Han Dynasty period, Hsu Shen (Xu Shen) provided an etymology of the character for prostitute (chang) in his magnum opus *The Etymological Morphology of Chinese Ideograms*, as coming from the characters for traditional Chinese “Geisha” dancers (changyou) or court “jester” comedians (paiyou). From this, people can surmise that the earliest prostitutes in China included both men and women.

The history of male prostitution in China can be said to be one with that of female prostitutes. Their freedom was also subject to the control of their superiors, and besides being required to perform their artistic or musical talents for the imperial officials or courts; they were also compelled to engage in sexual relations with these superiors. Male prostitutes who were the subject of bullying or playful coterie by their male clients had never been absent from Chinese history.

In Shi Nan’ s *Secret History of Chinese Male Prostitution*, he writes about two distinct kinds of male prostitutes. One is the mianshou, a male whose facial features are considered handsome, who is kept by a wealthy family’ s patroness or royal princess. The

other is the Nanchong “endeared males” or Ruantong “handsome young men” , who were men who provided companionship and sexual services for superiors. From the Spring and Autumn Warring States Period, the “Shorn Sleeves” (yutao, euphemistic reference to homosexual men) and “Shining Dragons” (long yang, gigolos), to the Ming and Ch’ ing Dynasty’ s “qige” somewhat akin to a handsome pimp, Chinese society permitted men to engage in limited sexual liberty, resulting in the rapid rise in male prostitution, which caused the development of a culture of male prostitute’ s engaged in providing sexual services as their primary work.

During the Ming Dynast, capitalism developed rapidly, and industry became more developed. Throughout the southern parts of China (beneath the Yangtze), from the highest quarters of royalty and officialdom, to the common businessman and educated people, there was no one who did not seek the services of prostitutes. Hence houses of prostitution were widely established, and places for male prostitution first began and quickly flourished. In 1492 the Emperor(Chuan-de) formally pronounced an edict banning prostitution which forbad women from being prostitutes, and as an unintended result of the legislation, males transformed from sexual frolicking with women to “having fun” with fellow men. Thus, the Confucian ethics of the Soong dynasty were destroyed by calling for uprooting human lust and preserving the law of nature, were radically challenged by these developments which fostered playful experimentation with naturally lustful feelings. Releasing the internal impulses of lustful desires and inherent nature of human, resulted in reaching the pinnacle heights of a kingdom of pleasures of the flesh. At that time, sexual relations among those of a common gender were referred to as “external relations” or “external affairs” , and relations between men and their wives or concubines were referred to euphemistically as “internal relations” . It was not at all uncommon for gentleman in that era to have extensive experience in the conduct of such “external relations” . (Liu 1995)

In 1644 the Manchurians invaded Peking (Beijing), and formally established the Ch’ ing Dynasty, which became the last Chinese imperial dynasty. The Ch’ ing Dynasty rulers followed the Confucian ethos and the doctrine of the mean, so as to restore ideological unity and rebuild the national self-esteem and identity. In fact, Confucius and

Mencius did not devote much ink to the questions of human sexual liberation, but Confucius and Mencius were well known for their regard for social stability, demanding adherence to the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues, emphasizing that only through mutual respect in human relations, can people establish a cooperative social order, and enjoy harmonious married life. And, a happy married life is built on a foundation of the relations between (a) man and (a) woman. Therefore it was natural that the role of the male as a prostitute would diminish over time.

At that time the national leaders also began to realize that in light of the history of Chinese sexuality, it would not be sufficient to rely on the moral tomes of the Confucian ethicists and their educational system to inculcate values. Thus, while the Ch'ing Dynasty began to reestablish the traditional Chinese system of training in proper social decorum and morality, a great emphasis was placed on social coercion of conformity through law and regulations. In order to promote the teachings of Confucius and Mencius, and secure the support of the Confucianists for the new dynasty, besides a strict emphasis on social order, China in 1740 promulgated its first anti-male prostitution regulation. For the first time, nanchong (gigolos) were considered to be engaged in immoral conduct and were subject to interference by the law.

However, after the middle period of the Ch'ing Dynasty, Chinese shipping began extensive contacts with Southeast Asia, Japan and the coastal ports across China (Tian 1987, Song 1983, Lin 1987). This resulted in the rapid development of the coastal cities, with Shanghai emerging as the most important coastal port. Adding to this was the fact that after the Treaty of Nanking, Shanghai formally inaugurated the Bund, and western imperialism unabashedly entered into every crevice of Shanghai. The inflows of foreign capital, caused capitalism to flourish, thus further stimulating the development of Shanghai. Shanghai then began establishing the foreign concessions, which were partly colonial, partly traditional Chinese feudalist in nature. The English, Americans, and French superpowers each had their respective concession zones, which meant that Shanghai in terms of its politics, economics and international relations enjoyed independent development. This special form of development, with the concession zones as the predominant focus, caused Shanghai to become a literal country within a country, with the

popular epithet of “the danger zone” or an “adventurer’s amusement park” .

Shanghai thus became the epicenter of development in the Ch’ing Dynasty, and remains one of the most highly developed cities in China to this day.

It is precisely because of this amalgam of East and West in Shanghai, a place of rapid economic development, that the presence of male prostitutes and female prostitutes, equally considered to be among the lowest echelons of society, engaged in that kind of work which must still be conducted only in stealth in contemporary China, could have developed into such a literal hotbed. In Shanghai, because of the influence of being a port city open to the world, and with the development of trade, perhaps it was only natural that Shanghai would so swiftly see the renaissance of Chinese male prostitution. This has resulted in the appearance of a subculture involving a very unique sexual industry.

In February 2008, the writer by happenstance met with the only organization in China dedicated to counseling male sexual workers, known as LeYi or Happy Friends, whose director Mr. Huang ZHENG and his assistant Mr. Tian YU, were able to assist the writer to meet with 15 male sexual workers for interviews. During these discussions and interview sessions, the writer was deeply impressed by the fact of the practical pressures in their environments, and their personal anguish against their form of work as improper, but their feeling of it being necessary to bring home the bacon and stave off abject poverty; it is even more depressing to realize that they rely on their personal characteristics to make a living, but cannot share their personal torment with society at large; and in light of the intensely painful personal contradictions they experience from the social mores and moral standards and their family expectations.

1.1 Research Background and Motivation

Professor Minghsing Luo in his article the problems of current marriage and sexual morality has said, “It is human nature, that every person seeks sexual pleasure outside the confines of their marital relationship. The quest for sexual pleasure should not be limited to a certain gender (i.e. heterosexuality) but focused rather on its pleasurable” . Professor Tuomin Pan in his work *Existence and Ridiculousness: Fieldwork in China’s*

Underground Sexual Economy, discusses “China’s ancient system of prostitution, whose origin involves the marriage and family structures across the entire society. Engels once wrote that prostitution is the necessary ameliorative result of monogamy” . Prof. Pan surmises that it is not merely of ameliorating monogamy, but rather a matter of co-existence, and in fact there is a certain synergy involved, with neither quite possible without the other, as twins.

So it is precisely for this reason, the history of male prostitutes and female prostitutes is essentially the same. In China, there has always been a traditional system for patronage of gigolos or prostitutes. From the Tang dynasty’s Parrot Perches to the establishment of the Ming dynasty’s Chang-gu centers, there has always been a substantial presence of male prostitution throughout China. But ever since the Ch’ing regime occupied China, as the power of patriarchy developed and with the limited restraints on male sexual behavior, the presence of male prostitutes had always been a visible part of Chinese society.

In China, male homosexuals constitute the majority of male to male sexual workers. (Feng 2009) Because China has been a closed off society, the homosexual population has not been widely accepted by the society at large, choosing true love and companionship has been difficult, so some homosexual males have chosen to engage in sexual work as a means of resolving their physiological sexual needs. Among the 15 interviewees the writer met with, there were 14 who identified themselves as male homosexuals. But this also illustrates that not all male to male sexual workers are in fact homosexuals. Besides their sexual orientation as a primary factor in their decision to engage in sexual work, many heterosexual male to male sexual workers come from families mired in abject poverty. In order to make more money, they transform their bodies into a product for sale.

From the past feudal system’s master-servant relations to the present contractual based system of labor, China’s male to male sexual workers have used their bodies in exchange for certain economic returns, while they themselves were not necessarily the direct or primary beneficiary of the proceeds (Tong, 1955). In China, male to male sexual workers and female prostitutes equally belong to the socially disadvantaged classes, because they lack any clear status or rights at law, so they are often subjected to oppression or torture by their clientele and left without legal recourse to follow. Many male to male

sexual workers experience violence on the job with their clients, but have no viable option of seeking police intervention or other help. In moral terms, they are unaccepted by society, so China's male to male sexual workers are unable to obtain their families' understanding or support, nor recognition from their friends. Even more concerning, is the lack of social organizations to provide a voice for male to male sexual workers in China, so many male to male sexual workers lack any idea about protecting themselves or means of learning how, so sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS transmission rates remain very high and the trend is discouraging. Regardless of the social pressure against legal recognition (decriminalization of) for prostitution, there can be no disputing, that in China, especially in Shanghai, there is a serious public health threat from AIDS. In 2006, Shanghai reported 600 new cases of HIV infection, an increase of 70% from 2005. In February 2007, the writer visited China's only organization dedicated to counseling male sexual workers, LeYi, The Happy Friends Workshop. During the short 16 day period, the writer met and interviewed 15 male sexual workers. During the interviews, the writer discovered that the common perceptions were correct that most of the male sexual workers came from the countryside, and they left their homes to come to the big city to make more money. And as stated above, not all of the 15 male sexual workers were homosexuals, as there was also a heterosexual too.

The writer recalls that the first interviewee was a heterosexual from Xi'an. He was a graduate from the Xi'an Normal College's Architectural School, and by Chinese standards would be considered a member of the intelligentsia. Wanting to make more money to repay friends and student loans, he decided to move to Shanghai. Unfortunately, not sooner had he arrived than he had been cheated of his savings. In order to eat and survive, after spending several days in an internet café, having expended all of his remaining funds, he felt he had no choice but to sell his body. During the interview, he repeatedly told the writer, "Well, whether male or female, all our bodies are physical, so there's really no difference."

Some male to male sexual workers only realized that this society is not what they had expected after they began engaging in the trade, so they were full of contradictions and anguish. But under the twin pressures of the practical environment's struggle to survive

and their family background, they felt compelled by their real desperation in spite of their unwillingness.

Another interviewee was Little Orchid. He is a Muslim. He is not one of those really pretty boys with a handsome disposition, but he has nevertheless been a male sexual worker for some time now. During the interview process, he also revealed his dissatisfaction with this line of work. Besides being roughed up by the clients, there is also suffering caused from cheating by fellow male prostitutes. He has really been tormented spiritually, especially since promiscuity is a cardinal sin in Islam which permits the death penalty, and he has not merely committed promiscuity, but in a homosexual context. In material terms, he is very poor. So to earn more income, he dressed as a female to entice male customers, because the heterosexual market is much larger than that for homosexual sex. For a Chinese male, the social disrespect that this entails (engenders) is really unimaginable to others.

Through the Le-yes, Happy Friends organization, 15 interviews were arranged, and each of the 15 interviewees had a different reason for their work. But the writer's curiosity was especially raised by the fact besides the financial and poverty reasons involved, among the 15 interviewees, fully 13 had planned on returning to their hometowns, to get married and have kids, to carry on their family names.

The research revealed that in spite of their deep-seated unwillingness, marriage remained an important part of almost all of the male sexual workers' life plans. As for the marital concepts of the heterosexual male to male sexual workers, coming from a similar cultural background, the writer did not find it so difficult to understand their way of thinking. But as regards the other homosexual male to male sexual workers, the writer found their marital concepts to be quite fascinating.

Shanghai is one of China's most developed cities; in 2006 the GDP per capita reached US\$7490, with a year to year economic growth exceeding 8% every year for the past decade. These results leave everyone impressed. Besides this factor, Shanghai is a meeting ground for intercourse between the East and the West, with a truly cosmopolitan cultural milieu. For these very reasons, many young Chinese come to Shanghai in search of their lucky pot of gold. But homosexual male to male sexual workers, leave their

hometowns to come to the big city, availing themselves of the chance to get rid of their family pressures, to embrace a new life inclusive of their sexual orientation, so why do they instead choose to remain subject to the traditional Chinese way of thinking, limited by traditional Confucian precepts, seeing marriage as an absolutely essential requirement of life. What are the relations between economic development and social mores in terms of China's male to male sexual workers? As the economy develops very rapidly, China has begun to sexualize, so how can male to male sexual workers envision themselves in light of these trends? From the traditional views of the subservient master-servant Confucian vertical social relations, to the present circumstance of transforming one's body into a product for sale, does this help China's male to male sexual workers to oppose the constraints of the traditional Confucian views, so that they can, like China's female prostitutes, begin a quest for their equal human rights? These are among the many questions addressed in this study.

1.2 Shanghai's Male Sexual Workers

1.2.1 The definition of male sexual workers

Some researchers have found, China's service industry has a GDP of 1.8 trillion RMB annually, with sexually related industry involving fully a third of the total, through effects on business, tourism, culture, healthcare, the public sector, and food and beverage services. In Shanghai especially, the third industrial sector, or the service sector, is an especially important part of the economy. (Hershatter, 1997). In terms of male sexual work or providing sexual services, there are two kinds of male sexual workers. One is called the male escort (euphemistically termed a "public relations assistant"), also called the "duck (ling)" or a "cowboy". They serve a predominantly female clientele. Their services, besides accompanying to drink alcohol, companionship, as well as any sexual services their female clients may require has occupied one third of the service industry value. Another kind is the one engaged in services to males, the male to male sexual

worker. Their scope of services is the same as that of males engaged in providing sexual services for females, accompanying to drink alcohol, companionship, as well as any sexual services their male clients may require.

In Tong Ge's work, *Status Report on Fieldwork on China's Male to Male Sex Trade*, he defines male to male sexual workers as males who predominantly provide sexual services to homosexuals. These are those that the public commonly refers to as "MB" (short for "money boys"). They treat their bodies as products for sale in the market, males who sell sex primarily to other males. From the very words used to describe them as money boys, the MB, are mostly young men who have not yet reached middle age, so many of them have trade names such as Little Boy, Child, Kid, etcetera or similar terms indicating youthfulness in Chinese.

But in fact, many of the male to male sexual workers are middle aged. And there are many customers who demand services from a specified age group. Also, male to male sex workers can also be categorized by their body shapes such as bears, wolves, pigs, and etc. To sum up, on top of this consider that most male to male sexual workers treat sex as a commodity for sale to get money, so many people refer to male sexual workers as "bought (and paid) for" (or, sold).

1.2.2 The places where sex is sold

As the times rapidly change, male to male sexual workers have become a part of the overall sex trade, bringing great changes to the industry. From the prior system of coercing kidnapped human trafficking victims to sell sex, to the modern entrepreneurial prostitute, from the brothel based to the street side, prostitution has undergone many changes, but as for male to male sexual workers the locations for their endeavors has not changed so much. There are basically two kinds of places for male sexual work in Shanghai: clubs and individual entrepreneurs.

Clubs (body building gyms)

Clubs refers to establishments advertised as exercise or body building gyms. One can find such clubs everywhere throughout Shanghai. Most are hidden among ordinary office buildings or apartment complexes. Most advertise that they feature lymph drainage therapy, kidney warming physical therapy, prostate preventive health, or full body oil massage, in name, but offer sex for sale, in actuality. The clubs provide homeless male sexual workers with a place to stay home and spend the night, male sexual workers must turn over a 30 to 50 percent commission after they finish their business, to the club owner or mamas an, in exchange for their rent and three meals a day. Wherever the male sexual workers go, they have to report first to the club owner (whether going out “on a date” or even if just for fun), so their personal freedom is really quite restricted. Most of the club owners (or mamasans), will keep their male sex workers identification cards as a practical means of coercing them to not leave unexpectedly without notice, but because the clientele also prefers fresh faces, and since most clubs provide a substantial protects fee to the local police stations, and since most mamasan are afraid that disputes might bring the attention of the police, so the turnover rate of male sex workers in the health spa clubs is very high.

Entrepreneurial (Self-Employed) Prostitutes

Besides those who work at the health spa clubs, are those male sex workers who find their own clients. These kinds of male sex workers, find their clients through saunas, at parks, by the roadside, in bars or online (through the internet). For these kinds of male sex workers, the usual place of business will be the buyer’s home or a hotel. The majority of these male sex workers have prior work experience at the clubs, and then after awhile, they decide to find their own clientele. On the one hand, they can thereby reduce the unfair commissions they had to pay to the club owners, and on the other hand, they can enjoy real personal freedom. They can choose their own clients and control their own time. But in most cases, this kind of male sex worker also has to bear some substantial risks, for example: sourcing clients, personal safety. But the most important thing is, since their

income stream is uncertain, this kind of male sex worker has no certain market rate for their sexual services. During good times, they might charge 100 Yuan RMB, but in the winter when it is harder to find clients, they might have sex for only 20 or 30 Yuan RMB. Moreover they also weaker in terms of their knowledge of personal protection, so if customers are willing to pay only a little bit more, they will have unprotected sex without a prophylactic condom. During the writers' interviews with the 15 interviewees, some of the male to male sex workers mentioned that during the winter when clients were sparse, some were willing to engage in oral sex for as little as 10 Yuan RMB.

1.2.3 Pathways to entering the trade

Among the 15 interviewees working as male to male sex workers, the vast majority came from Xi'an or other rural areas. 10 of them had already heard about the field of male to male sex work before they came to Shanghai. Many of them had engaged in farming as youth, and often played with other boys, and thereby became familiar with male to male sexuality (sexual contact). But none of the interviewees initially had desired to engage in this line of work. There are three different methods by which the 15 entered the trade, which can be distinguished as follows:

Through private contacts

The first method of exposure to the trade is through private gay meeting places. In Shanghai there are a large variety of such meeting places, such as bars, saunas and health spas. Many of the homosexual leaning male to male sex workers, when they first come to Shanghai, before they have found an apartment or place to reside, will visit bars to find companionship or go to a sauna to spend the night. The main reason for this is economic, as compared to a modest hotel, the costs to stay at a bar or saunas are inexpensive. Initially most homosexuals do not even realize that they could rely on selling their bodies to make a living. It is not until someone flirtatiously comes onto them and they engage in their initial sexual encounter, that they realize their body can be a product to exchange. Most of these

male sex workers will not work at the clubs, but are self-employed instead.

Through gay groups

The other method of entry to the male to male sex work trade results from seduction over the internet. Most of these male sex workers are young people without much social exposure or experience. After freshly arriving in Shanghai, and finding themselves without a place to live, with the expense of staying in an internet cafes much less than a hotel, naturally most male sex workers reside together in the internet cafes. As soon as they run out of cash, they are susceptible to influence through the internet by other male to male sex workers. Add to this the fact that in the countryside, most of them have heard of or engaged in male to male sexual encounters, so out of utter desperation or mere curiosity they begin to engage in male to male sexual commerce.

Because these kinds of male to male sex workers are usually young and full of hope to lives, therefore, this kind of male to male sex worker often experiences deep contradictions between their physical body and their emotional feelings. On the one hand they feel compelled by real world pressures, to they have to continue their male to male sex work; on the other hand, because of social attitudes and family pressures, they very much want to leave the male to male sex work trade.

Through public meeting places

The third method of entry to the trade is through public parks or public meeting places, where they see male to male sex workers meeting together and get exposed to enter the trade. There is one special aspect of the male to male sex work trade; it is that the work is not highly competitive or monopolistic. Male sex workers do not reserve their customers to themselves, so they will not refuse to admit new colleagues to the trade. On the contrary, because they are also males, male sex workers understand their customers psychological desire for new sexual partners, so male sex workers will help new male sex workers meet clients so as to help satisfy their clients' desire for new partners. So, in the old days of the Shanghai Bund or nowadays in the People's Square, one can often find large groups

of male to male sex workers, who when they see a fresh face or an impressionable young man with no obvious sexual orientation or, who do not know where they are going in life, directionless, they will aggressively ask if the person is willing to consider the male to male sex work trade, and will introduce their (best, long-term, well-known, experienced, old) customers to them. So compared with female prostitutes, this is a completely opposite approach to “customer relations” work.

Regardless of the method by which male to male sex workers in Shanghai enter the trade, the existence of the male to male sex work trade in Shanghai is an open secret. During the writer’s interviews with the Happy Friendship Counseling Organization, the writer witnessed one postal worker delivering a package to the group, he was curious to learn about the services of the organization and the kind of people they seek to help, and when he learned the objective of the organization was primarily related to male to male sex workers, he enquired whether the organization needed additional help or accepted new members.

Also, among the 15 interviews conducted by the writer, one interviewee was interviewed along with a fellow from his hometown. The interviewee was a male to male sex work meeting place owner, and that meeting place was located in the same skyscraper as the hotel in which the writer was staying, and besides managing the club, he also takes on servicing customers. And that club manager and his hometown fellow were best friends in junior high, the classmate had only just arrived in Shanghai a few days earlier, and it was only after he arrived here that he realized the club’s business was providing male to male sex. Surprisingly, the classmate did not express attitudes of disdain or discomfort to the manager. Quite to the contrary, the classmate fully commiserated with the circumstances the manager was faced with. But he also suggested that the manager should lease the club to someone else. Following up, a few days after the interview, the club manager had indeed transferred control of the business to another male to male sex worker.

1.3 Description of the Work performed by male to male sex workers

Working it

Shanghai's male sex workers engage in the sale of sex as their primary commodity for exchange. In terms of the division of labor, among Shanghai's male sex workers, if they do not work in clubs, then they discuss their work in terms of "working it". They divide working it, into working it to first base, second base, third base, and a home run (what they literally term a little work, medium work, allots work and the whole nine yards). First base or a little work means masturbation. This means the male sex worker's fingers will contact with the sex organs of the clients until they ejaculate. This service is relatively inexpensive. As far as those male sex workers, who search for clients on their own outside clubs, etc., are concerned, masturbation sells for between 80 to 100 Yuan RMB. In winter when it is not easy to find clients, some may sell their services for as little as 10 to 20 Yuan RMB.

Medium work is also called oral work, that is or Fellatio (oral copulation, a "blow job"). This means that the male to male sex worker will use their lips to excite the client's sexual organs until ejaculation. These services cost more than the little work or masturbation, but could also be done within the 100 Yuan RMB ballpark. This is among the most common services provided by the male sex worker.

The large work refers to anal copulation or sodomy, which means the client's penis, will enter the male to male sex worker's anus until ejaculation. The price for these services ranges from 200 to 400 Yuan RMB. Because of the space limits, most self-employed sex workers provide mostly just the little work masturbation or blow jobs. The whole nine yards refers to the combination of masturbation, blow job and sodomy altogether.

In the name of preventive health and bodybuilding

In Shanghai because the clubs provide convenient meeting places for male to male sex workers, they are able to provide more services than self-employed male to male sex workers. Also, since the clubs usually advertise publicly as health clubs, most of their

services are marketed in terms of preventive health or bodybuilding. For example: prostate protection, referring to masturbation or the little job. Thai massage, referring to body to body contact between the male sex workers and the customer, resulting in sexual satisfaction. Princes in flight together (Captain and Co-Pilot on autopilot), refers to a threesome with two male to male sex workers and the client, resulting in fulfilling the client's sexual desires. Happy Spring Festival means three or more male to male sex workers providing services. And watching others work refers to the customer not being directly engaged in any sexual contact, but watching on the sides as two or more male to male sex workers engage in sexual contact (conduct).

In the clubs the marketing technique involves the manager introducing the “technicians” (male to male sex workers) to the clients through a menu of names; the menu includes all the male to male sex workers associated with the club and includes their biographical information or resumes as well as their height and weight. After customers have selected the male technicians of their liking from the menus, the manager of the club will bring the technician to meet the client. If the client likes them, and the technician is also agreeable, then the deal is made. What is different about this from the sexual trade in the past, is that the management considers its interests to be aligned with those of the male sex workers. This is unlike the olden days of subservient master-slave/pimp-prostitute relations in the sex trade. While the management will hold their club's male to male sex workers' identity documents in custody, to ensure the men will not just up and leave while still owing debts. But if the male to male sex worker insists on ending the work ties to the club and leaving, the club's boss will return the ID to them.

During the transactions, besides the club owner providing the environment, a place to live and food and beverages, they will also provide a certain degree of protection to the male to male sex workers while engaging in sex with patrons. So for example if the boss knows that a certain client has rather distasteful habits, or if the male to male sex worker has some degree of distaste for a particular client, the manager may help the male to male sex worker by refusing to arrange that transaction. But should the client insist, the manager will console and encourage the male to male sex worker involved.

As compared with the male to male sex workers who reside in the clubs, the

self-employed male to male sex workers enjoy much greater degrees of personal freedom, but since their range of services are more limited, they also have fewer sources of clients. So, some male to male sex workers will reduce their prices to encourage more “sales volume” , or if customers will only increase their agreed payments a slight amount they will agree to engage in highly risky sexual contact, for example: anal sex without a condom or ejaculation inside the body, etcetera. One also finds that where there are so many male to male sex workers competing in the homosexual market, more so than in the heterosexual market, some will cross dress as women to go looking for clients. This is because when dressed as women, male to male sex workers can only provide masturbation or blow jobs, which provide less economic rewards. Of course this method of business will often be seen through by the customers, but the vast majority of clients will permit the transaction to be finalized.

Service Customers

In a country with such a vast population, naturally the customer base of the male to male sex workers of Shanghai is mostly the domestic Chinese market. Since on average the amount which customers can afford to pay for services is less for Chinese than for foreigners, a minority of male to male sex workers engage primarily in servicing foreign clients. Because of Shanghai’ s internationalization, these male to male sex workers have become very visible. Because their clientele is also very different, these kind of male to male sex workers generally earn much more substantial incomes. Naturally therefore these male to male sex workers will display an attitude of social superiority.

Among most of Shanghai’ s male to male sex workers it is common to arise after noon, then in the early afternoon to go meet at gay meeting points such as the Bund or the People’ s Square to hang out, and only begin looking for clients in the evening. Many will look for clients in the public parks or on streets overflowing with tourists. With a wink of the eye or other furtive gesture, a hint for establishing a trade can be communicated. Many male to male sex workers are familiar with the fixed points where customers will await them.

But most of the club based male to male sex workers will arise in the morning,

because they have to share the cleaning responsibilities and cooking duties. Because the club based male to male sex workers have less free time, for many male to male sex workers their waking time is their only free time from having sex. So, most rise early and arrange their things, so they have spare time to wait for customers coming in.

But irrespective of where they work or live, and even though the male to male sex workers of Shanghai are far away from their hometowns, nevertheless their heart is always focused on their families and the idea of family. Even though they work in the sex trade, but they are otherwise very modest in terms of their behavior. Most manage to send money back home, and also fear that one day their circumstances will become known to their family members. Many of them are even very distant from their close neighbors, afraid that those closest to them will come to learn the nature of their actual work. This kind of internal pressure from the family values held by the male to male sex workers, and the emotional anguish it brings, leaves one with a very deep impression.

1.4 Research problems

China has always been a predominantly male oriented society. Dr. Xiangjun Li has written “China, since the oldest of times, has organized social labor divisions by gender, with males as the productive force in the society, and women in charge of the home front, that is men lead outside the home and women work inside the home, which is why Chinese refer to men as Outsiders and women as Insiders. Confucius was also a great supporter of this gender based division of labor. The Confucianists used the ideas from Confucius, to establish this social reality as an ideal form of traditional social relations. While in the most ancient times, China was a matriarchal society, and the culture of women hood was common, but since the familial inheritance system and patriarchy were established, men have become the holders of heaven, and women have been reduced to the dirt. The feudal system relied on subservience for its continuation. It is very visible in the society where men rule the day, and is the tyranny of women (Gongcai Feng, 2006).

China, being a feudalistic society, has very different social statuses attached to being male or female, males hold all the key social strengths, and women are the accessories, as

it were, to men, without any personal freedom of their own. The feudal values emphasized that women must follow the 3 commands (obediences) and 4 virtues, in the home to be obedient to their fathers, after marriage to be obedient to their spouse, after the passing of their spouse and entry into widowhood to be obedient to their adult children, and to practice morality, virtue, forbearance and hard work, etcetera, these were what was expected of the ideal woman, resulting in a situation of men in respected authority and women in inferiority. Women, from their heads to toes, were accessorized, wholly owned and subservient to their men (Zhang, 1995).

But in China, male sex workers even though of the male gender, cannot enjoy the special privileges which the patriarchal society makes available only to “real men”. On the contrary, these male sex workers are just like the women trapped in the feudal society’s brothels, they are victims. Even worse is the fact that for these male sex workers because of their social attitudes, their circumstances are even less advantageous than those of women in society. In the mainland Chinese director Zi-En Cui’s *Diary of a Money Boy*, the male to male sex workers were described as the lowest of the low in the social order.

In the premodern traditional society one might expect to see the subservience of the sex worker to their master, whether for male or female sex workers, they lacked personal self-determination. The futures of the sex worker or their personal happiness were under the control of their superior (master, mamasan, the clientele). Even though they are selling their own bodies, but the sellers are not the true co-beneficiaries of the economic rewards of the transactions. Their fates are in the hands of their superior.

As the society is transforming and against the backdrop of the rapid development of the Chinese economy, it is not possible that the human body can be treated as the property of another, because the modern person and their body are no longer subordinate to others (Yingbing Ling, 2004). Especially as China enters into a capitalistic society, through the path of “socialism with Chinese characteristics”, the rights of ownership and property rights, and the attitudes of self-ownership, and related ideas, have already achieved social prominence. For male to male sex workers in general, the idea of self-ownership is one well understood and agreed upon, and the idea that labor belongs to the laborer to decide

how they will sell and to whom they will sell their services is no longer an uncertainty.

Many male to male sex workers leave their hometowns in order to search for their own life, facing their own sexual identity. But, because of their family values and traditional culture, the male to male sex workers cannot overcome the strictures of the Confucian ethic's influences which mean they are forced to get married with a female in the end. In other words, Chinese society's sexual mores remain tied to the vision of marriage as a cooperative bond between male and female. "When men reach adulthood, they should be husbands, when women reach adulthood, its time to marry", reflects the common Chinese attitudes, which constrain all adult Chinese men and women, as goalposts which cannot be avoided in life, and without achieving these, one's life is considered to be incomplete. The ancient Chinese attitude says there are three kinds of disrespect for one's elders, and that failing to provide progeny to continue the family name is the worst form of disrespect, and along with the values of carrying on the family name and raising kids who will provide one with support in their old age, and related values, marriage, is seen not so much as a means of personal fulfillment and romance, but as the means of meeting the responsibility to have kids and honor the ancestors (Keqiang, 1997).

The nation state considers the family as the basic social unit. Chinese respect Confucianism because the Confucianists teach that social stability is founded upon mutual respect among the sexes and a happy marital life. During the interviews conducted in this research, the writer realized that among the 15 interviewees, whether voluntarily or under compulsion of some sort, and whether they regarded marriage as some sort of social amulet of protection or not, or a means of paying off what was seen as some sort of a social debt, of the 15 interviewees, fully 13 expected to return to their hometowns and get married, establishing a heterosexual household. This conforms to the predictions of Keqiang An in his "The Dark Black Soul under the Red Chinese Sun: On the scenes Reports on China's Gays", that among the cases he analyzed, and as confirmed by many social scientists in China in their surveys, over 90% of China's homosexuals are either already married or certainly expect that it is unavoidable to be so.

Sexual freedom should not be a tool of the government through which to control society. The first publicly avowed homosexual in China, Chunsheng Wu, said, "as long

as there is no effect or harm on others, and one maintains their own good health, every one should enjoy the same right to choose how they will lead their own life including sexual orientation, without fear of interference from others” . It is precisely for this reason, that it is very important to consider why it is that the male to male sex workers remain locked within the confines of the Confucian ethical system. So this research hopes to consider the following questions in light of the interviews with the 15 interviewees:

1. Confucianism remains a very strong influence demanding China’ s male to male sex workers to get married. In light of the double pressures of traditional morality and economic development, how can China’ s male to male sex workers choose their own path?

2. While seeking the freedom to live as one pleases, how can these male to male sex workers view their own line of work in light of their traditional values?

3. Examine these male to male sex workers in terms of their families, educational backgrounds, and emotions, as regards their attitudes toward marriage and money.

The writer earnestly hopes that this research will contribute to the sexual equality so sought after by China’ s male to male sex workers.