



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Legality and Labor: Chinese Migratory Workers in Great Britain

Pieke, F.N.; Xiang, B.

Citation

Pieke, F. N., & Xiang, B. (2010). Legality and Labor: Chinese Migratory Workers in Great Britain. *Encounters*, 3, 15-38. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/19339>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Leiden University Non-exclusive license](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/19339>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Legality and Labor: Chinese Migratory Workers in Great Britain

number 3 fall 2010

Frank N. Pieke
and Xiang
Biao

ABSTRACT

In this article we argue that the state's discourse on migration is not simply a dominant force imposed externally on migrants, but is itself shaped by migrant strategies. These strategies lead to migratory employment and survival practices that in turn produce the social phenomena that originally informed and justified the discourse itself (for example, bogus asylum seeking, an informal labor market and illegal border crossings). We make this argument by looking at the case of Chinese migratory workers in England. We show how, for instance, "legality," "skills," or "qualifications" are not intrinsic qualities that migrants do or do not possess, but are bureaucratic statuses manufactured and commercially supplied in the process of migration. We conclude that the state started with a carefully crafted discourse on "good" and "bad" migration, but ended up with a migratory reality that produces these categories on demand. What results is a regulatory arms race between migrants and state agents that may restrict the total number of migrants who are let in, but on the basis of criteria that have been firmly appropriated by migrants themselves and that have often very little to do with the original intentions of policy.

INTRODUCTION

In the United States and western Europe, neoliberal deregulation of the labor market and curtailing of labor unions have facilitated the employment of immigrant labor, both at the fringe of the formal economy and in the growing unregulated, informal sector. Informal marginal or nominal self-employment, “casualization” of work, subcontracting, and domestic and personal services have encouraged forms of employment that stand in stark contrast with those in the mainstream economy. This informal sector is in many ways reminiscent of early capitalism’s “primitive accumulation” as described by Karl Marx, and which by the 1960s was thought to have safely been exported to the “Third World.” The new informal sector is firmly embedded in the structure of developed capitalist societies, providing crucial goods and services to consumers and producers that in the mainstream economy raise standards of living, depress prices, and increase the competitiveness of firms (Schierup et al. 2006, especially chapter 9). We can thus conclude that neoliberalism has produced what we call neoproletarian employment conditions of undocumented and unskilled or deskilled workers from all over the world.

Traditionally, the Chinese in Britain sought and found employment exclusively in the economy of the Chinese ethnic sector, mainly restaurants and takeaway shops. Since the mid-1990s, the commercialization and generalization of migratory opportunities in China have raised Chinese migration to Britain beyond the level where new arrivals can be absorbed by the Chinese ethnic economy. Moreover, many newcomers are from entirely different parts of China than the established Chinese community, making it harder to access and especially keep jobs with Chinese employers. Forced to look elsewhere for employment, they join migrants from all over the world as members of the neo-proletariat. As a consequence, the traditional barriers are lowered between the ethnic Chinese and non-Chinese sectors of the economy, with both Chinese and non-Chinese workers moving more freely back and forth between them.

The countries of the developed world in the West continue to admit more immigrants than their governments say they want or need. There is thus a clear gap between official immigration policies and actual policy outcomes (Cornelius and Tsuda 2004; see also Joppke 1998). Part of this policy gap is explained by the impact of domestic and international institutions and legal restrictions beyond the direct reach of the government. However, the need to cater for conflicting interests in society also plays an important role. Most of the costs of immigration devolve to the less privileged classes (real or perceived loss of jobs to immigrants, pressure on housing, schooling, health care, public transport and welfare, co-residence with immigrants), while most of the benefits are reaped by the middle and upper classes and employers

(cheaper and better services, increased supply of labor). As Stephen Castles points out, this frequently leads to “hidden agendas” in migration policies, where “politicians sometimes give lip service to anti-immigration rhetoric while actually pursuing policies that lead to more immigration” (Castles 2004: 867; for a similar conclusion, see Cornelius and Tsuda 2004: 41–42).

The disjunction between rhetoric and reality, we believe, gets us right to the heart of some of the problems that continue to confront Western immigration policies. Immigration regulation is based on the assumption that the demand in the national economy for immigrant labor should be overridden by the “national interest.” This assumption means either that regulators can do a better job than the market in gauging the labor supply needs of the national economy, or, alternatively, that market forces have to be contained lest they rend the fabric of the harmonious national community. In East Asia and the Middle East, this is normally done through contract labor schemes that allow workers in without extending civil or permanent residency rights to them. Governments in the Western world balk at the human rights implications of this policy (and in Europe, they also have vivid memories of the flawed “guest worker” schemes of the 1960s and the early 1970s), preferring “managed migration” that sifts desirable migrants with scarce skills, education, or simply cash from undesirable migrants who try to enter with only their labor to offer.

In this article, we provide ethnographic evidence that the production of migrants in sending areas in China, the mechanics of migration itself, and life and work upon arrival are all strongly informed by the categories of the neoliberal discourse on managed migration. However, it would be a mistake to think that the contrasting concepts describing migration that underpin the discourse, mainly “legal” vs. “illegal,” “economic” vs. “political,” and “skilled” vs. “unskilled,” simply serve to constrain or restrict migration in the way envisioned by policy makers. As we will show in this article, migration discourse is not simply a dominant force imposed externally by the state on migrants, but is itself appropriated by migrant strategies. These strategies lead to migratory, employment, and survival practices that, in turn, produce the social phenomena (bogus asylum seeking, an informal labor market, illegal border crossing) that originally informed and justified the discourse itself. Furthermore, and as a final irony, some of the very discursive categories themselves are not simply externally imposed on migrants. For instance, “legality,” “skills,” or “qualifications” are not intrinsic qualities that migrants do or do not possess, but bureaucratic statuses manufactured and commercially supplied in the process of migration. We argue that the state began with a carefully crafted discourse on “good” and “bad” migration, but ended up with a migratory reality that produces these categories on demand. As a result, a regulatory arms race between migrants and state agents may restrict the total number of migrants that are let in, but on the basis of

criteria that have been firmly appropriated by migrants themselves and that have often very little to do with the original intentions of policy making.

Britain is a particularly relevant country for the purposes of this study. Until the economic downturn in 2008, Great Britain was the favorite European destination for many Chinese migrants. The reasons for this included the strength of the British pound, the UK's lack of in-border restrictions on migrant life and employment (often termed "good human rights" by Chinese migrants), the attraction of an English-language environment (to many migrants, Britain and other Anglophone countries are a proxy for the most desirable country of all, the United States), a large existing Chinese community and ethnic Chinese economic sector, and, for richer or more highly educated Chinese, a commercialized education sector. Discursively, too, the Chinese are an important immigrant group. In public discussions and policy papers on the pros and cons of immigration, the Chinese stand both for all that is good and all that is bad about migration. The 2000 Dover and 2004 Morecambe Bay incidents have become paradigmatic of the evils of human smuggling, illegal labor, and bogus asylum seeking, embodying all the reasons why migration requires much more state intervention. Conversely, Chinese students and skilled professionals (including those from Hong Kong and Taiwan) are the paragons of the good migrant that the managed migration of the state should help to attract.

Our fieldwork on Chinese migration to Britain consists of two separate ethnographic projects. Xiang has been working on out-migration from Northeast China (also known as Manchuria) since 2004, with a focus on the role of migration agents. By 2007 he had interviewed about seventy people in China, with more than half being recruitment agents or others involved in the emigration business, and the other half being would-be migrants and Chinese government officials. He also conducted five in-depth interviews with Chinese community activists and migration lawyers in London. Pieke conducted a research project in 2006 on Chinese illegal immigrant labor and employment in the UK. This project yielded thirty-five interviews with recent (since 2000) illegal Chinese immigrants in the UK and eleven interviews with British police and government officials.¹ The two projects complement each other in many respects, with Xiang's work offering detailed insight into the operations of the highly commercialized Chinese migration market, and Pieke's project focusing on the experiences of the most vulnerable and least understood of Chinese migrants, namely those who remain in Britain without the right to live or work in the country.

PRODUCING MIGRANTS AND MANUFACTURING LEGALITY IN NORTHEAST CHINA AND BRITAIN

Since the mid-1970s, emigration from the People's Republic of China (PRC)

gradually resumed after an almost total ban on out-migration during the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). Currently, the PRC allows, in principle at least, foreign travel and emigration of almost all Chinese citizens who can produce a visa or other evidence of the right of legitimate entry to a foreign country (Xiang 2003). Changes in the Chinese emigration regime since China's began opening up to the outside world and since the economic reforms beginning in 1978 have boosted and commercialized emigration to such an extent that emigration has become a near-universal phenomenon across most of the country, particularly in the more developed coastal and central regions. Chinese immigration has also become a near-universal phenomenon across the globe; currently, it is hard to name a country that is not a destination for Chinese migrants. In the UK alone in the year 2004–05, there were 59,000 PRC citizens staying at least a year, which makes the PRC the third largest immigrant-sending country after India (99,000) and Poland (76,000).ⁱⁱ


Since the late 1970s, and accelerating in the early 1990s, Chinese migration changed almost beyond recognition. Some old overseas Chinese areas have capitalized on their overseas links and have turned into commercialized migration configurations with a truly global reach. In these areas, emigration has become virtually universal; migrating abroad is the number one choice for pursuing success for all but the very rich, the very poor, the very young, and the very old. Simultaneously, emigration has also become a much more generally available avenue for social mobility across China's (mainly urban) working, middle, and upper classes. Here, unlike the commercialized overseas Chinese migration configurations, emigration is far from the only choice that people can consider. Instead, a decision to emigrate is based on diverse educational, employment, or entrepreneurial strategies in which emigration is carefully weighed up against domestic employment, entrepreneurship, or higher education, all of which may also include possible migration elsewhere in China. In other words, these migratory flows have to be understood as transnational aspects of domestic patterns of geographical and social mobility resulting from the fundamental changes that have taken place in Chinese society, rather than being caused by the near-universal "culture of migration" in many overseas Chinese areas.ⁱⁱⁱ Migrants of this type end up in a range of employment and living conditions. Many aspire to find white-collar employment or self-employment, but, as we will see in section four, a considerable number may actually have to settle for low-skilled work.

Immigration from mainland China did not concern the British authorities until the 1990s. In 1989, the UK government adopted the so-called China policy, which granted "exceptional leave to remain" (equivalent to permanent residency) to any Chinese citizen who was in the UK by June 4, in response to the Chinese government's crackdown on the mass protest movement on that day. This policy lasted until 1993. The number of Chinese applicants was


smaller than the government expected, but the UK policy towards Chinese migrants tightened after the mid-1990s in response to the sudden surge of asylum applications from smuggled migrants, particularly those from Fujian.

As in many other countries, a more recent trend in the UK has been the arrival of urban Chinese, particularly from Northeast China, since the late 1990s. Three characteristics of the emigration of the Northerners stand out clearly. First, most of the migrants from the Northeast are from large cities instead of the countryside, with the cities of Shenyang and Dalian in Liaoning province being the most common places of origin. Second, almost all the Northerners entered the UK legally using a genuine passport and visitor's visa. Since the early 2000s, smaller numbers of Northerners have also been coming to the UK on genuine work permits as Chinese medical doctors, nurses, butchers, mushroom growers, manufacturing workers, and chefs. Although Fujianese since the turn of the twenty-first century have also been increasingly traveling legally, the availability of legal migration channels in Fujian is part of a broad range of services that are offered by local snakeheads. These services also continue to include decidedly illegal services developed from the 1980s onwards, such as procurement of forged documents or cross-border smuggling from Mexico and Canada, that are not on the menu in the Northeast (for details, see Pieke et al. 2004, chapter 3; Soudijn 2006; Zhang 2008). The fact that most Northerners enter the UK legally, thus leaving records with the authorities, does not stop them from overstaying their visa and thus becoming illegal. If legal migrants decide to apply for asylum, they can easily claim that their possession of genuine Chinese passports was made possible by official corruption. Alternatively, as no biometric data are collected and recorded in visa applications, migrants can simply throw away their passports and use other names for asylum applications.

INVESTING IN LEGALITY: THE PRODUCTION OF MIGRANTS IN NORTHWEST CHINA

Student migration played a major role in starting migration from the Chinese Northeast. Many of these students were “working students,” whose primary objective was not necessarily to study but to work in the UK. The students not only raised the awareness about the UK in the Northeast, but some also brought their parents to the UK. Indeed, some agencies in the Northeast advertised as a selling point the claim that study in the UK would also facilitate parental visits. 

The majority of the Northerners enter the UK on business visit visas procured by specialist migration agents. The reported agent fees vary widely, from as low as RMB (renminbi) 20,000 to as high as RMB 110,000.

 Northerners pay much less for migrating legally than the Fujianese

pay for smuggling (RMB 250,000–310,000 in early 2007). The price is much lower for those with work experience in a large state-owned enterprise and for those who look urbane. Peasants, on the other hand, have to pay around RMB 100,000; it requires much more effort and skill to turn a peasant into a business visitor. When asked, a former official at the Liaoning Provincial Academy of Sciences, who is now running a trading company-cum-recruitment agency in Shenyang, said:

Unlike those in other parts of China, Northeasterners are well educated and economically well off . . . Since they have an urban background and education, and can get certificates and documents from their work units, their papers look much better than those of the peasants from the south. Foreigners are happy to process their cases and to give them visas.^y

21

To obtain business visit visas, agents work transnationally. On the China side, the migrant has to provide a letter from his or her work unit, a salary slip for more than RMB 3,000 a month, and a bank statement proving access to at least RMB 50,000 while in the UK. If the migrant looks fine but cannot provide these documents, the agent can help for an additional RMB 20,000. If the British consulate in China requires an interview, the agent is responsible for coaching. On the UK side, the agent needs to secure an invitation letter from a company. This is not simple. First, the invitation letters must be genuine, that is, they must be issued by a properly registered enterprise. Second, for the invitation to look more convincing, the migrant is often invited to participate in a conference, exhibition, or trade fair, rather than travel for a general visit. The agent then needs to register the hosting firm with the event beforehand. Finally, as we were told repeatedly by agents in both China and the UK, an agent must not use the same firm to issue invitation letters twice in a row, as this would attract the suspicion of the authorities. Connections with legitimate companies are often regarded as the most important asset of agents; conversely, maintaining these relationships constitutes the main cost of the business.

Almost all the agents in China we interviewed stated to their clients (migrants) that they do not process the cases themselves. The agents stressed the fact that their British partner would be the main party in charge. “We will do all this for you from the UK,” one agent in Shenyang declared while making a huge wave with his hand, signaling a collaboration spanning half of the globe. When we asked a Hong Kong Chinese running an agency in London’s Chinatown whether he could help bring our friend to the UK, he corrected us immediately: “I don’t do this. Our lawyers in the back do it. We have our backstage (houtai). We have people in the Home Office, Immigration Bureau, in law.” His thumb pointed to the back room, a small storage for a Chinese medical shop next door, as if a lawyer in wig and gown were sitting

there working furiously.^{vi} Projecting themselves as nothing but front shops and stressing that the real power is in the hands of other people may be uncommon practices for services businesses. However, the migration agents enhance their authority by highlighting the role of a mysterious “backstage” that is ultimately linked to the power of the state.

First-class agencies in China have connections with large state-owned enterprises and are therefore able to provide convincing documents for would-be migrants. Even more important, such agents should also be connected to foreign embassies or consulates in China. Their partners in the UK should have connections with proper companies that can produce “weighty” invitations. “Weight” (*lidu*) is a term commonly used by agents in the Northeast in describing how convincing an invitation is for an embassy or consulate. For instance, an invitation from a well-known firm with trade relations with China carries much more weight than one from a Chinese takeaway shop.

Based on their connections, powerful agents often provide “guaranteed visas” (*baoqian*); the agency guarantees the issuing of the visa and normally the migrant will not be called to the consulate for an interview. The price for guaranteed visa service is much higher than for the ordinary service, and agents tend to provide guaranteed visa service only to people with an urban household registration (*hukou*) and documented work experience in a large state-owned enterprise. The prices for guaranteed visa service during our fieldwork in the Northeast were RMB 220,000 for the USA, RMB 60,000 for Germany, and RMB 70,000 for the UK. In the UK case, the migrant pays half of the money up front, and makes a final payment when the consulate issues the visa. If the migrant decides to return to China before the expiration of the visa (business visas are valid for 180 days and allow multiple entries), she or he will be refunded RMB 50,000. In other words, the agent charges only RMB 20,000 for the visa application and RMB 50,000 to cover the risks to the inviting enterprise if the migrant overstays the visa. The assistant to the general director of a licensed agent in Shenyang explained to us that powerful agents normally rely on someone inside the provincial government or the consulate for running the business, and both the agents and their contacts want to be cautious. “Who would want to lose these kinds of jobs [in the government or the consulate]? They think of the long term.”^{vii}

Less well-placed agents provide “non-guaranteed” or ordinary visa service (*bu baoqian*) at only half the price charged for the “guaranteed” service. Non-guaranteed service is meant mainly for those who have difficulty in producing convincing documents, particularly residents of small towns or village. Non-guaranteed visa service does not mean that migrants lose all their money if they do not get their visa in the end. By the early 2000s, it had become standard practice for migrants to receive the refund of most of the payment if the application failed, except the initial fees for registration with

the agency and the costs actually incurred. The main problem with the non-guaranteed visa service is that it is unpredictable; the agent in the UK needs to wait for an opportune event, and the China agent is dependent on small windows of opportunity when his inside person is in charge at the consulate.

Non-guaranteed visa service requires a much greater investment on the part of the migrant than guaranteed service. For instance, agents without strong “inside” connections sometimes first send their clients to Cyprus, New Zealand, or Australia as tourists to get a record of international travel in their passports, and only then send them to the UK. “Blank passports” (*bai ben'er* or *bai zhao'er* as they are called in the industry) have a much lower chance of being granted business visit visas. The costs for these preparatory tours are, of course, shouldered by the migrants, even if they never get their UK visa in the end. Would-be migrants are often worried that non-guaranteed visa service is a scam by the agent to rake in registration fees and alleged costs, which in total can amount to RMB 10,000, without any intention of actually procuring a visa.

Another peculiar source of the Northeasterners’ travel legality is the Korean connection of some of them; most self-claimed North Korean refugees in the UK are likely to be Korean Chinese from the Northeast.^{viii} With the aid of agencies run by South Koreans and Chinese, these migrants leave China for the UK on their own Chinese passports. Before going through customs, they exchange their Chinese passports for South Korean ones in the UK with a South Korean agent who accompanies them during the flight. As South Korean citizens they are allowed to enter the UK without visas. Afterwards, they apply for asylum by claiming to be North Koreans who had bought the South Korean passports in China. South Korean passports are also reported to be sold to ethnic Koreans in China for a price of RMB 40,000.^{ix}

“OPENING THE PATH”: MANUFACTURERS OF LEGALITY IN CHINA AND THE UK

Liaoning Services for Foreign Travel Ltd., an agent in Shenyang affiliated to the Liaoning provincial government, was a pioneer in sending migrants to the UK on work permits. In 2004 and 2005, the company sent out more than fifty workers; in early 2005, they planned to place another 240 workers by May 2006. Liaoning Services charged RMB 110,000 per worker as a basic fee. In addition, the migrant pays for training and other costs. For instance, a migrant who is prepared to move to the UK to work as a butcher needs to practice on two cows in order to master the basic skills as a slaughterer, the cost of which is RMB 5,000. When we said that RMB 110,000 sounded high, the founder and legal representative of Liaoning Services, who also was an official of the local Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, stood up and said: “This is completely legal! [...] You can spend 30,000 on a business visa, but you will have to become illegal later. With us you don’t need to worry at

all.” Legality clearly is manufactured to different degrees and in all kinds of variety, all of which carry their own price tag.^x

Our informant was upset also because manufacturing a fully legal work permit really does cost a lot. A lawyer in London charges £3,000 (RMB 52,000) for a Chinese application for a work permit. Normally, the migrant pays £800 up front, a further £1,800 when the process starts, and an additional £400 for job advertisements. According to UK regulations, an employer wishing to recruit an employee from abroad has to provide the advertisements as proof that he or she has been unable to find British or other workers with the right to work in the UK, a task that is commonly taken care of by the lawyer. On top of that, Liaoning Services pays RMB 20,000 to certain staff working in the UK consulate in Shenyang for each visa issued to their clients.^{xi}


Our informant at Liaoning Services started the work permit business with an investment by one of his friends, a China representative of a large international pharmaceutical company. This friend had visited the UK a few times and had got to know a Pakistani who runs an agency in London. The Pakistani introduced him to a law firm that specializes in immigration, with its headquarters in Dublin and a branch in London. The friend persuaded another person in Shenyang to join, and the two invested RMB 2 million, mainly to develop connections with consulates and to pay the London-based lawyer. As the two investors are not specialists in migration and have no licensed companies to process documents, they asked Liaoning Services to take care of the business. Liaoning Services charges a certain percentage as commission. This kind of investment to develop transnational chains to facilitate migration is called “opening the path” (*kaifang xianlu*) in the industry.

The chain works like this. The Pakistani finds companies that wish to employ Chinese workers. He then contacts the lawyer. The Pakistani charges RMB 15,000 per migrant for himself. Through the Pakistani, the lawyer receives RMB 55,000 for each migrant from Liaoning Services, including a sum of RMB 15,000 that the lawyer says has to be paid to the Home Office. The lawyer prepares the full documentation for submission to the Home Office as well as for the visa application at the British consulate in Shenyang. Liaoning Services transfers money to the Pakistani firm to be passed on to the lawyer. In order to keep a close eye on the process in the UK, one of the two investors has his niece, who originally went to the UK as a student, working in the Pakistani firm.

When asked why he still pays RMB 20,000 to the UK consulate insider when the entire process is completely legal anyway, Zheng said that he did this for the sake of the migrants and to reduce the risk of rejection and the subsequent appeal: “We want to send the workers to the UK as quickly as possible. A worker can earn RMB 200,000 a year in the UK, and we can earn

RMB 20,000 once they can go. I would rather pay the extra RMB 20,000 to make sure that the workers can start earning money early.”


The heavy investment has paid off. After the first batch of workers started remitting money home, their relatives and friends approached Liaoning Services as well. No one bargained about the price. Liaoning Services now charges the workers upfront, and the UK side no longer demands in-advance payment. Liaoning Services is also sending workers to Italy, mainly as porters and chefs, again through the same Pakistani agent who has an office in Rome that places East European migrants in Italy.

Legality is not only manufactured for prospective emigrants in China. Chinese and their employers who are already in the UK also need professional help to maintain or create their legal status, a testimony to the immigration “arms race” between migrants and the state referred to in the introduction of this article. The immigration business has flourished in the UK since the mid-1990s. As the government tries to clamp down on “illegal” or “undesirable” immigration by erecting ever higher regulatory barriers, employers rely increasingly on specialist law firms in dealing with immigration issues.  2005, 40 per cent of all work permit applications to the British Home Office were made by representatives on behalf of employers.^{xiii} “There have been immigration solicitors ever since there was immigration regulation,” a London-based lawyer specializing in Chinese immigration commented, but immigration solicitors are indispensable now with the regulations becoming ever more complicated. The UK Home Office changes the rules twice a year, and the lawyer admitted that even he cannot keep abreast of all of it. “Everyone wants to stay legal as long as it is possible. But probably as many as 70 per cent of the migrants who come legally do not have the complete documents that meet all the requirements of the UK government. [...] You really need a legal representative in order to have a good chance to be successful.”^{xiv}

Registered solicitors, the only party authorized by the Home Office to be the legal representative of migrants, are an essential link in the business of manufacturing legality. However, some migrants never meet the solicitor who is their formal representative. Instead, they deal with their solicitor and the Home Office through an interpreter, usually a Chinese with several years of residence in the UK. Interpreters are in actual fact much more than that, taking on many of the tasks of a solicitor. The interpreter introduces the migrant’s case to the solicitor with whom he or she works. The interpreter also accompanies the migrant to the Home Office and to other government departments when the migrant is called for interviews. Interpreters charge fees on behalf of the solicitors, earning a certain percentage themselves. They also charge for other services that they may be asked to provide separately (such as preparing documents and providing interpretation services for interviews), usually £100–£300 for each time.

“Visa agents” are institutionally positioned between solicitors and individual interpreters. They are not qualified solicitors, yet they are more formal than interpreters and often have registered businesses and offices. They commonly reside in Chinatowns and advertise in Chinese newspapers. Very few agents provide comprehensive services, including facilitating entry, finding jobs and accommodation, and sorting out long-term status; instead legality is offered piecemeal. Many agents in the UK provide supplementary documents needed for creating or maintaining legality. Business visitors need to declare their address in the UK at their point of entry into the UK; asylum seekers likewise must give an address to the authorities in order to obtain temporary residence. To provide for this need, agents “hire” addresses from those who have resided in the UK for a long period of time for a fee of £300. They then rent the address to solicitors, snakeheads, or other types of immigration brokers for £500.^{xv}

China-England Consultancy, which was set up by a student who came from Tianjin, charges £200 for a chef qualification certificate from vocational colleges in China, and £150 for a letter from a hotel that is authorized to host foreign guests in China. He does this through collaboration with a partner in Tianjin. The most difficult part of the business, he said, is to decide how to divide the profit between him and the Tianjin partner. As the Tianjin partner needs to find new (that is, different from the one they have used already) colleges and hotels constantly for the documents, the cost varies from case to case, but at his end he wants a relatively stable price for the client.^{xvi}

The evidence presented in this section shows what “migration management” means at the ground level. From the perspective of migrants from the Northeast of China, migration management is synonymous with commercialization and professionalization. Migrants quite simply employ professionals who “manage” their migration for them, rather than the state “managing” the nature and number of migrants who are allowed into the UK. The commercial sector manipulates and creates the relevant biographical evidence to fit the categories of the UK’s immigration policy, turning “illegal,” “unskilled,” and “unwanted” individuals into “legal,” “skilled,” and “useful” immigrants or visitors. From the perspective of policy makers, this may be no more than a problem of execution; the policy is right  is just that it hasn’t been carried out properly. Hence, solutions ought to be sought for stricter enforcement, closing loopholes in the rules, ferreting out corrupt consulate personnel, and using more sophisticated technology (that is, the “e-borders” project of the British Home Office).^{xvii} No doubt such measures will have a certain effect; the manufacture of legality will have to keep up with the changes, and as a result, the price of manufactured legality will rise and fewer migrants will be able or willing to pay. Yet we doubt that such migration “management” will achieve its stated objective of proactively selecting who it wishes to let into the country and on what terms; not the

most “useful” or “wanted,” but simply the most clever, stubborn, lucky, or wealthy will continue to manage their own migration successfully. The commercialization of migration has created an elaborate professional sector that specializes in matching the state’s efforts and in dodging whatever new hurdles it puts in the path of migrants. In the end, we predict that migration management will simply boil down to a bureaucratic and technological arms race and spending war, with no clear end in sight.

However, our bottom-up look at Chinese migration does not only reveal the fallacy of the concept of “management” when it comes to controlling international migration. We also question the more fundamental assumption that the state ought to manage migration by focusing its efforts on controlling a highly porous border. International migration is, after all, predominantly driven by a real or perceived demand for immigrant labor, and it is extremely questionable to argue that the state is better able to gauge demand than the market. In the next section, we look at the employment patterns of illegal Chinese immigrants in the UK for gaining an ethnographic view of labor “demand” and “supply.” We will show that, much like the concept of “legality,” “demand” for immigrant Chinese labor does not exist externally or separately from the practice of immigration and immigrant employment; immigrant labor creates its own demand, thereby changing the very structure of the economy itself.

MIGRANT LABOR IN THE UK: BEYOND THE ETHNIC ENCLAVE

The increased influx of illegal or visa-overstaying migrants from very diverse backgrounds has not only altered the composition of the Chinese population in the UK, but also its employment patterns and structural position in the British economy and society. In the late 1990s, the first signs of diversification of employment among Chinese migrants were already visible. By the mid-2000s, although the Chinese catering trade and the ethnic sector still remain the main areas of employment, Chinese migrants who do not enter as students or skilled immigrants have become highly enterprising in exploring possibilities elsewhere, mainly in agriculture, cockle picking and food processing, manufacturing, construction and repairs, prostitution, and hawking. The Chinese journalists, community activists, solicitors, and agents whom we interviewed conceptualized these changes as the problem of “absorbing” (*xishou*), “digesting” (*xiaohua*), and “dissolving” (*rongru*) new Chinese migrants, including the Fujianese who also increasingly seek job opportunities outside of the ethnic sector. Even within the Chinese sector, few migrants limit themselves to pre-existing familial or local networks in their search for jobs, and Chinese migrants experience a very high level of mobility in employment.


In the course of our interviews with illegal migrants, we found that the

trajectory of their employment career follows a reasonably set pattern, despite frequent opportunistic shifts from one type of employment to another, and despite the very different operations of immigration facilitators in Fujian and travel agencies in urban China that brought them to the UK to begin with. Most immigrants had at least one contact in Britain upon arrival, usually a person from their own hometown or area, to help them get started. The minority of migrants who arrived without any contacts usually relied on their snakehead for a first job and a place to stay. However, this definitely was not the preferred option, as these people ended up in even lower paid jobs than other recent arrivals, and sometimes even had to pay an additional fee to the snakehead for this service. The first paid employment of almost all immigrants was in the catering trade, mainly in restaurants as a kitchen help, and usually in London. These jobs typically paid between £100 and £150 a week, plus a bed in a room above the restaurant and two meals. Working hours were the normal ones for legal and illegal employees alike in Chinese restaurants: 10–12 hours a day, six or sometimes even seven days a week. Most of the migrants we interviewed had left their first employment within months, weeks, or even days. In the catering trade, both employer and employee are expected to give only a week's notice, and employees get paid by the week in cash. Some resigned, citing low pay, hard work, bullying by the owner or the first cook, and inability to understand either Cantonese or English as the main reasons. Others were fired when the owner or the first cook found another, even cheaper illegal migrant, or a friend, relative, or somebody else from his or her own native area to take their place. After their first job, some migrants continued with similar jobs in the catering trade, usually at only marginally higher pay, interspersed with shorter or longer periods of unemployment. Such migrants in particular felt utterly dependent on the vagaries of the market for cheap illegal labor, especially since relationships with employers in most cases continued to be purely transactional.

However, many migrants very soon after their arrival began to explore other types of employment outside the catering sector working for non-Chinese employers that have emerged since the mid-1990s. As we saw at the start of this section, in their search for employment, migrants frequently drew upon the services of professional agents, both Chinese and non-Chinese. Such employment offered pay comparable to the wages for unskilled jobs in the catering sector, or in some cases even less. The types of employment mentioned by our interviewees include seasonal agricultural work (cherry picking, lettuce harvesting), food processing, cleaning, industrial assembly, and garment manufacture.

At an informal level, migrants often sell jobs to fellow migrants. When a worker finds a greener pasture elsewhere, he recommends a friend to the boss as a replacement before moving on. If the boss agrees to hire

this friend, the latter pays the former a fee of £100–£200. More than one interviewee cited this as an example of the sad side of working abroad—the commodification of friendship, or, in their words, the loss of the sense of human obligation (*meiyou renqing weir*). There are also a few registered, and many more unregistered, Chinese placement agents. Some agents are connected to restaurants in Chinatown, while others operate outside of Chinatown. One Northeastern man, for instance, organizes labor gangs of between 10 to 50 workers to serve large events, such as music fairs and exhibitions. He spoke some English and also had contact with a British placement agent. When he gets an assignment, he calls a few students, who in turn bring their friends over. Lastly, non-Chinese employment agencies also place Chinese migrants.

Thames Oriental Manpower Management, whose owner claims to be a political refugee from North Korea, is probably the best known of such agencies. The agency, which began as a one-person shop, linked up with Samsung UK, which subsequently outsourced the recruitment for all its factories to Oriental Manpower. Oriental Manpower charges a worker £100 for registration—a standard practice employed by all legitimate agencies in the UK—to create a work permit and a National Insurance number without which factories are not allowed to employ the worker, often using photocopies of genuine documents. Across the UK, Oriental Manpower disappeared in early 2004 after one of its workers, who was from Heilongjiang, died after stamping the word Samsung on microwave ovens for 24 hours  2003.

Chinese gangmasters, often illegal migrants themselves, work as subagents for larger agents by bringing in or by supervising workers. In order for the workers to be accepted by the agent, the gangmaster has to provide proper papers, including passports, which are sold to the workers for £400–£500 each. Apart from this business of “status manufacturing,” the gangmaster makes money from the commission paid by the agent and by charging the workers for accommodation, transport, and registration. Migrants are completely free to walk away and turn to another agent (they own the identity papers that they have paid for), but will have to pay a registration fee of about £100 every time they register with a new agent.

Gangmasters play a central role in the cockle-picking industry, which has become an important occupation for recent Chinese migrants. Although the public media portrayed the Morecambe Bay tragedy of early 2004 as an inevitable consequence of migrants’ illegality and the workers’ slave-like submission to snakehead–Triad–criminal gangs,^{xi} in fact, the operation was neither completely illegal nor were the migrants enslaved. For instance, the gangmaster held the necessary permits for the picking, and two of the nineteen dead were white Europeans.^{xx}

There were still other actors between the smart white men and the



Chinese. Chinese cockling gangs faced resentment from British pickers, and most fish-processing companies in the area did not want to get into trouble by buying cockles directly from the Chinese. Thus, the Chinese gangs often relied on English-speaking Malaysian Chinese to sell their cockles.^{xxi} Some British cockle pickers, too, started buying cockles from the Chinese, selling them on to companies. Instead of criminal syndicates that coerce and control powerless Chinese workers, what emerge are loosely structured networks of Chinese and British operators that bridge the world of illegal migrant-workers and mainstream society. The working conditions for the migrants are undoubtedly inhumane and exploitative, but they enter employment voluntarily and are free to leave at any time. Work for illegal migrants in cleaning, agriculture, or industry through agencies entails overly long hours for little pay, exploitative conditions, very few if any rights, and no job security. Work is sometimes also physically extremely demanding. For instance, ironing clothes in a garment workshop was considered so hard that it could not be done for more than one year at the very most. In this neo-proletarian segment of the labor market, workers are treated as what Karl Marx called “free” labor, free from any social ties and obligations, free to compete with other workers, free to be employed and fired at a moment’s notice, and free from any requirements of skill or experience (Marx and Engels 1965, chapter 3). Neo-proletarian employment conditions, in other words, reduce immigrant workers to “pure” labor deployed anonymously for the realization of value without concern for their humanity or for any specific assets or demands that they may bring to the workplace. In neo-proletarian employment in contemporary late capitalist societies, in other words, a mode of production and exploitation is realized that is free from the fetters of the welfare state, and is strikingly similar to early capitalism as described by Marx (Marx 1958).

However, as far as the Chinese are concerned, the neo-proletarian sector of the economy does not exist independently of the traditional ethnic sector: Chinese workers submit to the conditions of the neo-proletarian sector because the ethnic economy has nothing better to offer. Conversely, for the British economy, the spread of neo-proletarian employment has meant that the forms of exploitation of Chinese labor that were formerly restricted to the ethnic enclave have become accessible to other sectors as well. Neo-proletarian employment was for none of our interviewees a long-term prospect. The risks, transience, and low pay made it a form of survival and a means of paying back their migration debts. With no savings or social security on which to fall back, illegal immigrants have to stay employed at all cost, and our interviewees tended to move back and forth between unskilled jobs in the Chinese catering trade and the larger neo-proletarian labor market. They remained at the mercy of the vagaries of these labor markets, including those caused by the unpredictable changes in government policy and policy

enforcement. After the incident in 2004, for instance, there was greater risk to cockle pickers in Morecombe Bay of being identified by the authorities as illegal immigrants, and many cockle pickers turned to other forms of employment, including catering. They did so despite the requirement imposed upon employers in the same year to check the employment status of employees, which suddenly made traditional informal employment practices in Chinese restaurants much more risky (Beck 2007: 148–50).

None of our interviewees reported that they had been forced into any form of employment by snakeheads, legal or illegal gangmasters, or criminals. The picture here is, in fact, identical to the situation regarding smuggling; migrants enter into employment voluntarily and can leave whenever they want. Even interviewees who continued to be in debt to snakeheads were never forced to work, although they were reminded of their obligation to pay, which in two cases had led to severe beatings and injuries. Although some snakeheads have branched out into organizing labor gangs, it was only in a few cases that we encountered connivance between gangmasters and snakeheads to keep workers under control. Nevertheless, illegal Chinese working for British or other non-Chinese employers or gangmasters quite frequently suffered verbal or physical abuse, general ill-treatment, non-payment of wages, and arbitrary deductions of fees. A further hazard is protection rackets run by local Chinese criminal gangs that prey on illegal Chinese, particularly when they are concentrated in labor gangs and provide an easy target. This is an important point, as it shows that there are serious problems with the neo-proletarian sector of the British economy, which is, in large part, dependent on an abundance of illegal immigrant labor, in general. Workers put up with squalid living conditions, hard work, and low pay simply because it is better than no work at all. In sum, immigrants voluntarily enter into, and decide to stay on in, often seriously exploitative and dangerous situations. As Marx said, a free labor market makes coercion simply unnecessary.

Because migrants move back and forth between their ethnic and the neo-proletarian sectors, it would be incorrect to think that the employment of Chinese migrants is simply limited to ethnic enclave employment. Even if we limit ourselves, as we do in this article, to illegal immigrants who operate under very difficult circumstances, Chinese migrants have inserted themselves much more broadly (and possibly also permanently) in the British economy than they had done fifteen years ago. Neo-proletarian employment has propelled Chinese migrants into mainstream society and, although many return to the ethnic sector at some point, many others eventually find other types of employment that, from their perspective, are less mercilessly exploitative and insecure, although not necessarily less illegal or dangerous.

After several jobs in catering, agriculture, food processing, or the garment industry, and usually after two or three years in the UK, many Chinese immigrants managed to upgrade their employment. However, only one of

the thirty-five immigrants we interviewed had achieved the traditional token of success for Chinese migrants, namely owning their own restaurant, which she, in fact, subsequently had to abandon again. Some immigrants followed the traditional path of upward mobility and became skilled restaurant cooks, particularly those with a background in catering in China, but many of the men branched out into construction, quite often because they could put to good use the skills learned in China. Usually working for non-Chinese building companies, they could make at least double the amount (typically £250–£300 per week) that unskilled work in the neo-proletarian labor market would earn. Just as importantly, this type of work gave them much more independence, freedom of movement, and security. The men also often appreciated the greater contact with British society and the opportunity to learn some English. All of this added to a sense that their migration project had succeeded.

Construction was not an option for women, however, and more than men they tended to remain in the catering trade or engaged in other forms of unskilled employment. However, for some women prostitution has become a way out of such employment in a way that is quite similar to how working in construction for men operates. As in many other European countries, Chinese prostitution has become a common phenomenon, catering both to East and Southeast Asian and British customers, and working for or through Chinese or British brothel owners or pimps. The three prostitutes we interviewed had turned to this line of work only after having been in other types of employment in the UK; none had been trafficked to work in the sex industry and none felt that she could terminate her employment if and when she wished. This conclusion based on interviews with the migrants is, in general, corroborated by the evidence given by the police officers who were interviewed for this project. They, too, had not encountered cases of involuntary employment or trafficking among Chinese. One police officer did, in fact, express a certain amount of surprise at this, as involuntary employment and trafficking were common among many other immigrant groups. The exception was the Joint Intelligence Unit in Kent. In 2005 and 2006, the unit had worked on eight cases of Chinese trafficking and abuse of prostitutes. These cases usually involved the recruitment of women in China for prostitution in the UK. Although their initial recruitment tended to be voluntary, once in the UK, these women's migration debt and the threats and abuse they faced left them with little choice but to work for the Chinese or British brothel owners who had acquired them from their smugglers. Chinese prostitutes were, moreover, frequently trafficked within the UK, and were treated as commodities that could be traded, bought, or sold.^{xvii}

Several of our interviewees reported that the clampdown on illegal employment and gangmasters had made them decide to explore yet other possibilities, sometimes on the other side of the law. Most frequently

mentioned was hawking counterfeit DVDs, thereby arguably ending up engaged in even more illegality. Hawking Chinese cigarettes has been common in London's Chinatown since at least the early 1990s, but the market for DVDs is much greater as it is not limited to the Chinese. Like hawking cigarettes in Chinatown, selling DVDs is a highly opportunistic and individual activity; a hawker only has to deal with the supplier of pirated DVDs, and on a good day can easily earn £50 or more. The main risks of this trade are apprehension by the police and, much more seriously, robbery and beatings by local youth gangs. Hawking was perceived to offer greater freedom; unlike working for gangmasters, one can choose where and for how long one works. Hawkers are only accountable to the criminals who provide them with smuggled Chinese cigarettes or counterfeit DVDs.


The upsurge and diversification of Chinese migration has brought about fundamental changes in Chinese employment patterns and entrepreneurship practices in the UK. Particularly because of the dispersed nature of the Chinese catering trade, the UK's traditional ethnic economy has never fully conformed to the model of the "ethnic enclave" as proposed by Portes and his co-authors: a separate segment of the labor market characterized by residential concentration, institutional completeness, co-ethnic employment, and high levels of enforceable trust between co-ethnic business partners, clients, and employees.^{xxiii} However, as in Portes's model, in Britain, the Chinese ethnic community provided employment and other opportunities for upward mobility to recent migrants with limited skills relevant to the mainstream economy, and first-generation migrants only sporadically ventured outside the Chinese ethnic community in pursuit of employment opportunities. Recent developments have made the ideal type of the ethnic enclave even less applicable. Sure enough, Chinese restaurants are still almost exclusively staffed by Chinese. "Enforceable trust" applies to at least certain aspects of employment relations; non-payment of wages still happens very rarely within the ethnic community, despite the fact that it is very common in the non-ethnic neo-proletarian sector. However, workers and employers are as a rule no longer from the same area of origin, and their relations are purely transactional and ephemeral. Services, mutual help, and social relations within the ethnic sector have become commercialized and professionalized. Most importantly, recent illegal immigrants find it very hard to get ahead in the ethnic sector. As outsiders to the established community of mainly Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong Chinese, they have limited access to business opportunities, credit, information, and help. Most immigrants remain stuck in marginal, lowly paid employment, with little hope of opening their own business or even getting a more stable and better paying job.

Furthermore, changes in Chinese immigration patterns have connected the Chinese ethnic labor market with a growing non-ethnic neo-proletarian one, where wages and conditions are, if anything, even worse than those

in Chinese restaurants. In this regard, Chinese illegal immigrant labor, together with legal and illegal unskilled immigration from many other parts of the world, has fuelled a fundamental change in the British economy made possible by a partial deregulation of the labor market since the late 1970s. Chinese migrants have also made some headway in moving out of ethnic or neo-proletarian employment altogether. Their work as builders, prostitutes, or hawkers is testimony to the increasing diversification of Chinese employment in the UK. Despite the marginality of these activities in the eyes of the mainstream, to these Chinese themselves they entail more direct and independent participation in the non-Chinese economy and a sense of personhood and success that was denied to them when they were employed as “pure,” anonymous, and disposable labor in the ethnic or neo-proletarian sector.

CONCLUSION: REALITIES AND PERCEPTIONS OF CHINESE IMMIGRATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK

Our study of recent trends in Chinese undocumented migration to the UK has given us a window on to some fundamental changes taking place in the world economic order. We have found that the new Chinese migration transcends the old ethnic economy. Conversely, as Schierup, Hansen and Castles have pointed out, a “post-Fordian” capitalist sector has grown in the developed world that goes beyond ethnic boundaries (Schierup et al. 2006, chapter 9). That part of the economies of developing countries that is based on labor-intensive production, simple technologies, and high levels of exploitation is now moving (back) to the developed world, a shift made possible by the deregulation of the labor market in the developed world and by the increasing level and the commercialization of international migration.

The current dominant migration discourse in the UK is not in tune with this trend. It, therefore, fails to do what it says it should do, namely regulate and manage migration. Instead, it has created a mythical landscape of manageable migration that naturalizes the discursive categories that are used to talk about and act on migration. The discourse presents migration as an external force whose impact upon the receiving society can somehow be managed without migrants themselves having a say in the process. In this article, we have tried to show that the carefully sanitized arguments about managing migration fly in the face of the messy ethnographic reality of Chinese immigration to the UK. British “needs” do not exist prior and external to immigration itself. In reality, Britain is integrated into a globalized market for all kinds of (skilled and unskilled) labor. This, together with the neoliberal deregulation of the domestic labor market, has given  an economic structure that generates demand for labor quite independently of electorally expedient assertions about what Britain might or might not need.

The yawning gap between immigration rhetoric and reality means not only that illegal migrants continue to flow into the country undetected “through the back door,” but also that the ostensibly carefully managed “front door” of migration has become a major point of entry for all kinds of migrants, “desirable” or not. Migration management does not mean that the state, on behalf of the nation, manages who gets in and who does not, but rather that prospective migrants have to employ a range of specialists (in the UK and abroad) to manage their migration for them. In the final analysis, migration management achieves the exact opposite of what it claims to do: controlled immigration and a fully legal immigrant workforce. By continuing to limit the opportunities for legal immigration and employment in the UK, the majority of prospective immigrants have no choice but to migrate completely illegally or to manufacture their “legal” status. As a result, one consequence of managed migration paradoxically is that its restrictions on immigration lead to the continuing presence of illegal immigrants, thereby maintaining the highly exploitative conditions of the ethnic and neo-proletarian sectors reminiscent of Britain’s Dickensian past.

NOTES

ⁱ The interviews for Pieke’s project were conducted by three Chinese research assistants. One of these, Hsiao-Hung Pai, has since published her own book, which draws on her years of work as a journalist writing on Chinese illegal immigration and work in Britain (Pai 2008). Pai provides many individual case studies with a wealth of detail on the exploitative practices found in Chinese illegal employment, which we have been able to only summarize briefly in this article.

ⁱⁱ Figures from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) as reported in Asian Migration News, April 30, 2007. Online at <http://www.smc.org.ph/amnews/amn070430/world070430.htm>, accessed on 28 April 2011.

ⁱⁱⁱ For one of the earliest studies employing a transnational perspective on international migration, see Glick Schiller et al. 1995; Glick Schiller et al. 1996.

^{iv} In the 2000s, the exchange rate of one US dollar was around eight renminbi yuan.

^v Interview in Shenyang, October 22, 2005.

^{vi} Interview in London, February 19, 2007.

^{vii} Conversation in Shenyang, October 29, 2005.

^{viii} Interview with Professor Hyun Mee Kim of Yonsei University, South Korea, Oxford, February 8, 2007.

^x Radio Free Asia. 2002. Smuggled Chinese in the UK (Zai Yingguo de Zhongguo Touduke) May 22. Available at <http://www.rfa.org/cantonese/zhuanti/2001/05/22/56885/index.html?simple=1>, accessed on October 11, 2009.

^x Interview, Shenyang, November 1, 2005.

^{xi} Interview, Shenyang, November 1, 2005.

^{xii} Interview with Elspeth Guild, Singapore, December 28, 2005.

^{xiii} Home Office, Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment for the New Points-based System, 2005, 6, para 32.

^{xiv} Interview, London, February 19, 2007.

^{xv} Interview, London, February 19, 2007.

^{xvi} Interview, London, September 13, 2004.

^{xvii} On e-borders, see, for instance, http://press.homeoffice.gov.uk/press-releases/Cutting-Edge_Technology_To_Secur and <http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/eborders/>, both accessed on May 18, 2007.

^{xviii} Gangmasters in Britain are entrepreneurs who recruit, run, and contract out teams (“gangs”) of workers. Their operations are not in themselves illegal and the term gangmaster should not be confused with the word “gangster.”

^{xix} For instance, Anuska Asthana and Tony Thompson. “Evil gangmasters who rule the cockle slave trade by fear,” *Observer*, February 8, 2004, main section, p. 7. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2004/feb/08/immigration.china>

^{xx} “Victims of the sands and the snakeheads: 19 Chinese drown half a world away from home. The gangs behind the tragedy are on the run.” (reported by Felicity Lawrence, Hsiao-Hung Pai, Vikram Dodd, Helen Carter, David Ward and Jonathan Watts in Fujian province), *Guardian*, February 7, 2004. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2004/feb/07/china.immigration1>, accessed on April 28, 2011. The article states: “Rescuers pulled 19 bodies, including two women, from the waters and 16 survivors. Police said 14 were from mainland China, of whom nine were asylum seekers and five were unknown to the immigration service. Two were of white European appearance.”

^{xxi} Hsiao-Hung Pai, “Inside the grim world of the gangmasters,” *Guardian*, March 27, 2004. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2004/mar/27/china.immigration>

^{xxii} It should be emphasized that these cases proved to be extremely difficult to prosecute. The women involved refused to give evidence to the police, and, moreover, always voluntarily returned to the brothels of their employment upon release. In addition, the Kent unit also knew of cases of involuntary employment of Chinese outside prostitution. In one such case, migrants after having been smuggled into the country were handed over to a Chinese criminal gang, which put them to work in a Chinese restaurant. In order to keep them under control, the original smugglers had arbitrarily raised their smuggling fee by £1,000 and charged a usurious interest rate.

^{xxiii} For the original “ethnic enclave” argument, see Wilson and Portes 1980 and Portes and Bach 1985. Zhou 2004 provides a useful elaboration of the original argument and model.

REFERENCES

Beck, Sean. 2007. “Meeting on the Margins: Cantonese ‘Old-Timers’ and Fujianese ‘Newcomers’.” *Population, Space and Place* 13(2):141–52.

Castles, Stephen. 2004. “The Factors that Make and Unmake Migration Policies.” *International Migration Review* 38(3):852–84.

Cornelius, Wayne A., and Takeyuki Tsuda. 2004. “Controlling Immigration: The Limits of Government Intervention.” In *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*, second edition, edited by Wayne A. Cornelius, Takeyuki Tsuda, Philip L. Martin and James F. Hollifield, 3–48. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Glick Schiller, Nina, Linda G. Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc. 1995. “From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration.” *Anthropological Quarterly* 68(1):48–63.
Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3317464>

Glick Schiller, Nina, Linda G. Basch and Cristina Szanton Blanc, eds. 1996. *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity, and Nationalism Reconsidered*. New York: New York Academy of Sciences.

Joppke, Christian. 1998. “Immigration Challenges the Nation-State.” In *Challenge to the Nation-State: Immigration in Western Europe and the United States*, edited by Christian Joppke, 5–46. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marx, Karl. 1958. *Capital, Volume 1: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

- Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels. 1965. *The German Ideology*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Pai, Hsiao-Hung. 2008. *Chinese Whispers: The True Story Behind Britain's Hidden Army of Labour*. London: Penguin.
- Pieke, Frank N., Pál Nyíri, Mette Thunø and Antonella Ceccagno. 2004. *Transnational Chinese: Fujianese Migrants in Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Portes, Alejandro, and Robert L. Bach. 1985. *Latin Journey: Cuban and Mexican Immigrants in the United States*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Schierup, Carl-Ulrik, Peo Hansen and Stephen Castles. 2006. *Migration, Citizenship, and the European Welfare State: A European Dilemma*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Soudijn, M. R. J. 2006. *Chinese Human Smuggling in Transit*. Den Haag: Boom Juridische Uitgevers.
- Wilson, Kenneth L., and Alejandro Portes. 1980. "Immigrant Enclaves: An Analysis of the Labor Market Experiences of Cubans in Miami." *American Journal of Sociology* 86(2):295–319. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2778666>
- Xiang Biao. 2003. "Emigration from China: A Sending Country Perspective." *International Migration* 41(3):21–48.
- Zhang, Sheldon X. 2008. *Chinese Human Smuggling Organizations: Families, Social Networks, and Cultural Imperatives*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Zhou, Min. 2004. "Revisiting Ethnic Entrepreneurship: Convergencies, Controversies, and Conceptual Advancements." *International Migration Review* 38(3):1040–74. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27645425>