

# WHEN MORALITY MEETS RIGHTS:

The Chinese Migrant Workers' Struggle for  
Legalization in France

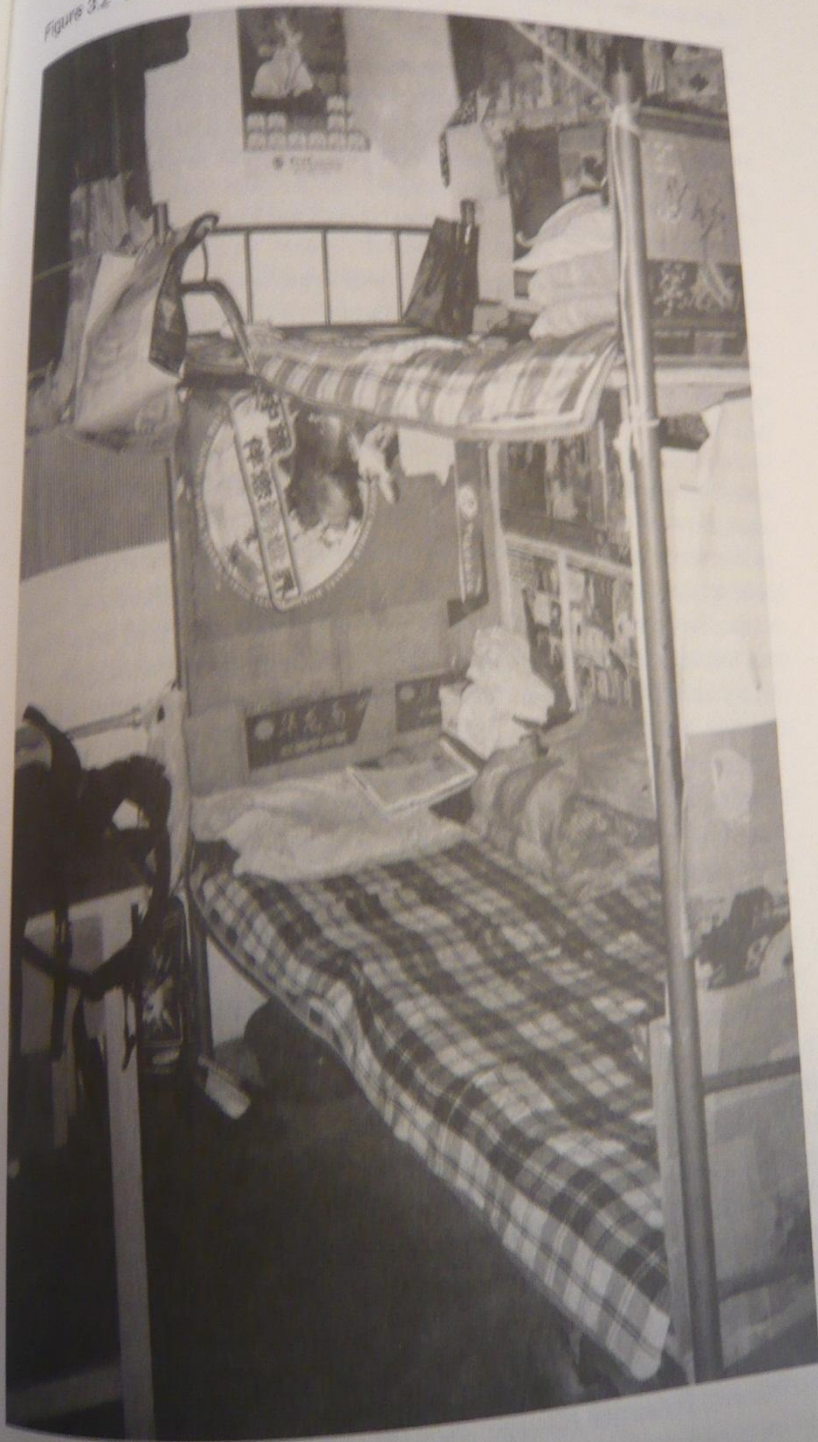
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# SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION

- The migration process of Chinese in France
- The composition of labour market in Paris and types of migrants
- The movement for « régularization » : achievements and frustrations

Figure 3.2 Migrant Women Workers' Dormitory  
IN OUT OF PLACE 107



- **Left: Shenzhen 1997**
- **Right : Paris, 2010**



# Composition of Chinese Workers in Paris



# TWO IDEAL TYPES OF MIGRANT WORKERS

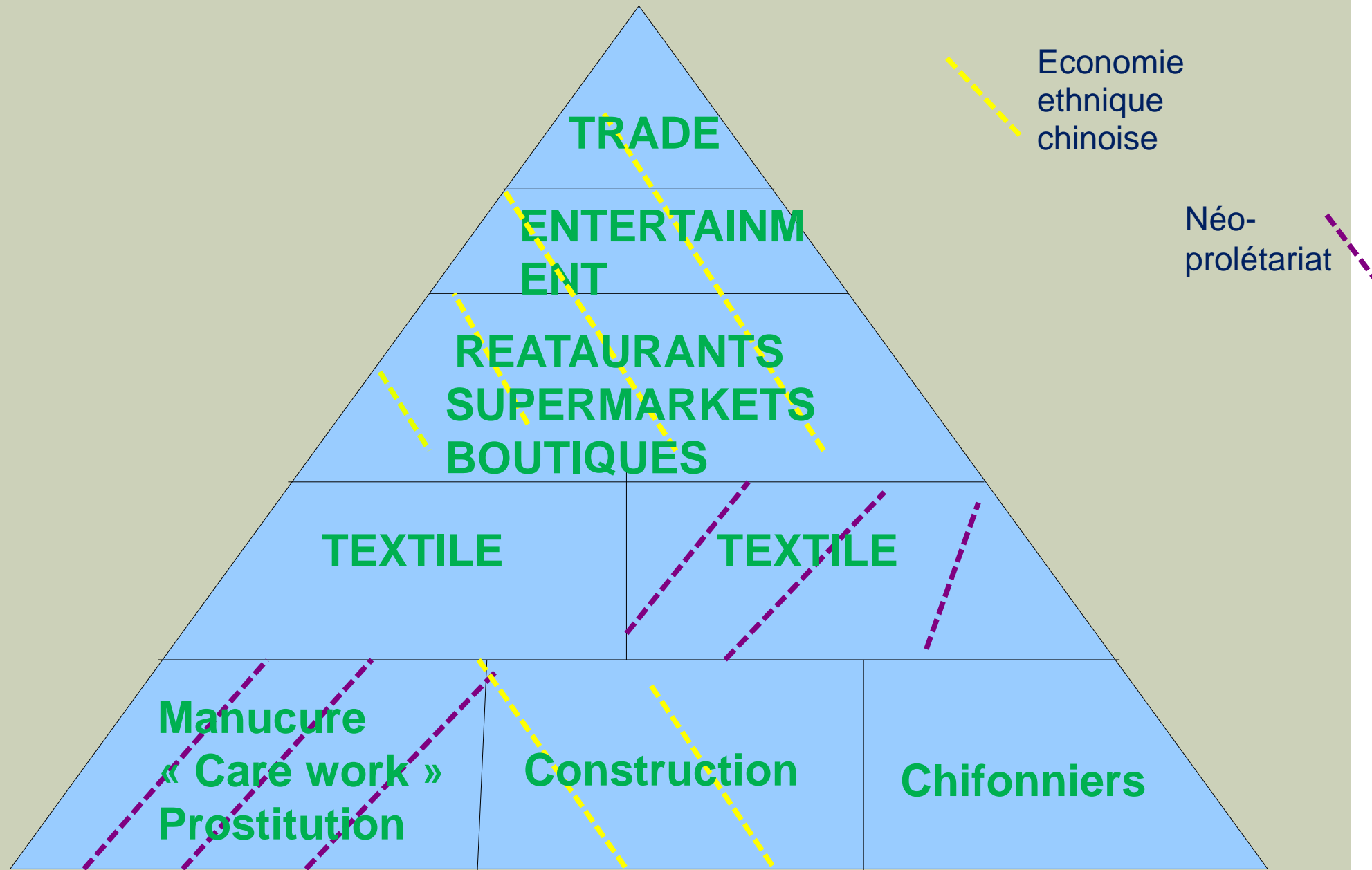
## The « Adventurers »

- Rural Background
- Age of migration between 15 to 50
- Emigration to pursue upward mobility
- Chain Migration arriving through family network
- Perceiving return as a failure. With a projet to settle down for long term.
- Mainly working in restaurants and textile

## The « castaways »

- From the city where there was no emigration tradition before.
- Migrants of rupture.
- Arriving through commercial trafficking network.
- Arriving with a short-term economic project (but often change)
- Mostly working in highly unstable professions

# DIVISION OF WORK





**NOUS VOULONS COTISER  
NOUS VOULONS ÊTRE DÉCLARÉS**







**Régularisez les travailleur-e-s.**  
**Regularisation of undocumented m**  
**Trabajamos aquí! Wir wohnen hier! V**





ILS BOSSENT ICI,  
ILS VIVENT ICI,  
ILS RESTENT ICI,  
RÉGULARISATION  
DES TRAVAILLEURS  
SANS-PAPIERS  
MAI 2008

ILS BOSSENT ICI,  
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RÉGULARISATION  
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MAI 2008

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RÉGULARISATION  
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MAI 2008

Pas de salarié-e-s  
SANS DROITS  
dans les entreprises!  
Régularisation

Pas de salarié-e-s  
SANS DROITS  
dans les entreprises!  
Régularisation

travailleuse  
nie



# FEEDBACKS OF THE MOVEMENT

## Achievements

- Incorporation in the civil movement in France and contact with French society/culture of protests/language
- Formation of a trans-origin consciousness based on common experiences of being « sans papiers »

## Frustrations

- Difficulty to break the informal practices in the ethnic economy and the logic of maximizing profits
- Lack of bargaining power in face of the extortion of employers. Sense of disillusion and deception.



# CONCLUDING REMARKS

- The specificity of Chinese migrants' emigration project has rationalized the illegal practice inside ethnic economy and thereby weakened workers' confidence to challenge the practices such as long working hours and avoidance of taxes/social charges.
- To improve Chinese workers' working condition, labour unions thus need not only to tackle governments' migrant policy that produce a group of underprivileged foreign workers, but also through education, workers' formation and dialogue with Chinese entrepreneurs so as to challenge the logic of capital accumulation built on moralised discourses and informalization of social rights.