

Mercenaries, domestics and prostitutes, three figures of the wage system in Nepalese international migrations: *Beyond the institutional fictions of the State: the reality of employee trafficking*

B. Steinmann, Pr. University of Lille 1

Abstract :

As a result of preliminary research into the growth of social, domestic and gender inequalities in certain non-Hindi minority populations of Nepal, who began to emigrate massively from the rural areas in the 1980s, I was led to study the conditions of their integration in Arab or Christian countries where these Buddhist populations migrated, through multi-site and transnational surveys in their destination countries (especially in Europe - France, Portugal, Belgium, and in the United States). Having lived since forty years now, in close continuity with a Tamang community of Nepal, how could we sociologically account for the shared representation of the profits or losses in the new statuses they claimed and sometimes acquired in working abroad? How could the new provisions of these aspiring migrants who had managed to create new conditions of life outside their country, in turn influence and change new forms of exploitation or "self-exploitation" of workers, believing they were accessing a new form of subjectivity and freedom by leaving behind the rural world and domestic constraints? This paper attempts thus to drawing a historic redefinition of the 'restrained work', i.e. not working on the desire of people to emigrate, nor whatever the pressures exercised on candidates for emigration, but rather on the redefinition of what we commonly mean by 'work' and 'employment' in the recent history of Nepal and through the studies of economic history and history of rural migration abroad.

Keywords : international labour outmigrations; Nepal ; wages ; salary ; alienation ; forced labor ; capitalism ; manpower ; Foreign Legion ; services

Paper

The important Nepalese migrations looking for a salaried job, have been widely published in various disciplines of the social sciences¹. In socio-economic studies, it is the unilateral idea of

¹ Among some recent research, see for instance : 'Circuits of Labour, Obligation, and Debt. International Labour Migrants, their Families, and the 'Migration' Industry in Nepal', *Workshop held in Oxford* on 13-14 March 2017. For some recent

looking for a wage that prevails, to explain the continuous and massive Nepalese migration to more and more varied regions of the world. These salaried working conditions would, at the same time, be a cause of growing alienation of the workers, prisoners of foreign markets and the operations of international finance, in particular in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia and the Arabian Gulf² countries, where they become salaried, temporary employees in semi-slavery.

In the classical anthropological analyses of the economic fact such as those of the Ethnologist Claude Meillassoux³ (black Africa specialist), one could read a new synthesis on the issue initially raised by Marx concerning "labour reserve", which would continuously feed the capitalist wage system. Meillassoux took into account the status of this labour force integration in the receiving countries and wondered about the effects of European imperialism on the 'domestic communities' of black Africa. It was because of the "rotating migrations", which enabled the return of the cost of reproduction of workers to the domestic communities in the country of origin, especially through remittances. The ethnologist distinguished three fractions of the proletariat based on their reproductive ability: 'the integrated proletariat' which receives direct and indirect wages (i.e. social protection); the 'peasant proletariat', which receives only the means of the immediate reconstitution of its production via direct salary; and the fraction of the proletariat which has no way of reproduction. The immigrants he studied at the height of the "rotating migrations" were in the second category, but could fall into the other categories according to the advance or decrease of union struggles, or relating to illegal or stateless immigrants. Examples of working Nepalese migrants in the Gulf countries typically represent this 'rotating migration'. The characteristics of their status, the degree of alienation of their working conditions (coached by Nepalese and international agencies, access or not to local companies) are becoming increasingly documented. The ancient categorisations of migrant workers, who passed mainly through India and the countries of South East Asia, before finding new opportunities and working conditions in more remote areas are infinitely less documented.

reports, see also: *ILO report: "Analysis of Labour Market and Migration Trends in Nepal"*, 2015 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and International Labour Organization.

² See in particular T. Bruslé, « No one desires to go abroad, it's all about compulsion. The meaning of migration through narratives of Nepalese workers in Qatar in : *Global Nepalis: Religion and Culture in a New Diaspora* », Dir. by David Gellner and Sondra Hausner, OUP Delhi, 2014. See also : H  l  ne Thiollet, « Managing migrant labour in the Gulf Transnational dynamics of migration politics since the 1930s », IMI Working Papers Series, University of Oxford, 2016, No. 131, CNRS-CERI Sciences Po/Paris.

³ Claude Meillassoux, *Femmes, greniers et capitaux*, Paris 1975, quoted and analyzed in : Andrea Rea & Maryse Tripi  r, *Sociologie de l'immigration*, Paris/La D  couverte, Collection Rep  res, 2008 p. 37.

As a result of preliminary research into the growth of social, domestic and gender inequalities in certain non-Hindi minority populations of Nepal, who began to emigrate massively from the rural areas in the 1980s, I was led to study the conditions of their integration in Arab or Christian countries where these Buddhist populations migrated, through multi-site and transnational surveys in their destination countries (especially in Europe - France, Portugal, Belgium, and in the United States⁴). It emerged from these investigations that there were in fact, important fractions of salaried or fixed-term contract migrant workers calling for a reconsideration of a number of questions asked on the idea of salaried job search, or even of 'work' by the Nepalese workers who were candidates for export. This required revisiting the study of the historical and political nature of constrained labour⁵ policy and its relationship with the State.

Yann Moulier Boutang⁶ undertook an encyclopedic summary of the studies on the creation of the wage system, from the perspective of a critical program to investigate the double movement of the exploitation of living labour, which sometimes takes the form of restraining devices, sometimes pretending that the worker is in control of the sale of his life's exploitable resources. The pioneering side of his study is not only visible in the dismantling of a tautological approach used by both the proponents of liberalism and by some of their self-proclaimed Marxist opponents: once the wage system is defined as the free sale by those alienated from the means of production, an allegedly scientific scholastic structure overshadows the reality and it is ultimately this shadow which is the object of that which is presented as "observation".

Historically, all the investigations converge on the fact that, without necessarily being slaves (example of indentured employees who rent themselves out voluntarily), men and women set to work give up a substantial amount of freedom in their decisions: and to begin with, they generally have not the possibility to change jobs even if attractive alternatives would present themselves. Moulier Boutang has adopted the term "bridled labour" to identify a very wide range

⁴ See B. Steinmann in : *Workshop*, Oxford, to appear (*infra* note 1).

⁵ For instance, in : Manoj Sharma Neupane & als. *Dynamics and Dimensions of Labour Migration from Nepal (A report based on advertisement analysis)*, Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training Research and Information Division Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, 2014 p. 11, the authors, whatever the quality of their work and reliability of the given data might be, must add an important restriction to the source of data collected and the nature of salaried works analyzed : « Source of information analyzed in this study is fully based on the published advertisement ». Therefore, both validity and reliability of the information can't be justified by the methodology adopted in the analysis. The information undertaken in this research are assumed to be valid and reliable since these activities are operating according to the law ».

⁶ Yann Moulier Boutang, « De l'esclavage au salariat. Economie historique du salariat bridé », Paris, PUF, Actuel Marx/Confrontations, 1998.

of conditions in which labour, although paid, remains constrained. Boutang's discovery, which he proposes to develop further, is the capital importance of the erosion of the restraining conditions in this alternation between slavery and the free entrepreneurship of their own operations⁷. Constantly, population flows come together and are susceptible to exploitation, before even being channeled through it. This flight of exploited populations must be confronted and measured against the movements of revolt and revolutions (for example, Maoism in Nepal), and it is forcing labour exploitation to be reformed to take into account the threat of depopulation.

If we take the example of Nepal, Boutang's considerations are obviously promising. This is a country where "the Royal family" owned most of the arable land just before its fall in 2006. People in remote areas where survival is the most difficult (medium-sized mountains), have traditionally provided significant numbers to the exodus to the cities, the exodus to India and beyond, or the emigration in the world's capitalist cities. However these populations were not just happy to flee the iniquity and abjection of oligarchic domination. From the 1980s to today, a series of uprisings ultimately led to the fall of the monarchy and the self-selection of a new Government class claiming to lead the revolutionary transformation of the country. However, it is notable that the "Royal" caste's latifundia were not expropriated. Moreover, the war carried out against its hegemony decimated the traditional societies in the informal sector of the population, which led to an increase in emigration.

In Moulher Boutang's terms, a flight accentuation occurred. From a political point of view, this flight could be considered the flight that appeared spontaneously to significant fractions of these repressed populations as a revolutionary requirement, regardless of the fact that this was a requirement of the leaders of the Maoist revolution. Yet, the flight did not break the link that a host of emigrants continue to maintain, each with their respective environment, especially through family and clan-based bonds; whereby, of course, a flow of currency to Nepal increases dependence on emigration. In view of the prosperity of the agencies claiming to channel emigration, especially in directions where there is considerable risk of falling into semi-slavery

⁷ It is the question raised by T. Bruslé, about the question of « compulsion or desire », see Bruslé *op. cit.* 2014.

(countries where, in particular, the *kafala* system⁸ exists), we are much more pessimistic than Boutang. Indeed, it is not only businessmen who discover a source of substantial profits in the opening of foreign placement agencies, it is the logic of state funding that looks more and more like the figure of a pimp State⁹, not only in Nepal, but in a host of other regions. Insofar as the State is, in most cases an institutional fiction, there is real interest in the organisation of this global pimping which lies with the international community of the creditors of these States. We are not talking specifically about geographic regions: some Nepalese working in the UAE aren't, for example, necessarily slaves, nor even bridled employees¹⁰. And conversely, you could discover in Portugal, since 2010, latifundia quite similar to those of the Nepal, managed by international gangs where Nepalese workers, after confiscation of their identity papers, worked under the constraint of European men through international placement agencies who had sold them through several intermediaries (India, Israel, Angola, Portugal)¹¹. It is through cases of Nepalese working in domestic service in Lisbon, Portugal, that this track was initially detected. So, the global flows of fleeing populations seem not to give rise to this kind of reform of the rule, whose role is to make labour attractive and provide the minimum comfort that can be expected to stabilize or lure labour seekers. While in contrast, the dominating forces are reforming as a pimp organisation of the stream of 'human resources'. This theoretical reflection and this review of the new jobs abroad, also draws data from an extended ethnological analysis of the work of many non-government, national and international organizations involved more and more in work and emigration regulations in Nepal. In this way, 'new migrant workers', become 'immigrant' and 'integrated' in new countries, in both new but still precarious positions, and continue to live inside new territorial borders, while being maintained at the borders of the state of Law and the

⁸ See among many other denunciations of this modern slavery system :

https://amnestyfr.cdn.prismic.io/amnestyfr%2Fcf19f340-6ce4-4c04-9bf555e15fa1a0e_mde2235482016english.pdf

⁹ The national profit issued from Nepalese labour remittances can be studied through official World Financial and Banking reports. For sociological analysis, see for instance : Seddon, J.D. *et al.* 1998. "Foreign Labour Migration and the Remittance Economy of Nepal". *Himalayan Bulletin* XVIII (2): 301-27. Seddon, D. *et al.* 2001. *The New Lahures. Foreign Employment and Remittance Economy of Nepal*. Kathmandu: NIDS.

¹⁰ Kesang Tseten's documentary movies illustrate the various working positions of Nepalese migrants in Qatar. See for instance :

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:5swRZjCEKqMj:comitedufilmethnographique.com/film/in-search-of-the-riyal/+&cd=8&hl=fr&ct=clnk&gl=fr>

¹¹ I have made different field enquiries in Portugal, between 2011 and 2015, being invited also by an association of Tamang migrants in Lisboa.

welfare state institutions.¹²

From the history of peasant migration in the Kathmandu Valley (1980s) to the new recruitment of ex-rurals in "the body trades".

On "The Double Truth of Work".¹³

In the last decades of the 20th century, and in conjunction with the international development policies that intensified in the decade that would lead to the restoration of political parties in Nepal in 1990, we very often heard in rural areas of the centre of the country, an antiphon repeated by all temporary workers, young people and adults who were working as porters in tourist expeditions (in particular the Sherpa and the Tamang¹⁴ 'minority' populations and 'Buddhists' in a Hindu area); the poorest peasants became carts pullers, rickshaw drivers, service agents in hotels or in private homes: *Talap chahincha, talap paunu parcha*: "we want a salary", "we need to make money"! The source of this lamentation was that the fees received for this temporary work were not 'wages', but closely resembled the service payments of the traditional agrarian system of sharecropping (*parma*¹⁵), where the money given to the agricultural workers was still signified in quasi-religious terms. It was not a salary for services rendered, but rather a "gift" from the boss to his employee, a donation accompanied by the ritual obligations of assisting the parties related to the harvest, as well as to domestic celebrations in the homes of the bosses. Without this participation, obtaining employment was not conceivable.

Obtaining a regular income, as in a 'fixed salary' over a period determined by the private employer, for example, by a member of the Tamang rural village of Temal where I was doing my research in 1980, was an object of envy and great consideration. It gave its happy beneficiary an extraordinary status: a divine gift of sorts, because this "salary" paid by anonymous bosses was devoid of any ritual obligation. Between 1980 and 1990, the work conditions for the fixed service jobs in the urban city, restaurants and hotels evolved slowly, regulated by trade unions

¹² For instance, D. Fassin, A. Morice, 2001 : « Les épreuves de l'irrégularité : les sans-papiers entre déni d'existence et reconquête d'un statut » in : Shnapper D., (dir.) *Exclusions au cœur de la cité*, Paris, Anthropos, p. 261-309.

¹³ Pierre Bourdieu, 1996 : « La double vérité du travail » in : *Actes de la Recherche en sciences sociales*. Vol. 114, septembre 1996. Pages 89-90.

¹⁴ See B. Steinmann (1988) : *Les Tamangs du Népal, usages et religion, religion de l'usage*. Paris, collection ADPF, Recherches sur les civilisations, MAE. And B. Steinmann (2001) : *Les Enfants du Singe et de la Démone. Mémoires des Tamangs, récits himalayens*. Nanterre, collection Haute Asie, dir. par A.W. Macdonald.

¹⁵ The Farm Labor exchange system among Indigenous Peasants in Nepal.

and associations of workers, who depended, of course on the restoration of the plurality of political parties within the royal government. But the peasants who are hired as porters to tourists passed directly from a domestic and feudal subjection to their villages, to that of their itinerant temporary bosses, major users of these services. Another feature of the money received is that it wasn't injected directly into the production and reproduction of rural life, but was mostly used to buy luxury items, totally useless in the context of farm life (watches, radio sets, ski poles to aid the elders walk, small bottles of butagaz which, once hollowed out, were used as recipients to make butter lamps). This issue of "wages", although widely the subject of speculation and myths by the new urban worker-servants riveted to tasks over which they initially had no control of the conditions, nor the spatial and temporal boundaries (they often lived, for example, in kitchens where they worked, or accompanied their clients in the mountains, but remained in a clear spatial segregation), remained at the centre of confusion and error in the socio-economic analyses.

What is obscured, in all cases, is what Bourdieu recalled in 1996¹⁶ about the Marxist theory of labour and the Levi-Straussian analysis of the "gift", namely, what are the actual conditions of the accomplishment of the work we're talking about? Bourdieu stressed that it is through "objectifying a blow of force" that we forget how "the intrinsic benefit" found in the work, is not irreducibly bound to a simple wage paid in cash. If the extreme contemporary "mobility" of labour assumes *a priori* an "indifference of the worker with respect to the content of his work", one can speak of a possible benefit that workers can find in even partial alienation, of their work force, in the hope of a greater freedom, in the acquisition of a new status lifting them out of their ancient existence and allowing them to invest in new areas¹⁷. Thus, this desire for wages described above, in a rural Nepal still relatively closed to economic transformations and to the urban political revolutions that would sweep the royalty, was very different to what it would become through the national (via employment agencies) and international (via labor calls) organisation of a market of semi-slave workers, as part of a bridled labour force recruited from "developing" countries. It remains said, in the Bourdieusian demonstration, the importance of disowning the generalized strategies of international management, which knows how to take advantage of the question of 'interest' or the symbolic income and able to lead the actors to apply

¹⁶ « The Double Truth of Work », see ref. *infra*

¹⁷ Adhikari, J. 1995. *The Beginnings of Agrarian Change. A Case Study in Central Nepal*. New Delhi: Adroit ; and Olivia Aubriot and Tristan Bruslé « Agriculture paysanne népalaise et phénomènes migratoires : de la complémentarité à la rupture des liens ? », *Autrepart* 2012/3 (N° 62), p. 141-158.

to themselves (strikes, overtime, etc.) the rules and constraints of body worked against them.

Thus, three examples of historical trajectories of migrant workers which have taken novel contemporary forms compared to the last two decades of the 20th century, came to my attention, especially from a reflection on ethno-nationalism¹⁸ and the axiological projections of empirical field studies. If the researcher examined the meaning of the commitments in wage labour, not from the point of view of Nepal, but from their own country of origin, in this example, a European country, they had would have to question a whole set of accepted categories and definitions regarding "work" and its corollary, money earned, between a European country where the wage system is already old (France in my example¹⁹), and another, Nepal, where its implementation dates merely from the Indian post-colonial period. Three examples, taken from brief interactions, but through recurrent surveys over 40 years, have offered me this opportunity to re-conceptualize the relationship between work/alienated body/symbolic profit and the Nepalese bridled labour force, from a Europe standpoint.

Interactions bearing meaning and questions

1. Date, April 2017. We are sitting next to each other on the Air India flight to Nepal. Discreetly, I look sideways at the passenger sitting next to me on the plane, as he tries to sit very straight in his seat, stuck between the aisle and the window, and is working to bring order in the content of the magazine rack located on the backs of the chairs. He seemed to be Nepalese, and I couldn't help but speculate about the motivations of his trip and the reasons for his return to Nepal: holiday, home, temporary visit? The flight leaves from Paris, he didn't seem to be a student, or businessman, or... he is neither a Brahman, nor a Chetri, nor a Sherpa, perhaps a Tamang? I ponder all the orientalist clichés on caste that pass through my mind and I know that I won't ask him anything until an opportunity allows us to enter into conversation. Will I speak to him in English, in French, in Nepalese? The plane took off and the authorized visual distractions time came, when I realize that my screen does not work. It was my turn to fiddle with the wires and

¹⁸ David N. Gellner : « Uncomfortable Antinomies : Going Beyond Methodological Nationalism in Social And Cultural Anthropology » in : AAS Working Papers in Social Anthropology /ÖAW Arbeitspapiere zur Sozialanthropologie Vol.24.

¹⁹ For in depth historical, sociological and political analysis of labor immigration in France between 19th and 20th century, see in particular : Pierre Georges (1986) : *L'immigration en France. Faits et problèmes*. Paris, Armand Colin ; Gérard Noiriel, (1988 et 2006) : *Le creuset français. Histoire de l'immigration XIXe-XXe siècle* Paris, Point/Histoire ; Ronald Hubscher (2005) : *L'immigration dans les campagnes françaises. XIXe-XXe siècles*. Paris, Odile Jacob. Henri Lefebvre (2001. 3^e ed.) : *Du Rural à l'Urbain*. Paris, Anthropos/Ethno-sociologie.

buttons, while he watched me. He intervenes spontaneously, with genuine friendliness and expertise, to help me restore the sound and the image on my screen. I thank him profusely, while he replies in a correct, although hesitant French. I didn't allow myself to ask him if he were Nepalese. I only learn the truth once we landed at Tribhuvan airport in Kathmandu. . There, he will once again spontaneously help me, this time to change some euros to pay for the entry visa, by manipulating a wad of cash in front of me with pleasure and visible pride: Yes, he was indeed Nepalese, and my God, his job? He was a legionary We had arrived in his territory and I allowed myself to ask the fateful question of social affiliation: "Rai". My ideas on the French Legion fell immediately: I never imagined that a young Nepalese Rai, not very tall nor muscular, moreover, no shaven head, could be a legionary in France.

2. We are in 1980 and I live temporarily in the village of Temal, Kabhre Palanchok district, for my anthropological field research. It was a young Tamang woman about thirty years old, who lived alone with her youngest eight year old daughter. As I was trying to get in touch with all the Tamang women of the village, who were always keeping busy around a fireplace to prepare the daily cornmeal and I had just learnt that in this house, there were actually several girls. I still remember this young woman's look, both embarrassed and smiling, who replied without hesitation that: "Yes, my girls, Saili and Maili", well, they're both disappeared! They left to find work, the eldest and the youngest! "Where to? She didn't know, but it was somewhere in a city, they hadn't sent any news. However, it was "their brothers" (jyojyo-ale) who had taken them. I was puzzled, trying to justify this freedom in reference to mine, as I had been allowed from a young age to travel around Europe, for fun. In this case, it was work-related (gye labari nijim in Tamang), "they left to find working", under the tutelage of their 'brothers' (jyojyo, elder brothers), I knew that the term 'brothers' was used in a very wide sense in the clans, without necessarily referring to biological parents. However, these two girls had traveled to India, to Mumbai and they were working in Indian brothels. I'll learn this 10 years later, when the anti-trafficking NGOs came to Nepal, under the leadership of international organizations, and will have started their intensive prevention work based on Western 'humanitarian' theories and models on gender and work.

3. In 1995: a group of Westerners temporarily staying in Kathmandu, in Nepal employed a Nepalese domestic staff. I met up with them periodically when I shuttled back and forth between

the village and the city. A Nepalese employee, usually called "didi", name given in general to female service staff, and particularly popular, has been hired by a occidental of Sicilian origin, an employee in a Belgian refrigeration company. During an invitation in their house, I discovered that this young Tamang woman had already been a cook at the French Embassy, and was fortunate enough to be employed in this household to manage, in fact, all the Nepalese service staff who were already there, and who were attached to the kitchen. She herself had a young child, and the master of the household had invited her to live with her child at his place of work. In talking with her, I discover that she was the second wife of one of the wealthiest inhabitants of the Temal village where I did my research. I had known the first house of this person very well fifteen years before; There was a wife and a family in the village, but the two wives do not know each other, and completely ignored the double domestic links of the husband they shared. One woman is in the city, an employee, and the other is in the fields, while the husband became Manager of the Agricultural Development Bank in the village and trekking guide in the city.

Mercenary, domestic, prostitutes: old paths, new destinations

Legionnaires, domestic and prostitutes, three examples of professions so which appear intrinsically related by a common mediator element: the body. Whether it is involved in the tasks of security, maintenance tasks, or simple enjoyment, the body is a first form of starting **capital**, which does not require any other investment (as, for example, the necessary possession of tools). For former agricultural workers eager to escape the bondage of agrarian work, soldiery, domestic work and prostitution may well be described as "oldest jobs in the world". Up to the 1980s, India remained the main work destination of the Nepalese²⁰. Not only for the recruitment of the world-famous soldiers enlisted in the Anglo-Indian armed forces (Gurkha), but also for a variety of civilian or seasonal or permanent migration projects. The first wave of emigration in the 'modern' period dates from the 18th century, when the Nepalese soldiers, the Gurkhas, first begin to be used by the Raja of Lahore - hence their nickname: *lahure*, then by the British East India Company, and later by the British and Indian armies. This military tradition has continued

²⁰ It is difficult to depict the actual volume of Nepalese migrant workers in (and remittances from) India. Despite this, the literatures show that until the 1980s, India remained the main destination country not only for recruitment into the army but for various kinds of migration- resettlement or permanent migration, longer term but temporary migration, and seasonal or short-term migration ; see among others Seddon et al. 2001 (*op.cit.*), Seddon 2005, Adhikari et al. 2006: 2.

and even expanded, and the Gurkhas are still troops sought out in Asia and the Middle East. Veterans who retired in their countries of employment also helped create sometimes important Nepalese communities, as in Bhutan, India (Sikkim, Assam and Darjeeling), in Burma, then in Singapore and Hong Kong, not to mention of course London. The last avatar seems to be taking place in France, through its post-colonial wars²¹. 500 Nepalese legionaries, engaged in battalions spread between various garrisons across France, were recruited over the past two decades. Unlike the current status of these legionaries which is that of mercenaries, the soldiers worked under fixed-term contracts and the Anglo-Indian Gurkhas, recruited by the British in the 19th century, fought regularly under both English and Indian flags.

Training of workforce: resilience and reversal of identities

The oldest Nepalese legionaries in France have had a long career, through numerous French military missions (Central Africa, former Yugoslavia, Mali, Afghanistan, French Guyana, etc.); today, some of them have French nationality. X²² was the first Nepalese to have been recruited in France. He belongs to one of the large groups of people in the East of Nepal, those who resisted the longest against the Hindu unification of Prithivi Narayan Shah, and who have nevertheless formed the battalions of choice in the Anglo-Indiens regiments, because of their natural bravery and endurance. Once he joined the Legion, he managed to bring a large number of his countrymen, creating a true "Nepalese network" in the legion. He is at the heart of the Nepalese associative life in the Ile de France, and he performs a large number of services for his countrymen, ranging from the traditional roles of monitoring and security in Nepalese official events, providing migration assistance, and personal assistance for the latest arrivals. During an interview we had together, he expresses his considerable resentment at the lack of national recognition in Nepal for services rendered, as well as the lack of respect his fellow Nepalese have, who treat him in reality in the same way that they treat the lower caste people in their own country. He swears that "the next revolution in Nepal will be that of the minority populations, the remote mountain groups far removed from development and the capital city, "against the dominant Brahmans and Chetris castes". It is they, the Gurkhas, the French legionaries, who still

²¹ I have started intensive inquiries in France about the status and recruitment of Nepalese mercenaries in the French armies.

²² Interview realized on June 2nd 2017, with the very first Nepalese citizen having been recruited in the French Foreign Legion, 20 years ago.

contribute in Nepal to the maintenance of all public services, from the roads, to the post-earthquake rebuilding, to education, to all the civil services, that "these castes occupying power are unable to support"! X's anger is deep, he is determined. We can understand other aspects of this political speech in the light of the actual treatment of these soldiers in their working conditions in France.

In 2009, a report from the Defense of Military Rights Association recounts the following facts²³ :

"There is no hesitation to abuse the weakness and ignorance of the legionaries.". Thus the Adefdromil received in mid-January 2009, a legionary of Nepalese origin enrolled under the name: GURKHA. This soldier had contracted tuberculosis after one year of service. He had surgery at the Lavéran military hospital in Marseille. But, in chronic pain, he left his unit without permission on November 11, 2008 and was treated in a civilian hospital in the Paris region. He was declared a deserter. Early December 2008, upon returning to his unit, and after another 4 day absence, he presents himself to the security protection officer who, after copiously insulting him, asks him to go immediately to his unit commander. After having confiscated all his identity papers (military ID card, driving licence), the unit commander kicks him out of the regiment omitting voluntarily to return his official papers and to record the change of his civil status. Having no ties in France, Mr GURKHA fled in a private home in Paris who agreed to host him. Wanting to withdraw money on his account held by the Postal Bank, Mr GURKHA realized that the Foreign Legion had asked the Bank to freeze his account and block his credit card. After about 18 months of service, Mr GURKHA became homeless, without official papers, having contracted tuberculosis during his service and without his contract being officially terminated. At the date of publication of this report, Mr GURKHA situation has not been restored and the ADEFDROMIL has given his case to one of their lawyers".

It appears immediately that the recruitment of Nepalese soldiers in the French Legion had be facilitated by their unilateral assimilation to the already illustrious Gurkhas. This finding would have us believe that the Nepalese should be privileged and have distinctions related to their very old commitment in the world armies. In reality, an investigation into the conditions of

²³<http://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2009/02/18/01016-20090218ARTFIG00479-la-legion-etrangere-est-un-vrai-scandale.php>

recruitment, related to the *loss of identity* shine a very different light on the terms of training suffered, very similar, we will see later, to that suffered by other corporations of workers in private domestic services and sex workers.

There are five Nepalese legionnaires in the French garrison of the city of Nîmes²⁴. They are all called "Gurung", regardless of the actual names they gave during their recruitment. Indeed, during their engagement, the newcomers are subject to training whose goal is firstly to strip them of their original identity: confiscation of identity documents, loss of their name and all external pointers linking them to their country or their family. For five months, aspirants are woken up at any hour of the night and subjected to intensive interrogation about their resolution to commit themselves, their past, their desire to serve a country different from their own. A name is given to them, which at the same time, "unidentifies" them and "re - identifies" them to a global "group", like "Gurkha", which recalls a vague national identity, but not their real name. All possible advantageous identification with the Gurkhas of the Anglo-Indian army on which they could rely, is thus removed.

In talking with X about this condition, he explains to me that it is also a strategy of collective resistance of Nepalis, who play in return on this name to enable other classmates to integrate conveniently, declining from the outset their willingness to be aggregated to the first ("already trained") entrants. Effective networks are built this way, and recognition in the disidentification produces a reverse effect, as a form of solidarity in the search for work.

A close investigation is made on the track record of the aspirant legionaries : do they had a past record, are they wanted for murder? etc. When conditions warrant it, the soldiers received no wages for a specified period. Discipline consists in "being locked up." The recalcitrant, the culprits, the unteachable are thrown into a kind of oubliette, the "Hole" in which they receive virtually no food and where they are subjected to daily abuse. These conditions apparently have been improved in the last decade, thanks to the interventions of Associations for Soldiers Defence.

The bridled labour system, in the case of the legionaries, consists of obtaining the "right to work" from very violent body constraints. In this case, there are two kinds of contracts: a first five-year

²⁴ June 2017 : Preliminary enquiry in Nîmes, France, with the help of various mercenaries of European origin (particularly Polish citizens).

contract, followed possibly by a ten-year renewal, depending on ample evidence of aptitude to fighting and to submission. The young man met on the plane, Raï, became a military instructor in Perpignan, and was leave soon for a ten year commitment in French Guyana.

Ethnic and social of domesticity enslavement

Through the history of A. mentioned earlier, appears all the distancing that a privileged situation in a private urban environment can provide compared to a rural existence where the multiplicity of tasks by carried out by women removes any separate functional category: "the maintenance of the household" in the village assumes looking after the animals who live there too, and suggests in turn that of the maintenance of the fields, and ultimately the entire production of the food chain and the reproduction of the life of the inhabitants²⁵. We understand therefore how women who want to escape rural worlds would prefer repetitive tasks, even those of a "Fordist" nature to those of a farmer's wife. That's what can be seen as part of the hospitality industry, for example, or in all public places in India and Nepal, where women in service work always crouching, attached to the mops, working as close to the ground, just as the legionaries learn to crawl on the ground and in the mud, and prostitutes, to kneel in front of their customers. If we take the example of the "gate keepers", these are Nepalese who constitute the largest part of this labour force: they are also part of the service trades which do not require any particular qualifications, but which establish strict borders between the idea of 'productive' work and the idea of 'maintenance' work, ruthlessly exploited and not identifiable as such by the State since they can be exercised in all kinds of "non-places". outside of national and international borders, but in intermediate spaces.

New medical technologies, to the rescue of prostitutes

There are new job opportunities for Nepali women who choose or who are forced into sex work in prostitution. I rely on many examples between the 1980s and 2000, and on extensive surveys

²⁵ For a study of the « Chain of Usages » and its logic in the rural life of the Tamangs of Nepal, see : B. Steinmann <https://www.google.fr/search?q=An+Empirical+Investigation+of+Indigenous+Theories+and+Local+Normative+Systems%3A+The+Case+of+%E2%80%9CFermented+Drinks%E2%80%9D&oq=An+Empirical+Investigation+of+Indigenous+Theories+and+Local+Normative+Systems%3A+The+Case+of+%E2%80%9CFermented+Drinks%E2%80%9D&aqs=chrome..69i57.16830j0i8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

made during the past two years in the humanitarian field in particular those of Nepalese NGOs working against the sex trade. In the months that followed the earthquake of 2015, Maiti Nepal²⁶ identified the daily departure of dozens of young girls and women to Bombay. Investigating with some NGO workers stationed at the intersection of routes where the Nepalese buses leave for India, it was explained to me that in reality, most of the girls strongly resist the police interventions who are trying to get them out of the buses. The NGO is certain that these girls will leave by all means at their disposal to reach their work destination. S. Åsman's investigations²⁷ clearly showed the new source of earnings represented by the Tamang women's prostitution work.

But we can also connect this resistance to the "anti-trafficking" policies, to the real money gaining opportunities open to women, in particular, paradoxically thanks to massive contemporary intrusion of new medical technologies of prenatal examination of fetuses. This has led to a huge abortion industry which has developed in India (in particular), leading to a widely practiced female foeticides. This could explain the huge proportion of Nepalese prostitutes working in Bombay's 'Red District' and the insistent job offers that are made to them, leading possibly, to a new form of control of women in this area of work. An excellent example is found in Maharashtra²⁸, which is one of the states where an increasing gender imbalance exists due to this broad practice of the foeticide of unborn girls. In this state, there are 922 women per 1000 men in 2001, and 929/1000 in 2011. In the capital of that state, Mumbai (Bombay), between 1921 and 2011, the rate decreased from 838 women per 1000 men to 561/1000 in 2011. This situation is specific in this state capital, other districts exceeding for some 1000 women to 1000 men or being understood between 900 and 1000. As for the literacy of Maharashtra in 2011, it amounts to 82,91%, with 89.02% for men and 75,48% for women.

Bridled salary issues do not really apply in the case of prostitution, because we can find that it is an even more restrained wage system than others. A. Corbin²⁹ has described, from Balzac's "Misery and Greatness of the Courtisanes", very different situations from those described in

²⁶ I have studied closely, in the 2015 post-seism crisis and its consequences on the selling abroad (or voluntary departures) of young Nepalese girls for Indian brothels, the role and kind of interventions of a number of local and international NGOs in Nepal, like Maiti Nepal, (and their foreign counterparts, « Planete Enfance », for instance). An important academic debate exists about the question of « Anti-trafficking » interpretations, by both Academics and sex-workers.

²⁷ Susanne Åsman (2016) : *Bombay Going. Migration, Return and Anti-Trafficking in The Lives of Nepali Migrant Sex Workers*. University of Gothenburg, School of Global Studies.

²⁸ <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/criminology/an-analysis-of-female-foeticide-in-india-criminology-essay.php>

²⁹ Alain Corbin (1978) : *Les filles de noce. Misère sexuelle et prostitution, XIXe et Xxe siècle*. Paris, Aubier-Montaigne.

Zola's novel "Nana". Before them, the abbe Prevost described the situation of a prostitute, Manon, working under the protection of his own brother, a situation which is in reality a case of traditional prostitution in Nepal, with the example of the Badi³⁰, a caste of Indian courtesans where prostitution was passed down from mother to daughter under the protection of the family; It is an example taken up by those who argue in favour of the right for women to sexual work, and as a way to control their destinies. However, a number of NGOs are involved today around the educational problems facing young Badi girls, who are both in school and possibly continuing to practice their trade under the gaze of their peers. T. Cox³¹ has described in detail the enslavement of young Badi girls, 'visited by queues of Brahams and Chetris', 'saving' visits and dealing with both their ritual purity and their physiological needs in making profitable them. These Fordist working conditions can in no way be compared to those of other kinds of subordinate work, but they are the backbone of a reflection that we have developed here on the relationship between alienation/deruralization/bridled bodies and the pimp State.

Conclusion

To explain the constant flight of workers from Nepal, the ingenuity to invent new networks to try to integrate into international situations which we already know in advance the terrible conditions, but which they pretend to ignore in this frantic search for salary resources, we chose here to not rely on the economic, educational and social development conditions of their country. We preferred instead, a historic redefinition of the 'restrained work', i.e. not working on the desire of people to emigrate, nor whatever the pressures exercised on candidates for emigration, but rather on the redefinition of what we commonly mean by 'work' and 'employment' in the history of Nepal and through the studies of economic history and history of migration.

From this approach, three job categories were spontaneously drawn , with similar traits between them, both historically and sociologically, since the 'developmental' years in Nepal, especially with the growing depopulation of the countryside since the 1980s. This depopulation is coupled to the divestment of the traditional modes of life and the break-up of the framework in which the

³⁰ See Pratava Subedi (1994), « Women and Trafficking » in *Quarterly Development Review*, Vol.X, n°13, Jan.-Mar. 1994, p. 4-14.

³¹Thomas Cox (1994), « The Badi : Prostitution As A Social Norm Among An Untouchable Cast Of West Nepal » in *Quarterly Development Review*, *op.cit.* p. 15-33.

different social activities connect.

In comparing the case of a woman who is employed as a maid, with that of the prostitute, it makes us see that these two activities that seem to find their natural context in the family microcosm, namely the household and sexuality, unfurl, separate and are empowered, under the rule of money. Which is indeed the primacy of money, is that all dependencies seem to subordinate themselves to the dependence of the currency, and that, in contrast, money seems to be able to provide all possible rewards. And finally, the mercenary is the same outsourcing from a traditional position of "guardian of the house". So, it is the home, as the paradigmatic formation of archaic social life, which is dismembered in the division of work. The reality of money would be nothing else than this division.

This evocation of three kinds of trades, both very old and very contemporary, helped also to describe the growth of ignorance, social, political and economic by the Nepalese Government, on the real jobs of their fellow citizens abroad, an ignorance voluntarily maintained by what appears as the very essence of the State.

