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THE HIGH PRICE OF CHEAP SEX:

A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF SEX TOURISM

by

Dorothy Doucet, B.A., B.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

January 19, 1996

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THE HIGH PRICE OF CHEAP SEX:
A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF SEX TOURISM

submitted by
Dorothy Doucet, B.A., B.A.

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

the degree of Master of Arts

Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Jared Keil, Thesis Supervisor

Carleton University
January 19, 1996.

Abstract

During the past several decades, there has emerged a growing body of literature on what has come to be called "sex tourism". Much of the existing body of works contains emphases on the political economy of sex trading within various tourist industries. Few researchers have attempted to examine the "problem" of sex tourism from an ideological perspective. This thesis will utilize the growing feminist literature on the concept of "Otherness" to analyze relations between Western male consumers of emotional and sexual services and Southeast Asian female sex trade workers. In particular, the main focus will be placed on the virulence found in a large number of commercial exchanges within the Asian sex trade. The thesis will employ a case study approach to illustrate with specific examples how dominant Western ideologies have constructed Asian sex workers as "Others".

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INTRODUCTION

For approximately the last thirty years, an emerging body of literature has documented and analysed "tourism" as an economic development strategy throughout the world (Britton 1982, ECTWT 1985 , Mies 1986 ; O'Malley 1987 , Truong 1990 , Hewison 1992 ; Warr 1993)

In relation to the potential success of implementing tourism as a national economic program, most Third World nations have not achieved the desired result of elevating their economies out of "dependency" status. For example, at least twenty years after the Thai government implemented its "tourism as development" strategy, the country still merits a place on the list of underdeveloped nations (Truong 1990 : 159-161). Subsequent research findings have pointed "again and again to the inappropriateness of Thailand's current tourist industry development strategy" (O'Malley 1987 : 174)

Growing documentation and analyses of "sex tourism" in the Third World has also been steadily added to the existing body of works on tourism (Barry 1979 ; Cohen 1982a ; 1988 , Phongpaichit 1982 , Mies 1986 : ECTWT 1985 ; O'Malley 1987 ; Enloe 1983 ; 1989 , Truong 1983 , 1990 , Rhodes, November 1991).

For example, Taiwan (Sturdevant and Stoltzfus 1993), and Brazil (Time 1993 : 16 ; Barry 1995) are among, but by no means the only, nations where sex tourism thrives. African countries like Kenya (O'Malley 1987 ; ECTWT 1985 ; Mies 1986), Zaire (Barry 1995), and Tanzania (Barry 1979) have also been studied particularly with a focus on female prostitution. Some authors have emphasized the trafficking of children (Barry 1979 ; 1995 ; Barry, Bunch and Castley 1984 ; Sanghera 1992 , Time 1993), in India, Burma, Laos, and Southern China

(CLno2 n.d. ; Barry 1979 , Time 1993 , Barry 1995), and most recently in Russia and Eastern Europe (Barry 1995 ; Time 1993)

Because South East Asian countries, especially Thailand and the Philippines, have among the largest sex trades in the world, most of the literature on sex tourism contains an emphasis on these countries' industries (Barry 1979 , 1995 , Cohen 1982a , Phongpaichit 1982 , Mies 1986 ; ECTWT 1985 ; O'Malley 1987 ; Enloe 1983 , 1989 , Truong 1983 , 1990 , Rhodes, November 1991)

The Thai sex tourist industry emerged from a historically unique amalgamation of political and economic conditions, many of which were especially salient during the 1960's and 1970's. In particular, Thailand's sex trade catering to foreign visitors developed as the South East Asian region was inundated with Western military personnel (ISIS 1979 , Enloe 1983 ; 1989 ; Barry 1979 , Barry, Bunch, and Castley 1984 ; Mies 1986 , O'Malley 1987 , Rhodes 1991 , Truong 1983 ; 1990).

In the name of "Rest and Recreation", Western servicemen flocked to Thailand's red light districts to be serviced emotionally and sexually, mostly by young women and children. During the middle and late 1970's, after the U S began withdrawing its troops from South East Asia (but still remained in the Philippines and Japan), local pimps, bar operators, and other sex-related establishment owners had to search for new kinds of customers as the soldiers and sailors who previously constituted the bulk of their business had left. They inevitably found this new customer in the "tourist" (Truong 1983 : 537). Backed by their respective federal governments, the international business community, and major financial institutions, sex traders transformed what had been a local commercial success, limited to Rest

and Recreation services, to a much bigger commercial success, expanded to include a wide range of customers and consumer tastes (Truong 1990 : 166-167)

Both the expansion of the military and the massive development of tourist enterprises are being financed by foreign capital, which in turn is legitimized by insecure local governments eager to pay off foreign loans and suppress domestic opposition (Enloe 1983 : 37)

Many sex workers migrated from poor rural communities, mainly from the Northeast to the urban areas, in search of employment (Phongpaichit 1982 : 35 ; O'Malley 1987 : 129 ; Hall 1992 : 72) Others were "bonded" or abducted before being coerced into prostitution. The expansion of sex tourism in Thailand brought with it an increasingly complex physical infrastructure including more international air traffic, high-tech data processing, and large hotel chain accommodation (Truong 1983 : 546 ; 1990 : 101-105, 167 ; O'Malley 1987 : 84-90 , Muscat 1990 : 105 , Hewison 1992 : 81).

As the industry expanded so too did the amount and variety of sexual services. A substantial number of sources document and analyze mostly the types of services available and information on the people who provide them. Less numerous are sources that address the question of who benefits from these services. Especially relevant as a contribution to this thesis will be those works that are concerned with the consumers and with their reasons for buying sex in the Third World

From the inception of sex tourism, sex buyers have been overwhelmingly male. They arrive from all parts of the globe. In previous years they were mostly military workers, now the clientele consist of more businessmen and holiday travellers.

Theoretical Focus : The Construction of "Others"

Recent feminist scholarship on the Western concept of "Otherness" emphasizes a long historical process lasting at least several centuries, wherein the white, adult upper class European male was placed at the "centre" while everyone else was pushed to the "margins"

Starting approximately during the fifteenth century, in the West, a dominant ideology¹ emerged dividing humanity into a set of dichotomous categories. The white, adult European male took on the status of "Subject/Self/Culture" which relegated people of colour, non-Europeans, women and children to that of "Objects/Others/Nature". Everything affiliated with the Subject --culture, civilization, science, control, Reason, the mind, etc -- acquired positive value. All else associated with Others --nature, barbarism, emotion, intuition, the body, etc -- were devalued.

¹ Here, "ideology" has been borrowed from Marxist theory. Unlike some definitions of the term which present it as a separate entity from material practices, here its meaning includes notions of it being created by material practices as well as being expressed through them. According to this conceptualization, one sphere does not determine the other. Rather, material practices shape ideological systems, at the same time that ideologies influence the formation of material practices, always within a "dialectical" relationship. A famous passage from Engels' and Marx's writing eloquently makes this point.

Morality, religion, metaphysics all the rest of ideology and their corresponding forms of consciousness, thus no longer retain the semblance of independence...but men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking. Life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life (1964 : 35).

Within this historical framework, "Others" have been defined as a defective version of "Subjects". A hierarchy of difference was established whereby "Objects" and "Subjects" have been classified in binary opposition to each other. The worth of those on the margins, judged by the standards set by those at the centre, has consistently been evaluated as "less than" the worth of those at the centre.

These historical dualisms have been reflected in, and created by, racist (Smedley 1993), imperialist (Wallerstein 1974), and sexist (de Beauvoir 1989) practices. Particularly influential in the formation of the dominant ideology have been the institutionalization of slavery (Wallerstein 1974, Smedley 1993), colonialism, imperialism, and the extermination of entire "Native" populations (Wallerstein 1974, Smedley 1993), the witch hunts and the persecution of midwives (Ehrenreich and English 1973, 1978, Merchant 1980 : 132-148 ; Mies 1986 : 64, Storey 1987 : 62-65), the rise of positivist "science" (Brocke-Utne 1985 : 112, Harding 1986 : 116, Bordo 1986), the destruction of "nature" (Mies, Bennholdt-Thomsen, and Werlhof 1988 : 88 ; Bleir 1986 : 6 ; Merchant 1980 : 30), and the "man-as-bread-winner" marriage system (Ehrenreich and English 1978).

These dualisms and dichotomies, and material practices were established during the Reformation, the Renaissance, the 'Age of Discovery', the Enlightenment, and the Scientific Revolution and remain today.

Focus of the Thesis - Virulent Sex Tourism and the Virulence of "Otherness"

The existing literature on sex tourism, while focussing on the political economy of

tourism and the Third World, and on the supply and demand and exploitation of sex tourism, seems nowhere to utilize the feminist analysis of the "Other" This thesis will make a contribution to the existing literature by combining the feminist work on "Otherness" with a case study of sex tourism in South East Asia With an emphasis on Thailand's sex trade (1960 to the present), the principal aim will be to stress the "Otherness" of female and child Asian sex workers and the virulent practices and ideologies attached to the sex industry, practices that are widely deemed unavailable and/or unacceptable and/or illegal in the West

Chapter Overview

Chapter One outlines a historical overview of the dominant Western ideology of "the Other" as it emerged from the 1500's to the present It illustrates the monumental shift in thinking and practice that took place principally during this period which permitted white, ruling class European men to assume the God-like position of the all-knowing "Subject" while reducing everyone else to the status of devalued "Others" and "Objects" The chapter provides historical evidence to show how this dominant ideology was incorporated into institutions such as science, religion, colonialism, imperialism, racism, and sexism This Western world-view continues today.

Chapter Two provides information on the case study of contemporary Thailand It mainly focuses on the political economy of Thailand with an emphasis on the emergence of "tourism" as a development strategy and its connection to the sex trade Pertinent factors such as the rural to urban migration of young women and children are explored to show the links

between rural poverty and the sex industry's methods of procuring cheap labour

Chapter Three looks at the women and children who sell sex in Thailand and gives a portrayal of male sex trade customers, specifically those from the West. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight those attractions within the sex tourist trade that have particular appeal for these consumers

Chapter Four offers an analysis of how the virulence of "Otherness" manifests itself within the specific sex touristic practices that were outlined in the previous chapters. It gives an inventory of the actual sex trade services and discourses offered in Thailand. This discussion gives descriptions of labour conditions in such a way as to emphasize the types of exploitation that take place. The aim of the chapter is to illustrate how Thai sex tourism involves practices and ideologies that are virulently racist and sexist and degrading, vulgar, and often unavailable or unacceptable in the West

The conclusion will pull together theory and practices from all the chapters to summarize the main thesis

CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORICAL CONSTRUCTION OF "OTHERNESS"

In the West, the creation of the "modern world" and 'modernity' emerged from several long, outstanding historical events starting in the fourteenth century with the Renaissance, followed by the Reformation and the Scientific Revolution, the Age of Discovery, and the Enlightenment.

The concept of "modernity" largely emanated from practices imbued with notions of "progress" During the span of these centuries, progress informed every dominant European tradition, institution, and way of thinking It became embedded into the definitions of mainstays like "civilization", "reason", and "culture"

Dichotomies prioritizing the transcendental powers of "culture" over the a priori immanence of "nature" expanded to include the mind/culture versus body/nature split Such dualisms evolved into two oppositional epistemological frameworks, from the organic world view, to the mechanical Moreover, inferiorization of all things "natural" became associated with gendered and racialized categorizations Over time, the organic world view, with its affiliations to the feminine and non-whiteness, was devalued Mechanical thinking, which stressed the control and exploitation of "nature", emerged as the dominant philosophy

Some of the consequences of the denigration of a feminized and racialized "nature" have included the destruction and exploitation of the natural world during the Renaissance (and beyond), the invention of masculine "science" during the Scientific Revolution,

colonialism, imperialism, and the mass persecution of witches and midwives during the Reformation

Concomitant with all these eras was the emergence of global capitalism. From approximately the fourteenth century, a long, gradual process emerged which made Europe and what came to be known as the "First World" prosperous at the expense of the "Third World" ² This process spanned the length of several major economic transitions, including the end of the feudal era, and the establishment of modern capitalism. Regional economies previously restricted to continental Europe eventually spread outward, infiltrating the production process and trade of other global regions (Wallerstein 1974 : 38)

Unequal exchange between global regions did not evolve coincidentally, but rather developed as a relationship characterized by "dependency" (Mies 1986 : 39). The fundamental idea behind the notion of dependency is

not simply that the Third World is poor in comparison to the industrialized world; rather it is that the development of the industrial system in Europe and North America fundamentally changed and impoverished most of the societies in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Isbister 1993 : 32-33).

The economic system identified as the first to be a world-wide, all-encompassing, unifying structural entity is capitalism. Capitalism succeeded the age of mercantilism and grew into what Immanuel Wallerstein called the "modern world-system" (1974 : 1⁵). The main feature differentiating all other known economic systems from international capitalism is that, unlike

² The terms overdeveloped and underdeveloped will be used, respectively, for the following : the First World and the Third World, the West and the Rest, the centre and the periphery, and the North and the South.

regional economies, capitalism consists of a single integrated system

The extraction of material resources combined with the exploitation of cheap labour in the Third World formed the foundation for an inherently unequal distribution of effort and wealth, commonly known as the "international division of labour" (Mies 1986 : 39)

Capitalism As A World System

Primitive appropriation of wealth, both labour and capital, was primarily achieved through the use of force. It was essentially exploitative, predicated on unequal relations between workers and owners, the ruled and rulers, and between men and women. The transition from feudalism to capitalism did not eradicate economic exploitation. Rather, "it was transformed and dialectically preserved, in the sense that it reappeared under new forms of labour control" (Mies, Bennholdt-Thomsen, and Von Werlhof 1988 : 86)

The colonization of the "New World" which included the extraction of valuable mineral resources and the acquisition of cheap labour proved to be particularly profitable for merchants and for monarchs who "sought glory and revenues for the throne" (Wallerstein 1974 : 46). The plunder of the colonies' natural resources was achieved mainly by conquest through warfare.

Direct and violent acquisition of gold, silver, and other products, mainly in Hispanic America, and of producers --first the Indians in Latin America and later African slaves-- proved to be the most 'productive' activity in what has been described as the period of primitive accumulation (Mies, Bennholdt-Thomsen, and Von Werlhof 1988 : 87-88)

During the age of mercantilism, colonial land was appropriated (read stolen) mainly

for agricultural production. In addition, wood was required for construction (ships, houses) and became more in demand as Europe suffered increasing deforestation (Merchant 1980 : 65-66). Sugar was considered a lucrative commodity, but required a great deal of manpower for its cultivation (Smedley 1993 : 95). It is not surprising, then, that the production of sugar was (more than any other commodity) often accompanied by slavery. Textiles were also in demand, especially silks (for the wealthy), wool and cotton (for everyone else). Colonizers sought bullion --precious metals-- to use as "money". Apart from its use in the exchange of traded goods, bullion was also converted into valued objects like jewellery, cups, plates, and other goods for the rich (Wallerstein 1974 : 42-45).

In order to acquire these goods, settlers sometimes imposed taxation and restrictive legal frameworks on "Third World" inhabitants to encourage 'production'. Another common method utilized to secure market control in underdeveloped regions was formal annexation. These colonial tactics were quite effective at securing the settlers' interests which included (among the most important objectives) the installation of cash cropping and the creation of new market relationships. Often done in the name of "empire building", these formal rules laid the groundwork for the establishment of plantations (silk, tea, opium, coffee, etc.) and for the institutionalization of slavery.

All these regulations and economic enterprises represented, in the minds of the settler, "progress". As Franz Fanon remarked,

Colonialism has made the effort in these regions to plant deep in the minds of the native population the idea that before the advent of colonialism their history was one which was dominated by barbarism (1963 : 213).

Consequently, over time, while some natives prospered, most became poorer through slavery,

indentureship, increased landlessness, the accumulation of debts, and limited employment options

Another related "progressive" practice included religious conversion. During the time of colonialism, missionaries were (and still are) dispensed all over the globe to "save" natives from Godlessness and moral corruption. Missionary zeal was seen as yet another aspect of the "White Man's Burden" (Kipling poem). Despite the fact that the native everywhere initially regarded missionaries with suspicion and hatred, they nevertheless continued for many centuries in their efforts to convert uncivilized "heathens" into God-fearing Christians.

The colonization of the "Third World", as well as advancing economic developments in Europe, was aided and sometimes made possible by the invention of new technologies. The so-called "Age of Discovery" produced, for example, fairly sophisticated navigational technology which made cross oceanic voyages possible. Also, more sophisticated methods of processing minerals, of manufacturing, and so on, allowed for increases in the outputs of goods and for greater productivity in general.

After raw resources are extracted from the Third World, most are shipped back to the First World to be processed. The division is extenuated by the concentration of processing and manufacturing ownership in the First World. But even when these operations are located in the Third World, which has been increasingly the case in recent years, peripheral dependency does not abate as the management and profitability of these enterprises still mainly remain at the centre.

In addition, capitalistic dynamics promote certain types of (exploitative) labour and ownership arrangements which, ultimately, dictate the wealth and power of individuals, all

defined by their relationship to the means of production. Collectively, these differences in wealth produce class stratified society. And,

As long as capitalism remains what it is, surplus capital will be utilized not for the purpose of raising the standard of living of the masses in a given country, for this would mean a decline in profits for the capitalists, but for the purpose of increasing profits by exporting capital abroad to the backward countries (Polychronion 1991: 77)

Moreover, technological innovations were accompanied by, and contributed to, the emergence of towns and cities (especially in Europe). Factories and mines were built which required (wage) labour. The demand for these types of industrial labour was provided principally by "proletarians" who migrated from mostly rural, "peasant" agricultural and fishing communities. This internal migration was influenced by many factors including the abolition of the "commons" and the privatization of land.

These socio-political, and economic developments encouraged a move away from the manufacturing of domestic-level, subsistence products towards the consumption of factory-made goods. Because children and other household responsibilities fell almost exclusively on the backs of women and because over time there emerged greater demand for industrial labour was for men (among other reasons), a gendered division of labour was created which relegated women to the "private" realm of domesticity while men increasingly dominated the "public" sphere.

Racism

Not long after the first explorers 'discovered' the "Third World", they had to deal

with the "Indian problem" In the Americas and in the West Indies, for example, the presence of Aboriginal populations proved to be an impediment for Europeans who wanted to take away natural riches. On these continents, one solution to the "Indian problem" was mass slaughter. Seemingly on the grounds that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian", the killings resulted in the extermination and near-extermination of, some estimate, millions of people. Because non-white colonial inhabitants were regarded as less than human -- "animals" and "savages"-- the killings were considered by many settlers to be justified. After all, their aim was, in part, to advance "progress", so in the European mind, the elimination of "backwards" people seemed legitimate. Throughout the conquest of new lands, the European has not granted non-whites the affirmation that they (non-whites) possessed the same integrity as human beings. Rather,

Colonialism, which has not bothered to put too fine a point on its efforts, has never ceased to maintain that the Negro is a savage (Fanon 1967 : 211)

Another justification for murdering these native inhabitants included the religious notion that ridding the world of "inferior" people constituted an act of holiness. For instance, about the extermination that took place on Rathlin Island in 1574, an Englishman wrote, "how godly a dede it is to overthrowe so wicked a race the world may judge : for my part I thinke there canot be a greater sacryfice to God" (quoted in Smedley 1993 : 86). Non-whites were considered "wicked", in part, because they were not Christian and thus not worthy of holy salvation. Apparently, it did not matter that native cultures throughout the world had complex belief systems that addressed matters like the cosmos, spirits, and the afterlife. As long as these beliefs remained unrecognized or discredited by European churches, natives were perceived as being without souls and "Godless".

European theological doctrine contained many threads of racist assertions that likened non-whites with Godlessness and, consequently, with the Devil. These racist beliefs were also grounded in supernatural supplications. In a time when little was known about the physical causes of such natural catastrophes as storms, earthquakes, diseases, etc., religion and witchcraft provided explanations that offered people illusions of control, relieving their fears. Natural disasters were explained away as works of the Devil (Smedley 1993 : 63-64). They were described as "dark" forces. In the Western mind, the colour black was frequently associated with danger, evil, filth, fear, and death (Smedley 1993 : 63). In a similar way, the colour white was affiliated with positive qualities like goodness, purity, virtue, heaven, beauty, and God (Hodge 1990 : 89-105). Such beliefs only reinforced already established biases against people with dark skin. So not surprisingly, non-whites, because they were thought possessed by the dark forces of the Devil, were often blamed for causing catastrophes like natural disasters and diseases (Smedley 1993 : 97).

In some cases, the theological initiative to convert "heathens" into "God-fearing" Christians provided additional opposition to those ideological positions that posited slaves as sub-human. For centuries, nearly everyone not considered a member of a Church was denied full social status because it was then believed that "heathens" (the non-converted) lacked "souls". Once converted, people previously dismissed and denigrated based on those beliefs could gain some upward mobility (sometimes even in the forms of legal rights) and dignity. Consequently, many slave owners resisted religious conversions because they feared the event would encourage their slaves to rebel and reject slave labour altogether. Some slave owners, on the other hand, objected less to conversions because they appreciated the socializing

influence the Church had on slaves, "conditioning them to proper Christian humility and willingness to serve their masters" (Smedley 1993 : 211)

Slavery was widely practiced in the colonies, its existence often dependent on "the [European] male monopoly over arms" (Mies 1986 : 64) Women slaves were especially valuable as they could be forced to perform agricultural labour and "they could produce more slaves" (Mies 1986 : 65). Such practices --stealing land in the colonies, exploiting their mineral resources, and enslaving (as well as indenturing) their labour-- allowed for ideal conditions which rendered the colonies increasingly dependent and helped create the international division of labour.

Slavery was not an aberration among other colonial practices ; it constituted "an essential social institution with deep roots in Western history" (Smedley 1993 : 113) Even though slavery had existed in various forms across cultures and historically, it nevertheless was accompanied everywhere by speculations and debates on the non-human nature of the slave. Depending on the socio-historical context, slaves were almost exclusively considered by whites to be either not human, or human, but "inferior". According to Smedley,

Old World slave systems all acknowledged the slave as an unfortunate but nevertheless human being. There are few societies outside North America in which the basic human status of all those in a slave category has ever been denied or even questioned (1993 : 116)

Clearly, from the beginning, the institution of slavery embodied ideologies of racial superiority and inferiority. However, during most of the fifteenth century and sixteenth centuries, the dominant Western belief systems tied "inferiors" mainly to concepts like "savagery" and related notions of "civilization" and "progress", to superstitions like witchcraft, and to religious ideas about salvation. "Scientific" thinking came later. Specifically, "The

focus on biologically inherited 'racial' features as a way of explaining Anglo-Saxon cultural institutions did not take place until the mid to late eighteenth century" (Smedley 1993 : 62).

While stealing other people's lands and their natural minerals was viewed as "progress", the inhabitants of those lands were thought to be "backwards". Progress was equated with "civilization", specifically the kind found in Europe. As such, most people living outside Europe were commonly labelled with negative epithets like "primitive", "barbarian", and "savage". As inhumane as this prejudice seems, it constituted only a fraction of what many non-Europeans suffered.

In North America, one of the first known recorded cases of African-American slave trading occurred at Jonestown in 1619 (Smedley 1993 : 95). The "inferiority" of the black "race" was rarely questioned. Instead, scientists, for example, were busy producing "evidence" linking African blacks to apes and other primates (Stepan 1990 : 43).

"Race", as a classification tool, started acquiring substantial scientific weight in Europe around the mid-eighteenth century. Theories of "racial inferiority" developed from and blended with other compatible racist ideologies. Older ideas about savagery and heathenism were not entirely abandoned in favour of "scientific" explanations that emphasized "race". Rather, science could be used to reinforce or complement already long-held racist ideas. Moreover, the cultural authority science acquired elevated its explanations to a higher political level. According to Smedley,

Once "race" became the major mode of thinking about group differences, history received its simplest (and most distorted) explanation for all human achievement. Thus any society composed of "inferior races" lost the potential for social, economic, and political advancement in the minds of whites (1993 : 181)

Validations for the existence of different "races" and of their unequal value was provided in various ways. Some scientists devoted their entire careers trying to find "proof" of both. Initial efforts mostly focused on the body and the collection of "physical" evidence. Later, that search would expand to include more abstract evidence related to the mind. They were extended beyond religion and incorporated into various institutions, including "science". To illustrate, consider the example of Dr. Thomas Towns. On March 26, 1675 he published a letter in the Royal Philosophical Transactions containing assertions that "Africans' blood was black, a premise expanded to include variously their brain, skull, and semen" (Gates 1990: 320).

In contrast, white people were assumed to have "pure" blood (Smedley 1993: 135). For the religious, mixing people of colour with whites was deemed immoral. For the more "scientifically" minded, blood-mixing was tied to the notions of racial inferiority. In either case, on both hierarchical scales of human worth, "mixed-bloods" ranked below whites because they were thought "contaminated". Predictably, legal and cultural measures were put in place, in Europe and in the colonies, to prevent "interracial" fornication and mixed marriages (Smedley 1993: 134-135).

World View : Organic Versus Mechanical Models

Concomitant with the conquest of the "New World" and racism was the conceptual transition from organic to mechanistic thinking which, like the other changes, was neither politically neutral, nor peaceful. During this historical period, the Scientific Revolution (1500-

1700) further promoted Man's isolation ("emancipation" (Mies 1986 : 75)) from nature, including women and non-whites. These systems of ideas and beliefs served to justify and legitimize violence against Others.

Underlying the theories and "evidence" that made up "science" was (and continues to be) the desire for control. Utilized to justify and legitimize the subordination of women and non-Europeans, science was seen to be conducted in the name of "progress". But progress was rarely the product of intelligence, hard work, and control (as some would have us believe). Rather, the notion of progress was (and is) intrinsically linked to the oppression of Others and to the exploitation of natural resources (Mies 1986 : 74), all of which flourished during these several centuries.

Francis Bacon (1561-1626), the so-called "father of modern science", epitomized the mechanistic model. According to Merchant, at the heart of Bacon's program was the desire to dominate. His program "was meant to sanction just such manipulations [dig mines, prevent storms, kill weeds, etc.], his whole objective being to recover man's right over nature" (1980 : 185).

The methods Bacon proposed to achieve control over nature required reducing "her" to the status of slave (Brocke-Utne 1985 : 112). His program for mastering nature involved distancing oneself from "her", thereby cutting all organic connections which were once thought to sustain life. Consequently, nature, then, could be perceived as dead matter --an object. Instead of a holistic being whose parts co-existed, under this model, nature was seen as a pile of disjointed parts that could be manipulated. This "scientific" stance contributed significantly to the ideological shift whereby the organic world-view was lost to be replaced

by a mechanistic one

Consistent with Bacon's objective science is Issac Newton's (1642-1727) conception of the universe. The Newtonian model is fundamentally mechanical insofar as it is based on the notion that the world is made exclusively of tiny building blocks. According to Newton, these particles are ordered by laws which could be calculated mathematically. For example, gravity was what Newton

believed moved between particles, according to their mass and mutual distance from each other. For Newton, the particles and forces of gravity between them, were thought to be created by God and as such, needed no further analysis (Storey 1987 : 80).

Likewise, Rene Descartes' (1596-1650) objective view of the world was derived from anxieties he experienced, related to his discomfort with "the organic female universe of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance" (Bordo 1986 : 441). Conforming to the thinking promoted by the scientific community around his time, Descartes placed particular emphasis on "reason" as the most effective method of acquiring information, and ultimately of understanding the world. Affective means of gaining understanding were discredited in favor of abstract rational thinking (positivism).

Rationality, however, was not utilized as simply one manner among many of viewing the universe. Instead, it came to represent an entire cognitive style. Backed by the authority of "science", reason, as opposed to feelings or intuition, was institutionalized as the dominant epistemological stance (Bordo 1986 : 439-456).

Overall, the rise of the Scientific Revolution marked

an unprecedented juncture in Western history wherein the ancient dichotomies posited between mind and body, and particularly male and female, became a conscious social organizing principle (Storey 1987 : 54)

In addition to the junctures created between ways of thinking and gender, the emergence of modern science also widened conceptual distances between the rich and the poor, whites and non-whites, Europeans and colonial inhabitants. Furthermore, as "science" increased in legitimacy, "the lack of differentiation between subject and object, between self and world [became] construed as [an] epistemological threat" (Bordo 1986 : 449). The separation also extended to "Man's" view and treatment of "Mother Earth". Consequently,

in the same brilliant stroke that insured the objectivity of science --the mutual opposition of the spiritual and the corporeal-- the formerly female earth becomes inert res extensa : dead, mechanically interacting matter (Bordo 1986 : 452)

Humans Versus Nature

Capitalistic practices of predatory acquisition during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were accompanied by a sweeping ideological shift which increasingly associated women and non-Europeans with "Nature". This shift was partly rooted in the ruling class's desire to enrich itself. After precious metals were discovered hidden in the "womb of the earth", capitalists saw the viability of exploiting them for personal financial gain (Mies 1986 : 75). During the sixteenth century, the popular belief concerning the source of minerals held that they were alive, like trees, and that they had the power to reproduce. This belief was embedded in a larger appreciation of the earth as a living organism. People understood themselves to be dependent upon the earth's bounty. The earth was Mother --an active, benevolent, nurturing force.

Powerful taboos once existed that protected the earth against exploitation. Some of

those taboos were thought to be the expressed wishes of Mother Earth herself. For example, the fact that the earth's natural resources were hidden in the ground was believed to be "her" way of indicating to people that they should not be touched. Also, a common belief of the time held that "the living earth in her wisdom has ordained against mining of metals by concealing them in the depths of her womb" (Merchant 1980 : 30)

In the process of mining the earth's natural resources, taboos against digging holes in the ground and other violations of Mother Earth had to be broken. During this historical period, the exploitation of Mother Earth was simultaneously accompanied by the institution of a new ideology. The belief that the earth was organic and that it sustained life for all dependent beings was replaced with a "mechanistic and physical world-view" (Mies 1986 75)

Before the employment of violence to loot "her" resources was widely practiced, the conventional wisdom of that period promoted images of the earth as a "nurturing mother". And as Carolyn Merchant explains,

One does not readily slay a mother, dig into her entrails for gold, or mutilate her body. As long as the earth was considered to be alive and sensitive, it could be considered a breach of human ethical behaviour to carry out destructive acts against it (1980 : 3).

This organic ideology, which emphasized the positive function of the earth as a "living, sentient being with which humans could co-exist rather than dominate" (Birke 1986 102), was eventually abandoned for a belief system that understood the earth as non-living --a machine. As the mechanistic world-view emerged, the primary 'producers' (i.e. appropriators) gradually became more reluctant to acknowledge their dependency on nature. Instead, nature

was seen as something to conquer, tame, and exploit. From that point on, "the capitalist class saw itself as the master and lord over nature" (Mies, Bennholdt-Thomsen, and Von Werlhof 1988 : 88)

The devaluation and repression of women was partly a result of the predominantly male ruling class's desire to tame the "'inherent disorder and chaos' in both women and nature" (Storey 1987 : 59). The chosen methods utilized to keep women in their place were the same excavational methods used in the exploitation against Mother Earth --"namely torture and inquisition as were used by the Church and State" (Mies 1986 : 75)

Disorder was seen to originate from nature, which included both the earth and the universe. There were storms, droughts, earthquakes, and so on. So while people appreciated and valued the nurturance their benevolent Mother Earth provided, they also had to contend with "her" destructive forces. According to Merchant, around this period,

Sixteenth and seventeenth-century writers exhibit a growing tendency to view both nature and society as wilderness and to advocate control over the forces and fates dealt by nature (1980 : 129)

It was only a small step for the capitalist class (who were predominantly white, ruling class, European males) to arrive at the conclusion that all who could be dominated were like nature, and vice-versa. These included, above all, females and non-Europeans. For example, according to Mies, Bennholdt-Thomsen, and Von Werlhof,

women and peasants were/are defined as 'earth' or parts of the earth --as nature is identified with the earth and her plants-- under early capitalism slaves were defined as 'cattle' and women as 'breeders' of these cattle" (1988 : 88).

An ideology was created that divided the classes, women and men, Europeans and non-Europeans along master-slave relations of ruling. As the poor, women and non-whites

became considered part of nature, they were also perceived as being chaotic and destructive. The role of subduing them, then, fell to the white, European ruling class.

While white Western men viewed women and non-Westerners as "natural", they considered themselves to be "cultured", and thus superior. The cultured were understood to be the "civilized", the inventors and primary beneficiaries of "progress". Those affiliated with Nature were subsequently dismissed as wild, savage-like, uncontrolled, and backwards (Mies 1986 : 74-75).

In the process of controlling "Others", both theological doctrine and scientific ideology were relied upon to provide convenient justifications. An illustration of this is found in what was known as the "Great Chain of Being". The idea that the cosmos were organized hierarchically --God at the top, followed by Man, then Woman, with the animals, plants and minerals below-- commanded respect for many centuries (Merchant 1980 : 100-101 , Birke 1986 : 107-109 , Storey 1987 : 50-51). "Together", this arrangement

comprised [of] a living chain of being, each member a step in a stable, ordered, spherically-enclosed world, each member sharing some particular feature with the steps below and above, yet excelling in some unique characteristic (Merchant 1980 : 100).

In the same way that women became associated with Mother Earth's benevolent and destructive powers, so too did non-whites (as well as the poor). As mentioned earlier, during this period, being "closer to Nature" meant not being in possession of bodily control. Unlike "civilized" people, non-whites were thought to lack the forms of inner discipline (those of the mind) that were needed for "progress". These included especially the control over one's violent tempers and sexual urges. Thus, non-whites were perceived as uncontrollable,

potentially violent, over-sexed people who required externally imposed constraints to function in "civilization"

Francis Bacon was among those who thought the people identified as "natural" ought to be subjected to external controls. In relation to women's nature, he believed that Woman/Nature was a dark, mysterious territory that needed to be "unveiled and penetrated" (Bleir 1986 : 6). The purpose of science, he insisted, was to "conquer and subdue her and (even) [to] shake her to her foundations" (quoted in Brocke-Utne 1985 : 113 ; also see Merchant 1980 : 171-172)

This type of violent reaction against "Others" has been found to originate within Man's insecurities related to his fear of the unknown. In short,

Men seeks in woman the Other as Nature and as his fellow being. But we know what ambivalent feelings Nature inspires in man. He exploits her, but she crushes him, he is born of her and dies in her; she is the source of his being and the realm that he subjugates to his will (de Beauvoir 1989 : 144)

Within the same intellectual (Enlightenment) tradition, Rene Descartes' philosophy also stressed human separation from and domination over nature. Cartesian objectivism, argues Susan Bordo, is rooted in Descartes' anxieties, especially those related to his personal relationship with the universe. According to Bordo, it is this "strong sense of fragility of human cognitive relations with the object world" felt by Descartes that underlies his epistemological position (1986 : 442). It lead him to place paramount focus on the Self (the "inner life") which he regarded as isolated --completely removed-- from nature. Consequently, Descartes developed a theory which emphasized that

All spirits were effectively removed from nature. External objects consisted

only of quantities : extensions, figure, magnitude, and motion Occult qualities and properties existed only in the mind, not in the objects themselves (Merchant 1980 : 204).

Like Bacon and Newton's scientific models, Descartes' mathematical objectives largely reflected his desire to tame a seemingly disordered and chaotic world His methodology involved "detachment" (Harding 1986 : 116 , Storey 1987 : 76-77) from men's dependence on nature as well as becoming ontologically and theologically born-again From his need to resolve his alienation from nature, "the possibility of objectivity, strikingly, is conceived by Descartes as a kind of re-birth, on one's own terms, this time" (emphasis in original, Bordo 1986 : 448)

Additionally, a central feature of the Cartesian "drama of parturition" (Bordo 1986 : 444) includes the need for Godly reassurance. His religious beliefs acted as a kind of external crutch God (the father), he thought, could relieve his anxieties by administering holy order from above in the form of natural laws In 1630, he wrote "'God sets up mathematical laws in nature as a king sets up laws in his kingdom'" (quoted in Merchant 1980 : 205) This reliance on theological doctrine and religious orthodoxy is a recurring theme throughout the Scientific Revolution. Bacon had close ties to the Church and worked with Catholic and Protestant prosecutors during the witch pogroms (Merchant 1980 : 164-172). Likewise, Newton's mechanistic approach also contained the premise that "knowledge of the world can be certain and consistent, and that the 'laws' of nature have been imposed on creation by God" (Storey 1987 : 80).

During this period, acts of violence against nature (as well as all else associated with "Her") increased. In part, this was due to eroding sanctions and to science's ability to justify

and legitimize them. The "birth" of modern science, not surprisingly, proved to be an era of wide-spread racism and gynophobia (Bordo 1986 453-455). Accordingly, Nancy Leys Stepan has noted that

In the nineteenth century, as attention turned increasingly to sexual and gender differences as well, gender was found to be remarkably analogous to race, such that the scientist would use racial differences to explain gender difference, and vice versa (1990 : 39).

Midwives and Witch Persecutions

Wide-spread sanctioned assaults on women in the form of witch hunts were linked to the exploitation of nature and to the ascension of the Scientific Revolution. Remember, nature and women were interconnected, nature was seen as feminine and women were considered "natural." Consequently, as the destruction of nature became increasingly acceptable, so too did the attacks on women.

In specific relation to men's power over women, the Scientific Revolution produced rationales which were conveniently utilized to enforce the status quo. Particularly threatening to ruling class men were some women's economic independence, their special "medical" knowledge that allowed them to be successful in the practice of healing, as well as their close ties to the peasantry and to working class struggle. These factors directly corresponded with the period's increasing rise of the male-as-bread-winner, nuclear family, the establishment of the professions (especially law and medicine), and the persecution of witches.

The European and American witch hunts are believed to have spanned more than four centuries --from the 14th to the 17th century-- and from feudalism to the "age of reason".

Executions have been estimated into the "thousands upon thousands" (although some feminists have put the numbers into the millions). Roughly eighty-five percent of those executed were women, including the old, the young, and children (Ehrenreich and English 1973 : 7-8 , Merchant 1980 : 132-148 ; Storey 1987 : 62-63) So common were the murders in some countries that entire towns and villages were devastated (in England, France and Germany in particular). Note especially the example of the Bishopric of Trier where in 1585, "2 villages were left with only 1 female inhabitant each" (Ehrenreich and English 1973 : 7-8)

Clearly the witch craze involved much more than random acts of violence against women. Probing state-wide "investigations" were conducted by Church and State officials to find witches. Once someone was suspected --anyone could be, and no evidence was required-- the accused would then be forced to endure brutal interrogations and torture. Typically, if the accused, by chance, had not been killed at that point, (often) "she" would be given a trial which (unless bribes were forthcoming for the judge) usually ended in a guilty verdict.

What crimes could have been so horrendously committed by women to warrant such a hunt? Feminists have argued that at the heart of these mass murders was the struggle for power. The witch hunts were not products of mass hysteria or peasant lynching (Ehrenreich and English 1973 : 8) Instead, they were the end results of orchestrated attempts by ruling class men to wrest power away from (mostly) poor women. Essentially, "the witch-hunts were well-organized campaigns initiated, financed and executed by the Church and State" (Ehrenreich and English 1973 : 9)

By the standards of that era, the women who were accused of witchcraft had power -- in the form of knowledge, money, and/or influence-- and it was this power that men aimed to

destroy. Accusing women of being witches and killing them, then, "was one of the mechanisms to control and subordinate [them], the peasant and artisan, women who in their economic and sexual independence constituted a threat for the emerging bourgeois order" (Mies 1986 : 81)

During the Renaissance (translation : re-birth) and the Enlightenment, factors like the rise and institutionalization of the patriarchal nuclear family helped limit women's independence --legally, economically, and politically-- resulting in the lowering of their social status. In the "private" sphere, gender relations were affected in large part by the spread of secularization and by a growing capitalist market economy (Merchant 1980 : 172 ; Storey 1987 : 59)

In the "public" sphere, before the witch pogroms, many women enjoyed relative freedom. They could be found engaging in commercial activities like trading home-made goods on the street and consuming luxury items. Some of these women (mostly among the middle and upper classes) enjoyed formal political and legal rights (Mies 1986 : 78). In addition, most healers, including midwives, were women. These "wise women" served as 'general practitioners', herbalists and counsellors. And unlike the emerging male-dominated medical profession, they based their practice on knowledge gathered over generations. "The female lay healer operated within a network of information-sharing and mutual support" (Ehrenreich and English 1978 : 33-35).

Furthermore, the patriarchs pushing "new science" also joined forces with the Church in their efforts to destroy women's credibility. They did this essentially by associating women with evil and/or by devaluing their mental abilities and overall competency. The opinions of

Johann Weyer, a sixteenth century physician, illustrates well the misogyny of the time. According to Weyer, women were the "weaker sex" who became "passively victimized by the devil because they were female, silly and senile." (Merchant 1980 : 141).

The true story, of course, is quite different. Women were far from incompetent. In fact, one of their "crimes" for which they were put to death was "helping and healing" (Ehrenreich and English 1973 : 12 ; Griffin 1978 : 15-19 ; Storey 1987 : 61, 65). This was perceived as a threat by both the clergy and by the medical profession which was trying to establish itself. The Church's attempt to preserve its influence in the community included repressing wise women and their knowledge by endorsing "God's cures" (male) and condemning those of the "devil's" (female) (Storey 1987 : 65).

Curiously, the Devil was also implicated in women's "uncontrollable" sexuality. Not only was "lust" defined as evil, it was thought out of control and harmful, especially to men. This dark, mysterious force, after all, was seen to come from nature and both nature and women were irrevocably chaotic and threatening (Merchant 1980 : 132-138). As a result, witches were found guilty of lust. The men of science helped the Church's persecutions with theories that women's sexuality rendered them emotional, mentally debilitated, and dangerous (Merchant 1980 : 141).

The women who were not murdered suffered in other ways. The Church and State tried to prohibit women from gathering together, as this type of collective socializing posed a threat to the patriarchal rulers. Their "secret" meetings were deemed subversive because they provided opportunities for information sharing and because they "built a spirit of collective and autonomy among the peasants" (Ehrenreich and English 1973 : 12 , Storey 1987 : 65).

Most women were also prevented from enrolling in universities, effectively excluding them from all professions. It is important to note that the professions greatly benefitted from the repression and/or appropriation of women's knowledge. While male lawyers were actively trying women as witches in courtrooms all over Europe and America (and getting rich from it), male doctors gained prominence after the wise women had been either discredited as healers or killed (Ehrenreich and English 1973 : 6-19).

During this historical era, the women persecuted as witches were mostly poor or working class. Rich women were rarely executed. Their higher socio-economic status rewarded rich women with some immunity. Besides, those who were accused could usually escape the death penalty by bribing law officials. This class favouritism inevitably contributed to the stereotyping of poor women as more "lustful" and thus, impure (Merchant 1980 : 132-138)

Gender Relations

In a sense, one objective (or at least one effect) of the Scientific Revolution involved overthrowing Mother Earth and substituting her power with the authority of God and male science. Accordingly, Evelyn Fox Keller has stated that

if modern science evolved, and helped to shape a particular social and political context, by the same token, it evolved in conjunction with, and helped to shape a particular ideology of gender (1985 : 43).

Hence, Bordo's description of Cartesian thought as "masculine" (1986 : 453-455).

The witch pogroms had a lasting and profound influence for many years. Some

feminists have traced the "cult of womanhood", a deeply misogynist ideology prominent during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, to the witch hunts. Ultimately, both forms of female repression were used to smash women's independent spirit. So, when killing became a less socially acceptable method of oppression, enforced domestication was invented to fill the void. Dividing women in these ways greatly prevented them from building supportive networks across class lines which, undoubtedly, enforced the existing patriarchal, ruling class power structure.

"For the affluent women, society prescribed lives of leisured indolence; for the working class women, back-breaking toil" (Ehrenreich and English 1978 : 11) Class inequality has always been a feature of capitalism. The ways in which class stratification finds material expression varies historically and culturally. Customarily, the ruling class tries to separate itself from the working class by making a point of acquiring more prestigious status objects, by developing different lifestyles, by endorsing certain fashions, etc. The European rulers, from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, practiced all of the above

Social status can be communicated through objects. Of course, the masculine ruling class owned multitudes of precious objects, but one stood out above all --woman. By putting "idle" women on display, ruling class men could show off their wealth and power. Here is the main root of the "cult of womanhood". It is comprised of two distinct prescriptions for women --one imposed on the upper class, the other for the lower class-- essentially because "no single ideology of sexism could embrace both realities or justify both social roles" (Ehrenreich and English 1978 : 11).

This type of gender and class division was evident as early as the 14th century. Then,

one's socio-economic standing could be guessed by merely looking at someone's clothes.

"Women of different social classes could, for example, be easily identified by their socially appropriate head attire" (Storey 1989 : 55). Several centuries later, clothing still functioned as a marker of class distinction. However, clothing differences constituted only part of the display. The requirements of "womanhood" were also composed of behaviour (or lack thereof). Simply stated, upper class men admonished their wives from doing any work. The objective was to display their (male) wealth by showing others that they could financially support their wives. A married woman working, then, would have been a sign of a man's inability to provide.

When these sexist standards were pushed to their logical extreme, upper class (and to some degree, middle class) women were refused the opportunity to do anything. When some women grew restless and/or craved the challenges of meaningful work, doctors were brought in to subdue them with treatments, one of which was the "rest cure" (Ehrenreich and English 1978 : 33). Here again, science conveniently delivered theories, evidence, and interventions that reinforced the existing class/gender system of oppression (Ibid 1978 : 8-9). In addition to the standard female requirement --acting "ladylike"-- upper class women gained status by appearing more sick. Ehrenreich and English referred to this ideology as the "cult of female invalidism" (1978 : 17). Sickness went hand-in-hand with weakness. Eventually, women's whole bodies were pathologized. Special attention was paid to the female reproductive system, in part because these organs were related to sexuality and, as we have seen, female sexuality was stubbornly thought by men to be a threat (Ibid : 20-22).

At the same time that upper class women were subjected to lives of chronic leisure

and medical interventions of all kinds, working class women worked. These women were typically forced to endure long hard hours under often intolerable working conditions. Clearly, weakness and sickness were not associated with them. This fact greatly explains why the "cult of womanhood" contained two distinct ideologies --one for the rich and one for the poor. Under capitalism, the lower class was required to work (Ibid : 45-49)

Various myths were invented to justify keeping certain people poor. They were deemed "naturally" inferior, contaminated, diseased, stupid, dangerous, over-sexed, and so on (Ibid 52-61). All such claims were in some way legitimized by the professions, the State, and the Church. For example, prostitution was rarely analyzed using a socio-economic perspective. Instead, these women would be labelled everything from mentally defective by medical experts to evil and immoral by the clergy (Ibid : 59-61). So, if upper class women were sick, emphasized Ehrenreich and English, working class women were positively "sickening" (1978 : 45)

Moreover, all this was presented as inevitable. The sciences had, by this time, built an impressive reputation. Backed by elaborate biologically deterministic theories, male scientists had, to a large degree, monopolized the "official" making of history and ways of explaining human nature.

The institutionalization of the "cult of womanhood" carried its effects throughout the entire world. It served as a measurement for value which all women would be judged against. Maria Mies wrote about "housewifization" and its role in the establishment of the gender and international division of labour (1986 : 74-143). Such ideological systems, she explained, solidify patriarchal capitalism by promoting two crucial functions --separation and

subordination (1986 : 74) They serve to both create and to maintain divisions between people

Enlightenment Thinking The Knowers Versus The Known

During the course of the several centuries outlined above, in the West, a dominant ideology emerged that placed the white, European, ruling class male at the centre of almost every discourse while placing everyone else at the margins. As Nancy Hartsock notes, the philosophical and historical creation of a devalued Other

was the necessary precondition for the creation of the transcendental rational subject outside of time and space, the subject who is speaker in Enlightenment philosophy (1987 : 86)

Unitary Subjects, that is Subjects defined as unified wholes with common sets of cultural, political, and social values, are constructed over time through multiple practices and meanings. The Enlightenment Subject has been constructed through sexist, racist, and classist practices. In a sense, historical socio-political phenomena like the witch hunts and slavery have created a kind of epistemo-cultural prism through which only certain types of understandings of the world have been allowed to pass.

The Enlightenment Subject may be defined as a point of view that was formed in the process of excluding other points of view. Basically, it was constituted through the marginalization of certain categories of people as well as through the omission of certain types of thinking. In particular, the modern Enlightenment Subject was formed by excluding "Others", among them women, people of color, children, and the poor. In addition, it was also

constituted by denigrating certain methods of thinking such as intuition, affective knowing, faith, and visionary thought. The constitution of the modern Enlightenment Subject rests not so much on the practice of limiting alternative views, but rather depends on the elimination of these views. In other words, they are placed in direct opposition to one another.

Radical exclusion forms the basis for the major distinctions upon which modern thinking is founded. A rational, masculinist, racist, and classist Subject rests on dichotomies like reason/non-reason, male/female, rich/poor, white/colour, culture/nature, mind/body, science/art, critique/affect, etc. Each either/or category corresponds with its counterpart to form distinct, comprehensive paradigms. So, for instance, from the point of view of the Subject, the feminine will be associated with non-reason, nature, art, and so on, while the masculine will be associated with reason, culture, science, etc. (Merchant 1980 : 10-16 , Storey 1987 : 54).

Moreover, these paradigms are never invested with the same value. Rather, within the relationship -- "us" versus "them" -- the "us" assumes a superior position. The experiences of "us", or of those who take on the position of the subjective "I" (Man/White/Person /Colonizer/Self), have been appropriated as the norm. Consequently, the experiences of those outside that group (Person of Colour/Woman/Colonized/Other) are perceived as Objects. For those not members of the dominant group, exclusion meant being considered (and treated as) deficient. Ultimately, by the standards of the dominant group,

the Other is always seen as Not, as a lack, a void, as lacking in the valued qualities of the society, whatever those values may be (Hartsock 1987 : 86)

This dualistic world-view became instituted in all matters of everyday life, and took on the

importance of being the only legitimate standards by which all humans were to be judged.

Therefore, the exclusion of alternative views and people comes at a cost. A primary cost includes the inevitability of acquiring "biased" perceptions of the world when it is viewed through the eyes of the Subject. For example, the unified, modern Subject may take "his" privileged view for granted and generalize "his" personal experiences to "universal" human experience. Upon scrutiny, such perspectives can be discovered to always originate, instead, in specific personal, historical, and cultural conjunctures and, as such, can be exposed for their limitations. Likewise, analyzing situations and problems from a supposed mature, rational, position and making claims to objectivity obscures the fact that as long as human thinking is grounded in the real, material world, pure objectivity is impossible to achieve.

Moreover, related to such biases is the probability of repression. By this is meant, of course, the repression of certain kinds of knowledge and ways of understanding. It can, and usually does, also extend to the repressive treatment of Others.

The Nature and Consequences of Constructing Others

During the historical period outlined above, from the 15th century until the 19th century, many racist, sexist, and imperial practices were thoroughly invested with dominant Enlightenment philosophies. Institutions like slavery, the witch hunts, and the emergence of positivism (modern science) were embedded with premises assuming the existence of a detached, rational Subject. The cumulative effect of these material practices over centuries on our collective thinking has resulted in the creation of a dominant ideology in the West which

has consisted, and continues to consist, of

a way of looking at the world characteristic of the dominant white, male eurocentric ruling class . a way of dividing up the world that puts an omnipotent subject at the centre and constructs marginal Others as sets of negative qualities (Hartsock 1987 : 86)

Consequently, those pushed to the periphery by the Enlightenment Subject are, apart from being denied legitimated experiences, also inevitably stamped with derogatory labels. This process can include denying Others the integrity of owning unique experiences and characteristics by dumping everyone in one generalized group, thus branding them with what Albert Memmi called " the mark of the plural" (1967 : 83). A common example of this type of reductionism is reflected in the colloquial phrase "they all look alike" (Hartsock 1987 : 86)

With reference to "race", such circumscription can be achieved by assimilating all blacks into the category "savages". Likewise, during the time of the American slave trade, black men were typically all referred to as "boy", irrespective of age. In terms of colonial racism, non-whites have also been thought uncivilized, less advanced morally, psychologically, and intellectually, barbaric, primitive, savage, and so on. Less culturally general, but nonetheless equally insulting stereotypes of non-whites have also included explicit negatives like parasitic, freaky, promiscuous, physically ugly, and childlike. Racism, in the words of Franz Fanon, contains such reductionist putdowns in large part because it is

a system based on the exploitation of a given race by another, on the contempt in which a given branch of humanity is held by a form of civilization that pretends to superiority (1967 : 224).

In reference to gender, women have been consistently dumped into the generic caste "girls". Specifically, women are typically relegated to one of two moral categories . "good girls" and "bad girls" (Bell 1987). The whore/sex object represents the woman as a symbol of

sexual availability and subordination. She is assumed to be manipulative, dangerous, and morally corrupt. Relatedly, "good girls" get reduced to marriageable trophies whose main functions are to enhance their specific husbands' social status, perform domestic labour, and act as reproductive vessels. She is thought to be passive, dumb, and content in her subordination. In each case, Woman is assumed to be irrational, "closer to nature" and, in general, the defective versions of men; the "imperfect man" (de Beauvoir 1989 : xvi). Inevitably, her role is restricted to that of servant and her human status to that of Object. Through the assertion of masculine privilege emerges the alterity of Woman -- "Man is the Absolute, Woman is the Other" (de Beauvoir 1989 : xvi).

Woman is not assumed to possess the autonomy required to define her own Subjectivity. Instead, she is constituted as inferior and placed in dichotomous opposition to Man, within unequal relations. As de Beauvoir explains:

In actuality the relation of the two sexes is not quite like that of two electrical poles, for man represents both the positive and the neutral, as is indicated by the common use of man to designate human beings in general; whereas woman represents only the negative, defined by limiting criteria, without reciprocity (1989 : xv).

Regardless of the specific label and of its particular meaning in its given cultural context, each racist and sexist attack carries with it assertions of the inferiority of non-white people relative to whites and the inferiority of women relative to men. Racist, imperialist, and sexist images never reflect the authentic experiences of non-whites and women. As such, they are fundamentally reductionist and reactionary in character. Such ideologies, beyond imposing demeaning labels on Others, also carry explanations on the source of their inferiority. For example, slavery was accompanied by an ideology that presented slaves as subhuman. By

dehumanizing slaves outright, those benefitting from slavery could justify the practice. Moreover, implicit in the etiology "subhuman" is the idea that non-white inferiority is somehow innate; meaning that it is considered natural.

Innateness implies inevitability. It contains assumptions about the non-changeability of the human condition regardless of social variation. So while most negative stereotypes vary across cultures and time, depending on what is perceived as valuable, certain notions about the nature of Others remain constant. Assigning essentialist characteristics to Others renders them "fixed" --without the possibility of evolution (Memini 1967 : 71-72). Therein lies the primary effect of imposing universal claims on Others. Whether it is making reference to the elusive "eternal feminine" (de Beauvoir 1989 : xv) that all women are supposed to possess, or labelling all colonized natives "savages", the generalizations effectively imprison people inside categorical imperatives and circumscribes them within the limits of an assumed homogeneity.

An intrinsic effect of such categorizing involves removing people from culture and history. One of the most effective, time-tested methods of rooting people within the limitations of timelessness and cultural vacuums includes ascribing human behaviour to "biology", thereby tying it to "nature". Because, over centuries (in the West), nature was assigned less value than culture, everything affiliated with nature has subsequently been denigrated. According to Sherry Ortner, women's

pan-cultural second-class status could be accounted for, quite simply, by postulating that women are being identified or symbolically associated with nature, as opposed to men, who are identified with culture. Since it is always culture's project to subsume and transcend nature, if women were considered part of nature, then culture would find it "natural" to subordinate, not to say oppress, them (1974 : 73).

Characteristics associated with culture on the one hand or nature on the other hand are

thought, to a large degree, interchangeable. This means that all people linked to nature, for example, may be perceived to possess the same traits. Not surprisingly, the devalued Other in the Third World has consistently been associated with the feminine (Hartsock 1987 : 87). As well, sexist stereotypes have been used to label black African-American men as a way of keeping them in their "place", a political technique bell hooks calls the "demasculinization of men" (1982 : 22).

In addition to being defined as unchanging, Others are also placed at the bottom of established hierarchies. Such deterministic devaluations are ingrained in wider ideological structures which maintain and promote larger systems of inequality. Groupings of lies, myths, fantasies, etc. pertaining to Others take shape and form institutionalized discourses or what Edward Said called a "created body of theory and practice" (1979 : 6). They may be organized around specific metaphors and themes that likely contain justifications and excuses drawn from a myriad of discursive streams, including moral orthodoxy, suspicious scholarship, legitimated violence, and so on.

To illustrate the point, in relation to Europe's colonization of the Orient, Said coined the term "Orientalism" to explain the many ways racism became institutionalized into formal academic practice and into everyday life.

Orientalism can be discussed and analysed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient --dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient (1979 : 3).

Fundamentally, the exercise of constructing Others is comparative and comprises the twin agendas of distancing and devaluing. Or as Maria Mies prefers "structural separation and

subordination of human beings" (1986 : 74). Those who enjoy the privilege of detached Subject are in position to project onto Others whatever qualities the Subject wishes to not possess and then to define those qualities in derogatory terms.

Essentialist standards of human worth and similar universal claims that ultimately silence the voices of marginalized groups continue to be part of the lasting dominant ideological backbone that continues to find expression to this day. Although constructions of Otherness were thoroughly embedded in and may be mostly associated with the sexist, racist, and empiricist practices of the past, these notions have not entirely disappeared. While institutions like slavery and the witch hunts have been formally abolished and are no longer practiced on a large scale, we are nevertheless still left with the ideologies created from them. Likewise, even though formal colonialism and imperialism are largely phenomena of times gone by, "neo-colonialism" continues unabated.

Attempts to equalize relations between the sexes and "races" have led to the creation of modern, progressive political movements. The feminist and civil rights movements, as well as the unrelenting efforts by many within academia to legitimize certain types of marginalized knowledge and ways of thinking are direct counter-responses to prevailing institutionalized Enlightenment hegemonies.

CHAPTER TWO

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THAILAND

Thailand is similar to its other Asian neighbours in the sense that it has not been able to escape the kind of underdevelopment prevalent in the region. The Thai political economy has evolved with the identical economic discontinuities that have marked most developing countries in Asia --with the exception of Japan (Jacobs 1991 : 3). This has been the case despite the exceptional fact that Thailand never suffered formal annexation during European colonial expansion (O'Malley 1987 : 49 ; Schlossstein 1991 : 135).

Thailand, being in many respects like most Third World nations, fits very well into the political economic model Stephen Britton calls "dependent development". In almost all cases, countries that suffer structural dependency within global capitalism have histories that show considerable exposure to colonial or imperialist rule. Britton summarizes the nature of economic dependency Third World nations suffer very clearly when he states,

Peripheral countries were articulated with the core capitalist economies in such a way that the former had imposed upon them forms of production, social organisation, and trading patterns designed to meet the economic and political requirements of the colonial powers (1982 : 333).

The present underdevelopment predicament Thailand is caught in has been unfolding over a historical period spanning more than one hundred and thirty years. Its crippling economic dependence can be traced back to at least 1855, the year the country (then called Siam) signed the Bowring Treaty with Britain (O'Malley 1987 : 51-52 ; Truong 1990 : 158 ; Schlossstein

1991 : 140). Thanh-Dam Truong notes that the treaty

set the conditions for trade similar to those in British colonies and allowed Thailand virtually no control over trade and capital movement (1990 : 158)

Reduced to "semi-colony" status, Thailand was subsequently pressured to implement export-led policies, a development strategy which has consistently been backed-up by government action. "Thais", argues Norman Jacobs, "have deliberately cultivated a policy of holding off direct political control by accepting foreign economic penetration" (1971 : 129-130).

Initially, the main item for export was rice. As a consequence of cash-cropping, especially in the Central Plain where rice cultivation was (and still is) concentrated, farming practices and socio-economic formations have undergone drastic changes (ISIS 1979 : 12 , Rhodes 1991 : 66) Rice production became heavily commercialised. And as Phongpaichit discovered,

The commercialisation of rice trade in the late nineteenth century and expansion of the export economy were accompanied by a large-scale influx of immigrant trading communities (1982 : 3)

Also, during the first half of the twentieth century, the exportation of Thailand's natural resources was extended to include teak, rubber, and tin, especially after the British influence subsided and the American presence became more pronounced (Hewison 1988 : 73 , Muscat 1990 : 2). Land distribution gradually shifted from primarily peasant ownership to the concentration of larger land holdings in the hands of the rich. Irrigation systems were introduced to increase agricultural output. Similar drastic transformations affected the Northern region after opium cash cropping was introduced by Westerners. Two results of

these changes were. (1) class differentiation intensified (O'Malley 1987 : 98 ; Keyes 1978 : 28), and (2) dramatic social disruptions escalated which included greater migration flow from rural to urban regions (O'Malley 1985 : 11-12 ; Phongpaichit 1982 : 4).

Export-oriented trading practices in Thailand were the major initial factors that eventually caused the country's economy to become soundly integrated into the global market system as a satellite of First World nations (Hewison 1988 : 78). The structural consequences of Third World dependency usually involve devastating transformations within the peripheral country's political, economic, and social formations, a phenomenon sometimes referred to as "internal-disarticulation" (Roxborough 1979 : 42-69 ; Britton 1982 : 334). The kind of internal reorganization that often results from colonial domination includes worsened economic and social inequality, increased levels of mass poverty, greater division between regions, and the enrichment (and empowerment) of First World-backed indigenous elites (Britton 1982 : 333-335).

In 1932, the Thai government was overthrown by a successful coup d'etat. The country's absolute monarchy was dethroned and replaced by changing alliances between upper-echelon military personnel, business leaders, bureaucrats, and Western-educated intellectuals (Truong 1990 : 158-9). They ruled within a "loosely-structured" social system (Embree 1950 , Evers 1969 , Heins Potter 1977 : 2-4) under the "prevailing ideology of economic nationalism" (Truong 1990 : 158-159). The shift in political leaders, however, did not drastically affect Thailand's development strategy nor the country's thrust toward greater Third World economic dependency (O'Malley 1985 : 12). Instead, the new elite continued to allow the exploitation of its country's natural resources as well as its growing economically

displaced population Attracting foreign investment and favouring short-term profits over long-term planning were consistently promoted as growth strategies during the decades following the coup (Truong 1990 : 159-160 ; Schlosstein 1991 : 145, 209)

Thailand's bourgeoisie provided essential links between foreigners and the local economy (Schlosstein 1991 : 150 , Jacobs 1971 : 127) Furthermore, "In order to expand their enterprises", notes Kevin Hewison,

some Thai capitalists were willing to pay the price of subordinate integration into the international capitalist system (1988 : 76).

During the late 1950s, but especially throughout the 1960s, American geo-political interest in Southeast Asia sky-rocketed. The U.S. administration pushed "containment" strategies (read: anti-communism) to strengthen its position in the region. These strategies involved increasing the number of American military forces in Thailand primarily to back up the invasion of Vietnam³ (Muscat 1990 : 21-25)

Tourism As A Development Strategy

The growth of Thailand's tourist industry emerged under the Thai national government's adoption of a 'tourism-as-development' strategy within the context of international capitalism. Although the tourism promotion board of Thailand had been created and the national government had also set up an inter-ministry committee to provide direction to tourism planning as early as 1936 (O'Malley 1987 : 68), the implementation of coherent

³ A list of the American Air Force bases in Thailand during this period includes : U Tapao, Tahkli, Korat, Udon, Ubon, Nam Phong, Kamphaeng, Saen, and Chiangmai (Muscat 1990 : 25).

development policies promoting tourism were evident mainly during the 1950's and 60's. The government laid out six national development "plans" --starting in 1961 and ending in 1991 (Truong 1990 : 159-167). It was mainly in the Third Plan (1972-76) that

the government began to stress tourism as one of the major sources of potential foreign exchange earnings, as other sources (especially US grant aid, loans and other foreign inflows) were declining (Phongpaichit and Chiasakul 1993 : 157 ; see also Warr 1993 : 157).

The Thai government's decision to select tourism as its "main industry" (Richter 1992 41) is consistent with many other Third World nations' development strategies, a factor that helps make tourism "the second largest item of trade" in the world (Cleverdon 1979 : 4). Tourism was hailed as an ideal method of acquiring precious foreign exchange (Cleverdon 1979 : 20 ; Hewison 1988 : 78 ; Warr 1993 : 160), often needed to buy expensive imports (Warr 1993 : 169). To promote the industry, Thailand opened its doors to foreign investors and started building a social and physical infrastructure along the guidelines drafted by the World Bank and other First World financial institutions (Hewison 1988 : 77).

Secondly, another factor that contributed to Thailand's initiative to implement tourism as a development policy is the fact that the United States started pulling out its military troops from the South East Asian region in the mid 1970's (but still remained in the Philippines and Japan). According to Steven Schlossstein,

Thailand's rapid economic growth in the 1960s was attributable primarily to the massive U S military expenditure for the war in Vietnam (1991 : 141).

So when the U.S. began its withdrawal (roughly from 1973 until 1976), the Thai government was pressured to find other ways of acquiring foreign currency (Warr 1993 : 159). Tourism was seen as a logical choice, in part, because, as a service-heavy industry, it

depends primarily on the exploitation of cheap labour to generate profit, something Thailand had an abundance of. In addition, the industry does not require (locally) large capital investments (Cleverdon 1979 : 46)

In 1959, the Thai federal government passed the Investment Act, a law that encouraged foreign business to invest in Thailand's economy by eliminating many import duties and providing generous tax concessions. A similar law, the Investment Promotion Act (1972) facilitated even more foreign economic penetration. Among the concessions granted to foreign corporations by this act were "the free movement of capital, the right to own land to transfer profits and full exemption from taxes and duties on machinery whether bought locally or imported" (Truong 1990 : 160). Likewise, the Tourism Promotion Law (1979) was introduced to prevent price controlling at the national level and to promote "free-enterprise" (in other words, a *laissez-faire* economy). Apart from allowing the lowering of import duties and business taxes, the law also permitted foreign ownership of land as well as unsupervised foreign exploration (United Nations/ESCAP 1980 : 99, O'Malley 1987 : 75-76, Truong 1990 : 163).

The Tourism Organization of Thailand (TOT) and the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), both government bodies, were formed partly for the purposes of pushing private investment, building infrastructure, and reserving geographical areas for provincial tourist sites and resorts (Rojanasoonthon 1982 : 43 ; Truong 1990 : 163 ; Warr 1993 : 161-164). The regulation of hotels falls under the Service Establishment Act. This policy, also called the Entertainment Act, serves to legitimize "the operation of entertainment places (massage parlours, night-clubs and bars) whose main clients were US military servicemen stationed in

the country" (Truong 1990 : 161)

Throughout this period, Rest and Recreation ventures multiplied at an astounding rate, in large part, because these services did not require expensive capital investment and also because the availability of cheap labour in Thailand was (and is) abundant. The remnants of colonialism, due largely to economic transformations in the rural economy, included increased out-migration to cities and, subsequently, wide-spread unemployment in the urban centres (Elliot 1978 : 130 ; O'Malley 1987 : 106-116 ; Truong 1990 : 123-129)

The Thai government felt pressure from First World institutions like the IMF and the World Bank to invest heavily in tourism. As Lanfant points out,

Tourism is not, as is often claimed, a spontaneous phenomenon. It does not occur in a disorderly way, as a result of uncontrollable demand. It is a product of will. It unfolds under the impetus of a powerful tourist promotion mechanism, supported at the highest international level : the World Tourism Organization, the international Monetary Fund, the United Nations, The world Bank, UNESCO, etc (1980 : 15)

Global-scale tourism operations had already been well established in the 1950s by First World-based multinationals in many Caribbean and Mediterranean countries. Thailand was pressured to open its legal and financial doors to foreign investors if it wanted to secure even a minimal amount of the world's touristic traffic. As Truong explains,

tourism and leisure policies in developing countries are investment policies intended to capture some of the flow of the tourism market from industrial countries (1990 : 99).

To reduce their debts and to finance imported goods and services, many Third World governments adopted development strategies like tourism to obtain much needed foreign currency. In the specific case of Thailand, the policy of TAT clearly states that its main

objective is to attract more foreign exchange into the country (O'Malley 1987 : 74)

So far, Thailand's "success" in accumulating foreign exchange through the promotion of its tourist industry has surpassed that of all other exported items. Indeed,

compared to other commodities, tourism has been since the mid-1970s the major foreign exchange earner, overtaking rice in 1982 (Truong 1990 : 163)

One manner in which industrialized countries have maintained their dominant economic and political position vis-a-vis peripheral nations (in relation to tourism) involves the issue of competition within international capitalism. Because First World-based multinationals enter non-industrialized economies with greater capital holdings than local businesses, they can quickly and easily monopolize local market operations. As Britton explains,

The historical advantages held by foreign and local elite owned companies perpetuates a situation where other small scale simple commodity producers cannot evolve to a point where they can effectively compete with the favoured firms or benefit from public support services (1982 : 335)

Monopolization of this kind is especially pronounced in the international tourist industry. The main reason industrialized nations dominate this industry in such an overwhelming way has much to do with the capital requirements in the industry and with the running of the industry's inner organization. Essentially, the problem is exacerbated by the fact that "a significant proportion of the tourism product itself is owned or controlled by foreign organizations" (Cleverdon 1979 : 20). Specifically, international tourism requires huge investments to build and maintain its physical infrastructure. It takes hi-tech equipment to keep touristic traffic flowing smoothly to meet costs (Cleverdon 1979 : 19-22)

Global Tourism Industry Infrastructure

The decades following the Second World War (the 1950's and 1960's) were marked by an unprecedented increase in leisure provisions in many First World countries. This upsurge corresponded with, among other factors, higher wages in the West and with the introduction of social legislation governing holiday allocation for workers (Truong 1990 : 98). The taken-for-granted two week paid vacation was capitalized upon to produce what we now recognized as the modern leisure industry, of which international tourism remains but one section

It did not take long for capitalists to discover the potential markets that could be created from the discretionary incomes of large numbers of people combined with their desire to travel. The enormous growth of global tourist industries were predicted and promoted vigorously, mainly by Western investors.

Truong's research reveals that,

The World Bank's study, completed in 1975, assessed the growth potential of tourism in Thailand irrespective of R&R, and recommended more public sector investment in infrastructure, i.e. airport expansion and maintenance (1990 : 163)

"Since the beginning of the 1950s, air travel and tourism has experienced spectacular growth, to become one of the largest world trade items after petroleum" (Truong 1990 : 101).

According to a study by A Lowenfeld, 85 percent of all aircrafts are manufactured in the United States (1975). The U.S aviation industry also benefits from a monopoly on navigation equipment and ground control technology. Early American leadership in air travel is partly

due to highly government-subsidized programs aimed at dominating the civil aviation competition. Americans were competing against Western Europe, not only for air routes, but also to invent new technology and bigger, longer-range aircrafts. The United States attained its monopolistic position also as a consequence of phenomenal amounts of government investments in the aerospace program.

There exists (at least) a dual connection between the aerospace and aviation industries. One link concerns the development of new technology. The strides in hi-tech invention made within the aerospace industry trickled down to aviation manufacturers which enabled airlines to provide larger, technically advanced commercial planes (Schiller 1981 : 33 , O'Malley 1987 : 81-82 , Truong 1983 : 545 ; 1990 : 105). The second connection between the two industries concerns military interests. At least from the beginning of the 1960s and onward, the U.S. Department of Defense (and its affiliates) committed itself to winning the "space war" against the Soviets which prompted a huge expansion in aerospace developments. Also, in the early stage of international tourism's evolution, military aircrafts were used commercially, although more commonly in Europe than in the U.S. (Sampson 1985 , Muscat 1990 : 105 ; Truong 1990 : 102).

The history of international air travel for tourism can be characterized by two phases. According to Truong, "The formative phase began during the period of post-war growth, and the consolidation and expansion phase began in the 1970s" (1990 : 101). During the first phase, U.S. aviation and foreign policies were formulated, mainly along the line of 'free enterprise' (i.e. deregulation policies) which predominantly served as the standard for international air travel regulation (Heymann 1964 , Truong 1990 : 101-115). As well, this

phase was marked by the promotion of tourism as an economic development strategy, initially in the U S and later in the Third World (Britton 1982 : 333 ; O'Malley 1987 : 66-93 ; Truong 1990 : 101-115) Early American involvement in air transportation and tourism development secured the U.S. two significant benefits. Truong reveals that,

From a commercial perspective, such intervention contributes to the strengthening of the US position as a manufacturer and exporter of aircraft and navigation equipment. From a political perspective, it helps to consolidate the direction of social and economic development in the Third World, which benefit US interests under a screen of peaceful understanding (1990 : 104).

During the initial phase, national governments (both in Thailand and in the U.S.) began building the kind of infrastructure that would accommodate air traffic. In Thailand, by the late 1980's, 80% of visitors arriving in the country came by air (Muscat 1990 : 105). Much of the equipment required to expand the Thai infrastructure had to be bought from industrialized countries (primarily the United States) with foreign currency. THAI airline, during the initial phase, received approximately \$1.6 billion in U.S. assistance (Muscat 1990 : 105). Consequently, those First World countries netted healthy profits for its export businesses while Thailand struggled to acquire more precious foreign exchange.

The expansion phase, which took place during the late 1960's and throughout the 1970's, was characterized by several important developments, one of which was the expansion of the service sector created to cater to new tourists. This sector included business providing food services, car rental, etc., and of course, brothels, bars, etc.

Another development, especially pertinent for Thailand, was the emergence of Third World airlines (almost all parastatals). Although Third World airlines are rarely effective at

competing against dominant First World enterprises, Thailand's national airline, THAI (Thai Airways International) has proven itself in many respects to be an exceptional case (O'Malley 1987 : 84-90). A primary reason for its success relates to the fact that the holding company, Thai Airways Company Ltd., did not attempt to establish an international operation unaided, but instead formed a partnership with Scandinavian Airlines Systems (SAS) (Special Report 1985 : 6-29 ; O'Malley 1987 : 85 ; Truong 1983 : 546). Additional factors like strategic market selection, competent management, and effective promotions (of the airlines and of its targeted tourist destinations) have also contributed to its staying power (O'Malley 1987 : 84-90)

Tourism differs substantially from most types of commodity production because it is the only major item of international trade which involves transporting the consumers to the site of production rather than the product to the consumers (O'Malley 1987 : 77)

As such, accommodating tourists in Third World countries has, since the beginning of global tourism, been recognized as a principal area of investment and potential profit (Cleverdon 1979 : 22).

In Thailand, "high scale" accommodations have chiefly taken the form of large luxury hotels (Truong 1990 : 168-170). The construction of large hotels (many of which are owned by the First World, e.g. Hilton and Sheraton), was mainly financed by Western investors with the help of commercial banks offering loans on very favourable terms. Mainly due to poor long-term planning, the hotel industry in Bangkok experienced a significant shortage of visitors during the early 1970's and, every year since then, during certain periods of the year (Truong 1983 : 546 ; 1990 : 167). "Tourism", notes David Harrison, "is a notoriously fickle

industry and expensive infrastructure may lie idle as international demand fluctuates" (1992 : 81) This erratic pattern on the demand side of the tourist industry and the over-supply of rooms has forced hoteliers (those who did not close their operations) to, on occasion, substantially reduce their rates (Truong 1990 : 162, 197).

The expansion of the hotel industry in Thailand was grounded in financially symbiotic arrangements between airline operators and hoteliers. Not only did the aviation business own shares in some hotel chains (Dunning and McQueen 1981), but as well,

The expansion of the hotel industry in Third World countries appears to have received support even from aircraft manufacturers, notably the Boeing Company, which commissioned surveys and forecasts on the demand for hotels of international standards (Truong 1990 : 110).

Accommodation spaces are connected to an intricate system of sophisticated schedules and information processing. Like airline operations, the hotel industry's profits are partly contingent on its achieving full-capacity customer occupancy. Not surprisingly,

The airlines were among the first to capitalize on the advantage of computer technology in reservations and to use spare computer capacity for booking of other elements of the travel products such as hotel rooms (Truong 1990 : 107).

Consequently, a highly organized reservation system emerged that fully integrates the airlines with the hotel industry. This type of close relationship between large-scale tourist operations has had important repercussions, one of which is an increase in horizontal and vertical integration (Cleverdon 1979 : 23). Another repercussion has been the international tourist industry's dependency on information technology.

Reservation bookings and information services (i.e. phone operators, advertising, etc.) are indispensable elements in the mass sale of touristic commodities. To function efficiently,

international tourism requires the coordination of many components. As such, successful communication between these components (especially the "to the minute" type) is crucial. Predictably, computer technology has had an especially massive impact on international travel (Hudson 1972 ; Hunziker 1968 ; Truong 1990 : 107-108). For most Third World countries, that impact includes negative political consequences as "the tourism of developing nations is often dependent on the timetables and routes of other nations' airlines or cruise ships" (Richter 1992 : 37).

Information processing with hi-tech equipment has enabled the industry to reduce investment risks. The technology available can accommodate specialized services and can manage/organize a wide range of products supplied to highly diversified consumer markets. An example of increased specialization includes customized tourist packages like hiking expeditions in Northern Thailand (O'Malley 1987 : 114). Another example is the inclusive packaged tour (Truong 1983 : 544). Britton notes that,

The introduction of packaged tours in the mid 1960s brought together the conflicting psychological needs of tourists for novelty as well as security in strange environments (Cohen 1972), and the latent tendency for commercial enterprise to reconstitute individual touring into a repeatable and marketable product (1982 : 336).

Two other appealing elements of total packages for the consumer include the hassle-free feature of an already assembled product and its reasonable price (Truong 1983 : 544).

The inclusive tour proved quite compatible with Thailand's development strategy because it could be shaped to attract the up-scale mass tourism market that the Thai government consistently made efforts to capture (O'Malley 1987 : 67). However, the introduction of packaged tours produced contradictory economic effects for Thailand

(O'Malley 1987 : 81, 118 ; Truong 1983 : 543-544). On the one hand, tours proved profitable because they could be geared to mass marketing (Cleverdon 1979 : 23). On the other hand, due in large part to the fact that most agencies that sell tour packages are owned and operated in the West (Cleverdon 1979 : 23), the net profits earned by First World countries against Thailand's profits reveal a large economic discrepancy between the two sections of the industry. O'Malley cites a clear example of this margin. He states that,

The typical 'pre-integration' tour package used a metropolitan airline along with local hotels and services ; it often meant that the host country would receive 40-45% of the prices paid by tourists. Integration of airline and hotel capital reduced the typical retained earnings to a mere 22-25% (1987 : 82-83).

To understand the disparity in revenue distribution, it is important to appreciate that the international tour operating sector is almost exclusively dominated by wholesalers in the tourist-generating countries rather than by those in the host countries (Comisky 1977 : 71-118 ; Britton 1982 : 336 ; Truong 1990 : 111)

The introduction of inclusive tours onto the world market has heightened the tourist industry's trend toward vertical integration. Because tour operators are often closely affiliated with airlines, they benefit from the airlines' resources especially in the areas of marketing, financing, and advertising (Comisky 1977). In addition, vertical integration enables airlines to give preferential treatment to tour operators during peak-season time, shutting out independent operators (Comisky 1977 : 91-118 ; Truong 1990 : 111).

Due to large capital investment requirements, the monopolization of the international air travel and the hotel business, and vertical integration throughout the industry, tourism proves to be a highly problematic "development" strategy (Cleverdon 1979 : 20 ; ISIS 1979 :

11). Evidence indicates instead that this strategy has fostered political and economic dependency rather than truly progressive sovereign development. Consequently, Thailand's increased immersion into the global market system has integrated the Thai work force into the international division of labour.

Female Rural-to-Urban Migration

Drastic changes in Thailand's economy have largely come about as the result of the country's integration into the global capitalist system. As little as fifty years ago, Thailand was almost completely agrarian (Phongpaichit 1982 : 1 ; O'Malley 1987 : 96-98) Since then, the country has witnessed a significant decline in traditional agricultural production and rapid expansion in industrial and commercial infrastructures. One effect of such a radical transformation has been an intensification of class stratification among the peasantry. Because few farmers could benefit from the ensuing land reforms that resulted in the concentration of land holdings, many plunged into poverty with little hope of re-establishing themselves on independently owned farms (Muscat 1990 : 193).

At the same time that rural areas were becoming unprecedentedly depressed, the process of commercialization and industrialization were accelerating mainly in the urban areas located primarily in Thailand's central and southern regions. For instance, while the per capita income for Thailand was \$800 US per annum (in 1986), in the rural Northeast it was roughly \$250 US per annum. This is in a country where approximately 20% of the population live below the poverty line (Muscat 1990 : 2-3 ; see 188 for details ; also ISIS 1979 : 11 ; Schlossstein

1991 : 217 , Hall 1992 : 72).

Tourism development has not resulted in the equal allocation of resources to every part of Thailand. Only certain specific geographical areas (some carefully selected and groomed to be tourist resorts) have experienced growth. Among the regions that experienced the biggest upsurge of touristic activity are Bangkok, Pattaya, and Phuket -- the three most popular sites migrants flock to in search of employment. The expansion of this sector "has provided a safety valve for absorbing underemployed and unemployed labour from rural areas" (Warr 1993 : 165).

Largely as a response to the emergence of Thailand's tourist industry, an increase in the number of rural females (especially during the 1960s and onward) migrated (and continue to migrate) in search of work in this sector (Phongpaichit 1982 : 35 ; ECTWT 1985 : 83-84). O'Malley's research reveals that,

Numerous sample surveys have found that the majority of informal service sector employees in Bangkok and Pattaya came from rural areas, especially from the North and Northeast (1987 : 106-7).

The demand for labour within the tourist industry and the nature of Thai farming are two of the factors that attracted a disproportionately high percentage of women (and children) migrants to the cities (ISIS 1979 : 12). According to Phongpaichit,

In the movement from the Northeast to Bangkok, women exceeded men in the ratio of roughly 4:3, and in the movement from the North to Bangkok by 5:4 (1982 : 35).

The tourist industry in Thailand is known globally for its specialization of sexual services. The introduction of foreign militarization created the primary pre-conditions that later served as the foundation of sex tourism.

In the late 1960s, for example, about 40,000 US servicemen were stationed at air bases in Thailand and close to half-a-million were stationed in Viet-Nam, creating a conducive climate for entrepreneurs to organize prostitution (Truong 1983 : 537).

To cater to the sexual and emotional needs of international (heterosexual) male visitors, the industry has mainly recruited women and children workers (Phongpaichit 1982 : 35 ; O'Malley 1987 : 129 ; Schlosstein 1991 : 199 , Hall 1992 : 72). This segment of the labour force, due to economic need, are more likely to accept low wages. Prostitution is seen as an unfortunate, but nevertheless available option in women's (and children's) economic situation. In terms of comparative advantage relative to other opportunities, selling sex counts as a viable survival strategy (Truong 1983 : 539).

Additionally, some migrants who enter the sex trade have been "bonded". That is to say, they have been given over to commercial agents by poverty-stricken parents for the purposes of getting money and/or to pay off debts. These agents usually bring these workers to Bangkok or to touristic resort areas such as Pattaya where they are expected to work until the loans have been repaid (Phongpaichit 1982 ; Mies 1986 : 139 ; O'Malley 1987 : 133-134 ; Truong 1990 : 181).

Rural girls who have migrated to urban centres and work as prostitutes often remit substantial amounts of money to their families (O'Malley 1987 : 138 ; Truong 1990 : 74 ; Chutikul 1992 : 118). In Phongpaichit's research sample, the average total family incomes per year was 14,800-16,900 baht⁴ (approximately \$330-\$400 US). Of that total, the amounts that

⁴ Various sources have provided different exchange rates for the Thai baht for different years. Here are some examples:

EXCHANGE RATE

SOURCE

were purely from their daughters' remittances came to 8,000-9,000 baht (approximately \$200-\$300 US) --more than half the total! (1982 : 55). These findings make clear that the girls are their families' principal income earners. Indeed, "perhaps the most remarkable thing about the sample girls", Phongpaichit remarks, "was their conception of themselves as family breadwinners" (1982 : 24).

Sex industry recruiters find women and children attractive targets in part because their (the sex workers') powerlessness makes them vulnerable to manipulation and coercion. Pushed into the sex trade by poverty and violence, many women and child sex trade workers become integrated into the international division of labour (Mies 1986 : 137-138 ; Truong 1990 : 125, 197 , Hewison 1992 : 82) despite their best wishes.

1 US\$ = 40 baht (1981)	(ECTWT 1985 : 40)
1 US\$ = 22 baht (1982)	(ECTWT 1985 : 77)
1 US\$ = 22 baht (1983)	(ECTWT 1985 : 13)
1 US\$ = 25 baht (1991)	(Rhodes 1991 : 69)
1 US\$ = 25 baht (1992)	(Muecke 1992 : 896)
1 US\$ = 25 baht (1996)	(Internet)

CHAPTER THREE

SEX TOURISTS AND THEIR SERVERS

Women and Children . The Supply Side of Sex Tourism

Sex tourism has evolved into a highly specialized service-based industry. Women, children, and some men employed within this industry can be found working in a diverse range of occupations, e g , masseuses, dance partners, waitresses, call girls, streetwalkers, etc

Accurate figures on the number of women who work as prostitutes in Thailand are difficult to acquire in part due to the clandestine nature of the occupation and due to the limited amount of research done in this area. Truong, however, took some educated guesses based on the census information available. She estimates that Thailand has approximately 500,000 to 700,000 prostitutes (1990 : 181). Sanghera found reports that put the number of Thai prostitutes at 2 million (1992 : 48).⁵

The working conditions under which female prostitutes must provide sexual and emotional services vary considerably. Factors like the circumstances surrounding a sex trade worker's entry into the "trade", the type of prostitution entered, and the sex trade worker's age and beauty determine their pay, their chances for upward mobility, their exposure to occupational risks, and so on (Truong 1990 : 90)

⁵ These figures, from different sources and dates, are inconsistent and mutually contradictory.

Compared to other female dominated professions, prostitution remains considerably better in terms of its short term earning potential. Although exact figures related to the incomes of prostitutes are difficult to get, studies consistently show a significant difference between earnings from traditional female labour and those derived from prostitution. According to Truong's research findings, prostitutes in Bangkok earned \$ 1,875 U.S. to \$ 18,000 U.S. yearly from 1974 to 1978 (these figures exclude 'bonded' girls). During the same period, restaurant waitresses only made \$ 250 U.S., battery factory workers earned \$ 312 U.S., and garment factory employees earned \$450 U.S. (1983 : 541)

Pasuk Phongpaichit's study revealed that a massage girl can make ten or twenty-five times as much as she would at any other unskilled work (1982 : 8). In short, "even after all the middleman costs, prostitution pays better than anything else unskilled upcountry girls can get" (Richter 1989 : 98)

Unfortunately, few employment opportunities exist for unskilled labourers. Factory work is one option. But as O'Malley notes as he compares it to prostitution, "the industrial sector is scarcely more attractive as many multinational corporations lay off workers by the age of thirty due to failing eyesight and dexterity" (1987 : 136). Often the informal sector is all that remains for these women.

But it is not only unskilled women who enter prostitution. Low wages and the high cost of living has also pushed civil servants (Phongpaichit 1982 : 34) and skilled service employees (Thitsa 1980 : 13) into freelance prostitution. Furthermore, these figures refer to women who enter the sex trade voluntarily (restricted by limited options); they do not apply to women -- and especially to children -- who are sold into prostitution.

In some tragic cases, bonded prostitutes (many of whom are children) do not regain their freedom very easily. Of the masseuses Phongpaichit interviewed for her research, one of the saddest stories she described involves Lek, a bonded girl in Bangkok. Lek's parents incurred a debt of 1,500 baht. Because she earned 10 baht per hour/customer, she would have to serve at least 150 customers in order to pay off the debt. Unfortunately for Lek, before accumulating this amount of money, her parents had come to borrow another 1500 baht from her employer (1982 : 56-61). This kind of occurrence, Phongpaichit notes, is probably not uncommon. And in some cases, even if the girls were to be able to work off the loan, they may never be informed of it, thus prolonging their enslavement (Mies 1986 : 139).

Equally vile is the practice that some brothel keepers and agents have devised to bring in "fresh" girls. Sanghera discovered that brothel keepers will tell the prostitutes that the only way they can procure their freedom is by furnishing a substitute. According to Sanghera, "At any given time, several of these women travel to their villages in the hope of cajoling a younger female relative, a friend or just another village woman to accompany them. Most often they are successful in their endeavour, and return with another victim, in lieu of themselves" (1992 : 51).

The working conditions under which bonded sex trade workers must provide sexual and emotional services are typically the very worst in the sex tourist industry. Most (if not all) of these sex workers are virtually imprisoned in teashops, massage parlours (Phongpaichit 1982), or in seedy hotel rooms "which they share with eight to ten other girls" (Davidson 1985 : 18). By themselves these living conditions are inhumane enough. Then in 1984, tragedy turned to absolute horror when a hotel, which had sex workers chained to the beds,

burnt down The fire killed five young women (ECTWT 1985 : 62)

Escape from brothels is nearly impossible for many prostitutes Apart from being locked up and/or tied to beds, many of these women and children, because they are from rural areas, cannot easily return to their families If they try to escape and do not have the money or help to get home, they likely face the difficulties of surviving in a hostile city alone And according to Richter, Bangkok is one of the most violent cities in the world (1989 : 91).

Moreover, most prostitutes are put through the process of being "broken in" (also called "seasoning") Beatings are reportedly a common method by which pimps subdue their girls (Truong 1990 : 185 ; Sanghera 1992 : 50) Other effective methods are insults, humiliation, rape, threats, isolation, withdrawal of favours, financial dependency, and drug addiction (Barry 1979 : 86-121)

The fact that women and children are often physically smaller than pimps and other male sex trade recruiters makes them especially vulnerable to the worse kinds of exploitation (Truong 1990 : 182) They make easy targets for procurers, in part, because they are easier to discipline and because they yield high profits For example, in Thailand, a child "can be sold to a pimp for as little as 6000 baht (The Nation, 9 February 1985). The price for deflowering a virgin is around 4000 baht (Thitsa 1980 : 33). By putting the teenager to be deflowered, the pimp already gets two-thirds of his investment back" (Truong 1990 : 182).

Call girls and escorts often enjoy more benefits than other women in the sex trades (Truong 1990 : 188). They usually make more money and can avoid many of the job's downfalls. Examples of the contrast in pay earned between call girls and others who work in low-grade whore-houses can be found in Phongpaichit's research (1982). Phongpaichit

interviewed fifty masseuses. Taeng, for example, worked in Bangkok as a call girl for an international network. Her earnings were such that she was able to send her father 10,000 baht or so every three or four months (1982 : 61-64)

Call girls in Thailand's sex industry are in a sense the "elite" sex workers. Among the factors that operate in favour of women and girls getting into this higher paying trade are class and beauty. Occupying a middle or upper class background obviously offers advantages. These women are in a better position to dictate the terms of entry into the trade. They are not "bonded", and because they are often better educated than other sex trade workers, they have more confidence and skills (e.g. foreign language, negotiation) with which they are able to bargain for better working conditions and pay.

Call girls and escorts are more likely to be self-employed. Compared to bar girls and streetwalkers, fewer have pimps. While many call girls and almost all escorts initially work for agencies, some eventually "go on to create their own agency once they are familiar with the client network" (Truong 1990 : 188).

Physical attractiveness is another asset which can grant these girls entry into the most lucrative sex trades. Taeng (mentioned above) and her sister Suay, Phongpaichit emphasizes, were both very attractive. "They have beautiful skin and are very pretty. Thus an obvious occupation for them was something to do with their beauty" (1982 : 62). Similarly, another call girl in the same sample, Ploy, was "decidedly beautiful" (1982 : 64). Having an appearance which conforms to the prevailing definition of beauty clearly is an advantage in the sex tourist industry.

Beauty is so much part of the sex trade that rates have even been drafted along these

lines As Phongpaichit reveals, "The usual sum for an ordinary girl with no special beauty was about B 1,500, and a better-looking girl could command B 5,000 or even B 10,000 if she was a virgin" (1982 : 65).

Furthermore, call girls and escorts generally make more money than other prostitutes because they have better access to a richer clientele. They are considered classier and thus can demand a higher price for their services.

Of the prostitutes who work in the sex tourist industry in Thailand, the ones who are in positions to make the most money are those who work with affluent Thais or foreigners (farangs) (O'Malley 1987 : 131). The advantages of servicing foreign clients are many. As Cohen discovered "women working with farangs are in many respects the 'elite' among the prostitutes : they earn significantly more than those working with Thais, enjoy greater independence, and are rarely controlled by pimps or pushed into prostitution against their will" (1982a : 409). In addition, working with foreigners offers these women some self-respect (relatively speaking) It gives them the means to draw a moral line with which they use to separate themselves from the girls who work in the low-grade brothels. They also experience the kind of excitement that comes from meeting people from other countries with higher statuses and different cultural backgrounds. But more importantly than these advantages, working with foreigners gives them the increased chance of eventually marrying one (Cohen 1982a : 412).

The prospect of marrying a foreigner is accompanied with the hope of emigrating from Thailand and being able to escape poverty, the trade, and all the misery that comes with it (Cohen 1982a : 412 ; Truong 1990 : 187). Very few sex trade workers ever achieve this

dream. Many are never promised marriage. Even if a prostitute is proposed to, she may never see the day the event is supposed to take place. Foreign men have been known to renege on their promises. In some instances, as in Taew's case, marriages do not materialize due to circumstances beyond the couple's control. Taew was pregnant with the child of an American GI and planned to marry him. In the end, she did not because "he was killed in Viet Nam after the baby was born" (Phongpaichit 1982 : 50).

Unfortunately, the futures of the "lucky" who do manage to secure a farang husband do not always turn out in the optimistic way that is often hoped. According to Cohen, many of the girls in his study sample who succeeded in their efforts to marry foreigners and emigrated to Western countries "returned to Thailand after a relatively short period of time" (1982a : 422). The cultural and psychological differences between the newlyweds sometimes cause stresses and tensions which lead to the break-up of these international relationships.

The women who have returned to Thailand after being abroad may be the most fortunate of all those who have married foreigners. There are documented cases which show that for many of the women who emigrate, their lives have become as difficult or worse after one of these "marriages" (Richter 1989 : 99). Maria Mies reports that "The German ambassador in Bangkok stated that a large number of German men who had come to Bangkok as tourists had married Thai women. He declared that the only purpose of these marriages was to take these women to Germany and force them into prostitution" (1986 : 140). One example that Mies gives of such a case concerned one Asian woman who was brought to Germany and ordered to sexually service all the men who belonged to a bowling club (1986 : 140). Women have also been forced to work in brothels and on the street. At least one of the reasons for

importing Asian women into the West is the profit motive. In short, "So much can be earned with a Thai woman that the expenses are negligible" (quoted in Richter 1989 : 99).

Thai women may also end up in foreign countries, not as "brides", but as exported sex trade workers. They may be recruited to work in bars and brothels within countries in Western Europe, the Middle East or in Japan by brothel owners. International slave trading has become so highly organized, however, that some prostitutes are recruited, not only by individual owners, but also by global sex trade syndicates (Barry 1979 : 96 ; Truong 1990 : 182). The export of Thai sex trade workers is such big business that, according to the House Social and Cultural Committee of the Thai parliament, "Thailand has the region's highest number of overseas prostitutes, estimated at 16,000" (Truong 1990 : 182). The statistics that Sanghera found are even higher. She states that "more than 5000 Thai women annually are either trafficked or find their way into Germany alone. Each year, close to 100,000 Filipinas and 50,000 Thai women are given temporary work permits and absorbed by the burgeoning sex and entertainment sector in Japan" (1992 : 51).

Prostitutes who remain in Thailand mostly work in establishments such as bars, massage parlours, teashops, and hotels. Different places offer different types of sexual services, although there is a great deal of overlap. In many bars, stripping, floor shows, and table dancing can be found (Truong 1990 : 182). "Novel" and "exciting" shows are introduced to attract more customers. Some attractions involve sexual acrobatics and gynaecological sideshows that can become quite dangerous for the workers.

Periodically, establishments that offer sex for sale are raided by the police. When this happens, it is almost always the women who get arrested rather than the establishment

operators. Typically, the women are detained until bail is paid, often by the operators who then make them work extra to pay back these "loans". Business operators are usually "tipped off" before the raids and quickly disappear (Truong 1990 : 183-184). If some are caught, they simply bribe the police to escape a jail sentence. Davidson found that the police in Thailand are so corrupt that the bribes they receive elevate their incomes far above the national average. "A reliable source told me that one of his school friends is a police chief in one part of the city who makes thirty thousand US dollars a month in bribes from the prostitution industry. This is in a country where the average yearly wage was \$ 433 US in 1978" (1985 18).

Prostitution is illegal in Thailand (O'Malley 1985 : 17 , Truong 1990 : 180), under the Penal Code it is defined as 'a crime of promiscuity'. But brothels and other establishments that offer sex for sale continue to operate without too much interference from law enforcement officers. Bribing the police only accounts for part of the reason why sex businesses succeed in escaping legal prosecution. A more complex reason why they rarely face legal action is related to the manner in which the different institutions that fall within the sex trade define prostitution. The Police Department calls it a 'special service' and business operators refer to it as a 'personal service' (Truong 1990 : 180). There is little doubt that these terms are used to mask what is obviously prostitution. By utilizing them, sex business owners put forward the charade that theirs are legitimate operations. The police benefit because these sanitized, but ambiguous, terms allow them to justify not taking legal action against the establishments if they want. At the same time, the ambiguity gives them permission to raid if they do. Ironically, the "law" permits them to collect generous bribes

while simultaneously generating quasi-legal sanction for the businesses.

However, the women who provide the sexual services are not similarly protected from legal prosecution. As mentioned above, when raids do occur, the women are presumed guilty and become the targets for arrest. This double standard is summed up by Truong, who states that the "law recognizes 'personal services' as a business and ensures privileges to investors, and at the same time criminalizes workers in the business" (1990 : 180).

As long as the sexual services sold are camouflaged under such hypocritical labels and as long as there exists an informal agreement between law enforcement agencies and the business community which assures the sex industry's continued operation, there is little chance that the sexual exploitation of these women will be eradicated by "legal" means.

The reasons women enter any of these occupations has much to do with their socio-economic situation. In short, "prostitution is a matter of struggle for survival in a socially and economically hostile environment which provides women with few viable alternatives" (Truong 1983 : 540 ; O'Malley 1987 : 135). So while some women might be lured into the sex business by hopes of affection, fame or other non-tangible rewards, most are not so much lured in as are pushed in by the reality or the threat of dire poverty.

Many of the workers found in Third World sex trade are children. The number of children forced into prostitution in Thailand is shocking. Sanghera notes that "while the government admits to some 30,000 children under the age of 16 years working in the sex industry in Thailand, several organisations assert that 40 percent or 800,000 of the two million Thai prostitutes are children" (1992 : 48). Radda Baren of the Anti-Slavery Society and Defense for Children International estimates that the numbers of prostitutes under the age of

16, in Bangkok alone, is 30,000 (quoted in "Sexual Exploitation of Children" 1985 : 13-14). Comparable statistics can be found for the Philippines where the relationship between prostitution, tourism, and child labour has been articulated in a similar manner (Phongpaichit 1982 : 7 ; O'Malley 1985 : 20 , Mies 1986 : 138-9 , Enloe 1989 : 87 , Truong 1990 : 181-2 , Williams 1991 : 107 ; Sanghera 1992 : 48)

The future looks exceedingly bleak for these children. While an adult prostitute may be able to gain freedom and continue her life with some dignity and ambition (Truong 1990 : 100), child prostitutes face considerably more obstacles. Even if a child sex trade worker survives physically, she nevertheless has been subjected to a tremendous amount of emotional and psychological torture (Sawyer 1986 : 79 ; Williams 1991 : 100)

Those who manage to escape from their slavery may have the opportunity to return back to their parental home (Phongpaichit 1982 : 61-65). Apparently, many families do not cast moral judgements on the daughters who work as prostitutes. Indeed, in the areas where the girls' earnings supply a substantial part of the family income, parents have started to celebrate the birth of girls (Sanghera 1992 : 53). And most (men and women) want to be reborn female (Richter 1989 : 98).

Some girls are "rescued" and detained in rehabilitation centres where they suffer "severe discipline and humiliating punitive measures" (Truong 1990 : 185). Such measures are employed to force these children into conforming to traditional feminine roles (chastity and submissiveness). Despite attempts to escape, the girls have little chance of remaining free from sexual slavery. In either case, they face the high probability of being pushed back into prostitution (Truong 1990 : 180).

The long term outlooks of both child and women prostitutes are predominantly characterized by substantial downward mobility. According to Truong, "Downward mobility from well-paid forms of prostitution to street soliciting on the basis of barter for survival may occur as early as the age of twenty-six" (1990 : 90). The reduced demand for "older" prostitutes, the fluctuations in the market, and the slow erosion of the woman's childlike beauty assets are all factors that contribute to a sex worker's declining income

At best, an aging prostitute may improve her situation by marrying (preferably a rich foreigner) or by eventually setting up her own establishment (brothel, hair dressing shop, etc.). For the majority who do not accomplish these ambitions, many continue to sell sex until their earnings are so low and infrequent that it becomes more economically viable for them to leave the "trade" all together (Cohen 1982a : 424)

The pessimistic futures of sex trade workers is exacerbated by the health hazards associated with sex (O'Malley 1987 : 136). In Thailand, an estimated 70 percent of prostitutes have venereal diseases (Davidson 1985 : 18). Apparently, gonorrhea is so common that the chartered flights carrying sex tourists out of the country are nicknamed "gonorrhea express" (Richter 1989 : 99 , Sanghera 1992 : 48).

The findings of Dr. Thepanom's 1980 study (quoted in Phongpaichit 1982 : 21) show that 41 percent out of a sample of 1000 women had contracted VD. In the same study, Thepanom looked at the rates of VD among women who attended VD clinics located throughout most of the country. Among the 700,216 women sampled, 102,440 were women who offered "special services". Of these sex trade workers, 49 percent suffered from venereal diseases

The infection rate among men was much higher -- 71 percent of them tested positive. The author also notes that these percentages probably constitute a conservative indication of the pervasiveness of the problem. Only government hospitals were approached during the study and "government hospitals would only see a small proportion of VD cases, since Bangkok and other large towns have a considerable number of private VD clinics" (Phongpaichit 1982 : 21).

Another health hazard Thepanom found concerns the risks associated with pregnancy and abortion. The researcher's sample of 1000 had borne a total of 752 children. Many of these children were under the care of a parent or other relative. Furthermore, 19 percent of the sampled "girls" had had abortions. And because abortion is illegal in Thailand "most of these were the back-street sort with all the dangers and subsidiary complications that such operations always entail" (Phongpaichit 1982 : 22).

Drugs were also among the disadvantages of the "trade". In Thepanom's survey sample, 25 percent of the girls were "regular users of drugs, particularly barbiturates (seconal), amphetamines, and heroin" (Phongpaichit 1982 : 22). In Phongpaichit's research sample, two girls interviewed revealed that they "drank a lot", one described herself as a "drug addict" and disclosed that she had attempted suicide three times (1982 : 22).

More serious than these problems, though, has been the emergence of HIV/AIDS (O'Malley 1987 : 133). "Studies reveal that after 1987 was declared the 'Visit Thailand Year' by the Thai government and an all out effort was made to lure foreign tourists, the number of HIV positive cases in the country doubled" (Sanghera 1992 : 48).

The official figures of people with AIDS in Thailand in 1987 were 81 reported cases

During the following few months, the number of cases doubled to 165. A 1988 study found that of 200,000 people tested, 128 people tested HIV positive. An additional 25 people were showing some symptoms of the disease, and another 11 people had full-blown cases of AIDS (Cohen 1988 : 470).

In 1991, according to another source, the estimated total number of people testing HIV positive had skyrocketed to 300,000¹ (Rhodes 1991 : 114). In a country where sex is cheap, internationally promoted, and sex tourism has the full backing of governmental authority, a sexually transmitted disease such as AIDS is sure to spread very quickly. Indeed, the epidemiological prediction for this disease are absolutely horrifying. In his 1991 article, Rhodes announces that :

If public awareness and education change sexual behaviour so rapidly and positively that HIV infections peak in 1992, then the cumulative HIV incidence in Thailand by year 2000 will total 1 million cases. If the peak doesn't come until 1994, then the cumulative incidence by 2000 will be 2 million. If the peak doesn't come until 1996, then the cumulative incidence by 2000 will be at least 3.4 million (Rhodes 1991 : 114).

A document currently posted on the Internet suggests an equally grim future for Thai prostitutes. The text mentions that a recent study conducted by the Rachapat Institute of Chiang Mai concluded that 7 out of 10 prostitutes in Chiang Mai carry the HIV virus (posted April 25, 1993 by Femisa).

Admittedly, the situation of Thai sex trade workers looks bleak. Yet despite the obvious oppression these women and children live under, some have managed to form unions and support groups. In Thailand, there is the National Council of Women which has a thirty year history and offices in the rural regions. The Thai Women Lawyers' Association "which is

mainly responsible for the changes in law regarding women's status in the late 1970s" (Davidson 1985 : 19) is also active against sex tourism. The Status of Women Promotion Group and the Friends of Women Group also support the advancement of women, the latter being considered more radical by many Thais (Davidson 1985 : 19).

At the international level, feminists have organized conferences to expose and develop strategies against female sexual slavery (ECTWT 1985 : 103-122). In particular, and among the best known, were the First World Whores Congress which took place in Amsterdam in 1985, followed by the Second World Whores Congress (1986) in Brussels (Truong 1990 : 54).

The political space created by feminist organizations is quite limited owing to harsh crack downs by law enforcement agencies and the business community. For example, the sex workers' union called Thai'N'Girls lost considerable power when their employers fired union members (Off Our Backs, Jan. 1987 : 2). Understandably feminist activists have faced a great deal of opposition from male customers. But the strongest backlash has come from the government. For instance, in 1984, the Minister's Office and the Tourism Authority of Thailand "jointly passed an order to all domestic government agencies instructing their officials not to mention and discuss the problem of prostitution during their participation in seminars abroad" (Truong 1990 : 187). This kind of resistance is not surprising considering the importance of sex tourism to the country's economy and to private interests (Davidson 1985 : 19 , Truong 1990 : 187).

Men The Demand Side of Sex Tourism

During the past three decades, Thailand's reputation changed from being the "land of smiles" to being the "brothel of Asia" (Ong 1985 : 4 ; Rhodes 1991 : 70). The shift occurred while the country was receiving its largest inflow of foreign visitors ever, most of whom were men (Heyzer 1986 : 52) "Between 1960 and 1979, tourist arrivals in South-East Asia increased 25-fold" (Mies 1986 : 137). However, this statistic would not reflect the increase that probably resulted when, in 1978, Thailand passed a new law allowing tourists to stay longer in the country (ISIS 1979 : 10). Although the role of sex tourism in Thai prostitution is considerable, it is important to remember that most of the customers of prostitution (but not of sex tourism) are not farangs, they are Thai (Cohen 1982a : 422 ; Rhodes 1991 : 65).

Every year many Western men (mainly Americans, Canadians, Australians, and Europeans) and Japanese anxiously travel to Thailand hoping to sample for themselves the nation's "special services". Although sex trade customers cannot easily be categorized according to their motives for visiting Thailand --we cannot prove they all visit exclusively to buy sex-- there is nevertheless a strong positive correlation between the expansion of the sex trade and the statistical growth of foreign (male) arrivals.

Thai sex trade workers service customers who come from a wide range of socially diverse groups (Barry 1979 : 59-70). However, demand

may be thought of as conditioned primarily by the growing geographical and occupational mobility of single males, ranging from migrant workers, corporate professionals and military servicemen (Truong 1983 : 534).

Whether single or not, Western demand for "entertainment with sex" with Thai "hospitality

girls" has grown substantially from a ripple in the 1960's to a flood in the 1980's and 1990's

Sex trade customers rarely fall into easily demarcated occupational or psychological categories. For instance, businessmen and tourists may not constitute mutually exclusive populations (Truong 1990 : 172-173). Men sent to Thailand by their companies to close deals can also spend time during their visits enjoying touristic attractions (Truong 1983 : 544). But while it may be difficult to draw clear lines to demarcate categories of men based on their motives for going to Thailand, dividing visitors in such a manner can nevertheless be useful for descriptive purposes (Truong 1983 : 548).

Among the earliest and most significant factors to aid the growth of Thailand's sex industry was the U.S. military occupation of the South East Asian region. During the Vietnam War (roughly up to the mid-70's), American soldiers stationed in the region routinely took Rest and Recreation (henceforth R&R) leaves in Thailand, fueling the establishment of red light districts throughout the country (Enloe 1989 : 36 , 1983 : 32-45 , Ong 1985 : 4 , ISIS 1979 : 17 ; Barry, Bunch, Castley (eds) 1984 : 56 , Truong 1983 : 537 , 1990 : 81-82, 159-162 ; Heyzer 1986 : 59 , Mies 1986 : 138 , Rhodes 1991 : 66-67 , O'Malley 1987 : 118-140).

The number of military servicemen occupying or visiting Thailand mushroomed in the 1960's when approximately 40,000 U.S. soldiers were stationed at air bases in the country. Most of the troops stationed there were located in the North Eastern region, which, by then, had developed a sizable sex trade (Muscat 1990 : 25 , Thorbek 1987 : 80). Near Udon Air Force Base, for example, "the number of 'special job workers' grew from 1,246 in 1966 to 6,234 in 1972 (Enloe 1983 : 43). Other locations within Thailand with flourishing sex trades were Bangkok, Phuket, and Pattaya, a popular beach resort

In addition to servicemen doing their tours of duty in Thailand, 500,000 more soldiers were stationed in Vietnam, close enough to gain regular access to Thailand's R&R facilities (Truong 1983 : 537) Noeleen Heyzer found that

during 1967 to 1976, up to 50,000 American military personnel were stationed in different parts of Thailand and an average of 700,000 flew each year into the country for 'R&R' (1986 : 59).

Military "grunts" fighting in Vietnam could select any location "from Tokyo to Sydney for their seven days of R&R", and many chose Bangkok for its convenient location and "sexy" reputation (Rhodes 1991 : 65)

After 1976, when the Viet Nam conflict came to an end (Mies 1986 : 138), the number of military troops rapidly declined in that country (Truong 1990 : 159-160). Yet, despite the withdrawal of many troops, foreign military occupation in the region never completely disappeared. "In 1982, the US [had] 200 military bases and 500,000 military personnel overseas, 92 per cent of whom [were] male" (Enloe 1983 : 43). Throughout the 1970's, 80's and 90's, American soldiers continue(d) to be stationed in the Philippines, in particular at Olongapo and Subic Air Force bases (Enloe 1983 : 20-45 ; Truong 1990 : 85), in Okinawa, and Korea (Sturdevant and Stoltzfus 1992), and other locations deemed strategically important for military purposes.

From the beginning of the Indochina occupation, the government of Thailand co-operated willingly with the U.S. military by signing agreements to provide R&R centres for U.S. troops (Enloe 1983 : 42-43 ; Truong 1990 : 81-82). Moreover, government policy allowances were sometimes made to permit Western men setting up sex businesses in the country. For example, it was an American retired Air Force officer who owned the Cowboy

Bar, one of the first strip clubs in Bangkok. Likewise, the sex trade on Pat Pong, "the main sex-entertainment street of Bangkok, widely known and cited in tourist guides and brochures" was started with the investment in a night club by an American in 1969 (Truong 1990 : 162 see also 85).

Participation in R&R activities not only allows the men to rest, it also helps to build fraternity among them. Declining to hire prostitutes would automatically attract suspicion from fellow soldiers. In this context, sexual abstinence can easily be mistaken for homosexuality, a problematic identity for anyone in a highly homophobic social climate such as the military. As well as institutional heterosexuality, militaries also rely on the systemic exclusion of women in positions of power as well as on violence against women to preserve their masculinist ideologies (Enloe 1983 : 19-20)

Furthermore, rape is commonly practiced as a military tactic against opposing armies (Enloe 1983 : xxxii). Rape is also perpetuated against civilian women, and sex trade workers have often been made convenient targets of male violence (Enloe 1983 : 33-36, also see xxxii)

As a way of addressing "problem areas" related to gender relations, military strategists draft policies that frequently include guidelines aimed at minimizing "damage", often presented euphemistically as preserving "honour" and "morale" (Enloe 1983 : xxxviii). Moreover, in the name of avoiding "security risks", armies and navies have devised methods of controlling their men's sexual behaviour and that of women, both military and civilian (Enloe 1983 : 45). Policies promoting acceptable (heterosexual) marriages and dealing with the problem of sexually transmitted diseases, have been implemented. Not surprisingly, these

policies have often resulted in awarding military men a substantial amount of sexual freedom while women have been both controlled or blamed for most of the problems associated with sex (Enloe 1983 : 25)

Military practice still adheres to the age-old ideology that unjustifiably posits women as the cause of venereal disease (Gilman 1990 : 152-153).

Furthermore, militaries often would rather not deal with the matter of monitoring people's infections directly. In most cases, they prefer to leave the responsibilities of testing for and treating VD and AIDS to local health authorities (New Internationalist March 1990 : 8 , Truong 1990 : 85). Military men have also frequently managed to escape accountability after the rapes, beatings, and murders of local women. For instance, in relation to the sexual abuse of children, Shay Cullen, a volunteer youth worker in the Philippines, argues that soldiers are routinely protected by military institutions in co-operation with governments. In defense of abused children, he says,

'We've got to go after these guys because they get away scot-free ; they are protected by the Navy. If they are ever accused of any sexual molestation they can invoke the Military Bases Agreement, go under US jurisdiction and get very light treatment' (New Internationalist March 1990 : 10)

Likewise, servicemen who father Amerasian children in Thailand are rarely pressured to take responsibility for them. In Olongapo, government records show that an average of 30 Amerasian babies are registered each month (1979), but "many more are never officially accounted for" (ISIS 1979 : 16). As well, the matters of responsibility for birth control and wearing condoms for protection against AIDS are often left to the women. And, "Because of the low status of sex workers, it is not possible for most of them, particularly females, to

insist on the use of condoms with a customer'" (Rhodes 1991 : 114) These factors frequently result in high rates of unwanted pregnancies and the rapid spread of STDs in red light districts.

During the 1970's, after the U S. withdrew most of its troops from Vietnam, the infrastructure supporting the R&R industry remained. The demand for sexual and emotional services, previously met by the military, had to have come from elsewhere if the sex industry was to continue supplying these services at the same or at a higher rate it once did. In Thailand, not only did the sex industry survive the outflow of some of its 'traditional' customers, the sex trade expanded. The solution to the business problem concerning who would replace and/or supplement those soldiers and sailors was, in short, "tourism" (Truong 1983 : 537 ; 1990 : 199 ; Mies 1986 : 138)

From 1960 to 1986, the number of tourist arrivals entering Thailand increased from 80,000 to 2.8 million (Truong 1990 : 172). According to Sanghera, by 1990, the estimate for tourist arrivals climbed to 5 million (1992 : 51). Another source estimates that during 1986, Thailand received 2.7 million tourists (Enloe 1989 : 37). For the year 1986, Truong found that almost 65 percent of tourist arrivals came from the Asia/Pacific region, while about 28 percent arrived from the United States and Western Europe (1990 : 174)

According to an ISIS report (No. 13), "in 1977, 1.2 million foreigners visited Thailand and a great part of them came exclusively for sex" (1979 : 10). Likewise Rhodes documents that in 1964, Thailand had 250,000 visitors. That figure climbed to 5 million in 1989, a documented "peak" year (1991 : 65). The ratio of male to female tourists, quotes one study, "'was conspicuously regular at 2 : 1 in favor of men'" (Ibid : 65). Cynthia Enloe puts that ratio

of male tourists in Bangkok (year not stated) at 3 to 1 (1989 : 35). Truong documents that, since 1980, "the ratio of male to female visitors has increased even more, with 73 percent of the total number of international tourist arrivals in 1986 being male" (Truong 1990 : 173 ; see also Sanghera 1992 : 51). For the city of Bangkok alone, between 1970 and 1977, tourists rose from 628,700 to 1,220,700 , two thirds of whom were men (1983 : 543). Similarly, Maria Mies states that "Of the two million tourists who visited Thailand between 1970 and 1980 71.1 per cent were men" (1986 : 139).

Farangs enter the country as individuals, in small groups, or in large groups, often as part of a tour (Heyzer 1985 : 53). Innovations such as rapid, modern transportation and the institutionalization of the annual two week holiday have facilitated travel for Westerners (Ong 1985 : 3 , Truong 1990 : 98).

Initially, the tourist industry required men to buy sex after they arrived in the country. Over time, additional touristic options were introduced, giving Western men more specialized services to ease their access to sex workers. Truong argues that possibly the "most important" new option offered was the "inclusive tour" (1983 : 544). In 1979, tour operators brought in about 60% of visitors to Thailand (Truong 1990 : 170).

A small niche in Third World tourist industries includes the provision of specialized services for those who want to venture off into rarely touched touristic areas. In the 1960's, they consisted mainly of "hippies" who were looking for exciting, but cheap adventures. Jeff O'Malley refers to them as "drifters" who practice "hill tribe tourism" (1987 : 114-115). Although they constitute a very small percentage of the overall number of tourists, they nevertheless leave a lasting influence. As Maria Mies points out,

one should not forget the role played by so-called 'avant-garde or alternative' tourists, those who do not want to stay in big hotels but open up with their 'rucksack tourism' new areas and new fields for sexploitation (1986 : 141)

Moreover, some men travel to Thailand in search of wives. Sex traders have capitalized on this desire in a variety of ways. Among the many innovative business ventures a popular one has been the pimping of women through mail order bride catalogues (Wilson 1988). Mail order bride purchasers are not likely to be classified as "tourists" because catalogue "shopping" for sexual partners mostly takes place in their home countries. Nevertheless, categorizing them as tourists is appropriate since they sometimes, often after long postal correspondence, travel to Thailand to meet the objects of their far-away fancy. Some unions, those with few conflicts, have led to marriages. In most of these cases, it has been the women, not the men, who emigrated from their countries of origin to cohabit with their new spouses. Once settled in the West, men have considerably more bargaining power than their "wives". On top of having the "home front" advantage which includes familiarity with the culture, language, laws, etc., they also benefit from their wives' lack of social support networks (i.e. friends and family). This kind of social isolation has allowed men more freedom to engage in domestic violence against their wives as there exist fewer people in the vicinity who will intervene on their [the wives'] behalf (Ong 1985 : 5).

In addition to "normal" heterosexual men, a subsection of male tourists visiting Third World nations are less interested in the "entertainment" offered by the young women and more enthusiastic about acquiring the company of young children (Barry 1995 : 12, 29, 61 ; ECTWT 1985 : 12, 62, 29-34, 68 ; CLno2 and CLno4 n.d. ; Skrobanek 1985 : 11 ; New Internationalist, 1990 : 9-10 ; Thitsa 1980 : 33 ; Truong 1990 : 182 ; Chutikul 1992 : 118 ;

Sanghera 1992 , Time 1993 : 18) Foreign paedophiles are known to travel to underdeveloped countries specifically in search of children for sex. Some of them are highly organized into international networks that recruit youngsters (many of whom are boys) for adult-child sex.

The type of R&R services most commonly provided for soldiers and sailors has also been (and continue to be) made available to business employees (Truong 1990 : 173). Companies located in the West and the Middle East have learned from the military about the benefits associated with keeping their executives and workers emotionally and sexually satisfied. Corporations wanting to reward men for exemplary work or in trying to attract new recruits to the company have included "trips for men only" to their list of fringe benefits (Truong 1983 : 533 , 1990 : 177 ; Mies 1986 : 139 , Ong 1985 : 5 ; Allison 1994 : 138).

Businesses dangle feminized sex objects in workers' faces with the aim, through male bonding, of creating more effective corporate "players" (Allison 1994 : 23). Like military policy, female sexual and emotional services are offered for a job well done.

Another example of businesses taking advantage of sex tourism are the "sexcursions" generally known as Kisaeng Tours (U'S 1979 : 22-26 ; ECTWT 1985 : 42-44 ; Barry 1979 : 64 , 1995 : 139-141 , Barry, Bunch, and Castley 1984 : 64-72). These involve Japanese men travelling to Korea for sex. They are generally sponsored by companies in the name of offering "vacations" for their workers. In recent years, Korean feminists have protested the practice with some success at putting an end to it (ECTWT 1985 : 42-44).

It has been said that money cannot buy love. Maybe so, but if the buying behaviour of Western men visiting Thailand is any indication of what it can buy, it is power. In this socio-economic context, money, along with white skin and masculine authority, awards numerous

benefits to Western men. Essentially, the demand side of sex tourism

requires men from affluent societies to imagine certain women, usually women of color, to be more available and submissive than the women in their own countries (Enloe 1989 : 36).

Power inequalities manifest themselves most directly through give-and-take trading mechanisms like bargaining. While Thai sex trade workers must struggle to negotiate prices and working conditions under very restrictive circumstances (i.e. poverty, pimps, night club rules, etc.), men can bargain unmediated, from positions of undisputable privilege. The unequal position of Western men (especially those carrying thick wallets) allows them to select the sex workers and services of their choice without hassles. Moreover, the types of bargaining chips Thai sex trade workers commonly rely on to help them earn more, like youth and beauty (Truong 1990 : 90), are rarely criteria applied to Westerners. These advantages, added to the fact that Western men face few legal, governmental, and moral sanctions, reinforce their already solid position of dominance.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DAY-TO-DAY UGLINESS OF "OTHERNESS" IN THE ASIAN SEX TRADE

"Ja, I like Bangkok very much. It's the last place in the world where you can still be a white man" (Rhodes 1991 : 69)

The preceding quote and the examples of material practices that follow represent concrete instances of sexism and racism that epitomize the vulgarity found in Southeast Asia's sex trades. Large numbers of Western men are drawn to South East Asia by the promise of cheap sex with beautiful, submissive "exotic" women and children (Thitsa 1980 : 13 ; Truong 1983 : 539 ; Ong 1985 : 7). The "candy store", as sex aficionados affectionately call Thailand, offers men abundant opportunities for selecting among a huge supply of sexual and emotional services without the legal and moral responsibilities they would face in the West --all at very low prices (New Internationalists March 1990 : 9 ; ISIS 1979 : 10 ; Truong 1983 : 533 ; 1990 : 178) or at the "perfectly acceptable wage of a T-shirt or a pair of undershorts" (Rhodes 1991 : 65).

Western militarized manhood often includes the most extreme form of aggressive masculinity and racism. Military cultures in all countries remain bastions of sanctioned machismo characterized by systems of gender and racial oppression. Fundamentally, masculinist militarism operates, in part, by subordinating females and non-whites through exclusion, discrimination, and violence. Gender and racial domination constitutes a crucial ingredient for the maintenance of white male authority, and stereotyping women and women

with negative moral-sexual labels proves to be an effective means of control. In relation to gender, Cynthia Enloe states that,

each time a military establishment reasserts its 'masculine' identity, it is inclined to do so by purging or marginalising women, and it does this by insinuating that women are essentially whores (1983 : 19-20)

Equating women with "whores" stems from an ideology of sexuality which posits females as devalued objects. In Thailand's sex industry, female objectification takes on diverse forms, the most common ones being people used as leisure status accessories, freak show entertainment, and/or sexual playthings (ISIS 1979 : 19 ; O'Malley 1991 : 90). That sexual expression in this context is practically synonymous with dehumanization and exploitation --for male pleasure-- reflects popular modalities of Western male sexuality.

After examining the issue of Western sexuality, Nancy Hartsock concluded that

the culturally produced dynamics of hostility which structure sexual excitement corresponds to a masculine sexuality which depends on defiling or debasing a fetishized sexual object (1984 : 28).

Overwhelmingly androcentric in its definition, sexuality in the West is most often understood to be a biologically-based practice that prioritizes male genitalia, penetration, ejaculation, and male pleasure. Two additional assumptions include the normalcy of heterosexuality (Rich 1980) and easy sexual access to females as a "right" (1980 : 77 ; Barry, Bunch, and Castley 1984 : 26). Female pleasure is rarely given priority. Rather, female sexuality is valued primarily for the pleasure it gives men as well as for its reproductive function. According to this definition, males initiate and control the act, sex remains on their terms (Ellenreich,

Hess, and Jacobs 1986 : 185)

Synergistic with these assertions is the racial bias that emphasizes Third World women's sexual availability. In many Asian bars, customers can simply select the "girl" they want by pointing to her while she is performing or serving. A small fee may be paid to the bar owner if they wish to take her out of the establishment (O'Malley 1987 : 85). In places such as massage parlours and coffee-shops, where girls sit in dimly lit cages, the client can pick one up by giving the number she is wearing on her blouse (Phongpaichit 1982 : 9). Similar arrangements have been adopted by hotels --or "sex farms" (Truong 1990 : 170).

Consider also, for example, an infamous ad in the literature on sex tourism that offers Western men a chance to purchase Thai "unknown pleasures" in their own home countries. Rosie Reisen, a West German travel company, announces, "'For the first time in history you can book a trip to Thailand with exotic pleasures included in the price'" (Enloe 1989 : 37 ; also quoted in ISIS 1979 : 9 ; Truong 1990 : 178)

Such blatant guarantees of women's sexual accessibility are not commonly found in developed countries, even in the sex trade. As Cynthia Enloe correctly notes, sex tourism "requires men from affluent societies to imagine certain women, usually women of colour, to be more available and submissive than the women in their own countries" (1989 : 36).

In the tourist industry, Asian women are frequently cast as sex objects, expected to fit into modes of behaviour and conduct designed for those with greater power. Their availability is so taken for granted that one Western male in the Philippines commented to another "'Pick any one you want...It's just like shooting fish in a barrel'" (O'Malley 1992 : 87).

Furthermore, tours allow men to select sex partner(s) before leaving their home

countries, which helps them bypass the hassles of finding "girls" and of negotiating prices (and working conditions) with sex trade workers on a one-to-one basis. From Germany alone, 100,000 men a year visit Thailand on packaged sex tours (Time, June 21, 1993 : 18).

The combination of knowing what to expect in advance, and the comfort of well organized touristic services with the appeal and excitement of visiting an 'exotic' country provides for the tourist "the novelty of a different experience" as well as "a safe release from constraints of familiar social codes and customs" (Heyzer 1986 : 53).

This notion of availability also extends to the liberties Western men feel they can take in relation to the use of contraceptives and other pregnancy/health matters. In the Third World, Westerners often assume no responsibility for such things as wearing condoms and paying for abortions. Should pregnancies result in the birth of children, likewise, their care is dumped on the mother. Western men usually return home after their sex junkets without looking back for the consequences of their actions.

The privileging of males by asserting sex as a "right" is not new (Rich 1980 : 77). Men have held and taken advantage of this doctrine for centuries. The international sex trade only reinforces the notion by providing a larger supermarket of "cheaper" sexual services. In most cases, sex can be bought as "'cheap as a pack of cigarettes'" (Truong 1990 : 178, also 86 ; Rhodes 1991 : 139 ; New Internationalist, 1990 : 9). Sex tourism enables men to enjoy the mass consumption of more access to more women, with more variety. In the marketplace of commoditized Others, women, children and Third World people are offered as inexpensive "entertainment" (ISIS 1979 : 8).

The "conveyor belt of sex" (ISIS 1979 : 27), namely those industries that serve sex

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PM-1 3 1/2"x4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
NBS 1010a ANSI/ISO #2 EQUIVALENT

PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS

objects to customers cafeteria-style, offers ideal socio-political spaces for men who want to confirm their "natural" masculine superiority. It constitutes a "secure place for men in society" essentially because it serves as a sanctuary "where they can always have women who do not say no" (Barry, Bunch, and Castley 1984: 42).

Of course, the preservation of white male domination is achieved best when women of colour are not permitted to talk at all. In the face of male abuse, to save their jobs, Asian sex workers "are always smiling. They pretend they like it" (New Internationalist, 1990: 9).

Likewise, during her study of Tokyo hostess clubs, Anne Allison discovered that female silence and/or unambiguous approval systematically enhanced the male customers' social status. This was primarily achieved by stroking individual egos or by standing as a symbol of womanhood within a male collective. Here, simply being perceived as sex objects among a group of men apparently was enough to "encourage a heightened sense of maleness that would link them [the men] together" (Allison 1994: 154; also ISIS, 1979: 9-10, O'Malley 1992: 88).

Cynthia Enloe found identical male collective identity building in the military (1983: 23). "Male bonding" institutionalizes women's oppression by systemically excluding them from male-defined enclaves (ISIS 1979: 9). During their tours of duty, military personnel were/are regularly encouraged to take unabashed advantage of the sexual opportunities provided by local businesses to satisfy their sexual and emotional desires. Preferential treatment, in terms of access to the 'best' prostitutes, was/is typically given to top ranking

officers' But all soldiers found/find particularly attractive the young Asian women (or "girls" as they are always called) whose behaviours conform to the traditional stereotypes of female submissiveness Pursuing these women has proved an effective way for them to prove their manhood (Truong 1983 : 538) The more aggressive the pursuit, the more masculine they seem in the eyes of their peers, which would explain why someone said of U.S. soldiers looking for Asian women, they "hunt in packs" (New Internationalist March 1990 : 8)

Interestingly, American soldiers used to jokingly call R&R, "I&I" for intercourse and intoxication (Rhodes 1991 : 66) In the same comical vein, Americans also referred to the sex industry in South East Asia as the "ejaculation industry" (Allison 1994 : 21)

Reducing female to sex object status also involves what Jack Litewka calls "fixation" and "conquest" (1974 : 19 , also in Lees 1993 : 218) Fixation is essentially a form of fetishism whereby men concentrate on only certain parts of the female anatomy, and these parts come to define the whole person Conquest includes the game of hunting down females like prey and devising ways of making them submit to intercourse Or as one sex tourist in Thailand calls it "'the thrill of the chase'" (Rhodes 1991 : 66) Inequality is built into both practices Males are assumed in control and considerations such as female consent and mutual pleasure are absent

Paradoxically, essentialist definitions of male sexuality, those that classify males as animalistic, can contain the opposite assumption --that males have no control. Behind such

⁶ For example, in Vietnam, young Asian women were sometimes called "Cinderellas" because they were sometimes paid by the government to attend and dance with officers at exclusive clubs, after which they were told to leave and return home alone (Enloe 1983 : 36).

ideological positions we often find the notion of the 'male sex drive' (Enloe 1983 : 22). The myth of the proverbial sex drive has lasted to take on numerous permutations. With respect to "sexploitation", we can find it in the belief that certain people should act as a "safety valve" for male sexual aggression. As one American soldier expressed it, "'Instead of exposing our decent women to the possible danger of being raped or to other forms of sexual abuse, it is better to provide a safety valve for the sexual drive of the marine and at the same time to make money'" (Mies 1986 : 142). Such biologically deterministic assumptions assign men physical needs for sex, who if not satisfied, will produce dire consequences resulting (among other things) in loss of health, frustration, and/or explosive fits of violence (ISIS 1979 : 28).

As an ideology, this definition cleverly serves as a convenient excuse to free males from being held accountable for their sexual behaviour (Hartsock 1984 : 23). Sexual violence can be blamed on "nature", or on the victims. For example, one ad promoting sex tourism in Thailand emphasizes that their sex workers know the "art of making love by nature" (Truong 1990 : 178). Sue Lees' study of adolescent sexuality in Britain revealed that most of the boys interviewed had already internalized this lesson. Her research uncovered that,

Often the responsibility for arousing aggression is subtly shifted on to girls. It is widely believed, for example, that male sexual drives, once aroused, are uncontrollable, and the arousal results from girls' so-called provocative behavior (1993 : 228)

Likewise, Mariana Valverde located a similar myth, what she calls the "slippery slope", within Western Christian tradition. "According to this myth", she explains,

the one-way, limitless growth of sexual passion is by necessity a downward movement, an irreversible sinking into increasingly more perverse and more

bizarre passions (emphasis in original, 1985 : 150)

The myth of the male sex drive, like the myth that female and non-white sexuality is "closer to nature" (Truong 1990 : 178), includes an amalgam of reductionist and essentialist ideas that serve to excuse men's unethical behaviour by blaming "dark forces", hormones, and/or the victims

Women-blaming and race-bashing are considered almost as much a "right" for some white men as sex is. Stigmatizing Third World women with degrading labels such as "dirty whore" consigns them to the status of convenient dump heaps. "Even murder is taken less seriously if the victim is said to have been a pro [prostitute]" (ISIS 1979 : 26). In the Third World, prostitutes have been scapegoats for an array of problems including droughts, epidemics, drug abuse, etc. (Truong 1990 : 78)

Racism fuses with sexism within sexualized hierarchical relationships between whites and non-whites. Within First World/ Third World relations, the gendered meanings of sexual "conquest" blend with those associated with colonial conquest to give white men added feelings of power. Such are the power relations behind explicitly hate-filled messages like this one found on a T-shirt in the red light district of Manila : "I like little fucking machines powered by rice" (O'Malley 1992 : 87). Like sexism, racism requires constant affirmation to function as a hegemonic system of oppression

Wifely Virgins Versus Fuckable Whores :

The exclusion of females from masculine culture has been most effectively achieved

by dividing women into two camps . good girls (virgins) and bad girls (whores) (Bell 1987) Even though these gender/sexual dichotomies are found cross-culturally (Truong 1990 : 74), they seem paramount in the Westerner's image of those who inhabit the Third World

"Sex tourism", remark Barry, Bunch, and Castley, "is based on the racist myths that Asian women are particularly submissive and passive" (1984 : 31) Cynthia Enloe notes that imperialist racism structured all relations between Westerners and Asians during the Vietnam War In relation to Asian women's chances of falling prey to the virgin/whore dualism, she states that,

All of them were vulnerable to the label 'prostitute', because they were women and because they were at the bottom of the racial hierarchy (1983 : 33)

This gendered dualism undermines women's solidarity as it simultaneously justifies their sexual exploitation (ISIS 1979 : 4-5) Each category is tied to the Western family system and the institution of marriage (Barry, Bunch, and Castley 1984 : 36 , ISIS 1979 : 28)

"Prostitution and respectable marriage", Valverde states,

exist side by side and reinforce each other To separate the virtuous mother/wife from the stripper and the hooker, assigning to the former the role of 'analyzing' the latter, is to fall into the patriarchal trick of isolating women from each other (1985 : 134).

Tied to racist categorizations within imperialist hierarchical structures, the marriage system also typecasts Third World women within a narrow ideological framework Imperialist assumptions informing Western male ideas of Third World women's "usefulness" often limit them (Third World women) to sex slaves or to subservient wives (Wilson 1988)

As such Thai sex trade workers are typically treated like whores and thus deemed disrespectful, "dirty", and unsuitable for marriage Patriarchal convention dictates that

marginalized women's usefulness can be limited to sexual exploitation. After men extract whatever pleasure they desire from them, the women can then be discarded (ISIS 1979 : 19 ; Enloe 1983 : 43, 45), they are "throw-away women" (Barry 1979 : 105-106)

At the complementary, yet opposite end of this ideological spectrum, racially marginalized women are simultaneously constructed as domestic objects of male fantasy (Mies 1986 : 140 ; Wilson 1988 : 121). In these cases, Asian women are still regarded as just another luxury fixture, but instead of being seen primarily as objects for sexual gratification, they are additionally marketed as devoted, dutiful wives suitable for accommodating men emotionally and for performing spic-and-span domestic labour, all without complaint.

Thai women regarded as marriageable are labelled with stereotypical "virginal" qualities. Ara Wilson's analysis of mail order bride catalogues reflected this well-entrenched gender dichotomy. The women featured in her samples were presented as potential future wives for Western men and were described as "unspoiled, unliberated, devoted, obedient, and faithful" (1988 : 120 ; also see Mies 1986 : 140 ; Wheeler 1994 : 43). Unlike the whore's function as pure sex object, the traditional wifely role includes domestic labour, servicing men sexually, and motherhood. In Thailand, women hired for such services are called "mia chao", or rented wives (Barry, Bunch, and Castley 1984 : 39 ; Ong 1985 : 5 ; Truong 1990 : 127 ; Rhodes 1991 : 69).

While the whore/virgin dichotomy is imposed onto Asian women and institutionalized globally, a symbiotic myth co-exists with this dominant one. A subtle, underlying assumption that pervades the mail order bride literature rates Asian women (as opposed to American women) as more desirable marriage partners. Wilson found this type of devaluation of

American (feminist) women in her samples. According to mail order bride literature American "liberated" women are presented as "rude and sloppy or demanding, power-hungry feminists" (1988: 120). It could hardly be coincidental that such anti-feminist sentiments appear at historically the same time American women have started winning social and political gains/rights (Faludi 1991).

Likewise, many advertisements promoting sexual services in South East Asia frequently reflect the most blatant ideological paradigms that combine racism and sexism. Apart from reifying human beings into purchasable possessions, they also situate gender and racial relations in a fixed hierarchical order. Respective "races" and sexes are placed in opposition to one another within a closed system of symbols.

By using formulaic marketing techniques, advertisers attempt to draw from culturally shared preconceptions to attract consumer attention. Sex holiday ads share many similarities with pornography. Most ads are particularly like porn in the sense that they rely on

some of the most pronounced sexual myths and biases of reactionary thought in American [and Western] society (Barry 1979: 175).

Not only do the ads inspire racist and sexist behaviours, they also publicize the myths of women's collusive participation in their own subordination. They're presented as women "without desire for emancipation" (ISIS, 1979: 6; Ong 1985: 7, also Mies 1986: 139).

The Prevalence of Degradation and Violence

The Thai sex trade highlights Western male sexual dominance. Not only are female sex trade workers subordinated within the larger patriarchal culture that includes conditions

like lower pay discrimination, and domestic violence, but added is the commodification of their bodies and their sexual services. Among the brashest statements of white male power comes from the purchasing rights that whites own simply through their wallets.

This relationship was expressed by one American sex tourist by insisting to another who hesitated asking a bar girl for a blow job for fear she might refuse, "Then just make her. She's a whore, for Christ's sake. You're paying for her" (O'Malley 1992 : 90). By being consumers, men gain control over sex workers simply with the power of their dollars. Kathleen Barry explains,

The fact that sex and women's bodies are the commodities to be sold in prostitution holds for all women that men have taken the acquisition of this commodity as their right (in Barry, Bunch, and Castley 1984 : 26).

In addition, offering payment both concretizes the definition of women as prostitutes and provides an outlet for men who want to shed unwanted residual feelings. "That is why money is so important to the transaction", contends Hanna Olsson, "for when men pay, it frees them from the guilt" (in Barry, Bunch, and Castley 1984 : 43).

With economic power comes the right to demand "specialized" (demeaning) services. As such, Western men assert a strong influence on the "flavour" of what services will become available. This explains, in large part, why the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand urged the provincial governors in October 1980 to encourage

'certain entertainment activities which some of you may find disgusting and embarrassing because they are related to sexual pleasures' (Mies 1986 : 138).

Of course, the "disgusting and embarrassing" services (also see Truong 1990 : 179), promoted in ads as "novel" and "exciting" shows, are introduced to attract more Western customers.

Some attractions involve sexual acrobatics and gynaecological sideshows that can be quite dangerous for the workers. For example, it is known that injuries have resulted when performers have removed razor blades from their vaginas (Rhodes 1991 : 64 , Sanghera 1992 : 52). Sadly, such acts can cause irreparable damage to a woman's reproductive system. They can also, in some cases, threaten her life (Richter 1989 : 99).

Such commercialized transactions play on and legitimize racist stereotypes that present non-whites as made for and/or enjoy kinky sex (Barry 1979 : 175 , Mies 1986 : 139). In the quest for confirmation of their masculine whiteness, Western men seek out non-white females to dominate. Equipped with "cowboy" mentalities, they venture off into Third World unfamiliar territory, with delusions of "taming" the natives. This mentality is compatible with Western racist mythology that regard non-whites as dirty and expendable. Third World inhabitants get characterized as animalistic and the environments they inhabit, "seedy".⁷

Probably the most blatant expression of power is violence (Mies 1986 : 141 , Truong 1990 : 189). Through the international sex trade, women of colour in every country, but especially in the Third World, have been selected (mostly by white, Western men) as the main targets for the release of sadistic aggression (Barry 1979 : 38-39, 42, 175 , Mies 1986 : 139). Sex workers are aware of such dangers as many (justifiably) exercise caution, especially during their first encounters with foreigners, fearing each may be a "slasher or choker" (Rhodes 1991 : 70).

⁷ It is interesting to note that in Rhodes' piece in Rolling Stone, someone the author interviewed asked him to not make Bangkok seem "seedy". "I hope you don't make the sex life around here sound seedy"... "Can you keep it from making it seedy?" (1991 : 66).

Among the most disturbing consumer trends in the global sex trade is the traffic and abuse of children (Thitsa 1980 : 33 , ECTWT 1985 : 12, 29-34, 61, 68 , Truong 1990 : 10, 74, 180-182 , Rhodes 1991 : 105 , Sanghera 1992 , Ong 1985 : 5 ; Chutikul 1992 : 118 , Time 1993 : 18 , Barry 1995 : 39, 212, 227) Although, or more accurately, because adult sexual behaviour with children is prohibited universally in the West, paedophiles and others wanting sex with children commonly proceed to search for those "pleasures" in underdeveloped countries. The Western view that anyone and everyone in the Third World is available and expendable ultimately underlies child sexual slavery.

Deflowering (Thitsa 1980 : 33 , Skrobanek 1985 : 11 , Truong 1990 : 182) and the practise of having sex with children for protection against HIV/AIDS are two reasons that account for the reduction in the average age of children in the sex trade (Rhodes 1991 : 114). In India, it has been noted, the average ages of girls who work in brothels have dropped from 14-16 years to 10-14 years (Sanghera 1992 : 48). Since Thailand's sex industry employs children in large numbers and has a competitive market similar to India's, it would not be unfair to guess that the average ages are probably dropping in this country as well.

Sexual access to the world's poorest children is such a taken-for-granted privilege that trading in kids is expanding in numbers as well as in lower ages (Sanghera 1992). So much so that a director at UNESCO's women's-rights department can state, "'Selling a 14-year-old girl has become so commonplace, it is banal'" (Time, 1993 : 18).

The higher sexual (and commercial) value of children lies in their powerlessness, in the intactness of their "virginity", in their perceived innocence, and in the novelty of the acts. Children are easier to dominate than adults. Plus, "stealing" someone's virginity or "breaking

someone in" is associated with power as well as with sexual potency and regaining one's lost youth. Thirdly, innocence is refreshing in a world full of corruption, malice, and AIDS. Children are now being sought after for their unlikelihood of transmitting HIV/AIDS. And lastly, there exist Western taboos (and laws) against adult-minor sex, that when violated (for some) provides titillation.

"Sexcursions" (Tuong 1983 : 539) are frequently sold to men who want to live out their sexual fantasies. Those fantasies can include desires as tame as wanting romantic "love", or they can involve sadistic motives like blatant sexual exploitation and violence (Mies 1986 : 139, 141). In Thailand, both the fantasies and how they are played out are gendered and racialized.

That violence, sexism, and racism are played out in sexual practices, in large part, accounts for the fact that sanctions against violence, which could act as protection for Thai sex workers, are few. This is not to suggest that violence is uncommonly meted out against prostitutes in overdeveloped countries. However, it may be argued that violence is probably more common --and more severe-- against Third World sex workers, if only because there are clear connections between racial hostility and sexual defilement (Hartsock 1984 : 23).

Legal and state authorities around the world continue to consistently "wink" their approval at international sex trading (ISIS 1979 : 6). On top of the secrecy that is customarily created around prostitution, this type of state-level passive condoning renders sex tourism even more "invisible" (Enloe 1983 : 29). Secrecy acts as a camouflage against global public opinion which protects men from being held accountable for their actions, subsequently enforcing the institutionalization of Western male domination.

CONCLUSION

The literature on sex tourism has addressed many issues, mostly those directly related to the political economy of the industry. This thesis makes a different contribution to the literature by utilizing recent feminist scholarship on "Otherness" to help us understand the virulent practices found in the Asian sex trade.

Along with the international division of labour has come an international division of morality. The contemporary manifestations of "Otherness" through the venue of global sex tourism has constituted, and continues to constitute, a major site where the convergence of patriarchal, racist, and imperialist ideologies are played out in degrading, oppressive practices.

In this econo-moral context, South East Asia, but especially Thailand, has emerged as the international mecca for the world's sex buying aficionados. Western masculine condescension and contempt reserved for marginalized "Others" gets transmitted during interpersonal exchanges within the process of each commercial transaction. It is at the level of the individual, and at the body as a site of power, that most of the extreme manifestations of that disdain has been observed.

In today's Western moral climate, when sex with children is regarded as a repulsive act of depravity, paedophiles can roam the streets, bars, and hotels of underdeveloped countries and take their pick among a wide selection of minors. In places such as Pat Pong in Bangkok, anyone with enough money can demand services catering to any and all levels of perversity. In an era of Western feminist political activism, the Third world is increasingly

being perceived as a "haven in a harsh world" by those attempting to cling to the privileges of unequal power relations. Whether it is "normal" men seeking comfort in the expectations of the traditional Western marriage contract, or sadists looking for sex workers upon whom to vent their hate-filled rage, what is considered unavailable and/or unacceptable in the West is being sought in or dumped on "the Rest" The

"Otherness" of sex suppliers working in underdeveloped countries is embedded in wide-spread beliefs among First World people (in this case, especially men) that the raison d'être of persons of colour largely consists of being both available and expendable. It is premised on a long-standing Western ideology that regards the inhabitants of the periphery "less than" fully human. It dismisses the notion that "Others" are worthy of the same rights to protection, dignity, and a decent standard of living as people in overdeveloped nations.

As a way of both legitimizing and of justifying the exploitation of Third World sex trade workers, Westerners endorse an array of reactionary and/or mythological racist, imperialist, and sexist ideas. Most of these ideas embody notions about the "inferiority" of women, children, and people of colour. They perpetuate demeaning stereotypes, or emphasize the devalued qualities, of those exploited. These ideas often include assumptions about the "naturalness" of their subordinate positions.

Such assumptions can be found in the advertising and in touristic products associated with the Asian sex trade. Whether its degrading messages on T-shirts or those in the most blatant sale pitches of brochure promotions, integral to the appeal of Third World sex for many Westerners is easy accessibility in combination with high "quality". Accessibility includes factors such as low prices, a wide selection of services and workers, and the

powerlessness of those workers

The "quality" of sexual and emotional services involves factors like the beauty and youth of the workers, silent subservience, and their perceived willingness to accommodate customers with virtually any act, however bizarre or degrading, demanded.

Sex tourism embodies the conjunction of consumerism combined with sex as a form of entertainment and psychological release. Within global capitalism, the powerlessness of marginalized sex workers has been marketed as a rare consumer good. The human elements integral to sexual and emotional services have been incorporated into market relations in a manner which objectifies the providers of these services through the process of "sexploitation".

The introduction of tourism has changed the political dynamics of sex trading. However, those changes do not extend to a reduction in the inequality between consumers and workers. Rather, inequities have remained and been transformed as well as legitimated through more specialization in the industry. When once hiring a prostitute was associated with shame, the sex trade's symbiotic marriage with global tourism has changed such transactions to make them slightly more respectable.

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