

NIKK *magasin*

NO. 1 - 2002

Bodies across borders *- prostitution and trafficking in women*



NIKK - Nordic Institute for Women's Studies and Gender Research



The misery behind the fantasy

Trafficking in young girls and women from the Baltic States to Western European countries including the Nordic countries is a growing problem - not least for the victims. Moderate EU estimates say that 120.000 women and children are being trafficked from Central and East European countries into Western Europe each year. This special issue of NIKK magasin on prostitution and trafficking in women is a contribution to a Nordic-Baltic information campaign on the same subject involving eight countries. For this reason all the articles are in English. The contributions come from Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland as well as from Russia and the Baltic States.

The eight countries behind the The Nordic-Baltic campaign has different policies on the issue of prostitution but have agreed to base the campaign on the UN definition of trafficking in women described in article 3 of the so-called Palermo-Protocol, the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. This Protocol is the first international instrument that mentions the men who create the demand for prostituted women. All state parties that sign and ratify the protocol must adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures to discourage the demand. The most controversial aspect of the Protocol is the definition of trafficking. This definition takes into consideration the actual reality of women who are trafficked for prostitution. Trafficking can take place by means of force, deception and abduction, but traffickers who abuse power or a victim's vulnerability, will also be criminally liable. The Protocol specifically mentions that the consent of a victim is irrelevant to the prosecution of traffickers. Even if some trafficked women know they will have to prostitute themselves, they do not know that they will often be kept in conditions corresponding to slavery, being unable to escape from their exploiters, as the opening article in this issue from the Danish scene reveals.

W also present a newly concluded IOM research survey in the Baltic states exploring and describing the magnitude, the mechanisms and the actors of the prostitution and trafficking business. One of the conclusions drawn in this study is that while the main trafficking flows from the Baltic states some years ago were directed to The Middle East, Greece and Turkey, the trafficking for prostitution now has turned to Central European countries – and the Nordic countries.

The Russian prostitution across the border in Northern Norway is discussed in a historical framework, and the stereotype of the Russian woman as associated with prostitution is seen in an urban-rural/centre-margin perspective in another article in this issue. The 'grand old man' in prostitution research in the Nordic countries, professor Sven-Axel Månsson, has been fighting for criminalizing the customer in the sex trade for over 20 years and finally succeeding. In The Interview he tells how he has identified some of the reasons why men buy sex, which is necessary knowledge in order to create measures to combat sexual exploitation of women and children. New Russian research into how women in prostitution see themselves and explain their motivations for entering into prostitution is presented in one article. Other articles deal with important issues like racism in the sex trade and abuse of minors in the sex trade.

In this issue of NIKK magasin we present some samples of new research within this field. But trafficking in women and children for prostitution purposes is a multifaceted problem which requires much more interdisciplinary research with gender perspectives than what is actually going on in the Nordic region. Such research ought to constitute the knowledge basis for social, economic and legislative measures for combating this growing criminal transnational trade, which is based on gender discrimination and violence against women.

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NIKK magasin 1-2002
ISSN 1502-1521

PUBLISHER:

NIKK – the Nordic Institute for Women's
Studies and Gender Research

EDITOR:

Trine Lynggard
trine.lynggard@nikk.uio.no

REFERENCE GROUP:

Maria Eriksson (SE), Marjut Jyrkinen (FI),
Aase Rieck Sørensen (DK), Hanne Størset
(NO), Frida Eeg-Henriksen (NIKK)

TRANSLATORS:

Heidi Granqvist, Sarah Bannock

GRAPHIC DESIGN:

Alien Design

PRINTING:

CDDU Repro

PRINTED IN:

17 000 copies

COVER PHOTO:

Mikkel Østergaard/BAM/Samfoto

Free subscription

**BODIES ACROSS BORDERS**

During one year two Danish journalists investigated the criminal networks behind the trafficking in young women to Denmark. They wanted to find out who the agents are, how they target the women and how they organise the travel across borders avoiding the attention of the authorities. Ulrikke Moustgaard reveals the hidden pattern behind the criminal trade of trafficking in women and young girls.

PAGE 4**"YOU WILL BE SOLD LIKE A DOLL"**

Public awareness of the trafficking problem is low in Lithuania as well as in the other Baltic countries. Most people are not aware of the dangers of trafficking. The findings of the public opinion survey done by IOM indicated the urgent need for an information campaign. The main concept-image was this "human marionette" hung in her bare skin.

PAGE 10**WHY DO MEN BUY SEX?**

Professor Sven-Axel Månsson has studied prostitution since the mid-70's, starting with an investigation into the nightclub culture. From the mid-80's he has mainly focused on men as buyers of sex and their motivations. In 1999 the law about sexual services came into force in Sweden, criminalizing those who buy sex.

PAGE 22**Nordic-Baltic campaign against trafficking in women**

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Between suppression and independence

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***Bodies** a c r o*

By **ULRIKKE MOUSTGAARD**

Young women from the Baltic countries increasingly come to the Nordic countries to find jobs in the sex business – at the same time, there is an increasing number of hairdressers, house wives, managing directors and other “ordinary” people who have seen the financial opportunities offered by the business and therefore establish themselves as agents for sexual services.



ss *borders*

"Girls wanted for work in Denmark"

On a morning in July 2000 in the Latvian capital Riga, 25-year-old Aija sees a job advert on a Latvian website specialised in contacts between people who offer jobs and people who are looking for work.

Aija quickly replies. "I have seen your advert and I am a 25-year-old woman, tall and slim. I have experience as a dancer."

Aija is a beautiful, red-haired Latvian woman looking for work,

preferably in Scandinavia. She, along with hundreds of her fellow Latvians, would like to go abroad to a rich country for a couple of months to earn good money. There are plenty of opportunities for this, Aija knows. For a long time, many Danish, Swedish and Norwegian clubs, bars and private individuals have been advertising on the internet, in newspapers and through Latvian agencies for young women who are willing to leave Latvia for a few months for a job that will give them far more money than it is possible to earn

at home.

The Danish advert on the Latvian site looks for young women who can dance. And Aija knows how to dance. She immediately gets a reply.

"You can come at any time", replies a woman who calls herself Luna. Luna asks Aija to call her on a mobile number in order to get detailed information.

Club 8

Luna manages a club in a suburb of Copenhagen. Club 8 is "a place where many different forms of entertainment ►

are offered for the customers to enjoy in a pleasant environment", as it says on the club's website. Cars roar past on a four-lane road outside the club. Every now and then one of them will slow down on sighting the simple wooden sign saying "club" and then turn down the gravel drive to the red brick villa that houses it. Here, a small white arrow points the way to the club's main entrance with shaded windows. Inside, in what once was the living room of the house, red bulbs and mirrors create a sleazy atmosphere appropriate for the club's daily striptease show. There is also a sex cinema, a live sex show, a lesbian show and a weekly sex party. But the most important feature of the club is "the girls". They usually come from Eastern Europe. They are available every day between 9 in the morning and 11 in the evening, providing, for a fee, various forms of sex in the double beds on the top floor of the house.

But Latvian Aija gets no information about all this.

"What exactly will I be doing?" she asks Luna when she calls on the mobile number Luna has sent her.

"Actually, nothing in particular," Luna answers.

"Just socialising with the customers, dancing and taking part in the live show and so on, that sort of thing. And a little bit of dancing..."

Luna also tells Aija that she can look forward to living in an area, which is "very, very rich". Aija will be able to "buy everything", since there are a lot of good shops. In reality, the only shops in the area around Club 8 are some second-hand car dealers, two petrol stations, one of which is unmanned, a kiosk, a veterinary clinic and a hairdresser for dogs.

Main destinations

What Luna does not know when speaking to Aija, is that the mobile phone calls are being taped. The fact is that Aija has applied for the job in Denmark as part of an agreement with the Danish newspaper Information and the BBC, who together want to reveal how the traffic in women from the Baltic coun-

tries to Denmark is carried out - a trade which nobody can give exact numbers for, but which experts say, is growing drastically.

According to a report published by the Danish police last year - after a fact-finding mission in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - Denmark and Sweden are the main destinations among the Nordic countries for organised prostitution from the Baltic countries. The police describe the scope of the traffic as "considerable".

This is confirmed by the latest cases that have come to light in Denmark.

In the summer 2001 the Danish police carried out the country's largest raid so far of places where Baltic women

that the women were referred to by the agents as goods with individual product codes. "These girls can be moved around as we like, and go back home when we like. If all goes well, we make money", was the description of the business between two Danish agents according to the taping of phone calls by the police.

Instructions

It is these agents, and their methods, that Information and the BBC want to know more about. How they target the women who are suitable for their trade, how they organise the travel across borders, and how they manage to get the women into the country without

Photo: Morten Andersen/Samfoto



work as prostitutes. The police found an organised network of 40 agents in the whole country, which since 1999 has transported 78 women - mainly from Latvia and Estonia - into Denmark and then around the country for organised and controlled prostitution.

The network had connections to agents in the Baltic countries and traded sex to a total value of two million Danish crowns in two years.

The Latvian and Estonian women were mainly supposed to be available around the clock as escort girls. They were moved between different Danish cities according to demand and customers. The police monitored around 20.000 telephone calls, which showed

attracting the attention of the authorities.

The agent Luna already has a long experience of trafficking in women when she gets in touch with Aija. Her club has existed for two years and has had a constant flow of women from Eastern Europe - lately especially from Hungary. Now Luna wants to get women from Latvia.

"I might get some girls from there next month" she says on the phone to Aija.

"I have a good contact."

In this way, Luna has invited women to her club in Copenhagen several times. She knows exactly how to avoid the Danish authorities. The first obsta-



Photo: Morten Andersen/Samfoto

cle is the Danish police at Kastrup airport. Here, two things are absolutely necessary. Firstly, Aija must have a credit card to document that she has enough money to live on in Denmark. Secondly, Aija must not say one word about her plans to work in Denmark.

"When you arrive at the airport, and they ask about money, you show them the credit card... If they ask you what you plan to do in Copenhagen, you say 'I'm here on a camping holiday', just say 'I'm going to travel around the country, camping, I'm here as a tourist'. And if they ask whether you know anybody in Denmark, you answer 'No, I'm here as a

tourist, on a camping holiday'".

Luna also tells Aija that she must not carry Luna's address with her. She is to take a taxi and ask the driver to call Luna's mobile number. Luna herself will then tell the driver where to take Aija.

Contact

Aija gets in touch with Luna on the internet. And Luna is by no means the only one who uses the net to recruit women for sexual labour. The internet has become a Mecca for agents, as was recently documented by the British intelligence agency. Direct recruitment of women takes place on the internet,

often under the cover of jobs as au pairs, models, waitresses or dancers.

"Hi, I'm looking for a cute and attractive girl for au pair work and possibly to be a 'play mate'. Your salary depends on your flexibility," writes a Danish woman who looks for girls from Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania.

Others openly admit that the work involves professional sexual services. This is the case with the Danish pimp, Spike, who on a Latvian website advertises for women between the age of 18 and 30 for work in his Danish escort agency.

"The reason why I resort to advertising on the net is to avoid all the greedy Eastern European agents," Spike says.

Women who are interested in working for him can send a letter with pictures to a post box address. Spike then assesses whether he wants to employ them for three months – the length of a tourist visa in Denmark. He pays for the flight tickets, salary and a flat.

Others try personal advertisements in local newspapers, where they offer a job – or marriage. Many of these offers of marriage are completely genuine. But for some women who are looking for happiness abroad through marriage, this is their first step on the road to a life as a prostitute. Crisis centres both in Denmark and Norway report that an increasing number of women who have married in good faith but have been forced into prostitution once they have arrived in Norway or Denmark turn to them. An employee at a Danish crisis centre describes the experience of a Polish woman.

"He had a special room in the house. When she was to enter this room, she would be called something else than her real name. Then a number of men would arrive. And that's where her vocabulary ended."

However, the experience of this Polish woman is far from a typical example of a woman who enters the Danish sex industry. A great majority of the women who come to Denmark know very well that they are going to work in sexual services.

A day in June 1999 Yveta from the



Photo: Morten Andersen/Samfoto

Czech republic for the first time stepped into a car in Denmark to a man who wanted to buy sex from her. He was "old, dirty and ugly" and it was her very first sex job.

"I have a second-hand shop and there were simply so many things that had to be paid," explains Yveta two years later in her cosy flat in the Czech republic.

"I was desperate. I didn't know what to do. And then one day I went down to a café near my shop, where a lot of girls were sitting and talking about how they had been in Denmark and made money."

Yveta got in touch with the man who had organised the trips for the girls. And then she took off for Copenhagen.

"I got used to it. Of the perhaps 12 customers you have, 10 will sometimes take only a few minutes each," she says.

Networks

Several of Yveta's friends have since gone to Norway, Sweden and Denmark by means of "good contacts". And everywhere in Denmark these good contacts can be seen in action. New offers for sexual experiences with foreign women appear constantly – in closed-down farms in the countryside, in flats and basement rooms in the cities, and in villas that have been converted into sex clubs, such as Luna's house on the outskirts of Copenhagen.

The people behind the sexual enterprises are typically organised in international, criminal networks. Europol, who for several years has worked with studying the criminal networks trading in women, groups the networks into three categories: large-scale, medium-scale and small-scale.

The large-scale networks are the most 'mafia-like' and today control about 60 per cent of prostitution in Western Europe. They belong to the Russian and Albanian mafia and trade many women at a time. The large networks typically have a history in drugs trafficking, but have chosen to also trade women as goods since the profit margins are high - there is a great demand and supply, and the risk for

being sentenced is small. In addition, the mafia groups are very brutal in their ways of doing business. There have, for example, been reports and eyewitness testimonials of prostitution concentration camps in Poland, Albania and Italy among other places, where women from Eastern Europe, the Baltic countries and Russia have been kept imprisoned behind barbed wire, raped, starved and even branded by the mafia, until they either have got a chance to flee or have been resold at an auction to local brothels.

"The brutality used is something we in the Nordic countries would find difficult to conceive of" says Norwegian Jan Austad, who is expert on trafficking at Interpol.

The large-scale networks characteristically have solid political and financial contacts both in the countries where the women originate and the countries they are transported through, as well as those where they finally end up working. These contacts mean that they are able to falsify documents that make the transportation easier.

The medium-scale networks, on the other hand, specialise in trading women from a certain country, and they do not act as intermediaries. Instead, they take care of everything themselves: they recruit and transport women, and they have their own brothels where the women work.

But even if organised prostitution in the Nordic countries most probably can be ascribed to both large and medium-scale networks, the dominant ones are the small networks of agents. Typically, the small-scale networks are not run from the top. There is no big, autocratic mafia boss who sits in his chair pulling the strings. On the contrary, these networks consist of a myriad of individuals across country borders, who have mutual contacts and sell and buy women off each other. They are usually so-called ordinary people, who have seen the financial opportunities offered by a steadily growing sex market. The 40 people who were arrested last summer by the Danish police, were thus neither muscular mafia types nor

known criminals. On the contrary, the hard core of the network consisted of a managing director and an IT expert, a married couple with a dog kennel, a bus driver and his wife, an artist and a hairdresser.

Brothels in Denmark who need employees can thus also pay and use an increasing number of agencies and private persons in the Baltic and Eastern European countries who specialise in finding young women who want to go abroad. These local agents speak the women's language; they find them in, for example, discos, or spread the word on the opportunity to work abroad in the local community, and then offer "help" in arranging the trip and in many cases also loans for paying the tickets etc. The next time the Danish brothel needs more women the contact is easily available. This is why the activities can be called trafficking: the organised shipment of women from one country to the sex industry in another.

Sold several times

The networks get in touch with each other, for example, via the internet. On several Baltic, Russian and Eastern European websites local agents offer to recruit local women to interested parties.

"We are an agency in Moldova. We have girls who are interested in sex work," writes an agent on one of these sites.

Later, in a private message, he says that he can get women in two weeks and is able to help transporting them to Denmark.

Other networks are created on the basis of the criminal environment in the place where the women come from. Within these networks a woman can be "sold" several times, before she crosses the border and finds herself in a Danish, Swedish or Norwegian brothel.

19-year-old Marcela from the Czech republic came to Sweden through such a network. She had just met a new guy, Ivan, whom she was very much in love with. He invited her to stay in a hotel in the city of Teplice in the Czech republic, where he had some friends.

"One night Ivan took out a pistol and pointed it at me. Then he said that he owed some people money and that they would kill him, if he didn't pay them. Then he suggested that I would prostitute myself," says Marcela. She had never sold sex before, but agreed in order to help Ivan. Soon after this, Ivan persuaded Marcela to go to Sweden to continue working as a prostitute there. Marcela was introduced to one of Ivan's friends, Ota, who could help with the travel arrangements.

"I saw Ivan give Ota 10.000 Czech crowns," Marcela reports.

Ota then introduced Marcela to a man, Milan, who lived in Sweden but was visiting the Czech republic.

"Milan told me that he had bought me from Ota for 3.000 German marks," she explains.

Three days later Marcela was in Stockholm.

"We had sex in the customers' cars or in their homes. Afterwards we handed over all the money we had earned," she says.

Marcela herself never got any money for her prostitution. Milan took everything.

"But it was never said that I would not be able to keep the money myself," she says.

Fifty, fifty

Aija from Latvia, on the other hand, will not be cheated of a good salary, Luna promises her on the phone.

"In two weeks you can make perhaps 30.000 Danish crowns," Luna says.

She also explains to Aija that she will take half of Aija's salary for board and lodging: "Let's say fifty fifty... (...) ... You get half and I get half."

So a few weeks later Aija sits in the blue chair of Air Baltic's flight BT 113 headed for Copenhagen. When she arrives at Kastrup airport she carefully follows Luna's advice. She has a credit card, a hotel room and her good explanations at hand. Aija passes through the Danish passport control without any problems. She gets into a taxi, asks the driver to call Luna's mobile number and

20 minutes later she is standing in Luna's Club 8. It is completely empty. A few hours before Aija landed at Kastrup airport, the police had conducted a raid at the club and arrested the Hungarian women working there. They are now being questioned at the police station, where they report that, among other things, they have been working as prostitutes and have paid 50 per cent of their salary to Luna. The police prosecute the women for working without a work permit in Denmark and put them on a flight back to Hungary. Luna, on the other hand, is not arrested. A few weeks later, Club 8 reopens – this time with new women from Eastern Europe, as the answering machine of the club reports. This the police comment:

"We have been in touch with the club, and they say that they show films, but that there is no prostitution going on."

Until recently, statements and lines of action like these were the norm within the Danish police. The reason for this was partly the Danish legislation – and partly the beliefs within the police force about what constitutes trafficking in women.

Procuring

Until recently, the Danish police claimed that no actual organised use of prostituted foreign women takes place to any great extent in Denmark. The main reason for this was that foreign women who were arrested for working as prostitutes did not give information that they were victims of what that police normally take to be activities associated with trafficking in women: i.e., actual forced labour, physical violence and theft of passport and personal documents. The women have arrived in the country voluntarily; they are basically able to move around freely, as they choose, and they even get paid for their work. How the women have entered the country, who has arranged their travel and whether the women are paying off a debt to these people are questions that have not been the primary concern of the police, since they have assumed that the crucial issue is whether the women

are working as prostitutes voluntarily or not. What the police, on the other hand, have focused their investigation on, is whether somebody else has profited from the women's prostitution. In Denmark, working as a prostitute is not a criminal act, while procuring, that is, making money from somebody else's prostitution, is illegal. But when it comes to this, the problem lies with the courts of law, the police say. At the Danish courts of law, documented proof of actual financial profit from procuring is needed in order for someone to be able to be sentenced as a procurer.

"We can go into a brothel and find working schedules and accounts, which document that a person has made, for example, a million crowns in a year. But when the defendant stands before the judge, he can deduct costs for toilet paper, coffee and what not and thus prove that the actual profit wasn't that big in the end. And so he is let off, since he hasn't made any money out of the prostitution," says criminal inspector Kurt Jensen at the Copenhagen police. On these grounds, there have been very few court trials of procuring in Denmark in relation to the number of pimps that probably operate in the country.

However, with the latest case, where the police revealed a network of 40 agents who trafficked in Baltic women, this trend is now undergoing a change. For the first time in Denmark, the police chose to charge the suspects with the smuggling of people and emphasised in their prosecution that the women, in spite of their voluntary participation, had been treated as goods according to the whims of the agents and had not been able to set their own working conditions. The case resulted in a sentence of a total of ten years and six months imprisonment for five people. However, this did not help the Baltic women. They were, as is customary, sent back home.

ULRIKKE MOUSTGAARD works as reporter at the Danish daily newspaper *Dagbladet Information* and has written the book *Kroppe over grænser – når kvinder handles til Danmark* [Bodies across borders – when women are traded to Denmark] Informations Forlag, Copenhagen, 2001.

TAVE PARDUOS KAIP LĖLĘ



NETIKĖK LENGVU UŽDARBIU UŽSIENYJE

Principal image of the IOM Anti-trafficking campaign in the Baltic States, financed by SIDA.

"You will be sold like a doll"

by AUDRA SIPAVICIENE

"You will be sold like a doll" – warns a puppet-girl in outdoor posters currently displayed all over Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian cities. "Do not trust easy money abroad" – she urges again, appearing on TV screens. This human marionette hung from her bare skin is used as the main image in an information campaign launched to prevent trafficking in women from the Baltic States and is designed to convey the situation of a trafficked girl – manipulated, coerced, helpless and in pain. The coordinator of the campaign – the International Organization for Migration (IOM) - says that more and more women from the Baltic States find themselves in the traps laid by traffickers.

Research by the IOM indicates that, besides other western European countries, the Nordic countries have recently also become a destination for trafficking of women from the Baltic region.

The issue of trafficking in women in the Baltic States and especially in Lithuania has recently attracted a great deal of attention from the media, government agencies, NGOs, and certain international organisations. This complex, sensitive and hidden phenomenon is a fairly recent issue in the Baltic States, owing its novelty to the newly acquired freedom of international travelling from these parts, and the introduction of a market economy. Despite the recent emergence of the issue in the Baltic region, it is an urgent and increasing problem, especially in Lithuania.

Unfortunately, until recently research on this subject was significantly lacking. Any available information pertaining to the trade - which was quite fragmentary - usually reflected the attitude of the organisation from which it originated. For example that emerging from law enforcement institutions was rather negative whilst that of the NGOs was very sympathetic. Too little was known about the phenomenon in order to be able to deal with it effectively, to prevent and combat trafficking in women. This situation, as well as the address by the Baltic governments was the rationale for IOM to initiate and

implement the Project "Research, Information and Legislation on Trafficking in Women in the Baltic States". In this framework, a pilot project was carried out, consisting of studies on legal and social aspects of trafficking in women in the Baltic region and a public opinion poll on the issue. The project was carried out with the financial contribution from the Finnish and U.S. governments and further supported by SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency).

The aim of the sociological element of the research project was to explore and extensively describe the magnitude, ►

"(...) They took us to Warsaw and then already in Poland one guy explained: "Stupid girls, what housemaids could you be. There are enough local housekeepers. You will have to make love." Then they gave us bus tickets and put us on the bus Warsaw – Barcelona."

VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING, (IOM, 2001).

mechanism and actors of the prostitution and trafficking business: factors leading to employment in the sex business. Below are some major results of this study (IOMa 2001)1.

Methodology

It is rather difficult to describe the scope and dynamics of trafficking in women, due to its largely clandestine character. The nature and complexity of the problem predetermined that several data gathering techniques and research methods should be applied. Apart from statistical/archival data analysis (official institutions' statistics on migration, labour force, missing persons, deported citizens etc.), the methods applied were predominantly qualitative, as itemised below:

a) In-depth expert survey. This included such professionals as: those providing shelter, assistance or service to the victims of trafficking and/or sex and entertainment industry workers; reception centres personnel; experts from state institutions dealing with trafficking matters, such as the police, border guards, social workers, special medical personnel, etc. The experts referred to in what follows are from these institutions. Even though the experts represented very different spheres and organizations, interviews were carried out based on general guidelines, so as to achieve comparability and a balanced view of the different aspects related to trafficking;

b) Interviews with victims of trafficking and sex workers – both

Lithuanians involved in prostitution business locally and those returned from abroad; also foreign women working as women in prostitution in Lithuania;

c) Practical experiments – telephone inquiries to escort/call-girl agencies as well as inquiries among employment agencies about labour opportunities for women, including jobs in the entertainment business and employment (legal and illegal) abroad;

d) Media analysis and secondary data analysis (available articles, reports and materials of other organizations, including materials for needed actions).

The results of this study, applying the methods listed above, revealed that only an indirect evaluation or perhaps more accurately "guesstimates" can be made regarding the magnitude of the problem. Although it is impossible to state the exact number of cases of trafficking in women in the Baltic region, the study revealed the mode of the phenomenon and its mechanisms - i.e. "how" and "why".

The magnitude of trafficking in women in Lithuania

According to Lithuanian Interpol information, there is no doubt that trafficking in women conducted by organised criminals is on the increase. Some indirect evaluation of the scope and especially the dynamics of this phenomenon can be derived from the data pertaining to missing people, including young women/girls and on the data about deportations of Lithuanian citizens from other countries.

Data from the Lithuanian Ministry of the Interior shows that since the beginning of 1990 the number of missing people in Lithuania has increased significantly and for the past few years it has stabilised at a rather high level. Regrettably, the number of those "not found" has also stabilised at about 400 persons per year. With regard to missing young women under 30, the tendency is similar - over the past few years the numbers of missing women have increased, including those who have not been found.

Of course only a portion of all the

Photo: Christophe Rohart/BAM/Samfoto





missing women are victims of trafficking. In fact, most of the victims of trafficking do inform their relatives/friends about their departure (usually not mentioning or not themselves knowing the real purpose of travel). Therefore the above data may be relevant only in a few cases.

Data from the Lithuanian Border Guard Service (Ministry of the Interior) on deportations of Lithuanian citizens from abroad may appear more informative, since the majority of prostitutes/trafficking victims detained abroad are deported. First of all, a significant increase in numbers over the past few years can be observed. According to this information, in 1999 the total number of deportations to Lithuania amounted to 1,928 people. In 2000 it nearly doubled (3,498). The year 2001 continues this tendency of increase – 4,133 persons from Lithuania were deported by foreign countries during the last year.

The actual number of expulsions of Lithuanian citizens from foreign countries may be much higher, since only expulsions with formally issued deportation documents are registered. Most people are deported due to overstaying, or their presence becomes illegal because of illegal employment. Trafficking as a reason for expulsion is never mentioned, even if it is known about the person. Therefore numbers of deportation may only suggest tendencies, not provide statistics.

The United Kingdom and Germany are the absolute leaders among the countries comprising trafficking destinations, followed by the Nordic countries and the Netherlands. If, some years ago the main trafficking flows were directed to Israel, Greece, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey, recently the prostitution business has turned to Germany, Holland, UK, France and Sweden. According to the latest information from the Police Department, Spain is rapidly becoming the new target country. The increase in trafficking cases has also been noted in some "traditional" reception countries, such as the U.K., Denmark and Germany. In

"I've heard all these stories about trafficking, but it did not even occur to me, that I was going to fall into that trap. I did not trust all these advertisements, I did not move with unknown people, I thought I knew where I myself am going and what I will do there. I moved to Germany together with my "friend". On arrival 4 Albanians met us and my "friend" sold me for, I think, 1,000 USD. He took the money and left me without saying a word. Later these Albanians explained that I was sold and I would have to work as a prostitute to repay the debt. Of course I opposed and wanted to leave, so they beat me so severely that I recovered only after 10 days. During all those 10 days they kept me at their place and I was raped many times. I was alone and no one could help me."

MARIJA, 24-YEAR-OLD LITHUANIAN, HIGHER EDUCATION, PLUS SECRETARY'S DIPLOMA. (IOM 2001)

Germany alone, the number of criminal cases which deal with women trafficked from Lithuania has doubled during the year 1999-2000. In trafficking cases in German courts Lithuania has taken a lead over much bigger countries such as Russia, the Ukraine and Poland, which are considered the main suppliers of women for working in prostitution in Germany. According to experts at the Vilnius Airport Border Guard service every second flight from Germany now brings women who are suspected of being engaged in prostitution.

In sum, it is possible to assert that most official numbers are quite contradictory. On the one hand, they do not include a large part of returned trafficking victims; on the other hand, foreign-



Photo: Morten Andersen/Samfoto

ers holding false Lithuanian passports are included. Despite all these contradictions, experts interviewed in this IOM study express the opinion that trafficking in women from Lithuania is increasing and becoming a real, urgent problem.

The reasons for women's migration and for trafficking in women

According to the experts, the main reasons for women's migration are economic. Firstly there is a high level of unemployment in Lithuania. Poverty makes them look for any, even elementary source of income, and, as was indicated by one trafficking victim "one would clutch at straws to survive".

Secondly there is an absence of any realistic prospects for a better life. Even people with employment hardly have enough means for a modest living. Wages are low (and further, women earn a 1.4 times lower salary than men) and a young girl without higher education has very few possibilities to earn the kind of money, for example, required for buying a flat. Stories abound about how much one can earn abroad during a summer, a year. This is also an incentive to go and look for a better life in foreign countries. The effect of success stories is not tempered by awareness of the difficulties experienced by women entering the trade.

More over, criminal interests are involved. According to the research results, the main reason for criminals engaging in women's trafficking is money, big money. All the experts were of the same opinion: a craving for

money makes people forget and disregard moral standards of intercommunication: nobody thinks of the harm done to others. As compared with other countries in central Europe, Lithuanian women are frequently cheaper and do not know their rights so well, so they cannot defend themselves. Therefore they are in great demand.

In the opinion of some of the experts, the old patriarchal culture of Lithuania has a significant effect on the development of the business of trading in women in Lithuania as well. It seems quite normal for a man to have the right to dispose of a woman in any way he wants, as he feels superior to her. Hence, if he thinks that a woman can provide pleasure to a man, he finds it quite natural to make use of the fact, simply to sell her. Women from asocial families appear to be in the most disadvantaged situation.

Though officially discrimination of women does not exist in Lithuania, it can be observed in everyday life, for example, in employment situations. Lithuanian Labour Exchange statistics indicate that in general women earn less than men working at the same job. The Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men came into force on December 1st, 1998 in Lithuania. Nevertheless, the deep-rooted patriarchal attitudes to women as inferior members of society do not change very quickly.

Another fundamental reason is the unaccountability of traffickers: practically nobody is punished for it. The number of cases against traffickers in the court is really insignificant. It is quite seldom that women who have

managed to escape from the trap of pimps, dare take their case to the courts. They are ashamed of what has happened to them; frequently they are frightened and threatened. It takes a long time for the case to be investigated in court and the traffickers often manage to get away unsentenced. Out of 27 trafficking cases which reached the courts in Lithuania over more than three years, only one trafficker was sentenced.

Expanding prostitution, and entertainment business in general, in the countries of destination (i.e., demand) as well as in countries of origin (supply) may be evaluated as additional factors stimulating cross-border trafficking.

The recruitment of trafficking victims

Currently one of the main ways of involving women in the prostitution business abroad is by means of deception or promises. Girls are offered employment in foreign countries as au pairs, nurses, or to do agricultural work. They find such offers either in newspaper ads or through acquaintances. Upon arriving by themselves, or having been trafficked to the country of destination, they find out that the work they had been offered is in reality prostitution. Women, who prior to being taken away, "suspect" that they might be offered to work in prostitution abroad, are lured by high wages and the possibility to see the "wide world".

Methods of recruitment of women from the Baltic countries are now changing. Several years ago the main way of finding women for traffic were

advertisements in newspapers whereby some non-existent firm offered non-existent legitimate work abroad. However, this type of recruitment is becoming less and less popular. Nowadays recruitment becomes more delicate and more personalised. Traffickers try to establish a personal contact with a prospective victim, to "become friends" and only then offer some "good job abroad and only for you, since we need a reliable person". Trafficked girls' stories indicate that it was people quite close to them who offered them a "job" abroad – an acquaintance, friend or even a so-called boyfriend. When recruiting women, traffickers now tend to offer precisely those forms of contact and recruitment which most people would consider to be the most innocuous – people intending to work abroad would first rely on the recommendations of friends, acquaintances or relatives. This peculiarity was revealed by analysing the results of the public opinion poll carried out by IOM in the Baltic States (IOMb 2001).

Public perceptions of trafficking in women

One of the most important tasks of the public opinion survey was to establish the respondent's personal experiences related to women trafficked by force. According to the respondents, such cases comprise tenths of a per cent

speaking about their families and relatives (however, even such a small portion would produce quite significant absolute numbers). Furthermore, many more of such cases were indicated concerning respondents' acquaintances. Almost one in every ten young persons in Lithuania has come across the problem of trafficking in women more or less personally: 8,8 per cent of young persons say that they have come across attempts to traffic girls with the purpose of prostitution and these cases appeared among their acquaintances, colleagues, friends, relatives or family members. Among the general population of Lithuania 5,6 per cent of all people have personally come across trafficking in women. These findings are alarming.

Meanwhile, public awareness of the problem is low in Lithuania as well as in the other Baltic countries. According to the research data, most respondents are not aware of the dangers of trafficking and would not know where to appeal for help in a difficult situation. Nearly one quarter of the Lithuanians, a slightly higher proportion of Latvians and one third of the Estonians consulted mentioned that they would not know what to do (or would not do anything) if a close relative was forced to engage in prostitution abroad. The findings of the public opinion survey indicated an urgent need for informing people in the Baltic region about the dangers of traf-

ficking in women. Therefore, the information campaign was launched by IOM to prevent further growth of the trafficking in women from the region.

Providing information about the dangers of trafficking

Based on the findings of the research project, an anti-trafficking information campaign was launched in the Baltic States by IOM in October 2001, and it will go on until October this year. The purpose of the project is not only to increase the awareness of the dangers of trafficking among the general population, but also to educate potential victims to give a proper response to traffickers: what to do/not to do before going to work abroad and when already in a foreign country.

The main concept-image of the campaign – the "human marionette" hung from her bare skin – warns: "You may be sold like a doll if you blindly believe in easy money abroad". The information campaign began with the distribution to public advertising spaces in Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian cities and went on with TV and radio spots. Print media, indoor posters, leaflets, fact-sheets and other printed materials are being prepared. In order to further increase public awareness of the issue, special lectures on the dangers of trafficking and appropriate responses to these dangers are given to the most vulnerable groups during country-wide tours at secondary and special schools, orphanages, and other educational institutions. The project also includes networking activities - workshops, meetings and seminars aimed to strengthen co-operation between government organisations and NGOs involved in the issue, as well as increase the participation of journalists and media coverage of trafficking in women.

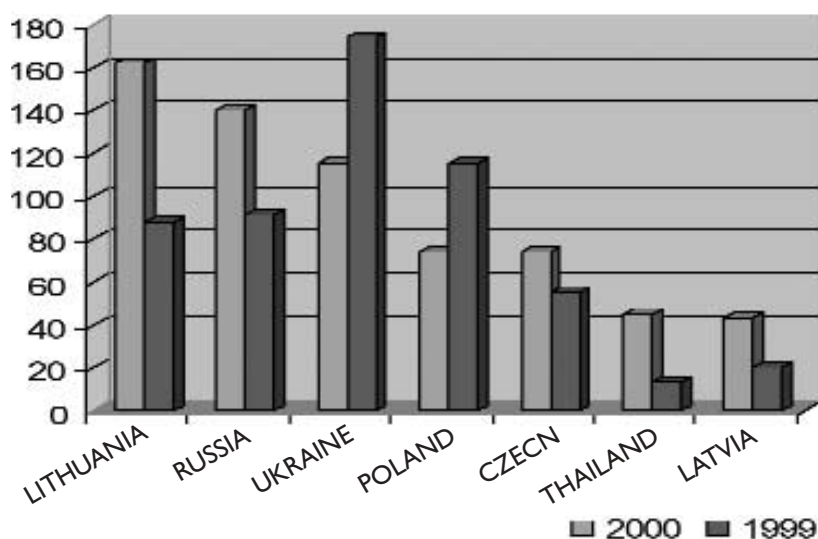
AUDRA SIPAVICIENE

Ph.D., Head of International Organization for Migration (IOM) Vilnius Office

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GERMANY: Country of origin of trafficking victims
(number of cases in courts, 1999-2000)



Nordic-Baltic campaign against trafficking in Women

By **TRINE LYNGGARD**

- Daily I pick up leaflets at the university campus and at bus stops advertising for girls to highly paid, easy jobs abroad where no skills are required, not even fluency in English. The salaries that are being promised for these "easy" jobs can be up to six times the average salary in Estonia, says Kristiina Luht, co-ordinator in Estonia for a joint Nordic-Baltic information campaign to combat trafficking in women. The Nordic countries are more and more frequently the destination for young girls being trafficked for the purpose of prostitution, and many of these girls and women come from the Baltic and Eastern European countries.

During the Women and Democracy Conference in Vilnius, Lithuania in June 2001 the Nordic and Baltic Ministers responsible for questions concerning gender equality decided to run a joint information campaign against trafficking in women. Later the Ministries of Justice also joined in. Although there are differences in policy on the issue of prostitution among the eight countries, the Nordic-Baltic working group has agreed to base the campaign on the definition on trafficking in women described in article 3 of the so-called Palermo-Protocol, the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. This definition takes into consideration the actual reality of women who are trafficked for prostitution. Trafficking can take place by means of, among others, force, deception and abduction, but traffickers, who abuse their power or a victim's vulnerability, will also be criminally liable. The definition specifically mentions that the consent of a victim is irrelevant to the prosecution of traffickers.

Stop the demand

The Nordic-Baltic working group responsible for the campaign is led by Norway, which now has the presidency in the Nordic Council of Ministers. Anne Berit Mong Haug from the Norwegian Ministry of Child and Family Welfare is chairing the working group. She refers to article 9,5 in the UN/Palermo Protocol as an important guideline for this Nordic-Baltic co-operation.

This article obliges the member states to co-operate through education, social, cultural and legislative measures to stop the demand which creates all forms of exploitation of human beings, of women and children, and especially young girls, and which lies at the root of trafficking in human beings.

– In this way, the information campaign can be a first step in co-operation on concrete measures to combat the criminal activity of trafficking in women. I also want to emphasise the importance of this inter-disciplinary co-operation between gender equality units and the justice and police units. The problem of trafficking in women has a social and a gender equality dimension that must be integrated with the legislation and law enforcement measures. The impact of gender inequality, which makes women into sexual objects, must be understood by the different authorities involved, such as immigration, police and the judicial system in order for them to treat the women with respect and as victims of criminal activity, and not as means for investigating a criminal case, says Anne Berit Mong Haug.

Targeting potential buyers

The campaign's project co-ordinator Gunilla Ekberg from Sweden is a lawyer with international NGO-experience in combating trafficking in women; she works closely with the national co-ordinators in each of the eight countries. She says that each country will carry out an information campaign adjusted to

the specific situation in their country.

– As, roughly speaking, the Baltic states are 'sending' countries or countries of origin and the Nordic countries are recipient countries, the target groups and the profiles of the campaigns will differ. In some of the Nordic countries the focus will be on the buyer of sexual services. In Sweden, for example, we will target the men who exploit women and girls sexually and men who travel to neighbouring countries and other countries to buy women and girls. The campaign will also be directed to potential buyers among younger men and teenage boys. This raising of the awareness among potential buyers is crucial to combat trafficking and prostitution, since, as long as men see it as their right to buy women, prostitution and trafficking will go on, says Gunilla Ekberg. She also underlines as an important purpose of the campaign in all countries the raising of the awareness among the general public and the increasing of the knowledge on prostitution and trafficking in order to strengthen the efforts of both governments and NGOs.

Mapping the situation

The Nordic-Baltic campaign will be launched at a seminar in Tallinn in Estonia at the end of May. The first part of the campaign in Estonia will concentrate on what co-ordinator Kristiina Luht calls 'mapping the situation':

– The awareness and attitudes among key groups will be investigated, such as the police, border guards and female high school students. Our overall aim is to introduce the concept of trafficking in women, its reasons and consequences. There is a widespread ignorance and lack of public debate and media coverage analysing the roots of the problem. After Estonia's independence pornography was in a way seen as part of the freedom, since it was forbidden under the Soviet regime. So there is a certain culture of normalisation and social acceptance of pornography and prostitution. In the capital Tallinn alone, there are between 70 and 80 brothels, says Kristina Luht who is concerned with the way young people are

approached in this sensitive issue.

– Because of the poverty and sometimes lack of educational opportunities it is only natural that young people dream of starting a good life somewhere else. Therefore, it is very important how we approach the young girls. We must realise that the girls want to go abroad anyway, either for the adventure or for the good money. So we will have to tell them and people who can affect them, such as teachers, youth workers and job counsellors, how to work or study abroad as safe as possible. Information about what rights they have and how to get in touch with institutions that can be of help is also important, says Kristiina Luht, herself a M.A. student in Information Science. Every day she experiences the active recruitment efforts of the traffickers.

– Daily I pick up leaflets at the university campus and at bus stops advertising for girls to highly paid, easy jobs abroad where no skills are needed, not even fluency in English. The salaries that are being promised for these "easy" jobs can be up to six times the average salary in Estonia, says Kristiina Luht. Unfortunately too many girls eagerly grasp this possibility to go abroad and earn good money.

New law criminalizing traffickers

Also the Latvian campaign co-ordinator Elina Laiveniece points to the extensive prostitution in Latvia itself as part of the problem. Latvia has an estimated number of 10 000 women in prostitution out of which 75 per cent are Russian women. Prostitution is regulated by law in Latvia and five cities have specific streets appointed for prostitution. In 2000 Latvia got a new provision to the criminal law, which criminalizes the sending of a person to a foreign country for the purpose of sexual exploitation even if the person has given her or his consent. The trafficker can be convicted to up to 4 years of imprisonment.

Elina Laiveniece points to the lack of information and experience among young girls coming for the rural areas to Riga and how easily they can be tricked

into prostitution abroad.

– One typical example of women recruited by traffickers is girls from rural villages, who come to Riga hoping to find a job in the capital and start a new life. Usually the newcomers gather near the central bus station in Riga. And there the girl accidentally meets a very gentle guy who becomes her friend and spends money on her, and she starts to trust him. In most cases girls are trafficked with the help of so-called job-offering organisations. At first they ask the girls what they are expecting and would like to do. The girls speak very openly and naively and then the organisation, surprisingly, has the right offer for her!

6 years imprisonment for trafficking

According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Lithuania has now taken the lead in trafficking cases in German courts over much bigger countries like Russia, the Ukraine and Poland, which are considered the main suppliers of women for prostitution in Germany. The Lithuanian co-ordinator for the Nordic-Baltic campaign Kristina Grachauskaite says that the problem with young girls being trafficked to western European countries is increasing, and that the situation in the rural regions is especially serious. Here, the high unemployment rate combined with lack of information about the problems and risks connected with travelling abroad makes the need for an information campaign acute. The government of Lithuania has newly adopted a National program on prevention and control of trafficking in human beings and prostitution. Already in 1999 the first law cases were filed against traffickers and since then the amount of cases has increased every year. The first verdict came this year when a trafficker was sentenced to six years of imprisonment for trafficking in women.

TRINE LYNNGARD is editor of NIKK magasin

Photo: Morten Andersen/Sonifoto

Between Suppression and Independence

- Transnational Prostitution of **BLACK** Women in Denmark

By MARLENE SPANGER

Is it adequate to approach women who migrate to richer parts of the world in order to earn money for themselves and for their families by prostitution as victims? Are there other aspects, besides the social and psychological damages, which are important to take into consideration?

Different views on prostitution exist in Denmark. The most prevalent view on prostitution can be described as one of double standard: That prostitution is a private affair for both buyer and seller, and further prostitution is considered as a natural thing, but at the same time the prostitute is condemned (Järvinen 1989). Another approach to prostitution, which is not so prevalent, but has made progress within the last 10 years, considers prostitution as a socio-political problem: That prostitution is rooted in social need and that women in prostitution incur social and psychological damages. Despite the slight research in Denmark on prostitution a number of reports and books have been written during the last ten years, which represent this view (e.g. Bechmann et al 1990, Bjørnholt 1994, Koch 1987). Furthermore, this approach has shed light on inequality between men and women, but in the same time the women are often approached as victims of social misery.

The subject of this article is African and Central American female migrants-who-prostitute in Denmark. I approach this subject by focusing on two themes: 1) migration and 2) notions of 'the black woman', which in different ways enclose the living conditions of these women. Here gender, sexuality and race will be considered as social constructions linked to specific contexts in which both prostitutes and clients are acting individuals in the construction of the so-called special 'authentic' sexuality of the black woman. It is my intention to destabilise or hopefully draw a more nuanced picture of coloured women, which not necessarily keep them in the position as the victimised woman or in

the position as the women with liberated sexuality.

This article draws on oral sources: five interviews with black female migrants-who-prostitute (Spanger 2000).

Prostitution as an identity or a strategy

Prostitution is not a neutral term for the selling and buying of sexual services. The term evokes certain notions on how women should express and use their sexuality. Prostitution must be understood in relation to a specific society and culture in which it exists (e.g. Nencel 1997). More specifically, women-who-prostitute should be understood from a number of gender related perspectives: the social organisation around the sexual-economic exchange between men and women; the production of knowledge about prostitution; women's working opportunities, etc. These are all conditions that influence the regulation of the practices of prostitution and the way in which prostitute women are seen.

According to Pheterson (1996) women-who-prostitute are often perceived as a homogenous group, an understanding which both Kempadoo and Doezema (1998) and Pheterson (1996) finds critical, because it neither gives a complete picture nor a nuanced representation of the women's lives. Inspired in general by the social constructivist approach, and more specifically by Lorraine Nencel's (1997) dissertation on prostitution in Peru, I should like to emphasise that I will not refer to the women as prostitutes, because the term prostitute reflects an identity more than an act. The women I have spoken to do not recognise themselves as prostitutes but rather as women who occasionally sell sex. Nor do they wish pros-

titution to be legalised. I find the term women-who-prostitute more precise for my study, because it reflects an act or some discursive practice of the women's life. The women regard prostitution as a hidden survival strategy, which gives them an opportunity to increase their income.

The construction of black woman's sexuality

Even if my empirical evidence does not clearly document that various notions of race, gender and sexuality influence the prostitution of black women in Denmark, I assume that this is an important perspective to take into account. The icon of the black woman has changed and has been reproduced in different discourses during the last centuries (Gilman 1985). Pieterse (1992) and Gilman (1985) argues that the notion that black women, possessing a more wild and natural sexuality and having a need for sex with many men, was a quite common picture in the late of the 19th to the early 20th century. This notion of the sexuality of black women still exists today, when black women prostitute themselves to white, western men (e.g. Davidson and Taylor 1999, Thorbek 1997). When female black migrants represent 'the foreigner', this can simultaneously seem both attractive and dangerous; the fear for sexually transmitted diseases, especially AIDS, but also fantasies about the sexually unknown play a role in this. These notions of black women are, for example, used in travel advertisements and contribute to the stimulation of 'the white western mens' desire for the sexually Other.

That the black women-who-prostitute advertise themselves in the Danish

newspapers and magazines under the term: 'exotic', 'mulatto babe' or 'chocolate-brown' reflects an emphasis on the colour of their skin, on how they look, and on their body, which may be understood in relation to a certain discourse. This discourse can be traced back into the past.

The fact that black women exist as a specific category within the sex industry points to certain notions of sexuality connected to the prostitution of black women. Notions, which can be very denouncing and racist towards the black female migrants, but at the same time these notions can give the women a kind of anonymity, because through their mobility they can hide and hopefully live an undisturbed life.

The women I have spoken to during my fieldwork did all define themselves as black towards me despite that they came from different African or Central American states. That is also a reason why I have chosen to use the term black instead of referring to them as for example Ghanaian or South African women.

Transnational prostitution

Transnational prostitution is global. It is a concern, it involves women from poorer parts of the world, with limited opportunities for increasing their income but with a duty to support a large part of their family. More or less voluntarily they choose to migrate to a richer part of the world, where the opportunities for an increased income are better. For these women, prostitution becomes a more or less deliberate survival strategy.

During my interviews with the interviewees, I focused on their life condition in general and not specifically on prostitution because I wished to place prostitution in a broad context. My questions are divided into three themes: 1) Migration process 2) Everyday life 3) Conditions of prostitution (also called: the way they earn money). By focusing on their situation in general, I hoped to avoid denouncing the women, and simultaneously show interest in understanding why they prostitute. Below, I will present two cases.

Between South Africa, Århus, Ålborg and Copenhagen:

Julia is in her late 30's and comes from Johannesburg in South Africa. She has five children who live with her mother in Johannesburg. When her first husband died in an accident at work, she was left as sole breadwinner of the family and her salary as a teacher was not enough to support her and her five children.

When Julia came to Denmark, she got a resident permit for two years. She emphasises that she chose to migrate because of financial reasons, and that she did not have a certain kind of work in mind when she moved. Through her uncle, who lives in Denmark, she learnt about the country. It was also through him that she met her present Danish husband. They live in Århus. It was in Denmark that Julia first started to work as a prostitute, when a Danish woman introduced her to it. Julia makes it clear to me that her profession is not that of a prostitute, but of a teacher. However, she is not proficient enough in Danish to be able to teach in Denmark.

At no point during the interview does she use the term prostitute, but refers to prostitution as 'that'. Several times she underscores the economic aspect as her only reason for working as a prostitute. Apart from the prostitution, she cleans for a few hours in various places and the cleaning work functions as a cover for the prostitution. Julia has contacts at several massage parlours both in Århus and in Copenhagen, which means that she commutes between Århus, Copenhagen and Ålborg. Julia underlines that neither her uncle, her husband nor her family in South Africa know anything about the prostitution. She simply says that she works as a cleaner, which she actually does a few times a week.

Between Copenhagen, Ghana and Amsterdam:

Sarah lives in Amsterdam, but works periodically as hostess in a bar in Copenhagen. She talks to the male guests and solicits her customers among them.

Sarah is in her early 40's and comes from Ghana. Today she lives in

Amsterdam together with her husband and four-year-old daughter. She is the only one out of a family of nine children who managed to get some education before her father died, and therefore it is her duty as the eldest and the only educated child to help her brothers and sisters in financing their education. Later, when some of the other children have found work, it will in turn be their duty to help the rest of their siblings. Sarah's husband is also from Ghana and works as electronics engineer in Holland. She told me that she has close contact with her relatives in Ghana - sisters, brothers and mother - and she takes on an economic responsibility towards her family, which means that she sends remittances back to them.

In Amsterdam, Sarah got a job at the post office, but her salary was not sufficient to cover her family's expenses for school fees, hospital visits, etc. This is why she started doing this 'thing', as she described her work in Copenhagen. She works for about one to two months at a time in Copenhagen, then goes back to Amsterdam and returns to Copenhagen after two or three months. She cannot work for a longer period at a time since she is also responsible for the running of their household and taking care of their daughter. Sarah emphasises 'that' 'the way in which she makes money' in Copenhagen is not a permanent or full-time job, and therefore she does not regard herself as a prostitute, but describes prostitution as that, which she only does every now and then. Her husband knows that she works in Copenhagen, as a kind of hostess, but she has not told him about the prostitution. This part of her work is easier to hide when she works far away from her home base. Working in another city in Europe gives her better opportunities to become anonymous. The deliberate choice of working place illustrates that she is hiding from her family, relatives and friends how she earns the money.

Mobility

These two stories represent different migration patterns and at the same time the stories contain similar features. Both

women have a certain duty to support their children, parents and/or brothers and sisters, and both had personal contacts in Denmark before migrating. The women's economic responsibility towards their families and the involvement of the family members in the migration process make the migration a family strategy and not an individual strategy despite the fact that only one person actually moves. In Sarah and Julia's cases, their migration happens between several bases and across one or two country borders, which denotes a relatively high degree of mobility. This contributes to securing their anonymity.

Migrants engage in more than one society, but at the same time they feel that they are not fully part of either of the societies, since they have neither totally left their 'original' society nor fully integrated into their new society (Smith 1994, 20). On the other hand, migrants create social spaces between the sending and the receiving countries, where meaningful social practices are produced and identities constructed (Malkki 1992, 37-38). The women move between two or more social systems, languages, cultures etc., while they also often have different statuses and positions in the respective countries. In Denmark, they are 'the prostitute', 'the foreigner', while they are often regarded as 'the rich and privileged member of the family' in the sending community. When the women's children live with their family in another city in Europe or in the sending community, and the women regularly send remittances back and stay in close contact, they are creating social spaces across national or regional borders.

Even if the women are part of a larger group of women from the poorer parts of the world, where the possibilities to generate capital are limited, they are able to maintain the connection to their family in their home country by using technological means of transport and communication. Thus the geographical distances do not prevent the women from earning money. Prostitution in Denmark is an example of one of the few opportunities that the

women have to increase their income. For some, prostitution serves as a stepping-stone to improving their living conditions; others never succeed in breaking out of it.

Between suppression and independence

For both Sarah and Julia, prostitution is something that is not talked about, but a hidden act that is carried out in secret. Furthermore, neither of the women refers to themselves as 'prostitutes'. The fact that prostitution is not mentioned among the women in the interviews can be seen as a kind of cover mechanism, which aims at 'anonymising' the prostitution for themselves, their family and friends. Thus, these women are fully aware of the action itself - the selling of sexual services - but by not mentioning it, they presumably hope to avoid the stigma of being 'socially deviant'. Their mobility enables the women to create and maintain a social network across country borders. For them, prostitution is exclusively a hidden survival strategy, which not only concerns the individual women, but several family members.

The earlier notion of the sexuality of black women as more 'natural' and physical still exists today within prostitution. The idea of the sexuality of black women contributes to the anonymisation of the women for their customers. Presumably, the anonymity can be tempting for the women, since they can thus conceal themselves and ensure that no outsiders interfere with their private affairs. On the other hand, this racial stereotype reduces black women (in general) to sexual objects and keeps them in a degraded position.

When prostitution is a hidden act, the balance between suppression and independence becomes very narrow. Despite their socially, financially and mentally demanding lives the women interviewed have a relatively high degree of autonomy in the organisation of their own lives, since they are not dependent on pimps. They have also been able to influence their own migration process, in spite of their limited opportunities. For some of the women, prostitution has

meant a greater independence. Their income from prostitution has made them breadwinners, which has given them greater esteem and an improved position within their family. However, the size of the income from prostitution does probably vary among the women.

At the same time, prostitution may very easily place the women in a vulnerable position, since they have no rights to plead in case of abuse and violence by customers and pimps. On the other hand, their anonymous position enables them to avoid bureaucratic systems and the duties imposed by these. However, this also means that it might be difficult for the women to receive the help that the Danish public system can offer. Thus, the women are anonymous in various ways and for various groups, but at the same time their appearance as black women means that they are also elementarily visible in Danish society.

MARLENE SPANGER

M.A. in History and Int. Development Studies, ass. editor of the Danish journal for gender research "Kvinder, Køn og forskning."

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The Interview

Why do men buy sex?

The Interview: **Professor Sven-Axel Månsson, Sweden**



Photo: Johan Hedenström

By **MARIA JACOBSON**

During the spring of 2002 he has appeared almost weekly in the Swedish media, where, with patient didacticism he has defended a Swedish law criminalizing the customer in the sex trade. Sven-Axel Månsson, Professor of Social Work at Gothenburg University in Sweden, has been fighting for this law for over 20 years.

This law has been on the statute books for three years now. It was challenged both before and after it was introduced, as well in Sweden as internationally. Two years after its introduction, however, 80 per cent of Swedes said that they were satisfied with the law.

Today though, many are beginning to question the extent to which the law is actually being enforced. Investigations into the legal system have revealed that the law's guardians - the police - are actually far more likely to act to protect those who buy sex than they are to do justice to this law.

Sven-Axel Månsson gives us his explanation:

– The effects of male bonding play a part in creating this situation. The police force is a male dominated institution, which is being asked to enforce a law, which threatens traditional male values. Their ability to fulfil this duty is compromised by the fact that policemen will be far more likely to identify with the buyers of sex than with its vendors.

The morning following my meeting with Sven-Axle Månsson, I am confronted by hand painted signs which have been fastened on to the lights regulating the traffic on the main road I have to cross on my way to work: STRIPTEASE! Phone 1234 56 78 90, they exclaim. The signs are facing the flow of the traffic. A sex entrepreneur, typical for our times, has obviously identified the marketing niche of bored drivers in a traffic jam and thought: why not get them to phone a stripper while waiting for the lights to change?

We are spared nowhere.

Sex tourism, trafficking, porn, prostitution, Internet sex, popular sex – the world seems to have entered a sex spiral.

Månsson, the Swedish grand old man in research on gender, violence, sexuality and prostitution has used the concept of invasion: we are invaded by conservative, "phallogentrically whored" sex.

The 1970's: Black Business

Sven-Axel Månsson has studied prostitution since the mid-70's. It all started with an investigation into the nightclub culture of Malmö for the social authorities of the city, which he carried out together with his colleague Stig Larsson.

"The female body and sexuality would have to be exploited even more in a legalised market: competition would be as intense as it is in any other legitimate commercial market."

The result was Svarta affärer (Black Business), a report which indicated that the sex industry had become a significant social problem. The report gave rise to concerns about the role and responsibility of Sweden's Welfare State in this area, which so far had regarded prostitution as a question of law and order – and therefore best dealt with by the police - and women involved in prostitution as deviant characters, as social dropouts.

The report led to a further four-year project on prostitution in Malmö, where Sven-Axel Månsson was both researcher and social worker. The aim was to persuade women in prostitution to give up their activities. In 1977 Månsson was also asked to join the

committee for the first Swedish state investigation into prostitution.

– The state investigation caused some commotion. It analysed prostitution in a new way: on one hand, it was seen as a reflection of the normal relations between men and women in society as a whole; on the other, it emphasised the role and responsibilities of men in the sex industry, says Månsson,

But the Chair of the committee, a right wing politician, disagreed with the experts on this viewpoint. Each of the members of the investigation except one was fired. Supported by feminists and women's associations, Sven-Axel Månsson and others subsequently published an alternative report with suggested actions, which came out simultaneously with the official investigation report in 1981. In the same year, he published his doctoral thesis on "the Relation between Pimp and Prostitute".

From 1984: Focussing on men

So far, Månsson had studied the 'sellers' of sex. His next book (also in Swedish) came in 1984 focusing on men as buyers of sex. Since then, he has explored this theme in several books and projects, a recent one in English called Men's Practices in Prostitution: the Case of Sweden, published in 2001. A couple of times Sven-Axel Månsson has returned to the women involved in prostitution and the Malmö project, also resulting in books and reports. Trafficking, violence against women, HIV and homosexuality are some of his other research topics.

When the second Swedish investigation into prostitution suggested that both customers and prostitutes should be criminalized, Sven-Axel Månsson resigned in protest.

– Men facing problems in their relations with women solve these by buying

sex. Thus, prostitution is a male problem. It would therefore be totally wrong to punish women," he argues. And finally in 1999 the law about sexual services came into force, criminalizing those who buy sex.

Pro-feminist law against violence

– This is a pro-feminist legislation against violence, which protects the most exposed women. The law is also a way of forcing men to stop regarding the female sex and the female body as a male privilege – a view many men have not yet given up or come to terms with. The silent acceptance among the great mass of men is a bigger problem than individual anti-feminists.

– Prostitution is a specific relation and situation which resonates with general relations between the sexes," says Månsson. – Regardless of variations over time and between cultures in the expression of dominance and subordination, they all contain the shared view of the male right of possession of the female body. In our society this is manifested in, amongst other things, the crime of rape and other forms of violence, pornography and the buying of sex.

The Swedish law can seem provocative, precisely because it challenges the idea of men's freedom from responsibility and, at the same time, it problematises masculinity – positioning men as bearers of gender.

As was stated at the beginning of this article, this law has been the object of lively debate both before and after its introduction. An opinion poll in the beginning of 2001 showed that 80 per cent of the Swedes were satisfied with the law.

During 1999 the amount of street prostitution was halved – but the trade itself was not curtailed. Instead, it moved into flats, brothels, hotels and massage parlours, a state of affairs, which can be used to argue that the law is in fact a failure. However, recently there has been some suggestion that the movement of the sex industry from the streets may be interpreted not as a failure of the law but rather of the legal sys-

"Men facing problems in their relations with women solve these by buying sex. Thus, prostitution is a male problem. It would therefore be totally wrong to punish women."

tem. Journalists are more frequently asking how the law is being enforced, rather than questioning the law itself.

Sweden's second largest newspaper, Göteborgs-Posten recently showed in a series of articles that the police and prosecutors are imposing buyers of sex lighter punishments than other criminals.

When the law had been in force 33 months, 249 men had been charged with buying sex – most of these for buying sex in the street. 26 had confessed and been fined without trial. 33 men had been sentenced to pay a fine by the court.

Identification with the buyers of sex

– The police are making efforts to stop street prostitution. It is questionable however whether this is an appropriate action. The law on buying sex is part of a larger group of laws on violence against women, the so-called kvinnofrid legislation. The legal system needs to co-ordinate actions aimed at fighting all forms of violence against women. Furthermore, a change in attitudes needs to happen in male environments, Månsson underlines.

It was also revealed that if men asked not to have their mail from the court of law sent to their home address, the authorities made an exception to their routines out of consideration for the fact that the man was married or cohabited and had children.

– I see this as a case of male bonding acting in the situation: the police force is a male, homosocial, conservative environment. Of course, the police can never say out loud that they don't consi-

der buying sex to be a crime – but in various ways they do protect men who buy sex. I think this is a question of identification with those men.

A few days after my meeting with Sven-Axel Månsson I heard him again, this time on the radio. He commented on a suspected case of procuring through ads in pornographic magazines, which a journalist had revealed but which the police had neither discovered nor investigated. As a reaction to this, the police in Stockholm soon afterwards announced that a group of 15 police officers would be assigned to work full time on the hidden sex trade.

Legalisation strengthens stigmatisation

Internationally, the new law has caused both scepticism and curiosity. The lobby for legalising prostitution is influential within the EU. The Netherlands and Germany equate prostitution with other enterprises. An absurd consequence of this can, for example, be that unemployed people maybe directed to this "profession", in the same way they are to other jobs.

– One of the arguments for the legalisation of prostitution is that a social recognition would free women in prostitution of the stigma and shame attached to what they do. Those who use this argument do not consider the evidence of what it means to continually be used for somebody else's lust, to be continually invaded and regarded as a dehumanised sex. And stigmatisation is not the only problem associated with prostitution, says Månsson. He is convinced that legalisation strengthens stigmatisation of the women involved in prostitution.

– The female body and sexuality would have to be exploited even more in a legalised market: competition would be as intense as it is in any other legitimate commercial market, where to be successful means screaming the loudest, offering the most dangerous, the most original products. The whore/Madonna concept, which is to say the view of female sexuality as bad and good, would be strengthened. The stigma of a whore

would be made into a legalised commercial tool.

Why do men buy sex?

Women in the sex market are profiled in a stereotypical way, often with racist overtones, "wild, untamed" African women are an example of animalisation, whilst representations of "humble" Asian women are designed to stimulate the fantasies of the customers. Men, on the other hand, appear as more anonymous. Sven-Axel Månsson has interviewed many men and identified some of their reasons for buying sex, placing them into categories as follows:

- Men who live in a relationship and seek something different.

– These men feel that the relationship does not function and that their sex life is dissatisfying. Buying sex gives a moment of undemanding diversion. This group also includes men with sexual wishes and fantasies that they cannot, or dare not, express to their partner. Fantasies of the "whore" seem as important as the actual encounter with a prostitute. The whore is always available for male satisfaction. She is both attractive and repulsive, which arouses excitement and curiosity in these men.

- Men who experience problems in their contact with women – they "cannot get women in any other way".

– The basic reason for failure in relationships for these men may be shyness, fear, old age, physical or mental dysfunction. They talk, above all, about longing for a woman, not specifically a prostitute. The prostitute becomes a comfort and the purchase of sex is more an expression of loneliness and contact problems than of lust. Behind all this might also lie a wish for control of and revenge on women in general. In all, this is an expression of powerlessness and fear, and probably confusion, rather than desire and lust.

– These men may think that modern women have unrealistically high expectations of the pace and extent of change in their attitudes, as they hold

on to certain historically male ideals.

- Men who abuse sex, for whom feelings and certain behaviours are channelled through sexuality.

Other categories have been formulated by, for example, the Norwegian sociologists Prieur and Taksdal:

- "Losers" – traditional men who are frustrated with the fact that the conventional relations between men and women are changing and seek the well-known model of dominance and subordination.

- "Fiddlers" – usually younger men who are not capable of maintaining real relationships and who regard sex as any other form of consumption, a kind of McSex without context. Their view of sexuality is defined by pornography and violence.

"The boundary between the supply of sexual services and household services is very vague within international trafficking in women."

Sex on the Internet – why and how?

– For the latter group the Internet means that sex is more easily available than before," says Sven-Axel Månsson. – Nowadays there is no need to go out into the streets. One can sit at home or in the office and buy sex or consume pornography.

According to a survey of one month in 2001, every fifth Swedish man under the age of 35 visited a website directly related to sex. Sven-Axel Månsson, together with a research team at the Department of Social Work in Gothenburg, has this year started a project looking at sex on the Internet – exploring why and how it happens. The group co-operates with two American researchers and the study will be comparable to a corresponding American

one, which has already been completed.

The relation between supply and demand will also be explored.

– It is not a simple fact that demand is the driving force, Månsson says. – The exploitation of poor women leads to a large supply and competition. This, in its turn, increases the risk of exposure and as a consequence, more "extreme" services are offered, among other places, on the Internet.

– It is the market that is the driving force. Demand is defined by the services produced, not vice versa, which contradicts certain popular traditional market theories.

He sees the Internet as a good example of how the logistics of the sex industry have changed during the latter half of the 20th century.

– The breeding ground for the sex trade lies in poverty and the suppression of women. Package tours, and later business travel, has led to sex tourism. For many women in poor countries this was the first step on their way to brothels and sex trade in Europe, the USA and other countries. The boundary between the supply of sexual services and household services is very vague within international trafficking in women.

Together with researchers from India, Thailand and Italy, Sven-Axel Månsson is involved in an additional research project focused on trafficking in women.

– The other week I watched a programme on television, which investigated the au pair system. To work as an au pair is supposed to involve exchange and language learning. The programme showed that the majority of au pairs in Sweden come from poor Eastern European countries and work for rich families in the posher areas of large cities. They are commonly sexually harassed and forced to provide sexual services. This is a totally unregulated market – and Sweden is part of it, even if we would rather ignore this fact.

And what about the STRIPTEASE signs by the traffic lights? I tore them down on my way home.

MARIA JACOBSON
freelance journalist, Sweden

How women in prostitution see themselves and explain their motivations

By NATALIA KHODYREVA

Photo: Ketil Born/Samfoto



Massive-scale dismissals of women from large businesses, unemployment, gender discrimination when recruiting employees to highly paid jobs, as well as the commercialisation of education and health care have resulted in a feminisation of poverty during the recent period of economic transformation in Russia. Ousting women from the well-paid labour market has been supported by an ideology which holds that it is the "natural" fate of women to stay at home and care for the family. This renaissance of patriarchy in Russia has, naturally, affected the specificity of interpersonal relations there. In the first instance, this has resulted in a rise in the number of women specialising in the provision of sexual services to men.

According to different expert opinions, there are between 20 000 and 130 000 prostitutes working in Moscow alone. At the same time it is estimated that Russian and foreign men in Russia buy sexual services for more than 700 billions dollars per year (Khodorych & Golikova, 2001). It is alarming that prostitution in Russia has a tendency to be: (1) the alternative occupation for women from the low-paid sector – such as medical nurses, teachers, sales clerks, librarians;



(2) (for students) the way to pay both for one's education and recreation; and (3) the main source of income for needy mothers and their children, drug-addicts and single women. One may conclude that young women have by now lost access to the culture of self-preservation and the values of recognising that health is a priority that were widely available to them before the period of economic transition in Russia (Shilova, 2000).

The purpose of our research was to explore the phenomenon of prostitution in present-day Russia and to highlight it on a broader scale as a problem which concerns gender relations generally.

Another aim of the project was to examine in more detail the emotional background to prostitution and to address the reality of the epistemological phenomena – so called 'free choice' and 'work' – which are used to rationalise the decision to take up prostitution (Davidson, 1998; Jeffreys, 1997).

Research methods

In our research we used both quantitative and qualitative methods. We used questionnaires with both closed and open questions to a large group of women from various social groups (not primarily identified with prostitution); and non-directive in-depth interviews with eight women involved in prostitution.

The questionnaires were distributed to 1,200 young women (13-30 years of age) which represent a quantitative representative sample from this age group of women living in St Petersburg. They came from a range of social groups, including students, pupils, clients of women's hospitals and STD clinics, women working in bars and as strippers, unemployed women, heterosexuals and lesbians etc.

The eight women interviewed were of different ages (from 21 to 40 years old), had various levels both of education (secondary and higher) and material status (low and middle class). We would like to note that we chose a group of women who predominantly work without pimps and are not dependent on drugs. Some of these women had their first experience in prostitution through the agency of various pimps (some of them were their lovers) and later worked independently. At the time of interviewing, most of them worked independently. One of our interviewers was a former prostitute who now works as a psychologist. Thus, the personal experience of the researcher was included in the process of interviewing.

We tried to avoid the term "prostitute" as this notion does not characterise our research participants ade-

quately. Rather, the roles of mother, student, unemployed, wife, daughter, grand-daughter, friend, etc. are more pertinent to their lives. While performing their main roles, they sometimes, often, or from time to time, "make money" by prostitution. For that reason we introduced a new concept – "a woman involved in, or earning by prostitution" (WIP). By means of this new concept we would like to emphasise that prostitutes are not just an isolated, impersonal group of women. We would also like to underline that there is no borderline distinguishing the prostitute from the so-called respectable woman.

Opinions about prostitution

Parts of the questionnaire contained questions about the frequency, quality and development of sexual relations with unloved partners. The experience of girls and young women answering the questionnaire demonstrates that one in five has already had experience of emotionally non-reciprocal relations with undesired partners, with the respective figure of 5 per cent during the past year (0,5 per cent of respondents refused to answer this question).

The women tried to explain the reasons for their forced, alienated or unilateral sexual relations with an unattractive partner. The women have built a rating of material and other values which, in their opinion, "justify" their entering into sexual relations with an unloved partner (in past or in future). The motives include: 1) escape from the threat of violence directed at herself or her family members; 2) some noble intentions, such as earning money to pay for the medical treatment of family members; 3) consideration for fundamental material values – their own private accommodation, stable earnings, well-paid job, lots of money to spend; 4) then "the child" is mentioned, followed by 5) "the desire to take revenge on some other man". The sixth motive mentioned is that of moving abroad for permanent residence or entertainment

trips abroad. All this is an indirect indication of the fact that the stated needs are not otherwise accessible to women and that they wish to obtain all this by way of entering into relationships with men they do not love.

Only a small group of women (below 0,25 per cent) noted that they would enter into such contact purely for getting their own sexual satisfaction.

We also asked an open question on the definition of prostitution, which yielded a variety of answers. Over a third of the respondents (35 per cent) regard prostitution as a form of commodity-money relation, where the woman's body and her sexual services are offered in exchange for money, other material goods or services. The second most common definition was of prostitution as a phenomenon proceeding from poverty, dependence and other social and economic conditions unfavourable for women (10 per cent). Next in priority is the definition of prostitution as a job and profession (7,5 per cent). Next, sharing the fourth and the fifth positions, are definitions including moral judgement of this phenomenon (negative mostly) and psychological reasons and motives inducing women to take up prostitution (7 per cent). Sexual relations with a person for whom the woman has no affection, but has entered into for the sake of consumer benefit, are regarded as prostitution by every third woman who participated in the study.

There is a certain correlation between the level of income and the individual's assessment of prostitution. The smaller the income, the more often prostitution is regarded as a profession within commodity-money relations. The older the respondents, the more they subscribe to "liberal" views of prostitution. The acceptance of prostitution as a trade or job is related to a past experience of sexual relations for money.

In the in-depth interviews with the eight women involved in prostitution

we tried to focus on the decision-making process leading to the person's "choice" to engage in prostitution. All of these interviewees also filled in the questionnaire asking for their opinions about prostitution.

The following issues were detailed in their responses: violence from partners and clients, initial experience of the work, sexual relations, gender attitudes, attitude to prostitution, risks, feelings, coping strategies, etc. (Khodyreva, 2001).

1. Reasons for choosing prostitution and the initial circumstances leading to this choice

All the interviews show that the reasons of taking up prostitution are not only related to poverty, but also to the lack of opportunity for combining maternity with work, or studies with work, as well as the fact that it is often impossible to earn enough money to support a satisfactory standard of living if a woman takes up a normal profession and obtains a good education. In general, it is so easy to become a prostitute: everything around invites you to take it up. There are plenty of consistently ready and willing clients - those just driving around in their cars; those specifically watching for you; drivers engaged in carrier's trade and long-distance drivers. All the newspapers are full of ads looking for girls: "Girls wanted, good prices offered!!!", etc.

The process of involvement in prostitution also takes place through the numerous agencies of the pimping institution - relatives, friends, acquaintances, casual acquaintances.

"My first young man (now I recognize that he was a pimp) forced me to sleep with him when I did not want to and then gave me money for it".

There is an impression that knowledge of the different aspects of prostitution - regarding places, terms, relations with the police and criminal gangs - is

extremely accessible, publicly open and widely disseminated amongst the population.

2. Multiple violence from partners, clients and other men

Most of our interviewees suffered repeated physical and sexual violence from their husbands and their clients.

"If you want to talk about violence - it has always existed."

Also, the multiple risks include, in the first place, the ignorance of men, their lack of responsibility for the health of their partners, direct physical and sexual violence and violation of client's agreement on payment for the services.

3. Sex with the clients

We did not find that the WIPs' work provides much pleasure for themselves. The very process of their work aroused disgust in the women, if they still had any feelings left. These women prefer to avoid the subject in question and to evade any description in proper language of what is denoted by the term "prostitution" and what specific functional and emotional experience lies behind it. The WIPs are, in fact, devoid of real sexual pleasure in their lives.

*"Sex was never a joy for me."
"Prostitutes don't get pleasure from it".
"It seems to me, this is virtually impossible".*

4. Attitudes to prostitution

One participant in the study suggested her own way of solving the problem of prostitution in Russia. She wishes to see much fewer women engaged in prostitution in our country:

"Women must have better salaries; their problems should be taken care of; they should never be denied employment, even when they have children. Very often I was neglected because I had small children. This society should treat women who are mothers better".

5. The feelings

At the initial stage of entering non-professional prostitution women still make efforts to have some feelings, but very soon they develop protective strategies and become similar to experienced prostitutes working for hard currency.

*"All the feelings died away, atrophied."
"There is no room for sincere feelings in the world of prostitution if you wish to earn well."*

The anonymous participants of our study and the anonymous co-author of this article had made efforts to withdraw from prostitution. Some of them succeeded in this attempt, others did not. The perception of and reflection on this experience was a very important factor for an enhanced understanding of their real situation during the period of transformation, and this is a first step towards further social action.

Strengthening patriarchal gender relations

This study indicates that many women enter into sexual relations with men they do not love. One in every five women reported having such experience in her life. 46 per cent of these cases are related to initial violence from the men. On the other hand, about 20 per cent of the young women reported the experience of entering into sexual relations with unloved partners for some material and non-material benefits. About a third of the young women shared the point of view that trading of the female body for the provision of sexual services may be interpreted within the framework of the present market relations. It is not clear, however, if they regard their own body as a commodity for that purpose. Only one in ten women can see any relation between prostitution and women's situation in society. About 8 per cent defined prostitution as work and a profession. Most of these women have experience of having sexual relations for some benefit. One can make different assumptions regarding this: either they

had adopted sexist views with respect to women, or they had adopted protective mechanisms in order to rationalise away the experience of the social disapproval of prostitution. One may suppose that, as a consequence of experiencing the growth of prostitution at the personal level, the activity will be treated more and more as a normal profession: properly valued within the professional sphere. However, in this situation the fact that many women experience an impossible choice in respect of paid employment is being ignored.

The criterion of free choice supposes that there are opportunities to earn the same amount of money for the same period of time on the same terms. In order to have a real equity between prostitution and ordinary professions, one has to have a broad range of adequate alternatives. None of our women in prostitution (WIPs) mentioned any possibility of choice between prostitution and standard jobs. They had either been rejected when trying to get employment, or they had failed to combine studies and work. The salaries offered them had been insufficient to meet even a subsistence standard of living. They evidenced the actual absence of any state or public infrastructure that could provide any alternatives to prostitution for girls and young women. Though we cannot talk about any direct physical pressure forcing a woman to take up prostitution, one may conclude that in a situation where the opportunity for a more or less equivalent choice is missing, a woman can feel that she has to get involved in it.

Research shows that the social profile of women in prostitution has expanded tremendously - from a young uneducated mother to a student at a prestigious university, and including women over 40 with higher education who nevertheless have found themselves without jobs.

Most of our respondents (excluding 0,25 per cent) did not mention any actual involvement or pleasure from sex/sexual services with unloved persons

or clients. Moreover, they described negative or suppressed feelings. The model of patriarchal sexuality is traditionally characterised by the suppression of feelings, emotions and a resultant alienation. One may say that a discourse of liberalism and pseudo-freedom in Russia seems to have changed nothing in respect of traditional masculine sexuality.

Thus the very phenomenon of prostitution as a mechanism supporting patriarchy and traditional gender relations has expanded and strengthened its position in Russian society. No emancipation or liberation has taken place in this sphere. The predominant position of patriarchal sexuality, the promotion of it on the market, the forming of enormous groups of male consumers enjoying this system of entertainment is possible only because of a certain policy towards the Russian and NIS women. The destruction of the socially oriented (welfare) state in Russia and the social polarisation of gender promote the feminisation of poverty. This policy has resulted in women being entrapped by the system of prostitution, both locally and transnationally.

NATALIA KHODYREVA is researcher at the St. Petersburg State University, Russia. She also works for the INGI Crisis Centre for Women in St. Petersburg.

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Victims of trafficking - A journey into the world

Photo: Anders Lien



By **TAMARA FREEZE**

The magic and excitement of New Year's Day was strongly felt in Moscow. Sparkling snowflakes slowly fell on shopping displays, women's furs, and pigeons' feathers. New Year's Day has always been an optimistic holiday in Russia; it's the only day in the year when Russians immerse themselves in the hustle and bustle of festivities and in the euphoria of shopping, cooking, and playing family games. After three years of living in Los Angeles, I was enchan-

ted by the joyous rapture of the Russian New Year. But under it all, lurked a subtle scourge upon my homeland.

I was not there to enjoy the holiday. I had volunteered at the Center for Abused Women (CAW) to help victims of a new, fast-growing multi-billion-dollar business: human trafficking. After arriving in Moscow from Los Angeles, I was assigned to the Urals Region (city of Chelyabinsk) to provide psychological and legal assistance to two victims of trafficking in Denmark: Katya and Zhenya. Like thousands of women in

Eastern Europe, Katya and Zhenya were tricked by a vague local advertisement into taking "jobs abroad," only to find themselves sexually abused and forced into prostitution at an adult bar near Copenhagen. Katya, 18, and Zhenya, 22, who had endured brutal violence from pimps and "clients," appeared to have a long list of STDs - sexually transmitted diseases. To make matters worse, both had a criminal record for allegedly violating their visa status and using fraudulent documents in Denmark. When their brothel was rai-

of Katya and Zhenya



ded by local police, the victims were deported, but no criminal charges were filed against their abusers. Ignorant ostracism and indifference awaited Katya and Zhenya in their native land.

So they sat in front of me, quiet and apathetic, hardly interested in me and whatever I was about to do. It is a bitter irony, I thought. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, we had sought a better life abroad, but had found divergent fortunes. Even though my "patients" appeared from the start to have no interest in filing criminal

charges against the organized group that put them in the brothel, I had a feeling something constructive could be done.

No support from the men in uniform

My journey started one snowy morning with a trip to the local police station (the GUV). The Center for Abused Women notified me that a few complaints had been filed at that station, accusing several work-abroad businesses of using fraudulent travel documentation. In addition, a number of women

who responded to the "agency" that recruited women for jobs in foreign countries were missing. My trip turned out to be quite an experience: police officers categorically refused to cooperate by providing copies of the necessary documents. They cited the reason that many of the documents were "probably already missing by now." As I exited the building, the guard at the door dropped a sympathetic hint that the enforcement officers were poorly paid and that access to the documents could be arranged if "certain conditions" were met. The

reign of bribery and corruption at the very doors of the Chelyabinsk GUVd was disappointing, as I realized that Katya and Zhenya had no support from the men in uniform.

Breaking through the bureaucratic walls

Just as my efforts began to take an asymptotic spiral, the case was finally filed in a regional court on behalf of Katya and Zhenya. The news was thrilling. It took me several weeks to break through the bureaucratic walls of various law-enforcement agencies and finally find a civil rights lawyer to file criminal charges against the Ariadna recruitment agency. The documents from the GUVd were obtained after someone telephoned a few officials. The most daunting task that lay ahead of me (a task which placed my encounter with corruption and bureaucracy into a rather manageable perspective) was that I had to explain to the victims the far-reaching consequences of the case and convince them to testify against their traffickers. The prospect of testifying was particularly grim, since there were very few instances of victims doing so in trafficking cases, due to the threat of violence. Testifying would mean going to war with Russian organized crime. CAW coworkers assured me that this mission was one that no sane woman would accept and no lawyer would support.

Nonetheless, the lawyer who ultimately agreed to take the case seemed to have little trouble with it, but Katya and Zhenya rejected outright the proposal that they testify in court. They looked at me as if I were advising them to commit suicide. They seemed awestruck by my belief that justice could be served, but they themselves were deeply disillusioned and enraged by the law-enforcement practices that had backfired on

them so routinely and painfully. I did expect an adamant "No," but was determined to turn that "No" into at least a "Maybe."

The case still pending..

In my final weeks as a CAW volunteer, I did convince Katya to testify in court when her case was called. Unfortunately, at the same time, Zhenya disappeared, and even though I filed a missing person report with the police, few, if any, efforts were made to find her. It is not clear whether she was re-trafficked or whether, as I sincerely hope, she just decided to leave Chelyabinsk to seek a normal life somewhere else, of her own freewill. Even though the criminal charges were filed against Ariadna, the case is still pending. Katya's lawyer, Vasily Kravtsov, advised her to proceed slowly with the case, since the government had declared an amnesty for many criminals. It appeared that a few convicted traffickers had been released and had not been persecuted again. Even though Katya's case continues almost a year after the atrocity of her sexual slavery was committed, I am hopeful that one day her perpetrators will be tried and convicted.

Human rights beyond the Siberian terrain

As I left the snowstorm in Chelyabinsk and returned to Los Angeles, to my home, I could not help but think about Katya. There was a pessimistic feeling in Russia that international human-rights law was something elusive and intangible, beyond the Siberian terrain. Human rights is a fairly new concept to insular Russian communities. Chelyabinsk is located fairly far from Moscow and it seems to me that no aspect of international law (except commerce) had touched the Ural society. I left Chelyabinsk with grief and hope—grief,

because I realized that the notion of international human rights was still an elusive subject in the region, and hope, because it was no longer intangible to me, as I had tasted a small bite of success by helping Katya in my attempt to promote enforcement of laws against the horrid practice of human trafficking.

I realized that the victims of trafficking needed broader legal and political assistance from governmental and international agencies than was currently provided. I approached the problem of human trafficking with the aspiration to understand the cultural conventions and psychological polarization of Russian society, which has changed so rapidly in the last 10 years. The magnitude and importance of the trafficking problem is still comparatively underestimated in the Urals region, and there is no clear guidance for legal professionals on prosecution of the latter practice. One of the trafficking firms in the Perm Region was convicted for "tax evasion," but nothing else.

TAMARA SERGEYEVNA FREEZE from Russia is President of "Women's Triangle" (anti-trafficking organization) and a researcher. Her current research: "European Human rights law dynamics: trafficking in women."

RACISM

in the sex trade in Finland

by LAURA KEELER and
MARJUT JYRKINEN

Men in Finland, like those in other western countries, can consume "exotic" sensual encounters both at home and abroad. While Finland has a very small immigrant population and tight immigration procedures, it is known that women are trafficked to Finland, mainly from Russian and the Baltic countries, for prostitution and other forms of sex trade.

So-called "Thai massage parlors" are also sometimes sites of prostitution. Finnish men travel to well-known sex tourism destinations abroad, both in Finland's bordering areas and in Southeast Asia (Lammi-Taskula, 1999).

While there is a large body of literature on racism and a growing literature on the sex trade, little of the existing work pertains to Finland or expressly addresses the role racism plays in the sex trade. In contrast, other forms of oppression in the sex trade, such as sexism and classism, are frequent topics of

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Photo: Helge Hansen/Scenpix

analysis. There are likely multiple reasons why racism receives less attention in this context, one of which may be that it is difficult to tease out the role it plays in concert with other types of discrimination and exploitation.

The purpose of this exploratory article was to take an initial look at racism in the sex trade in Finland. First we briefly look at theories on the role of racism in pornography and in sex tourism in the Caribbean as informative examples. Then we report on our search in Finnish printed media for examples of how women of different nationalities or ethnic groups who are prostituted are presented to potential clients in Finland, and how women in other countries are presented to potential Finnish sex tourists.

Lessons from pornography

Feminist analysis and other research on racism in pornography can provide insight into the role of racism in the sex trade by uncovering racialized sexual stereotypes and discerning the damage

wrought by racial ideologies. Pornography sexually stereotypes black women as synonymous with carnality, uncontrolled lust and desire, and animality, and consistently shows black men as aggressive "super-sexualized" studs with unnaturally large penises (Dworkin, 1979; Forna, 1992; Dines, 1998; Cowen & Campbell, 1994; Mayall & Russell, 1993; Nelson, 1993). The theme that people of color are more animal than human is pervasive. While much of the literature focuses on racialized sexual stereotypes of blacks, Dworkin (1979) has discussed pornography's portrayal of Mexican women and men ("hot blooded señoritas", and forceful men who possess an insensitive brute sexuality, pp. 155-156). Mayall and Russell comment on the portrayal of Asian women as "sweet young lotus blossoms or objects of bondage" (p. 277).

Dworkin maintains that every despised racial group has been labeled as having an animal or bestial sexuality – this is the core paradigm of racist sexual

ideology. While all women are assumed to share the sexual nature of an unsatisfiable submissive whose sexuality is fulfilled through violent and painful degradation, women of color have further sexual attributes imposed as a consequence of their color. The specific effect of racism in pornography in the U.S. is that the woman of color's skin becomes her main sexual part. In other words, black skin is perceived as a sex organ and a sexual nature. Forna's position is that pornography draws on and recreates derogatory racist sexualized stereotypes of black people, driving them into consumers' subconscious. Part of the apparatus of oppression, "Racism like sexism is sexualized in pornography: the inequality is sexualized" (1992, p. 106, italics added).

Mayall and Russell (1993) noted that skin color is very salient in the materials displayed in pornography stores, and that pornography titles will usually indicate when people of color are involved. They interpret this as meaning that skin color is very salient to

pornography consumers. People of color are a "specialty item" in pornography, much like rape, sadomasochism, and bestiality.

Racism in sex tourism in the Caribbean

Two works in which racism is discussed in some length as an aspect of the sex trade are those by Julia O'Connell Davidson (1996; see also O'Connell Davidson, 2001) and by Beverly Mullings (2000). O'Connell Davidson concluded from her research on sex tourists in Cuba that demands for sexual access to local people are "generated and shaped by particular 'racialised' ideologies". Sex tourism is often a means to satisfy very particular sexual preferences, racialized sexual fantasies being among these. Consistent with this, Mullings (2000) found that sex markets in the Caribbean are segmented according to the racialized sexual fantasy being met.

Racial ideologies also allow the client to imagine women in prostitution as "Other" and place them outside the conventions that protect "good", or "their own", women. For male sex tourists in the Caribbean, local women embody the natural, mysterious island available for exploration and conquest (O'Connell Davidson & Sanchez Taylor, 1998, cited in Mullings, 2000). They often imagine white western women as controlling, cold, and resistant to traditional patriarchal domestic gender roles, compared to warm, Caribbean women who are eager to please and uncontaminated by the ideal of gender equality.

O'Connell Davidson reports that white sex tourists can be put at ease by a native form of racism that corresponds to western varieties, and by local racist stereotypes (such as the "hypersexuality" attributed to blacks), often also endorsed by Cubans of color. Existing racism in Cuba ensures both that more women of color than white women are involved in prostitution and that the sex tourist can enjoy access to "racialized Others" without the disapproval of a racist society and without having to seriously question his own racism.

Racism in the sex trade ads in Finland

Mari-Elina Laukkanen has researched ads in the Finnish daily press as a forum for the sex trade (2000). In her sample of ads for prostitution, escort services, sex shops and bars, pornographic publications, and telephone sex lines she found references to the ethnic background of the women involved, especially for women from Russia, the Baltic region, or Far East Asia. Traditional first names, as in "Tatjana" and "Nadja from St. Petersburg", were used as nationality indicators, more so for Russian/Baltic women than for others, perhaps encouraging an image of all Russian/Baltic women as being involved in prostitution. On the other hand, "Finnishness" was a marketing point, too (Laukkanen, 2000, p.110-111).

Presentation of women in prostitution in a Finnish newspaper

We examined the prostitution ads in two one-week samples of the largest national newspaper, Helsingin Sanomat, one from May 2001 and one from January 2002, for references to the seller's nationality or race. We included only ads that clearly specified this characteristic.

The 2001 sample included a total of 754 prostitution ads, or approximately 100 prostitution ads per day. There were 132 ads that indicated nationality

(17% of all the ads in the sample). The majority of these referred to Thais, followed by references to people of Finnish background. There were 11 references to other nationalities.

In the 2002 sample, Helsingin Sanomat published 723 prostitution ads. Of these, 90 referred to the person's nationality or race (13% of the sample). As with the first sample, the majority referred to Thais, followed by references to Finns or to the "domestic" or "native" (kotimainen) status of the person. There were 13 references to people of other nationalities. Most of the ads used descriptors such as "beautiful", "hot", "sexy", or hair color, but there were a few ads where specifically Thai women were referred to as "exotic". The few ads for (male) "masseurs" often indicated the person's nationality.

Presentation of women abroad for sex tourists

Next, we randomly selected four Finnish sex magazines (out of 12 on the shelf) that were for sale at a nearby "R-kioski" (a national chain of convenience stores). The first magazine had an article on sex tours to Riga, Latvia. It contained many practical tips for the sex tourist on, for example, prices, hotels, and places to find (cheap) drug-addicted prostitute women. Baltic women's insatiability was described as being "in a class all its own", and Latvian women were said to be "generous in the East" ▶

Table 1a. Sample 2001 (n=754)

	n	% of sample	% of race adds
Thai	86	11	65
Finnish	35	5	27
Other	11	1	8
Total	132	17	100

Table 1b. Sample 2002 (n=723)

	n	% of sample	% of race adds
Thai	50	7	56
Finnish	27	4	30
Other	13	2	14
Total	90	13	100

European custom and not too stingy with the 'goods'" (Jallu 2/2002 pp. 12-19).

The second magazine contained an article on sex tourism in the Grand Canaries. This article provided detailed information on the kind of women available and advertised the "international nature" of the women in prostitution, meaning their countries of origin, which included Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil (Napakymppi 1/2001, pp. 29-34). The third magazine's travel tip was for a cruise called "Tit and Pussy" that originated from Bristol, U.K. (Kalu 1/2002, pp. 70-71). There were no details provided about the women involved beyond photos in which all the featured women were white.

The fourth magazine's article presented Borneo as a sex paradise. The writer gave details about, for instance, having unprotected sex with a local prostitute woman (Kalle 2/2002, pp. 18-29). This article was a full 11-page spread with numerous pictures of nude women with Asian features, whom the writers referred to as "pearls of the Far East". The women were described as asking the writers for sex and to provide the writer's with sex, becoming "really hot and unrestrained".

Visible prejudice in Finnish sex ads

The prostitution ads in the Helsingin Sanomat indicate that the race and/or nationality of the women in prostitution is an issue of salience for clients. Foreigners account for only 2% of the population in Finland, while 11% of the prostitution ads referred to (non-Finnish, non-white) nationality or race. References to Thai persons were particularly numerous, while Thais account for only 1% of foreign national residents.

Furthermore, it is clear that for some sex clients it is important to have a "domestic prostitute". This is also intimated by what is not said in the ads: we found no ads promoting Russian or Estonian women in prostitution, even though trafficking in women from those areas is a recognized problem in Finland, and Russians and Estonians account for 34% of Finland's foreign national residents. The emphasis on Finnishness and the invisibility of Russian/Baltic origin may indicate a more recent prejudice against Russians, or a presumption that most prostitution in Finland originates from Russia or the Baltic states, so that any exception is worth indicating for marketing purposes. It is also possible that Finnish men have become leery of buying women who might be working for Russian crime syndicates.

Further, there have been some public health campaigns and media publicity regarding the health risks in buying sex in Finland's neighboring regions. We suspect there may be a general conception among Finnish buyers of sex that women from these areas are "unclean". The contrast of the salience of the "Finnishness"/domestic characteristic in our sample brings up the question of racism in the context of nationalism. The "home-grown product" is often understood to be better quality compared to that imported from abroad – even for "products" like women in prostitution.

As a few of the ads in the newspaper indicate, it is likely that Thai women are seen as "exotic" and therefore desirable. Such representation of Asian women was strongly present in the sex magazine travel article on Borneo. The travel articles in general portrayed foreign women as accommodating, insatiable, and a

good bargain for anyone buying sex.

There is a clear need for more investigation into the presentation of women's nationality and ethnicity to Finnish clients of the sex trade. A next step is to look for promotional materials, printed, virtual, or other, created by the procurers and providers of sex, and to apply feminist analysis to the racialized sexual stereotypes that are reflected and created through them.

LAURA KEELER (M.A.) is the consulting editor at the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES) in Helsinki, Finland.

MARJUT JYRKINEN (M.Pol.Sci.) is a consulting expert for the Programme for the Prevention of Prostitution and Violence Against Women at STAKES and a researcher at the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration, Helsinki, Finland.

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A vicious circle of abuse of **MINORS** in the sex trade

By REET NURMI

In Finland the public discussion on prostitution has led to the outlawing of sexual abuse of minors in prostitution and it is an offence for a citizen to buy sex from a minor (under 18 years of age), whether in Finland or abroad. This has led to the widespread myth that child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking in children is not taking place in this country. However, it is naive to close our eyes and believe that phenomena such as sexual violence against children for purposes of prostitution do not exist in our welfare societies. The study referred to in this article suggests that the extent of sexual violence against minors in the sex trade is not adequately known or recognised as an issue within social policy in Finland.

This article is based on a report drawn from 28 interviews done with representatives of Finnish organisations, agencies and outreach projects, all of whom come into contact with children who have experienced sexual abuse as part of child prostitution (Nurmi 2001). They were asked to present their observations on the sexual abuse of minors (under 18 years of age) for the purposes of prostitution, and for their opinions on whether youngsters get appropriate help and support from the authorities, NGOs and other adults. The aim of the study was to discuss the ways in which the respondents understand and deal with the child prostitution issue. Interviews with survivors of prostitution are also included in this study.

A taboo subject

The sexual abuse of minors (girls) poses a serious challenge to the professionals who are forced daily to address the life situations of young people. Investigating sexual abuse and intervening in it are ordeals for both. The more alien the form of sexual abuse is to the staff, the more strongly they will react. A defence mechanism is triggered. One interviewee helped me to understand this: "... if we admit the existence of child sexual abuse we can draw a straight line to the occurrence of child prostitution. I think that in a civilised state like this, where life is a bed of roses, if I suggest that we have child prostitution people would see it as something personal to me. ...Somehow it seems so odd that we could have child prostitution..."

Sexual violence is seldom discussed at the first meeting when representatives of caring professions meet new clients. It may also be difficult for staff to ask personal questions. As some of them put it: "... it's really difficult asking questions. It's somehow such a taboo subject. Perhaps if something can be seen, then you can ask. If you have no suspicions it seems terribly offensive and intrusive."

The main themes that emerged in the interviews with the professionals were the commercialisation of sexuality and the sex-driven nature of violence against young people. The commercialisation of sexuality was above all seen in situations involving the use of drugs and alcohol and



in the social interactions among those living in a marginal environment. This condition frequently creates situations in which young girls are compelled to take sexual risks, and risk-taking is ultimately understandable only in the context of social interactions in which trust and distrust are often in conflict. Children are unable to evaluate the risks involved in certain social situations.

The dominant culture

Many of the factors that place young people at risk and limit their life choices are of a social nature. We cannot separate child prostitution from other forms of prostitution, which makes this a complicated issue. Prostitution is a violent act against girls and women. It is linked to the prevailing culture and to attitudes in our society. The existence of the sex industry has an impact on the sex culture of young people, too. The sexual abuse of (women and) girls for the purposes of prostitution is underpinned by a whole array of complex factors associated with the dominant culture. According to my research, young girls often earn money to buy drugs by selling sex, which frequently amounts to the sexual abuse of girls for the purposes of prostitution.

It is not always easy to draw a line between commercial and non-commercial exploitation. Children are not necessarily aware of or able to understand what is going on, even in the case of sexual abuse for the purposes of prostitution. When they are offered, say, drugs in return for

sex, the transaction is a commercial one but the children's remuneration is non-commercial; the situation is nonetheless one of exploitation.

In the worst cases, children are recruited into institutionalised sex industries (prostitution, printed or electronic pornography/ or naked pictorial matter, trafficking in children and sex tourism), where they are subjected to gross abuse. Violence against children is hidden criminality. It can be seen as an element of violence against women and the violence linked to power structures, and easily takes forms that are not legally defined as crimes. Values and attitudes originating in the sex industry are very likely to have an impact on social intercourse between young people. One of the respondents asserted that: "... prostitution generates prostitution. If a person has the potential, they'll get the idea from anywhere. ...We don't talk clearly enough about the harms or dangers of prostitution. The sex business is harrowing; it makes no difference at what age the involvement starts."

On the basis of my material, I have classified the abuse of minors for the purposes of prostitution as occurring in three contexts: 1) prostitution to finance a drug habit, 2) social intercourse leading to commercial exploitation and 3) abuse leading to prostitution. Broadly speaking I characterise the issue as a vicious circle of sexual abuse. In the words of a respondent:

"... Drugs and prostitution – ...the sexual abuse comes first and then the victim tries to relieve the pain with drugs. They start using drugs because they feel so bad and then they start selling themselves, because that brings in the cash needed to buy the drugs. This is what we see here (...)"

1. Financing substance abuse with prostitution

Criminal offences such as stealing and petty larceny are widely linked to the financing of drugs and narcotics. The staff interviewed said that they see more boys than girls who pay for drugs through this sort of criminal activity. Criminal offences in general are more rare among girls. The interviewees indicated that it is the girls who realise that they can use their bodies to earn a living if that is all that is left. One

respondent explained that: "... if your income depends on selling drugs, wielding a crowbar or selling yourself. Of these three alternatives for getting the drugs, which would a girl choose – not a knife anyhow. In that situation, selling oneself looks like the least damaging strategy. But I don't think the young girls see it like that".

It became clear from many of the interviews that the circle of friends inevitably narrows for young people living marginal lives. The young people had close social contacts mainly or only with other drug users or with their own marginal group. They felt an affinity with these people and thought that offering sex was part of the culture of the girl junkie. The situation is particularly problematic if the young girl has been abused and has no reliable adult to turn to for support and help.

2. From social intercourse to commercial exploitation: Make the girl earn

Usually a man who is older than the girl, and uses drugs, lures a young girl into keeping him company. According to the interviewees, the path of a young girl from companionship to prostitution has at the one end trust and security and at the other end control, abuse and violence. Drugs are an extremely effective means of compromising the child's ability to control in that they take over your whole emotional life. One expert explained: "Youngsters say that it's all part of this culture, even right from the start when they're going out together. The boyfriend gets drugs for his girlfriend. But later when the boy isn't, like, up to getting the drugs anymore he starts hinting to the girl that she could get them from John, but that of course she knows there's no cash. And then John arrives and the girl has sex with him. And what's more then the girl feels that that's it and so they make sure of her fear that if she doesn't ... she'll get beaten up or something."

The relationship between victims and perpetrators is also affected by the social context. The situation is particularly ambivalent when both victims and perpetrators are members of the same social network. The findings of the study suggest that the victims then often remain alone:

either they do not talk about the incident for fear no-one will believe them, or they do talk about it but find that they themselves end up as the object of suspicion. Perpetrators' accounts may be more credible, as the violent side of their personality is not necessarily seen in 'normal' social communication.

3. From abuse to prostitution

"... these women often have abuse behind them, or then they have experience of being forced into sex against their will. ..If someone has experienced sexual violence, the problem will emerge clearly during the detox treatment. ...I've never met a woman who regarded it [prostitution] as her profession. They all hope they'll be able to come off drugs and at the same time finish with prostitution ..." notes one therapist in her interview.

The interviewees whose work daily brings them into contact with sexually abused youngsters were of the clear opinion that abuse was very often a contributory factor to a young girl's entrance into prostitution.

According to the interviewees, children who have lost the confidence of adults close to them are easy to expose to manipulation and enticement. The interviews, however, suggest that the guilty party in recruiting girls for commercial sexual abuse is more likely to be someone close to her, even a 'boyfriend' stamping his authority on the relationship. Another group comprises adult 'ordinary men', who use the services of prostitutes, and get



pleasure out of pornography and striptease. There are two types of victims: those who have been raped, and those who have been carefully groomed by a perpetrator.

The key issues

Often the clients, young girls, do not dare talk about things related to violence, and cases of abuse are not dealt with. Sometimes the matter is concealed until the victim is well into adulthood, so the problem remains hidden. Prevention, protection and investigation are the key elements in the fight against the sexual abuse of minors.

The greatest anxiety experienced by the interviewees was that the caring professions and other organisations involved lack the capacity to deal with the sexual abuse of children in prostitution. The children suffer from a wide range of problems that need to be tackled by professionals from many different fields. For example, substance abuse professionals cannot help children with symptoms if they do not know about the serious crises, such as sexual abuse, in their clients' lives. They need to be sufficiently informed about the children's situations and need for help. Further, treatment is often delayed due to a lack of co-ordination among the units helping children as well as because of long queues for treatment. All the interviewees expressed genuine concern for the children. Generating a discussion about these problems in Finland and bringing them to the public's notice were considered to be very important issues. Although the interviewees thought that the sexual abuse of children for prostitution purposes has not yet reached the level of a serious problem in Finland, they were unanimously of the opinion that "... even one case is one too many".

REET NURMI

Researcher for the Programme Prevention of Prostitution & Violence Against Women, STAKES, Finland

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The Palermo Protocol

By GUNILLA S. EKBERG

In December 2000, the new United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and its two supplementary Protocols were opened for signature by UN member states in Palermo, Italy. Of the 148 states present, 120 signed what is called in UN language, the mother Convention, and over 80 countries signed the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. The Trafficking Protocol recognizes the need for a combined approach that integrates effective prevention of trafficking with the prosecution of traffickers and the protection of human rights and assistance to victims of trafficking.

This Protocol is the first international instrument that mentions the men who create the demand for prostituted women. The most controversial aspect of the Protocol is the definition of trafficking.

This event in Palermo in the end of 2000 concluded a long and difficult series of negotiations, which started in Vienna in January of 1999. The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women took part in these negotiations and was joined by over 140 NGOs including the European Women's Lobby and many other organizations from around the world in the International Human Rights Network.

This NGO coalition worked to ensure that the Convention and its Protocols were consistent with the human rights principles expressed in numerous international agreements and instruments, such as the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Person and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others which states that trafficking and prostitution are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person. It should

also reflect the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which in Article 6 declares that States Parties must take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

The Convention against Transnational Organized Crime sets out the parameters for international judiciary co-operation against transnational organized crime, and creates an international judicial regime under which traffickers can be held accountable for their crimes. To be criminally liable under the Convention the trafficker must belong to an organized criminal group of three or more people, which has been in existence for a period of time, and has acted in concert with the aim to commit serious crimes in order to obtain financial or other material benefit.

The Trafficking Protocol, recognizes the need for a combined approach that integrates effective prevention of trafficking, with the prosecution of traffickers and the protection of human rights and assistance to victims of trafficking.

Article 3 - Definition of Trafficking

The most controversial aspect of the Protocol is the definition of trafficking found in Article 3. During the negotiations, countries such as the Netherlands, Australia, Germany and the United States, joined by Canada and some pro-prostitution NGOs, argued for a definition that would limit protection only to those victims who were trafficked under duress or by force, and who did not consent to be trafficked. They also wanted to omit any mention of trafficking for prostitution or sexual exploitation, and to delete the term "victims" from the text.

If this definition had been accepted, which it was not, the focus would have been on the victim and her state of mind and character, rather than on the actions of the perpetrators. It would also require the victim to prove that she did not consent to be trafficked. This is an almost impossible task for women who are vulnerable and in a situation of extreme dependency and subordination. Instead, the definition takes into consideration the actual reality of women

who are trafficked for prostitution. Trafficking can take place by means of e.g. force, deception and abduction, but traffickers who abuse power or a victim's vulnerability, will also be criminally liable. The definition specifically mentions that the consent of a victim is irrelevant to the prosecution of traffickers. Although today some trafficked women are aware that they may be prostituted in the country of destination, this false "consent" is a reflection of the deeply desperate situation many women live in and should certainly not exempt traffickers from legal responsibility.

The Protocol acknowledges that most trafficking is for the purpose of the exploitation of prostitution and for other forms of sexual exploitation, but also extends protection to people who are trafficked for other reasons, such as for forced labour, slavery and servitude, as well as to children under 18.

The definition, which protects all victims of trafficking, was supported by the majority of countries during the negotiations. Most significantly, many of these countries are the less wealthy, and are often "sending countries" for trafficked women and children.

Article 9 - Prevention of Trafficking in Persons

Article 9 requires states to implement comprehensive measures to prevent trafficking. They must endeavour to organize e.g. mass media campaigns and take social and economic initiatives. When implementing these measures they must, when appropriate, collaborate with NGOs and other organizations that have competence in the area. Countries must also strengthen measures to allevi-

ate the factors that make women and children vulnerable to trafficking, such as poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunity.

This Protocol is the first international instrument that mentions the men who create the demand for prostituted women. All state parties must adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures... to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, that leads to trafficking."

Other Articles

There are also articles in the Protocol that require countries to assist women and children who have been trafficked by providing e.g. counselling and medical and psychological assistance. They must also provide for the physical safety of the victims, and must ensure that they are permitted to stay, temporarily or permanently, in the receiving country, "if appropriate."

Importance of the Protocol


The Convention and the supplementary Protocol on trafficking in persons have to be ratified by 40 countries before they come into force. Countries that have signed and later will ratify the Convention and the Protocol have agreed to implement national legislation that reflects these instruments. However, the Convention and the Protocol set out minimum standards for prevention, prosecution and protection. There is nothing that prevents states from implementing more stringent measures. For example, they could make traffickers who are not connected to organized crime groups criminally

liable, and they could strengthen the protection of the victims of trafficking.

It is very important that NGOs follow this process closely and monitor how the Protocol is interpreted nationally and regionally. Countries where prostitution is legal or regulated have a financial investment in their local prostitution markets. They need a constant flow of new women for prostitution purposes, and are, therefore, interpreting the Protocol with a focus only on forced prostitution.

While it is vital to support the implementation of the Protocol, it is also necessary to ensure that countries do not improperly use the Protocol as an excuse to treat trafficked women as migration criminals, who automatically should be deported. In many countries, including in Canada, immigration laws have been made more restrictive to keep out the flow of legitimate migrants and refugees. When borders are closed, traffickers and organized crime syndicates are the only ones who are able to facilitate migration for women and children. In many cases these traffickers channel women and children into the global trafficking networks that supply local prostitution markets. Instead we should use this Protocol to hold governments responsible for implementing measures to prevent trafficking for prostitution, and make sure that the women and children who are the victims of trafficking are accorded the protection and assistance that is their right.

GUNILLA S. EKBERG is a barrister and solicitor and a member of Coalition Against Trafficking in Women. Currently she is working as project co-ordinator for The Nordic-Baltic campaign against trafficking in women.



We are driving along a snow-covered road in a small village in the northern part of Norway. The houses are placed at a distance from each other, and we expect to see cars parked outside. But there are no signs of either cars or people. It's an ordinary Tuesday in February and most people have probably driven to their work places hours ago. One house, however, has several cars parked outside. Maybe this is one of the houses we have been told about - a kind of lodging for Russian women on short-term stays in Norway? We stop the car, open the front door of the house and find ourselves standing in a small hallway. We know that we are in Sápmi, the part of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia where the Sámi people live. They have a language and a culture of their own, and the Sámi way of making an initial entry into a social group of persons is for the newly arrived to make his or her own introduction. Thus we introduce ourselves by telling the eight men inside that we are researchers studying prostitution and that we are interested in finding out about the men's point of view. Several of the men start making jokes about our project, and we, without even thinking about it, know that if we are able

to make jokes too, we will have made the first step into a world which may be open to us if we are open to it. We sit down. Some of the men put their arms around our shoulders, take our hands, and make comments on how we look. One of the men searches our bag for surveillance equipment, telling us stories of how this has been discovered in the house before. We acquiesce to their behaviour, so after a while the owner of the house makes us tea, and soon we are sitting round his kitchen-table talking about every day life. Where we come from, what kind of weather we will have for the afternoon, the prices of meat in the Finnish border-shops - and then we agree on a trip to do some cheap shopping. When we return we cook dinner and then we have coffee. Suddenly two women and a man enter the house, take their bags into one of the bedrooms and then enter the kitchen, hugging and telling the men how nice it is to see them again. They all speak Russian.

This is how our fieldwork in Finnmark began.

BRITT KRAMVIG and KIRSTEN STIEN

RUSSIAN WOMEN AS THE NEW IMAGE OF AN OLD ENEMY

Open borders – open bodies

By BRITT KRAMVIG and KIRSTEN STIEN

As the northern political border between Norway and Russia was renegotiated and dismantled during the 1990's, other borders of a more symbolic nature were constructed. The stereotype of the Russian woman as associated with prostitution was instituted, giving rise to a need to formulate attitudes that could re-establish and maintain a more satisfactory boundary between the Norwegian nation and the former Eastern superpower. Simultaneously, the stereotype of the bachelor from the border county of Finnmark – with a strong association with buyers of sex – was established as another notion. This facilitated the re-establishment of moral communities and juxtapositions between north and south, between the centre and the periphery in Norway.

Together with researcher Larissa Riabova at the Kola Science Centre in Murmansk, we are carrying out a pilot project, which was initiated by the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. The project explores the consequences of Russian prostitution in Finnmark, the northernmost region of Norway. We are looking at the work being done at the moment and we will point out areas where further research is needed, as well as suggest various actions to be taken. In this article, we will place the current debate on Russian prostitution in a historical framework and discuss the new discourses and counter-discourses which are being established from an urban-rural/centre-margin perspective.

The background to these developments can be found in the political changes that took place in the whole of Eastern Europe in the early 1990's. In various public fora, these changes were described as "the fall of the iron curtain". As the metaphor suggests, there had been in the west a perceived insurmountability and impenetrability of the borders with the countries in the Eastern

block. In Norway, the changes that came with the fall of the "curtain" were perhaps most dramatic for Finnmark, the region that shares a border with both Russia and Finland in the north. During the cold war there had been some bilateral cultural exchange between east and west, but there had been no focus on or experience of the world that existed beyond "the iron curtain". However, after the fall of the communist regime, Finnmark suddenly found itself in a new and extended regional context, with large military bases and nuclear plants and a city the size of Oslo within a few hours drive from the border. Not least, the opening of the border meant that the inhabitants of the region were confronted with massive differences in the standards and ways of living on either side of the border.

From enemies to neighbours

The establishment of new relations between former enemies was part of the institutional and individual challenge that the political changes resulted in. However, there were also expressions of a certain apprehension and fear of the consequences of the opening of the border;

especially concerning social and cultural conditions. The new situation led to an increased flow of people and goods in the region, and this flow of bodies created an opportunity for the exchange of power and sexuality which was also the basis for the establishment of a whole new set of human relationships across the border. The negotiations between the various actors in the development of border exchange was characterised by optimism, but also by a lack of predictability and by fear. Within a context which was characteristically random and uncertain, the focus on Russian prostitution became a way of highlighting and discussing these complex and contradictory circumstances - and further, for maintaining and strengthening the established discourses on north and south (regions of Norway, ed) and between the urban and rural masculinities.

In the beginning of the 1990's, an extensive Russian market trade in glass and porcelain, uniforms and clothes, crafts and embroidery, as well as in legally imported quotas of cigarettes and alcohol started up outside established shopping centres in both smaller and larger communities. Very soon, ►

demands for the curtailment of these activities were made, and the arguments used were connected to the view that it included the unwanted and immoral trading and selling of sex, alcohol and cigarettes. The fact that shopkeepers also regarded this market trade as competing with their own business most certainly contributed to its closure. The official explanation was that the Russians entered the country on a tourist visa and did thus not have the work permit needed for running a sales business. However, seen from a northern regional perspective, these trade relations and the establishment of various forms of contacts were not a new phenomenon.

The Pomor trade

The flow of goods, services and people, which was called the Russian trade (Nielsen, 1992) or the Pomor trade, has a long tradition in the northern regions of Scandinavia and Russia and has probably taken place since the end of the 17th century. The trade grew to such an extent that it developed its own specific language, called "Russian Norwegian", which facilitated the necessary negotiations. The 1917 revolution brought an abrupt end to this trading co-operation. However, because of the proximity of Russia, these contacts never entirely disappeared. Many marriages had taken place across the national borders. We cannot disregard a certain feeling of community based on the experience of similar living and political conditions in this peripheral arctic region. During the Second World War, young men from Finnmark received military training in Russia and fought as northern partisans for the liberation of Norway. During the escalation of the Cold War, these alliances proved to have almost disastrous consequences for the individuals involved, since they were regarded as enemies to the state of Norway.

These circumstances indicate that many of the inhabitants of Finnmark have occupied a different position in relation to their neighbours in the east than has been the case in the rest of Norway. The geographical proximity coupled with the fact that "the Russians"

have not just been an abstract category, but a community of people one has interacted with, make the antagonisms that exist in the region today seem paradoxical. This becomes clear when a difference is established between national Norwegian media perceptions of the situation and those of the various local media (Rossvør, 1998).

Five discourses on Russian prostitution

Dag Stenvoll (2002) has identified five different discourses on Russian prostitution through an analysis of reports and articles published in the Norwegian media since the beginning of 1990.

The first discourse focuses on *the fear of organised crime*, where prostitution, despite the fact that it is not criminalized, is seen as a possible and probable invasion of criminal and mafia-related activities in Norway. This discourse also includes the fear of increased trading in drugs from Russia.

Fear of contamination as a result of open borders is the second discourse. Throughout the 1990's this has been connected to the fear of tuberculosis contamination from Russia, but particularly to the fear of sexually transmittable diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis and HIV. In contrast to other discourses on sexually transmittable diseases, the solution presented here is not campaigns for the use of condoms to limit the risk, but restrictions in the traffic across the border. It is the social and moral health of the community that is at risk, not merely the biological one.

Fear of moral and social collapse of the local communities where this activity takes place forms the third discourse. In the public accounts, the focus has been on maintaining good environments for bringing up children as well as harmonious local communities, which through the effects of this traffic are facing social and moral breakdown.

The fourth discourse describes how perceptions of prostitution have led to *bullying and stigmatisation* of Russian women and children who have settled in northern Norway for reasons other than prostitution. As Stenvoll claims, prosti-

tution is singled out as the reason behind this stigmatisation and the solution, accordingly, is to get rid of prostitution.

The fifth discourse tries to direct attention away from prostitution and instead focus on the new opportunities that "*new neighbour relations*" represent both culturally and socially and, perhaps not least, also financially.

"We" and "the others"

Concepts that are repeatedly used within the first four discourses are characterised by the words flow, flood, invasion, explosion, hordes – all of which suggest a process which is out of control and to an extent which is threatening or destructive both socially and morally. The problem-oriented discourses constitute the Russian woman/Russians/clients as "problems" which need to be solved by taking certain negative actions. These discourses are not only part of and maintain the difference between us and the others, they also define what is seen as the moral community and what are "normal" activities for "Norwegian" women and men.

The establishment of the concept of buyers of sex as a synonym for bachelors in Finnmark can be regarded in relation to these popular myths. They form a moral category in the negotiations of a local moral order in a region where extensive changes are taking place. At the same time, the category of bachelors in Finnmark is implicated in the negotiations of masculinities, which bring to the fore the relation between the urban and the rural (which in a Norwegian context is also the relation between the northern and southern parts of the country). Men at the periphery become the other, in contrast to whom new and urban masculinities are established.

These discourses also indicate that the fear of Russia as the enemy has been incorporated into the concept of Russia as neighbour. Thus the image of an enemy and the discourse on the relation between Russia as a superpower and Norway as a potential victim are reproduced. This image of the enemy is also expressed in accounts of Russian prostitution. This was illustrated in a media

presentation of our project, where a journalist used the expression "the sex trade carried out by the women from the superpower" (Nordlys 19 March 02). Treating Russian women in Norway as representatives of a superpower is indicative of how collective fear seeks new images of the enemy, which appear through national accounts of them.

"They are human beings too"

The validity of these discourses was seen during our fieldwork in Finnmark, in our encounters with the local community, and in conversations with men who buy sex from Russian women. Simultaneously, we observed local attempts at renegotiating established discourses. Both the geographical and the social proximity to the Russian people's struggle with their living conditions can result in putting a pressure on the community's perceptions of its humanity and thus the stereotypical images disseminated by popular myths needed to be revised and renegotiated. This took the form of what we would like to call a counter-discourse, where the agenda includes a re-humanising of the Russian women. One of the perspectives within this discourse is that "they are human beings too". For the men, this perspective also served as an argument for inviting these women to their houses. This re-humanising can be seen as a reaction to the de-humanising that both Russian women and bachelors (buyers of sex) in Finnmark have suffered in the national public arena in Norway, especially in the media. However, we are faced with a paradox in this situation. When Russian women are described as victims who need to be protected, they are also given a role which is passive and de-humanised. It tends to limit their opportunities for acting as a subject, which in turn is the basis for being able to take on other roles which are normally available to women and men. The process of de-humanising also forms a basis for how people behave socially in encounters with these Russian women. Many stories are told of Russian women who have been denied entry to restaurants or have

been bullied in public places because of suspected prostitution.

"Ordinary women"

We found clear tendencies towards a situation where the notion of Russians as enemies is upheld in many contexts and is used as a basis by which the category of Russian women/Russian women in prostitution is constructed and maintained. However, there are attempts at counter-discourses. These are partly found within the stories of the new neighbour relation, but we saw it most clearly in the many efforts to describe Russian women as ordinary women. The bachelors in Finnmark have not however been the object of a similar re-humanisation. A possible explanation to this might be that this category is part of many different contexts where the concept is used to negotiate the relations between east and west (Russia-Norway), between north and south (in Norway), and between urban and rural masculinities.

In this article, we have put forward the argument that the national Norwegian rhetoric connected to the situation before "the fall of the iron curtain" has lived on after the fall since the notion of Russians as enemies has continued to exist in the new connections that have been established, especially in the prostitution trade. However, in some various local publicities, Russian women and men have been ascribed the same form of humanity as the local actors associate with themselves. At the breaking point between a national Norwegian public arena and local publicities, hegemonic positions can be challenged and made the object of new stories as to what kinds of perception we are to hold about ourselves and the other.

BRITT KRAMVIG is researcher at the NORUT Finnmark Research Institute, Norway.

KIRSTEN STIEN is researcher at the Center of Child Welfare Research in Northern Norway.

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Finnmark in Northern Norway

Finnmark is the largest and northernmost county in Norway, situated far to the North of the Polar Circle bordering to the north and east to Russia and to Finland. The county is scarcely populated with only 1,5 inhabitants pr. km2 (compared to Norway as a whole with 14 people pr. km2). Already in 1992 the number of Russian visitors coming through the only Norwegian-Russian border crossing in Finnmark was 100 000 a year, more than the total population of this vast county. What characterises the prostitution traffic from Russia into Finnmark is that the activity takes place in small transparent local communities in the countryside where everybody know each other. The open prostitution activity was quite extensive in some parts; for example in 1999 an average of 60 women came with buss to Tana every week, to a local community of 3 000 people. The prostitution in Tana (in the Sami core area) was concentrated at a camping site, where busloads of Russian women came regularly every Thursday to return back on Sunday. During the weekend local men and also customers coming from far away visited the campingsite. Negative reactions from the local community and especially women's groups combined with media exposure made the activity to change; it became decentralised and thus less visible. Presently the Russian women are transported in private cars across the border and directly to customer's private homes in different parts of Finnmark. Tana is the only municipality in Finnmark which has officially decided to work to prevent the across-the-border prostitution, while the central government in Norway is working on measures to limit the prostitution in this Northern part of the country, now being organised by a well established but informal network.

New publications

If you are searching for literature in women's studies and gender research in the Nordic countries, or want to know more about the publications listed below, we recommend the Nordic Virtual Women's Studies and Gender Research Library at NIKK's web site <http://www.nikk.uio.no/>

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Calendar 2002

This is an excerpt from NIKK's calendar of events in English - for more events visit NIKK's web site at <http://www.nikk.uio.no/>

Gendered Worlds: Gains and Challenges - Women's Worlds 2002

21-26.07 Kampala, Uganda
<http://www.makerere.ac.ug/womenstudies/congress2/>

The 8th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women. Special focus areas will be the African perspective, young voices, gendering women and men, celebrating multiculturalism and diversity and North-South perspectives. Org. by Makerere University in Kampala, Department of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere University, P.O.Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda, tel: +256 41 531484, fax: +256 41 543539, gendermu@africaonline.co.ug

Know How conference

21-26.07 Kampala, Uganda
http://www.iiav.nl/eng/ic/knowhow/knowhow_information.html
Info: Ruth Ojiambo Ochieng, isis@starcom.co.ug

Taking Wing - Conference on Gender Equality and Women in the Arctic

04-06.08 Saariselkä, Finland
<http://www.arctic-council.org/pmeetings/gender>
Org. by the Arctic Council, The Nordic Council of Ministers and Finland as the host country. The conference is about women and gender in the Arctic so that the issues brought to debate should be considered from an arctic viewpoint, as well as from the viewpoint of indigenous women and indigenous people where appropriate. Info: Laura Tohka, Department of Women's Studies, FI-33014 University of Tampere, Finland, tel: +358 3 215 8982,

fax. +358 3 215 6562, laura.tohka@uta.fi
Re-Negotiating the Politics of the Public and the Private - Gender and Politics in China and the Nordic Countries
 19-22.11. Shanghai, China
<http://eurasia.nias.ku.dk/norwag/>
 The First Nordic-China Women & Gender Studies Conference. Org. by Aarhus University, Denmark & the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies in co-operation with the Women's Studies Centre, Fudan University, China & the Nordic Centre at Fudan University, China. Info: Qi Wang, Research Fellow, Department of Political Science, Aarhus University, DK-8000 Aarhus C, Denmark, tel: + 45 8942 2033, fax: + 45 8613 9839, qw@ps.au.dk

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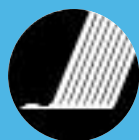
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P.O.Box 1156 Blindern
NO-0317 Oslo, Norway
Telephone +47 22 85 89 21
Telefax +47 22 85 89 50
nikk@nikk.uio.no
www.nikk.uio.no

This is NIKK

- Serves as a platform for co-operation for Women's Studies and Gender Research in the Nordic Countries
- Promotes, initiates and co-ordinates Women's Studies and Gender Research in the five Nordic countries and internationally
- Strengthens the flow of information about women's studies and gender research within the Nordic countries and internationally
- Conducts research projects

NIKK is located at the University of Oslo together with the Centre for Women's Studies and Gender Research



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 - The Prime Ministers have the overall responsibility.
 - The activities are coordinated by the Nordic ministers for cooperation, the Nordic Committee for Cooperation and portfolio ministers.
- Founded 1971.

NATIONAL CO-ORDINATION OF GENDER RESEARCH

DENMARK

The Co-ordination of Gender Studies in
Denmark
Department of Sociology, University of
Copenhagen
Linnésgade 22, DK-1361 København K
phone: +45 35 32 35 01
fax: +45 35 32 39 40
kkf@sociology.ku.dk
<http://www.sociology.ku.dk/sochrc/>

FINLAND

National Co-ordination of Women's Studies
Gender Equality Unit
P.O.Box 33, FI-00023 Government
phone: +358 9 160 01
fax: +358 9 160 4582
tasa-arvo@stm.vn.fi
<http://www.tasa-arvo.fi/>

ICELAND

Centre for Women's Studies
Aðalbygging, University of Iceland
IS-101 Reykjavík
phone: +354 525 4595
fax: +354 552 1331
fem@hi.is
<http://www.hi.is/stofn/fem/>

NORWAY

KILDEN Norwegian Information and
Documentation Centre for Women's Studies
and Gender Research
Grensen 5, NO-0159 Oslo
phone: +47 22 24 09 35
fax: +47 22 24 95 21
post@kilden.forskningsradet.no
<http://kilden.forskningsradet.no/>

SWEDEN

Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research
Göteborg University
P.O.Box 200, SE-405 30 Göteborg
phone: +46 31 773 5600
fax: +46 31 773 5604
sekretariat@genus.gu.se
<http://www.genus.gu.se/>

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