

Discarded Women:
A Feminist Analysis of Women's Status and Sexual Trafficking in Post-Soviet States

by
Leanne T. Vercaigne

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Political Studies
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Winnipeg

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Chapter II: The Anatomy of Sex Traffic.....	8
Defining Sex Traffic.....	8
The Victims of Traffic.....	18
The Traffickers.....	23
The Buyers.....	39
Chapter III: A Feminist Analysis of Post-Soviet Sex Traffic.....	56
Feminism, the Third Debate, and IR.....	56
Feminism, Gender, and the Subordination of Women.....	59
Post-Soviet Economic Hardship and Traffic.....	66
Women’s Post-Soviet Political Voice and Traffic.....	76
Post-Soviet Social Inequality and Traffic.....	83
Chapter IV: Women’s Status and Sexual Trafficking in Ukraine and Poland.....	93
The Case of Ukraine.....	94
The Case of Poland.....	123
Chapter V: Stopping the Traffic.....	145
Fighting Traffic at the Local Level.....	146
Fighting Traffic at the International Level.....	153
Fighting Traffic at the National Level.....	172
Chapter VI: Conclusion.....	194
Selected Bibliography.....	202

Abstract

Sexual trafficking has exploded in post-soviet states since the dissolution of the USSR.

This thesis examines what conditions are present in those states that allow, and even encourage, sexual trafficking to occur on such a large scale. To do this, the thesis studies the inner workings of sexual trafficking, as well as women's economic, political, and social status in post-soviet states. The cases of Ukraine and Poland are compared to determine what variables are most crucial to sustaining sexual trafficking. The thesis found that post-soviet sexual trafficking flourishes because there is a high demand for women in the global sex industry, a large number of young post-soviet women wishing to migrate from the region, and an established network of traffickers willing to exploit these women. The thesis concludes that the best option to reduce traffic is to use national strategies to raise the economic, political, and social status of women in post-soviet states.

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All opinions and any mistakes are mine alone.

Leanne T. Vercaigne
August 2007

To Mom, Dad, and Michael

Chapter One Introduction

Delia, from a small village in Southern Romania, was offered a short-term contract for a job in a flower shop in Germany by a friend, Matache. Matache promised to organize everything: passports, visas, and employment contract. Delia would earn 100 Deutsche marks per day, and be free to come home whenever she wanted. However, when they arrived in Germany, Matache gave her passport to a man who met them in exchange for some money. Delia realized what was happening, but when she tried to move away a gun was pulled on her. She was taken to a house and locked inside. When Delia tried to resist, she was raped and beaten by two men. For some time, they forced Delia to have sex with several men per day, and forced her to use drugs. There were other women working in the house but they were not allowed to communicate with each other. All the women were forced to take contraceptive pills, and anyone who got pregnant was forced to have an abortion.¹

Delia, along with thousands of other women and children, is a victim of sex traffic. Sexual trafficking is one of the most reprehensible global activities being carried out today. It encompasses such varied abuses as deception, coercion, forcible abduction and confinement, beatings, rape, and sexual slavery. Although lately the topic of sex traffic has been gaining attention, by and large it remains a concept that is poorly understood. From this author's own experience, few people are familiar with the concept of sexual trafficking, and fewer still are fully aware of its brutal and dehumanizing nature. So, the question becomes, in the midst of so many other global concerns, such as extreme poverty, genocide, terrorism, and war, why does the topic of sex traffic merit the attention of the public, national governments, and the international relations community? There are three compelling reasons why sex traffic deserves more attention than it receives.

¹ Elaine Pearson, *Human Rights and Trafficking in Persons: A Handbook*, (Bangkok: Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, 2000) 39.

First, sex traffic deserves attention because it is a grave assault upon human rights.² The forced commodification of the bodies of women and children for sexual exploitation is viewed by some scholars in the field as among the worst, or even *the* worst, of human rights abuses. In her article, "Prostitution and the Mafia: The Involvement of Organized Crime in the Global Sex Trade," Sarah Shannon says this of sex traffic:

The most unique aspect of this form of transnational criminal activity is its vast contribution to human suffering. Although other forms of illicit criminal ventures are certainly unfortunate activities, which may well undermine political and economic systems, the global sex trade has been described as, 'the most denigrating, dehumanizing of all crimes that can possibly be imagined...' Only in this realm are women and children viewed exclusively as commodities of economic value rather than human beings.³

Second, sex traffic deserves international attention because it is a global phenomenon with a significant global impact. Sex traffic is not contained within a specific country or region, rather it transcends borders to leave its mark on almost every part of the world. Countries usually fall into three categories that often overlap. These are: countries of origin, transit countries, and destination countries. A country of origin refers to the home country of a trafficked woman. Countries of origin are where traffickers first recruit their victims for the sex trade, and are often characterized by economic hardship and lack of employment opportunities for women. A transit country is any country that traffickers (with their victims) pass through on their way to their destination. This category could conceivably include almost any country. Countries of

² Saskia Sassen, "Women's Burden: Counter-geographies of Globalization and the Feminization of Survival," *Journal of International Affairs* Volume 53, No. 2 (Spring 2000): 515.

³ Sarah Shannon, "Prostitution and the Mafia: The Involvement of Organized Crime in the Global Sex Trade," in *Illegal Immigration and Commercial Sex: The New Slave Trade*, ed. Phil Williams (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999), 120.

destination are the final stop, where traffickers sell the women they have recruited and transported. Popular destination countries for traffickers are often economically wealthy with a well-established sex industry. Between countries of origin, transit, and destination, sex traffic operates in one way or another in almost every populated area in the world. Because of this, sex traffic is a global and transnational problem.⁴

Third, sex traffic deserves international attention because it is growing. The transnational human rights abuse perpetrated by the trafficking industry will only expand as time goes by if action is not taken against this activity. There are numerous reasons for the growth of sex traffic, which will be explored in greater detail in subsequent chapters. Briefly, sex traffic will continue to flourish for the following reasons: it is extremely profitable; there is very little being done to punish traffickers; globalization and corrupt officials make borders easier to penetrate; there is a large demand for paid sex and sex tourism; traffickers are becoming more organized with increased international linkages; and the feminization of poverty continues to make women vulnerable to coercion and exploitation.⁵

So far it has been argued that sexual trafficking is an important problem that merits international attention and study. However, developing a theoretical framework for the analysis of sexual trafficking is a challenging task. The topic of sexual trafficking itself is a sub-topic of human trafficking in general, which encompasses sexual trafficking, trafficking for labour, and even trafficking in human organs. Sexual trafficking was chosen as the central theme of this thesis over other forms of trafficking because it is such an extreme and intensely invasive form of exploitation. When studying

⁴ Sietske Altink, *Stolen Lives: Trading women into sex and slavery*, (London: Scarlet Press, 1995) 1.

⁵ Phil Williams, "Human Commodity Trafficking: An Overview," in *Illegal Immigration and Commercial Sex: The New Slave Trade*, ed. Phil Williams, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999) 1, 2.

this topic, two questions always come to the forefront: How, in the twenty-first century, with international human rights standards and global communication, can thousands of women and children be sold into sexual servitude and debt bondage? Why is there not more awareness and outrage about this activity, especially in countries of origin? The answers to these two questions will be explored throughout this thesis.

As we have seen, sexual trafficking is a global problem. It occurs in varying degrees of severity in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, North America, Latin and South America, and Africa. Obviously it is not possible to conduct a detailed study of trafficking on every continent within the parameters of this thesis. Because of this, the thesis will focus on sexual trafficking originating in post-soviet states. Since the fall of the Soviet Union sexual trafficking in women and children from the Newly Independent States has exploded. The severity of the problem in this region has surpassed many other regions and begs the question, what conditions in post-soviet states create the perfect climate for the sexual trafficking of women and children?

There is no single, widely accepted theory in the discourse on sexual trafficking that is able to neatly answer this question. Sexual trafficking envelopes many issues such as illegal migration, organized crime, corruption of officials, human rights abuse, domestic and international law, the economics of post-communist transition, the post-soviet political climate, and the status of women in the region. Because of this, the thesis often reaches outside traditional International Relations boundaries to include the valuable insights of scholars working on this topic from varied disciplinary backgrounds. It is the interdisciplinary aspect of this work and the pushing of traditional International Relations boundaries that makes this thesis unique in the field. Although the study of

traffic does indeed push the limits of IR, the thesis will argue that there is room for this issue within International Relations, and that the study of traffic should have a home in IR as well as in other disciplines.

As interdisciplinary as this thesis is, every study requires a dominant theoretical perspective or argument with which to analyze an issue. The topic of post-soviet sexual trafficking ultimately revolves around the abuse of women and female children. This issue requires answers to why post-soviet females are so vulnerable to sexual trafficking. What variables in the Newly Independent States are allowing this explosion of female sexual exploitation to occur? Why is sex traffic in this region more of a problem than in others, where women also struggle? Although not perfect, the best theoretical perspective to use in the analysis of these questions is rooted in feminism. The liberal and radical branches of feminism will be used to delve into questions of post-soviet gender inequality, as well as suggest normative solutions to this inequality.

The central argument of this thesis is that although many factors play a role in post-soviet trafficking in women, the single largest contributor to the growth of this exploitation is the patriarchal, male-dominant nature of the post-soviet economic, political, and social systems. This patriarchal dominance creates and sustains post-soviet women's subordination to men and keeps them economically desperate, politically weak, and socially vulnerable. This inferior status for women plays an absolutely crucial role in allowing their victimization by traffickers. The thesis will argue that the correct strategy to end post-soviet female subordination can be found in a fusion of the goals of liberal and radical feminism.

The next five chapters of this thesis will examine the issue of post-soviet female subordination and its relationship to sexual trafficking. Chapter two will introduce the reader to the basics of sexual trafficking in post-soviet states. It will examine definitions of trafficking, explore challenges to the study of traffic, and describe the anatomy of the trafficking process from the victims, to the traffickers, to the buyers. Chapter two will also discuss how globalization and militarization contribute to the demand for trafficked women.

Chapter three introduces the main theoretical arguments about the post-soviet conditions which allow traffic in women to flourish. It will address the third debate in International Relations and explain how this debate opened up space in IR for feminist topics such as traffic in women. It will introduce the arguments of liberal and radical feminism and will use these feminist perspectives to analyze post-soviet gender inequality. It will argue that women's subordinate status in the region's economic, political, and social systems makes them vulnerable to sexual exploitation by traffickers.

Chapter four will test the arguments of chapter three through the use of a comparative case study.⁶ The chapter will examine trafficking in Poland and Ukraine, as well as women's status in both state's economic and political realms. The chapter will then compare Poland and Ukraine to determine if and how women's status in the public realms of these two countries impacts the severity of trafficking in each state.

⁶ The comparative case study method was chosen because it allows the examination and comparison of variables that interact to contribute to, or inhibit, the sexual trafficking of women out of post-soviet states. Hard data on trafficking, as well as information on the economic, political, and social status of women in Poland and Ukraine will be compared. The comparative case study will rely on secondary sources such as scholarly literature, national and international reports, anti-trafficking NGO documents and on-line materials, and law enforcement activities.

Chapter five examines the need for anti-trafficking strategies. It will describe anti-trafficking strategies at the local, national, and international levels and will explain why each of these levels is important, as well as analyze some of their strengths and weaknesses. Chapter five will also explore the feminist debates surrounding anti-trafficking activities, and their arguments about what actions need to be taken to empower post-soviet women and children so they do not fall victim to this abuse. Chapter five will seek to determine if one anti-trafficking strategy is more crucial to the cessation of this dehumanizing activity than other strategies. Lastly, chapter six will draw together the arguments made in this thesis, as well as discuss the significance and limitations of these arguments to the field of trafficking.

Chapter Two The Anatomy of Sex Traffic

Defining Sex Traffic...

In a discussion of sex traffic it is important for the sake of clarity to understand exactly what is meant by the term. However, one of the challenges of examining this topic is the lack of a consensus in the literature, and between government organizations, NGO's, and women's groups, about what constitutes an acceptable definition of sex traffic. Much of the literature employs a general definition of traffic in persons, such as the following, provided by Gillian Caldwell, Steve Galster, Jyothi Kanics, and Nadia Steinzor. It describes traffic as:

all acts involving the recruitment or transportation of persons within or across borders. This recruitment involves deception, coercion or force, abuse of authority, debt bondage, or fraud for the purpose of placing persons in situations of abuse or exploitation such as forced prostitution, sweatshop labor, or exploitative domestic servitude.¹

Although this is a satisfactory definition of traffic in persons, it includes traffic for the purposes of labour and domestic servitude, thereby making it too general a definition for the purposes of analyzing sex traffic specifically.

In his article, "Trafficking in Women and Children: A Market Perspective," Phil Williams employs a definition from the International Organization for Migration that is more narrowly aimed at traffic for the purpose of sexual exploitation, but which contains a fundamental flaw. This definition argues:

¹ Gillian Caldwell, Steve Galster, Jyothi Kanics, and Nadia Steinzor, "Capitalizing on Transition Economies: The Role of the Russian Mafia in Trafficking Women for Forced Prostitution," in *Illegal Immigration and Commercial Sex: The New Slave Trade*, ed. Phil Williams, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999) 42.

Trafficking in women occurs when a woman in a country other than her own is exploited by another person against her will and for financial gain. The trafficking element may- cumulatively or separately- consist of: arranging legal or illegal migration from the country of origin to the country of destination; deceiving victims into prostitution once in the country of destination; or enforcing victims' exploitation through violence, threat of violence, or other forms or coercion. One trend in trafficking in women... is migrant women forced into, or forced to remain in, prostitution.²

Even though Williams has chosen to offer his reader the above definition of traffic in women, he is quick to point out that this definition is flawed because it limits traffic to movement across national borders. Traffic in women includes movements *within* the national borders of a state as well as movements that cross national or regional boundaries. In fact, a substantial portion of traffic in women is comprised of rural women being forced into prostitution in the urban centers of a state in order to meet the demand for commercial sex.³ This is an important point to note, because women who are trafficked hundreds of miles from their home are often equally as helpless and victimized as women who are taken thousands of miles from their home.

The U.S. State Department and the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons both provide satisfactory definitions of sex traffic and traffic in persons; in fact, the Government of Canada has chosen to adopt the definition provided by the UN.⁴ For the purposes of this thesis, however, the definition provided by Donna M. Hughes in her article, "The 'Natasha' Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of

² Phil Williams, "Trafficking in Women and Children: A Market Perspective," in *Illegal Immigration and Commercial Sex: The New Slave Trade*, ed. Phil Williams, (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999) 149.

³ Williams, 1999, 149.

⁴ Jacqueline Oxman-Martinez, Andrea Martinez, and Jill Hanley, "Trafficking Women: Gendered Impacts of Canadian Immigration Policies," *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, Vol. 2 No.3 (Summer 2001): 299.

Trafficking in Women,” may be the most useful for a few key reasons. Her view of what constitutes sex traffic is as follows:

Trafficking is any practice that involves moving people within and across local or national borders for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Trafficking may be the result of force, coercion, manipulation, deception, abuse of authority, initial consent, family pressure, past and present family and community violence, economic deprivation, or other conditions of inequality for women and children.⁵

First, this definition is useful because it is specific to trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Although many migrants are trafficked for the purposes of labour exploitation and domestic servitude, this activity is beyond the scope of this thesis, and therefore using a definition that includes such activity is too broad.

Second, by saying that traffic involves moving *people* instead of just women and girls, Hughes acknowledges the important fact that boys and young men can also be the victims of sex traffic, even if it is a less common occurrence. Third, Hughes puts forward the argument that trafficking has occurred if the victim is moved *within* local and national borders as well as if they are moved *across* national borders. The geographical distance a victim is moved is less important than the reality that the victim is no longer in their home environment. The fourth aspect of Hughes’ definition that makes it well suited to this discussion of sex traffic is that she goes beyond the usual list of contributors to sex traffic (force, coercion, manipulation, deception etc.) and includes such societal and economic factors as family pressure, violence, economic deprivation, and gender inequality. These factors are extremely important to any discussion of sex traffic, and will be explored further in this chapter and in subsequent chapters.

⁵ Donna M. Hughes, “The ‘Natasha’ Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of Trafficking in Women,” *Journal of International Affairs*, 53, No.2 (Spring 2000): 627.

The last point to be made about Hughes' definition is the most controversial and involves the notion of initial consent. In some cases of traffic, women initially give their consent to be taken to another region or country. Some even give consent with the knowledge that they are to work in the sex industry upon arriving at their destination. However, these women consent based on the assumption that they will experience decent working conditions. They believe that they will retain a large percentage of their earnings, will be able to send some money home to their families, will be free to select their own clients and work schedule, and will have the option to stop prostitution and return home if they so choose. These women do not realize the degrading and slave-like conditions they will work in until they reach their destination and their sexual exploitation begins. In essence, these women initially give their consent to work in a foreign sex industry with absolutely no understanding of the true nature of the situation they are involved in. Because of this, the idea that these women have knowingly consented to such treatment is ignorant at best.

Keeping this in mind, some scholars such as Jacqueline Oxman-Martinez, Andrea Martinez and Jill Hanley, argue that the term 'consent' should not be included in definitions of sex traffic. They feel that including the term 'consent' would erase the notion that these women have been victimized and will allow authorities such as immigration officials to use their initial consent against them, categorizing them as willful illegal immigrants rather than as victims of criminal activity.⁶

However, it is the belief of this author that the addition of the term 'initial consent' to the definition of sex traffic, as done by Hughes, will actually *protect* the victims, rather than endanger their rights. If a state's law enforcement authorities follow a

⁶ Oxman-Martinez, 2001, 299, 300.

definition of traffic that does not include initial consent, then it could be argued that because the woman initially consented, she is not really the victim of traffic. However, if a definition is employed that specifically includes in the trafficked category women who have given initial consent without full knowledge of their future working conditions, they then have a basis to demand treatment as victims, and not criminals.

The Challenges of Studying Sex Traffic

Deciding on a universally acceptable definition of sex traffic is only the beginning of the challenges that face the study of this relatively new topic. One of the foremost complaints of scholars studying sex traffic is the shortage of “reliable and uniform data” on the subject.⁷ This problem is exemplified by the lack of consensus on how many people fall victim to trafficking each year. In her article, “Human Trafficking: A New Challenge for Russia and the United States,” Sally Stoecker reports: “Recent intelligence estimates put the total number of women and children deceived, recruited, and transported from their homes, and sold into slavery throughout the world at 800,000 to 900,000 per year.”⁸ The International Organization for Migration estimates the number of persons trafficked per year to be between 700,000 and 2 million, while the UN estimates that the number may be as high as 4 million people trafficked annually.⁹

⁷ Sally Stoecker and Louise Shelley, eds. , *Human Traffic and Transnational Crime: Eurasian and American Perspectives*, (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2005) , 5.

⁸ Sally Stoecker, “Human Trafficking: A New Challenge for Russia and the United States,” in *Human Traffic and Transnational Crime: Eurasian and American Perspectives*, eds. Sally Stoecker and Louise Shelley, (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2005) 13.

⁹ See Carolina Johansson Wennerholm, “Crossing Borders and Building Bridges: The Baltic Region Networking Project,” in *Gender, Trafficking, and Slavery*, ed. Rachel Masika, (Oxford: Oxfam, 2002) 10, 11; and Donna M. Hughes, “The ‘Natasha’ Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of Trafficking in Women,” *Journal of International Affairs* 53, no.2 (Spring 2000) 628.

There are numerous factors that contribute to the above disparities in numbers and the general absence of uniform data and statistics about sex traffic. First, reliable estimates specifically for sex trafficking are often absent because many agencies and government sources, such as the above, include in their traffic estimates people who have been trafficked for the purposes of labour exploitation or other domestic services, as well as for sex traffic; therefore the above estimates cannot be read as numbers of people trafficked solely for the sex trade.

Second, the actual reporting of incidences of sex traffic is skewed due to the nature of the activity. Sex traffic is an underground criminal enterprise, which makes it closed and secretive to legitimate agencies and authorities. Detecting the activities of sex traffickers requires law enforcement to carry out undercover work and labour-intensive investigations, which in many nations is beyond the resources of the police force, or the government simply does not require their police to make stopping this activity a priority.¹⁰ The fact that many women never report their abuse further skews official estimates of sex traffic. Women often fail to report their abusers because of fear of retaliation against themselves or their families by organized crime and criminal gangs. They may also remain silent because they are ashamed to let their families know what has happened to them, or because they are suspicious of authorities and unwilling to go to them for help (often with good cause, as victims of traffic often encounter corrupt police and law officials). Women are also afraid to report their abuse because they are told by their traffickers that no one will help them and that they will be deported; or they are

¹⁰ Stoecker and Shelley, 2005, 5.

simply unaware of their rights, especially in situations where they do not speak the language and are unfamiliar with the local culture.¹¹

The third factor that contributes to poor information on sex traffic is the lack of proper training for law enforcement officials in this issue area. Many countries with a trafficking problem do not make the cessation of sex traffic a high priority for their police force. This lack of government action is compounded by a pervasive attitude in some regions, such as Russia's Far East, that these women are not really victims of any abuse, but are simply willing prostitutes who are making a great deal of money.¹² Because of this, many cases of what is probably trafficking are never recorded. Even the most well-intentioned police officers may inadvertently provide misleading reports on trafficking cases because they (along with government agencies) make the very common mistake of confusing trafficking with smuggling.¹³

In cases that are considered smuggling, migrants typically pay smugglers a sum of money in exchange for being taken across a border. Although migrants are often placed in very dangerous traveling conditions, the migrant- smuggler relationship is usually a voluntary one. If and when the migrant reaches their destination, there is the expectation that their relationship with the smuggler will end and that they will be free to pursue a new life in the foreign country. What makes trafficking different from smuggling is what happens after the migrants reach their destination. Trafficked people are not free once they reach their destination. Instead, reaching their destination is only the beginning of

¹¹ Siriporn Skrobaneck, Nataya Boonpakdee, and Chutima Jantateero, *The Traffic in Women: Human Realities of the International Sex Trade*, (London: Zed Books, 1997) 103; and Jo Goodey, "Sex Trafficking in Women from Central and Eastern European Countries: Promoting a 'Victim-Centred' and 'Woman-Centred' Approach to Criminal Justice Intervention," *Feminist Review* no. 76 (Special Issue on Post-Communism, 2004) 28.

¹² Victor Malarek, *The Natashas: The New Global Sex Trade* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2003), 120-123.

¹³ Goodey, 2004, 28.

the exploitation, servitude, and debt bondage imposed on them by their traffickers.¹⁴ In his article “Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective,” John Salt summarizes by saying, “Trafficking, according to many recent definitions, involves severe forms of labour exploitation. By contrast, the main purpose of smuggling may be simply to facilitate the illegal crossing of a border.”¹⁵ It is easy to understand how law enforcement officials who are not provided with special training would have difficulty identifying the difference between cases of smuggling vs. trafficking, especially with imperfect information.

Salt also discusses the fourth factor responsible for poor sex traffic data. He argues that statistics gathered by organizations are not comparable to each other because they each use different definitions of traffic or varied means of classifying and collecting data. Because of this lack of standardized methods in data collection, statistical analysis becomes almost impossible. He says, “The absence of statistics transcends the whole field of trafficking.”¹⁶ Information gathering is further impeded when countries do not give the problem due attention or refuse to consult with each other over their shared problem (ie. consultations between origin and destination states). In other situations, some reporting is done, but it is not sufficiently detailed, such as not identifying the countries of origin of victims, such as Latvia or Ukraine, and instead lumping all women

¹⁴ Louise Shelley, “Russian and Chinese Trafficking: A Comparative Perspective,” in *Human Trafficking and Transnational Crime: Eurasian and American Perspectives* eds. Sally Stoecker and Louise Shelley (Lanham: Rowan and Littlefield, 2005) 66, 67; and Francis T. Miko “Trafficking in Women and Children: The U.S. and International Response,” in *Trafficking in Women and Children: Current Issues and Developments*, ed. Anna M. Troubnikoff (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2003) 3; and Oxman-Martinez, Andrea Martinez, and Jill Hanley, 300.

¹⁵ John Salt, “Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective,” *International Migration: Quarterly Review* Vol. 38 No.3 (Special Issue/2000) , 34.

¹⁶ Salt, 2000, 37.

from the region into the same category of Eastern European, or Russian.¹⁷ This glosses over details that could be helpful in understanding the trends involved in sex traffic.

For all of the above reasons, a quantitative study of sex traffic, complete with meaningful statistics, charts, and graphs is beyond the reach of this thesis, not to mention beyond the scope of almost every piece of analysis written about this subject thus far. However, the inner workings of sexual trafficking can be discussed quite effectively by examining the collective knowledge of NGOs, multinational organizations, and scholars working on this topic from numerous ideological and disciplinary standpoints.

Sex Traffic- A Brief History

In his book, *The Natashas*, Victor Malarek describes the global trafficking activity during the past forty years as following roughly four ‘waves.’ The first wave of sex trafficking began in the 1970s and targeted Southeast Asian women, mainly from Thailand and the Philippines. During the 1980s a second wave of traffic began in African women from Ghana and Nigeria. Immediately following was the third wave, which was comprised of Latin American women, with most women originating from Colombia, Brazil, and the Dominican Republic.

The current wave, or ‘fourth’ wave, began in the early 1990s after the break up of the Soviet Union. This latest wave of traffic targets women and children from Eastern Europe and Russia. There is a huge demand for Slavic women in the global sex trade, and now that the migration controls of the Soviet Union are a thing of the past, these women are now accessible to traffickers. Malarek states, “Just a decade ago, these women didn’t even register on the radar screen. Today they represent more than 25 percent of the

¹⁷ Johansson Wennerholm, 2002, 10, 11; and Hughes, 2000, 627.

trade.”¹⁸ This trend is evident in the sex industry of almost every Western European nation. Indeed, Stoecker and Shelley report that of the women who are trafficked into Germany there are more from the former Soviet Union than from any other region.¹⁹

Donna Hughes underlines this point by arguing:

For decades the primary sending countries were Asian countries, such as Thailand and the Philippines. The collapse of the Soviet Union opened up a pool of millions of women from which traffickers can recruit. Now, former Soviet republics, such as Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia and Russia, have become major sending countries for women trafficked into sex industries all over the world. In the sex industry markets today, the most popular and valuable women are from Ukraine and Russia.²⁰

Although there has been a definite intensification of sex traffic in the past four decades, this activity is not without historical precedent. Stoecker and Shelley relate that in pre-revolutionary Russia women were trafficked into prostitution in Argentina and China but that this activity stopped in the 1920s when the Soviet Union sealed its borders. “During the Soviet period, internal migration and foreign travel were strictly limited, eliminating the possibility of both domestic and international trafficking.”²¹ As we can see, with the return of free movement came the ugly side effect of traffic in persons. At the present moment, the former Soviet republics are prime targets for the continuation and intensification of traffic. They are unstable economically and often politically; there is rampant corruption and an ever growing organized crime network; women continue to suffer due to economic discrimination and the feminization of poverty; there is extreme social disruption and lack of opportunity which drives the desire for migration; there is

¹⁸ Malarek, 2003, 5,6.

¹⁹ Stoecker and Shelley, 2005 15.

²⁰ Hughes, 2000, 625.

²¹ Stoecker and Shelley, 2005, 1.

negligible risk for traffickers because penalties for the activity are weak or completely non-existent; and the governments are often disinterested in dealing with the issue.²²

It is the task of the remainder of this chapter to investigate this 'fourth' wave of sex traffic. It is important to understand this wave because it is occurring at this very moment, and it is growing. There are many players involved in the process of sex trafficking, including, but not limited to: the women and children who are trafficked, recruiters, criminal organizations, corrupt officials, pimps and brothel owners, corrupt police, and 'johns.'²³ The remainder of this chapter will separately examine three of the most important links in the trafficking chain: the victims, the traffickers, and the buyers.

The Victims of Traffic

Who are the victims of traffic in post-Soviet states?

The victims of sex trafficking in post-Soviet states cannot be categorized into a distinctive profile, complete with standard traits, geography, and behaviours.²⁴ They may be children, adults, highly educated, uneducated, rural, urban, from Vladivostok, Warsaw, or a small village in Romania or Ukraine. However, although the victims of traffic are diverse, the majority share two characteristics: they were young and economically desperate at the time of their recruitment by traffickers. First, most victims are females under the age of 25. The Foundation Against Traffic in Women estimates that "of the women it assisted in 1995 and 1996, who came from the central and eastern

²² Francis T. Miko, "Trafficking in Women and Children: The U.S. and International Response," in *Trafficking in Women and Children: Current Issues and Developments*, ed. Anna M. Troubnikoff (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2003) 4.

²³ Williams, 1999, 154.

²⁴ Shelley, 2005, 69.

European countries and the Newly Independent states, more than 75 percent were under the age of 25 and 57 percent were under 21.”²⁵ These young Eastern European and Russian women are in very high demand in the sex industries of Western Europe and Asia, as well as the Mediterranean and the Middle East. This makes them highly desirable targets for traffickers.

The second common characteristic of the majority of these women is the most important. Many women who are trafficked report that they were economically desperate at the time of their victimization. This has much to do with the upheaval of the political and economic climates of the Newly Independent States following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis will examine in detail how the socio-economic and political climates of post-soviet states are contributing to female unemployment, workplace discrimination and harassment, and the feminization of poverty in the region. The poor economic position of post-soviet women is driving them to look abroad for economic opportunities in order to support themselves and their families. These women do not often qualify to immigrate through legal channels, which leads them to take chances on illegal immigration or to answer ads for jobs that look suspicious or seem too good to be legitimate.²⁶ Jo Goodey argues, “While women might be wary of employment offers for easy money that seem ‘too good to miss’, their economic circumstances push them into precarious situations.”²⁷

Women in these ‘precarious situations’ are easy prey for traffickers, who bait them with promises of high paying jobs abroad where they can earn enough money to

²⁵ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, and Steinzor, 1999, 48.

²⁶ Stoecker and Shelley, 2005, 1,2; Williams, 1999, 3; Sassen, 2000, 524; Oxman-Martinez, Martinez, and Hanley, 2001, 302.

²⁷ Goodey, 2004, 28.

ensure the well-being of their families back home. Some women agree to engage in prostitution in the destination country, but, as commented upon previously, they have no idea of the true situation that awaits them. Caldwell et al. illustrate by saying,

Victims of their own hopes and illusions, most trafficked women leave their home country willingly to pursue a seemingly legitimate opportunity, and even those who know they may have to engage in the sex business assume that they will be treated humanely. However they often fall victim to the skilled deceptions of the traffickers and their agents, who force them into lives far worse than they ever imagined.²⁸

Although traffickers locate many of their victims through a form of bogus job recruitment, not all women are lured by traffickers through false promises; some victims are simply abducted from their neighbourhoods. Victor Malarek reports that “in many rural areas in Moldova, Romania, and Bulgaria, women and girls have been kidnapped walking home along country roads.”²⁹ Following these abductions, some parents chose to keep girls home from school in an attempt to keep them safe from traffickers.³⁰

Trafficking in humans is always a morally repugnant activity, although it is most reprehensible when the victims of traffic are children. Phil Williams writes, “Trafficking in children for commercial sex remains the most pernicious aspect of the trafficking business and one in which there are very clear victims.”³¹ Traffic in children is often the least visible of all traffic in persons because children are given fake papers saying they are of age. Children who are obviously minors are kept hidden from the public eye, in brothels or private residences. By most accounts, trafficking in children is the most severe in Asia, due to a large sex tourism industry and allegedly permissive attitudes

²⁸ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, and Steinzor, 1999, 50.

²⁹ Victor Malarek, 2003, 14.

³⁰ Victor Malarek, 2003, 14.

³¹ Williams, 1999, 3. This thesis would also argue that women who are forced into prostitution are also very clear victims of traffickers.

toward sex with minors. However, child trafficking is also happening in post-soviet states and is escalating for two key reasons.³²

First, traffic in children is escalating because there is an increasing demand for young girls (especially virgins) within the global sex industry. Francis T. Miko attributes this greater demand to fear of HIV / AIDS, the logic being that young girls are less likely to be infected with HIV and other STDs than older sex workers, who may be forced to have unprotected sex many times a day.³³ Second, traffic in children in post-soviet republics is rising because there is a large number of vulnerable youth. In his book, *The Natashas*, Victor Malarek estimates that there are 1 million street kids in Russia, and tens of thousands of homeless children in each of the Newly Independent States. Because these children are poor and have no one to look out for them, they are popular targets for traffickers. Traffickers also prey on children in overcrowded orphanages, luring them into agreeing to migrate with stories of job opportunities in Asia and Western Europe.

Malarek describes the case of six girls being recruited from an orphanage in north- western Russia near the Finnish border. Two recruiters arrived at the orphanage, with an offer of work for girls between fourteen and seventeen years of age. The girls were told that the successful applicants would be taken to China. They would be trained in preparing Chinese cuisine in a prestigious restaurant in exchange for two years working as waitresses. Thirty girls signed up and boarded a bus. Instead of going east to China, the girls were trafficked west, to an apartment in Germany. Once there, they were

³² Williams, 1999, 159; "Excerpts from General Assembly Fifty-First Session Agenda Item 106, October 7, 1996- The Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children," in *Illegal Immigration and Commercial Sex: The New Slave Trade*, ed. Phil Williams (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999) 218.

³³ Miko, 2003, 6.

beaten and threatened. After a few days they were told to disrobe and were literally auctioned off to German brothels.³⁴

German officials estimate that about 5 percent of women trafficked into the area are actually underage, but women's organizations believe the percentage to be much higher, especially since minors travel using counterfeit documents provided to them by traffickers, which give false ages.³⁵ In their article, "Trafficking in Women in Bulgaria: A New Stage," Milena Stateva and Nadya Kozhouharova argue that girls who are physically, emotionally, or sexually abused at home have a higher statistical vulnerability to being trafficked. This may be because they run away from home and choose to live on the street, or are simply less protected from traffickers by abusive or neglectful guardians. In Asian nations, there are many documented cases of guardians selling their female relatives to traffickers because they are seen as an economic burden. This activity seems much less common in the post-soviet republics, but is not entirely unheard of.³⁶

In her article, "The 'Natasha' Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of Trafficking in Women," Donna Hughes makes a basic, but important point. She argues, "Poverty, unemployment, inflation, war and lack of a promising future are compelling factors that facilitate the ease with which traffickers recruit women, but they are not the cause of trafficking."³⁷ Hughes elaborates by saying that conditions of poverty and chaos exist in many regions, indeed, numerous other countries are much more impoverished than the Newly Independent States. However, trafficking does not necessarily occur in

³⁴ Malarek, 2003, 15.

³⁵ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, and Steinzor, 1999, 48.

³⁶ Milena Stateva and Nadya Kozhouharova, "Trafficking in women in Bulgaria: a new stage," *Feminist Review, Special Issue on Post-Communism*, No. 76 (2004), 112.

³⁷ Hughes, 2000, 643.

all poverty stricken areas. Hughes says that for traffic to occur, there must be people in the area willing to sell women and girls into sexual slavery.

With the exception of the dynamic of former victims becoming recruiters, as in Ukraine, women do not traffic themselves or organize themselves en masse to travel internationally to enter prostitution. Women do not voluntarily put themselves in situations where they are exploited, beaten, raped, and enslaved. Without recruiters, traffickers and pimps, trafficking in women would not exist.³⁸

In essence, poverty creates the necessary conditions for traffic, but there must be traffickers in place, ready to exploit desperate women and unprotected children, in order for large scale traffic in women and children to occur. So, let us now turn our attention to the perpetrators of this abuse against basic human dignity: the sex traffickers.

The Traffickers

Who are the traffickers?

Two of the primary challenges facing the researchers of sex traffic are: developing a profile for traffickers, and determining the organizational structure of trafficking networks. However, before dealing with the questions of the identity and organization of traffickers, it is important to underline to whom the thesis is referring when speaking about traffickers. For the purposes of this work, “traffickers” refers to the people who are involved in the recruitment and transportation of women within and across borders for the purpose of profiting from the women’s sexual exploitation.³⁹ The people who perpetrate this activity are, for the most part, invisible. It is, of course, in

³⁸ Hughes, 2000, 644.

³⁹ International Organization for Migration, IOM Research Series, *Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe* (Geneva, International Organization for Migration, 2002), 17.

their best interest to remain in this state of invisibility, as the activity from which they profit is illegal.⁴⁰ Because of this, compiling an accurate profile of who traffics in women in post-soviet states has been very difficult.

Reports on traffickers have implicated a diverse group of people, especially when dealing with the recruiting end of operations. Victor Malarek describes the unexpectedly respectable personal backgrounds of recruiters found in Kyiv, saying, “The culprits have included teachers, a local psychologist, the wife of a policeman and the daughter of a village priest.”⁴¹ As we can see, highly educated, locally respected, or affluent people cannot be automatically exempted from the ranks of traffickers. In their article, “Capitalizing on Transition Economies: The Role of the Russian Mafia in Trafficking Women for Forced Prostitution,” Caldwell et al., argue that the two central prerequisites to trafficking in women are “connections to market providers in countries of destination and cash.”⁴² They go on to say that due to the relative ease of fulfilling the above requirements almost *anyone* can become a trafficker.

It is possible for anyone to conceivably be involved in trafficking, regardless of occupation or stature in the community, which makes a foolproof trafficker profile almost impossible to compile. However, with that being said, in some trafficking cases there exist common threads that link the traffickers. In their article “Organized Crime and Trafficking in Women from Eastern Europe in the Netherlands” Gerben Bruinsma and Guus Meershoek draw out some of the similarities by arguing that 90 percent of all arrested traffickers are male; that their average age is approximately 34; and that many of them are also involved in other forms of criminal activity, such as smuggling drugs, arms,

⁴⁰ IOM, *Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe*, 10.

⁴¹ Malarek, 2003, 11.

⁴² Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, and Steinzor, 1999, 54.

or stolen cars.⁴³ John Salt adds to this that apprehended traffickers are often of the same nationality as the women they control.⁴⁴ This set of general characteristics: male, age 34, history of criminal activity, is about as far as researchers have been able to generalize about those involved with trafficking networks.

The second major challenge facing scholars is acquiring information on how trafficking networks are organized. The most prevalent view within the scholarly work is outlined by Bruinsma and Meershoek, who divide trafficking networks into two main categories: the first category is described as “cliques of professionals” or two or three traffickers who work together. The second category is made up of organized crime groups, which as we will see later, are comprised of larger numbers of people, with greater structure and hierarchy.⁴⁵ Very little attention is spent in the literature analyzing the trafficking operations that are carried out by a small “clique” of professionals. This could simply be due to the fact that these groups of two or three traffickers are less visible due to the limited scope of their operations, thereby making detection less likely as compared to a large network. More local research in countries of origin will be required to flesh out the nature and prevalence of these small trafficking operations. Presently there is much more interest in studying the second category of traffickers: organized crime groups.

Caldwell et al., characterize organized crime (or the ‘*mafiya*’ as it is often referred to) as: “profit-oriented criminal activity, [that] uses violence or threat of violence, expends resources to discourage cooperation of its members with the police,

⁴³ Gerben J.N. Bruinsma & Guus Meershoek, “Organized Crime and Trafficking in Women from Eastern Europe in the Netherlands,” in *Illegal Immigration and Commercial Sex: The New Slave Trade*, ed. Phil Williams (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999) 114.

⁴⁴ John Salt, 2000, 44.

⁴⁵ Bruinsma & Meershoek, 1999, 115.

and corrupts legitimate government authority.”⁴⁶ Organized crime is set apart from ordinary groups of criminals by its larger scope, as well as by its structure and hierarchy. Well known organized crime groups include the Italian Mafia, the Chinese Triads, the Japanese Yakuza, and the Columbian drug cartels. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russian Organized Crime (ROC) has quickly asserted its place among the ranks of the world’s most powerful organized crime networks. The tumultuous economic climate of post-soviet states following the collapse of the Soviet Union encouraged the expansion of the already large informal and shadow economy, leading to increased control by Russian organized crime groups. In 1994 the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs estimated that 40 percent of Russia’s gross domestic product was a result of the financial activity of organized crime, which generated 10 billion dollars annually.⁴⁷

Of the billions of dollars made annually by Russian organized crime groups, a growing percentage is thought to be generated from the proceeds of the sex trade and sex traffic. Russian organized crime is ideally suited to excel in sex traffic because it possesses all the necessary prerequisites, namely: extensive transnational linkages, expertise in illegal activity, and the resources to bribe or intimidate government and law enforcement officials.⁴⁸ As a result of these conditions, the influence of Russian organized crime groups is being felt acutely in the sex industries of Western Europe, as well as North America and the Middle East.

Sietske Altink states that in Western European countries such as the Netherlands, “prostitutes and their advocates report growing control by eastern European pimps in

⁴⁶ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, & Steinzor, 1999, 50.

⁴⁷ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, & Steinzor, 1999, 50, 51.

⁴⁸ Sarah Shannon, “Prostitution and the Mafia: The Involvement of Organized Crime in the Global Sex Trade” in *Illegal Immigration and Commercial Sex: The New Slave Trade*, ed. Phil Williams (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999) 126.

almost every red light district.”⁴⁹ Victor Malarek underlines the growing control of ROC in Israel’s sex trade, saying “A November 1997 report by Israel’s Women’s Network concluded that ROC controls the sex industry throughout the nation.”⁵⁰ The FBI and RCMP have also expressed concern over the growing presence of Russian organized crime in the sex markets of the United States and Canada in areas such as New York, New Jersey, Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal. Although ROC cannot be said to have a total monopoly on post-soviet state sex traffic, they are still one of the greatest dangers to women in the area. Malarek says, “The most formidable threat to vulnerable Slavic women today is Russian Organized Crime (ROC). Wherever women and girls from Eastern European countries are being trafficked, the iron fist of ROC is sure to be playing a hand.”⁵¹

In his article, “Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective” John Salt is much less certain about a centralized role for Russian Organized Crime in traffic. He argues, “The trafficking organization as a whole is more likely to consist of several loosely interconnected and competitive networks where the market is continuously being re-shared than to a single core.”⁵² In light of the deficiency of information on the inner workings of trafficking networks, and how they relate to each other, Salt is certainly correct to question the conclusions of other scholars. More in-depth research into the organizational aspects of traffic must be conducted before any firm conclusions can be reached. However, having said this, it does not seem premature or alarmist for European countries to be particularly concerned with the growing presence of Russian organized

⁴⁹ Sietske Altink, 1995, 131.

⁵⁰ Victor Malarek, 2003, 47.

⁵¹ Victor Malarek, 2003, 47.

⁵² John Salt, 2000, 42.

crime in their sex industries.⁵³ What scholars *do* agree upon is that sex traffic is an extremely attractive pursuit for the criminal classes in many regions of the world, a pursuit that will probably only gain in popularity. The next section of the thesis seeks to uncover what makes the deplorable activity of profiting off the sexual exploitation of women and children so inviting.

What Makes Trafficking so Attractive to Criminal Groups?

There are four primary reasons why the activity of sex traffic is so attractive to criminals. The first reason why traffic is an attractive criminal pursuit is that launching a trafficking operation is fairly easy.⁵⁴ As was mentioned above, the only real prerequisites to trafficking are connections in the sex industry of the destination country and a relatively small amount of money with which to pay for the transport of the women. Unlike trafficking in other illegal commodities such as drugs or arms, a large initial investment is not required because the women do not cost the traffickers anything to acquire, they are instead recruited under false pretenses, or, in some cases, simply kidnapped.

The second reason for sex traffic's appeal is its potential for extremely high profits. Sex traffic is immensely profitable due to a few different factors. First, unlike cars or drugs, one woman can be sold over and over again to different "clients." Saskia Sassen relates that Ukrainian and Russian women are highly sought after in the sex market, and are forced to service up to 15 clients per day.⁵⁵ Interpol estimates that even in

⁵³ IOM, "Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe" 42.

⁵⁴ Stoeker & Shelley, 2005, 6.

⁵⁵ Saskia Sassen, 2000, 516.

the cheapest prostitution sectors of Western Europe one prostituted woman can generate between 120,000 and 150,000 Euros per year.⁵⁶ Second, overhead expenses are low because the woman is paid next to nothing, or indeed, nothing at all. Third, when the trafficker wants to replace a woman, he can still make money from her by selling her to another brothel owner and misrepresenting her as a “new” acquisition. Phil Williams notes, “Indeed, there are perhaps few other criminal activities in which the profit to cost ratio is so high.”⁵⁷

Even with profit margins being so high, sex traffic could not be as attractive as it is today without the third reason for its popularity: the fact that sex traffic operations are rarely detected, and are successfully prosecuted even more rarely. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters of this thesis, the anti-trafficking laws throughout the former Soviet Union, as well as most Western European countries, are simply not adequate to discourage sex traffic, and where the laws are in place, their enforcement may be severely lacking. Many laws and law enforcement officials have a tendency to battle the sex trade by targeting the sex workers instead of the traffickers, brothel owners and pimps. Because of this, exploited women are the ones being arrested and deported, instead of their captors and exploiters. When traffickers *are* detected and charged, the profits of the traffic operation are not confiscated, as they would be if the case involved drug smuggling. It is standard practice for traffickers of humans to be dealt with much less severely than traffickers of drugs, weapons, or stolen goods.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Paola Monzini, *Sex Traffic: Prostitution, Crime and Exploitation*, (Black Point: Fernwood Publishing, 2005) 71.

⁵⁷ Phil Williams, 1999, 153.

⁵⁸ Louise Shelley, 2005, 72; Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, & Steinzor, 1999, 52.

Sex traffic is also a relatively low-risk criminal activity because successful prosecution is so difficult. It is extremely challenging to prove that women are victims of trafficking rather than voluntary foreign sex workers because women rarely make a formal complaint or testify in court. This is most often due to the victim's fear of the retaliation of traffickers, who threaten them and their families back home.⁵⁹ Even if one or two traffickers happen to be prosecuted and convicted, the trafficking network can usually continue their operations without much delay.⁶⁰

In light of the inadequate detection, prosecution, and punishment of traffickers, Liudmila Erokhina argues, "those who exploit foreign women and force them to engage in prostitution have almost nothing to fear."⁶¹ Criminal enterprise's awareness of this low risk of consequences, joined with easy start-up and high profits, are making the activity of sex traffic more and more popular. In fact, the International Organization for Migration estimates that sex traffic is the third largest generator of profits for organized crime, after drug and arms smuggling, bringing in over 5 billion dollars for crime groups annually.⁶² There is one more crucial factor that contributes to a trafficker's ease of operations: corruption.

The process of trafficking women within and across borders is made considerably easier by corrupt border guards and other law enforcement and immigration officials. Some cooperate with traffickers by simply turning a blind eye to their activities. Other officials may have a higher level of involvement, such as selling traffickers the falsified

⁵⁹ Liudmila Erokhina, "Trafficking in Women in the Russian Far East: A Real or Imaginary Phenomenon?" in *Human Trafficking and Transnational Crime: Eurasian and American Perspectives*, ed. Sally Stoecker and Louise Shelley, (Lanham: Rowan and Littlefield, 2005) 85.

⁶⁰ Stoecker & Shelley, 2005, 6.

⁶¹ Liudmila Erokhina, 2005, 81.

⁶² IOM, "Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe," 19.

travel documents and visas they require to move the women. Phil Williams states, “Indeed, in this area of criminal activity, as in others, corruption provides the lubricant which allows criminal organizations to operate with maximum effectiveness and minimum interference.”⁶³

Some authors have argued that in certain regions the complicity of officials goes beyond mere acceptance of trafficking, to regular involvement in the trade or even *control* of the trade. In her article, “Trafficking in Women in the Russian Far East: A Real or Imaginary Phenomenon?” Liudmila Erokhina alleges that this kind of activity is happening in China. She states,

Chinese police officers do participate in trafficking of Russian prostitutes. Almost all brothels are under their secret control. There have been instances when women ran away from their owners and turned to the police for help. Police officers would find out the name of the place the woman escaped from and return her there or would sell her to another brothel.⁶⁴

This case helps to explain why women are often so afraid to turn to the authorities for help, and why they are reluctant to give official statements to police. Now that the thesis has explored the primary reasons for the popularity of sex traffic, it is time to turn to the actual business of trafficking.

Trafficker’s Modus Operandi: Recruitment, Transport and Control

The actual trafficking of women for the purpose of their sexual exploitation in a foreign sex market has roughly three phases: first, the recruitment of women in their home countries; second, the transport of women between their home country and the destination country; third, the employment of control over the women en route, and in the

⁶³ Phil Williams, 1999, 4.

⁶⁴ Liudmila Erokhina, 2005, 91, 92.

destination country.⁶⁵ The recruitment of women is the first step in the trafficking process and occurs in various forms. In post-soviet states, the favoured recruitment method for traffickers is to place bogus job advertisements in local newspapers. These advertisements claim that they are seeking women to fill low-skilled, high paying positions such as hostesses, nannies, maids, and dancers in other countries, usually Western European.⁶⁶

Many papers in Eastern Europe are flooded with these ads, hoping to lure in women who are economically desperate. Donna Hughes relates that an inspection of newspapers in Ukraine turned up between five and twenty suspicious job advertisements per paper. Traffickers make every effort to give the ads a look of authenticity, often by using national symbols, such as the American Stars and Stripes, or the Canadian Maple leaf. Another method is to cut off the letterhead of a reputable business or government agency, attach it to a false job offer, and fax it to employment agencies.⁶⁷

Although ads that promise high pay for a low skill level seem suspicious or too good to be true, many women will respond to them, especially in economically depressed areas where local jobs for women are scarce or non-existent. Donna Hughes posits that women answer the ads in spite of misgivings because they have the attitude that whatever happens “cannot be worse than their present lives.”⁶⁸ Unfortunately, this is not the case. Once women are in the control of traffickers, they quickly discover that there is no job, they are in debt bondage to the traffickers, and that they are being forced into sexual servitude with no financial compensation. Hughes argues that the ease of recruitment

⁶⁵ Bruinsma & Meershoek, 1999, 109.

⁶⁶ Liudmila Erokhina, 2005, 82, 83.

⁶⁷ Sietske Altink, 1995, 125; Victor Malarek, 2003, 10.

⁶⁸ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 644.

stems from a severe lack of information about sex traffic in countries of origin. Women hear of other women who have gone abroad for jobs, but they are not told of what has happened to them. This lack of sufficient warning to vulnerable women leaves them open to being duped by traffickers.⁶⁹

Other than newspaper ads, traffickers use other seemingly legitimate venues to recruit vulnerable women. These can include university job fairs, modeling and dance competitions, and beauty pageants. For traffickers, these venues have the advantage of a respectable exterior, and they allow for recruiting numerous women at once. For the women, competing in a beauty pageant or modeling competition gives them a false sense of security, especially if they are asked to travel to another country to model or dance with other women that they know. In his book, *The Natashas*, Victor Malarek describes such a case:

An entire dance troupe of young Ukrainian women was conned by an “impresario” promising a five-city European tour. The tour seemed legitimate. They had even been presented with “contracts.” They ended up locked in a German apartment and sold into the trade.⁷⁰

Marriage agencies, or mail-order bride agencies, are also viewed by Caldwell et al., and the IOM as thinly disguised “hunting grounds for sex traffickers” that are under the control of organized crime.⁷¹

Another way for traffickers to snare victims is by using recruiters who form, or have existing, personal relationships with vulnerable women. These recruiters could be anyone in the community who is able to gain the trust of women and encourage them to accept jobs abroad. This category often includes local teachers, neighbours, friends,

⁶⁹ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 644.

⁷⁰ Victor Malarek, 2003, 10.

⁷¹ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, & Steinzor, 1999, 61; Donna M. Hughes, 2003, 634.

acquaintances, or even a woman's own family members.⁷² Donna Hughes says that this method of recruiting through personal contacts is the most popular trafficking tactic in Ukraine. A disturbing trend, almost even more disturbing than a family member selling their relative into sexual slavery, is a phenomenon called "second wave" recruiting. In second wave recruiting, women who have been past victims of traffic return to their home country to recruit new women for the sex trade. This seems counterintuitive, as one would expect past victims of traffic to do all in their power to prevent other women from being victimized by the trafficking industry. However, for some women who have been sold into the sex trade, recruiting other women may seem like the only way to free themselves from their slave-like conditions.⁷³ Abducting girls as a method of procuring for the sex industry seems to be less popular in Eastern Europe and Russia than in other regions where sex traffic is a problem, such as Asia. Women in post-Soviet states are much more likely to be led into the control of traffickers through false job ads or by being conned by acquaintances.

The most controversial category of women recruited for traffic are those who know from the beginning that they will be working as prostitutes in a foreign sex industry. A woman will agree to be taken to a destination country to work as a prostitute under the assumption that she will keep most of her earnings, will have the right to refuse clients, will be able to practice safe sex and have access to medical care. In essence, she agrees to prostitution with the notion that her basic human rights will be upheld. In some cases, traffickers will draft bogus contracts to reassure women that they will be treated

⁷² Skrobaneck, Boonpakdee, & Jantateero, 1997, 100.

⁷³ Liudmila Erokhina, 2005, 82, 83; Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 635.

fairly. The women only realize the gravity of their situation when they arrive in the destination country. Saskia Sassen describes what the true situation often becomes:

While some women know that they are being trafficked for prostitution, for many the conditions of their recruitment and the extent of abuse and bondage only become evident after they arrive in the receiving country. The conditions of confinement are often extreme, and so are the conditions of abuse, including rape and other forms of sexual violence and physical punishments. They are severely underpaid, and wages are often withheld. They are prevented from using protection methods to prevent against HIV, and they typically have no right to medical treatment.⁷⁴

Women who initially consent to migrate for prostitution are the most vulnerable to being treated as criminals because it is very difficult for law enforcement to prove that they are victims of any wrongdoing.⁷⁵ However, the women would not have initially consented to work in a foreign sex industry if they were aware of the true nature of their future working conditions. These women are so misled and ill-informed that any initial consent must be considered invalid and irrelevant in their treatment by law enforcement officials in their country of destination.

Once traffickers have recruited women from the country of origin, they must be transported to the buyer, who is usually in another country. This means that traffickers must take women over state borders. They do this using a variety of methods. Some women travel using legal travel documents such as temporary tourist or entertainer visas, and then overstay the time limit (usually 3 months) thereby becoming illegal aliens. Traffickers may also obtain legal documents by bribing corrupt officials, or by purchasing false travel documents from professional forgers.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Saskia Sassen, 2000, 518.

⁷⁵ Liudmila Erokhina, 2005, 82, 83.

⁷⁶ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, & Steinzor, 1999, 62; Malarek, 2003, 20.

The geography of sex traffic can be described as global and flexible. The IOM estimates that Russian and Eastern European women are trafficked to 40 countries, including states in Western Europe, the Far East, the Middle East, and North America.⁷⁷ The destination country for trafficked women, as well as the transport route, are determined by roughly five factors. The first factor that shapes the country of destination is the most influential. This is the geographical proximity of the country of origin to a large sex industry. For example, women from Eastern Europe and western parts of Russia are usually trafficked to Western Europe, while women from Russia's far east are trafficked to China, Japan, and Korea. Similarly, women recruited from the Caucasus or Romania are often trafficked to Turkey.⁷⁸ It is simply more efficient and less risky to take women to the nearest large sex market, rather than to cross multiple international borders.

The second factor that influences trafficking routes is border control. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the loss of centralized controls and the establishment of visa-free borders between the fifteen former Soviet Republics created ideal conditions for traffickers to begin exporting women for the sex trade.⁷⁹ One of the favoured routes to move women out of Russia, Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia has been the "Eastern Route." The Eastern Route is an overland trafficking route that winds through Poland, with Germany as the destination point. Traffickers have fake Polish passports made for the women they are transporting because Polish citizens do not require visas to enter Germany, thereby making the trafficking process easier.

⁷⁷ IOM "Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe" 26.

⁷⁸ Victor Malarek, 2003, 21; Louise Shelley, 2005, 70; Liudmila Erokhina, 2005, 82.

⁷⁹ Sally Stoecker, 2005, 21.

The influx of trafficked women into Germany from Eastern Europe, Russia, and the Newly Independent States, is so large that Caldwell et al., estimate that these women constitute between 60 and 80 percent of all women trafficked into Germany's red light districts, numbering approximately 15,000 in total.⁸⁰ Germany is also a popular destination because once women are inside Germany, traffickers can move them fairly simply into other European Union nations such as Italy or the Netherlands.⁸¹ Traffickers prefer to take the path of least resistance; if border controls are tightened in certain regions, traffickers will seek alternate routes to their destination.

The third factor which influences the pattern of trafficking is whether or not there are previously established links between trafficking networks, or pre-existing smuggling routes. Romanian and Turkish traffic networks have a tradition of working together, recruiting women in Romania and selling them to Turkish pimps and brothel owners.⁸² Another notorious trafficking route is the "Balkan" route. This route crosses the former Yugoslavia, with the European Union member states as the destination. This route was originally established to run guns and drugs, but the cargo has now been expanded to include women. It is not surprising that traffickers sometimes opt to use well-established routes, since these routes have proven to be successful in smuggling other illegal goods.⁸³

Trends in legitimate migration patterns are the fourth factor that may influence the geography of trafficking. If natural spikes occur in the number of people traveling from Russia or Eastern Europe to a certain area, traffickers may transport more women into this area, using the natural increase in legitimate migration to camouflage their activities.

⁸⁰ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, &Steinzor, 1999, 44.

⁸¹ Victor Malarek, 2003, 20, 21; Sietske Altink, 1995, 125.

⁸² Sietske Altink, 1995, 130.

⁸³ Victor Malarek, 2003, 21.

Donna Hughes cites the example of Israel. Migration of Russian Jews to Israel hit a spike in 2000. Traffickers began using this spike in migration to Israel to cover their movement of Russian women. Hughes says,

Russian and Ukrainian traffickers used this cover to bring 10,000 women into Israel for the sex industry. The sex industry in Israel has since grown to a US\$450 million a year industry, which is dependent on trafficked women from Eastern Europe.⁸⁴

The fifth factor in the geography of traffic is law enforcement. Traffickers may be drawn to regions where law enforcement is insufficient to combat their activities, and may avoid regions with established anti-trafficking laws and the political will to enforce them. However, increased law enforcement efforts may not always have the effect of discouraging traffic. In Kosovo, when police increased bar raids trafficking was merely driven further underground, to private apartments, where police raids were less likely.⁸⁵ Traffic's flexibility of operations will continue to pose a challenge for anti-trafficking efforts, within countries as well as at borders.

While being transported, trafficked women often begin to realize the gravity of their situation. They may become aware that they have been duped, and that there is no legitimate job or potential husband waiting for them at their destination. In order to prevent women from escaping, traffickers exert extreme control over the women while they are being transported to the destination country, or while they wait for a buyer. Traffickers often threaten the lives of women, or the lives of their family members back home.⁸⁶ Traffickers also keep women under lock and key when they are not traveling, or have actual guards posted in their rooms. The IOM notes that women are regularly

⁸⁴ Donna. M. Hughes, 2000, 632; Francis T. Miko, 2003, 9.

⁸⁵ IOM "Journeys of Jeopardy," 32.

⁸⁶ Louise Shelley, 2005, 71.

moved around within transit and destination countries. It is not known exactly if this is done to keep the women disoriented and dependent, or if it is merely a function of supply and demand in the sex market.⁸⁷ As traumatizing as the transport process is, it is only the beginning of the abuse that the women and girls will experience. Once they reach the destination country and are delivered to the buyers, the situation often becomes much worse. The buyers of trafficked women are the next group to be explored.

The Buyers

Who are the buyers and how do they operate?

Trafficking in women typically has three stages: the recruiting of women in the country of origin, their transport within or across borders, and the sale of women to the brothel owners and pimps who profit from their sexual exploitation. The buyers are not necessarily integrated with the same criminal group as the traffickers and recruiters; indeed, they are often of a different nationality than the women they buy. In some cases the brothel and club owners may be directly linked to the same criminal group as the traffickers (such as Russian Organized Crime in Israel and Turkey), however these cases do not seem to be the norm.⁸⁸ Once the buyers have paid for the women they are immediately forced into sex work for long hours each day, most days of the week. The immense profits that the buyers make from the women's earnings are often laundered through Western economies, so as to buy legitimate businesses or properties.⁸⁹

The women are put to work in various venues such as clubs, bars, behind windows in red light districts, and for escort services. The location in which the women

⁸⁷ IOM "Journeys of Jeopardy," 32.

⁸⁸ Louise Shelley, 2005, 73.

⁸⁹ Donna Hughes, 2000, 642.

will work is often a result of police activities in the area. If local police have a tendency to crack down on street prostitution, then the women will be moved off the street, to private clubs or escort agencies.⁹⁰ The length of time a woman will work for a buyer is often determined by her visa limitation. If she has been trafficked into the country using a legal visa, such as a tourist or entertainer visa, she may be sold to a buyer in another country when the visa expires. The usual time limit on visas of this nature is three months, which results in the woman being caught in a cycle of being sold to a new exploiter every three months. Bruinsma and Meershoek state, "In a steady, ongoing carousel, the women are bought and sold by brothel owners and traffickers from different regions across the borders of Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands."⁹¹

Women's Treatment by Buyers: Debt Bondage, Sexual Servitude and Sickness

The most disturbing aspect of sex traffic is not the involvement of organized crime, or the corruption of law enforcement, or even the recruiting of women through betrayal and fraud. The most disturbing aspect of sex traffic is the abuse the women and girls experience during the process of being sold to the exploiters in the destination country, and the conditions of servitude which follow. It is a safe assumption that all women who are trafficked for the sex trade against their will are abused in some form or another at different times in the trafficking process. The women, realizing their situation, must be controlled and forced to submit in order for the buyers to profit from them. In some regions traffickers and buyers are particularly violent and sadistic in their control of trafficked women.

⁹⁰ Gerben J.N. Bruinsma & Guus Meershoek, 1999, 113.

⁹¹ Gerben J.N. Bruinsma & Guus Meershoek, 1999, 113.

In his book “The Natashas”⁹² Victor Malarek uses the sex traffic industry in the Balkans as an example of extreme abuse of women within a region. Malarek describes what he calls the “breaking grounds” in Kosovo. Post-soviet women who are trafficked into Kosovo are taken to these breaking grounds to have their will to resist broken before they are sold to brothel owners. Here women are beaten, raped and humiliated, and if that is not sufficient for them to submit, traffickers will threaten to kill a woman’s family back home if they resist. Malarek sites an IOM official in Kosovo as saying, “There are big apartments or houses in Belgrade where most girls are brought. Sometimes there are fifty girls in each place.” The IOM official goes on to say that the brothel owners often insist on “test-driving” women like test driving a new car: “[The women] are sex-tested by each buyer. They want to see for themselves what the girls can do in terms of sexual performance.”⁹³

Women in Bosnia may be subjected to being sold to buyers at auctions. One such place is called “Arizona Market.” During the day Arizona Market is a busy marketplace, but at night the traffickers sell their stolen goods, weapons, and drugs. They have also begun to sell trafficked women in the market. A woman from a local women’s group reports: “They order the girls to take off all their clothes and they are standing in the road naked. They are exposed to be purchased like cattle.”⁹⁴ She goes on to say that similar “sex slave auctions” are held in nightclubs within the market with exotic names such as Acapulco and Las Vegas. Trafficked women are forced to submit to rape and untold

⁹² Victor Malarek’s title “The Natashas” comes from the common practice of buyers of Eastern European, NIS, and Russian women not differentiating between the countries of origin and referring to all these women as being Russian, and therefore referring to them all as “Natasha”.

⁹³ Victor Malarek, 2003, 31.

⁹⁴ Victor Malarek, 2003, 34-37.

humiliation; if they try to escape or resist their attackers, they are beaten, burned with cigarettes or even murdered as an example to other women.⁹⁵

After being bought by a pimp or brothel owner the trafficked woman's life gets no easier. As soon as the woman reaches the end destination, be it a brothel or club or private residence, the exploiter will immediately take her travel documents and identification, thereby removing her ability to travel independently and keeping her dependent on her exploiter.⁹⁶ The next step in the control and exploitation process is forcing the woman into a situation of debt bondage. The buyers make the woman work long hours as a prostitute and confiscate most or all of her earnings with the argument that the woman must pay off her debts to the buyer. These "debts" include the money the brothel owner spent to purchase her, and all expenses for her housing, her food, clothing, and any other expense the buyer can think of.⁹⁷ The debts become so large that in many cases there is no conceivable way the woman will ever be able to pay them off, which results in her living in a constant state of sexual slavery. This lack of funds, coupled with an absence of travel documents makes it almost impossible for a woman to escape her situation.

Buyers use various other forms of social control to keep women powerless and dependent. These include severing all contact between the women and their friends and family, and keeping women isolated from the society around them by forcing them to live where they work, often in conditions of near imprisonment. In many situations, the very country that the woman finds herself in imposes its own form of social isolation, as the women are placed in the midst of a foreign country where they are usually unfamiliar

⁹⁵ Victor Malarek, 2003, 37-40.

⁹⁶ Liudmila Erokhina, 2005, 87.

⁹⁷ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, & Steinzor, 1999, 62-65.

with the local culture and language. Control is solidified by the constant threat of violence to themselves and their families, and the threat that the police will arrest and deport them if they go to the authorities for help, (which may very well be true).⁹⁸

Caldwell et al., sums up by saying,

Using such actions, traffickers and brothel operators imprison women in a world of economic and sexual exploitation that imposes constant fear of arrest and deportation, as well as of reprisals by the traffickers themselves, to whom the women must pay off accrued debts.⁹⁹

The end result of the breaking grounds and these control tactics is that trafficked women often become indistinguishable from voluntary prostitutes. They must pretend to be interested and eager to have sex for money, or they will meet with violent consequences from their pimp. Malarek states,

In their cheap makeup, sleazy outfits and stiletto heels, they walk the same walk and talk the same talk. They smile, they wink, they pose and they strut, but they do it because they know what will happen if they don't. In short, they're forced to do whatever it takes with whoever asks, as long as he pays, and they're forced to do it with a smile on their face, a sparkle in their eyes and a moan on their lips...exactly as trained in the breaking grounds.¹⁰⁰

Many months or even years of this treatment result in serious physical and mental consequences for the victims of sex traffic. Physically, the trafficked women suffer from a multitude of ailments. Due to the stresses of their situation and the nature of the environment in which they are forced to live and work, women often become addicted to drugs and alcohol. They may use addiction as a means of escape, or their pimps may encourage addiction as a way of keeping the women dependent.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Shelley, 2005, 73; Caldwell, Galster, Kanics & Steinzor, 1999, 62.

⁹⁹ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics & Steinzor, 1999, 63.

¹⁰⁰ Victor Malarek, 2003, 4, 42.

¹⁰¹ Caldwell, Galster, Kanics, & Steinzor, 1999, 66.

Victims of sex traffic may be forced to have sex without condoms, which results in most being infected with various STDs, with some contracting HIV. These diseases may fail to be treated for many months or even years due to a lack of access to proper medical facilities and services. Similarly, sex without condoms or other forms of contraception results in most prostitutes becoming pregnant at some point, which leads to unsafe abortions or abandoned infants. The Czech city of Teplice is located near the E-55 highway which runs between Dresden and Prague. A five mile stretch of the E-55 close to Teplice is likened to a huge open air brothel, where many trafficked women are put to work servicing the men who drive along the highway. This activity has caused a large problem in Teplice due to the unwanted babies of the local prostitutes. Malarek reports the situation at Teplice:

On average, three prostitutes give birth each month. Many of the babies are born with syphilis or are HIV-positive. Some are drug addicted. A doctor at the hospital noted that abortions are costly and that many of the women work right up to the day that they go into labor. In fact, a steady stream of clients comes specifically to have sex with pregnant women, and they're willing to pay a premium for the opportunity. Nearby in a beleaguered orphanage, about seventy E-55 babies are on display, awaiting adoption.¹⁰²

The physical damage caused by repeated rape, beatings, sexually transmitted diseases and unsafe abortions is equaled or even exceeded by the mental trauma brought on by these experiences. In their article "Trafficking in women in Bulgaria: a new stage" Milena Stateva and Nadya Kozhouharova detail the psychological consequences experienced by the victims of sex traffic. They argue that survivors of sex traffic experience severe psychological trauma that manifests itself as post traumatic stress disorder. The woman's symptoms may include identifying with the traffickers,

¹⁰² Victor Malarek, 2003, 28.

identifying themselves as prostitutes, various personality disorders, a loss of trust in relationships, and a loss of memory of their life before they were trafficked. Women may turn their aggression inward or feel severe shame and guilt. These psychological changes make it very difficult for women to adapt back to a normal life if they ever escape their sexual servitude. Stateva and Kozhouharova describe the difficulty of women trying to adapt to life after being trafficked:

There are often psychotic breakdowns and somatizations that cause physical illness. The lack of appropriate treatment and understanding of the trauma can have a dramatic effect on personality, causing problems with assertiveness, initiative, and planning. As any independent action had been severely punished by traffickers, survivors often look passive or helpless. Their drive to keep extremely private and to hide their intentions was a survival strategy in captivity, but is often misunderstood as being manipulative and deceitful afterwards.¹⁰³

After some time has passed and a woman has aged and suffered these physical and mental traumas, her marketability as a desirable prostitute is lessened. In these cases the pimps and brothel owners may try to sell her off to another buyer, thereby making some additional income from her. Pimps may also try this tactic when a woman is close to paying off her debts; selling her to another buyer ensures that the woman will never be free of debt bondage. If another buyer cannot be found for a woman, the brothel owner may dispose of the woman by throwing her out onto the street, or by tipping off corrupt authorities, who will arrest her and have her deported, allowing her buyer to keep all of her earnings.¹⁰⁴ Malarek says, “To their owners and pimps, they’re perishable goods to be used to the fullest before they spoil.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Milena Stateva & Nadya Kozhouharova, “Trafficking in women in Bulgaria: a new stage” *Special Issue on Post-Communism in Feminist Review*, No.76 2004, 113.

¹⁰⁴ Donna M. Hughes, “The ‘Natasha’ Trade, 2000, 633.

¹⁰⁵ Victor Malarek, 2003, 4.

The sex traffic industry snares women for the sole purpose of exploiting their bodies, taking the earnings, and then throwing the women away like common waste. Many women die as a result of their trauma, whether it is from disease, murder, or by suicide. The women who survive being trafficked through escape or rescue are never the same as they were before their ordeal. As we will see in subsequent chapters, it is next to impossible for victims of this abuse to get justice for themselves for reasons such as police apathy, being treated as criminals by the government, and fear of reprisals from traffickers. For now, it is important to realize that sex traffic would not be such a lucrative criminal enterprise if there was no demand for paid sex. It is to this demand side of the equation that the thesis now turns.

The Demand Side of Sex Traffic

Without men who are willing to buy sexual services, there would be no demand, and hence, no reason to supply women for the global sex industry. As important as the demand side of the sex traffic equation is, very little attention is paid to it. Academic research on the demand for trafficked women is severely lacking. Concrete answers are missing for many questions, such as: can a profile be formulated on the men who purchase sex with foreign women? Do these men realize that the women may be trafficked against their will, and do they care? If a man suspects that a woman is trafficked, does that change his behaviour toward her in any way? Do these men prefer foreign prostitutes over local prostitutes and does this drive the demand for trafficked women, or do men use foreign prostitutes simply because they are available? All these questions have not been sufficiently addressed in the literature.

Donna Hughes argues that traffic takes place because there is more demand for women in the destination sex markets than there are voluntary prostitutes. She says, "If prostitution were a desirable, rewarding and lucrative job, traffickers would not have to deceive, coerce and enslave women to get them into, and keep them, in the sex industry."¹⁰⁶ Phil Williams and Carolina Johansson Wennerholm both point to "cultural and psychological factors" which encourage men in a society to think that it is acceptable or even biologically necessary to pay for sexual services, whenever and wherever they desire them. These cultural attitudes foster the notion that women are merely objects which are available for commercial sexual gratification, without thought given to the age or personal situation of the women whose sexual services they are purchasing.¹⁰⁷

Societal attitudes toward the acceptability of men purchasing sex versus women selling it is manifested in the language used to discuss prostitution. Women are referred to using derogatory labels such as sluts and whores, whether they are voluntary prostitutes or not, while the men who buy these women for their own sexual gratification are called neutral names such as johns, clients, or customers, which do not have the same negative connotations. Victor Malarek states, "This wordsmithing is not without purpose- it makes it easier for men and society to objectify, commodify and then dismiss the victims."¹⁰⁸

Hughes argues that the sexual commodification of post-soviet women has been greatly intensified by the "expanding economic, political, and social transnational linkages" of globalization that are "increasingly beyond local and state control."¹⁰⁹ Along

¹⁰⁶ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 645.

¹⁰⁷ Phil Williams, 1999, 154; Carolina Johansson Wennerholm, 2002, 13; Malarek, 2003, 79.

¹⁰⁸ Victor Malarek, 2003, 80.

¹⁰⁹ Donna Hughes, 2000, 3.

with the positive impacts of globalization on post-soviet states, such as increased freedom of migration and communication, came the darker side of globalization. This included the expansion of black market economies, an increase in the transnational linkages between NIS criminal groups and foreign sex industries, and the ability of traffickers to mask trafficking activities behind increases in female migration out of the region.¹¹⁰ Hughes also notes that increased computer communication has facilitated the illegal financial activities of traffickers, such as the transfer and laundering of money.¹¹¹

In addition to financial activities, traffickers use global computer communication and the internet to recruit and sell women into foreign sex markets. The internet has caused an explosion in sex tourism; men can shop for foreign women in brothels across the globe from the comfort and anonymity of their own homes, choosing which woman in which red light district they would like to buy on their next business trip or vacation. In the red light districts of Southeast Asia, Russian women are in high demand because they are deemed exotic by the locals and have become a “symbol of social prestige.”¹¹² Malarek says, “Without a doubt, the internet has turned the already blistering global sex market into a red-hot inferno.”¹¹³ Malarek cites the particularly depraved example of the Ukrainian Exotic Escort Agency auctioning off a day with a nineteen year old virgin on ebay. The young woman’s virginity was purchased for three thousand dollars; no one seemed interested in who this girl was or why she would allow her virginity to be auctioned off to the highest bidder.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Hughes, 2000, 3.

¹¹¹ Hughes, 2000, 3.

¹¹² Stoecker and Shelley, 2005, 15; Liudmila Erokhina, 2005, 84.

¹¹³ Victor Malarek, 2003, 80.

¹¹⁴ Victor Malarek, 2003, 80.

Some of the best sources of information on the attitudes and behaviours of the men who pay for sex with trafficked women are the online forums on which men trade information on global sex industries. One such forum is the World Sex Guide.¹¹⁵ On this website, men discuss their sexual exploits with prostitutes in other countries. This site is very extensive and has posts on the sex industries in most countries in the world. The men who post comments on this forum are self-indulgent to the extreme. They do not particularly care where a girl has come from, if she is of legal age, or if she is a prostitute against her will. They are solely concerned with how attractive a girl is, the quality of their sexual experience, and how much they paid for it. The World Sex Guide is divided into regions, and then subdivided into countries so men can post their experiences in each country. A post in the section on Bosnia read the following:

While the US military was stationed at “FOB Conner”, a strip club in Srebrenica (across the street from the police station) was a frequent haunt. The town is very poor...not many jobs. Most places are mob run (2-3 clubs/café)...but fair. The 4-6 girls at this unnamed place are Russian...and very talented. Standard pricing was...60 MARKS (about \$30 US) for full service for 30 min...well worth the cost. As an SFOR patrol leader I had no shortage of volunteers to night patrol the streets of this town. The girls of the region are very attractive...they bloom with nice breasts/slim bodies very early...but as they age to about 30, they look the roughness that they have lived.¹¹⁶

Another post gives advice on brothels in Holland:

There are plenty of private clubs and clubs with bars to choose from over the country. As prostitution is legal in Holland you do not have to be afraid. Occasionally girls from non-EU countries without permit are apprehended and kicked out, especially from the former eastern block though there are also legal girls from that region. But that is not your concern. Have fun!¹¹⁷

A post from Turkey demonstrates the lack of consequences for the buyer of illegal women:

¹¹⁵ World Sex Guide, found at [www://worldsexguide.com](http://www.worldsexguide.com), accessed 10 October, 2006.

¹¹⁶ World Sex Guide, found at www.worldsexguide.com, accessed 25 March, 2006.

¹¹⁷ World Sex Guide.

Check out the Laleli / Aksaray area instead. Thanks to the current dynamics of our globalizing world, Istanbul is swarmed with young chicks from Eastern Europe and Russia. One bar is “Bacardi Disco” in Aksaray, but it occasionally gets busted by the cops. But have no fear, even if you get busted, they will usually not prosecute the customer. They will take you to the police station, get a statement and let you go. The girls, they send them to the hospital and if they have a problem with their visa (which frequently they do) they will be deported.¹¹⁸

As we can see, many men realize that the brothels they visit are stocked with illegal women from foreign countries, but this does not deter them from their exploits. Indeed, some men such as the one below know that the woman they are paying for sex has been trafficked against her will, but they do not report it to the authorities, or even ask for a different woman. They have absolutely no qualms about having sex with a woman who has been forced into prostitution. The one below even has the audacity to complain about the girl’s performance, even though he knows she is the captive of her exploiters. This man posts from Milan, saying:

But if you can’t travel and want action in Milan, you can get it. You want to get the Eastern European girls. They’re usually the best-looking, and the cheapest. But you need to call a lot of them to get the best possible deal. Most of these girls are not in business because they need the money, but because they were tricked into becoming a prostitute. They don’t like to show their faces on the website because they fear that loved ones might recognize them and realize that they don’t work as a model like they claim, but as a prostitute. Because they were tricked into becoming a prostitute, they don’t perform like your girlfriend would. They don’t want you in their bed, they don’t want your money- they just want to get out of this mess! So, if you go there with the expectation of getting treated like a gentleman would, forget it. Some of these girls look in fact just like fashion models. They’re tall and thin, and absolutely gorgeous. In some people’s book, they might be a 9 or a 10. But their attitude is more like a 5. Don’t expect her to kiss you, she won’t.¹¹⁹

Men who seek out sex with prostitutes without regard for their status as voluntary or forced sex workers increase the incidence of trafficking in women by creating and

¹¹⁸ World Sex Guide.

¹¹⁹ World Sex Guide.

sustaining a demand for these women. They do not care about the situation of these women, and they are not afraid of getting caught because there are no consequences to their actions, even where prostitution is illegal. They are self-centered, self-indulgent, and more concerned about bragging to other men about their sexual prowess with young Russian women than in the sexual servitude of the women they purchase. Their sexual gratification is given a higher priority than the basic human dignity of others. These men frequently sign off their posts with the encouragement “Happy Hunting” which is exactly what they do; they prey on the bodies of women and girls who only wanted a better life for themselves and their families and were duped into a nightmare situation.

A final post sums up the sense of sexual entitlement that the men of the World Sex Guide possess, “After following your reports around the world, I have come to the conclusion that this is an invaluable service you provide. Keep up the good work for the male race.”¹²⁰ Unfortunately, post-soviet globalization and the internet have brought with them the nasty side effects of exposing trafficked women not only to exploitation in the country of destination, but also to global exploitation through forced internet pornography which can be accessed by anyone with an internet connection.

As important as the internet is in expanding the global sex industry, any discussion of the demand side of trafficking would be incomplete if it did not explore the role of militarization.¹²¹ In her publication “Barracks and Brothels”, Sarah Mendelson studied the impact of the arrival of NATO, UN, and American troops on sexual trafficking activity in the post-conflict Balkan region. Mendelson reports that when

¹²⁰ World Sex Guide, www.worldsexguide.com, accessed 25, March 2006.

¹²¹ Militarization and its link to prostitution and trafficking could be an entire thesis topic in and of itself. Unfortunately it is not in the scope of this work to study the history of militarization and forced prostitution.

international peacekeeping forces entered the Balkan region, the IOM and the UN recorded a dramatic rise in women and girls being trafficked into the Balkans. She states that spikes in the number of foreign women in prostitution followed troop deployments first to Bosnia, and later to Kosovo.¹²² Experts in trafficking in the region estimate that in 2002 and 2003, up to 90 percent of foreign women working in the Balkan sex industry were trafficked, and primarily originated from Albania, Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria.¹²³ Mendelson states, “Trafficking- especially the enslavement of women and girls for forced prostitution- follows market demand and, in post-conflict situations, that demand is often created by international peacekeepers.”¹²⁴

Although the majority of peacekeepers are not involved in trafficking or purchasing prostitution, there are enough peacekeepers who purchase sex with foreign prostitutes to significantly increase the demand for paid sex in a region, which encourages traffickers to provide a supply of women.¹²⁵ Mendelson cites a representative of the Office of the High Representative in Bosnia as stating, “you could plot the closure of the night bars with the removal of troops and the ending of [UN] IPTF.”¹²⁶ In 2004 the U.S Department of Defense and NATO both adopted zero tolerance policies which prohibited their personnel from “engaging in or facilitating human trafficking.”¹²⁷ Mendelson argues that despite this zero tolerance policy, peacekeepers are not expected to take any measures to identify or block human trafficking activities in the region they occupy. Interviews conducted by Mendelson clearly indicate that many high ranking

¹²² Sarah E. Mendelson, “Barracks and Brothels: Peacekeepers and Human Trafficking in the Balkans” (Washington D.C., The CSIS Press, 2005) 9.

¹²³ Mendelson, 2005, 9.

¹²⁴ Mendelson, 2005, 1.

¹²⁵ Mendelson, 2005, 2.

¹²⁶ Mendelson, 2005, 12.

¹²⁷ Mendelson, 2005, 5.

military officials do not consider human trafficking a problem worthy of their attention. In fact, some even feel that the use of trafficked women to sexually service military personnel is inevitable, taking a “boys will be boys” attitude toward the problem.¹²⁸

Even if military officials are not concerned about human trafficking from a human rights standpoint, they should, at the very least, be concerned about the destabilizing influence of wealthy and emboldened organized crime groups in post-conflict regions and how they may detrimentally affect international military operations. Criminal groups earning large amounts of money from trafficking in humans, drugs, or other activities have the ability to destabilize and corrupt an already volatile post-conflict society, as well as fund paramilitaries and other groups. In their article “Trafficking Women after Socialism: To, Through, and from Eastern Europe” Gail Kligman and Stephanie Limoncelli report that sex and drug trafficking in the Balkans “enabled both the Kosovo Liberation Army...and the National Liberation Army in Macedonia to be outfitted with the latest in rocket propelled grenades, machine guns, mortars, sniper rifles and night vision goggles.”¹²⁹ From a very basic military standpoint then, it is advisable to combat human trafficking in order to prevent the profits from being used to equip opposing forces.

Similarly to the Balkans, there are reports that the Iraq war has increased the levels of human trafficking in areas where troops are concentrated. Kligman and Limoncelli report, “Soon after U.S. military planes began landing in Romania’s Black Sea port city Constanta, in February 2003, in preparation for war in Iraq, the sex trade

¹²⁸ Mendelson, 2005, 34.

¹²⁹ Gail Kligman and Stephanie Limoncelli, “Trafficking Women After Socialism: To, Through, and From Eastern Europe” in *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, Volume 12, Number 1, Spring 2005, 127.

traffic there increased.”¹³⁰ It is imperative for the reduction of traffic in women that commanders of international military forces recognize that the military is largely responsible for the demand for prostitutes in areas surrounding military bases, and therefore needs to take a stand against the sexual exploitation of women and girls, both foreign and local.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the anatomy of the ‘fourth wave’ of sexual trafficking. This latest wave has snared thousands of young female victims since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and has resulted in their sexual exploitation in the sex industries of up to 50 countries. The explosion of this wave of post-soviet traffic would not have been possible without the presence of three crucial variables: the supply of young, economically desperate post-soviet women and girls willing to take a chance on migration abroad; the demand for these females in the sex industries of Western Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and North America; and the existence of individuals and organized crime groups who are more than willing to profit from the sexual exploitation of the most vulnerable in their society. If any one of these variables had been missing, this fourth wave would not have occurred, or would have been severely limited. Unfortunately, in the post-soviet setting, all the necessary variables converged to create the perfect conditions for a surge in sexual trafficking.

This chapter examined how global demand for trafficked women has been intensified by the forces of globalization-especially the internet- and militarization, and detailed the startling ease with which traffickers operate. This chapter also stated that

¹³⁰ Kligman and Limoncelli, 2005, 127.

there is a supply of vulnerable post-soviet women for traffickers to exploit because they are economically desperate and are determined to seek a better life in another country.

However, questions remain as to why this is the case. Why are women desperate to move out of the Newly Independent States, and what conditions are keeping them from attaining their goals in their home countries? Also, from a theoretical standpoint, does the global sexual exploitation of post-soviet women have a place in the field of International Relations, and if so, what International Relations theory or perspective(s) is most appropriate to analyze this issue? It is to these debates that we now turn.

Chapter Three A Feminist Analysis of Post-Soviet Sex Traffic

Feminism, the Third Debate, and International Relations

The sexual trafficking of post-soviet women is a largely uncharted subject within the field of International Relations. Twenty years ago, sex traffic would have been considered well outside of the boundaries of IR as a discipline. In addition, it has only been in the last two decades that IR has begun to appreciate the impact of domestic politics on the field. Before this time the domestic political decisions made by the USSR would have remained on the fringe of the discipline.¹ Traditionally, the discipline of International Relations has been devoted to the study of relations between sovereign states, especially inter-state conflict and issues of power, military security and defence.² The dominant theory within IR, realism, made the assumption that sovereign states were the key actors in international relations³ and therefore the field of IR could be studied without reference to issues considered to be personal rather than political, such as gender or the trafficking of women.⁴ Because of this belief, many International Relations scholars resisted the arguments made by feminists that gender issues are deeply imbedded within mainstream IR.⁵

However, having said this, in the past two decades there has been increasing support within International Relations for pushing the boundaries of the discipline

¹ Peter Gourevitch, "Domestic Politics and International Relations" in *Handbook of International Relations*, Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse & Beth A. Simmons, eds., (London: Sage Publications, 2002) 309.

² V. Spike Peterson, "Feminisms and International Relations" in *Gender and History*, Vol. 10, No.3, (November 1998), 581-589.

³ James E. Dougherty & Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*, 5th edition, James E. Dougherty & Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., eds., (New York: Longman, 2001) 63, 64.

⁴ Jill Steans, *Gender and International Relations*, (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1998) 1.

⁵ Jill Steans, 1998, 1.

outward, in order to incorporate a broader and more complex understanding of who and what constitutes 'the international.' The late 1980s marked the beginning of the "Third Debate" in International Relations.⁶ This third debate raised questions about the nature of theory and research methods in IR. Jill Steans writes that it "opened up discussions about what we take to be the nature of the world we are studying, what can be said to exist, what is significant and insignificant, and the nature and purpose of knowledge."⁷ J. Ann Tickner relates that scholars on the critical side of the third debate disagree with the positivist methodologies used by 'conventional' IR scholars, who seek to find "objective, universal" explanations for events in International Relations.⁸ Critical theories such as post-Marxist theory and postmodernism criticize the idea that there is an objective reality in International Relations that can be viewed by an impartial observer who is removed from power relations and ideology.⁹ Tickner argues that these critiques have resulted in the expansion of the boundaries of what is acceptable subject matter in IR, which has "opened up space for feminist perspectives in a way that previous IR debates did not."¹⁰

V. Spike Peterson argues that feminists are often considered part of the critical movement in the third debate in IR because they challenged (and continue to challenge) the boundaries and norms of the discipline. Feminists did this by incorporating gender into the study of IR, and by pointing out gender hierarchy and masculinism. Feminist scholars argued that the field of IR was fundamentally biased and androcentric because it did not take into account the lives and experiences of women. As J. Ann Tickner points

⁶ Jill Steans, 1998, 33.

⁷ Jill Steans, 1998, 34.

⁸ J. Ann Tickner, "Feminist Perspectives on International Relations" in *Handbook of International Relations*, Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse & Beth A. Simmons, eds., (London: Sage Publications, 2002) 276.

⁹ Jill Steans, 1998, 34, 35.

¹⁰ J. Ann Tickner, 2002, 276.

out in her book, *Gender in International Relations*, International Relations was comfortable basing its “assumptions and explanations almost entirely on the activities and experiences of men” while rendering invisible the experiences and knowledge of women.¹¹ Although women played important and diverse roles in international politics, they rarely crafted policy and their opinions on how international policies affected their lives were, for the most part, silent.¹² Feminist scholars sought to shift this male-as-norm paradigm to include the knowledge and experiences of women.

In order to bring women’s knowledge into IR, feminists encourage transdisciplinary study, and largely reject positivist methodologies that claim the ‘neutrality of facts’ based primarily on the experiences and observations of men.¹³ Feminists often subscribe to post-positivist methodologies, which allow a greater connection with research subjects, acknowledge the voices of the disempowered, and avoid the closure of debate.¹⁴ Feminist and other critical theories have succeeded in expanding what is considered acceptable scholarly activity in the field of IR. This allows for the exploration of topics outside of the ‘high’ politics of conflict, such as economic globalization, ethnic conflict, and the trafficking of women.¹⁵ Although topics, such as trafficking, which push the disciplinary boundaries of International Relations still have the ability to raise the eyebrows of traditional IR scholars, they have found more acceptance than prior to the third debate.

¹¹ J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992) 6, 14.

¹² J. Ann Tickner, *Gendering World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001) 2.

¹³ V. Spike Peterson, “Transgressing Boundaries: Theories of Knowledge, Gender and International Relations” in *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol.21, No.2, 1992, pp.183-206, 191, 197, 199.

¹⁴ Craig N. Murphy, “Seeing Women, Recognizing Gender, Recasting International Relations” in *International Organization*, 50, 3, Summer 1996, pp.513-38, 526.

¹⁵ J. Ann Tickner, 2002, 275.

Feminism, Gender, and the Subordination of Women

J. Ann Tickner states, “The key concern for all types of feminist theory has been to explain women’s subordination or the unjustified asymmetry between women and men’s social and economic position and to seek prescriptions for ending it.”¹⁶ Feminist study typically begins by searching for the ways in which gender and gender hierarchies create asymmetry between men and women.¹⁷ In their book, *Global Gender Issues*, V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan describe how gender and gender norms act to disadvantage women. Peterson and Runyan, as do most feminists, describe gender as “socially learned behaviour and expectations that distinguish between masculinity and femininity.”¹⁸ Through socialization, men and women are encouraged to display certain gender characteristics such as aggression, dominance, and reason for men, and passivity, nurturance, and dependence for women. The problem of gender inequality stems not from these characteristics, per se, but from the practice of valuing the stereotypical masculine traits over the stereotypical feminine traits. This valuing of the masculine and devaluing of the feminine creates what feminists call a gender hierarchy.

V. Spike Peterson argues that this gender hierarchy, or the privileging of masculinity over femininity, creates conditions where the stories and concerns of women become secondary, or the ‘background’ to the primary or ‘main story’ of men. Because of this, little or no analysis was traditionally conducted on the role of women in international politics as it was deemed irrelevant to issues such as war or economic competition. By introducing gender into IR, or, as Peterson advocates, using a gender

¹⁶ J. Ann Tickner, 2002, 276.

¹⁷ J. Ann Tickner, “You Just Don’t Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists” in *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41 (1997), 621.

¹⁸ V. Spike Peterson & Anne Sisson Runyan, *Global Gender Issues*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, Westview Press, 1999) 5.

sensitive lens when studying issues in international relations, we can begin to uncover the women in international politics and start to understand how gender roles are used to justify the subordination of women and the perpetuation of the structures of global patriarchy.¹⁹ In her groundbreaking book, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, Cynthia Enloe states,

If we employ only the conventional, ungendered compass to chart international politics, we are likely to end up mapping a landscape peopled only by men, mostly elite men. The real landscape of international politics is less exclusively male... Ignoring women on the landscape of international politics perpetuates the notion that certain power relations are merely a matter of taste and culture. Paying serious attention to women can expose how *much* power it takes to maintain the international political system in its present form.²⁰

The first chapters of this thesis acted to bring the treatment of trafficked women from the background of IR to the forefront (at least within the pages of this work). They argued that traffic in post-soviet women is an international assault on basic human rights and dignity, and that the abuses endured by women at the hands of international criminals, pimps and ‘johns’ demand the attention of the international system. The goal of this chapter, to borrow from Enloe’s terminology, is to use a “gendered compass”²¹ to chart the ways in which gender and gender inequalities in post-soviet states create or contribute to the conditions which are necessary for the practice of sexual trafficking in women.

Deciding on the appropriate ideological and theoretical framework with which to analyze the topic of sex traffic is a challenging task. This issue requires an interdisciplinary approach as no single theory stands out as being able to neatly explain

¹⁹ V. Spike Peterson & Anne Sisson Runyan, 1999, 5, 9, 30, 31, 40, 41, 50; Jill Steans, 1998, 11.

²⁰ Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1989) 1.

²¹ Cynthia Enloe, 1989, 1.

and encompass the multifaceted dimensions of this topic, which include international organized crime, gender inequality, human rights abuses, the political economy of sex, illegal immigration, and national and international law. However, as complex as the topic is, the bottom line is that sex traffic is an international threat which primarily targets women and girls, and that the conditions which make women and children vulnerable to this abuse originate and are perpetuated by systemic gender inequalities leading to the subordination of women to men. Because of this, the theoretical analysis of sex traffic in post-soviet states must be rooted in feminism.

Within feminism in IR there are numerous branches of thought, such as liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, postmodern feminism, and radical feminism. These branches of feminist theory explain gender inequality and male domination of women in different ways, and often disagree on key points or even entire approaches. The theoretical stream of liberal feminism will be used as the starting point for the analysis of sex traffic in post-soviet states. The objective is to determine if liberal feminism alone is adequate to analyze the conditions of female subordination which lead to sex traffic in post-soviet states, or if liberal feminism needs to be augmented or replaced by other feminist arguments.

In order to explore if liberal feminism is a suitable theory with which to analyze the conditions leading to sex traffic, it is important to first outline the core beliefs and arguments of this branch of feminism. In her book, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*, Rosemarie Putnam Tong argues that the main thrust of liberal feminism “is that female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal

constraints blocking women's entrance to and success in the so-called public world."²² Liberal feminists argue that women are given a lesser place in traditional areas of male privilege such as the academy, the forum, and the marketplace because women are expected to conform to oppressive gender roles. Gender expectations which dictate that women's place is in the private realm of the home and family make it easy to justify granting women little or no voice in areas such as politics or economics. Liberal feminists assert that women's discrimination from the public sphere acts to kill women's true potential as free individuals.²³ Because of this, liberal feminists advocate the goal of gender justice, in which women achieve sexual equality with men, meaning they have equal rights and opportunities to fully pursue their self-interest.

In order for women to attain gender justice and reach their full potential, numerous obstacles must be overcome. First, the rules of the game must be fair for all participants so that no one group is systematically disadvantaged. To create fair rules and not disadvantage women as a sexual class, liberal feminists argue for the elimination of all legal and de facto constraints on women so that they may enjoy the same rights as men, as well as equal educational and occupational opportunities.²⁴ Although the state is often viewed as one of the perpetrators of discrimination against women, liberal feminists argue that the state is the only institution that has the capacity and authority to enforce women's rights. Tickner says, "although it may engage in discrimination in practice, the state is capable of becoming the neutral arbiter necessary to ensure women's equality."²⁵

²² Rosemarie Putnam Tong, *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction*, 2nd ed., (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998) 2.

²³ Putnam Tong, 1998, 32.

²⁴ J. Ann Tickner, 2001, 12; Janet A. Kourany, James P. Sterba & Rosemarie Tong, eds., *Feminist Philosophies* 2nd ed., (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1999) 310.

²⁵ Tickner, 2001, 12.

Liberal feminists are often criticized for being reformist, that is, they campaign to make changes within the existing system to combat female discrimination and disadvantage rather than advocating the establishment of a new system.²⁶ Radical feminists argue that liberal feminists' strategy of removing legal barriers to women's advancement fails to go far enough to change the status of female subordination.²⁷ Radical feminists see women's oppression as stemming from systems of patriarchy that pervade not only the legal system, but also political, economic, social, and cultural institutions.²⁸ They believe that patriarchal structures and attitudes in these spheres, which are characterized by the power and dominance of men, create and maintain women's subordination to men.²⁹

According to radical feminists, patriarchal socialization encourages rigid ideas about gender roles and sexuality. This socialization disadvantages women by perpetuating the belief that because women bear children it is natural that they also act as primary caregivers and maintain the private realm. If women's natural role is in the private realm, this leaves the more powerful and competitive public realm open exclusively to men. Radical feminists fight against this constructed 'naturalization' of women's oppression.³⁰ Women are also controlled sexually by this patriarchal socialization. Radical feminists refer to the idea that men must have access to women as the "Patriarchal Imperative."³¹ They argue that men control women's feminine traits and sexuality for their own pleasure through "education, law, and economics; through

²⁶ Kournay, Sterba & Tong, 1999, 310.

²⁷ Janet A. Kournay, James P. Sterba & Rosemarie Tong, 1999, 350.

²⁸ Kournay, Sterba & Tong, 1999, 350.

²⁹ Jill Steans, 1998, 19.

³⁰ J. Ann Tickner, 2002, 277; & Kournay, Sterba & Tong, 1999, 350, 351.

³¹ Kournay, Sterba & Tong, 1999, 351, 352.

pornography, prostitution, sexual harassment, rape, and woman battering; and through foot binding, suttee, purdah, clitoridectomy, witch-burning, and gynecology.”³²

As we can see, from a radical feminist point of view, the root of women’s subordination, patriarchy, is so embedded in societal constructs that removing legal barriers only scratches the surface of the problem. Jill Steans says,

From this perspective, women’s liberation does not only involve striving to achieve formal equality, access to public space and to the means of production, but also involves a thorough-going transformation in the most private and intimate spheres of human relationships.³³

Thus, radical feminism advocates that instead of aspiring to male values, women should celebrate values and roles that are developed out of the desires and experiences of women.³⁴ Jill Steans relates that radical feminism encourages the challenging of patriarchy and male structures by engaging in “woman-centred analysis.”³⁵ This woman-centred approach diverges from the liberal feminist approach of encouraging the success of women within existing male structures. More extreme radical feminist prescriptions for challenging patriarchy include the sexual separation of women from men as well as the removal of goods and services from men in order to destroy patriarchal power.³⁶ Although these more ‘radical’ suggestions may be improbable, there is much in radical feminism’s explanation of women’s subordination and patriarchy that may be valuable to discussions of post-soviet sex traffic.

When studying the traffic of women from post-soviet states, one is first struck by the descriptions of the inner workings of this inhumane trade. However, once the reality

³² Kournay, Sterba & Tong, 1999, 351.

³³ Jill Steans, 1998, 20.

³⁴ Jill Steans, 1998, 20.

³⁵ Jill Steans, 1998, 20.

³⁶ Kournay, Sterba & Tong, 1999, 351, 352.

of the cycle of manipulation, abuse, and abandonment sinks in, one is left to question why women from the former Soviet Union are so vulnerable to this phenomenon; what economic, political, and social conditions make these women easy targets for traffickers and how is this cycle perpetuated? A rudimentary liberal feminist framework to begin addressing these questions is contained in a statement by Jill Steans, from her book *Gender and International Relations: An Introduction*. She states,

Liberal feminists focus on *women* in international relations and are primarily concerned with the empirical dimensions of women's inequality, the economic and social status of women around the world, the suppression of women's human rights and the denial of justice to women.³⁷

Within this statement are three components which are key to creating and sustaining the conditions needed for the sexual traffic of women in the former Soviet Union. The first condition for traffic is the severe economic hardship endured by the women of the former Soviet Union brought on by the rapid transition from communism to capitalism. The second condition is the ease with which the human rights of women are violated. The third condition needed to sustain traffic is the denial of justice to women in the form of both the absence of political equality, and the lack of enforcement of existing laws.

Sex traffic in post-soviet states occurs and continues to grow because women in the region are subordinate to men. They do not have the equality of rights and opportunities that liberal feminists fight for. They are disadvantaged in the public sphere, notably in business and economics, in politics, and in the drafting and enforcement of national and international laws. Partly because of this, women are vulnerable to being snared and exploited by traffickers, who blatantly disregard the basic human rights of their victims. However, the question remains, if liberal feminist goals were realized in

³⁷ Jill Steans, 1998, 160.

post-soviet states, would sex traffic lessen as a result, or are there other factors beyond legal equality in the public sphere which are important to women's subordinate status and which may be contributing to traffic in important ways? The next section of the chapter will outline liberal feminist arguments on how a lack of gender equality disadvantages women in economics and politics, and will attempt to determine if liberal feminist goals go far enough to challenge the conditions of female subordination which breed sexual trafficking.

Post-Soviet Economic Hardship and Traffic

Several socio-economic factors have been handicapping post-soviet women and making them into prime targets for local trafficking recruiters. These factors include a lack of economic opportunity, workplace harassment and discrimination, and an absence of regulation and support for women in the post-soviet workplace. The hasty transition of state economies from communist to capitalist after the dissolution of the Soviet Union had numerous detrimental effects on the economic standing of men and women in the region. However, in "Victims and Agents: Gender in Post-Soviet States," Mary Buckley argues that the economic status of women has been affected more detrimentally than that of post-soviet men.³⁸ This is evidenced by the fact that women between the ages of 25 and 40 constitute the majority of unemployed persons in Russia, with a consistent unemployment level of 70 percent.³⁹ Women who managed to work throughout the 1990s found themselves being ghettoized into poorly paid, low status occupations.⁴⁰

³⁸ Mary Buckley, "Victims and Agents: Gender in Post-Soviet States" in *Post-Soviet Women: from the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 4, 5.

³⁹ Kimberly A Weir, "Women's Experiences of Justice and Injustice in Russia" in *Civil Society and the Search for Justice in Russia*, Christopher Marsh & Nikolas K. Gvosdev, eds., (Lanham: Lexington Books,

In her article, "How Vulnerable is Women's Employment in Russia?" Galina Monousova argues that women in the Russian labour force are being concentrated into the lowest paid sectors of the economy. She reports that sectors dominated by female employees (over 70 percent) make lower wages than sectors where women make up 40 percent or less of the work force. Monousova goes on to say that when wages in an industry rise, jobs that were traditionally held by women will gradually be filled by men; if wages are lowered, men will leave for other positions, and women will replace them in the lower paid positions.⁴¹ Sara Ashwin & Elaine Bowers support this position in their article, "Do Russian Women want to Work?" saying, "The gendering of jobs in Russia is a complex issue, but there is one iron law: almost regardless of the physical strength required for a job, if it is low paid and low status it will become a 'woman's job.' This is understood and accepted by both men and women in industry."⁴²

Women in professions also face difficulties in moving up the personnel hierarchy because during the Soviet era men were more likely to receive the technical training required for job promotions. After the transition, this left many women in industry jobs unable to compete with men with superior training.⁴³ This condition also made it more difficult for women to compete with men for jobs after they had been unemployed for a period of time.⁴⁴ Because of these difficulties in finding employment, many women were

2002) 166; & Rebecca Kay, "Images of an ideal woman: perspectives of Russian womanhood through the media, education and women's own eyes" in *Post-Soviet Women: from the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 78.

⁴⁰ Galina Monousova, "How Vulnerable is Women's Employment in Russia?" in *Structural Adjustment without Mass Unemployment? Lessons from Russia*, Simon Clarke, ed., (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 1997) 213.

⁴¹ Monousova, 1997, 215, 216, 222.

⁴² Sarah Ashwin & Elaine Bowers, "Do Russian Women want to Work?" in *Post-Soviet Women: from the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 32.

⁴³ Kimberly A. Weir, 2002, 168.

⁴⁴ Galina Monousova, 1997, 213.

forced to try their hand at entrepreneurship. In her article, "Women and the culture of entrepreneurship" Marta Bruno says, "In most cases, the motivation to engage in some sort of business activity stems from need rather than choice."⁴⁵ Post-soviet women may attempt to make money in the informal economy through the sale of goods, by working as domestic servants, or by selling sexual services.⁴⁶ However, women are also disadvantaged in the informal sector because it is dominated by organized crime groups. Since the collapse of the USSR, the number of criminal groups operating in the black market has ballooned to 4,000 in Russia alone. The increasing power and wealth of these groups is made possible by the political, economic and social turbulence in the region, and threatens the security of legitimate entrepreneurs, both men and women.⁴⁷

Post- Soviet women's success in the workplace is also hindered by workplace discrimination and harassment.⁴⁸ Peterson and Runyan argue that women are often faced with gender hierarchy and sexism, in which male managers and co-workers value female laborers less than their male counterparts, and resent the presence of women in the workplace.⁴⁹ This resentment is especially pronounced when male unemployment is high, and is condoned by the highest officials in government. In their publication, "Russia: Neither Jobs nor Justice, State Discrimination Against Women in Russia" Human Rights Watch reported that rather than discourage sexual discrimination against women, the Russian government participates in discrimination and "fails to enforce laws

⁴⁵ Marta Bruno, "Women and the culture of entrepreneurship" in *Post-Soviet Women: from the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 61.

⁴⁶ V. Spike Peterson & Anne Sisson Runyan, 1999, 142.

⁴⁷ David L. Carter, "International Organized Crime: Emerging Trends in Organized Crime" in *Understanding Organized Crime in Global Perspective: A Reader*, Patrick J. Ryan & George E. Rush, eds., (London: Sage Publications, 1997) 132, 141.

⁴⁸ Larissa Lissytukina, "Soviet Women at the Crossroads of Perestroika" in *Gender Politics and Post-Communism: Reflections from Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union*, Nanette Funk & Magda Mueller, eds., (New York: Routledge, 1993) 275.

⁴⁹ V. Spike Peterson & Anne Sisson Runyan, 1999, 93, 94.

that prohibit sex discrimination.”⁵⁰ High-ranking officials such as Russia’s Labour Minister, Gennady Melikyan, have publicly endorsed employment discrimination against women with statements like the following, which he made in 1993. When asked about the problem of female unemployment, Melkiyan echoed the dominant political attitude with his response: “Why should we employ women when men are out of work? It’s better that men work and women take care of children and do housework. I don’t think women should work when men are doing nothing.”⁵¹

Sexual discrimination against women in Russia has been manifested in some very concrete ways. For instance, Russian women are banned from working in 400 occupations in the country because they are deemed harmful to women. Another way discrimination is apparent is in unequal pay for women and men in the same professions. In 1999, women in Russia working as civil engineers were being paid only 65 percent of the salary of their male co-workers. As well as being paid less, very few women are promoted into the upper echelons of professions. The fact that women in Russia tend to have more formal education than men⁵² underlines the reality that women are being discriminated against based on their gender, and not because of lesser ability in the workforce.⁵³

In the face of this economic discrimination, one would think that women would lobby for their rights, and that female politicians would speak out against this type of treatment. Surprisingly, this is not the case. In her article “Progress on hold: the conservative faces of women in Ukraine” Solomea Pavlychko states that women

⁵⁰ Human Rights Watch “Russia: Neither Jobs Nor Justice, State Discrimination Against Women in Russia” March 1995, Vol. 7, No.5 found at www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Russia2a.htm accessed on Nov. 1 2006.

⁵¹ Human Rights Watch, 1995, www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Russia2a.htm.

⁵² Kimberly A. Weir, 2002, 166.

⁵³ Kimberly A. Weir, 2002, 157, 166, 168,

politicians in Ukraine as well as society at large “stubbornly refuse to recognize discrimination against women.”⁵⁴ This lack of recognition of the problem was demonstrated in a Ukrainian public opinion poll which found that the majority of respondents (men and women) did not know about discrimination against women and believed that men and women had equal economic opportunities and success.⁵⁵

Pavlychko states,

Contemporary Ukraine shows two tendencies: first, the strengthening of discrimination against women in all spheres of social life and the workplace; and, second, the unwillingness or inability of society in general, and women’s organizations in particular, to understand this phenomenon and to challenge it.⁵⁶

In her article, “Images of an ideal woman: perceptions of Russian womanhood through the media, education and women’s own eyes” Rebecca Kay argues that post-soviet discrimination is largely ignored by men and women because of a cultural movement that is promoting a new image for women. She says that society has replaced the old Soviet image of the strong working woman with a new ideal of the “essentially feminine” woman. Instead of actively engaging in the workforce and politics, which is thought to be unfeminine for women and emasculating for men, women are encouraged to strive for “beauty, fragility and fashion.”⁵⁷ Kay says this new female ideal is meant to restore a “correct” gender identity for women, which communism altered, and reduce the “over-emancipation” of Soviet women, which Kay says is blamed for a whole range of contemporary post-soviet social problems.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Solomea Pavlychko, “Progress on hold: the conservative faces of women in Ukraine” in *Post-Soviet Women: from the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 226.

⁵⁵ Pavlychko, 1997, 226.

⁵⁶ Pavlychko, 1997, 232.

⁵⁷ Rebecca Kay, 1997, 81.

⁵⁸ Kay, 1997, 82.

In addition to sexual discrimination, many post-soviet women are dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace. In her article "Sexism and Sexual Abuse in Russia" Natalia Khodyreva argues that sexual harassment in the workplace is often overt, especially in the private sector, and one only has to look at job descriptions to find it. She says, "One often can see advertisements in the newspapers that there are job openings for secretaries (strictly young, attractive, and without complexes) who are supposed to provide sexual services for the boss or his clients."⁵⁹ Kimberly Weir reports similar advertisements for jobs in Russia in which the sexual requirements are specifically listed: "secretary-girl, 25 maximum age, uniform- miniskirt" or "young, blonde, long legged and without inhibitions"⁶⁰ Weir reports that hiring practices based on attractiveness and willingness to perform sexual services are common, and are referred to in Russia as 'face kontrol'⁶¹

Human Rights Watch quotes a research fellow at the Centre for Independent Social Research (Russia), an expert on the causes of women's unemployment in St. Petersburg, as saying, "[sexual harassment] is a big problem in private businesses, and there is no regulation of this. Sexual abuse is not considered abuse. People think it is a part of our culture."⁶² Sexual harassment in post-soviet states is difficult to stop because laws, such as those in Russia, place the onus on the woman to provide evidence that she has suffered serious oppression at the hands of her employer. Because it is so difficult to provide such evidence, women are usually forced to choose between quitting their job or

⁵⁹ Natalia Khodyreva, "Sexism and Sexual Abuse in Russia," in *Women in a Violent World: Feminist Analyses and Resistance Across Europe*, ed. Chris Corrin, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press: 1996) 29, 30.

⁶⁰ Kimberly Weir, 2002, 168.

⁶¹ Kimberly Weir, 2002, 168.

⁶² Human Rights Watch, 1995, www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Russia2a.htm.

continuing to suffer the sexual harassment. One Russian woman told Human Rights

Watch:

I am a single mother. I can't work at night because I don't have a husband to care for my baby. I experienced sexual harassment in the private sector, so I had to leave my job. I was working as an accountant, and, on the second day, my boss wanted me to sleep with him. So I had to leave. This happens to many women.⁶³

As we can see, poor job opportunities, sexual discrimination, and sexual harassment in the post-soviet workplace are making it difficult for women to find and retain gainful employment in their home countries. This economic uncertainty is often cited as one of the main reasons why post-soviet women seek to migrate for work.⁶⁴ Unfortunately, hasty or illegal migration makes post-soviet women extremely vulnerable to those seeking to exploit them, including traffickers. From a liberal feminist perspective, post-soviet women's economic fortunes would be improved by the removal of legal barriers to professions, and the implementation of laws against sexual discrimination and harassment in the workplace. However, from a radical feminist perspective, liberal feminism's legalistic approach fails to go far enough to address the roots of the problem because it does not challenge the patriarchal, male dominated nature of the economic system.⁶⁵

Radical feminists argue that it is not merely professional barriers and a lack of anti-discrimination and harassment laws that are handicapping women in the workplace. Radical feminists argue that women are disadvantaged by "deeply rooted structures of

⁶³ Human Rights Watch, 1995, www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Russia2a.htm.

⁶⁴ Elizabeth Kelly, *Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe*, (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2002) 49.

⁶⁵ J. Ann Tickner, "Feminist Perspectives on International Relations" in *Handbook of International Relations*, Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse & Beth A. Simmons, eds., (London: Sage Publications, 2002) 277.

patriarchy that cannot be overcome by legal remedies alone.”⁶⁶ Proof of this statement can be found in both the soviet and post-soviet contexts. In her book, *Dehexing Sex: Russian Womanhood During and After Glasnost*, Helena Goscilo describes the extremely egalitarian nature of the Soviet Constitution. Under the Constitution, soviet women could work in most occupations and were given the right to equal pay for equal work. Before its dissolution the Soviet Union employed the highest percentage of women in the world, at 90 percent, and soviet women comprised 52 percent of the total workforce.⁶⁷

On the surface the Soviet Constitution looked like the model of what feminists strive for in business: equal work opportunities and equal pay for women and men. However, Goscilo argues that equality under the Soviet Constitution was not nearly as good a proposition as it sounded. Due to traditional patriarchal attitudes, such as the belief that men were unfit for domestic tasks and nurturing children,⁶⁸ men did not increase their role in the private realm when women began their heavy participation in the public realm of paid work. This meant that women were expected to work outside the home as well as perform all duties within the home. Goscilo describes the role of soviet women as being producers and *reproducers*.⁶⁹ Kimberly Weir argues that legal equality did soviet women more harm than good because it imposed upon them the notorious ‘double burden’ of public and private work.⁷⁰

In this situation, the radical feminist critique of liberal feminism seems to ring true: although legally equal to men, women could not excel in the workplace because the

⁶⁶ J. Ann Tickner, 2002, 277.

⁶⁷ Helena Goscilo, *Dehexing Sex: Russian Womanhood During and After Glasnost*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996) 8.

⁶⁸ Helen Goscilo, 1996, 10.

⁶⁹ Helena Goscilo, 1996, 8.

⁷⁰ Kimberly A Weir, 2002, 160.

male dominant nature of the economic system had not been challenged. Patriarchal attitudes about the public/private divide made it impossible for women's legal equality in the workplace to translate into genuine gender equality. Weir says,

The legacy of the Soviet Union for women is one of a dichotomous system which imposed a formal paradigm of equality in written law, but permitted vastly unequal and openly discriminatory practices and expectations, relegating women to an economic and social second class.⁷¹

Women were an economic second class because the demands of the double burden made it difficult for them to advance in their careers. Employers preferred workers who did not take days off to care for sick children or tend to other household demands. Because of this, women often found themselves concentrated at the bottom of the employee hierarchy. Some employers had quotas in place for women, but quotas usually allowed only a few 'token' women to move up, and did not really represent women.⁷² Goscilo argues that women often reinforced the patriarchal gender stereotypes that oppressed them because they bought into the notion that women were naturally more nurturing and patient than men, and that men were unfit to contribute to the private realm. "In short, they essentialized, by mistaking social constructs (femininity) for biology (femaleness)."⁷³

The divide between female/male gender roles and the private/public spheres that was present during the soviet era only intensified with its collapse. Kimberly Weir argues that the traditional view that women should be in the home and men should be the breadwinners acted to justify employment discrimination against women during the

⁷¹ Kimberly A. Weir, 2002, 157.

⁷² Helena Goscilo, 1996, 9.

⁷³ Helena Goscilo, 1996, 9, 10.

transition from communism to capitalism.⁷⁴ With men out of work, there was strong pressure on women to leave their jobs in favour of men. Ashwin and Bowers state, “A logical answer to the great problem of economic reform- mass unemployment- therefore seemed to be that, instead of attempting to combine several roles, women should be allowed to fulfill their biological destiny as wives and mothers.”⁷⁵

For the post-soviet women who can afford it, the right *not* to work in the public realm is seen as freeing, because it means the end of the double burden.⁷⁶ However, for women who need paid work to survive, the intensified discrimination against women in the post-soviet workplace make them economically desperate and vulnerable to exploitation and harassment. Unfortunately, at the very time when post-soviet women were the most economically vulnerable and susceptible to being taken advantage of, their political voice was being silenced. In her article “Adaptation of the Soviet Women’s Committee: deputies’ voices from ‘Women of Russia’” Mary Buckley articulates the problem, saying:

As women’s unemployment grew, the number of women in parliament was falling. There was no causal link between these two developments; but their coincidence meant that, as women found themselves in increasingly vulnerable economic positions, likely defenders of their interests in parliament were decreasing in number.⁷⁷

Buckley’s statement brings attention to the fact that women caught in the post-soviet transition were not only struggling economically, but also politically. Poverty made

⁷⁴ Kimberly A. Weir, 2002, 175.

⁷⁵ Sara Ashwin & Elain Bowers, 1997, 21, 30.

⁷⁶ Larissa Lissyutkina, 1993, 274.

⁷⁷ Mary Buckley, “Adaptation of the Soviet Women’s Committee: deputies’ voices from ‘Women of Russia’” in *Post-Soviet Women: from the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 162.

women vulnerable to traffickers, but as we will see in the next section, the lack of a strong female political voice made trafficking next to impossible to combat effectively.

Bringing Traffic to the Agenda: Female Political Voice in Post-Soviet States

If the issue of sexual trafficking in post-soviet states is to be sufficiently addressed, it must be made a top priority by national governments. For this shift to occur women must collectively demand that trafficking be stopped, which requires a strong political voice. Unfortunately, as it stands today, post-soviet women do not have a strong political voice in political parties, parliaments, or the official public sphere in general.⁷⁸ In the introduction to her book *Women's Access to Political Power in Post-Communist Europe*, Kathleen A. Montgomery reports that in 2003, the mean level of female political representation in post-soviet states was roughly 12 percent. That level was 2 percent below the global average of 14 percent and 13 percent below the mean level of female political representation in Western European countries (at 25 percent). Montgomery argues that in addition to a low level of representation in parliaments, post-soviet women remain “virtually absent from party leaderships, cabinet positions, key ministries, and institutions of social bargaining.”⁷⁹

This political exclusion has meant a lack of advocacy for issues affecting the well-being of post-soviet women, such as high female unemployment, social programs, violence against women, and trafficking. Without adequate representation, these issues are given low legislative priority. Montgomery says, “those issues are not being treated

⁷⁸ Armine Ishkanian, “Gendered Transitions: The Impact of the Post-Soviet Transition on Women in Central Asia and the Caucuses” in *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology*, Volume 2, Number 3, September, 2003, 476.

⁷⁹ Kathleen A. Montgomery, “Introduction” in *Women's Access to Political Power in Post-Communist Europe*, Richard E. Matland & Kathleen A. Montgomery, eds., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 1.

seriously; they are being pushed aside as irrelevant compared to the exigencies of dual economic and political transitions.”⁸⁰ For example, as will be discussed later in the chapter, domestic violence is a serious problem in many post-soviet states, especially Russia. Despite the magnitude of the problem and the physical and mental harm it causes thousands of Russian women, Russian parliamentarians have been totally ineffectual at dealing with the issue. Kim Weir writes, “Legislation regarding domestic violence issues has been considered several times by the State Duma, but as of yet all attempts to make domestic violence a crime have been quashed.”⁸¹

Liberal feminists believe that women’s issues will be acknowledged in politics only when more women enter the political fray. They argue that if more women are recruited into politics they can use their positions of influence to include such issues as domestic violence and trafficking in women on the agendas of national parliaments.⁸² Radical feminists feel this approach is incomplete. They argue that simply increasing the number of women in government does not go far enough to ensure that women’s concerns are seriously considered on the political agendas of states. They believe that adding women to a patriarchal political system without attempting to change the nature of the system will be fruitless because the political system is based on male values.⁸³ Women involved in a patriarchal political system may be unable or unwilling to advance women’s political concerns because they are constricted by the competitive and power-based nature of the system.

⁸⁰ Kathleen A. Montgomery, 2003, 4.

⁸¹ Kim Weir, 2002, 173,

⁸² R. W. Connell, “The state, gender and sexual politics” in *Theory and Society*, Vol.19, No.5, October 1990, pp507-544, 512.

⁸³ Jill Steans, 1998, 19, 20.

The quota system for women in politics used in the Soviet Union provides an example of how large numbers of women in government may not be sufficient to promote women's issues if they are constrained by the nature of the political system in which they participate. In the Soviet Union, a quota system was imposed so that women would be formally represented in state and party politics.⁸⁴ Mary Buckley reports that in the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s, women held an average of 35 percent of the people's deputies positions in the republic-level supreme soviets.⁸⁵ This level of female political participation was very high. One would think that with such strong representation in politics, Soviet women would have been able to effectively champion issues important to them. However, this high percentage of female representation did not translate into political clout.

Soviet women in supreme soviets had very little opportunity to influence policy. This was because the system was still hierarchical, and very few women ever reached the top positions of power, where Party policy was actually crafted.⁸⁶ Kim Weir reports: "Only one woman ever served as a Politburo member (Yekaterina Furtseva, 1957-1961), and prior to Gorbachev's restructuring of the political system, only 3.1 percent of the Central Committee were women."⁸⁷ This minute number of women in the top positions of power was clearly not sufficient to influence Party policy significantly. Mary Buckley argues that the large number of female deputies also did not significantly influence policy because they acted as tokens and voted along party lines.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Armine Ishkanian, 2003, 482.

⁸⁵ Mary Buckley, "Adaptation of the Soviet Women's Committee: deputies' voices from 'Women of Russia'" in *Post-Soviet Women: From the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 162.

⁸⁶ Kim Weir, 2002, 172; & Armine Ishkanian, 2003, 482.

⁸⁷ Kim Weir, 2002, 172.

⁸⁸ Mary Buckley, 1997, 162.

In "The state, gender, and sexual politics" R.W. Connell argues that Gorbachev sought to include liberal feminist themes into the reforms of perestroika. In 1985, Gorbachev announced that he was reestablishing councils for women (the zhensovety) to increase their presence in public life. Connell cites Gorbachev as stating:

Today it is imperative for the country to more actively involve women in the management of the economy, in cultural development and public life. For this purpose women's councils have been set up throughout the country.⁸⁹

Although the establishment of women's councils was presented by Gorbachev as a way to increase women's influence in public life, Kim Weir argues that in reality, the establishment of councils and groups for women by the Party did nothing to empower women. She says that these women's councils did not influence policy because they were under Party control. "Indeed, most women saw them simply as a network to distribute food."⁹⁰

Weir goes even further by saying that the establishment of women's groups by the Communist Party actually had the result of disempowering women. She states,

One can argue that during the Soviet period, a majority of the attempts to institute women's organizations was simply an attempt to serve the purpose of disempowering women by creating the illusion that they were being represented within the system. In actuality, these organizations were run by upper-echelon male Party members whose primary interests were to preserve the patriarchal system.⁹¹

Indeed, the decisions made by so-called women's groups were made from the top down, which was not conducive to articulating women's genuine interests. However, with government claims that women were being equally represented, there was little room for

⁸⁹ R.W. Connell, 1990, 513.

⁹⁰ Kim Weir, 2002, 161.

⁹¹ Kim Weir, 2002, 161.

women to argue that change was needed.⁹² Gorbachev himself gave mixed messages about what women's role should be in the Soviet Union. On one hand he advocated more female participation in public life, and in the next breath he was arguing that women should return to family life, to their "purely womanly mission."⁹³

Armine Ishkanian says that the contrived and inauthentic nature of female representation was exposed after the fall of the Soviet Union, when women's political participation decreased dramatically.⁹⁴ At the onset of the transition to freer elections, the quota system for women in politics was removed. Without quotas in place, the number of women elected into the national parliaments of newly independent states plummeted. Kathleen A. Montgomery presents a chart in the introduction to *Women's Political Power in Post-Communist States* which plots the fall of female representation in the national parliaments of post-soviet states by comparing the last communist election to the first free election. In Albania, in the last communist election, 29 percent of the elected were women, in the first free election this number fell to 3.5 percent. In Hungary, the number fell from 20 percent to 7 percent. Moldova: 32 percent to 3 percent; Poland: 23 percent to 14 percent; Romania; 35 percent to 4 percent; Russia: 32 percent to 9 percent; and finally Ukraine; 32 percent to 3 percent.⁹⁵ After the elections, men had regained almost all the available positions in politics.

In her book, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*, Cynthia Enloe argues that women were kept out of the new governments on purpose, saying,

⁹² Kim Weir, 2002, 162.

⁹³ R.W. Connell, 1990, 513.

⁹⁴ Armine Ishkanian, 2003, 482.

⁹⁵ Kathleen A. Montgomery, 2003, 2. The states chosen are meant to be a sample showing the trend in post-soviet states. All numbers are taken from a bar graph and are therefore approximate.

It was precisely because the legislatures were transformed by the end of the Cold War that they became, in many men's eyes, worthy loci for reemergent civic activism. Legislatures became thereby places too important to allow more than a handful of women. Does the democratization of parliaments equal the defeminization of parliaments?⁹⁶

In the case of post-soviet states it did seem to be true that the democratization of parliaments also meant their defeminization. Unfortunately, women were virtually shut out of politics at the very time when they most needed meaningful representation. One would think that with soviet women's high level of education and economic activity, they would have been well-placed to fight for a strong political voice in the new system. This, however, turned out not to be the case.⁹⁷

Larissa Lissytukina reports that after the transition, not one female deputy remaining in the new legislature demanded that quotas for women be reintroduced into the political system.⁹⁸ In fact, post-soviet women in general seemed willing to give up their political representation without a fight. Armine Ishkanian and Kim Weir attribute this to a few factors. First, Weir argues that the collapse of numerous social programs increased women's double burden and left women little time, energy or motivation to engage in politics.⁹⁹ Second, women were disenchanted with politics because their prior involvement in the Soviet system did little to advance their concerns. Weir says that post-soviet women view formal politics as "an ineffectual means for change."¹⁰⁰

Third, there are still traditional sexist attitudes held by men and women that limit women's involvement in post-soviet politics. Armine Ishkanian argues that women often

⁹⁶ Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993) 23.

⁹⁷ Armine Ishkanian, 2003, 487.

⁹⁸ Larissa Lissytukina, 1993, 274, 275.

⁹⁹ Kim Weir, 2002, 171.

¹⁰⁰ Kim Weir, 2002, 171.

subscribe to the belief that politics is unfeminine and 'men's work' because it is seen as dirty and corrupt.¹⁰¹ Men reinforce women's aversion to politics by arguing that women's rightful place is in the home, and not in the public realm. These attitudes make women unpopular choices for positions of political leadership among men as well as among many women.¹⁰²

Although women may be reluctant to fight for participation in post-soviet parliaments, this does not necessarily mean that they are apolitical. Post-soviet women seem to be more comfortable with political activities that take place in the context of interest groups or NGOs which are more informal and allow for grassroots female participation.¹⁰³ Kathleen A. Montgomery argues that although it is desirable for post-soviet women to participate in groups and NGOs which may improve women's status, it is important for post-soviet women to understand that real political power in a democracy "resides in its formal institutions."¹⁰⁴ Therefore, if women truly wish to gain a political voice powerful enough to demand that their issues are addressed, they must begin with a liberal feminist strategy of capturing positions of power in their state's institutions, and then follow with a radical feminist strategy of breaking down the patriarchal, male-as-norm bias which pervades the system and keeps women's concerns off the political agenda.

Examples from the soviet system have shown that female representation within a patriarchal system does little to actually advance issues salient to women, such as unemployment, rape, reproductive issues and sexual trafficking. Kim Weir states that

¹⁰¹ Armine Ishkanian, 2003, 487.

¹⁰² Kim Weir, 2002, 171; & Mary Buckely, 1997, 4, 5.

¹⁰³ Kim Weir, 2002, 171; & Armine Ishkanian, 2003, 487.

¹⁰⁴ Kathleen A. Montgomery, 2002, 4.

presently in post-soviet states “women struggle to address social discrimination, patriarchal privilege, and gendered socialization obstacles to gain equality.”¹⁰⁵ We have seen how this struggle has played out in the economic and political realms, but there is another sphere in which women are disadvantaged, the social realm.

Post-Soviet Social Inequality and Traffic

Post-soviet women who become victims of sexual trafficking seem to receive very little sympathy or support from the societies in which they live. Women who escape or are rescued from their exploitation find it very difficult to reintegrate back into their home communities because they are often stigmatized by the local population. People think of these women as prostitutes rather than as the victims that they are. Attitudes abound that these women deserved whatever happened to them because they should have known what they were getting into. Maria Tchomarova, director of La Strada-Bulgaria (an NGO which provides assistance to trafficking victims) reports that the Bulgarian public has negative attitudes toward returning trafficking victims. She states, “Most Bulgarians still equate trafficking with prostitution and there is little support for the victims.”¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately, these attitudes are not confined to victims of traffic. There is an undercurrent of misogyny that permeates the social culture of many post-soviet states, which relegates women to a social second-class and endangers their rights to personal safety and protection under the law. Aside from trafficking, anti-female sentiment is apparent when one examines the issue of violence against women in the newly independent states.

¹⁰⁵ Kim Weir, 2002, 161.

¹⁰⁶ Juliette Terzieff, “Bulgarian Trafficking Victims Face Hard Homecoming” found at www.feminist.com/news/vaw30.html, accessed May 25, 2007.

The level of domestic violence against women in post-soviet states is alarming, especially in Russia. In 1993, it was estimated that 14,500 women in Russia were murdered by their husbands or partners. This number made up more than half of the total recorded murders in the country that year.¹⁰⁷ In their article, “Spousal Homicide in Russia Versus the United States: Preliminary Findings and Implications” published in 1997, Edward W. Gondolf and Dmitri Shestakov reported:

Russian women [are] two and one-half times as likely to be murdered by their spouses or lovers than their American counterparts. Women in the United States are, moreover, twice as likely to be the victim of spousal homicide than women in comparable Westernized countries, making Russian women the most vulnerable among industrialized countries.¹⁰⁸

Human Rights Watch reported that spousal abuse is not only common, but is also largely accepted in Russia.¹⁰⁹ The Russian phrase “if he beats you it means he loves you” is an example of the lax attitude that is expressed regarding domestic violence.¹¹⁰

The large incidence of domestic violence in Russia is compounded by the fact that the state and police do next to nothing to protect abused women. Lynne Attwood reports that Russian law enforcement officials treat domestic violence as a private matter and often refuse to investigate domestic abuse cases or lay charges against abusive husbands and partners. Violent spouses are not removed from their homes, and women often have nowhere to go because there are no shelters in Russia for battered women.¹¹¹ Human Rights Watch quotes Marina Pisklakova, coordinator of the Moscow Trust Line for

¹⁰⁷ Lynne Attwood, “ ‘She was asking for it’: Rape and Domestic Violence against Women” in *Post-Soviet Women: from the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 99.

¹⁰⁸ Edward W. Gondolf & Dmitri Shestakov, “Spousal Homicide in Russia Versus the United States: Preliminary Findings and Implications,” *Journal of Family Violence*, Vol.12, No.1, March 1997, pp63-74, 70.

¹⁰⁹ Human Rights Watch, 1995, www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Russia2a.htm.

¹¹⁰ Kimberly A. Weir, 2002, 165.

¹¹¹ Lynne Attwood, 1997, 102.

battered women as saying, “The law doesn’t protect women. If a woman goes to the police and tells them that she is being beaten by her husband or partner, the police say, ‘But he didn’t kill you yet.’”¹¹² Indeed, men often kill their female partners before any legal action is taken against them.

There is a pervasive attitude among Russian scholars and the public that women’s behaviour is partly to blame for provoking their abuse. Attwood says that two of Russia’s principle scholars in the field of domestic violence, namely G.G. Moshak and D. A. Shestakov, have theorized that women are partly to blame for their abuse because they are too independent, are not performing their ‘wifely duties’ sufficiently, and are not feminine enough. Attwood argues,

In short, Russian academics present male violence against women as an extreme but not unjustified response to the erosion of traditional patriarchal gender roles. If these roles are restored and men regain their rightful position as heads of the family, they will go back to protecting members of the ‘weak, splendid sex’ instead of beating them.¹¹³

For these scholars, domestic violence would end if women were vulnerable, dependent and feminine, and acquiesced to their husband’s every wish. Unfortunately for these so-called experts on domestic violence, the real life experiences of workers in women’s crisis centres shows that the more dependent women are on their husbands, the more likely they are to suffer domestic abuse.¹¹⁴ In fact, the largest number of reports of domestic violence comes from the financially dependent housewives of newly rich Russian men.¹¹⁵

¹¹² Human Rights Watch, 1995, www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Russia2a.htm.

¹¹³ Lynne Attwood, 1997, 107, 108.

¹¹⁴ Lynne Attwood, 1997, 102, 107, 108.

¹¹⁵ Lynne Attwood, 1997, 102.

Rape and societal attitudes regarding rape in post-soviet states are also posing a danger to women. In 1993, over 14,000 cases of rape were reported in the Russian Federation.¹¹⁶ Although this figure is large, it is thought to represent only 10 percent of the actual total. Perhaps even more alarming than the large number of rapes is the blame-the-victim attitude that women encounter. Just as with domestic violence, national scholars who study rape make grave mistakes in their assumptions. Attwood cites the work of Iu M. Antonian and A. Tkachenko, two legal specialists in Russia who lead the country's scholarly research on rape.

Antonian and Tkachenko assume that most rapes are committed by strangers, and therefore the onus is placed on women to prevent men from raping them. They argue that women often provoke rape through their dress or behaviour, if they drink, or if they are alone in secluded places. Even more shocking is Antonian and Tkachenko's argument that women are naturally masochistic and may enjoy the experience of being sexually overpowered, but report the rape in order to cover the truth.¹¹⁷ Antonian and Tkachenko argue that many men rape because they feel inadequate, and that women can ward off an attack by complimenting the man and expressing sympathy for him.¹¹⁸

Human Rights Watch reports that the blame-the-victim attitude is abundant among law enforcement agents, who are often accused of intimidating rape victims so they will drop rape charges. Human Rights Watch cites Natalia Gaidarenk, founder of the Moscow Sexual Assault Recovery Center as saying, "One lawyer admitted that the police rarely believe a rape victim."¹¹⁹ Human Rights Watch goes on to say that police

¹¹⁶ Lynne Attwood, 1997, 99.

¹¹⁷ Lynne Attwood, 1997, 104, 105.

¹¹⁸ Lynne Attwood, 1997, 106.

¹¹⁹ Human Rights Watch, 1995, www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Russia2a.htm.

and judges often blame the woman for the attack because of their ‘provocative behaviour’ such as going for ‘careless evening strolls’ or drinking alcohol and listening to music in public.¹²⁰

In post-soviet discussions on violence against women, whether it is domestic violence or rape, the onus is always placed on the woman to prevent the attacks against her. She must alter *her* actions and sexual behaviour so as not to ‘provoke’ an attack by a man. In no way are men expected to change their behaviour, attitudes or sexual practices. Lynne Attwood argues,

While Russian literature treats rape and domestic violence as separate phenomena, they have one distinct feature in common: the woman’s own behaviour is thought to have played a considerable role in instigating the violence. She has incited male violence by, in different ways, challenging the traditional norms of femininity. In the case of rape she has been insufficiently modest; in the case of wife battery, she has been insufficiently domestic.¹²¹

Russian scholars argue that the best way to alleviate the problem of violence against women is for women and men to strictly obey gender roles, with the man as the strong, aggressive head of the family, and the woman as weak and passive. In this way, women will not emasculate men with their female authority, and the man will not feel the need to beat his wife or rape another woman. Attwood says, “Rape and domestic violence are both being used as an excuse for promoting a stricter gender dichotomy, a means for bolstering the patriarchal order which has always been so central to Soviet, and, now, post-soviet Russia.”¹²²

Women activists who actually work with female victims of violence know that these patriarchal norms must be challenged, and not reinforced, if violence against

¹²⁰ Human Rights Watch, 1995, www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Russia2a.htm.

¹²¹ Lynne Attwood, 1997, 112.

¹²² Lynne Attwood, 1997, 112, 113.

women is to be reduced.¹²³ Kimberley A. Weir states, “so long as these entrenched notions of women as the “second sex” and men as the dominant patriarchal force in society continue, women will remain oppressed.”¹²⁴ It would seem that the way for post-soviet women to improve their social status would be to fight for the ideals of feminism, especially radical feminism, with its emphasis on challenging patriarchal privilege. Unfortunately, many post-soviet women do not identify with feminism, with some going so far as to vehemently denounce it.¹²⁵

Many post-soviet men and women have come to blame the ‘over-emancipation’ of women for the social problems that they are facing today.¹²⁶ Mary Buckley reports that there is a male backlash against the soviet ideal of the ‘emancipated’ woman, the rationale being that this ideal deformed women and stole their femininity. A substantial proportion of women also subscribe to this view.¹²⁷ In light of these attitudes, post-soviet women have largely rejected feminism. First, because it has negative connotations connected to lesbianism or being masculine, and second, the soviet notion of equality for women brought about the double burden, which did not liberate women, thereby leaving post-soviet women suspicious of the idea of equality for women.¹²⁸

Unfortunately, post-soviet women’s reluctance to fight for their rights has meant that these rights are being eroded. Without a strong feminist movement, myths about sexual and domestic violence are being put forward as unchallenged truth, such as the false notion that women’s behaviour is to blame for violence against them, and that

¹²³ Lynne Attwood, 1997, 113.

¹²⁴ Kimberley A. Weir, 2002, 164.

¹²⁵ Helena Goscilo, 1996, 11.

¹²⁶ Rebecca Kay, 1997, 82.

¹²⁷ Mary Buckley, “Victims and Agents: Gender in Post-Soviet States” in *Post-Soviet Women: from the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 7.

¹²⁸ Kimberley A. Weir, 2002, 163.

women can prevent violence by conforming to a strict feminine gender ideal. These ideas are dangerous because they justify law enforcement's lax attitude toward protecting women from violence and robs victims of the societal support which they require.

These social myths are also contributing to the success of the sexual trafficking of post-soviet women. In the same way as victims of domestic violence or rape, victims of sex traffic are discredited and blamed for their own exploitation. There is an attitude that the woman must have done something to provoke or cause her victimization. Instead of faulting the exploiters and demanding that they be punished, communities and law enforcement tell women that they should have known better and are stigmatized as prostitutes. The common theme between these three issues: domestic violence, rape and traffic, is the patriarchal idea that social problems are caused by women's actions, not men's, and that these problems can be remedied if women would simply behave themselves and do as they are told by men.

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to analyze the ways in which women are disadvantaged in post-soviet states and how these disadvantages make women vulnerable to exploitation such as sex trafficking. Women's subordination was explored in the economic, political, and social realms using the theoretical streams of liberal and radical feminism. The objective of contrasting these two streams of feminism was to determine if liberal feminism was adequate to explain women's subordinate status in post-soviet

states, and therefore why they are so vulnerable to traffic, or if liberal feminism needed to be augmented or replaced by the arguments of radical feminism.

The chapter argued that post-soviet women are disadvantaged economically due to high unemployment, sexual discrimination, and sexual harassment in the workplace. This makes finding and retaining a job difficult for many women, which often results in their wish to migrate abroad for employment. This economic desperation makes young women vulnerable to economic exploitation and sexual trafficking. Liberal feminists advocate the removal of legal barriers to women's employment and improved sexual harassment and discrimination laws to improve women's economic status.

However, radical feminism disputes this approach, saying that simply adding women into a patriarchal, male-dominated work environment does little to achieve female equality, because women are kept in low status occupations and are paid lower wages than men. The radical feminist argument was supported by the example of the soviet economic system, in which women were legally equal, but traditional gender roles kept women in low status jobs and forced them into the double burden, which hardly translated into female equality in the workplace. Now, in the post-soviet system, patriarchal attitudes condone preferential treatment for men in the workplace.

In the post-soviet political realm, it was demonstrated that women have very low political representation, which makes it difficult for women to demand that attention be paid to issues that affect their everyday lives. Liberal feminists advocate that women develop a stronger political voice by increasing the number of female representatives in politics. The argument is that if more women are in the halls of power, it will be easier for women's concerns to make it onto the political agendas of states.

Once again, radical feminists refute this notion by arguing that increased numbers of women in politics will not be sufficient to truly represent the concerns of women if female politicians are constrained by a patriarchal political system. In the soviet case, quotas for female representation were in place, yet women still did not have genuine representation of their issues because policy was dictated from the top-down, and very few women ever reached the heights of the Party hierarchy. The fall of the Soviet Union only strengthened men's political privilege. Women's political representation plummeted, but few women fought to regain it, because there was a knowledge that their prior political representation had been token, and not really meaningful.

Lastly, post-soviet women's economic and political struggles are compounded by a social atmosphere that treats them as second class citizens who are more likely to be blamed for being beaten, raped, or trafficked than helped. Top scholars advise women that they would not be abused if they simply strove for the ideal of ultra-feminine womanhood. Instead of benefiting women, achieving the patriarchal ideal of feminine dependency and vulnerability has been shown to increase their oppression rather than relieve it.

The bottom line is that post-soviet women are disadvantaged as compared to men. They are subordinate in economics, in politics, and in the social realm. This subordination creates prime conditions for women to be trafficked: they are financially desperate, politically weak, and socially vulnerable. However, this chapter has argued that Soviet, and now post-soviet, women have not been disadvantaged solely because of legal constraints or a lack of laws protecting women, but by the deeply patriarchal, male dominated nature of the economic, political and social systems. The fall of the Soviet

Union has only compounded the problem by removing women's token equality and replacing it with the ideal of strict gender dichotomies which keep women subordinate to men. Because of this, although liberal feminism's goal of equal opportunities for women is very important, it does not go quite far enough. In the post-soviet case, radical feminist goals must be joined with liberal feminism to break down the patriarchal privilege and male-as-norm bias that ghettoizes female labour, keeps women's concerns off the political agenda and fosters a misogynistic social culture. If post-soviet women enter politics and economics in greater numbers *and* work to challenge patriarchal structures, then they will have taken a significant step toward bettering their lives, as well as reducing their vulnerability to traffic.

Chapter Four

Women's Status and Sexual Trafficking in Ukraine and Poland

In order to test the validity of the argument that women are trafficked largely due to a lack of gender equality in the patriarchal economic, political, and social spheres of post-soviet states, it is essential to move away from regional generalizations, toward a more detailed and focused study of the trafficking phenomenon as it occurs within post-soviet states. The comparative case study method has been chosen to analyze the variables that may contribute to the trafficking of women. This method was chosen for three key reasons. First, the extreme paucity of verifiable data on trafficking in the region makes a statistical analysis impossible at worst and unreliable at best. In his article "Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective", John Salt argues that "the absence of statistics transcends the whole field of trafficking/smuggling."¹ Second, the case study method allows for the detailed exploration of "individual events, actors, and relationships"² that interact to create or inhibit the conditions of trafficking. For this particular topic, where numerous factors influence outcomes, it is important to have the flexibility allowed by case studies to investigate the subtle relationships between variables, and make comparisons between cases.³ Third, case studies allow the addition of some personal information about victims, which emphasizes the human trauma caused by this activity.

The two post-soviet states chosen for case-study analysis are Ukraine and Poland. Ukraine was chosen because it has a serious trafficking problem and is representative of

¹ Salt, John, "Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective" in *International Migration/Special Issue*, 2000/01, 37.

² Charles Lipson, *How to Write a BA Thesis*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 101.

³ Lipson, 2005, 101.

other post-soviet states with severe trafficking, such as Russia, Moldova, and Romania. Ukraine was also chosen because of the availability of information on traffic in the country; very little is written specifically about its smaller neighbours, such as Moldova. The second case study focuses on Poland. Poland was chosen for its contrast to Ukraine. Both are post-soviet states in close geographic proximity that have experienced similar challenges in the post-communist transition to democracy and free market economies. However, Poland is the only post-soviet state to be ranked in Tier 1 of the U.S. State Department's 2006 Trafficking in Persons Report.⁴ This would suggest that Poland has been the most successful state in the region in curtailing trafficking in women.

This chapter will examine trafficking in Poland and Ukraine, as well as women's status in each state's economy and political realm, and compare the two. The chapter will seek to answer questions such as: Why is Poland seemingly beating Ukraine in the fight against traffic? What variables may cause the differences? Are there factors aside from the status of women that may significantly impact the severity of trafficking in either state? In essence, the objective of this chapter is to determine whether or not it is accurate to argue that women's status in economics and politics is the most important variable in predicting the severity of sexual trafficking in post-soviet states. We will begin by examining the economic status of women in Ukraine, and how the transition from command to market economy has made Ukrainian women vulnerable to exploitation.

The Case of Ukraine

Traffic and the Ukrainian Economy

⁴ Trafficking in Persons Report, www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006.htm, accessed July 19, 2006.

With the fall of the Soviet Union, Ukraine was plunged into a painful time of economic structural adjustment. The transition to a free market system has been sluggish and the effects are still being felt today in the form of high unemployment, a large informal and criminalized economy, workplace discrimination, and a high percentage of citizens living below the poverty line. The CIA factbook reports that in 2005 Ukraine's per capita GDP was \$7,000 and 29% of the population lived below the poverty line.⁵ The average salary in Ukraine is approximately \$30 a month, but in many rural areas this figure is cut in half.⁶

The women of Ukraine have suffered disproportionately in the years since Ukraine's independence from the USSR in 1991. Women account for between 60 and 70 percent⁷ of the unemployed in the country and have difficulty finding positions that pay enough for them to support themselves or contribute to supporting their families. Women who work are typically concentrated in low-status, low-paying occupations.⁸ For example, although female employees dominate the public service sector, (Ministry of the Economy: 67.2 percent female employees, Ministry of Justice: 87.3 percent, Ministry of Statistics: 93.9 percent) these women are concentrated in the lowest paid, lowest authority positions; only 3 or 4 percent are in found in top Ministry positions.⁹ In "Women and Political Representation in Contemporary Ukraine", Sara Birch reports, "It is estimated that in 1996 women occupied a mere five per cent of 35,000 top managerial

⁵ CIA Factbook-Online www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos.html accessed July 6, 2006.

⁶ Donna M. Hughes, "The Natasha Trade" 644.

⁷ Saltanat Sulaimanova, "Trafficking in Women from the Former Soviet Union for the Purposes of Sexual Exploitation," in *Trafficking and the Global Sex Industry*, Karen Beeks & Delila Amir, eds., (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006) 62, 63.

⁸ Solomea Pavlychko, "Progress on Hold: The Conservative Faces of Women in Ukraine" in *Post-Soviet Women: From the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 225.

⁹ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 223.

and governmental positions in Ukraine, and another estimate put the percentage of women in government and administration at less than one per cent.”¹⁰

Ukrainian women were also discriminated against in the 1990s by not receiving equal pay for equal work. In 1993, the United Nations released a Human Development Report that stated that women’s average income in Ukraine was substantially lower than men’s average income. Even when working in the same profession, women received lower salaries than men. For instance, in 1993, women in light industry jobs made 90 percent of the salaries of men, but in the energy sector, women made only 45 per cent of men’s salaries.¹¹ A report by the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights called *Women 2000* states that women dominate Ukraine’s health care sector, and yet make only 63 percent of men’s salary. The report goes on to say that “according to the Institute of Sociological Research, on average, men are paid 1.6 times more than women, in practically all age groups.”¹²

This disparity is a continuation of the Soviet era practice of proclaiming the equality of men and women, while simultaneously segregating women into low status occupations, excluding them from positions of real authority and decision-making, and promoting the idea that women should be “mothers first, workers second.”¹³ The post-soviet transition strengthened attitudes that women’s place was in the home, with senior ministers and parliamentarians calling for women to return to the family.¹⁴ Gorbachev

¹⁰ Sara Birch, “Women and Political Representation in Contemporary Ukraine” in *Women’s Access to Political Power in Post-Communist Europe*, Richard E. Matland & Kathleen A. Montgomery, eds., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 131.

¹¹ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 225.

¹² International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, *Women 2000 Report*, found at www.ihf-hr.org/documents/doc_summary.php?sec_id=58&d_id=1478, accessed December 18, 2006.

¹³ Alexandra Hrycak, “Coping with Chaos: Gender and Politics in a Fragmented State” in *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol.52, no.5, September/October 2005, 70.

¹⁴ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 225.

himself partially blamed working women for the economic and social problems facing the region. He stated, “many of our problems...are partially caused by the weakening of family ties and a slack attitude toward family responsibilities. This is a paradoxical result of our sincere and politically justified desire to make women equal with men in everything.”¹⁵ Gorbachev went on to promote the reduction of female employment to “help make it possible for women to return to their purely womanly mission.”¹⁶ In 1997 Solomea Pavlychko argued that this type of patriarchal rhetoric “is a badly masked attempt to hide and justify high levels of unemployment and discrimination against women, which has become much worse in the last three years.”¹⁷

In addition to discrimination, women’s economic well-being is also threatened by sexual harassment in the workplace. The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor reported in 2006 that sexual harassment is widespread in Ukraine.¹⁸ Estimates on the percentage of women who encounter sexual harassment in the workplace differ greatly. The Stop Violence Against Women group, a project run by Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, cites a survey conducted in 2005 by the West Ukrainian Centre. In the survey, 2.3 percent of women said they were compelled by employers to have sexual relations in exchange for a promotion or raise. Nine percent of female respondents said they had experienced unwanted sexual touching, and 17.6 percent of respondents said they were familiar with friends or co-workers who had been sexually harassed.¹⁹ These figures are much lower than estimates given in the *Women 2000* report compiled by the

¹⁵ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 71.

¹⁶ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 71.

¹⁷ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 225.

¹⁸ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, “Country Reports on Human Rights Practices-Ukraine” March 8, 2006. Found at www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

¹⁹ Stop Violence Against Women found at www.stopvaw.org/Sexual_Harassment_in_Workplaces_in_Ukraine.html accessed on December 18, 2006.

International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, which cites surveys estimating that 50 percent of Ukrainian women have experienced some form of sexual harassment at work, and that 8 percent have been sexually harassed a number of times.²⁰

In a report written in 2003, Human Rights Watch noted that numerous Ukrainian employers are advertising in a discriminatory manner. Ads for positions such as secretaries or managers, which can be done by a wide range of people, have included criteria such as gender (female), age (18-30), height (170 cm minimum) and weight (slim build). Some employers even require the applicant to submit a photo as a mandatory component of their application.²¹ Human Rights Watch argues that the branches of government in Ukraine charged with monitoring sexual discrimination and harassment have allowed these discriminatory employment practices to occur unchallenged. They state,

The Ministry of Labor and its State Department on Supervision of Labor Legislation Observance, as well as the State Employment Service, have done little to recognize or acknowledge gender discrimination, let alone investigate and take legal action against employers practicing discrimination.²²

As evidence of this, in 2000, only three cases of sexual harassment or discrimination were brought to court in Ukraine, and only two persons were charged.²³

The vast majority of women do not feel that they are in a position to fight for their employment rights. Participants in the West Ukrainian Centre survey in 2005 indicated that they would not bring cases of harassment or discrimination to court because they did

²⁰ International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, *Women 2000 Report*, found at www.ihf-hr.org/documents/doc_summary.php?sec_id=58&d_id=1478, accessed December 18, 2006.

²¹ Human Rights Watch report on discrimination and harassment in Ukraine found at www.hrw.org/reports/2003/ukraine0803/8.htm.

²² Human Rights Watch report on discrimination and harassment in Ukraine found at www.hrw.org/reports/2003/ukraine0803/8.htm.

²³ International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, *Women 2000 Report*, found at www.ihf-hr.org/documents/doc_summary.php?sec_id=58&d_id=1478, accessed December 18, 2006.

not trust the judicial system and did not feel their case would be taken seriously. They also felt that they would be compromised or embarrassed by taking a sexual harassment case to court.²⁴ Other women cited financial concerns for their refusal to bring charges against employers; they either did not want to lose their present job, or they felt hiring a lawyer would be prohibitively expensive. Still other women were not even aware that they could seek redress for discrimination or harassment.²⁵ The *Women 2000* report states, "Given the mass unemployment, most women have to put up with sexual harassment as an inevitable evil."²⁶

Since the *Women 2000* report was published the Ukrainian government has taken some measures meant to increase gender equality in the country. In 2001, a presidential decree stated that women and men should have equal rights and opportunities in public life. However, Alexandra Hrycak argues that the decree did little to raise women's public status because the government "did not adequately fund, develop, or staff programs to combat discrimination against women outside the family."²⁷ More recently, in January of 2006, a new law called "On Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" came into force. The law obliges the Ukrainian Cabinet to make changes in existing legislation to ensure the equality of men and women. The new law addresses such issues as providing additional rights to NGOs who assist in ensuring equal rights for men and women and increasing Ombudsman activities on monitoring the rights of men and

²⁴ Stop Violence Against Women found at www.stopvaw.org/Sexual_Harassment_in_Workplaces_in_Ukraine.html accessed on December 18, 2006.

²⁵ International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, *Women 2000 Report*, found at www.ihf-hr.org/documents/doc_summary.php?sec_id=58&d_id=1478, accessed December 18, 2006.

²⁶ International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, *Women 2000 Report*, found at www.ihf-hr.org/documents/doc_summary.php?sec_id=58&d_id=1478, accessed December 18, 2006.

²⁷ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 78.

women.²⁸ It remains to be seen if the changes to Ukrainian legislation will be effective at raising women's status.

Presently, the difficulties in finding and maintaining gainful employment caused by gender discrimination and harassment contribute to two-thirds of young Ukrainian women living on or below the poverty line.²⁹ Economic desperation and lack of domestic opportunities have made young Ukrainians eager to immigrate to regions which they view as more prosperous, such as Western Europe. There is a widespread belief in Ukraine that life in Western nations is easy and affluent. Because of this belief, the UN estimates that half a million young Ukrainians wish to seek work abroad, many of whom have no way to verify the legitimacy of the jobs offered to them by foreign employers. Placing eagerness for a better future before caution leaves Ukrainians vulnerable to being heavily exploited in foreign labour markets.³⁰

Ukrainian women in particular seem to feel that the answers to their problems can be found abroad. Women are inundated with newspaper advertisements for high paying positions as maids, cooks, nannies, hostesses, and dancers in countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, and many others. Although the ads often seem too good to be true, the poverty of their present situations coupled with the hope that the opportunity could be legitimate often proves to be a chance too alluring to pass up. In her book, *Sex Traffic: Prostitution, Crime and Exploitation*, Paola Monzini explains that young women do not realize how vulnerable they really are when migrating for a foreign job opportunity,

²⁸ The Network of East-West Women Polska/Neww, found at www.neww.org.pl/en.php/news/news/1.html?&nw=2542&re=2 accessed December 15, 2006.

²⁹ Statistic based on 2005 data. Olga Pyshchulina "An Evaluation of Ukrainian Legislation to Counter and Criminalize Human Trafficking," in *Human Traffic and Transnational Crime*, Sally Stoeker & Louise Shelley, eds., (Toronto: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005) 166.

³⁰ Paola Monzini, *Sex Traffic: Prostitution, Crime and Exploitation*, (Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing Ltd., 2005) 63; Olga Pyshchulina, 116.

The girls do not see clearly that the lines of demarcation between the entertainment and prostitution sectors are highly tenuous for someone arriving without resources, or, more especially, that their expectations are quite remote from the reality of work in this field. They tend to be persuaded by those who talk them into the business. Their hope is to meet rich, elegant men and to have the opportunity of leading a different life in another country, or perhaps to make sacrifices for a while and then return home with a solid basis for the future.³¹

Unfortunately, young Ukrainian women often learn how wrong their expectations are the hard way, by being trafficked and living a horrible existence until they are let go, are rescued, or escape. One would expect that after such a traumatic ordeal as being trafficked, women who return home would be naturally wary of leaving home again. Shockingly, this does not seem to be the case. In a survey of 84 victims of trafficking, Tatyana Denisova discovered that 64 percent of the respondents would try again to work abroad, hoping for better luck the second time around, even though they had already suffered through foreign exploitation once.³² This willingness to risk their personal safety again speaks to the level of desperation felt by these women to make a better life for themselves and their families.

Unfortunately, such attitudes play directly into the hands of traffickers waiting to recruit and exploit young women. The dissolution of the Soviet system encouraged the expansion of an already large informal and often criminalized Ukrainian economy.

Hughes states,

The only jobs available were in the newly emerging privatized, criminal businesses. By 1995, the informal economy accounted for 50 percent of the GDP. The result has been a criminalization of the economy in general and an expansion of organized crime networks in particular.³³

³¹ Paola Monzini, 2005, 73.

³² Donna M. Hughes & Tatyana Denisova, *Trafficking in Women from Ukraine*, report prepared for the U.S. Department of Justice. Funded by the U.S. Ukraine Research Partnership, 2002, 53. Available at <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/203275.pdf>.

³³ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 630.

These organized crime networks have been able to excel in the trafficking of women due to the opening of the borders and the large number of women wishing to leave the country. In essence, organized crime groups benefit from a poor Ukrainian economy. They would have a much more difficult time recruiting if women were able to make a suitable living in Ukraine. Therefore, Ukrainian organized crime is interested in maintaining a low status for women in Ukraine, and a poor legitimate economy in general.³⁴

As we can see, poor economic status for women is a very important variable in creating the conditions for traffic in women. However, women's economic status is greatly influenced by the political climate of Ukraine. As we will see, women's political representation and the success or failure of the women's movement in the country greatly influences the efforts taken, or not taken, to increase women's status and to combat trafficking in women.

Traffic and Politics in Ukraine

In Ukraine there is a long standing tradition of patriarchal values and attitudes toward women, as well as the monopoly of political power held by men, who legislated for women.³⁵ During the Soviet era, the socialist ideology of women's emancipation and equality with men was highly unpopular in Ukraine. This ideology of equality, even if it existed mostly in the abstract, was resented in Ukraine as an imposition of foreign

³⁴ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 641.

³⁵ Rosalind Marsh, "Introduction: Women's studies and women's issues in Russia, Ukraine and the post-Soviet states" in *Women in Russia and Ukraine*, Rosalind Marsh, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 4, 5.

Russian ideals, which had little resonance with traditional Ukrainian values.³⁶ By the late 1980s, while Ukraine's nationalist movement was gaining strength, there was a simultaneous rejection of socialist values, which included, as Sarah Birch argues, "a reconsideration of the gender egalitarianism that had been part of the official Soviet ideology."³⁷ In her introduction to *Women in Russia and Ukraine*, Rosalind Marsh argues that the nationalist movement in Ukraine was interested in replacing the communist system, but had not interest in promoting gender equality or women's rights in general.³⁸

This lack of interest in gender equality was demonstrated by the first free elections that took place in Ukraine. In the mid 1980s, while Ukraine was still under the communist system of government, 234 women were deputies in the Ukrainian legislature, or about 36 percent.³⁹ This number was roughly equivalent to the number of women present in the legislatures of its neighbours, with approximately one-third female representation. However, like other states transitioning from a communist to democratic political system, free elections in Ukraine brought a significant decrease in female parliamentary representation. After the 1990 elections women's representation in Ukraine's legislature (the Verkhovna Rada) fell from just over one-third to a mere 3 percent.⁴⁰ Since then, the percentage of women in Ukraine's parliament has remained

³⁶ Solomea Pavlychko, "Feminism in Post-communist Ukrainian Society" in *Women in Russia and Ukraine*, Rosalind Marsh, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 306.

³⁷ Sara Birch, "Women and Political Representation in Contemporary Ukraine" in *Women's Access to Political Power in Post-Communist Europe*, Richard E. Matland & Kathleen A. Montgomery, eds., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 130.

³⁸ Rosalind Marsh, 1996, 4, 5.

³⁹ Alexandra Hrycak, "Coping with Chaos: Gender and Politics in a Fragmented State" in *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 52, no. 5, September/October 2005, 74.

⁴⁰ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 74.

low. In 1994, the percentage rose to 5, followed by 8 percent in 1998, and falling to 5 percent in the 2002 parliamentary elections.⁴¹ Rosalind Marsh states,

Some eastern European feminists have called the system which has developed since 1990 'male democracy' and certainly, democratization...in Ukraine does seem to have been a 'gendered concept', granting men and women equal rights in the formal sense, but suggesting that their duties were to be very different: women's would be firmly rooted in the moral, spiritual and thus private sphere.⁴²

Ironically, as women's formal participation in the nation's legislature was declining in the early 1990s, women's informal political activity was exploding. In Ukraine, women chose to be active in religious and cultural movements. They formed numerous pressure groups based around issues such as abortion, the environment, family violence, homosexuality, rape, abortion and health.⁴³ Women also set up Ukraine's first charitable organizations. Civic life, for both men and women, increased dramatically. Hundreds of new NGOs formed, there were new political parties, and women's ideas were being expressed, if only on an informal level.⁴⁴ Solomea Pavlychko argues that in the early 1990s, although women's formal political participation had fallen, there was some belief that the voices of Ukrainian women would finally be heard. She writes,

Although the ideologists of women's organizations accepted the role of women as mother, thus repeating the totalitarian stereotype, it appeared, none the less, that women began seriously to fight for a new social status and planned to exert genuine influence on the political and social life of their country.⁴⁵

Two of the most influential women's groups that formed were the Union of Ukrainian Women and the Women's Society of Rukh. These groups went beyond

⁴¹ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 74.

⁴² Rosalind Marsh, 1996, 5.

⁴³ Rosalind Marsh, 1996, 18; & Solomea Pavlychko, "Progress on Hold: The Conservative Faces of Women in Ukraine" in *Post-Soviet Women: From the Baltic to Central Asia*, Mary Buckley, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 220.

⁴⁴ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 220, 221.

⁴⁵ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 221.

cultural issues and attempted to increase Ukrainian women's status in politics. The two groups organized discussions on such topics as the health effects of Chernobyl, and lobbied to have the power station closed. Alexandra Hrycak states, "These activities later led the Women's Society to sponsor the first conferences evaluating the social, economic, and political status of women in Ukraine."⁴⁶ By the mid 1990s the Women's Society had a membership of 11,000.⁴⁷ Despite this, the Ukrainian women's movement made little to no impact on the nation's parliament and their policies. Indeed, Pavlychko argued in 1997, "today if one asks whether there is a serious women's voice in Ukrainian political discourse, the answer is an unequivocal 'no'."⁴⁸ The question is, why did the promising Ukrainian women's movement fizzle in the latter half of the 1990s?

By the late 1990s, the Ukrainian women's movement was in crisis. This crisis has been attributed to various factors. Alexandra Hrycak argues that part of the problem was caused by the economic crisis that followed Ukrainian independence. Hrycak asserts that with the new strains of hyper-inflation, unemployment, loss of social programs, and "wage and pension arrears" many women simply did not have the time or the energy required for active participation in women's organizations.⁴⁹ Hrycak argues that women's groups were not only afflicted by falling participation, but by a divisiveness that preventing existing women's groups from cooperating on issues and forming coalitions and partnerships.

Hrycak places much of the blame for this divisiveness on women's groups' struggle to obtain foreign funding. She relates that in 1994, foreign foundations and

⁴⁶ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 71.

⁴⁷ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 71.

⁴⁸ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 222.

⁴⁹ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 71.

development programs began to offer funding to set up women's development programs in Ukraine. These programs addressed various issues such as sexual trafficking, domestic violence, and gender discrimination. Although setting up women's development programs in Ukraine was a positive step, it had the unfortunate side effect of creating rivalries between women's groups for access to funding.⁵⁰ In an attempt to secure foreign funding, women's groups often changed their focus to popular issues, thus not sustaining long-term efforts in any one area. Hrycak states, "Frequent shifts in foreign policy and grant-making priorities encouraged local activists to move frequently from one hot-button issue to another."⁵¹ Ukrainian women's groups found themselves in direct competition with one another for funding; even groups which worked on similar issues did not cooperate or form coalitions.⁵² Groups which could not secure funding simply ceased to exist.

In the case of Ukraine, it would also seem that the women's movement has been sacrificed to the goal of nation-building. In her article, "Christian virgin or pagan goddess: feminism versus the eternally feminine in Ukraine," Marian J. Rubchak states,

Numerous Ukrainian intellectuals have argued (and the opinion appears to be widespread among the general populace as well) that the urgency of state-building compels the Ukrainian people to subordinate such movements as women's liberation to the task of constructing a fully modern, fully independent country.⁵³

Even women's groups such as the Ukrainian Association of Women in L'viv supported the notion that women could only be liberated after the state was liberated. Rubchak

⁵⁰ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 72, 73.

⁵¹ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 72.

⁵² Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 72.

⁵³ Marian J. Rubchak, "Christian virgin or pagan goddess: feminism versus the eternally feminine in Ukraine" in *Women in Russia and Ukraine*, Rosalind March, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 317.

argues that this self-sacrificing, patriotic attitude is not necessary, and may even be dangerous to women's status, as nation-building and women's liberation are not mutually exclusive, and the excuse of continued nation building can be used to stall the women's movement indefinitely.⁵⁴

Solomea Pavlychko argues that the lack of unity among Ukrainian women's groups has robbed them of the strong collective voice necessary to challenge the revitalization of a "patriarchal mythology" in post-soviet Ukrainian politics.⁵⁵ This patriarchal mythology endorses traditional gender roles in which women are encouraged to bear children and maintain the household rather than seek participation in public life.⁵⁶ Pavlychko reports that the new democratic parties endorse the "return of women to the family" or the "renaissance of the patriarchy."⁵⁷ As we saw in chapter three, an acceptance of patriarchal values and actions in states transitioning from communism to democracy makes it extremely difficult for women to achieve a meaningful level of representation, where women's genuine issues and concerns are made a national legislative priority.

Indeed, Ukraine is no exception from this trend. Women's voices, especially those of young women, are generally not heard in Ukrainian politics.⁵⁸ In 1997, there were no women present among the ranks of Ukraine's approximately sixty-five ministers and chairs of state committees.⁵⁹ On the occasions when women have sat on committees they are typically assigned to weak committees that deal with youth, social services, or

⁵⁴ Marian J. Rubchak, 1996, 318.

⁵⁵ Solomea Pavlychko, 1996, 306, 309.

⁵⁶ Sarah Birch, 2003, 130.

⁵⁷ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 223.

⁵⁸ Solomea Pavlychko, 1996, 309.

⁵⁹ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 223.

the family.⁶⁰ For example, in 2003, there were nineteen women in the Ukrainian parliament. Of these nineteen, three were assigned to the Motherhood and Childhood Protection Parliamentary Committee. Two women were assigned to chair committees, one being the committee on youth, sports, and tourism.⁶¹ Alexandra Hrycak states,

There was not a single woman on the parliamentary committees concerned with organized crime and corruption; European integration; law enforcement; national security, and defense; pensioners, veterans and the handicapped; freedom of speech; and construction, transportation and communication. Needless to say, several of these committees dealt with policy domains that have been a central focus of women's advocacy work on behalf of victims of organized crime, soldiers and handicapped veterans, and victims of domestic violence.⁶²

Anti-trafficking efforts could be increased substantially if female parliamentarians willing to champion the cause were placed on key committees, such as those on organized crime and corruption, and law enforcement.

Ukrainian women are also underrepresented on regional councils, of which they average 10 percent, and in high-level civil service positions, where only 15 percent of senior positions are filled by women.⁶³ When certain women do manage to succeed in politics, and gain positions of influence, they are not necessarily supporters of women's issues. In fact, Pavlychko argues that women in Ukrainian politics are dismissive of gender issues. She states, "The few women politicians who exist stubbornly refuse to acknowledge social and economic discrimination against women and refuse to include the woman question in their programmes."⁶⁴ Women have been leaders of political parties in Ukraine. The Fatherland Party, the Agrarian Party of Ukraine, the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine, the Democratic Party of Ukraine, and the Congress of

⁶⁰ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 74.

⁶¹ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 75.

⁶² Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 75.

⁶³ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 75, 76.

⁶⁴ Solomea Pavlychko, 1997, 225.

Ukrainian Nationalists were led by women, at one time or another, during the 1990s. However, these women disagreed politically on most fronts, and were not able, or not willing to use their positions to work together to raise the status of women in Ukraine.⁶⁵

An absence of pressure on the Ukrainian government (from women's organizations as well as from women within the political system), has meant that women's issues have been given low legislative priority or ignored completely. Hrycak argues that parliamentarians view women's role as keeper of the home and family, and therefore feel no need to empower women or encourage equality. To illustrate, Hrycak cites the example of a bill on equal rights and opportunities for men and women that was proposed by a women's rights lobby in 1999. The bill was not supported in parliament and was rejected in 2001.⁶⁶

Another example of the lack of interest in raising women's equality is found in the State Department of Family and Youth. The department was charged with encouraging gender equality in Ukraine. Instead of expending resources on women's job training, domestic violence shelters, or anti-discrimination campaigns, the department spent most of its women's status budget on children's recreational activities. Hrycak says, "Such programs differed considerably from the kinds of activities women's rights advocates have in mind when they talk about combating gender inequality."⁶⁷

Although raising women's status is a difficult task in Ukraine, there are some women's organizations that are making efforts to do so. These include, but are not limited to, the International Humanitarian Centre "Rozrada", La Strada Ukraine, the Ukrainian Centre for Women's Studies, the Women's Information Consultative Center, the

⁶⁵ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 75.

⁶⁶ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 74.

⁶⁷ Alexandra Hrycak, 2005, 78.

Women's Union of Ukraine, the Ya Zhinka Women's Centre, and DANA- Regional Women's Independent Association.⁶⁸ Rozrada was established in 1994 by a Ukrainian and an American psychologist. It is a non-governmental, non-profit group whose goal it is to spread gender equality, build civil society, and to encourage women's independence, education, and psychological well-being.⁶⁹ The Ukrainian Centre for Women's Studies was founded in 1992. It is an NGO that is focused on researching women and human rights in Ukraine and the surrounding region. It has a feminist orientation.⁷⁰

DANA- Regional Women's Independent Association was founded in 1995. Its first activities centered around helping the poor and homeless, aiding single mothers and children, and organizing benefit concerts. In 1998, DANA founded a crisis centre for women and educated women on how to escape domestic violence. Today DANA is involved in human rights projects, civic education, and has begun a program against trafficking in women.⁷¹ La Strada- Ukraine is a non-governmental organization that works specifically against trafficking in women. Its goal is to prevent trafficking in women and to help the victims of trafficking. La Strada-Ukraine was founded by the Foundation Against Trafficking in Women (based out of The Netherlands) and was registered in Ukraine in 1998. The website of La Strada- Ukraine states that it has the "specific goal of public awareness, to draw the attention of society and representatives of governmental institutions to the problem of trafficking in women as a question of human rights violation."⁷²

⁶⁸ Center for Civil Society International, found at www.civilsoc.org/nisorgs/ukraine, accessed December 9, 2006.

⁶⁹ International Humanitarian Centre "Rozrada" found at <http://www.rozrada.kiev.ua/about-e.htm#1>, accessed January 2, 2007.

⁷⁰ Centre for Civil Society International, civilsoc.org/nisorgs/ukraine, accessed December 9, 2006.

⁷¹ Centre for Civil Society International, civilsoc.org/nisorgs/ukraine, accessed December 9, 2006.

⁷² La Strada-Ukraine, found at www.brama.com/lastrada, accessed December 9, 2006.

The principal activities of La Strada-Ukraine are: to assist trafficked persons; to maintain an emergency hotline; to research violence against women; to offer expertise on legislation; to educate youth on women's rights and the prevention of trafficking; to inform the public about traffic through mass media, print materials, and conferences; to cooperate with government and non-governmental organizations in the prevention of trafficking and the assistance of trafficking victims; and to cooperate with law enforcement and lawyers in improving trafficking legislation.⁷³

La Strada Ukraine is the only NGO in Ukraine that specifically deals with the issue of trafficking. Without its ongoing efforts, many victims of trafficking would not have been offered assistance upon their return to Ukraine. However, for all the excellent anti-trafficking work that La Strada conducts, its organization has not escaped some criticism. Donna Hughes argues that although La Strada-Ukraine does important work, it does not always represent the best interests of the women of Ukraine. This is due to La Strada's stance on the legalization of prostitution. La Strada-Ukraine has adopted the stance of its Dutch founder, the Foundation Against Trafficking in Women, which advocates the legalization of prostitution and lobbies for women's right to travel abroad to work in prostitution.⁷⁴

Hughes argues that this view is not representative of women in Ukrainian society, saying, "no survey indicates that women or people in general support prostitution as work for women."⁷⁵ Hughes argues that since The Netherlands has a large sex industry, it must

⁷³ La Strada-Ukraine, found at www.brama.com/lastrada, accessed December 9, 2006.

⁷⁴ Donna M. Hughes & Tatyana A. Denisova "The Transnational Political Criminal Nexus in Trafficking in Women from Ukraine" in *Trends in Organized Crime*, Vol. 6. No. 3-4: Spring/Summer 2001, 19, 22.

⁷⁵ Donna M. Hughes & Tatyana A. Denisova, 2001, 22.

promote views and policies, through groups such as La Strada, which allow for Ukrainian women to enter the Dutch sex industry to help meet the demand. Hughes says,

In September 1998, in a televised debate on prostitution, La Strada Ukraine promoted the legalization of prostitution against DANA, a less well-funded grassroots Ukrainian NGO, which opposed that view...La Strada-Ukraine has also blocked conference resolutions that criticize the sex industries or state that prostitution is harmful to women.⁷⁶

Hughes argues that Ukraine's civil society will be corrupted if foreign funded groups choose to represent the views of their donor countries, rather than the views and needs of Ukrainian women.⁷⁷

Although various Ukrainian women's groups are working to increase the status of women in Ukraine, the political clout of the Ukrainian women's movement as a whole is very weak. In addition to this, women have very poor formal political representation in the Ukrainian government. When women are elected to parliament, they are either not interested in pursuing women's interests or initiatives, or they are placed on weak committees deemed appropriate for women, which address the family or tourism. Because of this, women in Ukraine are not in a strong position to lobby the government on issues such as gender equality, discrimination, female unemployment, domestic violence, and sexual trafficking. Until patriarchal attitudes are lessened and a strong, united women's movement develops in Ukraine, the conditions which lead to trafficking will continue. The next section will address trafficking in Ukraine: who is victimized, how it operates, and what Ukraine is doing to address the situation.

⁷⁶ Donna M. Hughes & Tatyana A. Denisova, 2001, 19, 21.

⁷⁷ Donna M. Hughes & Tatyana A. Denisova, 2001, 21.

Trafficking in Ukraine

Marika was from Kharkiv, Ukraine, where she was recruited by a trafficker:

Marika was the perfect dupe. She was desperate for work. Her mother was sick and her father was an unemployed, miserable drunk. Her two sisters were wasting away. The job offer was her only chance to make things better. It was a risk; she felt it in every fibre of her body. But it was one she knew she just had to take... The recruiter, though, was adamant, swearing up and down – going as far as to invoke the names of Jesus, Joseph and Mary- that this offer was on the up-and-up.⁷⁸

Marika found herself being trafficked through a winding route, eventually ending up in Tel Aviv. When Marika said she wanted to go home she was met with a violent response:

‘The Russian pig hit me across the face very hard and told me to shut up. My mouth was bleeding and I began to weep. That night, I felt for the first time what it was to be a whore. I had to service eight men. I felt so terrible and ashamed. Over the next four months, I don’t know how many hundreds of Israeli men I was forced to have sex with. Young men, old men, fat men, disgusting men. Soldiers, husbands and religious men. It did not matter if I was sick or if I was on my period. I had to work or I would be punished.’⁷⁹

Tatyana’s story, as related by Donna Hughes in “The ‘Natasha’ Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of Trafficking in Women” is similar to Marika’s:

Tatyana, aged 20, is from a small town in Lugansk Oblast in Eastern Ukraine. She could not find a job there because the economy is very poor and the factories are closed. A friend of her mother told her that rich families in the United Arab Emirates were hiring housemaids and she could earn US \$4,000 a month there. When she arrived in the United Arab Emirates, however, her passport was taken away and she was sold to a brothel for US \$7,000 and forced into prostitution to repay the purchase and travel costs to the owner. When she managed to escape and went to the police for help, she was arrested and sentenced to three years in prison for working in a brothel.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Victor Malarek, 2003, xii.

⁷⁹ Victor Malarek, 2003, xii.

⁸⁰ Donna M. Hughes, “The ‘Natasha’ Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of Trafficking in Women” 632.

Although details such as geography will change, Tatyana and Marika's experiences of trafficking are very typical of the thousands of Ukrainian women who fall victim to this activity every year. Ukraine's Ministry of the Interior estimated in 1998 that 400,000 Ukrainian women had been trafficked in the past decade. Other NGOs felt the number was higher. For example, the International Organization for Migration felt that the number of Ukrainian women trafficked in the first eight years of the 1990s was closer to 500,000.⁸¹ As previously described, statistics on trafficked women are notoriously difficult to gather. These numbers are broad and inexact estimates. Agencies and NGOs rarely specify how they have reached a certain statistic or if women trafficked for labour purposes as well as for sexual exploitation are included in the tally. These numbers are not meant to be exact, but are instead meant to express that the trafficking problem in the country is very severe.

Statistics aside, all evidence points to the fact that Ukrainian women are forced into prostitution in very high numbers in many regions of the world. Donna Hughes and Tatyana Denisova have found that Ukraine is one of the largest suppliers of women for prostitution in Europe.⁸² Ukraine is the third largest supplier of women to Western Europe, after Moldova and Romania, and is also in the top three countries that send women to the Balkan region. In October of 2000 alone the IOM reported that 185 Ukrainian women, most in their mid 20's, were returned to Ukraine by other countries

⁸¹ Donna M. Hughes, "The 'Natasha' Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of Trafficking in Women," 628, 629.

⁸² Donna M. Hughes & Tatyana Denisova, "Trafficking in Women from Ukraine" found at www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/203275.pdf accessed on July 12, 2006.

such as Turkey, Israel, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland.⁸³ Hughes reports that Ukrainian women are the largest group of foreign women in prostitution in Turkey.⁸⁴

Of course, Ukrainian women do not traffic themselves to these destination countries. The first step in the process is to be recruited by someone connected to a trafficking network. Hughes and Denisova report that traffickers operating in Ukraine are 80 percent Ukrainian citizens, with a startling number of women involved in recruiting and trafficking- an estimated 60 percent.⁸⁵ Most traffickers have no previous criminal record, as a criminal record makes it more difficult for them to leave the country. Traffickers are often associated with organized crime networks of varying sizes. In the year 2000 the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs estimated that 960 organized crime groups operated in Ukraine. The largest groups operated out of Odessa and were comprised of between 20 and 30 individuals. Other regions in Ukraine had smaller crime groups, with 5 or 6 members.⁸⁶

These trafficking groups use various recruiting methods that are typical for the region. These methods include: posting bogus job advertisements, offering fake modeling contracts, associating themselves with marriage or travel agencies, or posing as friends of the woman's friends or family in order to gain her trust.⁸⁷ Women are often more enthusiastic about a job opportunity if they will be traveling in a group, thinking that there is safety in numbers. However, recruiters have used this strategy to trap and

⁸³ International Organization for Migration, "Trafficking in Migrants" Special Issue, Quarterly Bulletin, no.23 April 2001, 5.

⁸⁴ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 629.

⁸⁵ Donna Hughes & Tatyana Denisova, "Trafficking in Women from Ukraine," 38.

⁸⁶ Donna M. Hughes & Tatyana A. Denisova, "The Transnational Political Criminal Nexus of Trafficking in Women from Ukraine" in *Trends in Organized Crime*, Vol.6, No. 3-4: Spring-Summer 2001, 6, 7.

⁸⁷ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices-Ukraine" March 8, 2006. Found at www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

sell numerous women at once.⁸⁸ The U.S. State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor reports that there have also been occurrences of women and girls being kidnapped by traffickers in Ukraine.⁸⁹ Hughes and Denisova report that in approximately 70 percent of trafficking cases, the deceptions used are so sophisticated and credible that women have no inclination that they are being trafficked to a sex industry until they reach their destination. Some women are not even able to identify the parties that are responsible for selling them into prostitution.⁹⁰

Hughes and Denisova have found that many women fall victim to recruiters despite almost 50 percent of them being aware of the dangers of sexual trafficking. This may be due to their attitudes toward working abroad. In an IOM survey of 1,189 women and girls in Ukraine (age 15-35), 40% of the women were categorized as at risk to be trafficked because they were interested in working abroad. All the women surveyed indicated that working abroad as a prostitute was not acceptable, however, the women under 20 years of age thought it was acceptable to take a job abroad as a dancer or stripper. These hopes of finding a better job in Western Europe, even as a stripper, make recruiting a relatively easy task.⁹¹

Women who agree to work in the sex industry have an unrealistic expectation of the working conditions and are not prepared for the situation they find themselves in. Saltanat Sulaimanova writes, "For example, a Ukrainian woman said she knew she would have to work as a commercial sex worker abroad, but she thought it would be similar to

⁸⁸ Victor Malarek, 2003, 11.

⁸⁹ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices-Ukraine" 2006.

⁹⁰ Donna M. Hughes & Tatyana A. Denisova, 2001, 9.

⁹¹ Hughes & Denisova, "Trafficking in Women from Ukraine" 9, 42-44.

the film *Pretty Woman*, where she would have only one client who would support her.”⁹² Street kids in Ukraine are also vulnerable to recruiters. Victor Malarek says, “According to police data in Ukraine, 12,000 children are abandoned by their parents every year. A Ministry of Internal Affairs document states that 100,000 children-14 percent under the age of seven- were registered as homeless in 2000.”⁹³ These children have little or no protection from traffickers and make easy prey.

While there is a certain amount of internal trafficking in Ukraine, the norm seems to be for traffickers to transport recruited women to other countries for sexual exploitation. Ukrainian women have been found in prostitution in upwards of 50 destination countries, showing up most frequently in Turkey, Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Italy, Greece, Serbia and Montenegro, the UK, Lithuania, and Portugal.⁹⁴ The geographic location from which women are recruited often determines to which country they will be trafficked. This large movement of women leaving Ukraine became possible with the fall of the Soviet Union and the subsequent opening of Ukraine’s borders. Hughes and Denisova report that between 1994 and 2000 the population of Ukraine decreased by 90,000 people per year due to emigration. “The trend to leave Ukraine, either temporarily or permanently, has facilitated the trafficking of women.”⁹⁵ Although Ukraine is primarily a country of origin for trafficked women, it has also been used as a

⁹² Sultanat Sulaimanova, “Trafficking in Women from the Former Soviet Union” in *Trafficking and the Global Sex Industry*, Karen Beeks & Delila Amir, eds., (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2006) 64.

⁹³ Malarek, 2003, 15.

⁹⁴ U.S. State Department, “The Trafficking in Persons Report-2006” found at www.state.gov/g/tip/ris/tiprpt/2006/65983.htm accessed June 19, 2006.

⁹⁵ Hughes & Denisova, “Trafficking in Women from Ukraine,” 28.

transit country for traffickers moving women east to west, as well as a country of destination for a few women from other post-soviet states as well as from South Asia.⁹⁶

Trafficking in women in Ukraine is facilitated by substantial corruption within the country's branches of government and law enforcement. Local police, border guards, and high-level officials have been accused of taking bribes to ignore trafficking activities, or to assist traffickers in moving women across the border. The U.S State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor reports, "Local officials reportedly aided organized crime groups involved in trafficking; a police officer, for example, allegedly assisted an organized crime gang that trafficked minors to Russian pedophiles."⁹⁷

These activities have not escaped the notice of the public; 50 percent of people polled in a public opinion survey thought that the government was seriously corrupt.⁹⁸ This opinion is supported by Transparency International's 2005 Corruption Perceptions Index, in which Ukraine earned the dubious distinction of ranking as one of the most corrupt countries in the world- placing 107th out of 159 ranked countries.⁹⁹ Corruption in the government and judicial system significantly increases the ease with which traffickers move women across borders. If border guards and the police were vigilant against trafficking and their cooperation could not be bought by organized crime, trafficking would still occur, but it would be much more risky and perhaps the number of overall

⁹⁶ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

⁹⁷ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

⁹⁸ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

⁹⁹ Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index-2005, found at www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2005 accessed July 29, 2006.

cases would decrease. Therefore, any fight against traffic must include a fight against official corruption.

In addition to the problem of corruption there seems to be a significant amount of complacency about the issue within government and law enforcement circles. Many public officials who are charged with the protection of Ukrainian society fail to see trafficking as a major problem that must be dealt with aggressively. Such indifference is very damaging to anti-trafficking efforts and occurs at the highest levels. This is demonstrated by a comment made in 2003 by Gennadi Lepenko, the chief of Interpol in Kiev, who said that women's groups blow the trafficking problem out of proportion.¹⁰⁰ Victor Malarek states, "Even where good laws exist, people trafficking is considered a far less serious crime than smuggling guns or drugs and so remains a low enforcement priority in most sending and destination countries."¹⁰¹

In 1998, Ukraine adopted an anti-trafficking law into their criminal code, making it the first post-soviet state to do so. Article 124 (later 149) of the Ukrainian criminal code made trafficking in humans punishable by 3 to 8 years imprisonment. Trafficking cases involving minors or numerous victims carried a sentence of 5 to 12 years.¹⁰² As well, in 2000, a special unit was established in the Criminal Investigation Department of the Ministry of the Interior with the responsibility of preventing and detecting traffic in human beings in Ukraine.¹⁰³ Unfortunately, many deficiencies exist in the Ukrainian judicial system, which have made it difficult to successfully punish traffickers.

¹⁰⁰ Victor Malarek, 2003, 120.

¹⁰¹ Victor Malarek, 2003, 120,121.

¹⁰² Anti-Slavery International, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection" found at www.antislavery.org/homepage/resources/humantraffichumanrights.htm accessed on December 19, 2006.

¹⁰³ Anti-Slavery International, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection" found at www.antislavery.org/homepage/resources/humantraffichumanrights.htm accessed on December 19, 2006.

The sentencing record for traffickers has been discouraging. In 2001, 60 men and 69 women were arrested on the suspicion of trafficking in humans. Of these 129 suspects, only 10 were convicted.¹⁰⁴ In the first 6 months of 2005, 149 criminal trafficking cases were brought to trial in Ukraine. Out of 149 cases, only 58 defendants were sentenced. Of these 58 defendants, 38 of them received no jail time, and most of the remainder who did receive jail time spent less than 5 years in prison. The longest sentence handed out was 8 years.¹⁰⁵ Recruiters are convicted the most often because they operate inside Ukraine. However, their conviction does little to slow traffic as they are low in the trafficking hierarchy and are easily replaced.¹⁰⁶ As we can see, the punishments handed down to traffickers are very light and provide little or no deterrent to continuing their activities.

Part of the difficulty of successfully prosecuting traffickers is the reluctance of victims to testify in court against their exploiters. Traffickers often threaten the lives of victims and their families, which makes them reluctant to testify. There is a witness protection program in Ukraine, but its services are almost never used for trafficking victims. Police and investigators feel that women are not in serious danger from traffickers and therefore do not provide protection services to victims during trials. In rare cases, a victim will receive alternate housing during trial, but this is usually coordinated by La Strada Ukraine and the Department to Combat Trafficking, not the department responsible for witness protection.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Anti-Slavery International, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection".

¹⁰⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

¹⁰⁶ Anti-Slavery International, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection".

¹⁰⁷ Anti-Slavery International, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection".

In addition, victims cite a lack of trust in police officials and fear of being stigmatized by society as contributing factors to why they prefer not to testify in court.¹⁰⁸ Many times ineffective investigation practices result in cases being dropped due to a lack of evidence. In their report entitled, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection" the group Anti-Slavery International writes,

The slow process of investigating and prosecuting trafficking cases, lack of proper resources for investigation, and reliance on witness testimony, rather than other forms of investigation, are the main hindrances to successful prosecutions. Both prosecutors and lawyers felt that lack of training and understanding by the judiciary of specific issues in trafficking cases also hindered successful prosecutions.¹⁰⁹

Due to the large scope of trafficking in Ukraine and the above problems, the U.S. State Department ranked Ukraine in Tier 2 of its 2006 Trafficking in Persons Report. Tier 2 is designated for countries "whose governments do not fully comply with the Act's [Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000] minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards."¹¹⁰ The minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons as laid out by the Act include 4 minimum criteria: the government of the country must prohibit and punish severe forms of trafficking; the punishment for severe trafficking must be comparable to that of other severe crimes; the punishment for severe trafficking must be stringent enough to deter others from this activity; and the government must make serious efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

¹⁰⁹ Anti-Slavery International, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection".

¹¹⁰ The Trafficking in Persons Report 2006, www.state.gov/g/tip/ris/tiprpt/2006/65983.htm accessed June 19, 2006.

¹¹¹ The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65994.htm accessed July 19, 2006.

In the past few years the government of Ukraine has begun some initiatives in an attempt to improve its trafficking record. As indicated above, one such measure includes the creation of a 500 officer anti-trafficking department, which allows more proactive investigations into trafficking and increased manpower to deal with cases. Ukrainian diplomats are being given training in handling victims of traffic who come to them for assistance, and some educational materials have been produced to warn the vulnerable public about the dangers of trafficking.

Having said this, there is much more that Ukraine needs to improve upon. As it stands, the government of Ukraine relies heavily upon international organizations such as the IOM, and local NGOs such as La Strada - Ukraine to assist victims of trafficking. These groups provide the bulk of medical assistance, education, and rehabilitation services to trafficked women. The Trafficking in Persons Report recommends that Ukraine provide more resources to victims in such areas as rehabilitation and reintegration; do more to protect witnesses during trial; and provide special training to designated trafficking prosecutors.¹¹²

Anti-Slavery International recommends that police treat trafficked women as victims and not just as witnesses. This distinction is important because as victims, women can file civil suits against their exploiters for compensation. Also, Anti-Slavery International recommends that police refer victims to local NGOs for assistance. La Strada has taken the step of providing application forms to police to give to all trafficked persons at first contact, so victims know they can find assistance with La Strada. Anti-Slavery International also recommends that Ukraine broaden its definition of trafficking

¹¹² The Trafficking in Persons Report 2006, www.state.gov/g/tip/ris/tiprpt/2006/65983.htm accessed June 19, 2006.

to include domestic trafficking; increase cooperation with its neighbours; establish clear guidelines for dealing with trafficking victims; include women in special trafficking units; provide free legal advice to women; and create a State compensation fund for trafficked persons.¹¹³

Ukraine suffered many setbacks as a result of its economic and political transitions. These setbacks have created difficulties for both men and women. However, women are vulnerable to the added danger of being traded as sexual commodities. Poland has experienced similar challenges as Ukraine, and yet, their trafficking problem is less significant than Ukraine's, and Polish women have a higher status in economic and political life. The case of Poland will now be examined in an attempt to understand how Polish women have attained this higher status, and if this status is significant to the reduction of Poland's importance as a country of origin for sexual trafficking.

The Case of Poland

Traffic and the Polish Economy

The transition of 1989 improved some conditions in Poland, such as free expression, prison standards, and the rights of political representation.¹¹⁴ However, as with Ukraine, many other conditions worsened, including the socio-economic status of women. The dramatic transition to a market economy robbed many people, including women, of their employment security. Although both men and women suffered, women felt the painful effects of the changing workplace more acutely than men. In her chapter "Polish Women in Politics: An Introduction to the Status of Women in Poland," Anna

¹¹³ Anti-Slavery International, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection".

¹¹⁴ The Human Rights Watch Global Report on Women's Human Rights, "Employment Discrimination in Post-Communist Poland," (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998) 333.

Titkow records that in 1991 women accounted for more than half of the unemployed population, and that the number of job openings offered to men were seven times greater than those offered to women. Most of the unemployed women were under the age of 34.¹¹⁵ The Polish state's reduction or cancellation of medical, educational, and child care services further strained young women, who became responsible for picking up the slack.¹¹⁶

Polish women have had legal equality with men since 1918, and on average are just as educated as men, or more so.¹¹⁷ Despite this, women in the mid 1990s were still being discriminated against in the workplace. This can be partly explained by Poland's return to a more traditional view of gender roles in the early 1990s. In her article "Women in the Polish Sejm: Political Culture and Party Politics versus Electoral Rules" Renata Siemienska argues that one factor involved in the swing back to traditional attitudes toward men and women was "a reemergent nationalist rhetoric, associated with the Catholic church, encouraging women to assume their 'proper' place in the home as the reproducers of Polish culture and identity."¹¹⁸

Poland's return to a more traditional view of gender roles has meant that men and women tend to concentrate in occupations deemed gender appropriate by Polish society. Women are encouraged to sacrifice for their family and their country, which means that there is much pressure to stay in the home, or work in a traditionally female occupation,

¹¹⁵ Anna Titkow, "Polish Women in Politics: An Introduction to the Status of Women in Poland," in *Women in the Politics of Postcommunist Eastern Europe*, Marilyn Rueschemeyer ed., (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1994) 30.

¹¹⁶ Joanna Regulska, "Transition to Local Democracy: Do Polish Women Have a Chance?" in *Women in the Politics of Postcommunist Eastern Europe*, Marilyn Rueschemeyer, ed., (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1994) 36.

¹¹⁷ Anna Titkow, 1994, 29.

¹¹⁸ Renata Siemienska, "Women in the Polish Sejm: Political Culture and Party Politics versus Electoral Rules," in *Women's Access to Political Power in Post-Communist Europe*, Richard E. Matland & Kathleen A. Montgomery, eds., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 228.

such as child care or secretarial work. Anna Titkow says, "Girls chose, and they continue to choose, specializations that prepare them for traditionally female occupations. It is as if they knew that some professions were not proper for them."¹¹⁹ Unfortunately for the economic status of women, the jobs seen as most suitable for women are also the lowest paid.

Poland has also enacted many paternalistic employment laws. They are justified by the government as protecting women in the workforce, but in actuality make it more difficult for women to compete with men for job opportunities. In 1995 the Human Rights Watch Global Report on Women's Human Rights reported that there was a total of ninety occupations in Poland in which women could not work because they are classified as dangerous to a woman's health. These occupations are found primarily in industry and agriculture, but also in health care and transportation. Women are also forced to retire 5 years earlier than men, at the age of 60 rather than 65. This mandatory retirement age applied to all women with the exception of university professors, who successfully challenged the law. An earlier retirement age further strains women's economic security late in life.¹²⁰

There are other paternalistic laws that act to make women less desirable as employees than men. One such law provides long term leave benefits to women who must care for sick children, but does not grant the same benefits to men. Men who take sick leave have their salaries reduced by 20 percent, whereas women do not. Laws such as this, and other considerations such as maternity leave, cause employers to view women as liabilities to the company and subsequently prefer to hire men. Employers are able to

¹¹⁹ Anna Titkow, 1994, 30.

¹²⁰ The Human Rights Report on Women's Human Rights, 1998, 334-338.

hire men over women without fear of punishment because there are no laws against sex discrimination in hiring practices. The Global Report on Women's Human Rights says, "Consequently, employers who choose a man over an equally or better qualified woman for a particular position face no legal sanction."¹²¹ Traditional gender roles also contributed to women being more likely to be laid off from their job than men, as men were supposed to be the primary supporters of the family, and a job given to a woman was one less job available to a man.¹²²

The above circumstances caused the standard of living to decrease for Polish women in the early and mid 1990s. Most women felt overworked, underpaid, and economically unstable.¹²³ This time of instability corresponds to the time in which Poland was one of the most important countries of origin for sexual trafficking. As in Ukraine, recruiting women was simple when Polish job opportunities were scarce. However, in the past few years, changes have occurred that have made Poland less important as a country of origin for trafficking, relative to its more impoverished neighbours. Presently Poland has one of the fastest growing and robust economies in Central Europe, and was admitted into the European Union in 2004. Poland's per capita GDP is \$13,300 and the percentage of the population below the poverty line is 17%.¹²⁴ Although these figures are not that impressive when compared to Western democracies, when compared to its post-soviet neighbours such as Moldova (per capita GDP: \$1,900), Ukraine (per capita GDP:

¹²¹ The Human Rights Report on Women's Human Rights, 1998, 334-338.

¹²² The Human Rights Report on Women's Human Rights, 1998, 338.

¹²³ Anna Titkow, 1994, 45.

¹²⁴ CIA Factbook 2006- www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos.html accessed on July 6, 2006.

\$7,000), and Romania (per capita GDP: \$8,100), Poland's economic transition has been relatively successful.¹²⁵

In her article, "Women's Vital Voices: The Costs of Exclusion in Eastern Europe," Swanee Hunt reports that although discrimination against women in the workplace still exists, "employment gaps between men and women are least apparent in Poland and the Czech Republic, which are thriving."¹²⁶ Economic improvements in Poland in the last decade may have made recruiting for sex trafficking more difficult. Women who can make an income domestically are less interested in migrating for employment, and therefore less vulnerable to traffickers. It is difficult to substantiate if the number of women trafficked out of Poland has decreased, and if so, by how much it has decreased, because of a lack of statistical data. However, the evidence suggests that traffickers have been focusing on recruiting in more impoverished nations to the east of Poland, such as Ukraine, Moldova, and the Russian Federation, because there is a larger population of women there who are desperate to leave their home countries in search of jobs.

Although Poland's status as a country of origin may be decreasing, its relative wealth has brought with it a different problem: it has become a country of destination. With higher personal incomes, more wealth is available for leisure activities, and for some men, this means paying for sex. As a result, women from Poland's eastern neighbours are being brought to Poland for exploitation.¹²⁷ If and when Poland's economy continues to strengthen, its anti-trafficking tactics may need to evolve from

¹²⁵ CIA Factbook 2006- www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos.html accessed on July 6, 2006.

¹²⁶ Swanee Hunt, "Women's Vital Voices: The Costs of Exclusion in Eastern Europe," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, no. 4 (July/August 1997) 3.

¹²⁷ United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, "Economic Roots of Trafficking in the UNECE Region" found at www.unece.org/press/pr2004/04gen_n03.htm accessed June 29, 2005.

prevention of their citizens being trafficked, to combating the exploitation of foreign women on their soil. As with Ukraine, anti-trafficking resources and initiatives are dependent upon the political will of a nation to implement them. Earlier, this chapter argued that Ukraine's low priority for ending traffic was linked to the absence of a powerful and united voice for women in the country. The next section will attempt to determine how the women's movement may or may not be affecting anti-trafficking efforts in Poland.

Trafficking and Politics in Poland

The break-up of the Soviet Union, and the subsequent rise of nationalist rhetoric and the strengthening of the Catholic church caused a return to more traditional values in Poland. Economically, this meant women were encouraged to stay home with children, and if they had to work, to work within occupations deemed suitable for females. Politically, women were discouraged from forming feminist organizations or running for elected office. Political parties viewed women as unsuccessful political candidates and therefore as liabilities to the party.¹²⁸ Rather than shape policy in the public world, women were relied upon to act as the glue of society, to sacrifice and use their labour to keep social life running.

Women were told to strengthen the nation of Poland by bearing children. In her occasional paper, "Women at work: The status of women in the labour markets of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland" Eva Fodor argues that Polish women were encouraged to have children by Polish policies that were slightly pro-natalist. Fodor

¹²⁸ Renata Siemienska, "Women in the Polish Sejm: Political Culture and Party Politics versus Electoral Rules" in *Women's Access to Political Power in Post-Communist Europe*, Richard E. Matland & Kathleen A. Montgomery, eds., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 217.

argues that women were “encouraged to have children through the constant renegotiation and restrictions of abortion rights as well as financial incentives to have larger families under the system of family benefits.”¹²⁹ Anna Titkow argues that women gained gratification from the knowledge that the system would fall apart without them and that they were vital members of society. It is ironic, then, that the members of society who sacrificed the most to encourage the well-being of their country were given the least input in the construction of the new system.¹³⁰

Polish women were very poorly represented politically in the 1990s. In the democratic elections of 1990 the percentage of women in Poland’s parliament dropped from 20.2 to 13.5.¹³¹ By the mid 1990s, women’s representation had declined further, to 9.6 percent of the Sejm (the lower house of parliament) and 6 percent of senators.

Women were also not appointed to positions as regional administrators.¹³² Women were viewed as risky political candidates by party leaders and thus were kept off candidate lists.¹³³ In the 1990s there was no strong women’s movement in Poland, which meant very little to no pressure was placed on political parties to include women on their party lists.¹³⁴ For Polish women, the early to mid 1990s were an uncertain time.

Unemployment and discrimination against women was high, and they did not have the political clout to challenge the system. At this time Poland was still an important country of origin for traffickers. However, as the 1990s came to a close, Poland’s economic

¹²⁹ Eva Fodor, “Women at work: The status of women in the labour markets of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland” Occasional Paper 3, prepared for the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, February 2005, 27.

¹³⁰ Cynthia Enloe, 1993, 257; Anna Titkow, 1994, 31.

¹³¹ Cynthia Enloe, 1993, 23.

¹³² Anna Titkow, 1994, 31.

¹³³ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 217.

¹³⁴ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 217.

fortunes began to look more favourable. Changes were also approaching for women's political activity.

In the Polish elections of 2001, there was a significant increase in the number of women who were voted into parliament. After having never surpassed 13 percent of parliamentary seats since the end of the Soviet Union, Polish women won 20.2 percent of the seats. In 2006, women held 94 of the 460 seats in the lower house, 13 of the 100 seats in the senate, and 2 of 18 cabinet positions.¹³⁵ The question is, after fairing so poorly in the political realm in the 1990s, what factors contributed to the marked increase in women's political standing in 2001?

A large contributing factor to women's political gains in the 2001 Polish election was the mobilization of Polish women's groups prior to the election. A Pre-Electoral Coalition of Women was formed, which was an agreement between fifty women's groups to work together to lobby for gender equality, both in the labour market and in politics.¹³⁶ A few of the Polish women's groups active in the movement were: the Democratic Union of Women, the League of Polish Women, the Labour Union's Women's Section, the Federation of Polish Women's Clubs, the Circle of Rural Housewives, the Women's Section of Solidarity, the Provincial Center of Crisis Intervention, the Zoliborz Women's Center, and Women Also of the Freedom Union.¹³⁷ The Pre-Electoral Coalition of Women was also supported by women who were already in the Polish parliament. Female parliamentarians formed a women's caucus called the Women's Parliamentary Group. This Women's Parliamentary Group was able to exert pressure on their political

¹³⁵ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 217; Bureau of Democracy, Human Right and Labor.

¹³⁶ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 232.

¹³⁷ Ewa Malinowska, "Women's Organizations in Poland" in *Women on the Polish Labor Market*, Mike Ingham, Hilary Ingham, & Henryk Domanski, eds., (New York: Central European University Press, 2001) 196, 198

parties from the inside, while women's organizations worked to sway public opinion and exert pressure on government from the outside.¹³⁸

Women MPs and women's organizations were able to encourage changes within political parties that increased women's representation. The most significant changes in women's representation were implemented by leftist political parties, with the Democratic Left Alliance at the forefront. Renata Siemienska reports that before the 2001 election, the Democratic Left Alliance established a policy that required at least 30 percent of their party nominations to be from each gender. She says, "This policy was developed in response to a variety of internal and external pressures, including efforts by the Parliamentary Group of Women, the influence of Polish MPs' contact with parliamentarians from different countries, and the desire to increase support from the female electorate."¹³⁹ Another leftist party, the Labour Union followed suit, and made women 31 percent of their party delegation. The Freedom Union also endorsed a 30 percent female party list rule.¹⁴⁰

In the 2001 election, leftist parties fared much better than they had in previous elections. Women's increased status within these parties meant that women's political representation increased significantly. Siemienska says that in terms of women's representation, the 2001 elections "catapulted Poland from being a laggard to a leader."¹⁴¹ She predicts that with the left's implementation of quotas for women, women will continue to do well in elections as long as leftist parties are successful. Parties on the

¹³⁸ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 232.

¹³⁹ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 220.

¹⁴⁰ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 223, 240.

¹⁴¹ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 242.

right have also been pressured to raise the status of women in their parties. However, they have not instituted quotas, so the number of women on their party lists fluctuates.¹⁴²

Increased acceptance of women in politics is partly due to a gradual shift in attitudes that is moving away from the traditionalism of the 1990s. Siemienska reports that women are becoming less traditional in their views and are leaning more and more toward equality between men and women in business and politics. She argues,

Public attitudes towards women in politics appears to be changing in a positive direction...there has been a noticeable increase in the number of women and men who disagree with the opinion that 'men are better suited to politics than women...' The increase from 1997 to 2001 may indicate a more permanent shift in the direction of accepting women in the political sphere.¹⁴³

Young, highly educated women are the least likely to have voted exclusively for men in elections. Youth and education do not necessarily make men less traditional in their view of gender roles, but what is important is that young women are increasingly open to joining women's groups, women's professional organizations, and even running for office. It was women's organization and mobilization- their will to work together and fight for women's issues and representation- that made the difference between the 1997 and 2001 elections.¹⁴⁴ If the women's movement in Poland is to continue, and gain momentum, women's organizations and women in politics must persist in working together to advocate for gender equality, employment for women, an end to violence against women, and the cessation of sex traffic to and from the country.

Of Poland's numerous women's organizations, La Strada-Poland is the leader on the anti-trafficking front. La Strada-Poland was established in 1995, three years before

¹⁴² Renata Siemienska, 2003, 240.

¹⁴³ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 219, 229, 239.

¹⁴⁴ Renata Siemienska, 2003, 230, 239.

Ukraine's branch, under the supervision of the Dutch Foundation against Traffic in Women. La Strada Poland describes its mandate as follows:

The La Strada Program seeks to make the issue of traffic of women visible and to influence the authorities and public opinion to address the topic from a human rights perspective. The program also seeks to refer victims to support networks and to educate women and girls against potential dangers of trafficking. The needs of the women concerned form the starting point of all activities.¹⁴⁵

La Strada Poland uses a three-tier approach to combating trafficking. First, they seek to raise awareness about the problem, both in the general public and for those in positions of national authority. To do this they have launched a press and lobby campaign consisting of interviews, conferences, and training sessions for professionals.

Second, La Strada Poland seeks to prevent trafficking through an education campaign. This campaign educates potential victims about the dangers of traffic through lectures, visits to Polish schools, video presentations and a telephone hotline providing information on migration to Western Europe. Third, La Strada assists victims of traffic, both those who have been returned after being trafficked abroad and those who have been trafficked into Poland. La Strada offers counseling and direct assistance as well as referring victims to professionals who can provide legal, medical, and emotional help.¹⁴⁶

La Strada Ukraine and La Strada Poland carry out similar campaigns and projects aimed at decreasing sexual trafficking in their respective states, although La Strada Poland has the advantage of having been established earlier. Although Poland's women's movement has been making headway in raising women's status, there is still a trafficking problem in the country that must be dealt with.

¹⁴⁵ La Strada Poland, www.strada.org.pl/index_en.html accessed July 19, 2006.

¹⁴⁶ La Strada Poland, www.strada.org.pl/index_en.html accessed July 19, 2006.

Sexual Trafficking in Poland

Anti-Slavery International documents many cases of women trafficked in the post-soviet region. They have recorded two such cases which occurred in Poland; one with Poland as a destination country, and one with Poland as a country of origin. The cases which follow describe the exploitation of Aurelia and Daria.

Aurelia, from a former Soviet State, was sold by a Polish border official to a trafficker who took her to Warsaw and forced her into prostitution. On one occasion, Aurelia was beaten and gang raped by a police officer and his colleagues. She was eventually rescued during a police raid. She made a preliminary statement to the police and prosecutors. Charges of gang rape and bribery by border officials were not pursued due to lack of evidence. The traffickers were convicted of trafficking under article 204 (4) and 253. They received sentences of four years imprisonment.¹⁴⁷

Daria was trafficked from Poland to Germany and forced into prostitution. She escaped and was deported from Germany to Poland. She reported the traffickers to the Polish police, but the authorities did not treat her case seriously. An investigation commenced three months after Daria gave her initial statement to police but was badly conducted, with no regard for Daria's safety. Daria's case was dropped due to lack of evidence and inability to identify the traffickers.¹⁴⁸

As in Ukraine, sexual trafficking in Poland began to develop in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In fact, women from Poland and the Czech Republic were some of the first women to be trafficked from the region. Poland's close proximity to Germany allowed Polish and Czech men to organize the migration of Polish and Czech women to work as prostitutes in cheap hotels in Germany and Austria. By the early 1990s Poland, the Czech Republic, and the Baltic republics were flooded with western sex tourists. Highways between Poland, the Czech Republic, and Germany became prime areas for

¹⁴⁷ Anti-Slavery International "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection".

¹⁴⁸ Anti-Slavery International "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection".

pimps to situate women for exploitation.¹⁴⁹ As the Russian Mafia began to increase their activities in Poland in the mid 1990s, Polish women were trafficked to more distant destination countries, such as Italy, the Netherlands, Japan, and Israel.¹⁵⁰

The Polish branch of La Strada estimates that 10,000 women are trafficked out of Poland each year. This number also includes women trafficked for labour, so the number of women who are trafficked for sexual exploitation falls somewhere under 10,000. These women are typically trafficked first across the border into Germany. Bar and club owners in Germany buy the women for 2,000-3,000 marks each. The women may remain in Germany, or be sold again to other brothels or bars in Belgium, the Netherlands, or elsewhere.¹⁵¹ Recruiting in Poland is much the same as in Ukraine, or any other of the post-soviet states; traffickers target women who are vulnerable, such as the poor and unemployed, the young, or those without strong support networks. Traffickers are most often citizens of Poland; only 25 percent of arrested traffickers were non-citizens. There are no statistics for how many women are involved in recruiting in Poland.¹⁵² In his article, "Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective" John Salt describes the organizational structure of traffickers in Poland.

Interviewees in Poland confirmed that the trafficking business there is conducted with a high degree of informality, adaptability, and flexibility. The organizational structure is again hierarchical. At the top is the "brain", a leadership that is thought to look after the entire route and its security. At the next level are found internationally linked "Mafia" bosses in each country through which a route runs. Only those in the top two strata have direct international connections. Next down

¹⁴⁹ Paola Monzini, 2005, 88, 89; United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, "Economic Roots of Trafficking in the UNECE" www.unece.org/press/pr2004/04gen_n03.htm accessed June 29, 2005.

¹⁵⁰ Sietske Altink, 1995, 40; The Trafficking in Persons Report 2006.

¹⁵¹ La Strada, Poland, www.strada.org.pl/index_en.html accessed July 19, 2006; Sietske Altink, 1995, 40.

¹⁵² Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "Country Reports on Human Rights – Poland" www.state.gov/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

are bilingual teams organizing trafficking in specific border areas...at the bottom level are freelancers who perform tasks such as driving.¹⁵³

Today, in addition to being a country of origin, Poland is also a transit and destination country for traffic. Poland is used as a transit point for traffickers bringing women from Poland's eastern neighbours to Western Europe. Increasingly Poland is also the destination point for the exploitation of women from Ukraine, Moldova, Romania and Bulgaria.¹⁵⁴ The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor estimates that 7 thousand prostitutes work in Poland. Of the 7 thousand, 30 percent are thought to be of foreign origin. La Strada has estimated that 75 percent of all foreign prostitutes working in Poland have been trafficked into the country. However, it must be said that cases of trafficked women versus cases of voluntary prostitution are difficult to separate because official statistics do not distinguish between the two. La Strada often must draw conclusions from interviewing the trafficking victims they assist.¹⁵⁵ In her book *Sex Traffic: Prostitution, Crime and Exploitation*, author and economist Paola Monzini reports that women from Bulgaria and Romania are the most exploited in the Polish sex industry.¹⁵⁶

Corruption is a serious problem in Poland, although exactly to what extent it impacts trafficking is unclear. There are no official Polish reports of government officials being involved in the trafficking process, but there have been unconfirmed reports of police officers and border guards taking bribes to ignore traffic, as well as

¹⁵³ John Salt, "Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective" in *International Migration*, Special Issue, 2000/2001, 43.

¹⁵⁴ The Trafficking in Persons Report 2006, www.state.gov/g/tip/ris/tiprpt/65983.htm accessed June 19, 2006.

¹⁵⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "Country Reports on Human Rights – Poland" www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

¹⁵⁶ Paola Monzini, 2005, 34.

harassing victims of traffic.¹⁵⁷ Victor Malarek cites an incident related during an anti-trafficking conference held in Vienna, in which Polish border guards allegedly abducted two women from a bus and turned them over to traffickers waiting in a nearby car. The women were thought to have been sold at an auction in Warsaw.¹⁵⁸ Poland is ranked in the 70th position on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index. Although it ranks considerably higher than Ukraine's 107th ranking, the Index still considers Poland's corruption problem to be of serious concern. However, if Poland does indeed have less overall corruption, corruption may play less of a role in trafficking in that country than it does in Ukraine.¹⁵⁹

Articles 204 and 253 of the Polish Penal Code, which came into effect in September of 1998, make trafficking in persons punishable by law.¹⁶⁰ These articles criminalize trafficking in persons (within Poland as well as internationally), abducting or enticing a person into prostitution abroad, and arranging adoptions for profit. These offenses carry sentences of a maximum of 10 years imprisonment.¹⁶¹ Punishing traffickers is a problem in Poland just as it is in Ukraine. In 2005 Polish police opened 22 new trafficking cases, and continued to work on 22 previously opened cases. 43 individuals were prosecuted for trafficking and 37 were convicted.¹⁶² This high rate of conviction is encouraging, yet sentencing remains light. Sentencing data is not available for 2005, but in 2004 all traffickers who received prison time were sentenced to 5 years

¹⁵⁷ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "Country Reports on Human Rights" found at www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61682.htm accessed June 27, 2006.

¹⁵⁸ The Trafficking in Persons Report- 2006; Victor Malarek, 2003, 137.

¹⁵⁹ Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index- 2005.

¹⁶⁰ La Strada Poland, found at www.strada.org.pl/index_en.html accessed December 11, 2006.

¹⁶¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_projects_poland.html accessed December 11, 2006.

¹⁶² The Trafficking in Persons Report-2006.

or less, and 3 did not serve any prison time. High conviction rates alone will not deter trafficking if the sentences remain little more than slaps on the wrist.¹⁶³

Despite these problems, Poland has received a Tier 1 ranking in the 2006 Trafficking in Persons Report. Tier 1 is the highest ranking given to nations, and by ranking Poland as such, the U.S. State Department is saying that Poland complies with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, and that it is ahead of all its eastern neighbours in the fight against traffic. The TIP report recognizes that Poland has “continued to improve its anti-trafficking efforts over the last year...”¹⁶⁴ First, Poland has improved its anti-trafficking efforts through increased cooperation with its neighbours. The Polish National Police have participated in bilateral task forces with other governments in the region including the Baltic states, Scandinavian countries, Germany, France and Russia.¹⁶⁵ The goal is to exchange information, cooperate to track victims and traffickers across borders, combat organized crime, and coordinate to repatriate victims when they are found. Polish police also work with Interpol, as well as training police in Moldova, Ukraine, and Belarus in anti-trafficking methods. Eleven Polish agencies are involved in anti-trafficking efforts, and 6 of the 16 provinces have special teams that monitor trafficking.¹⁶⁶

Second, for the first time, in 2006, the Polish government has allocated resources in its national budget for the assistance of foreign trafficking victims. Although the \$80,000 allocation was not large, it is at least a step in the right direction. Third, the

¹⁶³ The Trafficking in Persons Report-2006.

¹⁶⁴ The Trafficking in Persons Report-2006.

¹⁶⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_projects_poland.html accessed December 11, 2006.

¹⁶⁶ The Trafficking in Persons Report-2006; The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

government is implementing a newly created two-month “reflection period”¹⁶⁷ for victims of trafficking. Instead of deporting victims of traffic immediately, the Polish government is allowing victims to stay in Poland for up to two months. During this time women are given assistance and asked to decide whether they would like to go home immediately or if they want to stay in Poland to testify against their exploiters. If they decide to stay they are issued a temporary residence permit. This reflection period may increase convictions in trafficking, because women will have the opportunity to stay in the country and testify under relatively protected circumstances. In 2005, 37 victims of trafficking aided police in trafficking investigations.¹⁶⁸

Fourth, Poland has tried to improve its anti-trafficking public awareness campaign. The government and NGOs cooperated on four campaigns in 2005 on such issues as working safely abroad, safe travel, and the use of state-run employment offices. Although Poland is ranked in Tier 1, much progress must still be made. The Trafficking in Persons Report recommends that Poland work to increase the sensitivity of its police officers toward trafficked women, so they are not harassed and abused by officers. As well, national anti-trafficking resources need to be increased as La Strada Poland is carrying a large portion of the burden in the fight against traffic in Poland.¹⁶⁹

In 2005, the Polish government allocated \$33,000 dollars to La Strada. With these funds, La Strada gave training courses at 6 police and border guard academies to improve law enforcement’s awareness of trafficking. They also offered counseling to victims and families, as well as developed educational materials and awareness

¹⁶⁷ The Trafficking in Persons Report-2006.

¹⁶⁸ The Trafficking in Persons Report-2006; The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

¹⁶⁹ The Trafficking in Persons Report-2006.

campaigns.¹⁷⁰ Anti-Slavery International argues that although it is beneficial for Poland to support the anti-trafficking work of NGOs such as La Strada, the activities of NGOs cannot replace state structures, especially in the realm of providing safety to victims.¹⁷¹ Although it is difficult to directly compare the severity of traffic between Ukraine and Poland, most evidence at least suggests that Poland has a smaller trafficking problem than Ukraine, and is doing more to address the problem.

Traffic in Poland and Ukraine: Concluding Thoughts

This chapter set out to determine if it was accurate to argue that women's status in economics and politics are the most important variables in predicting the severity of sexual trafficking in post-soviet states. In order to do so, case studies were conducted on Ukraine and Poland. Ukraine was chosen because it has a severe trafficking problem that is typical of many of its close neighbours. Poland was chosen because, while it has faced many of the same transitional challenges as its post-soviet neighbours, it is seemingly the region's leader in its efforts to curtail traffic, as evidenced by its Tier 1 ranking in the U.S State Department's Trafficking in Person's Report.

The questions asked in the chapter's introduction were, why is Poland seemingly beating Ukraine in the fight against traffic, and what variables account for the differences? It would seem that Poland is making greater strides against traffic than Ukraine for a few reasons. First, Poland is becoming less important to traffickers as a country of origin, while Ukraine remains one of the largest suppliers of women to

¹⁷⁰ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2005-Poland" found at www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61668.htm accessed December 26, 2006.

¹⁷¹ Anti-Slavery International "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection".

Western Europe, Turkey, and the Balkans.¹⁷² This could be due to a smaller population of women who are vulnerable to recruiting methods as compared to Poland's poorer neighbours to the east. Second, Poland's police force cooperates with other nations against traffic, and is actively working to train officers in anti-trafficking methods.

Third, although sentences remain light, Poland has a higher trafficking conviction rate than Ukraine. In 2005, Poland convicted 86 percent of trafficking suspects, while in the same year Ukraine convicted 39 percent of its trafficking suspects.¹⁷³ Women exploited in Poland have also been encouraged to testify against their exploiters by the two-month reflection period that was recently established. Fourth, Poland has allotted resources for anti-trafficking activities in its annual budget, which helps support the local work of organizations such as La Strada and the IOM. Poland may also be faring better than Ukraine against traffic due to the levels of corruption in each nation. It is thought by 2005's Transparency International's Corruption Index that Poland has lower levels of corruption than Ukraine. There are fewer reports of corrupt police officers and border guards aiding traffickers in Poland as compared to Ukraine, and there have been no reports of high-level government officials aiding traffic in Poland, as has been reported in Ukraine.

Many of these differences may be directly or indirectly caused by disparities between the status of Polish and Ukrainian women in economics and politics. Today, Ukrainian women continue to face widespread workplace discrimination and sexual

¹⁷² Although Poland's status as a country of origin seems to be declining, it is important to note that it is increasingly being used as a country of destination. Countries of destination must take a law-enforcement approach to the problem of female exploitation on their soil, rather than the gender equality approach used by countries of origin.

¹⁷³ Anti-Slavery International, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: Redefining Victim Protection"; The Trafficking in Persons Report-2006.

harassment. The nation has a very low per capita GDP, and many women live on or below the poverty line. This has resulted in an intense desire on the part of women to migrate for work, which makes them extremely vulnerable to traffickers. Although Poland has endured a very difficult economic transition, and at one point was a very significant country of origin for traffickers, today Poland's economic progress seems to be somewhat insulating its female citizens from the recruiting methods used by traffickers. Poland has one of the smallest economic gaps between men and women in the region, and at \$13,300, its per capita GDP is almost twice that of Ukraine's \$7,200.

This increase in overall wealth may be just enough to keep some women working in Poland who would have otherwise answered a dubious newspaper advertisement to work as a nanny or hostess in Germany or the Netherlands. If Poland's economy continues to improve, their status as a country of origin should continue to decline. If Ukraine is to reduce the number of women being trafficked across its borders, it must work to raise the economic status of its female citizens. Similarly, states that have greater economic prosperity also have more resources to use in the fight against traffic, in addition to combating the illicit economy and corruption more generally. However, resources will only be expended to fight traffic if there is the will to do so, which is why women's political status and a strong women's movement are also so important in the cessation of the trafficking cycle.

In Ukraine, there remains a high-level of complacency about the phenomenon of traffic, due to a lack of political pressure to seriously address the issue. After an early surge in the women's movement in the early 1990s, Ukrainian women's organizations have been unable or unwilling to organize themselves into a coalition capable of

successfully lobbying the Ukrainian parliament on behalf of women's issues. This division has been largely caused by competition for foreign funding and ideological differences. There is little female political representation in Ukraine, and the women elected rarely champion women's issues such as discrimination and gender equality.

The opposite trend seems to be unfolding in Poland. The women's movement is gaining momentum, and most importantly, Polish women's groups have been willing to work together to form coalitions capable of placing external pressure on government to raise women's status. In addition, existing female parliamentarians have been willing to lend their support to the women's movement. This mobilization of Polish women's groups and MPs played a large role in Poland becoming a regional leader in women's political representation. Subsequently, patriarchal political views, such as men are more suited to politics than women, are being challenged by young, educated women. This surge in women's participation in politics, and their objective of gender equality in Poland, is an excellent step toward combating trafficking in women, and upholding women's human rights in general. The status of Ukrainian women, in both economics and politics, has the potential for significant gains should Ukrainian women's groups follow the example of the Polish women's movement.

Large scale trafficking in women was allowed to begin by the opening of the borders of post-soviet states. Today it is not feasible or desirable to close the borders between these states and their neighbours. Therefore steps must be taken to ensure that the women who live in these areas are not so desperate to leave that they disregard their own personal safety in order to escape. They must be given the economic opportunities to live and work in their home country, and the political opportunity to have their

concerns heard and addressed. When this happens, entrapment in sexual slavery will be an anomaly, and not just a sad but all too common story.

Chapter Five **Stopping the Traffic**

Sex traffic must be stopped because it is a grave offense against the human rights of the post-soviet women and children who fall victim to it. Those exploited by traffickers are robbed of their personal freedom and dignity. As we have seen, they are subjected to torturous conditions such as rape, forcible confinement, beatings, psychological abuse and manipulation, denial of earnings and lack of proper medical care. Even upon escape, rescue, or release from their exploiters, victims of traffic continue to face hardship in the form of poor treatment from law enforcement, deportation, imprisonment for prostitution, and a lack of rehabilitation services.

In order to stop or at least slow this violent and degrading trade in humans an anti-trafficking strategy must be devised and implemented. Any anti-trafficking strategy must be built upon the fact that trafficking involves a complex network of actors. From recruiters and transporters to brothel owners, pimps and johns, those responsible for turning humans into sexual commodities are often difficult to identify and locate. Each person involved in the trafficking process counts as a link in the trafficking chain which crosses borders, cultures, and jurisdictions. Trafficking networks are flexible and not confined to a specific geographical location. Hence, a successful anti-trafficking strategy must also be flexible and operate at various levels of analysis.

A comprehensive anti-trafficking agenda must address trafficking on three primary levels of analysis: the local / community level, the national level, and the international level. This chapter will outline why each level of analysis is important to the fight against traffic. It will also describe what actions need to be taken locally,

nationally, and internationally to reduce the supply of women and children who are vulnerable to recruiters; to punish and deter those who seek to profit from the sexual exploitation of others; to rehabilitate and reintegrate survivors; and to lessen the international demand for paid sex. Chapter 5 will explore the debate surrounding such issues as prostitution and migration policy as they relate to combating sex traffic, and will seek to determine if one level of analysis in an anti-trafficking strategy is more crucial to success than the others.

Fighting Traffic at the Local / Community Level

Why is an anti-trafficking strategy important at the local level?

Fighting traffic at the local / community level is important in an overall anti-trafficking strategy for three main reasons: 1) recruiting is done locally; 2) local conditions may leave women and children vulnerable to traffickers; 3) if women are deported back to their country of origin, they must often try to reintegrate back into their home communities. First, anti-trafficking strategy must have a local / community dimension because it is mostly at the local level that traffickers find their supply of women and children.¹ As illustrated in chapter 4, trafficking recruiters are often local people who live in a city or town and seek out women and children who are vulnerable to

¹ Although the majority of trafficking research reports that most trafficking recruitment is carried out in countries of origin, new research done by the International Labor Organization reports that a growing number of women are being forced into sexual exploitation by trafficking rings after they have independently migrated to a country for work. There is debate as to whether this activity should be categorized as trafficking because the exploiters do not play a role in the victim's migration from their country of origin. Yevhenia Lutsenko, Lydia Matiaszek, Shivaun Scanlan, & Inna Shvab, "Trafficking in Ukraine-: An Assessment of Current Responses" found at www.legislationonline.org/index.php?tid=178&jid=53&y=2007&m=3, accessed March 14, 2007.

the recruiter's influence. Recruiters may be trusted community members such as teachers or doctors, a friend of the family, or an acquaintance who encourages a young woman to migrate for a seemingly lucrative job opportunity abroad. Women are also snared locally by answering ads for low-skilled, high paying jobs placed in their community newspapers.

Second, trafficking must be addressed locally because it is the conditions in a community which contribute to the vulnerability of women and children to being trafficked. A city or rural community that has few economic opportunities for women results in many of them wishing to migrate from the area to a more affluent region. Women from the poorest post-soviet communities are desperate to work in Western Europe, motivated by the myth of high wages for low-skilled occupations. In addition to economic desperation, some post-soviet cities such as Moscow have a very large orphan population. Children in orphanages or those who live on the street are impoverished and have little to offer an employer. These children and young adults make easy targets for recruiters.

Third, communities must be considered in anti-trafficking policy because repatriated trafficking victims may require local assistance in rehabilitation and reintegration into their home communities. This type of reintegration requires specialized knowledge by community members, as well as a general improvement of local awareness of the plight of trafficking victims so as to reduce their stigmatization by the local population. With this being said, there are many anti-trafficking activities that can and are being carried out at the community level in post-soviet states.

What can be done to fight traffic at the community level?

At the community level it is important to implement strategies that will reduce the supply of women and children who are brought into the sex trade. This often means targeting the 'push' factors which make recruiting a simple task for traffickers. For example, poor economic prospects for women drives them to seek employment abroad, making them vulnerable to accepting job offers in other countries that look too good to be true. In their book *The Traffic in Women: Human Realities of the Sex Trade*, Siriporn Skrobanek et al., argue that communities with large trafficking problems should make special efforts to educate young women in marketable skills, and help them to find jobs locally, so as to make them less likely to accept dubious job offers abroad.

They also suggest the establishment of telephone hotlines or community offices where women who are determined to migrate can obtain information on such issues as safe migration practices, their legal rights in the destination country, and who they can contact for help if their travel documents are taken or they find themselves in a vulnerable or exploitative situation.² In addition to help for women, Sally Stoecker recommends that more needs to be done to protect homeless children and children in orphanages, especially in Russia. She argues that street children must be given the educational opportunities to learn skills so they do not end up as "human chattel" for traffickers.³

Another way to lessen the number, or supply, of women and children who fall victim to trafficking is to raise community awareness about the problem. In their

² Siriporn Skrobanek, Nataya Boonpakdee & Churima Jantateero, *The Traffic in Women: Human Realities of the International Sex Trade*, (New York: Zed Books Ltd., 1997) 103, 104.

³ Sally Stoecker, "Human Trafficking: A New Challenge for Russia and the United States" in *Human Traffic and Transnational Crime*, Sally Stoecker & Louise Shelley eds., (Oxford: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005) 25.

publication, *Human Rights and Trafficking: A Handbook*, the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women argues that a trafficking plan of action should be implemented by local governments that not only provides educational and job opportunities for women, but also seeks to inform those who may be vulnerable to recruiters about the dangers of trafficking.⁴ Such programs could be provided through community organizations, media such as local television and newspapers, as well as schools, churches, and law enforcement branches. This is not meant to instill in young women a fear of migration; instead it would encourage young women to thoroughly investigate the legitimacy of possible opportunities abroad.⁵ It is important for women to question newspaper ads that offer large salaries for positions as dancers or hostesses, as well as to be skeptical of stories of women who migrated and made a fortune as a nanny or prostitute. Young post-soviet women must understand that they can be exploited by a woman just as easily as by a man, especially in light of the second wave, i.e. formerly trafficked women acting as recruiters.

Community involvement and awareness are not only useful in curbing the supply of women, they are also very important to the well-being of victims who return to their home communities after their exploitation has ended. Victims suffering from the effects of physical and psychological mistreatment require assistance to re-build a sense of normalcy. They often need medical and legal assistance, as well as counseling and sources of temporary financial support and housing. In her article, "NGO Responses to Trafficking in Women" Marina Tzvetkova argues, "Without sufficient support for recovery from their traumatic experiences, women face difficulties regaining control over

⁴ Elaine Pearson, *Human Rights and Trafficking: A Handbook*, (Bangkok: Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, 2000) 69.

⁵ Elaine Pearson, 2000, 80.

their lives and re-integrating into society.”⁶ In order to encourage this re-integration process, Siriporn Skrobanek argues that communities should set up local groups for the sole purpose of assisting trafficked persons upon their return home. She goes on to say that there is a stigma attached to these women because of their activities in the sex trade and that this stigma must be broken down in order for the community to accept them. It is important to foster public awareness and understanding that trafficked persons are victims of criminal activity, and are just as deserving of help and support as any other victim of a crime, regardless of their activities involving sex work.⁷

One community in Ukraine that is helping trafficked women to reintegrate into society is the town of Novohuivinsk. The town’s administration has partnered with the Woman to Woman Centre to set up a rehabilitation centre for trafficked persons. Since it was established in October 2003, the centre has assisted the rehabilitation of 9 trafficked persons, including one man. The shelter assists victims of traffic by providing a safe place to live, as well as providing victims with access to specialists from the Woman to Woman Centre. The town’s rehabilitation centre is an excellent example of the positive results of local governments cooperating with NGOs. Unfortunately, the Novohuivinsk Rehabilitation Centre is not being used to its full capacity due to a lack of funds for renovations and furniture.⁸

Non-governmental organizations are often at the forefront of anti-trafficking initiatives in post-soviet communities, especially in the area of aiding survivors. Marina

⁶ Marina Tzvetkova, “NGO Responses to Trafficking in Women” in *Gender, Trafficking, and Slavery*, Rachel Masika ed., (Oxford: Oxfam, 2002) 62.

⁷ Siriporn Skrobanek et al., 1997, 103, 104.

⁸ Yevhenia Lutsenko, Lydia Matiaszek, Shivaun Scanlan, & Inna Shvab, “Trafficking in Ukraine: An Assessment of Current Responses” found at www.legislationonline.org/index.php?tid=178&jid=53&y=2007&m=3, p.127, accessed May 1, 2007.

Tzvetkova explains, “NGOs in countries of origin are largely involved in assisting women on their return. They meet them at the airport and provide them with first-aid, emergency housing, food and other supplies, medical care, and immediate psychological assistance.”⁹ NGOs such as La Strada Bulgaria often try to smooth the reintegration process for women by contacting their families to explain what has happened to them before they return home. Tzvetkova argues that NGOs are well placed to deal with traffic, especially returning women, because women may be more trusting of NGOs than a state-run program, especially since women’s NGOs are more gender sensitive than other groups that may deal with trafficked women, such as male-dominated law enforcement agencies.¹⁰

What are some of the challenges to anti-trafficking strategies at the community level?

For all the excellent anti-trafficking work that NGOs such as La Strada and the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women are able to accomplish, they are sorely handicapped by a lack of resources. In her book *Journeys of Jeopardy*, Elizabeth Kelly reports that anti-trafficking activists feel that too much of the burden of anti-trafficking is placed on NGOs that do not have the staff or resources to carry the load. One activist is cited as saying, “Relying on struggling women’s NGOs to lead the battle against multi-billion dollar criminal trafficking is completely unrealistic and dangerous. NGOs are intimidated by the very real threat of organized crime violence- particularly in villages.”¹¹

Some of the most crucial work to be done to help the victims of traffic (such as

⁹ Marina Tzvetkova, 2002, 61.

¹⁰ Marina Tzvetkova, 2002, 60.

¹¹ Elizabeth Kelly, *Journeys of Jeopardy: A Review of Research on Trafficking in Women and Children in Europe*, (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2002) 54.

establishing long-term, safe accommodations for survivors) is beyond the capacity of NGOs because they simply lack the resources.¹² This financial shortfall is the largest challenge facing the work of anti-trafficking NGOs, and will require extensive cooperation with other levels of government to be overcome.

Anti-trafficking work at the community level is often associated with NGOs, yet there are examples of individuals and groups that have stepped up to the challenge of helping those who are vulnerable to traffic or have survived being trafficked. In the Kemerovo oblast, in southwestern Siberia, the local military authorities have taken it upon themselves to fund educational programs for street kids. Business entrepreneurs have also begun to donate money to their home towns and cities in order to provide shelters and staff for children in need.¹³ These initiatives help to safeguard children against exploitation of many forms, including trafficking.

In San Foca, Southern Italy, a priest named Don Cesare Lo Deserto is demonstrating how great an impact one person can make in the lives of trafficked women. Don Cesare operates a safe-house for victims of trafficking called Regina Pacis. The safe-house is actually a large compound that is fenced in and surrounded by guards. The compound encompasses half a dozen bungalow-style houses where an average of ninety eastern European women live. These women have escaped or been rescued from the red-light districts of Italian cities, after having been trafficked into Italy across the Straits of Otranto by Albanian gangs in motorized dinghies.

The women who are brought to Regina Pacis are able to stay there as long as they feel they need to, until they sufficiently recover from the shock of their ordeal and are

¹² Marina Tzvetkova, 2002, 62.

¹³ Sally Stoecker, 2005, 25.

able to return home or begin a new life somewhere else. Don Cesare has had his life threatened numerous times by the Albanian mafia, who do not take kindly to him rescuing what they view as their property. Yet he persists at what he feels is his mission in life: aiding the young Moldovan, Romanian and Ukrainian women who have been badly abused and have nowhere else to turn for help. Victor Malarek reports, "By his own count, Don Cesare has saved more than 1000 women from the clutches of Albanian flesh dealers over the last ten years."¹⁴ Unfortunately, there is not a Don Cesare for every region where trafficking is a problem. This is why it is so important for higher levels of government to take up the anti-trafficking cause where communities, NGOs, and individuals leave off.

Fighting Traffic at the International Level

Why is an anti-trafficking strategy important at the international level?

Developing an anti-trafficking strategy at the international level is important because at its core trafficking is a transnational criminal activity and human rights abuse.¹⁵ Traffic is transnational because the victimization begins in one country and continues in another. The process of recruitment, transport, and ultimately sexual exploitation may include two countries, or several, depending on the transport route chosen and the distance from the country of origin to the destination point. All countries involved in the process should be concerned about trafficking. Countries of origin should

¹⁴ Victor Malarek, 2003, 105 -110.

¹⁵ Although trafficking, by the definition set out in the Introduction, can include the movement of persons within a state's borders (ex. from a rural setting to a urban setting), it would seem that in the majority of cases of post-soviet sexual trafficking the victims are transported across at least one national border, and often several.

be concerned that their citizens are being exploited abroad; transit countries should be concerned that they are being used as a corridor for organized crime; and countries of destination should be concerned that their domestic laws are being broken, and that vulnerable women and children are being used as sex slaves on their soil.

It is also important to develop an international anti-trafficking strategy to foster cooperation between nations and encourage a harmonization of their law enforcement activities and their treatment of trafficking victims. In her book *Sex Traffic: Prostitution, Crime and Exploitation*, Paola Monzini argues that it is crucial for nations to develop an international anti-trafficking strategy to coordinate their law enforcement efforts.

Traffickers are very mobile, and police departments are limited by jurisdiction. This means that in order to track the movements and activities of traffickers, law enforcement officials in different areas and countries must cooperate and share information.¹⁶ For example, Ukrainian law enforcement cannot follow traffickers into neighbouring states; therefore Ukraine and its neighbours must cooperate and share information to successfully locate trafficked persons and prosecute the perpetrators.

Similarly, developing an international anti-trafficking strategy is important to standardize the treatment of victims in the country of destination. Some countries arrest and jail prostitutes, regardless of their status as a victim of traffic; some immediately deport victims; states with the most advanced anti-trafficking policies allow temporary residency while victims decide on a course of action, such as if they want to testify against their exploiters, or be repatriated.¹⁷ Cooperating to develop international human

¹⁶ Paola Monzini, *Sex Traffic: Prostitution, Crime and Exploitation*, (Black Point: Fernwood Publishing Ltd., 2005) 145.

¹⁷ Paola Monzini, 2005, 137, 144.

rights standards as they apply to trafficking victims is important to prevent the further abuse of a nation's citizen at the hands of another country's law enforcement officials.

Lastly, developing an international anti-trafficking strategy is important because it may put pressure on nations to develop their own trafficking policies, or to implement previously signed anti-trafficking conventions. It is simple for nations to publicly proclaim that they oppose traffic, but more difficult to actually make the issue a national priority and allocate the appropriate resources. Hence it may be helpful if the international community monitored the anti-trafficking efforts of states, especially the worst offenders who, without external pressure, may ignore the problem altogether.¹⁸ Up to now it has been argued that international anti-trafficking strategies are important. Some nations and international organizations agree and have implemented initiatives directed at reducing traffic. It is to these international anti-trafficking strategies, and the feminist debates that surround them, that we now turn.

What is being done at the international level to combat traffic?

International legislation is the most visible way in which traffic is dealt with globally. The first international instrument to specifically address traffic in persons was the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. The Convention was approved in December of 1949 and came into force in 1950.¹⁹ The Convention consolidated the previous international agreements related to the issues of prostitution and traffic dating back to

¹⁸ <http://www.humantrafficking.org/updates/363> Human Trafficking website, accessed July 10, 2006.

¹⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, at www.ohchr.org/english/law/trafficpersons.htm accessed September 26, 2006.

1904.²⁰ The main objective of the Convention, as described by a United Nations website concerned with treaties, was to “provide effective measures against all forms of trafficking in women and the exploitation of prostitution.”²¹ The Convention stated in its preamble that,

Prostitution and the accompanying evil of the traffic in persons for the purpose of prostitution are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and endanger the welfare of the individual, the family and the community.²²

The Convention required state signatories to take measures to prevent prostitution and trafficking, and to punish under domestic law those who managed or financed a brothel, procured others for prostitution, or exploited the prostitution of another, even with the consent of that person. The Convention also required states to rehabilitate the victims of prostitution.²³

The 1949 Convention was controversial to advocates for the rights of sex workers due to its treatment of the issue of consent. The Convention made no distinction between victims of forced prostitution and those who consented to engage in sex work, declaring prostitution in all forms a violation of human rights. Women’s groups who advocated for the rights of sex workers felt that the Convention was discriminatory toward voluntary prostitutes, while abolitionists, or those who advocate for the abolition of prostitution in all forms, felt that the 1949 Convention was a great step forward.²⁴ According to the

²⁰ http://untreaty.un.org/English/TreatyEvent2003/Treaty_8.htm accessed September 26, 2006.

²¹ http://untreaty.un.org/English/TreatyEvent2003/Treaty_8.htm accessed September 26, 2006.

²² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, at www.ohchr.org/english/law/trafficpersons.htm accessed September 26, 2006.

²³ http://untreaty.un.org/English/TreatyEvent2003/Treaty_8.htm accessed September 26, 2006. & Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, at www.ohchr.org/english/law/trafficpersons.htm accessed September 26, 2006.

²⁴ Malka Marcovich, “Guide to the UN Convention of 2 December 1949 for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others” prepared for the Coalition Against

United Nations, the Convention maintained that prostitution and traffic were criminal activities even if the prostitute had given consent, in order to strip traffickers and pimps of the defence in court that their victims consented to the activity, and therefore there was no crime. In this way there was no burden on the victim to prove that she did not consent to prostitution.²⁵

Poland acceded to the 1949 Convention in June of 1952, although it did not become an official signatory. In 1954 Ukraine took the same stance as Poland and made the following declaration,

In the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic the social conditions which give rise to the offenses covered by the Convention have been eliminated. Nevertheless, in view of the international importance of suppressing these offenses, the Government of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic has decided to accede to the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others adopted on 2 December 1949 at the fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly.²⁶

Although the 1949 Convention was a step forward in raising international awareness about traffic, it is unclear if the Convention actually reduced global levels of trafficking and prostitution. Only 14 states became official signatories, and the Convention lacked an enforcement agency or any type of monitoring mechanism to see that its provisions were carried out by state signatories.²⁷ In her article, “The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women” Joyce Outshoorn argues that implementation of the 1949 Convention was largely ignored in the years following because “trafficking faded from

Trafficking in Women. Found at <http://action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=16896> accessed on September 26, 2006.

²⁵ Malka Marcovich at <http://action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=16896> accessed on September 26, 2006.

²⁶ Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights, found at www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/treaty11a.htm accessed on Jan 26, 2007.

²⁷ Malka Marcovich at <http://action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=16896> accessed on September 26, 2006.

the public eye and prostitution ceased to be a major political issue.”²⁸ Outshoorn states that the issues of trafficking and prostitution did not become politicized again until the 1980s, when increased migration and tourism, evidence of expanded trafficking activities, and the discovery of the AIDS epidemic once again placed issues of trafficking, prostitution and sexual health on the global political agenda.²⁹

In her article “Stopping the Traffic in Women: Power, Agency and Abolition in Feminist Debates over Sex-Trafficking,” Kathy Miriam describes that in the 1990s, numerous feminist NGOs and grass-roots women’s movements sprang up with issues of prostitution and trafficking as their primary focus. These groups fell roughly into two ideological camps. The first camp was made up of radical feminists (also referred to as abolitionist feminists). The second camp was comprised of sex-work feminists (sometimes referred to as materialist feminists).³⁰

Radical feminists believe that all prostitution is degrading, exploitative, and is a form of violence against women that violates their basic human rights. Radical feminists do not accept a distinction between free and forced prostitution, as they believe that all prostitution is coerced. Outshoorn states, “adherents reject the notion of voluntary prostitution, holding that no woman would prostitute herself by choice or free will.”³¹

Radical feminists describe prostituted women as victims of male domination who require

²⁸ Joyce Outshoorn, “The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women” in *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, Volume 12, Number 1, Spring 2005, p.141.

²⁹ Outshoorn, 2005, 142, 143.

³⁰ Kathy Miriam, “Stopping the Traffic in Women: Power, Agency and Abolition in Feminist Debates over Sex Trafficking” in *Journal of Social Philosophy*, Vol. 36, Issue 1, Spring 2005, p. 1; and International Law Association, Berlin Conference (2004) Committee on Feminism and International Law, Interim Report on Women and Migration, found at <http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:KG9nIW04vGcJ:www.ila-hq.org/pdf/Feminism%2520%26%2520International%2520Law/Draft%2520Report%25202004.pdf+Feminism+%2B+Migration+%2B+trafficking&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=7&gl=ca&client=firefox-a> accessed on March 9, 2007.

³¹ Joyce Outshoorn, “The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking in Women” in *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, Volume 12, Number 1, Spring 2005, p. 145.

rescue and rehabilitation. They also believe that sexual trafficking in women and children is directly caused by prostitution and men's demand for sexual access to women. Because of these beliefs, radical feminists argue that all prostitution should be abolished and those who exploit prostitutes should be punished.³²

Materialist feminists who subscribe to the sex work viewpoint believe that prostitution can be a legitimate form of work for women and therefore should be legalized or decriminalized.³³ Outshoorn explains that this viewpoint developed from liberal and socialist feminist thought.³⁴ Sex work advocates feel that women engaged in sex work could be better protected from violence and exploitation if labour laws were developed and enforced for prostitution. Sex work feminists also want a clear distinction made between voluntary prostitution and forced prostitution, and do not want debates about trafficking and prostitution to be closely linked. They argue that although women can be victims of trafficking and forced prostitution, not all women are forced into prostitution, and to abolish prostitution altogether denies women's agency to voluntarily choose sex work as an occupation. Hence, sex work feminists feel that only underage and forced prostitution should be criminalized.³⁵

The sex work feminist viewpoint has been bolstered lately by a post-colonial critique of radical feminism which states that abolitionism is merely a group of white, middle-class Western women who are seeking to "protect women from non-Western countries."³⁶ Despite the gain in popularity of the sex work perspective, Kathy Miriam

³² Joyce Outshoorn, Spring 2005, p.146; & Kathy Miriam, Volume 36, Spring 2005, p. 1, 11.

³³ Barbara Sullivan, "Trafficking in Women: Feminism and New International Law" in *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 5:1, March 2003, p. 70.

³⁴ Joyce Outshoorn, Spring 2005, p. 145.

³⁵ Joyce Outshoorn, Spring 2005, pp. 145-148; & Barbara Sullivan, March 2003, p. 77, 78.

³⁶ Joyce Outshoorn, Spring 2005, p. 147.

argues that “the radical feminist camp has largely prevailed in terms of how international protocol is currently formulated.”³⁷ Indeed, international protocols do not directly promote the strategy of legalizing prostitution as a way to regulate sex work and prevent trafficking in persons.

In December of 2000, the United Nations unveiled the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime.³⁸ The Protocol came into force in December of 2003 and effectively replaced the 1949 Convention as the primary piece of international anti-trafficking legislation. In Article 2, the purposes of the Protocol are described. They are:

To prevent and combat trafficking in persons, paying particular attention to women and children; to protect and assist the victims of such trafficking, with full respect to their human rights; and to promote cooperation among State Parties in order to meet those objectives.³⁹

The 2000 Protocol dealt specifically with trafficking in persons, and was the first international agreement to include a definition of trafficking. This definition included traffic for exploitation in prostitution, as well as forced sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, and the removal of organs.⁴⁰

Unlike the 1949 Convention, the 2000 Protocol does not conflate voluntary prostitution with forced prostitution and traffic for sexual exploitation. The 2000

³⁷ Kathy Miriam, Volume 36 (1) Spring 2005, p. 1.

³⁸ This Protocol is often referred to as the Palermo Protocol. Lin Chew, “Reflections by an anti-trafficking activist” in *Trafficking and Prostitution Reconsidered*, Kamala Kempadoo, Jyoti Sanghera and Bandana Pattanaik, ed., (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2005) 73.

³⁹ United Nations, “The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime” 2000.

⁴⁰ United Nations, “The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime” 2000.

Protocol focuses on women and children who have been coerced and manipulated into the sex trade, and does not seek to address the actions of women who have chosen prostitution voluntarily. However, to protect victims of traffic, consent to prostitution is considered irrelevant if there is any indication that coercion, manipulation, or false information has been used to secure the consent of the trafficking victim. In a summary of the 2000 Protocol, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime explains,

With the exception of children, who cannot consent, the intention is to distinguish between consensual acts or treatment and those in which abduction, force, fraud, deception or coercion are used or threatened.⁴¹

Presently, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children is the most comprehensive piece of international legislation in its advocacy of preventing traffic through education, punishing traffickers for their exploitation of others, and encouraging states to protect and assist trafficked persons.⁴²

Although the 2000 Protocol is the most comprehensive piece of international law on the matter of trafficking, it still leaves certain terms undefined so as to allow signatories to develop their own national strategies to combat trafficking. For example, the terms “exploitation of the prostitution of others” and “other forms of sexual exploitation” were intentionally left undefined because state delegates were not able to agree upon a definition. This was due to differing national stances on the legality of prostitution. The openness of the 2000 Protocol allows each state party to decide for itself whether or not adult commercial sex should be legal or illegal, and if it constitutes sexual

⁴¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at http://www.unodc.org/unodc/trafficking_protocol.html accessed September 26, 2006.

⁴² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at http://www.unodc.org/unodc/trafficking_protocol.html accessed September 26, 2006.

exploitation or not.⁴³ For this reason, each national party's trafficking strategy is important even though an international protocol exists.

As of early 2007 the Protocol had 117 state signatories and 111 state parties. Poland signed the Protocol in October of 2001, and ratified it in September of 2003. Ukraine signed the Protocol in November of 2001 and ratified it in May of 2004.⁴⁴ As state signatories that have ratified the Protocol, Poland and Ukraine are expected to: combat trafficking by charging traffickers with criminal offenses and by cooperating with other state signatories against traffickers and their activities; prevent trafficking through enhanced detection at borders, law enforcement training, and research; and protect and assist the victims of trafficking by providing a certain amount of confidentiality, witness protection, and social benefits such as housing, medical care and legal counseling.⁴⁵

In addition to the pressure of international agreements, the United States has recently begun exerting its political influence against trafficking on an international level. Since the Trafficking Victims Protection Act was passed in 2000⁴⁶, the United States has been attempting to use some of its international clout to pressure other nations into stepping up their own anti-trafficking campaigns. The primary tool used in this effort is the Trafficking in Persons Report, which is published annually by the U.S. State

⁴³ International Law Association, Berlin Conference (2004) Committee on Feminism and International Law, Interim Report on Women and Migration, found at <http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:KG9nIW04vGcJ:www.ila-hq.org/pdf/Feminism%2520%26%2520International%2520Law/Draft%2520Report%25202004.pdf+Feminism+%2B+Migration+%2B+trafficking&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=7&gl=ca&client=firefox-a> accessed on March 9, 2007.

⁴⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime_cicp_signatures_trafficking.html accessed January 26, 2007.

⁴⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at http://www.unodc.org/unodc/trafficking_protocol.html accessed on January 27, 2007.

⁴⁶ Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 found at <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/61124.htm> accessed September 27, 2006.

Department.⁴⁷ Each year the TIP report places countries into one of three tiers. Tier 1 is the highest ranking, encompassing the countries that meet the minimum anti-trafficking requirements of the TIP criteria. Tier 2 nations have not met the minimum requirements, but are seen as making efforts to do so. Tier 3 nations do not meet the minimum TIP anti-trafficking requirements, and are not making the appropriate efforts to do so.⁴⁸

The Trafficking in Persons Report states that Tier 3 nations may be “subject to sanctions, including termination of non-humanitarian, non-trade related assistance and loss of U.S. support for loans from international financial institutions...”⁴⁹ The threat of possible sanctions is meant to apply enough pressure that nations in Tier 3 will increase their efforts to curb traffic in order to avoid financial punishment. Although the threat of sanctions may work in theory, in practice the United States has been criticized for using its trafficking sanctions selectively; applying sanctions against fringe states such as Burma, Cuba, and North Korea, while avoiding imposing sanctions on states such as Israel, Russia, South Korea, and Greece which have large trafficking problems but are on friendlier terms with the United States. Kamala Kempadoo argues that without consistent sanctioning of Tier 3 nations, regardless of ties to the U.S., the Trafficking in Persons Report will become a token anti-trafficking measure, bearing no real threat to the worst offending nations.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Trafficking in Persons Report 2006 found at <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65983.htm> accessed September 26, 2006.

⁴⁸ Trafficking in Persons Report 2006 found at <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65983.htm> accessed September 26, 2006.

⁴⁹ Francis T. Miko, “Trafficking in Women and Children: The U.S. and International Response” in *Trafficking in Women and Children: Current Issues and Developments*, Anna M. Troubnikoff, ed., (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc., 2003.) 15-17.

⁵⁰ Kamala Kempadoo, “From Moral Panic to Global Justice” in *Trafficking and Prostitution Reconsidered*, Kamala Kempadoo, et al. ed., (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2005) xxi.

It is difficult to conclude whether or not Poland and Ukraine's Trafficking in Person's Report ranking of Tier 1 and Tier 2, respectively, is due solely to their anti-trafficking efforts or if the ranking is influenced by their political ties to Europe and the United States. Poland is given the highest possible ranking of Tier 1, although it is a country of origin, transit, and destination for sexual trafficking. Poland has been a full member of the European Union since May 2004, as well as a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization since 1999. Poland has also participated in military operations in Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq.⁵¹ It may be plausible that Poland receives a slightly higher TIP ranking than it deserves partly because of these close economic and military ties to Europe and the U.S. Ukraine, on the other hand, is ranked below Poland in Tier 2. Ukraine does have a large trafficking problem, one of the worst in the region, however, unlike Poland, Ukraine is not a full member of the WTO, the EU, or NATO, which may influence Ukraine's ranking compared to Poland's.⁵² Poland does seem to be taking more serious measures against trafficking than Ukraine, but without hard statistics with which to compare countries on a global scale, it is difficult to determine how many of the TIP report rankings are warranted and how many are influenced (positively or negatively) by political considerations.

In an unusual move in 2006, the United States warned Germany to take measures to discourage trafficking in women during the World Cup. With its domestic policy of legalized prostitution, along with its relative proximity to Eastern Europe and Russia, Germany was already a popular destination point for traffickers. The U.S. State

⁵¹ U.S. State Department country profile on Poland, found at www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2875.htm accessed on March 20, 2007.

⁵² U.S. State Department country profile on Ukraine, found at www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3211.htm accessed on March 20, 2007.

Department felt that the trafficking problem would grow worse as thousands of male World Cup fans flooded into the country. The State Department wrote, “Due to the sheer size of the event, the potential for human trafficking surrounding the games remains a concern.”⁵³ The State Department went on to recommend that the German government increase its law enforcement during the games to curb human trafficking. Although the U.S. pressure on Germany was less damaging than a poor tier ranking in the TIP report, it was still considered a rare rebuke to a close American ally.⁵⁴

Aside from international legislation and the pressure applied by the United States, there are many anti-trafficking and human rights groups that are working internationally to combat traffic and to assist victims. The International Organization for Migration is one of the leading groups involved in international counter-trafficking. Its initiatives include extensive research on the topic, awareness raising campaigns using mass media as well as grass-roots contacts, partnerships with local NGOs, the training of government and law enforcement officials in counter-trafficking, and the development of appropriate counter-trafficking policies for nations based on the characteristics of the trafficking problem on their soil. The IOM also works in dozens of countries (including Nepal, the U.S., Haiti, and Turkey), to assist and protect victims of traffic upon their return home.⁵⁵ In Ukraine, the IOM carries out the majority of repatriations of trafficked women, and since 2001, they have organized the return of 287 trafficked women to the country.⁵⁶ Data on IOM repatriations of trafficked women to Poland is not available at this time.

⁵³ <http://www.humantrafficking.org/updates/363> Human Trafficking website, accessed July 10, 2006.

⁵⁴ <http://www.humantrafficking.org/updates/363> Human Trafficking website, accessed July 10, 2006.

⁵⁵ International Organization for Migration page on Counter-Trafficking, found at <http://www.iom.int/jahia/page748.html> accessed September 27, 2006.

⁵⁶ Yevhenia Lutsenko, Lydia Matiaszek, Shivaun Scanlan, & Inna Shvab, “Trafficking in Ukraine-: An Assessment of Current Responses” found at www.legislationonline.org/index.php?tid=178&jid=53&y=2007&m=3, p. 124, 125, accessed May 1, 2007

In 2003 the IOM conducted a study on illegal migration from Ukraine. The IOM explored the factors which led to a migrant's success or failure securing gainful employment in their destination country. The IOM concluded that migrants from Ukraine were most likely to find a legitimate job if they relied on their own resources, meaning they arranged and paid for their own travel, found jobs without the assistance of employment agencies, and had close social networks in the destination country. Migrants who were exploited in the destination country, or were victims of traffic, typically relied on others to arrange their travel, could not pay for their own migration, and did not have strong social ties in the destination country. This reliance on third parties as well as social isolation in the destination country resulted in an increase in a migrant's vulnerability to exploitation, especially in women.⁵⁷

In Poland, the IOM has three new anti-trafficking initiatives planned. The first is a media campaign aimed at raising awareness of the situation of trafficked women in Poland. The second is a training program for judges and social workers on assisting victims of trafficking. The third planned program will conduct research on trafficking in children, as well as trafficking for labour exploitation. The IOM has not provided dates as to when the programs and research will begin, or when results can be expected.⁵⁸

The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women was founded in 1988 in the United States, and counts itself as the first international non-governmental organization to focus on human trafficking, especially in women and girls. The goal of the CATW is to "promote women's human rights by working internationally to combat sexual

⁵⁷ Yevhenia Lutsenko, Lydia Matiaszek, Shivaun Scanlan, & Inna Shvab, "Trafficking in Ukraine: An Assessment of Current Responses" found at www.legislationline.org/index.php?tid=178&jid=53&y=2007&m=3 accessed March 14, 2007.

⁵⁸ International Organization for Migration- Poland found at www.iom.int/jahia/page1383.html accessed March 17, 2007.

exploitation in all its forms.”⁵⁹ As part of this campaign, the CATW works in many Eastern European countries to promote gender equality, raise awareness about trafficking, and discourage the demand for sexual exploitation. The CATW is closely linked to radical feminist thought and takes an abolitionist approach to prostitution. The Coalition’s first director was Kathleen Barry, a radical feminist scholar and the author of “Female Sexual Slavery.”⁶⁰

The CATW maintains that prostitution reinforces gender disparities between men and women, and will encourage male dominance and oppression over women, as well as increase gender inequality. Hence, the Coalition often lobbies governments against the acceptance and legislation of prostitution as work.⁶¹ Instead, the Coalition advocates decriminalizing the women involved in prostitution, while criminalizing the men who pay for sex with women and children.⁶² The CATW operates 6 secretariats, in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America and North America. Their website does not list any campaigns currently taking place in Poland or Ukraine; however the CATW is conducting anti-trafficking information and public awareness campaigns in the Czech Republic, Moldova, and Georgia, as well as in other Central and Eastern European nations.⁶³

The other major umbrella organization for women’s anti-trafficking initiatives is the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women. The GAATW focuses on the human

⁵⁹ Coalition Against Trafficking in Women. Found at <http://www.catwinternational.org/index.php> accessed September, 27, 2006.

⁶⁰ Barbara Sullivan, “Trafficking in Women: Feminism and New International Law” in *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 5:1, March 2003, p. 71.

⁶¹ Coalition against Trafficking in Women found at <http://www.catwinternational.org/index.php> accessed September, 27, 2006.

⁶² Mini Singh, “Debate on Trafficking and Sex Slavery” in *The Feminist Sexual Ethics Project* found at www.brandeis.edu/projects/fse/Pages/traffickingdebate.html accessed on March 8, 2007.

⁶³ Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, found at <http://www.catwinternational.org/campaigns.php> accessed April 3, 2007.

rights of migrants, especially women, and specializes in monitoring how anti-trafficking initiatives impact the human rights of migrants.⁶⁴ Their stated mission is to ensure that the human rights of migrant women are respected, to combat trafficking in persons, and to work to change the circumstances which contribute to trafficking.⁶⁵ Unlike the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women takes a pro-sex-work stance on prostitution. They believe that women can make their own informed choices about engaging in sex work, and if they choose to do so, they should be protected under state legislation and labour laws.⁶⁶

Although the goals of the CATW and the GAATW are roughly the same: to protect women and children from the abuse of trafficking, their opposing views on prostitution often cause them to clash. In 1995, the GAATW opposed a CATW sponsored Convention Against Sexual Exploitation because of its anti-prostitution position. The GAATW has referred to the radical feminist-abolitionist stance of the CATW as “moralistic protectionism” and has accused radical feminists of aligning with the religious right wing and using “moral panic” to “mount an assault on women’s rights, migrants’ rights and labour rights.”⁶⁷ All La Strada branches are members of the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, including La Strada Poland and La Strada

⁶⁴ The Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women found at <http://www.gaatw.net/index.php> accessed September 27, 2006.

⁶⁵ Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, found at http://www.gaatw.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogsection&id=2&Itemid=59 accessed April 3, 2007.

⁶⁶ Mini Singh, www.brandeis.edu/projects/fse/Pages/traffickingdebate.html accessed March 8, 2007.

⁶⁷ Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, found at http://www.gaatw.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogsection&id=4&Itemid=42 accessed April 3, 2007.

Ukraine. This is not surprising, as La Strada originated in The Netherlands, where prostitution is legalized.⁶⁸

Human Rights Watch is another international organization that monitors violations of human rights, including trafficking in persons. They carry out research, report on trafficking in various countries, provide testimony to governments, and hold international conferences and meetings on traffic, among many other topics concerning human rights.⁶⁹ In the past few years, the HRW's attention to the issue of trafficking in Europe has been focused on Bosnia and Herzegovina, where trafficking has flourished in the post-conflict, militarized environment, as well as on Greece, where human trafficking has become a large problem.⁷⁰

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is unique due to the fact that "it is the only entity concentrating, from a global perspective, on the criminal component of trafficking."⁷¹ In 1999 the UNODC launched the Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings (GPAT). According to the UNODC,

The GPAT's overarching objective is to bring to the foreground the involvement of organized criminal groups in human trafficking and to promote the development of effective criminal justice-related responses.⁷²

To reach this objective, the GPAT is involved in many activities aimed at assisting member states in combating trafficking. These activities include: collecting data on smuggling routes and the methods used by organized crime; fostering cooperation

⁶⁸ Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, found at http://www.gaatw.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogsection&id=4&Itemid=42 accessed April 3, 2007.

⁶⁹ Human Rights Watch found at <http://www.hrw.org> accessed September 27, 2006.

⁷⁰ Human Rights Watch, found at http://hrw.org/doc/?t=women_trafficking accessed April 4, 2007.

⁷¹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_human_beings.html accessed September 27, 2006.

⁷² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_human_beings.html accessed September 27, 2006.

between criminal justice systems; training judges, law enforcement and special units in counter-trafficking measures; strengthening victim and witness support and protection; and finally, advising states on drafting relevant anti-trafficking legislation.⁷³

In Poland, the Czech Republic, and the Slovak Republic, the UNODC has launched a technical assistance project to help these nations implement the Protocol against Trafficking in Persons. The UNODC states that it will do this by:

assisting countries in legal and institutional reform to bring policies in line with the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. Priority areas of the project include improving the necessary cooperation between the criminal justice system as well as other agencies and civil society in order to combat trafficking in human beings especially as regards the involvement of organized criminal groups. A victim protection model is being developed in all three countries to provide support and protection to victims and witnesses.⁷⁴

At the completion of this project, as well as others in other regions, the UNODC will release a list of best practices in anti-trafficking initiatives.

Although much is already being done on the international level in terms of awareness, prevention, and victim assistance, the authors of *The Traffic in Women: Human Realities of the International Sex Trade* list numerous activities that they feel must be undertaken or strengthened. Siriporn Skrobanek, Nataya Boonpakdee and Churima Jantateero argue that existing international instruments should be reviewed to assess their effectiveness and how they impact the rights of trafficked persons. Skrobanek et al., also argue that multilateral agreements should be made to establish a standard minimum treatment for trafficking victims, as well as agree on safe repatriation between nations. Lastly, Skrobanek believes that the United Nations could step up its

⁷³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_human_beings.html accessed September 27, 2006.

⁷⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, found at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_projects.html accessed April 4, 2007.

counter trafficking activities by pressuring governments to strengthen their anti-trafficking efforts, provide funds for groups that document human rights violations, and monitor the actions of UN peacekeepers and their impact upon regional trafficking.⁷⁵

What are some of the challenges to international anti-trafficking strategies?

Efforts taken at the international level to reduce the trade in humans for sexual exploitation are crucial to a comprehensive counter-trafficking strategy. However, these efforts are not without their own set of challenges. Perhaps the greatest challenge to international anti-trafficking efforts is the matter of enforceability, or the lack thereof. As Andrea Bertone points out in her article “Sexual Trafficking in Women: International Political Economy and the Politics of Sex,” international treaty law lacks legal force. Due to sovereignty, member states can be pressured, but not actually legally forced to comply with the articles of a treaty which they sign. Bertone states,

Like much of international law legal instruments are difficult to enforce because they are qualified by reservations that eliminate the binding effects of these treaties and they are left to be implemented by obscure committees in the UN bureaucracy.⁷⁶

For example, the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others lacked an enforcement agency, and the 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons deliberately left sexual exploitation undefined, so nations had room to tailor their own anti-trafficking strategies. Even the Trafficking in Persons Report, which is supposed to sanction Tier 3 nations for their lack of anti-trafficking efforts has a loophole that allows the waiving of sanctions if

⁷⁵ Skrobaneck et al., 1997, 104-110.

⁷⁶ Andrea Bertone, “Sexual Trafficking in Women: International Political Economy and the Politics of Sex” in *Gender Issues*, Winter 2000, Vol. 18 Issue 1, 11.

they would have “significant adverse effects on vulnerable populations” or would bring about a result that was contrary to “the national interest of the United States.”⁷⁷

Second, international cooperation against traffic is made difficult by the fact that each nation views the issue of traffic differently. A country of origin may feel very strongly about anti-trafficking efforts, and the destination country with whom they must cooperate may feel no urgency to deal with traffic whatsoever, or visa versa. Differences of opinion are exacerbated by differing state policies on such issues as the legality of prostitution, migration control, and deportation. Despite these challenges Francis T. Miko makes the argument that,

Most agree that extensive international cooperation will be needed to stop international trafficking and that both “carrots” and “sticks” may be needed to encourage other governments, including assisting governments in their efforts to curb trafficking.⁷⁸

A large portion of international anti-trafficking efforts seem to be aimed at pressuring or enticing states to step up to the plate and take a stand against traffic. As we will see, the national response to traffic may be the most crucial of the three levels of anti-trafficking to halting this human rights abuse.

Fighting Traffic at the National Level

Why is an anti-trafficking strategy important at the national level?

It is important for national governments to draft and implement anti-trafficking strategies because they have a responsibility to protect the human rights and freedoms of their citizens, as well as to ensure that the rule of law is enforced within their state

⁷⁷ Victor Malarek, 2003, 188.

⁷⁸ Francis T. Miko, 2003, 23.

borders. Because of this, national governments cannot, in good conscience, allow the criminal activities involved with sexual trafficking (such as rape, child abuse, forcible confinement, involuntary servitude, extortion etc.) to continue unchallenged. National governments also have an obligation to combat traffic because they are the most equipped to do so. National governments have access to the resources required to implement prevention and victim assistance programs, which communities and NGOs lack. Perhaps even more importantly, national governments have the ability not only to draft anti-trafficking legislation, but to enforce it domestically, which is beyond the scope of international organizations or United Nations conventions or protocols. Although the transnational nature of trafficking, along with jurisdictional barriers, often impedes the work of national police, they are still the best resource in investigating and arresting traffickers, provided that countries of origin, transit and destination share intelligence.

Each country with a trafficking problem must come up with its own individualized anti-trafficking strategy based on the unique set of circumstances present in the state. When drafting a counter-trafficking strategy, countries of origin must consider variables such as: the recruitment of their citizens by traffickers; the social and economic conditions that make women and children vulnerable to being trafficked for sexual exploitation; the corruption which allows traffic to flourish, and the repatriation and rehabilitation of its citizens if they survive their foreign exploitation. Countries used primarily for the transit of trafficked persons may concentrate their counter-trafficking efforts on preventing the use of their state as a corridor for organized crime. These states may focus less on prevention or prosecution, and more on monitoring migration and controlling borders. Lastly, because the actual exploitation occurs on their soil, countries

of destination require anti-trafficking strategies that address the demand for paid sex, the abuse of women and children by organized crime, the prosecution of traffickers, and the treatment of rescued or escaped victims.

Nations can do a great deal to combat the trade in women and children, but it is extremely important that they do not draft policies that will further harm the victims of sexual exploitation. There is much debate on the most effective path to take when attempting to reduce traffic, especially concerning the legalization of prostitution and the tightening of migration controls. The next section will address these debates; explore the actions states have taken in the areas of preventing traffic, prosecuting the perpetrators, and protecting the exploited; and outline some suggestions for improvement.

What is being done to fight traffic at the state level?

States that are proactive in the area of counter-trafficking typically base their strategies around three pillars of action: the prevention of trafficking, the prosecution of traffickers, and the protection and support of victims.⁷⁹ Prevention strategies that attempt to prevent the illicit sale of persons are extremely important in reducing the number of people who may be victimized by this activity. These strategies can take many forms, such as national awareness campaigns, increasing the social and economic status of women in areas prone to trafficking, reviewing migration and prostitution policies, and attempting to decrease demand for paid sex.

Nations often employ mass-media campaigns to educate their citizens about trafficking. These campaigns have the advantage of reaching a large audience, but they may be less effective than education done locally, which can adapt the information to

⁷⁹ Francis T. Miko, 2003, 11.

local and community settings. It is important that information campaigns are done with sensitivity. They must convey the seriousness of trafficking yet not unnecessarily frighten the national population into restricting the freedom of its female citizens in an effort to protect them. For example, in *Journeys of Jeopardy*, Elizabeth Kelly reports that in Albania, some parents became so afraid that their daughters would be abducted by traffickers that they refused to send them to school.⁸⁰ This, of course, is not the desired outcome of trafficking awareness programs. A less alarming approach may be to incorporate information about safe migration and women and children's human rights into school curricula, so youth are able to recognize and avoid possibly dangerous situations, as well as know who to contact for information or help should they require it.⁸¹

In Ukraine, various state and NGO groups offer counseling to women on such matters as migration, trafficking prevention, civil rights and recovery from violence. One such group in Ukraine is the Woman to Woman Centre, which operates crisis prevention programs as well as legal services programs. The Woman to Woman Centre reported a case in which two girls from L'viv, Ukraine, signed a contract with a firm in Warsaw to work as dancers in Japan. Before leaving for Japan, the two girls sought advice from the Centre. The Centre advised the girls to get round-trip air tickets to Japan in advance and not give up their passport to anyone. Upon arriving in Japan,

they were taken to a dormitory, where they met other girls from Ukraine and Russia who told them immediately that they had been forced into prostitution. The two girls found a way to escape and flew back home the next day.⁸²

⁸⁰ Elizabeth Kelly, 2002, 48.

⁸¹ Elizabeth Kelly, 2002, 48; Marina Tzvetkova, 2002, 67.

⁸² Legislation Line, Ukraine, found at <http://www.legislationline.org/upload/legislations/4d/d8/c8fea56866876ba5cb12bd38724e.pdf>, p. 22, accessed April 7, 2007.

In this case, pre-migration counseling allowed the girls to remove themselves from a dangerous and potentially exploitative situation. Unfortunately, state-run trafficking and violence prevention centers in Ukraine often lack the funds to provide assistance to all those who require it, especially on a long-term basis.⁸³ The Polish government has attempted to prevent trafficking by publishing and distributing pamphlets with information on safe migration practices. One of the publications is called the Travel Compass, and targets people leaving Poland to look for work, especially those who are vulnerable to trafficking.⁸⁴

In a national program of preventing traffic, raising the social and economic status of women is even more important than promoting a national awareness of the problem. As we have seen in the post-soviet context, young women often know about trafficking, yet they continue to put themselves in danger by accepting dubious job offers abroad. Women do this because they have no opportunities to earn a decent wage at home, and therefore are desperate to migrate for work. Hence, if young women's vulnerability to recruiters is to be reduced, a national plan must be implemented to increase employment options for young women and to raise their social status by reducing gender violence and discrimination.⁸⁵ Elizabeth Kelly reports,

Indeed, the majority of trafficked women say that the most effective preventive strategy would be the creation of employment opportunities at home. Thus, the call by UNICEF... for an evaluation of the impact of economic reform and development as part and parcel of an effective counter-trafficking strategy is undoubtedly critical.⁸⁶

⁸³ Legislation Line, Ukraine, found at <http://www.legislationline.org/upload/legislations/4d/d8/c8fea56866876ba5cb12bd38724e.pdf>, p. 22, accessed April 7, 2007.

⁸⁴ Piotr Mieracki, "Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings: prevention, protection and prosecution" Council of Europe, 2007, p. 38-40. Found at http://www.coe.int/t/dg2/trafficking/campaign/Source/eg-thb-sem2_2006_Proceedings.pdf. accessed February 5, 2007.

⁸⁵ Elizabeth Kelly, 2002, 49; Paola Monzini, 2005, 151.

⁸⁶ Elizabeth Kelly, 2002, 49.

Most authors agree that without the long-term strategy of ending gender discrimination and developing viable economic opportunities for women, they will continue to be pushed into unsafe migratory practices leading to exploitation.⁸⁷

One of the debates on the issue of trafficking prevention is if migration policy should be altered in light of women being trafficked across international borders for exploitation. Some states advocate the increase of migration controls on groups that are vulnerable to being trafficked out of the country. The reasoning is, of course, that if the movement of young women is restricted or more highly regulated, traffic will be reduced because it will become too difficult for traffickers to move women out of their country of origin, or to cross the borders of transit countries.⁸⁸ Although this strategy could very well reduce sexual trafficking, women's groups such as the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women argue against its implementation because it is repressive rather than empowering; it would 'protect' women by restricting their freedom of movement.⁸⁹ In her article "Unpacking the Trafficking Discourse," Jyoti Sanghera argues that restricting women's migration will bring further harm to those who are already vulnerable. She states,

Conflating trafficking with migration in an unproblematic manner results in reinforcing the gender bias that women and girls need constant male or state protection, and therefore must not be allowed to exercise their right to movement...Borders cannot be impenetrable, and stricter immigration measures

⁸⁷ Victor Malarek, 2003, 266; Marina Tzvetkova, 2002, 67; Siriporn Skrobaneck et al., 1997, 103; Elaine Pearson, 2000, 65; Andrea Bertone, 2000, 9; Francis T. Miko, 2003, 11;

⁸⁸ Sietske Altink, *Stolen: Trading Women into Sex and Slavery*, (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1995) 160.

⁸⁹ Elaine Pearson, "Human Rights and Trafficking: A Handbook" (Bangkok: Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, 2000) 57.

have merely resulted in pushing the trafficked persons further into situations of violence and abuse, and rendering them more inaccessible.⁹⁰

Rather than preventing traffic through restrictions on migration, Sietske Altink relates that some post-soviet women are advocating for the prevention of traffic through the abolishment of immigration laws. They argue that if Eastern European and Russian women could freely and legally move to the European Union to find work, it would not be necessary for them to resort to dangerous, often illegal, migration practices.⁹¹

Although this idea may reduce traffic in theory, Altink is quick to point out that it is unrealistic to expect the member states of the European Union, or any other country for that matter, to throw open their borders for foreign migrant workers.⁹²

It may be more realistic to prevent trafficking through a migration policy that retains women's rights to freedom of movement, while monitoring the migration programs that are the most likely to be used by traffickers to exploit women. Jacqueline Oxman-Martinez et al., advocate immigration programs "with more flexible criteria for female workers"⁹³ so women have more legal ways to migrate for work. The migration of women in high-risk categories, such as those who travel on 'dancer' or 'entertainer' visas, should be paid special attention, as traffickers often use these types of visas to bring women into European countries for prostitution.⁹⁴ Andrea Bertone relates that since 1997, women applying to migrate to Canada using 'entertainment' visas have been

⁹⁰ Jyoti Sanghera, "Unpacking the Trafficking Discourse" in *Trafficking and Prostitution Reconsidered*, Kamala Kempadoo, ed., (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2005) 11. An almost identical argument is made by Ratna Kapur in "Cross-border Movements and the Law" in *Trafficking and Prostitution Reconsidered*, Kamala Kempadoo, ed., (London: Paradigm Publishers, 2005) 29.

⁹¹ Sietske Altink, 1995, 162.

⁹² Sietske Altink, 1995, 162.

⁹³ Jacqueline Oxman-Martinez, Andrea Martinez & Jill Hanley, "Trafficking Women: Gendered Impacts of Canadian Immigration Policies," in *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, Summer 2001, Vol. 2, No.3, 309.

⁹⁴ Phil Williams, "Trafficking in Women and Children: A Market Perspective" in *Illegal Immigration and Commercial Sex: The New Slave Trade* (Portland: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999) 157, 158.

required to prove their profession in an effort to reduce the number of women trafficked into the country for prostitution.⁹⁵ In essence, it is important for women to retain their rights to global movement, yet countries of destination, transit and origin have a responsibility when drafting and enforcing migration policy to set up barriers to the exploitation of migrants.

Another major debate in the literature on traffic prevention revolves around the legalization of prostitution. Women's groups who are pro-sex work, such as the members of the GAATW, advocate the legalization of prostitution. They argue that the criminalization of prostitution forces it underground, which allows organized crime to gain control and, in turn, traffic more women into forced prostitution to increase their profits.⁹⁶ Sex worker advocates argue for the ability for sex workers to work legally, for migration rights for sex workers to move between regions and countries, and for sex work to be accepted as labour and subject to labour laws.⁹⁷ They argue that if prostitution was legalized and regulated, women would not have to tolerate exploitation because they would have legal recourse against pimps and brothel owners who abused or did not pay them.⁹⁸

Donna M. Hughes and Elizabeth Kelly both make strong cases against the above arguments, saying that there is absolutely no research to back up the claim that the legalization of prostitution reduces sex traffic.⁹⁹ On the contrary, countries with a policy of legalized prostitution, such as Germany and the Netherlands, are often the most

⁹⁵ Andrea Bertone, 2000, 7.

⁹⁶ Ann D. Jordan, "Human Rights or Wrongs? The struggle for a human rights based response to trafficking in human beings" in *Gender, Trafficking, and Slavery*, Rachel Masika, ed., (Oxford: Oxfam, 2002) 30.

⁹⁷ Barbara Sullivan, 2003, p. 78, 79.

⁹⁸ Sietske Altink, 1995, 162.

⁹⁹ Elizabeth Kelly, 2002, 54.

popular countries of destination in Western Europe for traffickers. Hughes argues that organized crime is actually emboldened, not marginalized, by the legalization of prostitution because it becomes nearly impossible to convict them of trafficking offenses. If prostitution is legal in a country, pimps and brothel owners can only be convicted of forcing women into prostitution if prosecutors can prove that the victim did not work voluntarily. This is made exceptionally difficult when women initially consent to work in prostitution, without knowledge of their future working conditions.¹⁰⁰ Hughes quotes Michael Platzer, Head of Operations for the UN's Centre for International Crime Prevention as saying,

The trend toward legalization of the sex industry and narrower definitions of trafficking, which require proof of coercion or force, will make the conviction of traffickers very difficult and will greatly benefit transnational criminal networks.¹⁰¹

Hughes also makes the argument that the legalization of pimping, brothels, and prostitution makes the purchase of sex seem more acceptable in a society, which leads to a greater demand for paid sex. This growing sex industry may actually increase organized crime and trafficking because there are not enough local women who are willing to work as prostitutes to meet the demand.¹⁰² Lastly, Hughes argues that trafficked women are not protected from exploitation in countries where prostitution is legal, such as Germany, because those laws only apply to EU citizens. Hughes says, "Therefore, while it is legal for EU citizens to engage in prostitution and (for pimps) to run brothels, trafficked

¹⁰⁰ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 647.

¹⁰¹ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 648, 649.

¹⁰² Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 647.

women are doubly victimized, first as being victims of trafficking and second for being foreign citizens.”¹⁰³

In their work, “The Links Between Prostitution and Sex Trafficking: A Briefing Handbook” Monica O’Connor and Grainne Healy also dispute the sex-worker argument that legalization will help protect women in prostitution. Their research indicates that brothels and other sex industry venues do little to nothing to protect women from violence, regardless of their legal or illegal status. They report that in The Netherlands, where prostitution is legal: 60% of women suffered physical assaults, 70% received verbal abuse and threats of violence, 40% experienced sexual violence, and 40% of the women were forced into prostitution by acquaintances.¹⁰⁴ In light of the above arguments, there seems to be no compelling evidence that legalizing prostitution in any way reduces the incidence of sexual trafficking. A better solution lies in strengthening anti-trafficking laws and enforcement to punish and deter traffickers, brothel owners and pimps, while decriminalizing prostitution so that the women are not punished due to their status as forced prostitutes.

Another strategy to possibly prevent the sexual exploitation of trafficked women is to lessen the demand for paid sex in countries of destination.¹⁰⁵ In his book *Understanding Global Slavery: A Reader*, Kevin Bales states that without the demand for foreign prostitutes, organized crime will cease to traffic women because it would not be

¹⁰³ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 647.

¹⁰⁴ Monica O’Connor and Grainne Healy “The Links Between Prostitution and Sex Trafficking: A Briefing Handbook” Prepared for the Joint Project Coordinated by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women and the European Women’s Lobby on Promoting Preventive Measures to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings for Sexual Exploitation: A Swedish and United States Governmental and non-Governmental Organisation Partnership, 2006, p. 18. Found at www.catwinternational.org, accessed March 1, 2007.

¹⁰⁵ Liz Kelly, “You Can Find Anything You Want: A Critical Reflection on Research on Trafficking in Persons within and into Europe” in *Data and Research on Human Trafficking: A Global Survey*, Frank Laczko & Elizabeth Gozdzik, eds., (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2005) 256.

lucrative for them to do so.¹⁰⁶ On a basic level, Bales argues, there is demand for foreign women in countries of destination because the clients of these women feel that it is acceptable to sexually exploit them. So, in order to decrease demand, efforts must be made to convince individuals, and society at large, that using the services of trafficked women is a human rights abuse that cannot be tolerated.¹⁰⁷ Bales says,

When public awareness is keen and public attitudes toward trafficking and enslavement are very strongly negative, there may still be those who consider it an acceptable activity. But accomplishing the exploitation of trafficked persons will then be another matter.¹⁰⁸

In her book, *Sex Traffic*, Paula Monzini relates a more nuanced view of what type of men use foreign or exploited women for commercial sex. She states that there are two camps of men when it comes to purchasing the services of a prostitute. The first group of men prefers local prostitutes because they speak the same language, usually have better working conditions, and are seen as working voluntarily, and thus, in the men's opinion, offer better services. This group of men tends to avoid foreign, involuntary prostitutes. The second camp of men prefers foreign prostitutes because they are "cheaper and more malleable than others, and above all, that it is easier to have a degree of control over them which offers a good 'return' for the money."¹⁰⁹ These men view prostitutes as objects, not as people with whom a sexual contract has been made, and therefore are more inclined to use women who are controlled by third parties.¹¹⁰ There are obviously enough of the

¹⁰⁶ Kevin Bales, *Understanding Global Slavery: A Reader*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005) 154.

¹⁰⁷ Kevin Bales, 2005, 157.

¹⁰⁸ Kevin Bales, 2005, 157.

¹⁰⁹ Paola Monzini, 2005, p. 13, 14.

¹¹⁰ Paola Monzini, 2005, p. 13, 14.

second group of men to keep organized crime in the business of forcing women into prostitution.

Kevin Bales argues that efforts to reduce demand through education should be targeted at those most likely to seek out prostitutes. Bales argues that this group is typically comprised of young men, especially those in the military who may be stationed away from home. The hypothesis described by Bales is that if young men understand that prostitutes may be trafficked and suffering under slave-like, violently controlled conditions, they may be less likely to seek out their sexual services. Bales states, "The rationale behind this is that these young men will have to consider what effect their sexual use of prostituted women will have on the lives of those women."¹¹¹ Although research conducted in Western Europe indicates that a large number of young men do purchase the services of prostitutes, Paola Monzini relates that the same research also suggests that the majority of regular clients to prostitutes are educated middle-class men with stable employment and families.¹¹² Hence it is important that trafficking education campaigns aimed at men are not limited to young military men, but include a broad spectrum of potential customers, such as businessmen who travel and engage in sex tourism.

Prostitution in Poland is not openly discussed at the state level. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, prostitution is not criminalized in Poland, but activities surrounding prostitution, such as pimping, owning a brothel, and procuring women for prostitution, are criminalized. There is no law against purchasing the services

¹¹¹ Kevin Bales, 2005, 168.

¹¹² Paola Monzini, 2005, p.14, 15, 16.

of prostitutes.¹¹³ In Ukraine, trading in prostitution, running a brothel, pimping, and procuring others for prostitution are all deemed criminal offenses under the country's criminal code.¹¹⁴ Legislation Line reports that since 2006, prostitutes are no longer criminally liable for prostitution in Ukraine, which removes a barrier to victims reporting their exploitation in prostitution.¹¹⁵

Sweden has taken the most aggressive stance against the demand for prostitution by enacting legislation that makes buying sexual services illegal.¹¹⁶ In 1999, in a decision that closely mirrored radical feminist ideology, the Swedish government declared that the act of a man buying a woman's body for sex was a "gross violation of a woman's integrity" and an "act of violence against women."¹¹⁷ In order to reduce women's vulnerability, and to avoid victimizing them further, the *sale* of sex remained legal while only the *purchase* of sex became illegal.¹¹⁸ Donna Hughes supports this attack on demand for paid sex, saying, "This new law is the first that aims to protect women from violence by holding men accountable and thereby addressing the demand for women to be trafficked for prostitution."¹¹⁹ Drafting pro-active laws that may reduce demand for prostitution, and in turn reduce the traffic in women, such as Sweden's, is an excellent first step in a counter-trafficking strategy. However, when the exploitation has

¹¹³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, The Case of Poland, found at http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_projects_poland.html, accessed March 20, 2007.

¹¹⁴ Ukrainian Criminal Code, Legislation Line, found at <http://www.legislationline.org/legislation.php?tid=178&lid=3802&less=false> accessed April 11, 2007.

¹¹⁵ Legislation Line, "Guidelines on Trafficking in Human Beings for the Criminal Justice Chain in Ukraine" found at www.legislationline.org/index.php?tid=178&jid=53&y=2007&m=3 accessed April 11, 2007.

¹¹⁶ Pamela Shifman, "Trafficking and women's human rights in a globalised world" in *Gender and Development*, Volume 11, Number 1, May 2003, 130.

¹¹⁷ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 649.

¹¹⁸ Kevin Bales, 2005, 167, 168.

¹¹⁹ Donna M. Hughes, 2000, 649.

already occurred, is it imperative to prosecute those responsible for the sexual exploitation of women and children. It is to prosecution that we now turn.

The effective and aggressive prosecution of those involved in the sexual trafficking of women and children is vitally important if this activity is to be reduced. As it stands, prosecution methods must be improved across most of Europe if they are to provide any degree of deterrence to organized crime involved in trafficking. Most individuals convicted of trafficking receive either probation or a short amount of time in prison, typically less than five years. This extremely light sentencing reassures organized crime that there is little to fear and much to gain from trafficking in persons. In order to raise the price of trafficking, a few key measures must be taken.

Phil Williams argues that the maximum sentences for trafficking offenses should be significantly increased to correspond with the intense suffering their actions have caused others. This requires sentences much more severe than a few years in prison, perhaps reaching the fifteen or twenty year limit. Williams says, "In short, human commodity trafficking has to be treated with at least the same seriousness as drug trafficking and given penalties that reflect the fact that this crime involves fundamental and flagrant violations of human rights."¹²⁰ Traffickers must face the serious charges involved with rape, child abuse, abduction and unlawful confinement, and not just the lesser charges of migration and prostitution offenses.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Phil Williams, 1999, 158, 159.

¹²¹ Jyoti Sanghera, 2005, 16.

Another way to increase risk for traffickers is to make the activity less lucrative by targeting their profits.¹²² Siriporn Skrobanek et al., along with Victor Malarek, advocate the confiscation of assets of those convicted of trafficking offenses. The seizure of profits would make the punishment of traffickers more serious, plus the extra money could be used to partly fund anti-trafficking campaigns, as well as provide some financial compensation for the traffickers' victims.¹²³ A similar tactic is mentioned by Olga Pyshchulina, who argues that victims should be allowed to seek restitution from their exploiters by launching private lawsuits against them.¹²⁴

In addition to these specific prosecutorial initiatives, there are some general areas that could be improved. First, there must be sustained efforts by regions to cooperate with each other and share information about trafficking routes, and the key traffickers known to be operating in a region or regions.¹²⁵ Second, the prosecution process should be sensitive to the situation of trafficked women. This can be encouraged by creating special police units to deal with trafficking and violence against women.¹²⁶ These units would have training specific to traffic so as to not traumatize victims more by forcing them to interact with unsympathetic law enforcement officials. In 2006, Poland established a special counter-trafficking unit at its national police headquarters. This is a positive step in providing law enforcement officials with the specialized training required to identify and combat traffic in persons.¹²⁷ Lastly, women who cooperate with prosecutions should be treated as the victims they are, and not have their morals called

¹²² Elizabeth Kelly, 2002, 52.

¹²³ Siriporn Skrobanek et al., 1997, 106; Victor Malarek, 2003, 266.

¹²⁴ Olga Pyshchulina, "Ukrainian Legislation on Human Trafficking" in *Human Trafficking and Transnational Crime*, Sally Stoecker & Louise Shelley, eds., (Oxford: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005) 121; & Francis T. Miko, 2003, 11.

¹²⁵ Paola Monzini, 2005, 151.

¹²⁶ Siriporn Skrobanek, 1997, 106.

¹²⁷ Piotr Mierecki, 2007, p. 40.

into question. A trafficked woman's testimony must be equally weighted with other witnesses and not be de-valued because she has been forced into prostitution.¹²⁸

The third and final category of state action against trafficking after prevention and prosecution is the protection of victims. Victims of trafficking must be protected and treated with sensitivity because they have been through a horrific ordeal. They require a safe space in which to recuperate away from the threats of their exploiters, as well as assistance in rebuilding their lives. Currently, NGOs in post-soviet states are carrying much of the burden of protecting the victims of traffic. In Poland as well as Ukraine, the NGO La Strada provides most of the housing and counseling for victims of traffic. Unfortunately, La Strada, like most NGOs, is not equipped to provide for long-term rehabilitation services and counseling. Elaine Pearson, writing on behalf of Anti-Slavery International, writes, "While they clearly have an important role in providing support, NGOs cannot adequately replace state structures, especially in regard to safety measures."¹²⁹ Therefore, it is the state's responsibility to provide these safety measures to abused women and children.

States can implement many strategies to protect the victims of traffic. First, states should not treat trafficked persons as criminals. Those who have been trafficked are victims of criminal activity, and as victims they should not be forcibly detained or imprisoned for prostitution offenses.¹³⁰ Second, many European countries must cease their policy of immediately deporting victims back to their country of origin. Immediate

¹²⁸ Siriporn Skrobanek et al., 1997, 106.

¹²⁹ Elaine Pearson, "Human Traffic, Human Rights: redefining victim protection" Anti-Slavery International, 2002, p. 219.

¹³⁰ Olga Pyshchulina, 2005, 121.

deportation gives the victim no time to recover from her exploitation, and puts her in real danger of being re-trafficked once she reaches her home country. Instead of immediate deportation, victims should be allowed to stay in the destination country for a temporary period while they decide whether or not to testify against their traffickers, and to receive medical, psychological and legal assistance in a safe environment.¹³¹ The Netherlands, Belgium and Poland have instituted these reflection periods and have found that women who were given support under this program were more likely to report their traffickers and testify against them.¹³²

Women who act as witnesses in criminal prosecutions need protection against their exploiters because they are extremely vulnerable to violence.¹³³ This protection may include developing a witness protection program, keeping the woman's identity confidential, having her testify away from the courtroom, and sheltering her from media scrutiny.¹³⁴ Victims must receive protection from their exploiters even if they do not testify against them in court.¹³⁵ This is especially important when women are repatriated back to their home countries. If they have no protection, women are vulnerable to being met by traffickers at the airport or in their town and re-trafficked. Paola Monzini writes, "Such cases are common, and as many as 25 percent of girls assisted by the IOM find themselves being trafficked a second time."¹³⁶ State programs which send people to meet

¹³¹ David Ould, "Trafficking and International Law" in *The Political Economy of New Slavery*, Christien Van Den Anker ed., (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) 74.

¹³² Elaine Pearson, "Half-hearted protection: what does victim trafficking protection really mean for victims of trafficking in Europe?" in *Gender, Trafficking, and Slavery*, Rachel Masika, ed., (Oxford: Oxfam, 2002) 56-58.

¹³³ Victor Malarek, 2003, 263.

¹³⁴ Jo Goodey, "Sex trafficking in women from Central and East European Countries: promoting a 'victim-centred' and 'woman-centred' approach to criminal justice intervention" in *Feminist Review* 76, Special Issue on Post-Communism, 31.

¹³⁵ David Ould, 2004, 74.

¹³⁶ Paola Monzini, 2005, 150.

women at airports and train stations, and provide safe housing and financial assistance to help rebuild their lives, may significantly reduce the occurrence of re-trafficking.¹³⁷

Although women may have been involved in a trafficking victim's exploitation at some point, Jo Goodey argues that, in general, women are more sensitive to the needs of a recovering trafficking victim than men. Therefore, whenever possible, handling of trafficked women should be woman-centred so as not to traumatize victims further. This woman-centred treatment could include such initiatives as having female law enforcement conduct interviews away from male-dominated police stations, as well as using female doctors to perform medical examinations and counseling.¹³⁸ Similarly, civil servants who may come into contact with trafficked persons, especially those in consulates who deal with migration, should be trained to identify possible victims and assist them in finding the appropriate help.¹³⁹

Ultimately, it is of the utmost importance that trafficked women help shape the trafficking debate and consult on the strategies used to protect victims, as well as to prevent and prosecute trafficking.¹⁴⁰ The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women routinely includes formerly trafficked women in its conferences so as to give them a voice in the debate, as well as an opportunity to contribute to the formation of anti-trafficking policies and initiatives. Although every nation with a trafficking problem should implement an aggressive anti-trafficking strategy base on prevention, prosecution, and protection, there are challenges which must be overcome before this goal can be accomplished.

¹³⁷ Siriporn Skrobanek et al., 1997, 108.

¹³⁸ Jo Goodey, 2004, 33.

¹³⁹ Elizabeth Kelly, 2002, 121.

¹⁴⁰ Liz Kelly, 2005, 256.

What are some challenges to a national anti-trafficking strategy?

Although each state will face its own unique challenges in implementing a national anti-trafficking strategy, there are three basic hurdles that most post-soviet states must overcome. The first hurdle for national governments to overcome is obtaining specialized knowledge on trafficking. Without adequate trafficking knowledge, the anti-trafficking laws drafted by state officials may contain loopholes that can be exploited by traffickers. For example, if trafficking is not precisely defined, or if it is not made clear that trafficked persons are victims, women and children may be punished rather than helped by national laws.¹⁴¹ A lack of specialized trafficking knowledge may also lead to ineffective or even harmful law enforcement activities. One way to overcome this challenge is for national governments to work closely with NGOs, such as the IOM and La Strada, which have the trafficking expertise to help guide the drafting of anti-trafficking legislation and law enforcement activities.¹⁴² Anti-Slavery International points out that the Polish penal code does not define 'traffic in persons.' The group is concerned that this will lead to difficulty in prosecuting trafficking crimes, and recommend that Poland amend the penal code to include a precise definition of the term.¹⁴³

The second major challenge to implementing anti-trafficking strategies at the national level is official corruption. Numerous post-soviet states have significant difficulties with the corruption of government officials, police officers, and border guards. These officials represent a vital component in any national anti-trafficking strategy. Without their compliance (or if they are complicit with traffickers), it is next to

¹⁴¹ Elizabeth Kelly, 2002, 50-52.

¹⁴² Siriporn Skrobanek, 1997, 108.

¹⁴³ Elaine Pearson, 2002, 219.

impossible for states to execute a counter-trafficking strategy. In this situation it is extremely important for states to address the issue of official corruption. One way to do this is to pay border guards and police officers a living wage so they are less likely to accept bribes to supplement their income.¹⁴⁴ Another step would be to introduce significant punishments for officials who aid in the traffic of persons, either by actively aiding traffickers, or by turning a blind eye to the activity.

The third, and perhaps the greatest, challenge to implementing a national anti-trafficking strategy is simple ambivalence. Many people, even police and government officials, hold the belief that trafficking is not a large problem, and that these women are partly to blame for their own exploitation because they volunteered to migrate for work. Trafficked women are also stigmatized because they have been involved in the sex industry, and therefore are not considered innocent victims, or as deserving of help as children or victims of other crimes. Jo Goodey states, "Trafficked women, both in their home countries and their host countries, are often seen as complicit in their own exploitation."¹⁴⁵

Victor Malarek argues that if a state and its citizens have no will to fight traffic, then "...all the conferences, training programs, newly minted laws and wordy international protocols won't matter one bit."¹⁴⁶ Based on this, it could be argued that the key to a robust anti-trafficking strategy is to change national attitudes and make people take this issue seriously.¹⁴⁷ In order to change attitudes, research on trafficking in each post-soviet state must be continued to illuminate the true scope of trafficking activities,

¹⁴⁴ Elizabeth Kelly, 2002, 52.

¹⁴⁵ Jo Goodey, 2004, 33; Kevin Bales, 2005, 167.

¹⁴⁶ Victor Malarek, 2003, 259.

¹⁴⁷ Victor Malarek, 2003, 263.

making it more difficult for governments and individuals to deny the problem.¹⁴⁸

Research, coupled with a robust national awareness program to educate citizens on the human rights violations of traffic, may begin to turn the tide of public opinion. Kevin Bales states,

When a society's moral economy vigorously condemns trafficking and is willing to support that condemnation with resources, the number of prosecutions will be high and the costs of trafficking and enslavement will be prohibitive.¹⁴⁹

For the well-being of vulnerable post-soviet women and children, society's vigorous condemnation of traffic needs to happen sooner rather than later.

Conclusion

Trafficking in humans for sexual exploitation operates at multiple levels of analysis in a complex and flexible manner. Because of this, the only way to truly fight traffic is to implement comprehensive and complimentary anti-trafficking strategies at the local, national, and international levels. Local strategies are extremely important to reduce the effectiveness of recruiters by raising awareness about trafficking in vulnerable groups. Local strategies are also crucial to the successful reintegration of trafficking victims back into communities. At the other end of the anti-trafficking spectrum are international strategies. International strategies help to reduce traffic by fostering international cooperation on the issue, as well as placing pressure on states with large trafficking problems to strengthen their counter-trafficking efforts.

¹⁴⁸ Ann D. Jordan, 2002, 29.

¹⁴⁹ Kevin Bales, 2005, 157.

Local and international anti-trafficking efforts are vital, but ultimately, national counter-trafficking programs have the most potential to significantly reduce sexual trafficking. International organizations and national governments can both draft anti-trafficking laws, but national governments have the ability to enforce these laws domestically. Similarly, community groups and NGOs do excellent work and often have great expertise, yet they lack the long-term resources that a national government can bring to the anti-trafficking cause. The key, then, is to convince states to devote the nation's time, energy, and resources to combating this problem. Research and education must be used to shake off national ambivalence about trafficking, and make citizens realize that they cannot ignore their responsibility to protect the human rights and dignity of their society's women and children and to prosecute their exploiters. In the end, the most effective national anti-trafficking strategies will result from close collaborations between national governments and NGOs such as the IOM, La Strada, the CATW, and the GAATW. The expertise of these groups, joined with a strong national commitment to the anti-trafficking cause, represents the best hope for reducing this inhumane activity.

Chapter Six Conclusion

This thesis set out to investigate one of the greatest human rights abuses perpetrated today: the trafficking of post-soviet women and children for exploitation in the world's sex markets. In light of the explosion of this activity since the dissolution of the USSR, the introduction posed the question: what conditions create the perfect climate for this activity to occur? Chapter two found that there are three critical variables that have come together to create this phenomenon: a large number of economically desperate post-soviet women who are vulnerable to the deceptions of traffickers; an established network of organized crime groups and individuals who are eager to profit from the abuse of others; and a large demand for these women in the global sex industry.

This finding is important because it shows that if trafficking is to be stopped, or at least reduced dramatically, one of these variables must be cut out of the equation. Eliminating global demand for paid sex is a near impossibility, as it would require shutting down much of the global sex industry, which is already enormous and has only been strengthened by globalization and the internet. Stopping traffickers is a desirable goal, but the ease of starting up a trafficking operation, along with its high profitability and low rate of punishment makes it an almost irresistible enterprise for organized crime groups, which are thriving and difficult to combat in post-soviet states. The third, and best option, is to cut off the supply of post-soviet women who are vulnerable to traffickers. In order to do this, the conditions which create the supply must be understood. This was the task of chapter three.

Chapter three found that during the Soviet era, women had high rates of employment, yet their jobs were often concentrated in low-status, low-paying positions, and they came to resent being placed under the double burden of public and private work. Soviet women also had high rates of political representation, but the patriarchal, top-down decision making of the Communist party did not allow women meaningful policy input. When the USSR dissolved, women's status devolved from bad to worse. Women suffered economically from high unemployment, discrimination and harassment, and their political representation plummeted, robbing them of a voice at the very time when it was needed to help women's economic situation. Women who did enter politics did not challenge the patriarchal political and economic structures, and instead denied that discrimination against women existed, and did not champion their causes. Culturally there was a backlash against the Soviet image of the 'over-emancipated' woman, prompting many post-soviet women to strive for an ultra-feminine ideal.

Unfortunately, this lack of economic and political power is driving many young women into circumstances where they feel they have no other option than to leave the region to find a better life. These 'push' factors which make women vulnerable to trafficking recruiters will not diminish until post-soviet women attain the liberal and radical feminist goals of increasing their presence in economics and politics, and resisting conformity to patriarchal structures by championing women's issues and ideas. Chapter four set out to test this argument.

In chapter four case studies were conducted on Poland and Ukraine. These states were chosen because they are in close geographic proximity and have both experienced the dual challenges of political and economic transition. Ukraine is experiencing a large

trafficking problem, as one of the primary countries of origin for trafficked women, while Poland's trafficking problem seems to be on the decline and its anti-trafficking efforts have been recognized by a Tier 1 placement in the U.S. Trafficking in Persons Report. The chapter found that the most likely cause of the disparity in trafficking between the two nations is women's status in each state. Women in Ukraine are desperate to migrate because of poor job opportunities and poverty, evidenced by the low per capita GDP and the large number of women living on or below the poverty line. Women in Ukraine also have a very low level of political representation and the country's women's movement has stagnated. In contrast, Poland has the lowest pay gap between men and women in the region, and their per capita GDP is twice that of Ukraine's. This relative economic prosperity allows women to work in Poland and reduces the number of women wishing to migrate. Politically, more resources have been allocated to the anti-trafficking cause. This may be due to a significant female presence in Polish politics, along with a growing women's movement that is willing to champion female issues such as unemployment or traffic.

These findings are significant because they support the argument that women's status within a post-soviet state is directly correlated to the severity of sexual trafficking within that state. This argument assumes a high global demand for paid sex as well as the presence of traffickers willing to exploit women. So, this means that to successfully reduce traffic in their nations, other post-soviet states such as Ukraine, Russia and Moldova must follow Poland's example of increasing economic prosperity, especially for women, and encouraging women to enter politics, perhaps through the implementation of party quota systems. Lastly, the development of a robust women's movement that is

willing to enthusiastically address issues such as traffic is crucial to securing the political will and resources required for anti-trafficking and victim support projects.

Unfortunately, increased economic prosperity may have the unintended negative side effect of increasing a state's status as a country of destination for traffickers. However, the presence of a strong women's movement should be able to advocate for victims of traffic from other nations as well as their own. Poland has demonstrated this by rejecting immediate deportation of victims in favour of victim reflection periods.

This thesis has found that improving the economic and political status of post-soviet women is absolutely crucial in reducing traffic because it helps to cut off the supply of women who are desperate to leave the region and are therefore vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. However, the thesis also recognizes that this change will not occur in a short period of time, and may require years of effort and attitudinal change. In the meantime, concrete anti-trafficking initiatives must be implemented now to prevent and punish the exploitation of these women, as well as to assist those who survive forced prostitution in a foreign sex industry.

Chapter five explored anti-trafficking strategies and found that traffic is a highly flexible enterprise that easily adapts and transcends borders, making it a truly international problem that requires cooperation on many levels. Chapter five argued that anti-trafficking measures are important at the local, national, and international levels, but ultimately, national anti-trafficking strategies have the most potential to reduce traffic because nations have the ability to commit long-term resources to the cause, as well as enforce anti-trafficking laws. National will to end traffic is essential. However, this raises a problem: barring significant international pressure, it may be very difficult to

convince patriarchal, male-dominated post-soviet governments that this issue merits national attention and resources. This problem underscores just how important it is that women empower themselves in these states and demand that the issues concerning them be taken seriously.

The findings of the last five chapters support the argument that although global demand and the presence of traffickers are integral parts of the trafficking chain, it is post-soviet women's inferior status in their home countries that is the largest contributor to their victimization. This conclusion is confined to cases of post-soviet sexual trafficking of women and therefore has various limitations. The research did not turn up any well documented cases of sexual trafficking in males, and therefore no conclusions can be drawn about their circumstances. Additionally, these findings are limited to post-soviet states and cannot be applied confidently to sexual trafficking in other regions, such as Asia and Africa. The forces driving sexual trafficking in other regions may be very different, such as war, the use of sex tourism as an economic development strategy, or trafficking in women for forced marriages due to unbalanced demographics. Separate studies of traffic in these regions would be required to determine its causal factors. Lastly, the conclusions made about post-soviet sexual trafficking cannot be applied to any other types of trafficking in the region, or globally, such as trafficking for domestic or farm labour, or trafficking in organs, as no research was conducted in these subject areas.

The strength of this work comes from its interdisciplinary nature as well as its exploration of the root causes of post-soviet women's vulnerability to traffic. Many works on traffic are content to state that young post-soviet women are desperate to

migrate and are therefore vulnerable to trafficking recruiters, while leaving out the analysis of why this is the case. Employing a feminist methodology including the insights of liberal and radical feminism has been crucial to capturing the 'why' of women's vulnerability.

One of the early hypotheses of this work regarding why women are silenced in post-soviet society was that they simply did not have enough representation in politics and economics- a liberal feminist interpretation. However, upon more careful study and a comparison of the Soviet vs. post-soviet political and economic climates, this hypothesis had to be revised to include the arguments of radical feminism. This led to the argument that simply increasing the number of women in public life is not sufficient to raise their status. To empower post-soviet women, they must also have *meaningful* positions in economics and politics, and be willing to collaborate to challenge patriarchal structures and champion issues that are important to women.

The methodology used in the case studies could be strengthened by more complete information on the status of trafficking in Poland. Complete information on trafficking in Poland was difficult to come by and had to be gleaned from various sources with varying levels of detail. In general, the ability to compare the trafficking situations of individual post-soviet countries is impeded by varying levels of research available for certain countries. Ukraine has an adequate amount of study conducted on trafficking, however other nations such as Moldova are studied very little, although it is reported to have one of the worst trafficking situations in the region. Case study conclusions based on state comparisons could be more clear cut with improved field research done on individual countries using standard methodologies. Additionally, the entire field of

sexual trafficking could benefit from more quantitative study. This would ideally be conducted by a single organization such as the IOM, in order to provide uniform statistical analysis of cases that could be compared across time and space. A crowning accomplishment in the study of sex traffic would be the ability to pinpoint how many young women fall victim to this activity per year.

This topic has definitely pushed the boundaries of International Relations. However, with this being said, the increasing acceptance and integration of feminist insights into the field of IR has created a space for the issue of traffic to be studied and discussed. Feminists argue that the personal is political. In 1990 Cynthia Enloe took this a step further by arguing that the “personal is international.”¹ This assertion perfectly encapsulates the issue of post-soviet sexual trafficking. The issue of traffic is intensely personal to the victims of this abuse and their families. However, the impact of this abuse reverberates outward, influencing domestic politics as well as the international realm.

Sex traffic encompasses the issues of prostitution, gender inequality, discrimination, political power, women’s civil society, global activism, human rights abuse, transnational organized crime, migration policy, international black markets, post-soviet transition, corruption, globalization, militarization, and international law, to name a few. Because of this, it must be concluded that sexual trafficking deserves a place in the study of international politics. As Enloe argues, the landscape of international politics is not exclusively male.² If the field of IR is to attain a clearer picture of the international realm, it must incorporate the insights and experiences of women, even if, at

¹ Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, (Berkeley: University of California, 1990) 195, 196.

² Enloe, 1990, 1.

first glance, they may seem more personal than international. Hopefully this goal has been attained in a small way within the pages of this work.

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