

**HIERARCHIES OF SUBALTERNITY:
MANAGED STRATIFICATION IN BOMBAY BROTHELS, 1914-1930**

**for presentation at the
18th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies (EASAS)**

Lund, Sweden

July 9, 2004

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HIERARCHIES OF SUBALTERNITY: MANAGED STRATIFICATION IN BOMBAY'S BROTHELS

Both the following episodes took place in the same year, 1917, around the same neighborhood of Bombay, Kamathipura. The first was the murder of a Duncan Road brothel inmate named Akootai, who was tortured and killed by her brothel keeper, Syed Mirza, and his two accomplices Gangabai and Gombibai. Akootai had tried to escape the brothel after refusing a customer, and her torture was meant as an example to other brothel workers: she was beaten by her supervisors with fists and a metal yard measure, branded with lit matches, forced to drink her supervisor's urine, and made to bathe in scalding water (Home Department, 1917). The specifics of the murder trial --the brothel keeper's Pathan identity, his victim's valiant attempted escape, and the grisly forms of torture-- generated a great deal of press coverage, but when the police force was criticized for its failure to detect and prevent such cases, the Police Commissioner Vincent pleaded that it could not be expected to control this "class with its low state of evolution" (Home Department 1917a, 34-36).

That same year, a local police inspector was investigated for wrongdoing of a different kind. Inspector Favel, termed the "right hand man" of the previous police commissioner S. M. Edwardes, was found guilty of routinely extorting money and gifts from pimps, mistresses, and workers in European brothels in Kamathipura; collecting commissions when such brothels changed hands; sharing brothel profits; and availing of free sexual services (Judicial Department Proceedings 1917, 195-203). When one European woman tried to leave the brothel with the aid of an outsider, Favel obstructed them with blackmail and threats of deportation. Unlike the widely publicized Akootai murder trial, Favel's case was registered as an internal police matter; he returned his King's medal and later resigned.

These two cases --one characterized by too little police involvement, and the other by too much-- exemplify the stratification at the heart of state control of prostitution in late colonial Bombay. While police scrutinized and even socialized with the upper rung of European prostitutes, they viewed Indian prostitutes as an un-individuated mass. When asked to enforce laws against the transporting and bondage of women in prostitution, Bombay's police responded with strategies of elaborate differentiation between races and classes of brothels, and effectively altered the scope of the law. This paper is about how the universalist language of international anti-trafficking conventions was adapted and redirected to serve the requirements of colonial hierarchies.

The idiom of trafficking, which began circulating in the 1910s and 1920s in Europe and North America, and which supplanted an earlier vein of concerns about "white slavery," may be viewed as an expression of the budding internationalism of the era. Although the term "traffic" only connoted "improper dealings" or "prostitution",¹ the notion of movement across borders --and implicitly of white girls carried from Europe to colonies-- lent this new discourse its emotional weight. The first anti-trafficking agreements --signed by the members of the International Society for the Suppression of White Slave Traffic in 1894, 1904 and 1910-- required countries to keep a watch at ports of embarkation, repatriate victims, and criminalize abduction and trafficking (League of

Nations 1943). The most influential convention of 1910 specified that anyone who "...procured, enticed, or led away, even with her consent, a woman or girl under age, for immoral purposes, [would] be punished, notwithstanding that the various acts constituting the offense may have been committed in different countries" (Home Department 1922a, 35). The League of Nations adopted this Convention as part of its mandate in 1920, and its member nations, including India, had to submit annual reports on how they were reducing trafficking.

The annual anti-trafficking reports sent by the Bombay government to the League of Nations in the 1920s are the focus of this paper, although I also draw on a range of police files, newspaper articles, social workers' records and census tables.² The anti-trafficking reports consist of letters from police commissioners summarizing major cases, social workers' reports, and judicial statements. I critically read and compare the voices of missionary and social reform organizations, citizen petitions and police reports to arrive at an assessment of social relations in Bombay's sex trade. While agreeing with Spivak (1988) that it is never possible to fully access subaltern voices, I will nonetheless engage in a mode of "information retrieval" that allows an analysis of the relationship between the colonial state and prostitutes. In the first part of my talk, I compare the roles played by European and Indian prostitutes in the city's racialized sexual order. In the second part, I focus on the local police's selective enforcement of League of Nations Conventions: their emphasis on cross-national cases with an attendant neglect of internal trafficking, their legalistic emphasis on third party procurers, and concern only for victims with no prior history of prostitution.

Racial Rankings in Kamathipura

The presence of European women in Bombay's brothels testifies to the long history of transnational forces shaping the city. As Bombay became a prominent seaport in the late 19th century, its brothels served sailors and received brothel workers from distant parts of the world; it joined a sex trade circuit spanning cities in Asia, South America and Africa (Ballhatchet 1980; Guy 2000; Hershatter 1997; Hyam, 1990; Levine 2003; Van Heiningen 1984). An organized system for directing sailors from ports to licensed brothels was approvingly described by the Chief Medical Officer of Bombay as early as 1885 (Government of Bombay 1885). European and Middle Eastern brothel workers came to Bombay in large numbers after the 1860s, typically traveling through the Suez Canal; they often proceeded southwards or eastwards towards Capetown, Colombo, Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai Japanese and some Chinese brothel workers also arrived to the city, traveling in the opposite direction (Fisher-Tine 2003; Hershatter 1997; Hyam, 1990; Levine 2003; Van Heiningen 1984). Because of its location and eminence as a commercial port, Bombay was a point of entry to other Indian cities; there were more European prostitutes here than Calcutta, Madras and Karachi.³ Bombay's large population of Europeans made it attractive to the network of suppliers of brothel workers.⁴ When anti-trafficking measures were introduced internationally, the Government of Bombay served as the central authority submitting annual reports to the League of Nations, as it was acknowledged to be the primary destination for traffickers in India (Home Department 1932).

Although the term "European" was generically used in colonial India to include those who were British, in this context, European prostitutes were specifically of

continental origins, particularly French, Polish, Austrian, and Russian.⁵ The presence of European prostitutes resolved the separate dictates of sexual recreation for British soldiers and sailors, medicalized racism, and British national prestige. Although brothels remained legal in India well into the 1920s, there was decreasing acceptance of inter-racial sex between Indian women and British men. With the increasing pervasiveness of a biological construct of race, preserving racial purity and preventing miscegenation became a critical political project (Cooper and Stoler 1997; Stoler 1995). Concerns about venereal disease led to the framing of Indian prostitutes, and indeed all lower class Indian women, as threats to British soldiers: the Commander-in-Chief of the army warned British soldiers against inter-racial sex by stating that “diseases passed on from one race to another (were) always more severe” (Kitchener 1912, 60). At the same time, British women in India were seen to embody national honor, and British women who turned to prostitution were decried as “scandals to the nation” and often punished or sent home (Kincaid 1973, 43, 44; Levine 2003). Stephen Edwardes, police commissioner of Bombay from 1909 to 1917, declared that without European prostitutes, there would be increasing resort to Indian women, a possibility which “could not be regarded with impunity by those responsible for the general welfare of India” (Edwardes 1924/1983, 81). He explained that “the growth of European populations, and the government’s disapproval of liaisons with Indian women made authorities accept European brothels as a necessary evil. No direct steps were taken to curb it (sic)” (Edwardes 1923, 85).

European prostitutes in Bombay assumed the status of permanent outsiders, embodying a “lesser whiteness” than British subjects but an identity that was nonetheless superior to Indian prostitutes. Administrators symbolically distanced themselves from European prostitutes by highlighting the latter’s Jewish background. In his description of prostitution in colonial India, for instance, Edwardes repeatedly refers to “the preponderance of Jewesses in the brothels of Indian coast cities” and the “Jewish identity of procurers;” at a 1921 League of Nations conference on trafficking, he asked the representative of Jewish Associations why the latter’s “co-religionists” formed the “majority of the procurers and ‘fancy men’” who visited Bombay (Home Department 1922, 12). The actual religious or ethnic identity of European prostitutes in Bombay is perhaps less important than the official insistence that it was “less white” because it was Jewish or Eastern European. Despite the presence of a local Sephardic community, officials in Bombay drew on the British ideology of Jews as “foreigners” (Edwardes, 1924/1983, 77), heightened in Britain after the Russian pogroms (Marks 1996); in doing so, they simultaneously configured themselves as a legitimate, settled population.

Although European prostitutes’ intermediate racial stratum and outsider status provided a neat resolution of political imperatives, the women had a volatile social presence that required regular police attention. They lived principally in Kamathipura, originally settled by sweepers and construction workers, where their brothels were so conspicuous that a principal street, Cursetji Sukhlaji Street, was known as *safed galli* (white lane) (Edwardes 1923, 85-89).⁶ Although there were brothels with Indian prostitutes in Kamathipura, the presence of European prostitutes troubled Indian neighbors considerably. Residents of Kamathipura sent petitions to the police to have the women removed from the area, drawing striking contrasts between Indian and European prostitutes. One set of petitioners who called themselves a group of “respectable poor” stated that while native prostitutes were “very little nuisance,” European prostitutes

created annoyances the likes of which they “had never witnessed in their lifetime” (General Department 1888a, 29). Middle class Indian residents of other neighborhoods of the city also petitioned the police to drive European women back into Kamathipura, when they set up shop elsewhere (General Department 1887; General Department 1888c). These frank expressions of dismay, marked by hostility for British rule and a nationalist invocation of local female honor, also indicate that Indian residents understood the outsider and subordinate status the state assigned to European prostitutes. Indian residents questioned the continuing official tolerance of such women and their “disorderly” clientele without fear of retribution; unlike respectable Englishwomen, European prostitutes were fair game. The state responded to these pressures by insistently “herd[ing] together” European prostitutes in Kamathipura where surveillance could be focused and disruption to middle class residents was minimal; police stayed informed of new arrivals and deported prostitutes “guilty of misbehavior” (Edwardes 1924, 80; Home Department 1920, Police-A, No. 24-29).

Surveillance of prostitutes was a feature of state regulation set up under the Contagious Diseases Acts in various colonies, but the level of precision in archival information about European prostitutes in Bombay is striking. While Indian constables, who were primarily Marathi-speaking immigrant recruits from neighboring regions, rarely interacted with European brothel workers, the officers above inspector grade, who were usually British,⁷ took an intense interest in the European prostitutes of Kamathipura. They considered themselves privy to the goings-on in European brothels, detailing the numbers, nationalities and even names of European women (Edwardes 1924, 80). Police ranked European brothels into three tiers according to how well conducted they were: the first class consisted solely of European women living in private houses; the second, of women who solicited in streets; and the third, of women who were grouped along with Japanese and Baghdadi women in Kamathipura (Home Department 1920; Edwardes 1924, 80). Indian women figure implicitly as the bottom rung in this hierarchy, although they are not named as such.

Even though the number of European prostitutes was regularly reported to be around 100, far smaller than the estimated 1,500 to 15,000 Indian prostitutes,⁸ European prostitutes were prominently featured in annual and national reports, and even in books the police wrote (Edwardes 1923; 1924; Shuttleworth 1920). Police commissioners showed familiarity with the names of European brothel workers: in 1930, the commissioner uncovered a case of visa fraud involving a French prostitute who altered her name to re-enter India-- he recalled that the name “Indree Fiscari” was similar to the “Andree Fiscari” who had left Bombay in 1928 (Home Department 1930, 4). A Romanian woman was denied permission to visit Bombay in 1928 because the commissioner knew her to be a prostitute (Home Department 1928, 18).

Indian brothel workers, in contrast, received far less police attention: their stories rarely made it to the police commissioner’s summary letters in annual anti-trafficking reports, and the circumstances explaining their entry into prostitution were rarely elaborated in anti-trafficking report tables. Unlike European subjects, Indian brothel workers often appear in the records as unnamed “women.” Unlike European brothel workers, Indian brothel workers were far more dispersed across the city, and met with less public revulsion. There were no furious debates between police and residents over where to locate Indian prostitutes. The census figures for both 1864 and 1871 show high

concentrations of prostitutes in parts of Bombay other than Kamathipura, and notably in neighborhoods populated by working class Indians, such as Market, Oomburkheree, Phunuswaree and Girgaon.⁹ Census figures for 1901 and 1921 also indicate that there were areas other than Kamathipura such as Khetwadi, Phunuswaree, Girgaon and Tardeo, also working class areas, in which larger numbers of prostitutes lived.¹⁰ Yet none of these other areas were defined as red light zones. Kamathipura was not the only area with a concentration of prostitutes, but it was significantly the area where European prostitutes first resided, and then were allocated. On the strength of this European dimension, Kamathipura was termed the “prostitutes’ zone” by the administration (Home Department 1920, Police-A). A 1917 guide to the street names of Bombay noted: “Kamathipura is commonly used to denote the prostitutes’ quarter...” (Sheppard 1917, 84). In other words, prostitution in other parts of the city was literally invisible to official eyes. When police reports referred to brothels, most often they implicitly meant European brothels. It is in this sense, then, that the term subaltern most clearly fits urban Indian prostitutes. Although European prostitutes were generally viewed with contempt by both Indian and British communities, their presence and voices were nonetheless accessible in some form in official histories.

Police files provide chillingly rich detail about European prostitutes, indicating the zeal in targeting this population. The Favel case, referred to at the start of this paper demonstrates the extent of police surveillance over this group (Judicial Department Proceedings 1917, 195-203). The statements made before the police by Favel’s accomplice, five brothel mistresses, and a brothel client create a picture of a quotidian relationship between the police and European brothel mistresses, in which policemen visited brothels, oversaw the arrival on ships of new brothel workers, and sometimes even owned shares of brothels. Police surveillance not only hung over brothels, but followed European brothel workers’ movements. Women who wished to leave Kamathipura and reside in other parts of the city had to seek police permission. Even making public appearances at the horse races involved bribing Favel, explains one brothel mistress, Mlle. Margot. Rather than facilitating women’s escape from brothels, Favel refused to relinquish his authority: when a man named Meyer tried to “rescue” brothel worker Mary Fooks, Favel forced him to purchase brothel shares, sell him a horse carriage, and even throw him a picnic, in exchange for “keeping” Fooks as a mistress (Judicial Department Proceedings 1917, 99-100).

While this inquiry reveals a particularly egregious web of extortion, Inspector Favel was not alone in such activities. Other archived files corroborate the involvement of police superiors in regulating the sex trade. A 1926 letter from the police commissioner of Bombay to the Home Department relates matter-of-factly that a brothel mistress brought three newly-arrived prostitutes from Cairo to the police for registration, and that the deputy commissioner “raised no objection to their going to the brothel” (Home Department 1925, 89). Even in an abolitionist era when procuring women for brothels was illegal (under the 1923 Bombay Prostitution Act), and at a time when the police were heeding international anti-trafficking conventions, they continued to have working relationships with European procurers and brothel mistresses. I turn now to examine how police negotiated such contradictions.

Part 2. Police Responses to Anti-Trafficking Conventions

The discourse of trafficking set up a prototypical victim: the needy young girl who was enticed away by promises of respectable work, adventure or marriage. The victims were typically portrayed as being younger than twenty, naïvely trustful of strangers, and of peasant or small town origins (Roe 1911, 105). In various ways, police declared European prostitutes in Bombay to be unworthy trafficking victims because they did not conform to this type. A 1920 national report on prostitution in Indian cities declared that all the foreign prostitutes in Bombay “were prostitutes in their own countries... long before their arrival in India, and if any of them were victims of the ‘White Slave’ traffic, they have been so victimized long before their arrival in India. The ‘White Slave’ traffic as known in Europe is non-existent in India” (Home Department 1920, 24-29). In 1932 the police reported to the League of Nations that “if a girl comes to Bombay who has already been seduced or been a prostitute then we leave her alone...no European woman had been allowed to stay as a brothel inmate during the last years who was not already, on her arrival, a prostitute” (Home Department 1932, 17). According to S.M. Edwardes, European prostitutes entered the “profession” of their own free will, after serving an “apprenticeship” in Europe, Constantinople or Egypt; they were “fallen women” whose “weak morals” and “carelessness with money” had led them into vice (Edwardes 1924/1983, 77, 79).

The relative material security of European prostitutes helped Bombay’s police cast them as exceptions to the discourse of trafficking. In the course of the Favel inquiry, European brothel mistresses related that they had all been able to save enough money to buy “half shares” of brothels (Judicial Department Proceedings 1917, 99-102). They all declared that they had arrived in Bombay as brothel “girls” and worked as prostitutes from three to nine years before they went on to run brothels.¹¹ It is not clear how much money brothel workers charged per customer; however, if we compare the earnings of Indian women in Akootai’s brothel in 1917-- 3-4 *annas* (half a rupee) per customer-- it is obvious that European brothel workers earned considerably larger amounts of money per customer, to be able to save amounts as large as 7,000 rupees.¹² European brothels were profitable corporate entities; their value rose over time, as in the case of 392 Falkland Rd, whose half-share value rose from 7000 rupees in 1909 to 11,500 rupees in 1917 (Home Department 1917, 102). Another indication of brothel workers’ material circumstances is the description in the 1925 police anti-trafficking submission of a French brothel worker who traveled to France to bring back her sister to “join her” in Bombay; she must have been content enough with her circumstances to travel back and forth to draw her “sister” in (Home Department 1926, 85).

The records of local social work organizations such as the Bombay Vigilance Association, and Christian missionary groups such as the League of Mercy and the Salvation Army present a more alarmist picture of European prostitution than that of the police. These groups took a close interest in monitoring trafficking, and placed a quasi-competitive pressure on the police. Salvation Army officers, by their own account, visited brothels on *safed galli* “once a week” seeking rescue cases (Indian Social Reformer 1921b, 140). The League of Mercy, run by British subjects, exclusively sought out and repatriated European brothel workers independently of the police; the group hired a “rescue worker” trained in England for this purpose (Indian Social Reformer 1922, 5). In

1923 for instance, the League of Mercy returned seven girls and two children “to England;” a mother and two children “to Africa;” two girls “to Ceylon” (Home Department 1924, 15). In the same year, the police report only mentioned the deporting to Russia and Poland of two women who had been practicing prostitution. In 1927, the League of Mercy repatriated to Czechoslovakia a girl “found living with a Parsee...in a diseased condition,” while the police report for that year mentioned no repatriations (Home Department 1928, 53). The League of Mercy’s higher repatriation figures were driven by a code of female honor that suspected women who traveled alone: in 1926, among the several English girls the group sent back was one who had simply arrived in Bombay “to marry a man she had never seen” (Home Department 1927, 69). Directed by stringent notions of “moral hygiene” that drew on Victorian, Christian and brahminical ideologies, these organizations revealed gaps in police responses (Whitehead 1998).

Bombay police muted the competing voices of social purity organizations by strictly defining the parameters of the term “trafficking.” They held to a very literal understanding of the 1910 anti-trafficking convention, declaring that trafficking involved a third party transporting the victim across state borders to a brothel or client. In cases brought forward by social workers, they very often declared that third parties were absent. This understanding of trafficking enabled Bombay’s police to minimize the scale of the social problem that they were called upon to monitor.

Most importantly, the limited understanding of trafficking allowed the police to overlook trafficking between Indian provinces. Census figures from 1921 reveal that the majority of Indian brothel workers in Bombay were not born in that city (Government of India 1921). Of the 2995 reported female prostitutes, only 460 listed their birth district as being Bombay. The others hailed from regions such as Deccan, Ratnagiri and Goa to the south; Hyderabad state to the east; and Delhi, Punjab and Kashmir to the north. 25 women listed Jodhpur as their birthplace, which suggests “organized procuring” from there (Indian Social Reformer 1922, 7).

In many ways, Akootai, the murder victim in the case I mentioned at the start, was a prototypical trafficking victim. According to her cousin’s testimony, she was brought to Bombay from Kolhapur, where her husband lived. She was also living in bondage: all her earnings were confiscated by the woman who supervised the inmates, and the free board and clothes and ornaments was all she received.¹³ Others around her worked under the same conditions: if their earnings were insufficient, they were beaten with rods, a curry stone, an iron nail, or sticks.¹⁴ They were locked in barred rooms on the ground floor of a building, where they received customers both day and night. When they slept, it would be five to a room and under lock and key; they were even accompanied to the toilet. Yet nowhere in the official and journalistic descriptions of the case, was the term “trafficking” used to describe this case.

The annual reports of the Bombay Vigilance Association, a committee of prominent Indian and English reformists, give a fuller picture than the police of movement between Indian provinces. The reports state that in 1927, 54 girls or women were trafficked from other parts of India into Bombay; in 1928, 65 similar cases emerged (Home Department 1928; Home Department 1929). However, in the introduction to the League of Nations submissions for those years, the police commissioner argues that this information was not worthy of reporting to the League of Nations because the cases were “found not to fall under Articles 1 and 2 of the 1910 Convention,” which emphasized

cross-border movement (Home Department 1928, 47; Home Department 1929, 47; Home Department 1929, 61). Bombay police thus not only refused to attend closely to trafficking between Indian provinces, but even refused to classify the phenomenon as trafficking.

The Bombay Vigilance Association's records indicate that many Indian girls and women were lured to brothel work in Bombay by deception: its 1929 report mentions false promises of work made to girls, particularly jobs as mill-workers and ayahs (nannies), and its 1927 annual report explains that women who call themselves "employment agents" often procured girls for brothels (Home Department 1929, 47-49; Home Department 1927, 102-103). In the questionnaire the police submitted in those and other years to the League of Nations, however, they left blank sections on "employment agencies," declaring that "no such agencies have come to light" (Home Department 1927, 51; Home Department 1929, 87; Home Department 1930, 65).

Since the discourse of trafficking focused on third parties who shipped women across national borders, police attention centered on the figure of the foreign pimp. The "extraditions" and "repatriation and deportations" sections of the annual police reports to the League of Nations are peppered with voyeuristic details about pimps. The arrest of Luciano la Rosa, labeled a "well-known international pimp" by the police, is described carefully right down to the "obscene photographs" of a "semi-nude" woman found in his possession (Home Department, 1927, 31). In another case, the police followed a man newly arrived from France who described himself as a photographer, but who two days later, "took his wife to a brothel." The police arrested the man, but the French consul intervened and urged his release (Home Department 1925, 7).

Under pressure to demonstrate that they were complying with the League of Nations conventions, but unable to come up with examples of deportations every year, Bombay police turned to reporting cases of "suspicious aliens." In the 1928 report, they explain with excitement that they coordinated with police in Marseilles, France, to monitor the movements of four French women who had set sail for Bombay. The women ultimately avoided coming to Bombay, but this fact did not stop the police from reporting the case to the League of Nations. Similarly, in 1929, Bombay police communicated with the British passport control officer in Paris to deny permission to Gaston Guillon and Marie Amandine Poinet to arrive in Bombay. This pair claimed to have been in the hairdressing business in Brazil for fifteen years before they set sail for India via France, and Bombay's police were convinced that personal grooming establishments such as "massage" and "manicure" services were often a cover for "disreputable businesses" (Home Department 1929, 11-12). Occasionally, the police deported foreign prostitutes as a token measure. As with the deporting of pimps, the more distant the origins of the women, the better the police felt they were doing their jobs. The police deported a Polish woman "who had been practicing prostitution in Singapore and Penang." In addition, a Russian woman who admitted to carrying on prostitution in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Japan since 1918 was also forced to leave the city. The police related the previous history of the women with fanfare as if indicative of their own competence (Home Department 1926, 85).

On the whole, Bombay's police were quick to dissociate the prostitution they encountered from the one decried in the metropole. Their legalistic approach to the discourse of trafficking enabled convenient emphases and omissions. Their insistence

that European prostitutes were not victims of trafficking sustained the racially-stratified sexual order that they oversaw in the city. Any possible relevance of anti-trafficking conventions to local European prostitutes, whose outsider status served a useful purpose, was discounted. The language of trafficking also expanded the possibilities for corruption, as police could use the threat of deportation to extract money from European brothel workers and pimps. Most importantly, their interpretation of the international conventions seriously underplayed trafficking within the subcontinent. For the colonial subalterns who might have benefited from some form of anti-trafficking policing, the available law was simply beyond reach, because they remained below the threshold of official vision.

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Abbreviations

OIOC: Oriental and India Office Collections, British Library, London.

MSA: Maharashtra State Archives, Mumbai.

NAI: National Archives of India, New Delhi.

UP: University of Pennsylvania Library, Philadelphia.

UI: University of Illinois- Urbana Library, Urbana-Champaign.

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NOTES

¹ See Oxford English Dictionary 1933, 2092-2093.

² These sources are drawn from archival research conducted in Mumbai, New Delhi, London, Washington DC and Philadelphia between 1999 and 2002

³ At the turn of the 20th century, Bombay was reported to have the largest number of European prostitutes in the country--126 in 1912, in comparison with the reported 50 in Calcutta, 2 in Madras and 6 in Karachi (Home Department Judicial A 1913, 221).

⁴ There were about 9,000 Europeans (5,000 of whom were male) in Bombay, but around 4,000 in Calcutta and 3,000 in Madras in 1932 (Home Department 1932, 25).

⁵ These specific countries are identifiable through several means: census tables (Government of India 1921) and CDA enforcement reports (1880-1887) listed birthplaces in Europe; a petition to the police by a Kamathipura landlord mentioned German and Italian women tenants (General Department 1888b, 227-229); the last names Kamathipura petitioners resisting dispersal by the police --Polsky, Lukatsky, Puritz, Prevenzano, Greenberg, Erlich, Felman, Stern- suggest Polish, Russian, Italian, and German origins (General Department 1887, 376). These countries correspond to Hyam's (1990, 144) map of the circuits of traffickers, which indicates that women from Russia, Poland, Austria, France and Germany moved, or were moved, to Asia and South America. Many "sending" countries were sites of state-regulated prostitution: France had in place a system of regulated brothels, which made it an easier recruiting ground, while the Russian Czarist state issued prostitutes a "yellow card" in place of a passport, which allowed for their easy identification by recruiters (Carter, 1945).

⁶ Apart from Eastern Europeans, Kamathipura also had a distinct Japanese brothel colony, visited by local Japanese residents --generally numbering around 1000-- and itinerant Japanese sailors. The Japanese Consulate looked upon this set of women benignly, reporting that many of them "enjoy(ed) rather happy and comfortable private lives and even devot(ed) their spare time to mental and physical development" (Home Department Judicial 1932,16). This

brothels drew far less official attention than European ones presumably because their clientele differed.

⁷ See Chandavarkar (1998) on the racial composition of Bombay's police force.

⁸ During the enforcement of the CDA from 1870-1872 and 1880-1888, the number of registered European prostitutes never rose above 75, as compared with the average 1500 registered Indian prostitutes (Government of Bombay 1880-1888). In 1912, the number of European prostitutes in Bombay was pegged at 126 (Home Department Judicial A 1913); at the end of World War 1 in 1920, it had declined to 67, a tiny fraction of the 15,000 Indian women estimated by the police (Home Department 1920).

⁹ The spellings used here are consistent with the sources; the names have changed since colonial times.

¹⁰ See Tambe (2000, 137-140) for a detailed look at Kamathipura's changing significance relative to other parts of the city, between 1864 and 1921. In 1921, for instance, there were 779 reported prostitutes in Khetwaree as compared to 896 in Kamathipura. Yet Khetwaree was not described as a red light area.

¹¹ The average half share cost anywhere from 7000 to 10,000 rupees in 1908 (Home Department 1917, 102). It is hard to gauge the purchasing power of such sums, but the manuscripts also mention other sales which give insight into the rupee's strength: a summer rental for a bungalow in Poona came to 1500 rupees and a Victoria (tonga to be driven by a horse) bought from England could be sold for 1500 rupees (Judicial Department Proceedings 1917, 100).

¹² See the testimony of Phooli, Moti and Paru, (Home Department 1917) which relate the amounts earned per customer in a Kamathipura brothel.

¹³ Phooli relates that "Accused 1 (Mirza) used to buy them for us because there was no one else who could buy them for us." HD 1917 Police-A, December 128-130.

¹⁴ See testimony of Phooli, Moti and Paru, HD 1917 Police-A, December 128-130.