

of streetwalkers, led to a popular opposition to the law as well as the mobilization of conservative and Catholic politicians who demanded the return to criminalization of prostitution. Yet, representatives of the Lutheran church and various women's associations, though disagreeing with the existence of prostitution for moral reasons, opposed its total criminalization for fear of a renaissance of state-controlled brothels.

The controversies surrounding social and welfare reforms came to an abrupt end with the demise of the Weimar Republic. The intense economic and social crisis of the late 1920s resulted in a coup against Prussia's Social Democratic government in July 1932 and the installation of Fritz von Papen as *Reichskommissar* ("Papen Putsch"), thereby bringing to power the most prominent opponents of the Weimar social welfare experiment. The conservative backlash against the 1927 reform was then used by Adolf Hitler to advance his own political agenda. Nazi propaganda continually blamed Weimar's Social Democrat government for its inability to maintain law and order and its failure to combat immorality. After the National Socialist triumph in 1933, many Weimar achievements were abolished, resulting, for example, in the ban of street soliciting and the reestablishment of state-regulated brothels in Nazi Germany.

See also Criminalization of Clients.

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Antonia Levy

WEST AFRICA. In West Africa, women are involved in four main types of prostitution: rural or village prostitution, junction town or truck park prostitution, urban or city prostitution, and international prostitution. The prostitute often lives a nomadic existence—moving from place to place to earn a living. She can be described as "running with the wind"—an apt Guinean expression for prostitutes, which captures the West African sex worker's tendency to migrate from rural to urban areas and when feasible, across the seas, in search of "the good life." This propensity to "run with the wind" is captured on a Benin City, Nigeria, billboard in the following way: "Have you been offered a trip abroad? Be careful. Don't throw your future away"—this challenge written in sharp admonition of the young Edo (Nigerian) woman who might otherwise be snared by the lures of international prostitution.

Rural or Village Prostitution

There are essentially two types of rural or village prostitutes in West Africa. The first operates within the bounds of her rural village, servicing her clientele from the comforts of her home. This kind of prostitute can be found tucked away in rural West African villages as far east as Nigeria and Benin and west as Ivory Coast and Senegal. She often sets up business in her primary residence, providing her male customers with services that range from sex to conversation to food. Sometimes, prostitutes form long-term reciprocal relationships with their clients, and other encounters are short-term and casual. The rural West African prostitute controls her own

affairs and as such never answers to a male or female pimp or madam. She is in total control of her body and decides when, where, and how much. Payment is often made in money or in kind. In most parts of rural West Africa, the village prostitute is considered a vital member of her community and is believed to perform services that are deemed useful to that community. She is therefore often viewed with a degree of deference.

The second type of rural prostitute in West Africa lives as a *nomada* (nomad), journeying from her rural village to the major population centers and busy crossroads in search of work. Prostitutes from the Guinea-Bissau village of Caio regularly move eastward to the capital city of Bissau or settle in the northern city of Ziguinchor, and some of them work as far north as Banjul, Casamance, and Dakar, Senegal. In Ghana, most prostitutes are also rural/urban migrants. These girls and women go as far as Abidjan, Pikine-Dakar, and Brazzaville to trade sex for money.

Junction-Town or Truck-Park Prostitution

Junction-town prostitutes are sex workers who work on and along major West African highways. These sex workers either work full-time or part-time. The school-age girls among them often supply sex to fund their education. These young junction-town prostitutes get more action because of the truck drivers' misconceived ideas that HIV is more prevalent among populations 20 years and older.

Trucks parks—truck stops situated in junction towns where drivers can spend the night—are often adjacent to West African day-and-night markets. Itinerant female hawkers and solitary market women are known to offer sexual services to these drivers. Prostitution tends to be most prevalent in major junction towns of transport commerce, such as the Nigerian towns of Lagos, Ibadan, Calabar, and Maiduguri.

West African long-distance truck drivers stop for the night in designated areas—usually where the road widens or where they can park off the road. They then frequent popular roadside eating houses and bars called "Mama Puts," as well as other buildings that serve as places to sleep and find sexual partners. Sexual activity between drivers and prostitutes is often high, not because the men earn substantial salaries as drivers, but because many of them perform additional services on the side for which they are handsomely remunerated.

The young sex workers who service these drivers live for the most part in shantytowns near these stops. Truck drivers who work the same route for long periods cultivate relationships with these junction-town or truck-park prostitutes much like in the rural areas where the sex workers provide home-cooked meals, familiar surroundings, friendships, conversation, and sex. Many of these relationships thus established become long-term.

Urban or City Prostitution

The vast majority of city or urban prostitutes in West Africa come from elsewhere. In the Ivory Coast, for instance, most city prostitutes come from Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, Mali, Senegal, and other West African states. In Bamako, Mali, there is noticeable flux of young students from various parts of West Africa between July and August; these students spend their summer vacation working as prostitutes and then return home when school resumes in September.

There are many types of urban or city prostitutes in West Africa. In the Ivory Coast, the women in one group of prostitutes are known as "Dioula women" or "women of Dyaro-Mouso." Malian (mainly Bambara and Peul) in origin, these are usually young girls who after brief stints as prostitutes become vendors in the local markets. Another category of prostitutes is the

"Karona women." These Zerma or Hausa prostitutes are mainly divorced women from Niger. A third group are the "Westernized or évolue prostitutes." These sex workers, mainly operating in French West Africa, hang out at bars and dance halls and service European and African clientele. "Toutou" prostitutes can be found all over West Africa. Originating primarily from British West Africa, they belong chiefly to the following ethnic groups: the Fante and Asante of Ghana; the Ewe of Ghana, Togo, and Benin; and the Igbo, Ijaws, and Calabaris of Nigeria. The name "Toutou" derives from "2 shillings, 2 pence," and the women are so called because they charge low rates for sex. In Côte d'Ivoire, Toutou prostitutes have no general quarters and are mainly street prostitutes who cluster on the side streets of main avenues. This migratory pattern also lends credence to the other name by which they are known—"Walk About Women." In Accra, Ghana, they live in a separate red light area and position themselves on their respective doorsteps in clear view of potential clients. When engaged, they lower a curtain in front of their doorways. An Accra Toutou may visit a client in his own home and spend the night with him there, but it would be rare for an Ivory Coast Toutou to do so. Nigerian "Toutous" en route to Abidjan make an initial stop in Ghana, where they offer sex for money on the major city streets. The "Karvas or Karuwai" prostitutes are I Hausa, Fulani, and Zerma (Nigeria), and they rent small houses in the *zongo* (strangers') quarters of the respective West African city to which they migrate. Their clients visit them for up to a week to talk, play music, and have sex. The city name for the modern-day Igbo prostitute is *akwumakwuna* or *okada*—the ubiquitous motorcycle that has taken the place of taxi cabs in Nigeria.

The urban prostitutes who frequent the hotels and bars are known as "door knockers" in Nigeria. They are so called because they frequent four- and five-star hotels, knocking on the doors of potential clients. Door knockers often stay the length of their client's stop in the hotel, serving their sexual needs. In Lagos, Nigeria, high-price prostitutes work along the busy Allen Avenue in Ikeja. In a country where traditional religion and beliefs still hold sway, traditional medicines are said to be used by these prostitutes to procure clients.

Many city prostitutes in West Africa have organized associations that protect their interests as commercial sex workers. One such organization is The Nigerian Union of Prostitutes. In the Ivory Coast, city prostitutes have organized a number of large, highly formalized associations that are founded along ethnic lines. Each association is headed by a president, who is in turn aided by several elected officers. These officers are older prostitutes who are deemed wiser and are therefore trusted. They look after the interests of their group and act as spokeswomen for their members, especially in dialogues with the often-antagonistic police.

International Prostitution

There have been two types of international prostitution in West Africa. The first, which was especially common during the early days of independence in the 1960s, involved the importation of European prostitutes into French West Africa for sex. In the Ivory Coast, 90 percent of these European prostitutes lived in the capital city, Abidjan. These European prostitutes were predominantly barmaids attached to one of the city's numerous nightclubs or bars. Most of them were between the ages of 25 and 40. Generally from Paris or Marseille, these prostitutes were sent from France to Africa expressly for the purpose of becoming sex workers. Like their African counterparts, they moved around quite a bit. They rarely spent more than six months in a particular bar and would often spend two to three years in one French West African country and then move to another. European prostitutes charged high fees. Consequently they were frequented mainly by fellow Europeans and a select group of Africans who could

afford their services. In the late 1960s Ivory Coast's European prostitutes charged an average of 6,000 African francs (CFA) (\$24) and as much as 10,000 francs (\$40) per visit. They were said to make between 250,000 and 300,000 francs (\$1,000–\$1,200) per month, but were obliged to pay a per-client "air-conditioning" commission of 1,000 francs (\$4) to the proprietor of the bar in which they were stationed. Many European prostitutes were able to make enough money to return to France at the end of their three-year prostitution stints.

The influx of West African prostitutes into Europe is a more recent phenomenon. For nearly 20 years, women from Benin City, Nigeria, as well as from other West African cities, have been going to Italy and other European countries (e.g., Spain, Denmark, Germany, Holland) to work as sex workers. Called "Italos," many of these women are single, but some are married and seek work abroad with the blessings of their husbands. They build lavish homes in their hometowns, sink private boreholes to supply water, and buy four-wheel-drive luxury cars that they drive on the oftentimes unpaved West African country roads. The Italos often seem to be engaged in a never-ending cycle, as successful prostitutes recruit younger ones to join them in Europe. These younger recruits are encouraged by the success stories of the Italos before them who have purchased expensive cars and built mansions and estates for their families. The popular Nigerian singer, Ohenhen, in a hit song played the country over, recently celebrated the enormous wealth of a prominent Italo called Dupay who was said to sponsor younger women to follow her lucrative example. This apparent adulation of the international West African prostitute is not limited to the music world. The Nigerian Film Industry, Nollywood, seems also to have put a positive spin on prostitution in Nigeria and abroad. A number of popular low-cost videos that glorify prostitution have saturated the market. One such film, *Glamour Girls*, appeared in two volumes.

Many factors influence the young West African woman's decision to become a prostitute, but the most prevalent by far is the fact that prostitution is lucrative. In situations in which West African currencies have been devaluated by more than 800 percent, in which countries have been broken down by corruption, and in which still other countries have been ravaged by war, it is not surprising that young West African women take what appears to be the easy way out. When these West African girls come of age, they think only of survival—of how to put food on the table—and to many of these young women, survival in what has become a dry and unforgiving land often involves trading sexual favors for money. With limited education, West African prostitutes earn much more money than they ordinarily would in other modes of "legitimate" commerce. They are moved to enter prostitution because they see sex work as a temporary vice—a period of intense saving—that will allow many to marry and will allow still others to engage in "lawful" business.

See also Migration and Mobility; Unions.

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Nwanda Achebe

WESTERN EUROPE. Prostitution in Western Europe is documented in Ancient Greece, with kept women or brothel slaves known as *hetairae*, *porne*, and *auletrides*. The city of Pompeii offers the most relics of prostitution in Ancient Rome, when freeborn Romans were prohibited from marrying prostitutes and pimps. Laws from the 11th to 14th centuries document the state's approach to prostitution in the Medieval Era, including widespread regulation and taxation of brothels. Sumpuary laws regulating prostitutes' clothing indicated both what clines were worn to mark a woman a prostitute, such as a particular color scarf, and what she could not wear, usually expensive materials such as silk and fur that might be deemed above her status. Magdalen homes and orders were first established by a directive approved by the church in 1227.

Renaissance prostitutes faced harsher treatment than their predecessors as prostitution was gradually criminalized in much of Europe. This shift seems to have coincided with a growing prevalence of independent, unregulated prostitution, which rendered the municipal houses unprofitable, and brothels were closed in many cities. Religious fervor was not limited to the Catholic Renaissance. The Protestant Reformation promoted procreative sex and condemned recreational sex, especially sex with prostitutes.

Syphilis was first recorded in Europe in the late 15th century, and prostitutes were scapegoated for its spread. The Contagious Diseases Acts (CDA) in Britain in the 1860s stipulated that women suspected of prostitution be examined and held in a locked hospital if they showed symptoms of sexually transmitted infections. Victorian-era abolitionists including Josephine Butler, William Coote, and William Stead sought to eliminate prostitution, white slavery, and trafficking as well as to repeal the CDA.

Sex work in contemporary Western Europe takes many forms. In most places, sex work is not illegal; however, ancillary activities, such as managing the sex business of another, are generally criminalized. In Sweden, only the male buyer, and not the female prostitute, is committing a crime. Street-based prostitution is found almost everywhere, with supervised *tippelzones* in the Netherlands.

The low countries—the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg—are known for prostitutes working in the windows. The windows are essentially shop fronts for prostitution: women stand in the window of a small room facing the street, clients negotiate at the door and then the curtains are drawn while services are provided.

Brothels were widely closed after the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, which addressed only prostitution (as opposed to trafficking for work in other fields) and more specifically, living off the earnings of a prostitute. This meant that in Italy and France, the only legal venue for prostitution was the street, until the Sarkozy laws passed in France in 2002 made soliciting a crime. The Netherlands has allowed brothels to reopen in 2000. In Germany, large "Eros Centers" are state-supervised venues in which services including prostitution and sadomasochism are provided.

Despite the fact that anti-pimping laws prohibit them, escort agencies persist and, in Denmark, may even be patronized at government expense to secure sexual services for the elderly or disabled.

The International Union of Sex Workers is based in London and is affiliated with Britain's largest general union. Sex workers in Europe held a summit, attended by 120 people, in October 2005, echoing the original World Whores Congress held in 1985 during which the International Charter for Prostitutes' Rights was written.

See also Amsterdam; Appendix item 14; Hapsburg Empire; Medieval Prostitution; Syphilis; Unions; Window Prostitution.

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Melissa Hope Ditmore

WESTWARD EXPANSION. In the 19th century, prostitutes were frequently among the first civilians to settle an area in the American West after the army arrived. They also had close relationships with military personnel and law enforcement officials and contributed to town coffers through fines and licenses (though often unwillingly). Towns that grew by catering to the needs and desires of soldiers stationed at frontier posts often gained a reputation as dangerous centers of debauchery. During the 19th century, prostitution in the West offered a form of employment in a society in which many job opportunities were closed to women. With clerk and secretarial positions in the West dominated by men, women had very few options for earning a living. Although prostitution sometimes seemed to be the only answer in a dire economic situation, by making that choice, many of these women became trapped in a lifetime of dwindling economic prospects in light of the retrogressive dynamic of prostitution and possible exposure to dreadful and (at the time) incurable venereal infections.

Most full-time prostitutes on the frontier found themselves placed in one of four categories within the occupation. These categories included brothel dwellers, saloon or dance hall girls, crib women, and streetwalkers. The earning potential was highest with brothel dwellers (as were economic liabilities), and earning potential descended in the order the categories were previously listed. Brothel girls were usually younger, more attractive, and able to demand higher prices for their services. Likewise, renting a room in a brothel was quite expensive. Although a building rented for legitimate purposes could \$25, the same building as a brothel could be rented out for nearly \$200 a month. As brothel workers got older, they either became dance hall girls or rented cribs (small shacks in which the prostitutes lived and saw clients). These were steps down and also reduced the earning potential and living conditions of the women. The lowest step on the ladder was that of the streetwalker. Frequently these women did not earn enough to rent a crib and usually depended on clients to provide shelter for the night or squatted in an abandoned building.

Career prostitutes in the American West usually began working as early as age 15 and were often forced into "retirement" by age 30 because of younger competition. Some former prostitutes then began managing younger women in brothels, operating saloons, or working as abortionists. Prostitutes sometimes had their children living with them, and often, daughters followed in their mothers' footsteps. The presence of the industry and lack of education and marketable skills frequently left these young women with little hope for a different life.