SUN, SEA, SEX AND SWEDES.

A STUDY OF CAMPAIGNS TO PREVENT SEX TOURISM IN NATAL/BRAZIL AND STOCKHOLM/SWEDEN.

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1. Introduction

Vill du lära dej min samba
under månen, på stranden?
Jag kan vissla melodien,
med två snäckskal slår jag takten.
Och om du har lust att älska
har vi hamnat på rätt ställe.
Det är förbjudet - jovisst,
men hotell är så väldigt trist.
Dansa samba med mig!1

Hoje eu vou sambar na pista,
você vai de galeria
Quero que você assista
na mais fina companhia
Se você sentir saudade,
por favor não dê na vista
Bate palmas com vontade,
 faz de conta que é turista
Hoje o samba saiu procurando você.2

Two different versions of the same song. Cornelis Vreeswijk – one of the most famous Swedish Sing and Songwriters,3 well known for his social awareness and his critique towards inequalities and injustice – wrote the text to the first one. In the late 60s he visited Brazil and fell in love with samba and bossa nova. Back from Brazil he brought, among other things, this version of Chico Buarque’s Quem te viu, quem te vê.4 However, something happened in the transformation of place and culture. Buarque’s low key tribute to the samba dancing Brazilian woman became in Vreeswijk’s version a tribute to the Brazilian prostitute. Vreeswijk describes the ultimate dream of the sex tourist – the free, poor but happy prostitute who sells her samba and her sexual services with a careless attitude on the beach of Copacabana.5 The tourist buying, as well as the listener to the song, is in the hands of Vreeswijk lead to believe that although selling sexual services, she is not a “real prostitute” since she does it for her own pleasure.

Most countries are attached to an image, not least so in the tourism business. Brazil perhaps more so than many others. Some eight years ago, I was sent from my native Sweden to Brazil to work. I had applied for a job in Nicaragua but the organisation I worked for did not consider my wish, and so decided that a job in Brazil was the right thing for me. I remember the feeling of ground trembling. Nicaragua I knew. Brazil, only by the things I had read, seen, heard. When I closed my eyes at night I saw violence, shanty towns and a wild and wet Amazon jungle. I saw street children being shot in

1 Lyrics: Cornelis Vreeswijk. Music: Chico Buarque. My translation: Do you want to learn my samba, below the moon on the beach? I can whistle the melody, with two shells I mark the beat. If you feel like making love, you are in the right place. Sure, it is prohibited, but hotels are so very boring. Dance the samba with me!
2 Lyrics and music: Chico Buarque. My translation: Today I will dance the samba on the streets, you will be my audience, I want you to watch me with great pleasure. If you feel loss, please don’t let it show. Clap your hands with ease, make believe you are a tourist. Today the samba is out looking for you. (Available at Youtube, retrieved September 30, 3007, from http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=a62maWloQHQ&mode=related&search).
3 Although born in the Netherlands.
4 Named Deidres samba in Vreeswijk’s version.
5 I will through out this paper use the work prostitution/prostitute instead of sex work/sex workers since it is the term most widely used in the literature and also the term most commonly used by the Brazilians I encountered during my field work.
hundreds by policemen. And I saw bare breasted samba-dancing dark skinned women. Of course, when I got there, Brazil was basically…: Like Sweden. Give and take a little.

During my three years in the state of Sergipe in North-East Brazil, I visited the coastal town of Natal a couple of times. This was in the early days of Swedish package tourism with destination Natal (in the first years of the 21st century). Today, Swedes are one of the largest tourist groups visiting Natal during high season. I was struck by the beautiful tourist beaches and the obvious sex trade going on, especially on the beach of Ponta Negra. The image of Ponta Negra, with its white male tourists and young Brazilian women, has since then been kept in the back of my mind, waiting to be attended to.

2. Research question and limitation of subject

This study is the result of a personal curiosity combined with feelings of disgust. Having these feelings is obviously not the ideal way to start an academic work on sex tourism. Therefore, it is important for me to state that although these issues are important to me, and unavoidable to ponder upon when discussing sex tourism, they cannot be the focus of my study. I am not a philosopher. Moral is much too complex for me to handle. Therefore, I leave the moral issues here and will not let this thesis be guided by them.

Instead, this study focuses on the work of two organisations dealing with the issue of child sex tourism in similar, yet in some regards quite different, ways. One being Ecpat in Sweden and the other being Resposta in Brazil. My question is: How is it possible that Sweden, that (some say self deludingly) prides itself of being a non-colonising country, in 2007 still sends its citizens to the South to buy sex? Without this practice being addressed in any serious way, nor in the media nor by authorities? Re-phrased into a workable research question: **What role can communication/advertisement play for the existence of sex tourism and what actions are carried out to prevent sex tourism in a host country as well as in a sending country?** Geographically, my fields of study are Stockholm/Sweden and Natal/Brazil.

Originally, I was interested in male sex tourism in general. Studies of female sex tourism are included in the theoretical chapter but not in my field study and analysis since a very small part of the sex tourism industry in Natal is formed by female tourists. Initially, neither did I wish to separate child sex tourism from adult sex tourism because studies show (see for instance O’Connell Davidson, 2005, Montgomery, 2001) that most

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6 Ecpat refers to its own name in capital letters (ECPAT) but for the sake of aesthetics as well as a sense of justice towards Resposta, I will refer to the entity as Ecpat in this study.
child sex tourism is not about paedophilia, but about adult men, living in a culture that worships young bodies, who buys sex from adolescent women whom they many times consider adults.\(^7\) After having studied academic works and the work carried out by the civil society, I realised that much attention was towards child sex tourism. This reality will be discussed further in the following chapters. Both Ecpat and Resposta are very clear and definite in their unwillingness to deal with adult sex tourism. Therefore, this thesis focuses on child sex tourism in the chapters dealing with the two NGOs.

This thesis is written primarily for a Swedish context and public. I do not make any claims to add to the Brazilian or international body of research or knowledge, other than the specific Swedish perspective and the specific experience in Natal.

3. Methods

3.1. Semi-structured interviews, literature review and participatory observation

I have mainly used the semi-structured qualitative interview as a method for obtaining information as well as personal experiences and thoughts on the subject. I have conducted semi-structured interviews with personnel from Ecpat Sweden, the travel companies Ving and Fritidsresor in Stockholm and from Resposta in Natal. I have also conducted two qualitative interviews with staff at Save the Children Sweden who were and to some degree still are involved with prevention of child sex tourism.\(^8\) I have analysed those interviews in relation to my research question and specifically to the overall interview questions, which I formulated prior to conducting the interviews. I have also compared the answers received in interviews with relevant documents.

I have attended one seminar at the Swedish Parliament arranged by some parliamentarians in co-operation with Ecpat Sweden and one workshop arranged by Resposta in Natal. I have analysed communication material, in-flight films and evaluations from Ecpat as well as available documents related to the subject from the Swedish travel agencies. I have also studied travel catalogues on primarily Natal. I have made a brief overview of other advertising material on Brazil produced by Brazilian governmental organisations as well as by travel agencies.

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\(^7\) The most common academic definition of a paedophile is a person who is mainly attracted to prepubescent children.

\(^8\) Ving and Fritidsresor are two of the leading travel companies selling package tours in Sweden and Scandinavia. Ecpat is an international organisation working against child sex tourism since the early 1990s. Resposta is a local NGO working against sex tourism in Natal since 2003. Save the Children Sweden is part of the International Save the Children Alliance, a child rights organisation working in about 120 countries.
During my field study in Natal (June-July 2007), I carried out participatory observation among the staff at Resposta and studied the archives of the NGO, containing reports, evaluations, documentation and quite a big amount of press clippings. Resposta also had quite an interesting little library with books and other material that I would not have managed to get my hands on should I not have physically been there.

During my time in Natal, I also conducted some basic observation on the beaches of Ponta Negra (where the busiest tourist business is today) and the Praia do Meio (where the first foreign tourism activities took place and which was abandoned by travel agencies and tourists partly because prostitution was getting too obvious). Apart from this, I conducted five short, structured interviews with personnel at hotels that had agreed to sign the Code of Conduct, Resposta’s main tool in their work to prevent child sex tourism.

I have carried out a few more interviews, among others with Marita Jonols Victorsson, one of two researchers at one of few Swedish governmentally initiated studies on the phenomenon of sex tourists. The Internet has been a valuable yet distracting instrument in my search for information, primarily in the initial phase of the research.

I have also carried out extensive literature studies on the subject (see below discussion on the most important academic work).

3.2. Contemplating my own presence
There are of course implications in every study due to the fact that the researcher is a certain person and the one making the questions and analysing the results. Even more so, when the subject is sensitive and loaded with ethical and moral issues. The fact that I am a representative of a country from which inhabitants become tourists in Brazil may have influenced the answers I received from my interviewees in Natal, as well as the information I had access to. I would probably have had a different story to tell had I been born in Natal. But then again, I would probably have had a different story as a Natal-born upper class white male as opposed to a Natal-born working class black female. I personally think sheer personality also affects the result of interviews and field work. This is important to remember and be aware of. During my research I have tried to

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overcome the limitations brought by the fact that I am who I am. It is also important to remember that the interviews with the personnel at the travel agencies might be affected by the staff’s need to distance themselves from the issue of sex tourism and to create an image of an ethical business. In the same way, my interviews with personnel at Ecpat and Resposta might be affected by the fact that the two organisations want to be seen as important actors in the work to prevent child sex tourism, in order to not lose their justification.

There are many ifs and buts, the bottom line being – as always – that this study and these conclusions are what I was able to abstract in a specific time and specific place.

4. Theory

4.1. Post-colonialism and the image of the other

The post-colonial theoretical framework is a popular one in studies connected to globalisation issues. The concepts of colonialism and colonisation come from the Latin word *colere*, which means to cultivate and to give shape. Originally, the concepts colonialism and colonisation meant organisation, arrangement (Mudimbe, 2005, p. 129). But what is post-colonialism? Where does colonialism end and post-colonialism begin? Post-colonial studies are studies of the implications of the colonial era on colonised nations and their inhabitants, and on colonising countries and inhabitants. “The attempt to understand how post-colonial cultures resisted the power of colonial domination in ways so subtle that they transformed both coloniser and colonised lies at the heart of post-colonial studies”, states Bill Ashcroft, the author of several books on colonialism and post-colonialism, in *Post-colonial Transformations* (2001, p. 3, my translation). Post-colonialism, pre-occupied with the cultural dominance of the West, is today almost unavoidable when studying issues related to development and the so called third world. However, post-colonialism has also been criticised, amongst others by cultural theorist Stuart Hall, for being politically and theoretically ambiguous. According to Hall, the post-colonial theory erases the difference between colonisers and colonised. This confusion, when the clear line between good and evil disappears, makes opposition and resistance impossible, argues Hall. Post-colonialism has also been criticised for being a way of avoiding to talk about “global relations caused by changes in the capitalist world economy” (Hall, 2005, p. 82, my translation).

Another common critique is that the concept of post-colonialism has been too generalised and abstract to be useful. For example, is Latin America post-colonial, even
though their liberation period occurred during the 10th century, long before what is usually said to be the start of the post-colonial era? Hall’s answer to this problem is based on a separation between different kinds of post-colonialism. Although Australia, Canada, India and Jamaica are all post-colonial societies, they are not post-colonial in the same way (Hall, 2005, p. 85). Referring to Peter Humle, Hall concludes that post-colonialism should be regarded as a process, a general de-colonisation process, and states that one positive consequence of the term post-colonialism has been that it draws the attention to the fact that the colonising process did not end without leaving traces in the colonising societies (Hall, 2005, p. 85-86).

Sex tourism as I see it, is impossible to study or regard separated from post-colonial issues of Self and Other. Women from the South, often categorised by their physical appearance or their subordinate position in relation to the white male, is seen as “the exotic”; the mysterious Other.

In *Black skin, white masks* (1952), Martinique-born Frantz Fanon created and discussed the concepts of the colonising Self and the colonised Other (later on further developed by Edward Said and Homi Bhabha among others), two bipolar concepts closely linked to racialised stereotypes and also in many ways similar to the power relations described in gender studies. The Other is generally described in terms of nature (as opposed to culture), emotion (as opposed to reason), tradition (as opposed to modern) and wildness (as opposed to civilisation) (Fanon, 1952). Research carried out among male and female Western heterosexual sex tourists in the Caribbean has found that the wishes of sex tourists to engage in sexual relations with Others can be understood as a desire for an extraordinarily high degree of control over the management of self and others as sexual, racialised and engendered beings. This desire, and the Western sex tourist’s power to satiate it, can only be explained through reference to power relations and popular discourses that are simultaneously gendered, racialised and economic (O’Connell Davidson & Sanchez Taylor, 1999, p. 37).

In my discussions regarding sex tourism, especially the chapter on how Brazil is “sold” (see further chapter 8), the basic theoretical framework is the post-colonial notion of the Other, i.e. the Image of the Other and questions of exotism and culture. Said develops in his famous book from 1978, *Orientalism*, how the legacy of colonialism still marks the West’s conception of the Orient, and how it influences the relationship between colonisers and the colonised. Said states that colonialism created myths and stereotypes still valid today in what he refers to as “Europe’s collective daydream of the Orient” (1995, p. 54, my translation from the Swedish version).
4.2. Gender and power structures

The gender perspective is hard to leave out when talking about male heterosexual sex tourism. Sex tourism is about power and gender structures. The average sex tourist is white, male and with more money in his pocket than the average citizen in the country he visits. Many studies show that men who travel to the South with the aim to buy sex, do so in search for something that is not readily available for them in their home countries. It can simply be the search for a woman who seems to find pleasure in his company; or for a woman who behaves “as women should”, i.e. takes the position of the subordinate in the relationship; or the search for a specific physical appearance, maybe that of tanned skin (but generally not too black), black hair or a big (although not too big) bottom.

None the less, it is important to remember how we use feminist theories. Feminist scholar Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2005) creates a critical and sharp analysis of Western feminist research in the chapter Med västerländska ögon (Under Western eyes) on so called third world women, arguing that it is a part of the colonial discourse. She shows how third world women are pictured as objects, as opposed to the Western women (who describe the third world woman) who are constructed as subjects. Furthermore, third world women are seen as one big homogeneous group, not considering the great differences existing between women from different social and economic conditions in various developing countries. The feminist texts analysed by Talpade Mohanty offer a picture of a uniform “third world woman” category, as marked by colonialist ideas as any other colonial discourse.

The average third world woman basically lives a mutilated life based on her feminine sex (read sexual oppression) and her belonging to the third world (read ignorant, poor, uneducated, traditional, religious, homebound, family oriented, made the victim etc.). This I see as the opposite to the (implicit) self understanding of Western women as well educated, modern, with control over their own bodies and their sexuality, including their freedom of choice. (Talpade Mohanty, 2005, p. 198-199, my translation).

In the studies of male heterosexual sex tourism in Brazil, research indicates that the Brazilian “mulata” is the target of interest for the male tourists (Piscitelli, 2004b). bell hooks is one of the authors on representation of black female sexuality. In her book *Black looks. Race and representation* (1992) she discusses the representation and colonial/post-colonial fascination of the black female body in the contemporary media (mainly films and television). She traces the fascination of black “butts” back to the days of Josephine Baker, a fascination that is still obvious among Brazilian men, as well as white male tourists from the North (see for instance Bignami, 2002). hooks also differentiates two
types of representation of the black female, that of mummy and that of slut. Those two categories can be said to be valid for most women, independent of colour. The representation of women in mainstream contemporary media can often be characterised as “mother” or as “mistress” – the former nurtures, is passive and asexual, the latter is sexual and active (Montgomery, 2001, p. 113), also known as the “Madonna” vs. “whore” dichotomy.

Although some of hooks observations and examples are dated, her discussion on the racialised male gaze on the black female body is still very relevant in the discussion on sex tourism. The main question of hook’s chapter “Selling Hot Pussy” is: “How and when will black females assert sexual agency in ways that liberate us from the confines of colonised desire, of racist/sexist imagery and practice?” (hooks, 1992, p. 75).

Brazilians, men and women, are commonly described by themselves and by foreign observers as people fond of sex. When Brazilian women are described by the male tourists in studies by, among others, Brazilian feminist scholar Adriana Piscitelli, they are repeatedly commented on and praised for their strong sexual urge. Where women from countries like Sweden are seen as cold, independent and too occupied with jobs and careers, Brazilian women are pictured as happy, patient, simple and sensual. Those are positive adjectives but, as Piscitelli shows, they also have a negative side to them – happiness connotes irresponsibility, simplicity lack of reason and patience passivity and indolence. Contrary, the coldness and individualism of Europeans have positive connotations such as rationality, legal organisation and planning for the future (Piscitelli, 2004a, p. 12 and 14).

As the anthropologist Don Kulick has shown in his study of the colonial portrait of the exotic body, the imagined “wild sexuality” of the non-western woman was not seen as threatening by the colonial masters, as opposed to the “raw sexuality” of non-western men. On the contrary, the sexuality of the women was used as a way to justify rape and abuse on these women, as a means of taming them. (Kulick, 1991) Although Kulick is not primarily interested in discussing sex tourism, he rightly points out that this view of sexual abuse as a method of taming “un-civilised people” can still be used as a justification of the colonial elements of modern tourism (Kulick, 1991, p. 72). “The great cultural fear of the black person, given form in the psychic tremble of the Western sexuality”, as Homi Bhabha puts it in “Att minnas Fanon” (To remember Fanon) (Bhabha, 2005, p. 119, my translation).
4.3. Globalisation

“In the world we inhabit, distance does not seem to matter much. Sometimes it seems that it exists solely in order to be cancelled; as if space was but a constant invitation to slight it, refute and deny. Space stopped being an obstacle – one needs just a split second to conquer it.” The words are sociologist Zygmunt Bauman’s (2000, p. 74) and as obvious and non-exiting as they might seem, they are none the less very relevant to studies on global sex tourism.

Sex tourism is a typical consequence of the increasing physical mobility that comes with new techniques and with globalisation. In the beginning of the 1990s, when I went on one of those then popular “around the world trips”, it was a big thing. I collected letters from my mother at *poste restante*-boxes in Katmandu. Today, travelling is cheap and easy and keeping in contact with home even more so, with Internet readily available in almost every corner of the world. This means that more people can and do travel and (since information of all kinds has made the world more understandable and smaller) have the courage to travel further afield. It also means that the information exchanged between people who travel in the search for sex, has been facilitated. The Internet is full of information on where and how you can get sex with adults or children.

Bauman also talks about today’s society as being a consumption society, the same way as it used to be a production society. Today’s citizens are first and foremost consumers, and it is not primarily the materialistic need to own that is the goal, but the excitement of possibly finding a new sensation. Movement is expectation, reaching the goal of the travel often means disappointment (Bauman, 2000, p. 79). Bauman’s ideas are also applicable to sex tourism. Many sex tourists seem to be on a constant journey to find the perfect woman and/or perfect sexual experience. They are consumers of feelings, of sex and of possessing women. Like any other society, the consumption society is an unjust one where only a small fraction of the world’s inhabitants are able to travel and consume. The more mobile a person is, the higher in the hierarchies of the society he/she is. One big difference between those “on top” and those “at the bottom” is that the first category can leave the second behind (Bauman, 2000, p. 82). Translated to the sex tourism sphere, this discussion adds another level to the inequality and power structures – the tourists come and go as they please, and sometimes leave feelings and many times financial needs behind along with the women they use. Bauman (2000) also makes a distinction between tourists (those who travel because they want to) and vagabonds.
(those who travel because they see no other option). Translated to sex tourism issues, trafficking can be read to be part of the vagabond circle of globalisation.10

4.4. Sustainable tourism

In my interviews with staff at two Swedish travel companies, it was made clear that the industry is aware of the importance of addressing issues on sustainable tourism – if not for the sake of environmental preservation or social equality so for the sake of economic benefits for the company. This is also a growing academic field, studying the footprints left by people from the North travelling to the South. It is uncertain, however, how much is really done and how far the travellers have come in contemplating their role in a global and local perspective.

Sex tourists buy sex because they have the power to do so. Some say this power could be compared to the power of the average tourist who receives the service of the chambermaid being paid a minimum wage.11 As one of the interviewees, Ola Florin at Save the Children, put it:

As a tourist I need to understand that I come with hard currency and that there will be rivalry in the local population about my money. And there are differences in what kind of resources one has in order to get access to my money. Some can build hotels; others have only their body and others will polish my shoes” (Ola Florin, May 9, 2007).12

Tourists often defend their actions by saying that they contribute to the local economy (many sex tourists have the same attitude according to studies, see for instance da Silva & Blanchette, 2005, Faber, 1996, and Piscitelli, 2005) but looking at how the tourism industry is structured, it is quite clear that only a small portion of a tourist’s money actually stays in the local community. Most businesses in tourist resorts are controlled by large international corporations (Wilkinson, 1998).

So as tourists we make use of the water, energy and hospitality of the people we visit, eat their food and use their gasoline, leaving behind garbage and pollution. And little hard currency.

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10 I will not comment more upon this here, since I will not deal with trafficking in this study, but in another study it would be interesting to further develop.
12 Interview made by Charlotte Pruth. From hereon, if not stated otherwise, all direct and indirect quotations of my interviewees originate from interviews carried out by me, Charlotte Pruth. For a full list of interviewees see Bibliography. All interviews are carried out in Swedish or Portuguese. Therefore the direct quotations will throughout the thesis be my translation into English.
5. Mapping the field

There is extensive work available internationally on sex tourism and child sex tourism, mostly carried out at the beginning of the 90s and onwards. The real pioneer must be said to be Thanh-Dam Truong, professor in gender and development studies, who in 1990 published *Sex, Money and Morality: Prostitution and Tourism in South East Asia*. In Brazil, the topic of sex tourism has attracted attention from public opinion, researchers and policy makers from the early 1990s, when international tourism increased in the North-East regions and prostitution aimed at international visitors became more obvious (Piscitelli, 2004a, p. 2).

Very little seems to have been done internationally and in Brazil on homosexual sex tourism. Most studies concentrate on male and/or female heterosexual sex tourism or on child sex tourism, maybe because that constitutes the majority of sex tourism. Much of the academic work on sex tourism is related to post-colonial studies and explore themes such as “the male gaze”, “the image of the other” and “gender in tourism”. Canadian professor Kamala Kempadoo who has studied sex tourism in the Caribbean, writes: “Prostitution in the Caribbean is inextricably tied to the power and control exerted by European colonisers over black women since the sixteenth century” (Kempadoo, 1999, p. 5). The literature on child sex tourism often includes studies on efforts to combat child sex tourism by the civil society and at a governmental level, for example the works of sociologists Julia O’Connel Davidson and Jacqueline Sanchez Taylor and social anthropologist Heather Montgomery. In Brazil, the main author on the subject of sex tourism is feminist scholar Adriana Piscitelli at the University of Campinas, who has studied sex tourism primarily in Fortaleza in North-East Brazil.

Although there is an immense amount of articles, books and academic studies on the subject internationally, there is almost no work carried out in Sweden. I have found a few papers and master thesis written by university students, and two studies initiated by the Swedish Public Health Institute (*Folkhälsoinstitutet*) in the mid 90s. Sociologist Sven-Axel Månsson at Gothenburg University has studied prostitution in Sweden, trafficking and men’s practices in prostitution and also touched upon the subject of sex tourism. However, he seems to be rather alone from a Swedish context.

5.1. What is sex tourism?

Different scholars have different views on what is considered to be sex tourism, as well as different agendas on how to tackle the subject. Below, I will provide a quick exposé on
some common definitions on sex tourism and thereafter describe how I will use the term in this thesis.

Tourism scholars Pritchard and Morgan give a simple and clear explanation on what is often seen to be the foundation of sex tourism. There are three factors: 1) poverty, which makes women (and sometimes men), voluntarily or not, seek income through prostitution; 2) male tourists (although women can without doubt also be sex tourists), who have learned to look upon women of colour/from certain countries as more willing and more sexually active than women of their home countries; and 3) political and economic interests that encourage and make money from men who travel to certain countries with the intent of having sex with the women of that country (Pritchard & Morgan, 2000). Most academics who study the topic seem to agree on this, even though it is contested by some agents, as we shall see further on. It is an interesting anecdote, often told in texts dealing with this issue, that sex tourism began during the Vietnam War, when American soldiers were given “rest and recreation” trips (including sex) to Thailand.

The existing academic literature on sex tourism also includes studies on female sex tourism, often referred to as “romance tourism” since it is seen to be more about romance than plain sex (see for instance the work of Pruitt & LaFont, 1995, and Herold, Garcia & DeMoya, 2001, on female tourists in Jamaica and Dominican Republic respectively).

5.2. Sex tourism and globalisation

In the book Sun, sea, and gold: Tourism and Sex Work in the Caribbean, Kamala Kempadoo argues that sex work cannot be viewed in isolation from the global political economy. This is true not only in the Caribbean. As the interaction between nations and people increases, sex work becomes part of local cultures and national economies, and through them part of “the global corporate capital, first world identities, and masculine hegemony” (Kempadoo, 1999, p. 18). Sex tourism supports the business of travel agencies all over the world, of great hotel chains, restaurants and airlines.

Kemapdoo therefore argues that in the Caribbean, the 1980s structural programmes of the World Bank and IMF have squeezed the economic development and heightened poverty and unemployment, which has lead to a increased need to find alternative ways of earning a living (Kempadoo, 1999, p. 19). The Caribbean sexuality has been thoroughly used as a resource for the tourism industry, with the use of images of “brown and black women and men to market the region to the rest of the world” (Kempadoo,
Kempadoo concludes his chapter on the globalisation issues of tourism by stating that it is not possible to establish that prostitution has increased through increased tourism in the region. However he states that the intensified globalisation of capitalism since the mid 80s, “has had a tangible impact on structural opportunities and possibilities for the Caribbean working peoples”, which he concludes results in sex work becoming more important for the livelihood of Caribbean men and women and for the wealth of the global business (Kempadoo, 1999, p. 23).

5.3. Sex tourism – some definitions

So how should we define sex tourism? It is not as easy as it may seem. Initially, when the subject began to be explored in a more serious and broad manner, most researchers defined sex tourism as “intimacy between tourists and prostitutes for commercial purposes” or “tourism for commercial sex purposes” (Oppermann, 1999, p. 262 and 252). Today, most researchers seem to find this definition too narrow. One important notion to remember is that most sex tourists do not define themselves as such. The study of the Swedish Public Health Institute on Swedish sex tourists confirm that it is not rare for men who would not consider buying sex in Sweden to do so in Thailand. Many of these men do not consider these women to be prostitutes; therefore do not consider themselves to be sex tourists (Faber, 1996, p. 43).

Say “sex tourist”, and most people in the North will think of a middle aged man, not very important, not very handsome and rather lonely, who travels to Thailand to seek love and sexual pleasure from younger, good looking women (or under aged boys and girls). As described above, this does not always fit the picture. Many times the tourist is a younger man or even a woman, and even more often he or she does not travel with the sheer intent of finding sex – this might not even be one of the major attractions. Tourism scholar Martin Oppermann describes five additional parameters, apart from the monetary exchange, as important when we discuss sex tourism: purpose of travel, length of travel, length of time, relationship, sexual encounter, and who falls in this category of travel (1999).

It is also important to see that although sex tourism is intertwined with prostitution, it is not restricted only to that (Piscitelli, 2005, p. 313). One reason for men to visit prostitutes when on holiday or business travel might be that in developing countries they find that their money buys them not only sex but also some tenderness. This kind of sex tourism, which might include an illusion of love, is sometimes referred to by the sex
tourists as “girlfriend experience” (Piscitelli, 2005, p. 297, and da Silva & Blanchette, 2005, p. 211). Oppermann calls it an “open-ended prostitution”, where money might not be exchanged, at least not at the beginning, and where a woman might have relationships with tourists that continue even after they leave to return home.

Monetary exchange is commonly considered the most important characteristic of prostitute-customer relationships and, therefore, of prostitute-sex tourist relationships. However, the field of sex tourism goes beyond the traditional norm of prostitution [...] and has a wider meaning than a financial transaction (Oppermann, 1999, p. 257).

5.4. Child sex tourism

The fact that sex tourism is hard to define, along with the fact that prostitution is legal in some countries, makes it politically hard to criticise sex tourism in general terms. However, child sex tourism seems to be quite a different matter. Most people would agree that paedophiles who go to countries in the South to buy sex from under aged boys and girls are criminals and should be punished. Organisations that work to prevent child sex tourism commonly use the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a basis of their work and to define who is a child, i.e. anyone under the age of 18.13

However, only a small minority of the sex tourists, who buys sex from under aged boys and girls, are paedophiles. Can we, without doing injustice and risk being cynical, really separate prostitution where the one selling his/her body is over 18 years from the cases where that person is 17? There are many views on prostitution, from the radical feminist who wants to ban all form of the practice, to the liberals arguing that women (and men) have the right to their own bodies and can do as they please with them. There are almost as many forms of prostitution as there are buyers of prostitutes, from organised to informal, from forced to willing, from child to adult. The bottom line is that one thing they all have in common: the power relation, be it race, social, gender, economic and/or geographical – power is unequally distributed between the selling and the buying persons.

O’Connell Davidson argues in her book Children in the Global Sex Trade, and I agree with her, that “it is by no means clear that ‘child sex tourism’ – whether involving paedophiles or ‘ordinary’ tourists – can be meaningfully separated from ‘sex tourism’ or from ‘tourism’ more generally” (O’Connell Davidson, 2005, p. 127).

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13 The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989 and has since then been ratified by a large number of countries. Today, only two countries have not signed the convention; the USA and Somalia.
5.5. My definition

The focus of this study is not to understand sex tourism in itself, but to investigate some tools to prevent it. Therefore, I found that it only makes sense to separate sex tourism from child sex tourism when the context makes it necessary. Neither will I make a very strict definition of sex tourism as necessarily having to do with exchange of money, or with tourists travelling with the intent to buy sex. Opperman and Piscitelli, for example, define sex tourism as any travel experience in which engaging in sexual activity with the local population (in exchange for money or other kind of remuneration) is a crucial element for the trip to be considered a success (Oppermann, 1999, p. 261, and Piscitelli, 2004a, p. 3). In this thesis, sex tourism is understood as any sexual relationship between a man or a woman travelling from a western country, on vacation or business for a limited period of time, and a man or woman living in the country that is the tourist’s destination. Another criteria is that this relation is characterised by the unequal power structures (economic, safety, gender, social, class, race) between the two.

6. Analysis - Ecpat Sweden

6.1.1. The development of Ecpat International

Ecpat started as a campaign in 1991, as an offspring of the anti-tourism church organisation ECTWT (Montgomery, 2001, p. 30). Ronald O’Grady, one of the founders of Ecpat and its general secretary during its first years, tells about a meeting in Thailand with social workers from various countries, where studies on child prostitution were discussed, and where the decision to found Ecpat was taken. The campaign initially addressed tourists exploiting children in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Taiwan and the Philippines (O’Grady, 1992). One important task was to raise awareness of the problem, and to do that Ecpat organised conferences and international consultation meetings. In 1992, it published its first book, The Child and the Tourist. Posters with the symbol for the campaign at the time, a broken rosebud, and a warning to tourists of abusing children were attached to taxis in Taiwan. Much time was also dedicated lobbying towards governments to implement extraterritorial legislation that would make it possible to trial their citizens for sexual abuse abroad (see further discussion below).

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14 The Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism
15 In the beginning of the campaign, Ecpat talked about children as persons under 16 years (O’Grady, 1992). Today that is changed to 18.
The campaign rapidly became known throughout the world, and the time period was eventually extended from three to six years. Information spreading was very important to the growth of *Ecpat*. O’Grady has said that “in the days before internet, regular publications such as bulletins and newsletters were the only way the international community could be held together” (O’Grady, 1996, p. 62). One important factor to the rapid success of *Ecpat* was the strategy of communicating that child sex tourists were exclusively paedophiles and child molesters (O’Connell Davidson, 2005, p. 126). It made the message simple and easy to adhere to. Later, this strategy has been criticised for stereotyping and generalising the sex tourist in such a radical manner that it has in some ways complicated, rather than improved, the work against child sex tourism (see O’Connell Davidson, 2005, and Montgomery, 2001). Today, *Ecpat* has modified its view on the perpetrators and talk about “preferential” and “situational” offenders, where the first category is the paedophile and the second contain the ones who have sex with children because the opportunity appears (*Frågor och svar om kommersiell sexuell exploatering av barn*, p. 6). 17

*Ecpat* is no longer a campaign but an international non-governmental organisation present in some 70 countries around the world. 18 The organisation is widely regarded to have played an important role in putting child prostitution on the international agenda. Its message attracted the attention and sympathy not only of the general public, NGOs and governments, but also of the tourist industry. This must be considered a great achievement. Child sex tourism has gone from being a low key issue a decade and a half ago, to being on the agenda of many governments around the world, discussing the issue in parliaments and passing laws to imprison citizens who sexually offend children in other countries (O’Connell Davidson, 2005, p. 31, and Montgomery, 2001, p. 29 and 126).

### 6.1.2. The Swedish context

In Sweden, *Save the Children Sweden* started around the same time as *Ecpat*, a campaign against child sex tourism under the *Ecpat* umbrella. The goal was to raise awareness in Sweden on the topic and convince the police to increase activities in sex tourism

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17 *Ecpat* originally meant End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (O’Grady, 1992) but the meaning of the abbreviation was changed when the campaign became an international organisation to read End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes (Retrieved October 2, 2007, from [http://www.ecpat.se/pages.asp?r_id=321](http://www.ecpat.se/pages.asp?r_id=321)).

destinations in order to be able to stop Swedish sex tourists. The methods included information material, carrying out surveys, public seminars, press seminars and education of journalist and lobbying towards authorities (Karlén, 1994, p. 2). The campaign lasted 1992-1994.\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Ecpat Sweden} was launched after the 1\textsuperscript{st} World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Stockholm in 1996.\textsuperscript{20}

During the time of the \textit{Save the Children} campaign in Sweden, what was referred to in news magazines and journals as “the case of the 66-year-old” occurred. For the first time, the Swedish extraterritorial law was to be tested. And it worked; the 66-year-old Swede was condemned for having sex with a minor in Thailand. This was a hectic time for \textit{Save the Children}, with much media attention and even threats of the lives of the front figures behind the campaign. Some accused \textit{Save the Children} of having placed a trap in order to get the “66-year-old” (Lotta Sterky, communication director of \textit{Save the Children}, June 7, 2007).

\textit{Ecpat} sees the increased number of extraterritorial laws as one of the important evidence of the success of their campaign. In 1995, six countries (in addition to the Nordic countries, which had had them since the 60s) had passed the new extraterritorial law (O’Grady, 1996, p. 43). In 2001, the number of countries was 32 (\textit{ECPAT International Child Sex Tourism Survey}, 2001, p. 38). In the Swedish case, however, the law has not proved very useful since it has only been applied to two cases since the “66-year-old”.\textsuperscript{21}

6.2. The communication of Ecpat Sweden

There are three important notions that guide the communication work of \textit{Ecpat}: the focus on child sex tourism; the explanation model on root causes; and the emphasis put on

\textsuperscript{19} The campaign, according to long time communication director Lotta Sterky, meant a divide for \textit{Save the Children Sweden} – from being a movement of “old ladies” to becoming a movement that stood at the front of the barricades in controversial issues. It was also to that date the biggest campaign \textit{Save the Children} had undertaken (interview with Lotta Sterky made by Charlotte Pruth, June 7, 2007). Although evaluation and reports made by \textit{Save the Children} show that the campaign was considered a big success (media coverage was good, number of members increased, the Parliament discussed the issue and acted on some of the requests of \textit{Save the Children}), there is also in-house critique towards the way the organisation handled the topic. Ola Florin, responsible for child sex tourism issues, thinks that the campaign failed in contact with its cooperation parties in the specific countries and also that the organisation did not satisfactorily follow up the decisions of the 1\textsuperscript{st} World Congress (Karlén, 1994, and telephone interview with Ola Florin made by Charlotte Pruth, April 26, 2007).

\textsuperscript{20} This 1\textsuperscript{st} World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation against Children was followed by a 2\textsuperscript{nd} World Congress in Yokohama, Japan, in 2001. A 3\textsuperscript{rd} World Congress is planned for 2008, possibly in Brazil. During the 1\textsuperscript{st} World Congress, in which 122 countries were represented, a declaration of action was signed by the participants.

\textsuperscript{21} Today, \textit{Ecpat Sweden} is financed primarily by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the National Board of Health and Welfare. Fundraising is another important source of income.
commercial child sex tourism. Below, I will discuss and analyse recent information/campaigning material of *Ecpat Sweden* in relation to these concepts. I will base my analysis upon the following material, published in the last years: *Tio år mot barnsexhandel* (Ten years against child sex trade), *Barnsexturism och svenskars övergrepp utomlands* (Child sex tourism and abuse by Swedes abroad) and *Frågor och svar om kommersiell sexuell exploatering av barn* (Questions and answers on commercial sexual exploitation of children). This material is characterised by a desire to inform and increase knowledge, it is loaded with information and contains quite a lot of text and few images. The public seems to be those interested in learning more on the topic, perhaps student, journalists and other organisations. The first one also provides a resume over the first 10 years of *Ecpat Sweden* and works as a presentation of the organisation. It is hard to see the average tourist as a receptor of this material, but then, as we shall see in chapter 6.3., the information towards tourists is done through the travel companies.

### 6.2.1. Clear and direct messages

*Ecpat* dedicated the year of 2006, its 10 year anniversary, to focusing on child sex tourism with the goal of getting a responsible minister appointed and some actions carried out by the Swedish government (*Verksamhetsberättelse Ecpat Sverige 2006*, p. 12).

As discussed above, *Ecpat* has decided to separate child sex tourism from sex tourism in general. Even though it means ignoring the difficulties in defining concepts like childhood, sexuality and prostitution cross-culturally (Montgomery, 2001, p. 49), it also brings benefits. To support this work, there is the strong impact of the name of the UN and the world widely accepted Convention on the Rights of the Child, which condemns sexual violence against children. There are also clear benefits for the effectiveness of communication. Who will not be appalled by the stories of the overweight white man having sex with a ten-year-old Vietnamese girl or boy? A few words or a graphic picture is all that is needed. On the other hand, the risk is that this kind of stereotyped and simplified communication tends to steal the focus from the background issues and from the many violations made towards women and men, above the age of 18, around the world. In the *Ecpat Sweden* folder *Barnsexturism och svenskars övergrepp utomlands*, a simple information booklet on the role of Sweden and Swedes in child sex tourism consisting of eight pages in the A5 format, the following citation, made by a “child sex buyer” in Thailand is found:
Pruth:

*Sun, sea, sex and Swedes.*

It is different here, you see. People don’t have the same prejudices as at home. Here they are really open-minded. I mean, look how they are enjoying themselves [...] Since they live in a poor country, most of these children have had a rough time and this gives them a taste of the good life. Children love it. It is good. You give a little and help those needing.” (Barnsexturism och svenskars övergrepp utomlands, my translation).

Most people can unite in disgust for this man. But is he representative? Does it help us to understand child sex tourism, or is the result only a sense of fellowship in revolt?

The same folder also explains how “the victims” are recruited. It is stated that many times it is done through offering money to the child’s parents or through personnel or help workers in orphanages. “A young girl who in young years was forced into prostitution describes: It is sad to think that we – the poor bargirls – are the most affectable and despised”. In Frågor och svar om kommersiell sexuell exploatering av barn, a 32 page information booklet with common questions on child sex tourism, a few other ways of recruitment are discussed. Traditions in the tourist destinations, as in Ghana where young girls are said to be given away by their families to the local fetish-priest to perform sexual acts with him, are cited as one way of forcing young girls into prostitution.

Julia O’Connell Davidson has made several studies on child sex tourism, some of them ordered and financed by Ecpat International, and she is critical towards what she sees as an oversimplification in the information and communication strategies of Ecpat and other organisations using children to get across the information jungle. Not all child prostitutes are forced into prostitution by adults, she argues. As is the case of adults, many children trade sex as the best of many poor options for survival (O’Connell Davidson, 2005, p. 34). In *Children in the Global Sex Trade* O’Connell Davidson defends the benefits of telling more complicated stories about the global sex trade than those told by many organisations, academics and campaigns today.

I am uncomfortable with what I view as a more general impulse to separate children out as a special case when speaking of economic, social and political problems, as though the only way we can invite people to care about armed conflict or famine or poverty, for example, is by demonstrating the terrible impact these phenomena have on children (O’Connell Davidson, 2005, Introduction).
6.2.2. The use of images

The same thing goes for images. In *Frågor och svar om kommersiell sexuell exploatering av barn*, the first page contains a picture of two European men hand in hand with two small Gambian boys (see image 1).^{22}

Image 1. From *Frågor och svar om kommersiell sexuell exploatering av barn.*

At another picture in a recent brochure from *Ecpat Sweden*, a young girl is seen in a bar, standing in front of a white man most likely at least three times her senior, putting his hand on her female part (see image 2). Without doubt the pictures shock. In both cases those are young children. The pictures are snap shots and transmit the feeling of being taken clandestinely, which heightens the sense of reality and credibility of the pictures. In image 1, the two men are apparently heading towards a rock on the beach, where one can assume that behind that rock, hidden from the eyes of the photographer, they will abuse those two little boys.

In campaigns, in order to capture the interest of the audience, pictures are of immense importance. In the case of child sex tourism, pictures shock and provoke. But the problems are just as obvious. In order to get a long term effect, shocking pictures might not be the best way. In the worst case scenario, there is a risk of distancing from the message because it becomes too difficult to take in. There is also a risk of needing to be more and more shocking every time in order to get people’s attention. Not to speak about

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^{22} Below the picture, the following text is printed: “The picture is not arranged. The photographer followed the two tourists on a beach in Gambia after they had picked up one young boy each. The men’s wives and children were left at the hotel, unknowing” (my translation).
the ethical questions – do these already exploited children really need to be exploited once more, this time in the name of good?

*Save the Children Sweden* experienced this problem during their campaign in the early 90s (Lotta Sterky, June 7, 2007), and *Ecpat Sweden* is still fighting it. According to Helena Klingvall, responsible for child sex tourism issues at *Ecpat Sweden*, there are different views within *Ecpat Sweden* as to which kind of pictures are relevant and effective to use in communication and campaigning. “There are very few pictures available, that is a general problem for us. I am not fond of this picture [image 1] but there is no consensus about that. But we try to use these symbolic images as much as we can [image 3]” (Klingvall, May 3, 2007). However, as seen above, recent information material shows that graphic images are still used by *Ecpat Sweden*.

![Image 3. From *Tio år mot barnsexhandel.*](image)

6.2.3. Credibility at risk?

Like many other campaign makers in the field, *Ecpat Sweden* experiences the need to use hard facts, numbers. How many children are involved, how many tourists, how much money goes around? The problem for the organisation, as for anyone writing, thinking or campaigning on the topic, is that few relevant and serious statistical studies have been carried out.

In recent *Ecpat* information material, the number frequently referred to when talking about children in the global sex trade is two million, but it is not clear where this

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23 See also the *Save the Children Sweden* journal *Barnen och vi* (7) 1992, an issue dedicated only to the topic of child sex tourism.
data comes from nor how it was estimated. Since the French tourist minister a couple of years ago mentioned the sum of three million children, that same number is now used by Ecpat Sweden (Klingvall, May 3, 2007). The French minister did not state the source of the number. Correspondingly, Heather Montgomery tells about how one million, widely used during the mid 90s in the NGO world, originated from the Norwegian government. Neither source nor any indication as to how it was calculated was given (2001, p. 38). The lack of statistics and data has been a problem since the start of Ecpat. As Heather Montgomery states – anthropological case studies do not give the weight of real hard facts:

Statistics and numbers give an urgency to any campaign and it is not surprising that Ecpat or Christian Aid, for example, place so much emphasis on these figures. When a problem exists and threatens to grow exponentially if unchecked, an urgent response is needed. […] Equally, numbers suggest thorough and responsible research has been done, and that campaigning groups know the full extent of the problem (Montgomery, 2001, p. 37).

It is of course harder to get through with a message stating the necessity to act against child sex tourism if you cannot show how big the problem really is. However, using unsourced numbers means risking to undermine the seriousness and objectivity of the sender. This might be a particular problem for Ecpat to consider, since the campaign started out quite radically using statements and numbers, painting the picture of child sex tourism and paedophiles, that have rightly since been questioned.

6.2.4. What is commercial in child sex tourism?

Today, Ecpat is dedicated to combat what it terms “commercial sexual exploitation of children”, in order to separate it from sexual exploitation where no monetary transactions are involved. What then is “commercial sexual exploitation”? A tourist in Brazil meets a Brazilian woman for a few days. He might think that she is a date, she might think that he will give her a ticket to another world. Meanwhile, he probably pays for her dinners. Does this make their relation commercial?

During the World Conference against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, which took place in 1996 in Stockholm, Sweden, the following definition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) was agreed upon:

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is a fundamental violation of children’s rights. It comprises sexual abuse by the adult and remuneration in cash or kind to the child or a third person or persons. The child is treated as a sexual object and as a commercial object. The
commercial sexual exploitation of children constitutes a form of coercion and violence against children, and amounts to forced labour and a contemporary form of slavery.\textsuperscript{24}

Helena Klingvall, responsible for child sex tourism issues at \textit{Ecpat Sweden}, argues that the “commercial” aspect is a delimitation made by \textit{Ecpat} as an organisation in relation to other organisations, and that is not to be taken too literary: “It might not even be about paying, sometimes what is exchanged is a threat. ‘If you do something, tell some one about this for example, your mother will die.’ […] Many times there is some form of payment included, one pays for a dinner or at least has promised to do so” (Klingvall, May 3, 2007). However, the communication and information material produced by \textit{Ecpat} emphasises the commercial aspect: “Exploitation includes sexual abuse carried out by the adult and with remuneration in money or in other forms to the child or to other persons. The child is treated as a sex object and as a commercial object” (\textit{Frågor och svar om kommersiell sexuell exploatering av barn}, my translation).

\textit{Save the Children Sweden} has for some time criticised the term, and argued that commercial and non-commercial contexts intersect and that perpetrators may operate in both (Florin, 2001, p. 12). Instead, the organisation argues that special attention should be given “to the truly commercial elements and aspects of child sexual exploitation, i.e. the economic needs and interests, which make commercial sexual exploitation of children different from child sexual abuse more generally” (Florin, 2001, p. 13). The discussion on root causes of sex tourism is another area where \textit{Ecpat} stands out compared to many other NGO’s dedicated to the cause of children’s rights and child sex tourism. \textit{Ecpat}, as well as the declaration of action signed at the Congress in Stockholm in 1996, defines the causes of child sex tourism as being the existence of perpetrators.\textsuperscript{25} If there were no perpetrators, there would be no child sex tourism. Explaining child sex tourism in terms of poverty and inequalities is not relevant to \textit{Ecpat}, at least not in the information material. In his book \textit{The ECPAT Story – A personal account of the first six years in the life of ECPAT}, O’Grady explains that this is due to the need of keeping the campaign sharp, clear and simple – end child prostitution and nothing else:

There were those who had already decided that the sole cause of child prostitution was poverty and that we should spend our energies looking at the root causes of poverty […] Such a choice would have made Ecpat a replica of thousands of other development agencies […] It is too


simplistic to reduce the issue of child prostitution to a question of poverty alone (O’Grady, 1996, p. 19-20).

But is it possible to ignore power relations and poverty issues when talking about child sex tourism? Many studies show that poverty in reality is one of the factors behind sex tourism – although that it is not the only one. Adriana Piscitelli highlights the example of Argentine, which during its economic crises in the beginning of the 21st century experienced a rapid increase in sex tourists (Piscitelli, 2005, p. 303). And, remembering the definition of “commercial” discussed above – why emphasise the commercial aspects but refuse to talk about poverty? In Ecpat – a resource booklet, written as a bases of information for journalists and others in mid 90s, it is stated:

We talk about commercial sexual exploitation of children – in other words: There is a market involved. Supply and demand. […] Where does the demand for children come from? Understanding these forces helps to understand and explain the commercial sexual exploitation of children (Ecpat – a resource booklet, 1996, p. 7).

The idea of demand being the most important cause of child sex tourism is one of the foundations of the work of Ecpat. “Child sex tourists will continue to exist even if we eradicate poverty, and it is the child sex tourists who are the problem”, says Helena Klingvall. Ecpat sees poverty-based explanations to child sex tourism as a way of taking the responsibility off the perpetrator and putting the focus upon the victim “as if it were their fault that they must find a way to earn a living” (Klingvall, May 3, 2007). Klingvall is, however, prepared to modify and complicate Ecpat’s explanation model: “Poverty […] creates a group of people connected to trafficking […] Poverty makes it easier for child sex tourists to get in contact with what they want”, she argues (May 3, 2007). In recent communication material of Ecpat Sweden, it is possible to see a modification of the unwillingness to talk about poverty. In Frågor och svar om kommersiell sexuell exploatering av barn poverty is one of 15 issues discussed in regards to what makes children vulnerable for sexual exploitation. However, the text is ambivalent: “Poverty may be a trigger factor in many cases, but it is in itself no satisfactory explanation to children’s vulnerability. Many children from poor families escape sexual exploitation”.

It is possible to see the unwillingness to talk about poverty as a way of avoid getting into difficult political discussions that might become uncomfortable since, at the bottom line, we are all part of the global injustice. Without doubt, such a message would be harder to communicate. It is easier to communicate a message where someone else is the bad guy and my morals are not questioned: “The buyer is the reason why there is a market for sexual services with children under 18 years. Without their money, children
would not be recruited to the sex industry. The business will continue as long as it is lucrative” (Barnsexturism och svenskars övergrepp utomlands).

In Sex tourism. Thailand, a research paper carried out on the commission of Ecpat, O’Connell Davidson and Sanchez Taylor argue for a more complex explanation of the root causes. The ones who benefits from sex tourism are not the tourists, but the governments, international travel companies and hotels and local business people, they argue. These institutions have an economic interest in maintaining the flow of sex tourists. So “to engage in direct action against sex tourists […], satisfying as it may be, will not necessarily improve the lot of the women who sell their sexual labour” (O’Connell Davidson & Sanchez Taylor, 1994, p. 20).

6.2.5. Lobbying - The Swedish government’s (non) interest in the issue
The year of 2006, dedicated primarily to child sex tourism as mentioned above, also included some heavy critique from Ecpat on the Swedish government.\(^{26}\) Ecpat argues that the topic is not dealt with in a responsible manner by the Swedish government. Sweden has signed the declarations from the two international congresses on commercial sexual exploitation of children, and has elaborated a national plan of action (1998). A survey (2006) amongst the parliamentarians showed that a great majority believes that the issue is important,\(^{27}\) but in spite of all this, the Swedish government has presented “no concrete initiative against child sex tourism during the past 10 years”, according to Ecpat Sweden (Fakta barnsexturism. Mars 2007, my translation).

Instead, Ecpat carries out work that according to the organisation’s opinion should be the responsibility of the Swedish government, as for instance the “hotline” where the civil society can report suspected crimes against children.\(^{28}\) Ecpat would also like to see that the Swedish government presents statistics on the topic (Klingvall, May 3, 2007). According to Klingvall, one of the problems has been that no minister has had the topic as an area of responsibility, which has made lobbying difficult to carry out. Although, with the change of government in September 2006, Göran Hägglund, minister of Health and Social Affairs, has accepted child sex tourism as a responsibility. In June 2007 he

\(^{26}\) See for example Barnsexturism och svenskars övergrepp utomlands (Ecpat Sweden), Verksamhetsberättelse ECPAT Sverige 2006 (Ecpat Sweden), Skillnaden mellan ord och handling. Riksdagsledamöternas syn på vad Sverige gör – och borde göra mot barnsexturism (Ecpat Sweden), Fakta barnsexturism Mars 2007 (Ecpat Sweden).

\(^{27}\) Skillnaden mellan ord och handling. Riksdagsledamöternas syn på vad Sverige gör – och borde göra mot barnsexturism.

\(^{28}\) See http://www.ecpathotline.se/. In 2006, Ecpat received 946 entries per month through their hotline (Verksamhetsberättelse ECPAT Sverige 2006).
attended a seminar arranged by Ecpat at the Swedish Parliament, presenting a long list of possible actions against Swedish sex tourism.

A few weeks after my meeting with Helena Klingvall, the Swedish media reported that the former minister of justice, Thomas Bodström, had been elected as the new chairman of Ecpat Sweden. This would most likely be a way of strengthening the ties to the politics and authorities. Although a strategically smart move, it might seem like a strange choice bearing in mind the heavy critique that Ecpat has ventilated towards Bodström’s government.29

What then can politicians gain in joining Ecpat? As discussed above, it is a cause simple to support since we are all joined, across party borders, by the condemnation of child sex tourism. The emphasis on the children and their inability to choose prostitution, their position as victims, makes child sex tourism a heaven for tabloid journalists and also for “populist politicians who have nothing to lose but a lot to gain by making crude and sweeping statements about eradicating child prostitution by punishing the monstrous perverts, evil brothel keepers and vile traffickers who are responsible”, argues O’Connell Davidson. She continues:

Presented as a problem of individual morality, child prostitution appears as a fairly straightforward criminal justice and law enforcement issue. Certainly, it does not raise any complicated or threatening questions about the global political and economic order, or about inequalities of class, gender, race or ethnicity within nations. (O’Connell Davidson, 2005, p. 44).

This might be one of the explanations for the sudden interest in the issue by some politicians. On the other hand, why has it taken so long? And why is the subject still, in spite of promises, a low profile issue by the government? Could it be that we have difficulties in seeing Swedes as offenders? It is easy to talk about the offended children and of children’s rights; it is more difficult to address a possible Swedish target group. As says Helena Klingvall on the existence of a collective image: “in the stereotyped image of a child sex tourist […], it is a man in his late middle ages who is overweight, repugnant and socially incompetent and sometimes also German” (Klingvall, May 3, 2007).

29 “Now that he is no longer minister of justice, he can comment on and support this work in a different manner”, says Joakim Eriksson at Ving travel company, adding that he could not resist laughing when he heard that Bodström was the new chairman of Ecpat, since he for a long time had listened to the complaints of Ecpat about the lack of action during his time in the government (interview with Joakim Eriksson made by Charlotte Pruth, June 1, 2007).
6.2.6. Media coverage

*Save the Children* experienced some hectic times at the beginning of their campaign and following the capturing of the “66-year-old”. This was initially due to the topic being new to the Swedish audience and later to the fact that there was a clear connection to Sweden by the person who was caught. However, the media interest did not last until the end of the campaign (Lotta Sterky, June 7, 2007). *Ecpat* has experienced difficulties to get through to the media. Very few articles are written on the subject in Swedish journals. In *Dagens Nyheter*, only two articles have been published so far in 2007 (October 13), one of them mentioning *Ecpat*.

During the 2006 focus on child sex tourism, *Ecpat* found the media very reluctant to cover the issue, in contrary to the campaign on child pornography in 2005 (*Verksamhetsberättelse Ecpat Sverige 2006*, p. 12). This is probably related to the need to have a clear connection to Sweden. When the “66-year-old” was caught, the media could not stop writing. However, due to various factors, lacking of funds probably one of them, few Swedes are caught in action abroad. If there is no connection to Sweden, there is no interest from the media. “The interest of the media is very poor when there are no Swedes identified and suspected of crime. […] There is very little being written that is initiated by the journalists […] and even the debate articles that we write we do not always get published”, says Helena Klingvall (May 3, 2007). One other problem might be the difficulties in keeping a campaign running for a long time. “One needs to end the campaign and then start it up again. And during this period of time, something new has to have been added”, confirms Lotta Sterky (June 7, 2007).

6.3. The Code of Conduct

6.3.1. Launching the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct was elaborated at *Ecpat Sweden*, in co-operation with the travel industry, in 1997-98. It has now spread to some 20 countries. The inspiration for the Code was the work carried out by civil society to encourage the industry to assume their responsibility for the environment. The tourism industry is an important partner in order to reach the target group – the tourists – with information on child sex tourism. The goal

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30 An interesting anecdote told by *Save the Children* that highlight the novelty of the topic, is the response the organisation got when approaching the National Police Board requesting actions abroad: “Save the Children needs to understand that we must give priority to crimes that afflict Sweden, so don’t come with some fucking cunt crimes [några djävla fittbrott]” (Karlén, 1994, my translation).

31 Primarily *Fritidsresor*, but also *Apollo* and *Ving (My Travel).*
is to get the industry to undertake the task of informing its clients. Travel companies and other suppliers of tourism services that decide to adhere to the Code, undertake the responsibility to follow six criteria. Internationally, 278 companies have signed the Code, of which seven are Swedish.\(^{32}\)

Follow-up and documentation is run by an international secretariat in New York. Every year the tourism companies that have signed the Code are expected to report to the secretariat, using a form published on the home page (www.thecode.org). Unfortunately, technical problems made all the reports from 2004-05 disappear. There is also a steering committee, compound by industry, government and NGO representatives, where the Brazil Ministry of Tourism as well as Resposta has one seat.\(^{33}\) The steering committee is responsible for the development of the Code in a global perspective. Should any tourism company not comply with the requests, the committee decides on exclusion. So far, this has not happened (Helena Klingvall, May 3, 2007).

### 6.3.2. The Code

The tourism companies adopting the Code commit themselves to follow six criteria:

1. To establish an ethical policy regarding commercial sexual exploitation of children.
2. To train the personnel in the country of origin and travel destinations.
3. To introduce a clause in contracts with suppliers, stating a common repudiation of commercial sexual exploitation of children.
4. To provide information to travellers by means of catalogues, brochures, in-flight films, ticket-slips, home pages, etc.
5. To provide information to local "key persons" at the destinations.
6. To report annually.\(^ {34}\)

### 6.3.3. Two travel companies and the Code of Conduct

Two of the largest travel companies for package tours in Sweden are Ving and Fritidsresor.\(^ {35}\) They have arranged package tours to Natal since it opened to the Swedish

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\(^{32}\) In Sweden, the following travel companies have signed the Code of Conduct: Apollo, Fritidsresor, Lastminute.com, Lotus, Travel, Resfeber.se, Travelpartner.se och Ving (Ecpat Sweden, Fakta barnsexturism. Mars 2007.).


\(^{35}\) Both belong to larger industry groups, Ving is a part of My Travel and Fritidsresor is a part of TUI Travel.
market in 2000, although this season Fritidsresor decided not to work with Natal, due to a decrease in demand last season. Ving continues to travel to Natal.

Interviewing personnel responsible for the implementation of the Code of Conduct at the two travel companies, it is clear that the respect for the work of Ecpat is profound, but also that Ecpat is seen as too radical and demanding at times. At the other end, Helena Klingvall declares that she is sometimes disappointed by the lack of engagement by the travel companies.36

Basically, what the travel companies agree on doing, when signing the Code is: informing its clients about Ecpat and its work (see below); include a clause in the contracts prohibiting any connection with child sex tourism on the part of local business partners; train its personnel in child sex tourism issues and how to act should they see or hear anything suspicious; and elaborate an ethical policy regarding the issue. This seems to be fulfilled by Ving and Fritidsresor, with a question mark regarding the ethical policy which none of the travel companies can present regarding sex tourism. You could also ask yourself how many of its clients actually notice the information on child sex tourism.

6.3.3.1. Information to travellers

Both Ving and Fritidsresor point out that they are primarily in it to sell holidays, and that it is a commercial evaluation of how much they can allow Ecpat to be seen. There is information available on the websites and catalogues of the respective companies, in some in-flight magazines (an advertisement from Ecpat) and a spot produced by Ecpat is shown on many flights. At the time of the interviews, this was a 1.30 min spot produced by Ecpat France showing pictures of young children with their age published, 13 years, 16 years, etc. At the end, a mug shot of a man with the text: 10 years (meaning the jail sentence).37 There is no doubt about the message, but the spot is not too provocative for the travel companies. The new spot that Ecpat at the time of the interviews tried to get the companies to show, crossed the boarder, says Ann-Louise Gül at Fritidsresor. “When you sit in a plane there is nowhere for you to go, so you have to show quite nice messages in order for no one to feel bad” (June 1, 2007). When reaching the destination there is also information in the general information catalogue (telling about day trips, good

36 At the time of my interview with Helena Klingvall, she was experiencing a "down period" in the cooperation with the travel companies since they refused to show a newly produced in-flight film, which was considered by the travel companies to be too graphic.
37 The spot is available at Youtube (retrieved October 14, 2007, from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo8qbxUhGfI).
restaurants, etc) available at every hotel, according to Gül and Joakim Eriksson at Ving (June 1, 2007). Sometimes, at the bigger destinations, every traveller is presented with an individual information pack where Ecpat would be visible.

Both Ving and Fritidsresor sell a lot of their trips through their respective home page.\(^38\) Information on Ecpat is available but it takes some finding to get there. The truth is, it is rather well hidden behind the information about the company, and probably not visible to the general traveller.\(^39\) The information is also quite sparse, an account on when the travel company started working with Ecpat and what the co-operation means in terms of developing a policy for ethical travel, information towards clients and education of staff. The same goes for the catalogues where the information on Ecpat is sparse and quite difficult to find. Fritidsresor has in its latest catalogues made the information on Ecpat along with other collaborations with NGOs (Unicef and WWF etc.) an advertisement at the last page of the catalogue. Although visible, it only mentions Ecpat through its logotype. The travel company has chosen to highlight the work with WWF and other less delicate issues in the text (see for instance Fritidsresor Winter 2004-05).

Ecpat would obviously like this information to be more visible, and both companies say they have an ongoing dialogue with Ecpat as to how visible the topic should be. It is a general policy that it should not be the first thing a traveller sees when he plans his holiday, says Joakim Eriksson at Ving: “It will always be a balance between this issue, that is the whole agenda of Ecpat and that they of course want to push hard for, and our day to day that is a mix of many considerations to be handled”, he says (Eriksson, June 1, 2007).

The need for more information towards Swedish travellers became obvious in a recent market research carried out by the market research company Temo at the request of Ecpat Sweden, Allmänheten om barnsexturism (The general public on child sex tourism), which showed that nine out of ten Swedes who see signs of suspected child sex tourism choose not to report and that 30% of the Swedes do not think it is possible to get Swedish offenders trialled in Sweden.\(^40\)

Eriksson admits that Ving is not as aggressive as one might wish in regards to the topic, but says that one aspect of this is the fear of the media. Ving chooses to keep its work low profile since the company is afraid that should it position itself closer to the

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\(^{38}\) At Fritidsresor for instance 45 % of the travels are sold through the home page.


front of the barricades, it would risk being thoroughly examined by the media. “How can we possibly guarantee that none of our 600,000 guests somewhere will use prostitutes? Our experience is that if you distinguish yourself too much in this area, people will start looking for faults and we will end up getting critique for not doing everything right” (Eriksson, June 1, 2007).

6.3.3.2. The benefits/disadvantages for the travel industry

So what do the companies actually offer to Ecpat and its cause? Although the will might be there, both Ving and Fritidsresor are aware of the problem and the fact that some of their clients are among the offenders they do not risk much in the co-operation with Ecpat. Ecpat is satisfied with the fulfilment of some of the criteria of the Code, but there is some disagreement as to what message to communicate to the travellers. Ecpat Sweden finds it more effective to put the emphasis on the perpetrator, to speak out and say that Swedish child sex tourists exist (Klingvall, May 3, 2007). That seems to be crossing the line of what is commercially feasible for the companies that prefer to talk in more general terms about children’s right and the harsh situation for many children in the country of destination. The problem with the in-flight spot produced by Ecpat Sweden, for example, seems to have been that it concentrated on a Swedish perpetrator.41

Most campaigns focusing on child sex tourism actually ask very little of the tourist industry, argues O’Connell Davidson. Showing an in-flight film that it is wrong to have sex with a child is not a risky business. The industry has everything to gain by adhering to the message and wearing the logo “no to child sex tourism!” but very few campaigners want tourism industry to ask questions about the salary of the cleaning ladies or the social costs of tourism, and the fact that the income of tourism is largely going back to the sending countries (O’Connell Davidson, 2005, p. 138-139). Ecpat does not make that kind of requests from the travel companies, and the travel companies would clearly not be interested. “We are, above all, an organiser of travels and might not always address difficult political questions” (Eriksson, June 1, 2007).

The decision to sign the Code followed an intense discussion within the company, where the worry was whether or not adhering to the request from Ecpat would risk the reputation of the company, says Joakim Eriksson. “What if people began to associate our guests with paedophiles?” The bottom line was that there was more to gain to address the

41 According to Helena Klingvall the spot showed a Swedish child sex tourist at home making some phone calls to plan for his coming vacation (May 3, 2007, interview made by Charlotte Pruth).
subject and show that the company carried out serious work against child sex tourism, than trying to hide it (Eriksson, June 1, 2007). Both companies emphasise that they need to work with sustainable tourism in order to be successful long term. “The earth does not get any bigger, we work in almost all countries and if we want a sustainable business and earn money, then it is in our interest to preserve what we have got” (Eriksson, June 1, 2007).

Another issue worth commenting upon is the fact that the emphasis on child sex tourism can be seen as a silent acceptance of other forms of prostitution (Kempadoo & Ghuma, 1999, p. 292). Ving and Fritidsresor emphasise that the Code and the clause they include in contracts at the destination do not include sex tourism where adults are involved. However, at least when it comes to business partners, Ving and Fritidsresor state that they would not accept their hotels to be involved with prostitution (Eriksson and Gül, June 1, 2007).

The main problems with the Code for Ving and Fritidsresor seem to be related to the big instability of staff at the locations. The education of personnel on the topic is not always up to date, and guaranteeing that they always adhere to the demands of the Code is seen by the travel companies as impossible. Both travel agencies, however, identify as a positive outcome of the co-operation with Ecpat the security that it gives the staff to have an action list, a manual on how to act should they come across anything suspicious (Eriksson and Gül, June 1, 2007).

7. Analysis - Resposta Brazil

7.1. Natal, the city of pleasure

Natal is the capital of the state Rio Grande do Norte (RN), situated by the Atlantic sea, close to the equator line. It has almost 780 000 inhabitants (according to IBGE, 2007)\(^\text{42}\). Historically, Natal was colonised both by the Portuguese and by the Dutch.

Although situated in the drought-ridden and poor North-East parts of Brazil, Natal has for some decades been known as a modern and open city (Lopes Júnior, 2000). This is explained by various factors, one being the fact that the sugar industry and its very traditional society based upon “coronel” (great land owner) – slave relations, never really entered the state.\(^\text{43}\) Social scientist and Natal citizen Edmilson Lopes Júnior has in his


doctoral thesis analysed the historical process that created Natal as a “city of pleasure”. He highlights the fact that Natal during the 2nd World War hosted a military base for the North American forces. The military, according to Lopes Júnior, served as a libertine force in Natal when it came to costumes and values. During this time night clubs are started and the beaches are constructed as “places of controlled chaos” (Lopes Júnior, 2000, p. 37, my translation).

Natal is not only known for its night life, but has among Brazilians for many years been famous for its beautiful beaches and white sand dunes. However, it is only since the late 90s, that international tourism has become significant, starting with the Portuguese and now including primarily Portuguese, Italians, Spanish, Swedes (14.810 tourists in 2006), Dutch and Norwegians. Between 1994 and 2000, the state project Prodetur (a programme for the benefit of tourism development) in Rio Grande do Norte invested US$ 44 million in infrastructure, among other things the international airport. The goal was to increase tourism. According to Setur (state secretary of tourism) figures, the number of international tourists increased from 17 811 per year in 1996 to 282 270 in 2004, which means an increase with almost 1500% during these nine years. Though this is still a small portion of the hundreds of million tourists that visit Brazil every year, remembering the size of the city, it is a significant number. Social science student Ursula Moura analysed in her examination paper at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, the impact of sex tourism in Natal. She concludes that tourism is the single most important economic activity that “made possible the intense development of Natal during the last decade […] and contributed […] to the improvement of life quality of the local population” (Moura, 2003, p. 14, my translation).

7.2. Creating the Code of Conduct and starting the NGO Resposta

In Brazil, although sex tourism became an issue in the 90s, it started to appear already in the 70s. According to feminist activist Jaqueline de Souza Leite, this was partly due to the saturation of the sex tourism industry in Asia, which meant that parts of the practice.

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44 During the 2nd World War, Natal was classified as one of the four most strategic places in the world, by the War Department of the USA (Sectur. Natal Informações turísticas, retrieved October 27, 2007, from http://www.natal.rn.gov.br/sectur/paginas/ctd-298.html).
45 Natal was officially launched as a tourist destination on the international market in 2000 (Sotelo, 2005).
48 According to Embratur (Brazilian institute for tourism) about 5 million international tourists visited Brazil in 2006. (Anuário Estatístico Embratur. Volume 34. 2007. p 6).
moved to Latin America, primarily Brazil and the Dominican Republic. This coincided with the awakening of the Brazilian government for the benefits of tourism and a major propaganda machine started to promote Brazil abroad, many times through the use of the product of national exploitation, the Brazilian ‘mulata’ (Leite, 2003, p. 66). Although, as we shall see in chapter 8, the Brazilian government has radically changed its advertisement strategies, sex tourism is still a problem on many tourist locations in Brazil.

Therefore, when international tourism began to boom in Natal, with direct regular flights from Portugal and chartered flights from various cities in Europe, the international as well as the local civil society became concerned over a possible rise in sex tourism in Natal. Recife, another coastal town in North-East Brazil, had a few years earlier experienced a similar boom in international tourism but much because of sex tourism becoming too obvious, had just as quickly lost its tourists. Fortaleza, north of Natal, had also for some years been infamous for its sex tourism trade. So in the first years of the 21st century, the local newspapers report of the growing concern of the inhabitants of Natal who did not want to see this happen to their city (Moura, 2003, p. 38).

With the help from the Austrian NGO Respect, the process to create a local version of the Code of Conduct started in Natal. Three parties participated in elaborating a first version of the Code, Casa Renascer, a local NGO working with children at risk, the Potiguar University and the Banco do Nordeste – a quite unique collaboration between the civil society, the academic world and a state owned bank. This meant the start of a process including many persons from civil society, private businesses, authorities and academics, to create the Code of Conduct of Natal. The Code was officially launched in 2002, which then created a need for an NGO to carry out the monitoring and

49 “Mulata” (fem) is in Brazil traditionally used as a way of describing a person who is a mix of black and white (and sometimes Indian) heritage, who has a brown skin and often curly hair. It also connotes a woman with a nice body, who knows how to dance the samba and who has an air of sensuality to her. Today, the term “mulata” is mostly used in contexts of carnival, samba or other kinds of cultural expressions with a connection to the black Brazilian heritage. Instead, the term “morena” (fem) is more common, bearing less diminutive connotation and only meaning “light dark” (interview with sociologist Alex Franca made by Charlotte Pruth, October 27, 2007). When speaking of morenas, foreigners in Piscitelli’s study describe the term as: they have a skin which is not white, or black. To be morena requires a determined tonality, to be sun tanned is not enough (Piscitelli, 2004a, p. 21). In studies on sex tourism in Brazil, the term “mulata” is used to indicate the typical Brazilian woman used in propaganda material during the 70s and 80s.

50 According to Moura, the then secretary of tourism in the state of Pernambuco, where Recife is the capital, is infamous for stating: “It doesn’t matter if the tourists spend their money on prostitutes or at the shopping centers. What matters is that they leaves their money here. At the end of the day, there are prostitutes in every corner of the world.” (Moura, 2003, p. 37, my translation).

51 Interview with Ana Paula Felizardo, president of Resposta, carried out by Charlotte Pruth, July 3, 2007, and Sotelo, 2005.
development of the Code. The NGO Resposta (Responsabilidade Social Posta em Prática, Social responsibility put in practice) was created in 2003, and Ana Paula Felizardo from Casa Renascer was elected president. In 2005, Resposta entered into the Ecpat International umbrella, and was also chosen to be a part of its steering committee. However, Resposta is not able to attend the meetings since the organisation has not got the means to cover travel expenses. “We are quite critical of the fact that the organisations that are part [of the committee] are not given the conditions to participate. One meeting in London, another in Berlin, we have no possibilities to participate. [---] So, only the companies are there, it is a problem” (Ana Paula Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

However, the Code is not the only instrument for Resposta and in the next chapter we will look into its foundations and its campaigning a bit further, with comparison of relevant parts to the Ecpat Sweden case discussed above.

7.3. The communication of Resposta

The NGO Resposta was created as an answer to the demand following the Code of Conduct. However, right from the start it is obvious that Resposta did not see the Code as its only mission. Its basic lines of work are various and quite broadly formulated, including the first paragraph’s “contribute to the construction of a democratic society, through the strengthening of citizenship” (Carta de apresentação). Looking at concrete actions, Resposta primarily focuses on campaigns on the topic of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in tourism; co-operation with higher education of tourism professionals; educating tourist guides, taxi drivers and buggy drivers in sex tourism related issues; lobbying towards authorities; and activities related to the Code.

Resposta has carried out three general campaigns since its start and one specifically designed for the shopping mall Sea Way, where all shops have signed the Code of

52 The funding of Resposta comes primarily from Save the Children Sweden and World Child Foundation (set up by the Swedish queen Silvia).
53 Ecpat had been present in Brazil since mid 90s and in 1997 the first meeting of Ecpat in Brazil took place in Salvador/Bahia (Exploração sexual comercial de meninos, meninas e de adolescentes na América Latina e Caribe. Relatório final. Brasil, 1999, p. 120).
55 Interviews made by Charlotte Pruth with Ana Paula Felizardo and Liliane Cache at Resposta, and “Carta Circular” (2) 2005.
Conduct. A fourth general campaign is developed, but the NGO lacks funding to carry it out.

7.3.1. Provoking with the first campaign

*Child sex tourism cannot be disguised* was the message of the first campaign carried out primarily at the international airport of Natal and at hotels and restaurants frequented by tourists, but also among the *Natalenses* (citizens of Natal). The text read in both English and Portuguese. At the airport, a leaflet was handed out to every tourist at check-out.

The campaign (see image 4) includes an illustration of a girl doll in extreme close-up, wearing heavy make-up including very red lipstick. Even though there is no obvious link between the doll and sexual exploitation of children, the campaign was seen as offensive by many tourists (Felizardo, July 3, 2007). The goal of the campaign was to create a message that showed the seriousness of the problem but that did not result in feelings of paralysing hopelessness, explains Ana Paula Felizardo.

I am very critical towards many campaigns. Campaigns usually say ‘according to the UN, so and so many thousand children are…’. The person who receives this message will say, ‘yes, it is very serious but I have nothing to do with this. I can’t do anything.’ When we communicate in a way that calls for people to act, that talks about the seriousness of the topic but without this sensational tone, then the society is dragged out of the paralyse. We wanted to say that everyone tried to hide this topic under the carpet… (Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

The target audience of the campaign was the *Natalenses*, with the message that child sex tourism could not be hidden away, and the tourists, alerting them that the Natal society is mobilised against child sex tourism (Felizardo, July 3, 2007).
In retrospect, remembering the response that the campaign received, Felizardo is quite critical towards it:

We noticed that some topics are so stigmatised that people do not want to collaborate. Prostitution and drugs are topics that the companies don’t want to be associated with. Now, when it is hunger, cancer, those are topics that people sign up to (Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

Analysing the leaflet, its message seems unclear especially when tourists are the receptors. A tourist, without local knowledge or reference to the discussion on sex tourism in Natal, will probably not make much sense of the tag line. The link between the somewhat scary doll and children in sex tourism is not obvious and would have needed a bit of interpretation. It would probably seem both irrelevant and provocative, and could be understood to accuse me (the tourist) of being a child sex offender trying to hide it. Who else would be disguising sex tourism? To the Natal civil society, it might make more sense – at least for those who have followed discussions on sex tourism in Natal and Brazil in general. They might interpret the message as a call for action, for attacking the problem. The back of the leaflet is more balanced, with its headline being *Code of Conduct for the Tourism Industry against Sexual Exploitation of Children. The solution.* Thereafter follows a summary of the Code of Conduct of Natal.

On the whole, however, it is difficult to see who the target group for the information is. With its somewhat naïve overly optimistic “The solution” and the lack of explanation of the context for the Code (the leaflet only briefly states what the code is and what the companies adhering to it assume to carry out) the message seems directed more towards the tourism industry, promoting the Code, than towards tourists and Natalenses in general. However, it is important to highlight that this campaign was created prior to the foundation of *Resposta,* which implies that it is a collaboration between various parties evolved in creating the Code of Conduct (among them local government, the federal police, *Embratur, Scandinavian Tours* and *My Travels).*56 A difficult process to go through, according to Ana Paula Felizardo since everyone wanted their say in shaping the campaign (Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

7.3.2. Not too aggressive yet getting the message through

The following two campaigns of *Resposta* show a clearer focus on the tourists and are radically less aggressive in its approach. “For the second campaign we were more mature

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56 The Nordic travel companies *My Travel* and *Scandinavian Plus* donated money to cover some of the graphic costs of the campaign (Resposta, *Relatório do código de conduta do turismo contra exploração sexual infanto-juvenil. 2003*).
and wanted to communicate differently”, says Ana Paula Felizardo (July 3, 2007). The message on the front page of the second campaign reads (in Portuguese, English and Italian) *Natal – Rio Grande do Norte. Land of many attractions* and shows some postcard images of Natal – the beaches with its white sand and palm trees, the city at night, the carnival and three boys in traditional dresses, etc. (see image 5).

This campaign was part of a bigger strategy, trying to position Natal as a sustainable tourist destination. “It was a message from the city, we were the spokesmen of the city”, explains Ana Paula Felizardo (July 3, 2007). The leaflet was put in the tourists’ passports by the federal police at the airport and *Resposta* engaged 500 students to hand it out on the beach (*Relatório do código de conduta do turismo contra exploração sexual infanto-juvenil. 2003*, and Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

However, on the opposite side of the leaflet, the dark side of tourism is pictured, that of sex tourism. The text reads:

Welcome to Natal, Rio Grande do Norte. This city has much to offer in terms of entertainment, culture, dining, natural beauties and architecture. There is also warm and friendly people. So, Natal has everything to make your vacations memorable. Enjoy your time and get to know all of its attractions. But beware that here, sexual exploitation is not an attraction (*Natal – Rio Grande do Norte. Land of many attractions*).

Under the text there are four pictures of supposedly western men with young Brazilian women with the text (only in Portuguese this time): “Sexual exploitation is a crime!”

*Resposta*, as well as *Ecpat*, focuses only on child sex tourism. *Resposta* has a progressive attitude towards prostitution and *Resposta* has on various occasions
collaborated with, and supported the cause of, the organisation of prostitutes of Natal (ASPRORN).57 Resposta sides with the feminist line of thought supporting that the sexual rights of the woman should include the right to sell her body, and the idea that prostitution should be considered a job with “carta assinada”, i.e. prostitutes should pay tax if they earn sufficiently and have the right to the same benefits, as pension, from society as everyone else (Liliane Cache, June 29, 2007).58 To communicate this, Resposta separates sex tourism from sexual exploitation, the first indicating a business between adults “with free will” (Felizardo, July 3, 2007), the second indicating that minors are involved and thus it should be called exploitation.

This separation might have its logic when explained, but the meaning of the term “sexual exploitation” is not obvious in the second campaign, where child sex tourism is not mentioned. Instead, the term sexual exploitation is used. This probably meant that most tourists who got the leaflet in their hand would primarily associate with sex tourism in general and not specifically child sex tourism, considering also that the Brazilian women on the pictures could very well be above 18 years of age. The decision not to mention the children in the second campaign could be a result of the sometimes harsh reception of the first campaign, where threats against the people handing out the leaflets occurred, and a wish to “lighten up” the message.

We recognize that the first campaign was aggressive, that this image, this heavily made-up doll was a bit scary. But the others… There is also a problem in being too light. We have to create a communication that touches people’s hearts. It is no longer through aggression, or through chocking anyone. We want to make this topic into a topic that makes people aware, that touches people, we don’t want people who combat, we want people to act (Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

However, the use of the term “sexual exploitation” without further explanation might also be due to a miscalculation on the part of Resposta, where the campaign makers perhaps overestimated the knowledge of the receptor of the message on the discussion of child sex tourism. As anthropologists Ana Paula da Silva and Thaddeus Blanchette, who have studied the night club Help in Copacabana, known as the “Disneyland of Brazilian sex tourism”, state in their quite radical analysis of the discrepancy between the popular and academic understanding of sex tourism:

It is important to emphasise that the simple contraction of the service of a prostitute, who is not underage, is not in itself a crime, and therefore should not be seen as sex tourism […]. On the level of common sense, though, the sex tourism is synonymous of a normative behaviour by the foreign tourists that frequent the coastal cities of Brazil. According to this view, a sex tourist is that foreigner that looks for a partner on the Brazilian beaches […]. In the popular

57 ASPRORN = Associação dos profissionais do sexo e congênero do Rio Grande do Norte.
58 Workshop attended by Charlotte Pruth.
understanding of the phenomenon, the preoccupation of the legal aspect of the activities is less important than the moral code that says that foreigner should not have promiscuous sexual contacts with the natives. The solution according to this perspective of the phenomenon is to repress the women and deport the men (da Silva & Blanchette, 2005, p. 253-254, my translation).

7.3.3. Root causes of sex tourism according to Resposta

Natal belongs to the poor North-East region of Brazil, where the average poverty proportion is just above 45 percent. According to a national report carried out by the NGO Cecria for the Brazilian National Congress in 2003, 69 routes for trafficking people were discovered in this region. This means that the North-East, together with the North region of Brazil, has the highest number of routes trafficking women and adolescents in Brazil. According to the co-ordinator of the report, the social services professor Maria Lúcia Leal, this “confirms the close relationship between poverty, regional inequalities and existence of routes for trafficking […] for sexual purposes in all regions of Brazil” (Leal & Leal, 2003, p. 57). No similar report has been made to cover sex tourism but since trafficking and sex tourism are closely linked it is possible to also translate this conclusion to the sex tourism field.

However, Resposta is reluctant to give simple answers as to both the implications of sex tourism and the root causes of it. As opposed to Ecpat (se discussion above), Resposta finds that there are several causes to sex tourism and that there is also a local variation when it comes to explanation models. Ana Paula Felizardo argues that sex tourism is a complex phenomenon and that “every case is a special case”:

- We recognize that in Brazil it is not the poverty but the inequality, the concentration of income.
- I also emphasise lack of education, of investments in education. […]
- I emphasise the capitalist culture that we have, of earning more, a culture of insustainability. […]
- The gender relations. The way that the market use the woman, a woman sells everything. We sell diaper, we sell margarine, we sell cars, beer, and if there is a sculptural body with little intelligence, we sell even better. We have the ethnic issues, a blackness that is not valorised by us Brazilians […].
- And for the tourists, the exotic. […]
- They expect an allowing attitude from us Brazilians as if we were all open to sex here (Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

As in the case of sexual exploitation discussed above, this background is not transparent throughout, nor immediately understandable, in the campaigns carried out by Resposta. This could most likely be explained by the necessity of keeping campaigns as simple and clear as possible, with a direct message that quickly gets through to the receptor.
7.3.4. The tourists, the children and the tourism industry
In the third campaign, launched in 2005, Resposta retreats back to clearly addressing the issue of child sex tourism. This campaign included a video that was (and sometimes still is) shown at local television stations, geared towards the Natalenses. This allowed broad visibility to Resposta, the Code of Conduct and the issue of child sex tourism within the Natal community, according to Ana Paula Felizardo (July 3, 2007). The basis of the campaign was a newly published survey pointing towards the fact that many tourists who use child/adolescent prostitutes see them as adults (see discussion above).

![Image 6.](image)

The campaign is this time only in Portuguese and consists of a simple picture in black and white of two children, a boy and a girl, blowing bubbles. The text reads: “Sexual exploitation of children-adolescents isn’t a joke for adults. Much less for children. The solution is in your hands. That is not a joke either” (see image 6, my translation).59

The tourists in the survey would say, ‘we are not doing anything wrong, we are going out with a woman of 14 years’. We wanted to show that this is not a joke, because it was all seen as, ‘I am on vacation, I am relaxed, I am not doing anything wrong’. Many times this person is very serious in his own country, but comes here and it is permitted. We see tourism much like a run away from the everyday life (Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

This perspective on tourism is confirmed by O’Connell Davidson, who states that one important part of the tourist experience seems to be the enormous waste in places where the local people cannot afford to waste anything. This, the sex and the sun and the sand, is “all part of the ‘local colour’, the ‘party atmosphere’, the ‘exotic beach resort with a

59 By this time, Resposta had launched its home page (www.reposta.org.br, only in Portugues), which is also promoted in the leaflet.
great nightlife’ that tourists have been sold, not by ‘organised child sex tour operators’, but by big, respectable, mainstream tourism companies” (O’Connell Davidson, 2005, p. 138).

This discussion is closely linked to that of the tourist’s search for the unique, the singular experience, relevant also to the sex tourism issue. Places that for decades were the paradise for tourists, lose value when it gets overly exposed to tourism. Like tourism in general, when a great number of travellers consume sexual services in these places, the “sexual landscapes will become less authentic, less real and, therefore, less desireable” (Piscitelli, 2005, p. 286, my translation). Piscitelli (2006) has shown in her studies that the authenticity of the Brazilian women, in contrast to the highly organised sex tourism industry in for example Thailand, is attractive to many sex tourists.

Returning to the Resposta campaign, the message this time is simple and direct. It is a peaceful picture of children playing with bubbles (playing being the same word in Portuguese as joking, therefore a connection to the text). However, it could be a problem that it is only in Portuguese, since the target group is primarily the tourists. The tourists that do not speak Portuguese will look at the picture, a rather “non communicative” picture most likely there to give a sense of balance and emphasis to the harshness of the text. The campaign was primarily carried out in the brothels of Natal through a collaboration with the organisation of prostitutes of Rio Grande do Norte, ASPORN (Relatório do código de conduta do turismo contra exploração sexual infanto-juvenil. 2003). Most foreign tourists would probably not go to a motel/brothel, therefore one can assume that it mostly reached Brazilian tourists.

By this time, the issue of sex tourism is well known throughout Natal. In August 2004, the city of Natal approved a regional programme to combat sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in tourism (Programa Regional de Enfrentamento à Exploração Sexual Infanto-Juvenil no Turismo). The fact that a Swedish citizen was caught harassing a female employee at the airport in Natal and therefore put on the returning flight back to Sweden before even getting out of the airport, is an indication that the issue is on the agenda (Jornal de Hoje, March 3, 2005). The same year, the municipal council of Natal declared two Portuguese anthropologists “persona non grata” after having given an

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60 In the news article, the represent of Infraero in Natal, Manoel Henrique Cardoso, is quoted saying about the Swede that “The problem is that this kind of people thinks that every Brazilian woman is a prostitute” (Jornal de Hoje, March 21, 2005).
interview to a local paper (Servico à Mulher Marginalisada),\textsuperscript{61} saying that Natal should strive for a “pacific co-existence” between sex tourism and family tourism (\textit{Diário do Natal}, September 4, 2005). Sex tourism has become a sensitive issue for the authorities and the tourism industry.

7.3.5. Relations with the media

Although Resposta has kept the message in the campaigns simple, the organisation has alongside with the campaigning seen an important task in educating the journalists of Natal in the child sex tourism topic. This has primarily been done by the staff or Resposta. There are insufficient funds for employing a journalist. Therefore, the website of the NGO is not updated and the communication with the media is handled by personnel who are not working in the communication area. Despite of this, Resposta is very satisfied with the response it gets from local media. “Everything, every event that we organise, the press covers it”, says Liliane Cache (June 27, 2007), responsible for child sex tourism at Resposta. It is also obvious looking through the archives of press clippings at Resposta, that the NGO from time to time receives plenty of attention and is always addressed with respect.

One reason for this is perhaps the fact that Resposta is aware of the dangers in exploiting sensational figures that are not based on reliable research. The NGO prides itself of not using figures or statistics where the method of obtaining the figures is unclear. This has given the organisation a reputation for being serious, according to Felizardo. Resposta also nurtures the relation with the media in that it only sends press communication when it is necessary and where the information is important (Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

Contrary to the case of Ecpat Sweden, Resposta enjoys the benefits of a clear connection to the local reality in the topic of sex tourism. It is obvious for most people visiting the beach of Ponta Negra that there is sex tourism going on. Another facilitating fact is that Resposta does not usually compete for the space in national media, but concentrates its forces on the local media.

Nonetheless, in August 2007, Ana Paula Felizardo was interviewed by \textit{A Globo}, national television, on the Brazilian equivalent of the \textit{David Letterman Show, O Programa do Jô}. This must be considered an achievement by a small organisation in the North-East

Brazil, a region commonly handled in a diminutive way by the richer southern parts of the country. Felizardo has also received attention by winning a prize at the national women’s magazine Claudia for being an “extraordinary woman” in 2005. One explanation of this is most likely the fact that Ana Paula Felizardo is a colourful person with seemingly little fear of speaking her mind, even though it includes criticism towards authorities and powerful interests. “My social representation is a person who might not be liked by everyone but who is certainly admired, because we have obstinated many interests of the authorities”, says Felizardo herself (July 3, 2007). Another explanation is of course the relevance and the attractiveness of the topic for the media. Topics such as sex and prostitutes, as well as dedicated persons fighting for the benefit of exploited defensless children, make “selling” headlines for the newspapers (see O’Connell Davidson, 2005, and discussion above in the Ecpat chapter). A third factor may also be that Resposta is unique in its methodology in Brazil when it comes to the Code of Conduct (see discussion below).

7.3.6. Lobbying towards the local governments

Resposta has from time to time had a dialogue with the municipal secretary of tourism, Sectur, and the state secretary of tourism, Setur. However, the relationship is far from smooth. Both Felizardo and Cache express frustration over the slow work of the authorities relating to the issue of sex tourism, which they find ad hoc and with little substance. One of the results of the lobbying of Resposta is the creation of Frente parlamentar dos direitos das criancas e adolescentes (parliamentarian fronts for children’s rights) on the state and municipal level. However, these fronts have not been working in a satisfactory manner. The problems seem to be the fact that the employees and secretaries at Setur and Sectur are often replaced; a lack of knowledge of the area; as well as lack of funds. “In discourse tourism is a giant, in reality it is a dwarf”, says Felizardo speaking about the municipal Sectur (July 3, 2007).

In the reports of A Globo in March 2006, the state government was quoted minimizing the problem of sex tourism, stating “We expect 2,1 millions of tourists this year, in the universe if 2.1 million persons of course there will be those good and those bad, but most of them come with good intentions” (Jornal da Globo, March 8, 2006). The Globo report and the naivety of the local government put unwanted focus on Natal. This resulted in some immediate action, most visibly three quite spectacular blitz at famous sex tourism bars and night clubs at the beach Ponta Negra. At one point 210
policemen arrested 78 tourists, most of them for not carrying their passport, and retrieved ten children from the “risk zone” (*Jornal Tribuna do Norte*, April 6, 2006). After the blitz (called Operation Free Ponta Negra) the topic left the spotlight and again little effort is focussed on prevention of child sex tourism (*Diário de Natal*, September 19, 2006).

*Resposta* does not receive any money from local authorities since it wants to keep its possibility to criticise the governments. “If we were funded by the government then we cannot make demands, criticise, accuse […]. The authorities in Brazil do not have the maturity to distribute money and understand that we still want autonomy”, says Felizardo (July 3, 2007). Despite of this, *Resposta* did try to get a collaboration working with *Setur* for the last campaign that the organisation developed. Since *Resposta* has no money to go through with the campaign, it was offered to *Setur*. *Setur* rejected the offer since it preferred to develop its own campaign, which is the one the tourists receive when arriving at the Natal airport.62

### 7.4. The Code of Conduct in Natal

#### 7.4.1. Adaptation to local circumstances

When the Code was spread to the rest of the world, the content and the mechanisms for implementation differed from Europe, especially in Latin America since it is a region attracting tourists instead of a region people leave to become tourists elsewhere, according to Marco Sotelo at *Save the Children* in Lima, Peru (*Sotelo, 2005*). Natal became pioneers in Brazil and Latin America in implementing the Code and is still one of few places that have undertaken the trouble of adapting the Code to the local situation. To Ana Paula Felizardo, this adaptation remains crucial.

Looking through existing research, it confirms the need for local adoptions even within Brazil. Research carried out by the Department of children and adolescents shows that the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents differs between regions. In the North it is in the shape of brothels in areas of many gold diggers in the Amazon; in the North-East it is concentrated to the coastal cities and in the form of sex tourism; in the South and South-East in primarily involves street children; and in the Central-East it is related to cruising tourism (*Vianna & Lacerda, 2004, p. 71*).

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62 The ongoing *Setur* campaign consists of a poster at the airport of a white, blond man in is 40s with an alarmingly red face, with a text attached talking about the shame in sex tourism. Before that, the *Setur* campaign consisted of a white man with a giant condom thread over the upper part of his body, with a text about condom not being able to hide the shame. This campaign was criticised by the public opinion for using condom in a negative way.
The Code of Conduct of Natal was created by a group of non-governmental and governmental organisations and private businesses. The Code was elaborated at a seminar in August 2001 where 160 persons representing all kinds of organisations linked to tourism were present (*Código de Conduta do Turismo Contra a Exploração Sexual Infanto-Juvenil*).

Although the first to use the method of a Code of Conduct, it was not the first time Brazil had seen campaigns to combat child sex tourism. *Embratur* (governmental institution for tourism advertisement) had some years before, in 1997, elaborated the campaign *Beware. Brazil is watching you*. In year 2000, the 18th of May was chosen as the national day to combat sexual child exploitation (Vianna & Lacerda, 2004, p. 70).

The most important difference between the Code of Conduct developed by *Ecpat Sweden* and the Code of Conduct of Natal, is the demands put on the tourist institutions wanting to sign the Code and the monitoring of the companies having signed the Code. While the international Code is monitored by way of the companies handing in their annual report to the committee, in the Natal case the monitoring is done by *Resposta* and includes visits of “spies”. Prior to adhering to the Code you have to submit a number of official forms and documents, including marketing material. An interview with the owner will also be carried out, as well as education of staff after the company has been accepted as part of the Code.

On a national level, quite a lot of interest has been given *Resposta* and especially the Code of Conduct. At the end of the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, when the Code was very new, *Embratur* wanted to take the Code of Natal and make it national. *Resposta* did not allow this since the NGO finds the Code to be specifically developed for the special circumstances of Natal. Thereafter, *Resposta* was called on for collaboration both by the national government and by local governments and NGOs in other states. However, to my knowledge, no other Brazilian state or city has to this day implemented the Code in such a broad manner as *Resposta*.

### 7.4.2. The content

*Resposta* has published a small information booklet on the Code of Conduct (*Código de Conduta do Turismo Contra a Exploração Sexual Infanto-Juvenil*). The Code is
composed of five chapters: Chapter 1 talks about the purpose of the Code and adoption, stating that it is a formal declaration destined to orient and regulate the ethical conduct of persons or entities involved in the tourism industry. It also states that the coercive power of the Code is moral. Chapter 2 explains the work of the permanent monitoring committee and who/which organs should be part of this committee.\textsuperscript{63} Chapter 3 deals with the commitments assumed by those who adhere to the Code, i.e. developing business policies on the topic, educating staff, including clause on the topic in contracts made with other businesses, acting against any suspected act of exploitation of minors, as well as repudiating any type of sex oriented publicity in tourism. In chapter 4, the possible practices and actions against sexual exploitation that could be relevant for the different types of companies in the tourism sector, are dealt with more profoundly. Finally, chapter 5 includes some technical details (\textit{Código de Conduta do Turismo Contra a Exploração Sexual Infanto-Juvenil}).

The information in the booklet is in Portuguese, English, Spanish, Italian, German and French. It consists of 32 pages, each language occupy five pages. The target group is the tourists, although presumably only those who have a further interest in knowing what the Code is about. It is not written in a manner to attract readers, it is a quite dry recital of the commitments of the tourism establishments that adhere to the Code. The booklet would also work as a tool for any other organisation in Brazil that would like to set up a similar Code, since it is quite informative as to how to go about it.

\textbf{7.4.3. Working with tourism industry}

From the start, it was obvious for Ana Paula Felizardo and the others developing the Code, that the private companies were necessary for the Code to work. Therefore, it was important to work with the private sphere from the beginning and also to make sure the companies felt they were a part of a development process. “What was new was that we called for the private initiative to contribute. The private initiative had always only appeared in the role of the guilty”, explains Felizardo (July 3, 2007). The involvement of the private sector also came from the growing awareness that child sex tourism could seriously damage the perception of Natal as a tourist destination, which could become non-reparable and cause great economic loss (Sotelo, 2005).

\textsuperscript{63} Permanent members of the committee are: The State Attorney General’s Office, The Coordination in Defence of Human Rights and Minorities, the Children’s Rights Council of the State, the Municipal Secretariat of Labour and Social Security, Casa Renasce and the Potiguar University (\textit{Código de Conduta do Turismo Contra a Exploração Sexual Infanto-Juvenil}).
It is also important for Resposta not culping the tourism industry in its communication. Throughout the three main campaigns, the target is the tourist as an individual, not as a group or as part of a social structure. This strategy, along with the fact that the dark sides of sex tourism slowly became visible to the tourism industry, has led to a broad acceptance from the tourism industry of the work of Resposta and of the Code.

When we started to talk about sex tourism in 1993, no one recognised it as a problem. The quick economic revenue made it unimportant to think about where the money came from. What mattered was that tourist equals money. But the example of Recife and some shocks from Fortaleza, such as the death of nine Portuguese tourists involved in sex tourism etc., contributed to the conviction that tourism is an activity that is highly sensitive to being used by criminal organisations. [... This frightened the local businessmen. All this contributed (Felizardo, July 3, 2007).

Despite the demanding criteria 116 tourist institutions, mostly hotels and restaurants, had signed the Code in July 2007. Once a company has signed, it is only valid for two years and then the process has to be repeated. This along with the fact that the monitoring is seen as a crucial part of the profound success of the Code, of course means immense work for a small organisation like Resposta with only a few employees. Apart from monitoring, Resposta has also dedicated a lot of time educating hotel and restaurant staff, taxi and beach buggy drivers and other groups related to the tourism industry. From the interviews I carried out with five receptionists at hotels on the beach of Ponta Negra, where most of the Swedish package tourists stay, it is clear that the receptionists were all well aware of the problem of sex tourism (most confirmed it to be a growing problem for the tourist industry and for Natal as a tourist destination) of the Code of Conduct. In all five hotels, the certificate of alliance to the Code hangs on the wall near the reception.64

In a report published on New Years Eve of 2006, the local newspaper O Poti sums up last year’s international tourism in Natal. As mentioned above, in 2006 Natal was portrayed as a sex tourism resort in the most important national television channel, A Globo. This led O Poti to the conclusion that “sex tourism made Natal infamous for the whole world in 2006” (O Poti, December 31, 2006). It might not be as bad as that, since A Globo, although big in Brazil, has relatively little repercussion when it comes to news journalism in the rest of the world. However, it was clearly not a positive propaganda for Natal, still struggling to secure its place on the map of international tourism. Some indications actually suggest that the peek of the city is already over. In April 2007, the city council of Natal carried out a public hearing caused by the decrease in tourists during the past months. Mário Barreto, one of the most prominent hoteliers in Natal, and ex

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64 Interviews carried out by Charlotte Pruth on the beach of Ponta Negra July 5, 2007.
secretary of tourism, blames lack of publicity towards the European market and increased sex tourism as main factors behind the decrease. As revealed above, Swedish Fritidsresor has decided not to travel to Natal during the winter season 2007-08, due to decreased interest from the Swedish public.

8. Selling Brazil

8.1. Introduction

Tourism is big business, the third biggest in a world perspective. In Sweden, a country that in a global perspective does not receive many tourists, the tourism industry added about 23 billion Euros to the Swedish GNP in 2006. So, there are consumers, there is a market and of course people wanting to sell. However, how can you sell a country? And – more specifically – how can you do it without using stereotypes and without exploiting what you think the tourists themselves will want to exploit on their vacation? When you buy your holiday trip to foreign countries, you cannot touch upon it and see for yourself, experience the product before you buy it. Therefore, what you buy is first and foremost an image (Bignami, 2002, 13).

Swedish historian Klas Grinell has in his doctoral thesis analysed catalogues from Swedish travel agencies between the years of 1930 and 1990, using post-colonial theory. Not surprisingly, he found that much of the propaganda was based upon racism, prejudice and exotism (Grinell, 2004). In this chapter I will analyse the travel catalogues from Fritidsresor between the years of 1998 and 2007. I will also make a quick exposé of official Brazilian advertisement of Brazil, from the late 60s to today. In this part of the analysis I had great help by the work of communications professor Rosana Bignami (2002) on the image of Brazil in tourism, where she contradicts the notion held by many Brazilians that the image of Brazil is the fault of foreign media. I was also helped by a recent master thesis by anthropologist Louise Alfonso Prado (2006) on the role of Embratur in forming the image of Brazil.

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66 Loosing only to petroleum and the automobile industry (Wainberg, 2003, p 10).
68 Prado went to Embratur’s headquarter in Brasília to go through the archives, with the intent of staying one month. When she got there she realized that the old archives were going to be thrown away, since they were considered out of date. She ended up spending six months with the archives and through her work saved an important part of Brazilian tourism history (Raquel do Carmo Santos, Jornal da Unicamp, retrieved October 23, 2007 from www.diplomaciaenegocios.com.br/ntc.asp?Cod=635).
If sex tourism is based upon inequalities between people, sexes, cultures, races, social groups and regions, then you can assume that the marketing that makes tourists want to visit certain places plays a part in stimulating sex tourism. This is also the assumption of Ecpat and of Resposta, visible in their respective Code of Conduct, which includes rules regarding marketing. This is nothing new, and it is not new to study tourism marketing from the post-colonial perspective. Nonetheless, sufficient attention has not been shown this topic in Sweden, and – most importantly – you can assume that many tourists do not read the ads advertisements thinking in terms of racism and exotism. With Bignami, I will also discuss where the post-colonial theory looses its relevance and the responsibility of the receiving countries begins.

8.2. “If travel is your passion, Brazil is your destination”

8.2.1. Embratur and sex tourism

Embratur started out using the Brazilian woman as one attraction of the country in the late 60s. During the 70s, it was the Brazilian woman, football, the carnival and Rio de Janeiro that would sell Brazil, according to Louise Prado (2006). “In all material, the woman is related to beaches as well as cultural manifestations, primarily the carnival” (Prado, 2006, p. 87, my translation). Women were used not only directly by Embratur, but also in the tourism magazine Rio, Samba e Carnaval which was distributed in various languages in Brazil and abroad with support of Embratur, and which for many years used and abused the image of women as s main tourist attraction of Rio de Janeiro (Prado, 2006, p. 88).

In the late 80s, the Brazilian government wanted to construct an image of a “New Brazil”, young and modern and open for investments, and Embratur would play its part showing attractions from each region of the country. However, the women are not left alone. According to the description of Embratur from that time, “the idea was to show a country of colours, tastes and landscapes, a continental, tropical, exotic, welcoming, united country formed out of various races and cultures and full of sensual women” (Prado, 2006, p. 105, my translation). It was not uncommon for hotels in Rio de Janeiro for example, to show a picture of a woman instead of the inside of the rooms in their

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69 It would be very interesting to look into not only marketing by travel agencies but also how the Swedish media covers and has covered Brazil, in news articles as well as articles in the travel or cultural sections of the journals and magazines.

70 Quotation from an Embratur campaign.

71 In an issue in 1982, Rio, Samba e Carnaval published an article titled “Mulher, a maior atracão” (Woman, the biggest attraction) (Prado, 2006, p. 122).
marketing material. During this time the development of the North-East region as a sun-tourism resort also began (Prado, 2006, p. 106).

At the end of the 90s, the issue of sex tourism was arising as a problem in Brazil and the critiques towards the way Embratur marketed Brazil increased. Embratur decided to address the topic and launched the campaign Beware. Brazil is watching you. At the same time, Embratur abandoned in all its material, the use of a woman with connotations to sex (Prado, 2006, p. 109). In 2003, the president Luiz Ignácio Lula da Silva created the Tourism ministry (which diminishes the role of Embratur) with the explicit goal to “re-position Brazil as a product on the international market” (Felizardo & Andrade, 2005). In 2004, Brazil abandoned the use of, in addition to the female body, also references to the sun and the ocean. Brazilian marketing should now be about valorising its people (Turismo sexual, 2006, p. 21). It is probably too early to see any results of this yet, and it is also obvious from looking at the catalogues of Fritidsresor that this strategy has not found its way to Swedish marketing material of Brazil (see below).

8.2.2. The “mulata”

The woman used to portray Brazil is not any woman, it is a black or dark skinned woman, referred to as mulata or morena, and she is usually portrayed as poor. This has created an image of the Brazilian woman as poor, black, submissive, sweet and easy (Brazão Teixera & Batista, 2002).

Feminist scholar Adriana Piscitelli shows in her studies of sex tourists and prostitutes in Fortaleza, that the sex tourists have in common an image of the Brazilian woman, as a woman with a sensual temperament and a readiness for sex. Brazil is also thought of as having a high level of prostitution (Piscitelli, 2004a, p. 13). She quotes one of her female interviewees:

What is it that they like in me? My colour. Always, all of those who know me always say, they really love my colour, you know? Because I am morena, I have curly hair, and I am friendly, tender, I am very natural, from the earth, that’s what they always say (Piscitelli, 2004a, p. 22).

According to Piscitelli, for the foreign tourists, the colour morena is intimately linked to Brazil and to sexually “hot” women. And the Brazilian women who they meet are very aware of this (Piscitelli, 2004b).  

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72 According to the IBGE sensus of 2006, the state of Rio Grande do Norte has around 3 million inhabitants. Among them, 36.9% are white; 2.4% are black; and 60.6 % are coloured (mulatas, morenas). In the whole of Brazil, the same figures would be: white 49.9%; black 6.3%; coloured 43.2% (retrieved October 20, 2007, from
It is difficult to think the perception of sex tourists of the Brazilian woman without thinking of the intense marketing that she has received through, among others, *Embratur*. As says tourism scholar Rosana Leal:

The inadequate construction of an image could lead to catastrophically results for the place, primarily due to the specificities of the tourist product that contrary to others only can be evaluated during the experience of the trip – therefore it becomes difficult to change unwanted situations (Leal, 2005, p. 9-10, my translation).

This brings us to the marketing of the Swedish travel companies.

### 8.2. The Brazil brand

Each time that I return from a trip to Brazil, I am filled with the same feeling, most closely reminding of passion. It is as though had I been the guest of a wonderful woman who was not completely conscious of her on beauty. Who dances and smiles, full of life and possibilities, but who for ever keeps a bit of homelessness and melancholy in the bottom of her dark eyes (Fritidsresor catalogue, Winter 2003-04, p. 93, my translation).

The metaphor might be considered poetic and harmless, but looking at the history of image making on Brazil and in the perspective of sex tourism it becomes more disturbing. When *Embratur* was created by the Military Government in 1966, one of its main purposes was to reshape the somewhat tarnished image that the country had abroad, caused by reports of torture and abuse by the Dictatorship, and instead show a liberal and democratic country. To do this, *Embratur* used the Brazilian woman – known for her physical assets such as a rather big bottom, her tanned skin and for being easily seduced – and the carnival (Filho, 2005). However, the creation of the image of Brazil started long before that. It is well known that in the colonial times, travellers wrote letters and articles, so called “travelogues”, from the “New World” and that those stories have played a role in the creation of the image of the Orient and the Exotic (see for example Palmer, 1994). In the Brazilian case, Rosana Bignami shows how many things work together in the creation of the image of her country: Novelists like Jorge Amado, well known abroad, with his dark-skinned and passionate heroines in stories like *O País do Carnaval* and *Tieta*; films like *Bye bye Brazil* and the Cannes winner *Orfeu Negro* show a sensual, liberal and exotic Brazil (today we can think about the image that is transmitted through films like the world hit *City of God*); and not least music, where the sensual bossa nova and the happy yet melancholy samba has conquered the world. One early and very strong


image maker was of course Carmen Miranda, launched in the first days of radio in Brazil in the 30s and exported to the USA and Hollywood (Bignami, 2002, and Caetano, 2004).

In her analysis on how Brazil is portrayed in Italian media, Bignami manages to distinguish the most common stereotypes of Brazil: Brazil as Paradise with untouched nature; as a country where sex is easy; where the people are friendly and welcoming; the country of carnival and party; and the exotic and mystic Brazil (Bignami, 2002, p. 109-10). However, it is not only amongst westerners that stereotypes of Brazil and Brazilians linger. Also amongst Brazilians themselves you can find and auto-image of happy and sensual people, as well as of a poor, corrupt and violent state, as confirmed by amongst others da Silva & Blanchette (2005) and Bignami (2002). “It is enough to look at our televisions and see the content of the programs to perceive that we ourselves idealise a sensual people” (Bignami, 2002, p. 49, my translation). Bignami states further that it is necessary for the Brazilians to admit that the image of them is the result of their self-identification and that profound changes will only be possible when this auto-image changes (2002, p. 50, see also Nova, n.d.).

“The stranger sees Brazil as the Brazilian sees himself and promotes himself. It is not up to the stranger to change this image”, states Bignami (2002, p. 129, my translation). She makes an important point, we cannot blame the colonisers forever and of course we do not have the right to take the initiative and the action from the people concerned. However, does this mean that we have no responsibility? Does it mean that Swedish travel companies can write what they please and use what images they like in the advertising material?

The Ecpat Code of Conduct states that travel companies cannot market their destinations alluding to children and sex. Helena Klingvall at Ecpat Sweden says that this is not a problem in Sweden (May 3, 2007). Both Joakim Eriksson at Ving and Ann-Louise Gül at Fritidsresor confirm that there is a consciousness regarding what images to use (June 1, 2007). However, analysing the Fritidsresor catalogues ten years back gives another picture. There are few pictures of children that could be seen as indicating sexuality, but the stereotypes and the sexual connotations are abundant. Not so much in pictures and images as in language. Brazilians and the inhabitants of other destinations marketed in similar ways (like Cuba, the Caribbean, and the Dominique Republic) are commonly referred to as “warm hearted”, “welcoming”, “happy” and “easy going” and
when it comes to Brazil also often as “relaxed” and “sensual”. As Louise Prado shows, this image of happy and welcoming people, “the mark that differentiates Brazilians in relation to the ‘others’” can be seen also in Brazilian tourism propaganda since the beginning of the 70s (Prado, 2006, p. 89, my translation).

When the people are described as happy and easy going who “do everything for you to feel welcome” (Fritidsresor catalogue, Winter 1998-99, p. 122), and this text is published side by side with a smiling young woman, the image created is powerful. We, the Westerners, come as kings and we can expect to be served in any way that we please. This happens for example in the Fritidsresor catalogue, Winter 2000-01, where a picture of a samba-dancing *mulata* with only a small colourful bikini on (see image 7) is accompanied by the following text:

> The spirit of the Brazilians simply is like that. Life is given to us in order for us to play, dance, eat, drink, laugh and love. It is a delight to watch the sensual and playful drama along the long beaches of Rio, where people from morning to evening play football, dance, work out, and proudly exhibits their tanned bodies in a manner that might seem odd (but also liberating) for our Lutheran sense (Fritidsresor catalogue, Winter 2000-01, p. 34, my translation).

Apart from sensual and welcoming, the destinations are surprisingly often described with a tone smelling of the colonial era. According to the study of Grinell, it is not the contemporary aspect that is sold to the Swedes, but rather the timeless and exotic. The

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74 See for example Fritidsresor catalogue: Summer 1998, p. 372, p. 377, p. 386; Winter 2000-01, p. 8, p. 27; Winter 2001-02, p. 24; Winter 2006-07, p. 71. One example of the eagerness to please the Swedish visitors is shown in the following text on Natal: “The city’s mayor became thrilled when Fritidsresor as the first European travel agency discovered Natal, and she has done everything to make sure us Northerners like it. Among other things she commanded that the simplest bars by the beach be torn down and for this winter season new more well-equipped restaurants and cafés will have been built at the beach in Ponta Negra” (Fritidsresor catalogue, Winter 2001-02, p. 24).
tourist destinations should preferably be untouched by Western civilisation, unimportant if the keeping of cultures and places for our sake forces the inhabitants to continue in poverty (Svenska Dagbladet, February 22, 2005). The Swedish self-image is juxtaposed to the Swedish attitude towards foreigners and it is made clear how Swedish modernity has been created through comparison with people who are not regarded as modern: primitive African, exotic Orientals, mañana Spaniards, peasants in colourful folk costumes and so on (Grinell, 2004, Abstract).

The following quotation, describing the man who began the colonizing era in South America, Colombus, as the first tourist and possible also the first sex tourist, could perhaps pass as a funny anecdote: “Christopher Columbus was the first tourist on the Canary Islands, when he made a stopover here (and had an affair with the wife of the governor, Beatriz Bobadilla) on his sailings to America” (Fritidsresor catalogue, Winter 1998-99, p. 7, my translation). But descriptions like the following on the Dominique Republic cannot:

This country is already in our blood. [...] Maybe the truth is you have to love a country that seems to have dance and music as its religion. Poor and uncivilised, yes – but miserable? No. A mentality that might be devastating for the development of the country, but extremely liberating for us disciplined Europeans, prevail here. Live for the day, dance, laugh, drink and be happy. [...] The men are men (a true macho culture flourishes here), the women are women who with delight and pride sway their exuberant assets (Fritidsresor catalogue, Winter 1998-99, p. 115, my translation).

9. Final words

In this thesis I have taken a closer look at two organisations working to prevent child sex tourism. I have found that although they are alike in many ways, the fact that one works in a country inhabited by possible tourists and the other in a country that attracts tourists, makes their prerequisites quite different. I have found that the main obstacle to be tackled is the image that we all create regarding people and countries that are unknown to us. Swedes think of Brazil in a certain way, as a country of beaches and jungle inhabited by poor but happy people and beautiful, passionate women. Brazilians on the other hand think of Swedes as rich and cultivated. Many times, these images we have of others coincide with the image that that the other has of him/herself.

I have found that this is the issue that should be dealt with in a more direct way in campaigns, in order to prevent sex tourism. I also strongly believe that sex tourism should be combated since it is an expression of a long row of inequalities and injustices – between sexes, social groups, classes, countries and regions. Those inequalities have their

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roots in colonialism but also in today’s social structures and the unequal global structures. Therefore, I do not think it is effective in the long term to separate child sex tourism from sex tourism when campaigning against the phenomenon. In the majority of the cases, the same issues are involved. A more achievable separation in campaigns would perhaps be between sex tourism and paedophile sex tourism.

Not all these issues can be dealt with by the relatively small organisations, Ecpat in Sweden and Resposta in Brazil. Nor should they be, the campaigning and information work of the organisations have to be kept at a level that is possible for the tourists, the main target group, to digest. However, I have found that the two organisations sometimes seem unsure of who the target group of the campaigns is. In some occasions a more nuanced communication could have proved more effective. This goes for texts as well as images used in campaigns and other communication material.

My conclusion is that although the issues are similar for Resposta and Ecpat, they have to be dealt with in different ways according to the possibilities of each organisation. Sweden lacks a discussion on our role as tourists, what we become and represent when we travel to the South and what we bring in our luggage – that is the old notions of colonialism. As tourists we are guests in a country, we are not kings over that country’s nature, bodies, goods or environment. We need to learn respect. These issues have to be discussed in our society, amongst tourists and within the tourism industry and Ecpat Sweden could be the moderator for such a discussion. Regarding Brazil, there has been and still is an obvious problem as to how the country and its inhabitants see and portray themselves, on television, in films, literature and tourism advertisements. Perhaps here the discussion that Resposta could introduce in Natal could be about a greater respect for ourselves and for what we can actually offer tourists and, on the other hand, what tourists do not have the right to have access to.

Abstract
This thesis studies the work of two organisations working to prevent child sex tourism, Ecpat in Sweden and Resposta in Brazil. Issues dealt with cover how the organisations campaign and what messages they choose to focus upon. I have also looked closer at the Code of Conduct, a tool used by both organisations to make the tourism industry committed to the prevention of child sex tourism. I have further analysed advertisement material from Swedish travel agencies and made a quick exposé over the Brazil tourism advertisements since the 1960s.


Pruth: Sun, sea, sex and Swedes.

Key words: sex tourism, child sex tourism, sustainable tourism, post-colonialism, the image of the other, the image of Brazil, exotism, tourism advertisement, communication for development.

Resumo

Essa tese estuda os trabalhos de duas organizações que atuam na prevenção do turismo sexual de crianças e adolescentes, Ecpat na Suécia e Resposta no Brasil. Os tópicos estudados referem-se a como essas entidades organizam suas campanhas e quais as mensagens que elas enfocam. Também estuda-se o Código de Conduta/The Code of Conduct, um instrumento usado pelas duas organizações no intuito de facilitar a indústria do turismo a se comprometer na prevenção do turismo sexual de crianças e adolescentes. Desse modo, analisa-se os materiais de propaganda das agências suecas de viagem bem como faz-se um estudo geral sobre a propaganda brasileira de turismo desde a década de 1960.

Palavras chave: turismo sexual, turismo sexual de crianças e adolescentes, turismo sustentável, pós-colonialismo, imagem do outro, imagem do Brasil, exotismo, propaganda de turismo, comunicação para o desenvolvimento.

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