CHAPTER- 1

INTRODUCTION: HISTORY OF

PROSTITUTION

– RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT
Prostitution and prostitutes have existed in all ages and in all societies to meet the masculine needs of society. So long as the virtue of respectable women is regarded as a mother of great importance, the institution of marriage has to be supplemented by another institution which may really be regarded as a part of it — the institution of Prostitution.

Bertrand Russel

1.1 Introduction

Prostitution and civilizations have gone hand in hand all over the world. Historically, religious beliefs and social customs prevalent in society from time to time provide the earliest accounts of its origin. It is rather difficult to enumerate or identify all factors conducive to prostitution because it has often been argued that prostitution has its roots deep in the fabric of society.

Prostitutes are not new to the society. Like poverty it is one of the oldest social problems and oldest profession in the world. In the pre-historic days one can find references of prostitutes even in religious books and epics. Nagar Badhus or Kinnaris are examples of such ladies who depend for their livings on dance performances and prostitution. It denotes the dawn history. In European and American countries also prostitution worked as an institution. As an Institution it has been prevalent ever since

colonial days. Many prostitutes migrated along with other colonial settlers. Some were transported along with other criminals. The sermons of ministers, the criminal laws, the writing of travellers and report of jail conditions all attest to the existence and extent of prostitution in colonial America. Prostitution flourished during the nineteenth century with the growth of the eastern industrial cities and the rise of western mining towns.

1.2 Meaning of Prostitute and Prostitution

In ordinary parlance the word "prostitute" means typically a woman, who engages in sexual activity for payment. As to this definition, Beaumont, C.J. says that, "I do not say that this is a universal definition and I do not suggest that a prostitute is bound to be entirely indiscriminate and to accept the first customer who offers her price like a cabman on the rank. But I certainly think that prostitution involves more than intercourse with one man". He added "a kept woman, who confines her favours exclusively to one man, even though he is not her husband, is not, in my opinion a prostitute. Of course, a kept woman may also be a prostitute as may be a married woman. But I think that prostitution involves a more or less indiscriminate employment of the woman's body for hire".

The word prostitute has been derived from the Latin word *prostibula* or *prosedæa*.

The houses of ancient Greek harlots were allowed to be opened in the afternoon. The

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girls stood or sat before the lupanasia to attract the entire passers by. Therefore they were called prostibula or proseda.\(^5\)

The dictionary meaning of the word ‘prostitution’ is the act or practice of engaging in sexual intercourse for money and the word ‘prostitute’ connotes a person, usually a woman who engages in sexual intercourse for money.

Ploscowe said that “if the woman offers to satisfy sexually in any manners whatsoever any man who meets her terms and conditions, she is a prostitute”.\(^6\)

Fryer has pointed out that a prostitute, “is a woman who gives for money that which she ought to give only for love, which ministers for passion and lust alone, to the exclusion and extinction of all the higher qualities and nobler sources of enjoyment which combine with desire to produce the happiness derived from the intercourse of the sexes”.\(^7\)

According to Paul Wilson has pointed out that “it is most expedient to adopt an operational definition”. He went on saying that “a prostitute is a person who for immediate payment in money or valuables will engage in sexual activity with any other person, known or unknown, who meets minimal requirements as to gender, age cleanliness’ sobriety ethnic group and health”.\(^8\) He added further that “even this

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5. Varma P. Sex offences in India and Abroad: A Sociological study, B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi – p.g. 119
definition does not wholly suffice for the concept of prostitution is based on culturally determined values that differ in various societies in the world”.

Mamoria defines prostitution as sexual union by a woman with a person who is not her husband, for some consideration in cash a kind and prostitution is a woman who sells her sexual favours indiscriminately and takes money or other valuables for each act of intercourse; and who has no psychic involvement. The gist of the problem is that “it is more or less a promiscuous sexual intercourse” that is, all women who are guilty of intercourse outside the marriage state may be regarded as prostitutes.

The famous French Physician, Dr. Rey regards prostitution as the act by which a woman allows the use of her body by any man, without distinction, and for a payment made or expected.

Elliot and Merrill, have defined prostitution as an ‘illicit sex relation on a promiscuous and mercenary basis with accompanying emotional indifference”.

Eustace Chesser is of the opinion that prostitution may be defined as indulgence in promiscuous sexual relations for payment usually in money; with the absence of the emotional element that is a part of most other sexual relationship. It may be noted that besides female prostitution, male prostitution, both hetero and homosexual, also exists though on a smaller scale.

Fernando Henriques , the eminent anthropologist of Leeds University has advocated that, “Prostitution consists of any sexual acts, including those who do not actually involve

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10. Rey, Dr. Public and Secret Prostitution, [n.p], 1851 page 1.
copulation habitually performed by individuals with other individuals of their own or the opposite sex, for a consideration which is non sexual. He added further that in addition to sexual acts habitually performed for gain by single individual, or by individuals with animals or objects, which produce some form of sexual gratification, can be considered acts of prostitution”. Emotional involvement may or may not be present.¹³

Harry Benjamin, defines prostitution as ‘promiscuous intercourse for hire’ to which however, can and should be added that such intercourse is legally indiscriminate, without affecting and frequent anonymous, payment being made in cash.¹⁴

Gagnon and Simon has mentioned that prostitution is conventionally defined, in order to distinguish, it from other socio-sexual activity, as the granting of sexual access on a relatively indiscriminate basis for payment, either in money or barter, depending upon the complexity of the local economic system, with the payment acknowledge to be for specific sexual performance. They further pointed out that this service may be performed by either males or females for either males or females though in practices in nearly all societies acts of prostitution are commonly performed by females for males or by males for males”.¹⁵

There has been gradual change in the concept of prostitution. Prostitutes for years have been viewed only as a female phenomenon. This is evident from the fact that Webster’s dictionary defined a prostitute as “a woman who offers herself indiscriminately for sexual intercourse for hire”. Bonger stated that “those women are

prostitute who sell their bodies for the exercise of sexual acts; and Kingsley Davis pointed out that "Prostitution is distinguished by the elements of hire, promiscuity and emotional indifferences". According to him what is regarded as objectionable about prostitution, is "not the prostitute's promiscuity, but her willingness to sell her favours and her feelings of emotional indifference".

However, since the end of 1940's and beginning of 50s, it has been recognized, that prostitutes can also be male persons, including male children. According to, Alfred. C. Kinsey who is known for his classic and scientific studies on 'Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male and Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female, a prostitute is "an individual who indiscriminately provides, sexual favour in return for money". He felt that, "the person who is specifically paid for a single sexual relation is, for that particular occasion a prostitute".  

**The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Woman & Girls Act (1956)**defines 'prostitute' as a female who offers her body for promiscuous sexual intercourse for hire, whether in money or in kind; and 'prostitution' means the act of female offering her body for promiscuous sexual intercourse for hire, whether in money or in kind. The Act was amended in 1978, wherein the definition of the word 'prostitute' was omitted and the expression 'prostitution' was redefined as the act of the female offering her body for

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18. Vide, Section 2(e) and (f) of Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, (1956).
promiscuous sexual intercourse for hire, whether in money or in kind, and whether offered immediately or otherwise and the expression ‘prostitute’ shall be construed accordingly.¹⁹

Though in the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially women and children, 2000, the definition of prostitution is not given but it includes prostitution under the term of Immoral Trafficking, which means -- “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of threat, use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of the power, or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation........”

1.3 Prostitution in Ancient World

Prostitution is, perhaps, coeval with human society. It was found in all societies, all over the world, and in all ages. Through literature, art, paintings and sculptures, the presence of prostitutes had been documented in the most ancient civilizations. Acceptance or encouragement of prostitution seems a common societal posture and is often resorted to by disadvantages females such as divorcees, widows, the unmarrigeable, slaves and captives. In brief, it is in part, the solution of the economic problem faced by females without husbands. Sometimes, in societies that ordinarily

degenerate prostitution and even make some effort to preserve female virginity, it is encouraged when the economic reward is sufficiently great. Thus Marquesean parents encouraged their daughters to barter coitus for valuable goods brought by sailors.\(^{20}\)

Sacred prostitution was very widespread in antiquity. Religions incorporated prostitution as a transitory, rite to be done once or, more commonly as a continuing religious obligation of a particular class of women priests, who themselves were sacred harlots.\(^{21}\)

In some places ordinary respectable women went to temple and has intercourse with the priest or with a casual stranger. For example, Myletta\(^{22}\) rite of ancient Babylon, where every female was required to sit in the temple of the goddess and accept coitus from the first male who threw silver coin in her lap. Similar customs involving other goddess are known to have existed elsewhere in the Middle East. Perhaps all such customs arose out of the attempt to secure the fertility of women through the favour of Gods, or the fertility of the corps by sympathetic magic. In the olden days the worship of Isis, Moloch, Baol, Asrats, etc in the temples of Egypt consisted of the most extravagant sex orgies. The temples were reduced to centers of vices. Girls were purchased for temples. Obligatory prostitution by a certain women, priests was also a custom in Western Africa.

The Old Testament mentions about extensive prevalence of sexual vices and prostitution in Palestine of old puritan days. But all the same the laws of Moses for the Jews were very strict in matters of sex. Penalty for adultery was death.


\(^{21}\) Mannhard, W. Antike Wald and Feld Kulke, Berlin, 1875, was first who pointed out that religious prostitution developed, as a general rule, out of the believe that the reproductive power of human has mysterious and also sacred influence in increasing the fertility of the nature.

\(^{22}\) Goddess of Venus.
Italy had played a very important role in Europe by giving encouragement to art and letters during the early days. However, no influence played a more important part in bringing about the downfall of Italy than that of immoral conduct of the Popes and their advisors. In the eleventh century, a brothel and church stood side by side in important cities like Rome, Venice, Florence, Pisa etc. The clergy was accustomed to live in sate of public concubine.

Roman laws governing prostitution date from the reign of Emperor Augustus, but there is abundant evidence to show that prostitutes were common in the city of Rome at the time when authentic history begins. From time immemorial prostitutes had been required to register themselves. During the reign of Trojan the number of registered prostitutes was 32,000 in Rome alone but this number obviously fell short of the truth because there were great variety of classes into which the unregistered prostitutes were divided.

Rome had its vestal virgins who were dedicated to the service of Vesta, the goddess of fire, a living symbol of the sprit. It may be mentioned that sexual license reigned supreme in the later days of the Roman Empire as women population was much less compared to the males and as a result, many men could not marry at all and had their intercourse with prostitutes. In Renaissance Italy made painstaking cultural distinctions between lower class *whores* and upper class *Courtesans*. 23 Sixteenth century writer Pietro Aretino compared the prostitute to a soldier, she was paid for doing wrong but was not

condemned because that is what the society needed from her. Prostitution in this period was still governed by the effects of the structure which had been built in pagan Rome. It was a period of confusion and transition in which the status of prostitutes was indeterminate.²⁴

In Greece, the greek mythology supposes a related state of public morals. The first legal code provided the penalty of death to those found guilty of rape, seduction or adultery. Later, the law was changed establishing house of prostitution which were filled with female slaves. They were known as Dicteria under the control of municipal police. The lowest class of prostitutes was known as Dicteriades. They were originally required to reside at the Piraeus, the seaport of Athens, four miles from the city and forbidden to walk out by day. They all paid taxes. Bought with the public money, and bound by law to satisfy the demands of all who visited them, they were considered as public servants and their wretched income was legitimate source of revenue to the state. Prostitution became a state monopoly, and so profitable that a large temple, dedicated to Venus, was built out of fund accruing from the source.

At the height of Athenian prosperity, there were four classes of women, who lived on prostitution on Athens. The highest class was Hetaire or kept women who lived in the best part of the city and exercised influence on the politics of the state; next came the Auletrides or flute players or dancers, who were generally foreigners, and earned their livelihood by prostitution. Then came the lowest class of prostitutes known as

²⁴ Henriques, Fernando, op.cit. page-31.
Dicteriades, and lastly came the concubines, who were slaves owned by rich men with the knowledge and consent of their wives. They all paid taxes. In Greece some of them were exercising great influence in the social and intellectual life of the community.

In Egypt man was disguised as the God. During the period of God Amoun beautiful girls were sent to the temple of Amoun to be prostitutes of the God. These girls were called Amoun's harem or sacred women. When they grew old and incapable of meeting the sexual needs of the priests they were relieved of their temple duties and got married. When the Arabs invaded Egypt in the 17th century prostitution was flourishing.25

Medieval Christianity developed its own institution of consecrated females called nuns. Numbering hundreds of thousands they were considered to be 'brides of Christ', a little close to devadasis.26 They were kept in seclusion for as St.Jerome expounds Jesus is a jealous spouse. He would not want others to see (their) face. And this was certainly one of the reasons why it was thought wicked for them to have intercourse with mortals. They loved a vow of chastity.

France in eighteenth century exhibited the classical pattern of prostitution in high places. The courts of Louis XIV and XV exhibited a licentious manner and behaviour which finds its perfect expression in Les Liaisons Dangereuses of Choderlos de Laclos.27

26. Religious prostitution attached to temples. For reference see 1.4. Prostitution in India.
27. Herriques, Fernando, op.cit.page.126.
In France with the consolidation of the kingdom of Franks, it was noticed that concubinage was an established institution, recognised by the law and sanctioned by the church. All the Franks chief who could afford to the luxury maintained harems who were called *gynecea*, were ministered to their pleasures. Perhaps, the first authentic legislative notice of prostitution in France is to be found in the Capitularies of Charlemagne. That monarch who seems to have seen no mischief in the system of *gynecea*, was severe upon common prostitution. He directed vulgar prostitutes to be scourged, and a penalty to be inflicted on all who harboured them, kept houses of debauch or lent their assistance to prostitutes or debauches. In other words, Charlemagne treated the same act as a crime among the poor, and an excusable habit among the rich. An important distinction is made in the Ordinance between public debauch and public prostitution. In case of the latter, the procedure was simple. There was no appeal from the sentence. As such prostitutes, common whores, could not be affected by attacking their characters, punishments were necessarily physical such as imprisonment. Previous to this they had been wiped, had their hair cut off, or left to languish imprisoned for indeterminate period.\(^{28}\)

Information regarding the French society in the Middle Ages is obscure and scanty. From the available materials it is found that immorality prevailed in an alarming degree during the tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Rich men who maintained harems were considered the most virtuous class in the nation. West of the kings set an example of loose intercourse with the ladies of the Court. The armies of the time were noted for the ravages they committed among the female population in places

where they were quartered. In the south of France, prostitution had long been a deeply scattered feature of society. The passions of the Southerners required a vent and, in the absence of safety value, it was obvious to all that are ungovernable lusts of the men who soon kindle the inflammable passions of the southern women. Public houses of prostitution were, therefore established in three of the largest cities of the south——Toulouse, Avignon and Montpellier.

Of the number of regular prostitutes exercising their calling in France during the 15th and 16th centuries no correct assessment can be made. It was undoubtedly large. During the religious wars, a writer supporting the cause of Protestants estimated that there were at that time one million of women, more or less who led habitually lewd lives, and ministered to the passions of the clergy. They were independent of the married woman who were led into adultery, and of the pimps and procuresses who were in clerical pay.

In Great Britain in the ninth century, prostitution in a wide scale prevailed throughout the country. At no period in the history of England had the licentious of the court had been greater than it was during the reign of Charles II and James II, only to be exceeded, perhaps by the fearful abyss of debauchery and atheism which few years latter was beheld in the Courts of Louis XV. London is said to contain fifty thousand prostitutes, without reckoning kept mistresses. The most wretched of these live with matrons, who lodge, board and clothe them. The dress worn by the very lowest of them is
silk, according to the custom which luxury has introduced into England. In the upper classes of society the core -rottenness of the courts of Charles and James was felt during the reigns of the succeeding sovereign, even down to the time of George III Kings and queens of England were surrounded by their lovers. Industrial revolution in England caused widespread prostitution and led to immense extent of juvenile depravity. Factories were made accountable by many writer for much immorality and prostitution.

The cases of abuse of children between the age of ten and fifteen were a threat of beyond all proportions. Many of these cases were not reported to police; several of them were not out of same or compromise. To quote from “History of the Salvation Army” written by Frederick Connts,”exploitation of young girls was the most replant aspect of the Victorian sex, there were child brothels in all parts of London, particularly the East end. Every evening towards midnight, more than five hundred girls paraded between Piccadically Circus and Waterloo place, a stretch of ground no more than three hundred yards.

Incidence of sexually transmitted diseases was very high among the prostitutes in London. The period at which syphilis first made its appearance in England is obscure. During seventy seven years ending 1835, ten thousand and five females were received within London asylums of which six thousand two hundred and sixty two were satisfactorily provided for, two thousand nine hundred and eighty were discharged for misconduct. Taking all the institutions in London up to that time, it was estimated that fourteen or fifteen thousand prostitutes had the opportunity of returning to a virtuous life.

In China, prostitution prevailed to a prodigious extent. Seduction and adultery were frequently reported and brothels and their inmates were found everywhere, on land and water. In 1832 there were from eight to ten thousand prostitutes in and near Canton, of whom greater portion had been stolen children and were regularly trained for this life. In brothels, if a child was born its support devolved upon the father but in cases where the connection had been concealed, the infant was killed after birth. Young girls walking alone were liable to be stolen for incarceration in brothels. Many kidnappers gained a living by stealing young girls and selling them to brothels, and even parents had been known to lead their daughters through the streets and offered them sale.

A foreign visitor to Canton described the sale of children as everyday affair, as a simple mercantile transaction, Foot binding of women from their early age was common practice to make their feet small and beautiful, but another purpose might have been to restrict their movements. Some were brought up as prostitutes and were transferred to brothels. Women who disposed of for concubinage but others were deliberately battered to be brought up as prostitutes and were transferred to brothels. Women who were lodged in prison under the care of female wardens, employed them in prostitution for their benefit. Incidence of infanticide was high in China due to poverty among poorer classes and severity of laws against illicit sexual intercourse.

In Japan, brothels (geisha houses) were of great splendour, each containing thirty, forty, fifty or even a larger number of women and young girls who were traditionally apprenticed to geisha houses, often, by poor parents. The cost of their
accommodation, clothing and training were borne by the geisha houses under an
arrangement which saddled young maiki (trainee geisha) with astronomical debts to be
gradually, recovered from their income.

The extent of prostitution which was universal throughout Japan would cause it to
be taken as a regular institution. Geishas were all licensed and taxed and the price of
these woman was regulated by law. The poor people sold their daughters to the brothel
keepers, who brought the girls up with various accomplishments. After the expiry of their
term in geishas they resumed their places in society without any stain on their reputation.
Illegitimate births and infanticide were not uncommon. A Japanese was allowed to have
only one wife legally but he could have as many concubines as he liked. Wives could be
divorced without cause shown. Every place of public entertainment maintained
prostitutes as a part of the establishment. No village was without one or more houses of
ill-fame. They were all licensed.

In, United States of America, a very large majority of prostitutes were of
foreign birth. But Negro prostitutes constituted considerably outnumber white ones in the
Deep South America of the 1960’s. But the real point to appreciate is that Negro women
did not become prostitutes because of some defect of character, or from intrinsic
degeneracy, but originally had been compelled to debauchery and dissoluteness by the
white masters under slavery and majority of them subsisted entirely on prostitute
earnings. The immense maritime business of seaports and constant flood of immigration

filled the localities with thousand of sailors, men proverbial for having a *wife in every port*.

A recent phenomenon in New York, which has appeared in response to the demands of the wealthier sections of the community, is a certain type of club. There was a wide diversity among various grades of prostitutes in the city of New York. The first class those who resided in what was known as *Parlor House*. They were furnished luxuriously, located in selected part of the city and provided with all amenities available in those days. Old brownstone houses were converted into luxurious premises. Their visitors were mostly confined to men belonging to higher classes who could make liberal supply of money. Boarders were allowed in these houses. In a sense these clubs are a reversion to the once so fashionable upper-class parlour houses of the nineteenth century.\(^{31}\) There were second, third and fourth classes. The number of street walkers among prostitute were high in number.

In *Spain*, the Code of Alphouse IX, in the twelfth century, provided draconian legislation. Procurers were flogged, imprisoned, banished and liable to very severe punishment. Subsequently when clandestine prostitution increased and infected the virtue of families, a total change in the legislation was effected. Public brothels were established. One of the largest brothels was located in Valencia in the fifteenth century and constituted a complete suburb in itself. Physician were appointed and they were required to pay weekly visit to all recognized brothels. Diseased women were removed to

hospital. Venereal disease appeared in Spain to 1522 when a special hospital for venereal patients was founded in Madrid.

In Portugal, in 1780 scandalous licentiousness of monks and nuns were widespread, of whom there were no less than two hundred and fifty thousand in a population of two millions. Illegitimate children of girls were openly deserted in the villages and were brought up in an asylum run by the government.

In Germany (Hamburg and Prussia) ancient legislation in respect of prostitution was based upon a toleration of the necessary evil for the safeguarding the abuses of women and girls in families. The earliest legislation in Hamburg can be traced to the year 1292. Tolerance of prostitution in Prussia can be traced to the first Berlin enactment in the year 1700, which was revised in 1792 by a new code of regulations and they continued to remain in force in Berlin and other cities for many years.

In the seventeenth century, in place of tolerance and limitations of brothels, strict laws were famed, house of public women were pulled down and women expelled. There were frequent instances where the pillory or exile was inflicted for the crime of prostitution. In 1807 Proctor Abendroth issued an ordinance recognizing brothel keeping and prostitution as a calling, and permitted them to operate under severe restrictions. For many years, Hamburg city had about 500 registered prostitutes and one hundred registered brothels. In Prussia, in January 1810 there were 44 houses of prostitution,
divided into three class controlled by government at that time. Subsequent history shows that all attempts to abolish brothels in Prussia failed.

Prior to coming under the German Empire, Leipzig was an independent country where the legislation on prostitution was based on the ordinary German principle of toleration. Leipzig had been subjected to many fluctuations at various times and the laws and regulation on prostitution had undergone frequent changes. All brothels were registered and so also the prostitutes residing in them, and later they were subjected to police and medical supervision, as syphilis had its large percentage of victims. Brothels were situated in the lowest and least frequented parts of the city, resorting to every conceivable disguise to conceal the real character.

In Stockholm (Sweden) in 1838 there were 1137 illegitimate to 1577 legitimate births; in 1839 there were 1974 illegitimate to 1492 legitimate births. Street-walking and open prostitution were rare. But illegitimacy was of considerable extent, averaging one in five or in some parts, one in thereof of the total births. Very nearly half the registered births were illegitimate, to say nothing of the illegitimate bastard children born in wedlock. Stockholm was considered the most immoral capital in Europe. In 1836 prostitution was forbidden, by express enactment, throughout Sweden, and women who had not a legally recognized occupation were liable to imprisonment as disorderly characters. The prostitute came within this category. It was asserted at the time that there was no common prostitution, but a counter statement was made by the jurist Angelot,
who affirmed that every house of entertainment was a brothel, and every maid servant a loose woman.

In Russia, there were 40,000 registered prostitutes. Many of them lived in a number whose houses, in St. Petersburg alone, a short time before the Revolution. Prostitution by boys was also common and they earned about as much as the female prostitutes. The Czars and their wives were of very loose morals. While the Czars maintained a large number of concubines, their wives had unlimited number of paramours.

The mortality of St. Petersburg was the lowest and some writers say that a woman had no right or opportunity to be virtuous. It was a city of men, containing one hundred thousand more males than females. Women formed only two-seventh of the entire population. By reason of disproportion of sexes it is said that ladies could not venture out at night unattended. The incidence of infanticide and child mortality which look place as a result of immorality and unrestrained sexual intercourse. The conjugal relations of Russians were extremely loose. Women had two or three illegitimate children by different men. Rarely one in hundred of these children were claimed by its parents; majority were looked after, during infancy and childhood in hospitals, the largest and most magnificent was the Foundling Hospitals at St. Petersburg; the Wospitatel noi Dom is the most magnificent of this kind in Europe.32

In Australia, among Australia natives sexual intercourse was unrestrained and almost promiscuous. Polygamy was practiced by the more powerful men of the tribes. Sex exploitation of native women by white men and along with it venereal diseases was widely prevalent. The deficiency of respectable young women was very much felt by the colonists and the home government took action to supply the want. A large number of young women went out from Great Britain, under the charge of matrons and medical officers and their arrival was hailed with great satisfaction. It was not unusual thing for a young man, a settler far away from the country, to come down to the government centers at Melbourne and Adelaide on the arrival of the female immigrant ship, and then and there to pick out partner for life. Among these women many of them were of depraved character who turned to prostitution for easy money. During the gold mania prostitution in Australia was rampant.

In the Islamic Countries In Middle East, such as Persia and Afghanistan women occupied an inferior position where they were literally the property of men. In Persia polygamy was allowed but common usage among the Shah and noblemen permitted them to have concubines of unrestrained number. Wives and concubines lived in harems by armed eunuchs.

Persia had numerous opened avowed prostitutes, among who the dancing girls were conspicuous for their beauty. They had considerable sway until the time of Fatteh Ali Khan, who filled the place with concubines. Social life was most depraved under the Sufi dynasty. Public brothels were numerous and they contributed largely to the national
revenue, no less than thirty thousand prostitutes paying an annual tax in Isphahan alone. The governors of provinces allowed similar privilege for money and there was scarcely a town which had not a licensed brothel, whose inmates were known as Cahbeha or the worthless. Subsequently the practice had ceased due to firm action taken by the rulers. But clandestine prostitution prevailed and private brothels flourished in all the cities of Persia.

In Afghanistan, marriage was commercial transaction, the women being sold for prices varying according to circumstances. Polygamy was allowed under the Islamic Laws but was too expensive to be practiced the majority of people. Some rich people maintained a large number of concubines. Late marriages among poorer classes encouraged prostitution and birth of illegitimate children.

In all Latin American Countries which originally consisted of aboriginal inhabitants the conditions of female sex was, by and large degraded. The influx of foreign ships and sailors into the ports had brought in its train the usually accompaniments, debauchery and prostitution. After foreign conquests, Latin American countries adopted Christianity as their religion. Christian priests were generally of loose morals and indulged in prostitution with local women. When foreign armies took women prisoners they made a division of them.

Long before the civilization entered the peninsula of Africa wild and savage tribes could be found. The population was divided into various tribal groups of African States.
The condition of female sex was degrading. Females were marketable commodity; a man could sell his wife and bought another from the proceeds of the transaction. Every African tribal king had a wife and hundred of concubines. The governors of provinces and cities followed his example, Polygamy was allowed. Parents were known to hire their daughters, husbands hired their wives and women hired themselves as prostitutes, for a trifling sum. Morality was unknown among the savage tribes until Christianity made its appearance.

In Srilanka the original institutions of the Singhalese did not license public prostitution, nor made brothels of the Buddhist temples. Whatever effect the Buddhist religion produced was in favour of virtue. But profligacy among men and lack of chastity among women are general characteristics, and even those who professed Christianity they were not free from this stain. Among Kandrians polyandry was widely prevalent. Polyandry system of marriage prevailed and a nation of high caste was sometimes the wife of eight brothers. Open and acknowledged prostitution was rare except in the seaport towns. Under the Khandian dynasty if a public woman profess directly as a prostitute had her hairs cut off and she was publicly whipped in a state of nudity.

1.4 Prostitution in India

In India, prostitution had existed, as in other societies, from time immemorial. Various prose, poetical and dramatic works and numerous erotic paintings and sculptures refer to unrestrained sex life since remote ages. There are passages in the Rig Veda which
demonstrate it's existence in the *Vedic age*. Even in those pre-historic days the ganika had her prescribed place and functions in the social hierarchy of the time. Prostitutes (*known as Veshyasa, ganika*) happened to be one class of women who were not bound by the rules and restrictions which limited the freedom of housewives. There were many poor and cheap prostitutes, who would end their days in beggary, or as menials and work women, but the typical prostitute of literature was beautiful, accomplished and wealthy, enjoying a position of fame and honour comparable to that of the Aspasias and Phrynes of classical *hetaira*, in Greece.

The authorities on erotic demanded that as an essential part of her profession she should be thoroughly trained in sixty four arts or kakas. These formed a stock list, which included not only music, dancing and singing, but also acting, the composition of poetry, flower-arrangements and garland making, the preparation of perfumes and cosmetics, cooking, dress-making and embroidery, sorcery, composition of riddles, spying, archery, teaching parrots and mynahs (a kind of birds) to talk etc.

It was hardly true that the prostitute did in fact study all the arts of this rather bizarre list, but it shows what was expected of her. If she mastered those arts most suited to her profession a brilliant future awaited her." A courtesan of a pleasant disposition, beautiful and otherwise attractive, who was mastered the arts ... has the right to a seat of honour among men. She will be honoured by the king and praised by the learned, and all
will seek her favour and treat her with consideration". The literature of the Middle Ages fully bears out this statement.33

Typical of such accomplished courtesan was Amrapali, the hetaira of Vaisali, famous in Buddhist legend. Much that is said of this lady is certainly legendary, but it gives significant indication of the status of the better type of courtesan in ancient India. Amrapali was immensely wealthy, highly intelligent and famous throughout the civilized portion of India. She was one of the most treasured possessions of her city, and mixed on equal terms with princes. On her last journey to the hills, as she passed through Vaisali, the Buddha accepted invitation to dine in preference to that of the city fathers, who wished to give him a civic reception. Amrapali is said to have become a Buddhist nun, and one of the most beautiful poems of the Pali Canon is attributed to her.

The prostitute was protected and supervised by the state. Kautilya’s Arthasastra mentions the appointment of superintendent of prostitutes who was responsible for the care and supervision of the palace courtesans, the inspection of brothels, and collection of two days earnings from each prostitute every month, as tax to the government. Teachers and trainers of prostitutes were given encouragement by the state. So it seems, prostitution has hardly undergone any changes in its basic forms and methods since those early times.34 As in all other societies, around the prostitutes congregated men of doubtful character, either outside the law or on its borderline --- thieves, rogues, pseudo

33. Joardar, Biswanath, “Prostitution in Historical and Modern Perspectives”, New Delhi, Inter – India Publications, 1984, Pg – 39
34. Sinha, S N and Basu, N. K. “History of prostitution in India”, The Bengal Social Hygiene Association, Calcutta, 1933, P-115
magicians, etc. The texts on statecraft recommended that for this reason special watch
should be kept on brothels and that prostitutes should be enlisted in the secret service.
This fact was noted by Megasthenes, who remarked that the spies did much of their work
with the help of prostitutes.

The position of the courtesan merged with that of the concubines. Kings and
chiefs retained in their palaces numerous prostitutes, who were salaried servants, and who
often had other duties to perform, such as attending on the king's person including duties
of bathroom servants, bedroom attendants, presenting to the king water, scent, fragrant
powders, dress and garlands. It was their privilege to hold the royal umbrella, the golden
pitcher, and the fan, and to accompany the king when he sat on the throne or was borne in
his litter or chariot. Prostitutes of this type accompanied the king where ever they went,
and even awaited him in the rear when he went into a battle. A prostitute had to give her
musical performance in court at the age of eight and she could only regain liberty by
payment of a heavy ransom. When she grew old and ugly, a post was found for her in the
royal storehouse or kitchen or she was appointed as a matrika (nurse).

Another type of prostitute pursued her trade in an order of sanctity. In the
Middle Ages the God in the temple was treated like an earthly king, he had his wives, his
ministers and attendants and all the paraphernalia of a court-including his attendant
prostitutes. These were often the children of mothers of the same profession born and
reared in the temple precincts, but they might be daughters of ordinary citizens, given in
the child-hood to the God as pious offering. They attended on the God's person, danced
and sang before him, and, like the servants of an earthly king, were at the disposal of the courtiers whom he favoured; in this a case the male worshippers who paid their fee to the temple.35

There is no evidence of temple prostitution in very early times, though it existed in other ancient civilization. And has been suggested that the most striking of the figurines in bronze dancing girl of the Harappan culture is a representative of a class of temple dancers and prostitutes. The earliest record of religious prostitution comes from a cave at Ramgarh, in the Vindhya Hills some 160 miles South of Varanasi. This cave contains two significant inscriptions in a Prakrit script which shows that they were written long after the days of Ashoka. Temple prostitution was most common in the South, where it survived until recent times. In the Chola period the institution of devadasi was very well organised. Most temples employed devadasis who provided the music and dancing within their precincts. It is mentioned in one of the Tanjore inscriptions of Rajaraja dated 1004 A.D. that he ordered the transfer of temple women from other temples established in Chola country as the number of devadasis employed in the temple, which obviously employed number of dancing masters, singers, pipers and drummers.36

We find reference to prostitution by Manu and various sidelights upon the position of courtesan in Vatsysyana’s Kama Sutra written about A.D. 250-3000, which may be described as the Indian Arts Amoris. Manu’s ideas in the latter treatise on erotic

seems to have been borrowed from older works, for example, the Sutras of 600-200 BC and the *Atharva Veda* which contains several passages dealing with love, charms and philtres. It is also known that prior to the date of Vatsyayana, Babravya had compiled a voluminous work on the same subject and that treatise on one section of his work was written by *Dattaka* at the request of courtesans on Patliputra, then the capital of Mauryan empire. The result of this literary activity, coupled with the system followed at the royal court was that the science of erotics had been placed on an equal footing with the sciences of *Dharma* and *Artha* as a branch of bearing that Indian princes had to acquire.

The records of later ages indicate that public women still occupied a recognised position in the social economy, and further that the system of setting apart separate quarters of the city or town for their occupation had become stereotyped. Prostitution, in many contexts were honoured and respected and was much approved by the *Smiriti* writers, whose works contains passages of warning against the evils of prostitution reminiscent of those in the Jewish Book of Proverbs. Manu and some other writers classed the prostitutes with the thief and blackmailer, and declared that Brahmans must never consort with prostitutes. One source even maintains that the murderer of the prostitute commits no sin and should incur no punishment in law. But, as noticed in many other cases, the secular attitude differed very greatly from the religious ideal, and here it was the secular view which prevailed. By the Middle Ages the brahmans who propounded the sacred law might themselves be attached to temples with hundred of prostitution of their staff.
During the Muslim conquests large scale atrocities were committed on women and they continued during the Mughal rule. Many women sexually assaulted by Muslims turned prostitutes as they were not accepted in the Hindu Society. Prostitution was recognised and encouraged during the Muslim and Mughal emperors, their governors, officials and landlords. Dancing and singing girls, and courtesans were in great demand during Muslim and Mughal marriages and social functions. Prostitutes accompanied Muslim and Mughal arrivals on active service. During battles they captured large members of Hindu women and girls and forced them into prostitution and concubinage. During the reign of Akbar, according to Ain-i-Akbari prostitutes at the capital were so many that they defied enumeration. Separate quarters were assigned to them in the city known as 'Shaitanpura'. A ‘darogah’ and a ‘clerk’ were appointed for it, who registered the names of all those who visited prostitutes, or who wanted to take any of them to their houses. If any one wished to have a virgin, he had in the first instance to apply to the emperor for permission. During Shahjahan’s reign, great liberty was given to public women of whom the greater member was singers and dancers. All of them paid taxes to the emperor. Aurangzeb, at the beginning of his reign, left matters in status quo but later he ordered that all prostitutes must marry or leave his dominions. And this was the reason, that the palaces and great enclosures in which they dwelt went to ruins little by little, for some of them married and others went away. Muslim prostitutes were numerous in number in Northern India ranging from the inmate

37. Fazl Abul, Ain -e-Akbar (1590), translated in English by Blochman, H., second edition, Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1927 Pg 301
of brothels to the wealthy courtesan, who earned a high fee for her singing and occupied well furnished quarters.

Dancing girls and courtesans were an indispensable accessory of the confederate Maratha States. Shivaji alone forbade female slaves or dancing girls to accompany his army on active service. Any soldier discovered to be keeping one of these women was liable to be beheaded. Most of the Peshwas encouraged prostitution and kept concubines, the court of Baji Rao II was more gay and licentious that of his predecessors.

In Marwar, there existed a class of prostitutes known as Bhagin, i.e. the wife of a Bhagat or holyman. Among these women it was necessary for a girl to be normally married before commencing her career of prostitution, and a mock marriage was arranged between the girls and a sadhu (religious mendicant), who was always prepared to relinquish every connection with the bride for small payment.

Many gipsy like nomadic tribes in northern India prostitute their girls as a matter of custom. The Bediyas for example reserved nearly all their girls for prostitution and men of this tribe kept concubines drawn from other castes. In some places, if a man married a girl of the tribe he was expelled, and if he married a girl who had been reserved for prostitution, he was fined by caste council. The Nuts (wandering acrobats) scattered over north western provinces and Oudh depended largely on the prostitution of their

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38. "Bediyas is a tribe which was initially involved in criminal activities. Now they are in prostitution in Bharatpur and Dholpur districts of Rajasthan. None of them known that since when and why they have joined prostitution", Prostitution in Rajasthan, Gram Bharati Samiti (GBS), Jaipur, 1997, Pg 13
women, and Nut girls, on attaining puberty, was allowed to choose between marriage and harlotry. If she chose the latter, she appeared before the caste assembly, and with the consent of this members became a prostitute. The tribe had been known to kidnap high-caste girls, in order to bring them up as harlots and was, therefore, kept order police surveillance. Some of them also indulge in way-side prostitution. The custom of prostituting their girls was also followed by the Habura, the Bedars, and the Kanjars who were generally speaking were of professional robbers and thieves. The Dombars (acrobat caste) of Mysore were notorious for dedicating their smart and good looking girls as prostitutes.

In Bihar and Uttar Pradesh there was a certain Naik caste, the women of which frequently became prostitute known as tawaif and were much in demand for dancing and concubinage. They were permitted by caste rules to prostitute themselves only men of higher Hindu castes, and were forbidden to consort with non-Hindus. Another caste rule obliged them to confirm their favours with non-Hindus. Another caste rule obliged them to confine their favours to one man for one night. The son of one of these women, if asked for his father's name in a court of law or elsewhere, invariably gave his mother's name in reply.

In the Western India, many women of Dhed caste of Gujrat and the Mhar tribe of the Deccan became common prostitutes, and were found in the lowest class of brothels in Bombay city. A good many Mhar women were dedicated to Khandoba, and

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became *Murlis* or sacred harlots, like the women of the Maratha Kunbi class, but a much larger member embraced the prostitution as their profession merely for the sake of living. Women belonging to some of the higher classes e.g., Vani and Marwari were also found sewing in the large cities; but these cases were fewer in number and much immorality as existed in these classes was clandestinely practiced, as a rule with selected paramours.

With the arrival of the Portuguese, French and British traders prostitution flourished in seaports of Bombay, Calcutta, Cochin and Madras. Foreign traders came to India without families and had to satisfy their sex appetite with Indian women. Many of them kept Hindu women as concubines or indulged in sexual intercourse with many of them. During the East India Company rule followed by the establishment of the British Raj, prostitution got further impetus and a large member of brothels mushroomed in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras cities for entertainment of Britishers, concentrated in these cities. Several Indians who worked as clerks under the British Rule during East India Company and early British administration amassed huge fortune by only providing prostitutes to their British masters. To earn favour from their masters many passed on the prostitutes to them as their wives, and in some cases they also supplied their married wives.

With the passage of time appeared in the scene Anglo Indian, European, Russian, Jewes, Armanian, Japanese, Chinese and even Arab prostitutes in Bombay and Calcutta cities. Except Anglo-Indians the total number of prostitutes of other nationalities-
was not large, and they came to India of their own free will. They saved considerable sum and returned to their own countries to end their days in comparative respectability. The Japanese, who had brought with them to India, the habits of the Yoshiwara, formed a powerful attraction to the Gurkha regiments at the time of the departure of the expeditionary forces for France in August 1914; and the Bombay police had much difficulty to keep order and settle disturbances in particular street where these women mostly lived. The brothels were generally managed by a souteneur whose ostensible business was that of tattooing. The traffic in Arab prostitutes, which were in the hands of Arab procuress was often marked by great cruelty. In 1911 the Turkish consulate in Bombay requested the police to help in repatriating some of these unfortunate, and inconsequence of the inquiry that ensued, one Arab brothel keeper was deported and several girls were sent back to their homes in Baghdad. One of the girls was discovered to be quite insane, though it could not be ascertained whether this was due to ill treatment or other causes.

Prostitution was encouraged by the princes of Indian states who retained hundreds of concubines in their harems even till the last days of British rule. Professional kidnappers found a more convenient field for the exercise of their activities in the territories of Indian Princely states, where female life was held to be extra ordinarily cheap among lower classes. In some princely state young good looking girls, from lower class families, were picked up, on attaining puberty, and taken to harems.
Prostitution was exploited by foreign soldiers during the two world wars and prostitutes were paid handsomely by them. The breakdown of family life and economic distress of refugees who migrated to India in lakhs immediately before and after the partition gave further impetus to prostitution. Educated women both married and unmarried, in economic distress found employments and some of them who needed more money to lead a fashionable and fast life carried on prostitution in complete secrecy. Gradually, a few girls started massage parlours and new class of prostitutes known as “Call Girls” appeared in Bombay, Calcutta and other important cities and towns.

1.5 Types of Prostitution

There are different types of prostitutes: those who cater to local customers and these are poorly paid. There are young women who acquire ‘sugar daddy’ who are generous in payments. Prostitution connected with tourism is the most institutionalized and the most lucrative. In 1970s, there was Japanese package to Philippines, Bangkok and Taiwan which included hotel, golf facilities and sexual services of women all prepaid. There is a special high-class prostitution catering to visiting businessmen. It is said to be part of the standard operating procedure of local subsidiaries to include these in their hostling obligation. They usually choose women from middle class families, especially students in elite colleges. It is therefore important to understand the various types of prostitution which are prevailing in the society.

40. Background paper for the World Conference Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Child, Oslo, 1996.
41. Mouli, V. Chandra, Jogin, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi 1992
Common Prostitutes: These comprise the unfortunate women and girls who are recruited through pimps and procurers who have been sold or landed in brothels and vice dens maintained by old prostitutes known as 'madams' and the 'pimps'. Their induction into the trade is often through allurement, misguide about nature of work and many a time through false ‘marriages’. If the pimps fail to win ever the girls through other means then the procuring gang may resort to kidnapping and abduction. The recruitment methods and the torture and the plight of this category of prostitutes is well documented by Sr. Rozario who conducted a study and interviewed 3,000 prostitutes in India. According to her the recruitment is because large number of women and girls have entered as they were raped, neither the family nor the society was willing to accept them and the pimps are constantly on the look out for destitute willing to sell their children. A girl from Bihar who was sold just for Rs. 1,000 because she was raped and the family did not want to keep a girl in the house with such a stigma. Girls are also sold by near relations on account of acute poverty. Nearly one third of the total population of prostitutes comes from this source.

Dancing and Singing Women: This is a class in itself, who have heritage from the Mughal period. They are drawn both from the Hindu and Muslim communities. Among them, the prostitution is handed down from mother to daughter as a profession with no stigma attached to a life of immorality. They are trained in the art of Singing and dancing and the girls in the family are trained in this art from early age. As a matter of fact, large

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number of them have acquired an excellence in the rendering of classical and semi-classical music so much so that they have earned a place of pride and respect among the knowledgeable person. They do not indulge in open prostitution; they entertain or attend much selected clients. Their status is considered higher than that of common prostitutes. They also take pride in calling themselves as ‘Khandani’

**Patronised by Darbars:** This class of prostitutes comprised beautiful women and girls who were raised by the kings and chieftains and land lords. They were well trained in the art of singing and dancing and were required to render special services for the rules at the time of festivals to entertain audience and guests. Sometimes, they had to enter into competitions with similar artist from outside and their excellence and performance had a bearing on the prestige of darbar. They were known as kalvanathis, ‘Mangalmukis’ and ‘Neityamangalis. Seeing their face in the morning and at the commencement of the journey was considered auspicious. They had to become the paramours of princes or sardars or important courtiers of the state.

**Religious Prostitutes:** The terms commonly used for the religious prostitutes are devadasi, bogam, jogin, murali, ganika, nati etc who enter into the institution of prostitutes at an early age. These can be referred as child prostitutes. The term devadasi is a Sanskrit word denoting deva – the God, and dasi – female slave, which literally means ‘female slave of the God’. Many believe that devadasi is the feminine form of devadasa – a man who is enslaved for the service of a deity. Interestingly, this cult continues to exist even today throughout India with some regional variations. Infact, the

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45. For reference see chapter – 2.
institution of dedication of young girls to temples or deities happens to be pan-Indian phenomenon. However, it came to be known by different names at the local and regional level. For instance to describe these women in Goa, the term used is bhavin. On the west coast, it is kudikar, bogam or Jogan in Andhra Pradesh, thevardiyar in Tamil Nadu, murali, jogateen and aradhini in Maharashtra, jogati or basavi in Karnataka, ganika in Orissa, nati in Assam and so on. Perhaps one reason for usage of different terms could be on account of the different traditions followed and languages spoken all over the country.46

1.5.1 Prostitution today - Today, in almost all countries around the world, women and children are sexually exploited in various ways. These are discussed below:

Traffic in children, child prostitution and abuse of children.

Earlier the age of minor prostitutes varied between 15 and 17 years but today in most cases the children are 5 to 8 years if age it even younger. Buying and selling of little children have been widespread in the international marketed ignoring, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.47 Illegal sale of the children which is sadly the product of crimes has been operating through large scale multinational networks. There is illegal adoption of children for commercial purposes have been the most sensitive aspect.

46. Mukherjee, K. K. op. cit., 20 and Giri Mohini, op. cit – pg 32-40
47. The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on 20th November, 1989. It bears the opinion regarding protection of children everywhere against exploitation, neglect and abuse. Within five years the convention on the rights of the child has been ratified by 186 nations. The convention draws attention to four sets of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights of every child. These includes – The right to survival, The right to protection; the right to development and the right to participation.
Sex Tourism: Sex tourism to Third World countries is condoned and encouraged by governments for earning foreign exchange. The World Tourism Organisation has defined sex tourism as *trips organized with the primary purpose of affecting a commercial sexual relationship by the tourism with the residents at the destination*. Sex tourism or more specifically, traveling to a foreign country in search of sex, has become a well developed component of the commercial sexual exploitation of children. The sex tourism industry is most prevalent in Asia, where approximately one million children are prostitutes, and this epidemic is spreading to other poverty ridden area of the world such as Latin America and Eastern Europe. Sex tourism is attaining global dimensions through the internet. The advent of sex tourism in India has rung the death knell for the thousands of children who are being forced into sexual slavery. It is now becoming the ‘steadiest, least seasonal and most lucrative opportunity for women’.

Pornography: Pornography which used to be rather clandestine before, has now become an economic force playing a larger role in creating demand for exploitation and abuse of adults and children. It has become a big organized business worth billions of dollars. Teenage children are being widely, abused in pornographic literature, photographs and in shouting of films showing sex activities in action. Pornographic literature and films of violence and sex which have a dangerous effect on weak and unstable minds are now being mass-produced and widely circulated worldwide. India and South Asian countries area slowly replace south East Asia as a venue of choice for foreigners as there a fewer

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laws against child sexual abuse and South Asian Children can be bought more cheaply. Sex offenders commit crimes in other countries and return to their own, confident that the law enforcement agencies of the third world countries will not be able to catch up with them.

**Homosexual prostitution:** Today homosexual prostitution ring can be found in the Western, Middle East and South East Asian Countries and they have international links. Paedophiles bring in their wake appalling phenomenon, namely buying and selling minor children. The pedophilic tourists mostly from European Countries make pornographic films with 5, 6 or 8 years old children. In Sri Lanka, homosexual prostitution, by foreign tourist, is a blooming industry. There are prostitution houses in several areas, the inmates of which are all boys.  

**Clandestine Prostitution:** Clandestine prostitution in the form of call girls has growing rapidly. They are in great in the multistoried apartment houses, hotels and motels, industrial and government guest houses. These call girls consist of students, working and non-working and unmarried women and girls, widows, divorcees and housewives. They are available all the year round. Clandestine prostitution takes place also in the backside of the massage parlours, beauty parlours, dance hall etc. the number of which is multiplying every year. In a clandestine environment, men continued to require sex,

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49. Child Prostitution – The ultimate abuse, report on the National Consultation on Child Prostitution, 18 – 20 Nov. 1995, New Delhi, Organised by the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT), and UNICEF.

50. Child Prostitution in Western India, Report of Regional Workshop 29-30 May 1996, New Delhi organised by the Department of Women & Child Development (Government of India) and UNICEF – INDIA.
women continued to sell it, and there were also mistresses available for the wealthy businessman, politicians and high government officials.  

It has been found that in the present trend a new type of prostitution has come up in the name of *bar dancers*. A report based on the study of hundred bar girls across the city of Mumbai by NGO Prayas, states that most of the women did not know the nature of their employment at the time they were initiated into the trade. They were largely trafficked into it by middlemen, and once brought into Mumbai, were led by hand into the profession. Thereafter, they had no choice but to continue as other viable alternatives were not available to them.

**Contract Advertisement**: Contract advertisements are to be found in local newspapers, and nation wide magazines for housewives who work on Commercial basis as occasional prostitutes offering their services in their even private houses, in the houses of their friends or by coming to their client’s houses for sexual relations on the basis of mutual consent, or sometimes on a vaguely commercial basis. Pornographic advertising on television and magazines for men and sex magazines publish advertisements promoting substances to increase potency, embellish breast, prolong the orgasm, prevent pregnancy or stimulate desire. They also advertise for mail order firms of this sort giving their prospectus and catalogues.

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52. Bar girls were victims of trafficking: Study, The Times of India, 21.09.05, Kolkata, page 12
Houses and profits from Prostitution: In olden days brothels were located in the lowest and least frequented parts of a city and many of them presented in excess some of the worst features of such places. Every brothel was required to display a red lamp in front (consequently known as red light area) and was not allowed to operate near a school, church, temple or a hospital. Today, brothels in disguised form are scattered throughout the city and operate clandestinely in multi storied apartment houses, private houses, college and university campuses and even in graveyards. Some of those brothels are patronized by politicians, police and powerful gangsters of the underworld.

The gamut of those who profit from prostitution runs through a wide spectrum of the small and visible, and invisible. Sellers sometimes begin relatives and recruiters who provide the human flesh for sale. The immediate dealers are the pimps who procure business for the prostitutes and get a handsome commission from it. Go between are taxi drivers, rickshaw pullers, tourist guides, bell boys, hotel personnel and priest in places of pilgrimage. Protectors of the trade are policemen and law enforcement officials. The invisible sellers are those who hold command responsibility for the entire prostitution phenomenon----politicians, businessmen and the powerful gangster of the under world.

Rapid industrialization and urbanization have led to widespread prostitution. Migration of men from village to cities in search of employment, leaving their sex starved families behind and overcrowding of slums where men and women workers lived side by side created scope for immorality. Factories have been accountable by many writers for such immorality and prostitution. Children who work in factories are sexually exploited by their employers as well as by their co workers.
1.6 International Traffic and Exploitation of Prostitution

Prostitution was previously confined within the national boundary. Today it has become an international phenomenon. Wealthy nations are exploiting women and children in the third world countries as a result of decline in their economic situation. The third world countries in order to solve their desperate problems of poverty, unemployment and over population take refuge under the umbrella of industrialization without thinking of social consequence in human terms.

The gritty underworld of the international flesh trade may seem implausible throw back to 19th country slavery but in the 1990s it is thriving. Amsterdam, long famous for it tolerance of the local sex industry has a population of prostitute i.e. now 60 percent South American, South east Asians and Africans, a share that reaches 80 percent among the city’s trade mark store window prostitutes. In Japan recruiters are paid as much as 8000 dollars for delivering a girl the ‘working life’. Portuguese procurers take young Portuguese women to Spain with offers of employment in bars, night clubs, restaurants or hotels. These jobs serve as covers for the procurers to introduce young women into prostitution. Prostitution is a form of slavery with international ramifications. The fight against it must be carried out at the international level. Increasing the public awareness is essential but that should be coordinated on a global scale.

54. Report from the Kendall, R.E., the Secretary General of International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL).
1.7 Divergent approach to prostitution

Today prostitution is a much despised profession. It adapts itself to the changing conditions, profits from varying situation and continues to spread its networks, reaching in an alarming manner. Yet the increasing number of prostitutes and the expansion of red light areas suggest that the profession enjoys the patronage of a certain section of society. Countries all over the world have adopted today, three different approaches to prostitution based on the social attitudes of their citizens.\(^5\) They are:

**Prohibition:** They are the countries which ban prostitution and pimping. The police and department of justice play an important role like closing brothels, fining and imprisoning those who practice prostitution or who profits by such activities. The inequalities apparent in this kind of police activity are appalling – the clients themselves are not affected.

**Regulation:** They are the countries which permit prostitution and allow the existence of brothels and other houses of prostitution. The State considers prostitution a ‘public service’ and a ‘necessary evil’ and facilitates conditions for its existence. Their governments in agreement with the reality frame rules to control the system and to maintain law and order. Brothers are registered, prostitutes are licensed and medical checks are held. However, no such rules and regulations are applicable to clients.

\(^5\) Ghosh S.K. ' The world of Prostitutes' Volume – II, 1996 New Delhi, A.P.H. Publishing Corporation,
Abolition: They are the countries which advocate only the abolition of the regulation of prostitution and its exploitation but not the abolition of prostitution itself, since this is legal. Their aim is to eliminate discrimination brought about by regulation to combat organized procurement activities and to create a situation where no one is forced to prostitute himself/herself against his/her will.56

The aim of the abolition system is (i) to eliminate administrative and police regulation, (ii) to forbid obvious prostitution such as soliciting, and (iii) to prohibit pimping and the establishment of organized prostitution.

The abolitionist countries have two priorities, namely first protection for those vulnerable to prostitution and secondly, reintegration into society of those who wish to renounce prostitution. Majority of the countries accepted this system and ratified the international instrument.57

Two thoughts complete with the Abolitionist school of thought:

i) The classical thought that men’s sexual impulse is uncontrollable and can only be relieved through physical sex with a woman. If such a sexual expression is not allowed then it would endanger the moral and physical safety of every woman in a civilized society. Hence, it is more utilitarian to sacrifice a few unfortunate woman in the flesh trade than risk every woman member of the society.

ii) The second, and more recent


contender is the school of thought which holds that woman seek liberation from the oppressive parochial family system and get empowered through sale of their bodily sex.\textsuperscript{58}

The practice of prostitution may be the result of a combination of any of the following factors like sociological, economic, political, religious or cultural. It is estimated that of the more than 20milions prostitutes in the world today, 4 million are children. The number grows more and more alarming.* Poverty is one of the major causes of prostitution. In Third World countries, due to very poor socio economic conditions, women and children are easy prey for sex merchants and submit to prostitution in order to survive.

**Summary**

A survey of prostitution in the ancient world shows that it had been a world wide phenomenon. Religious (scared) prostitution had been a tradition of sexual ritual which had persisted, through the ages, and became a part of religious worship. It is here that the true story of prostitution begins. While they clung to their goddess – worshipping traditions, they chose prostitutes as their career. There was no dearth of clients for them as they were virgins and young girls. Men did not marry till their middle age and their appetites created a demand for illegitimate sex, which female weakness supplied.

\textsuperscript{58} Trafficking: A socio-legal study, National Commission for Women, 2001. pg. 9-10.
The prostitution had been causing widespread damage threatening every man, women and child in the community for hundred of years. Strenuous and well directed efforts had been made at different times by the rulers, governments and church to suppress it but all had been in vain. The houses of prostitution appeared spreading diseases and death. Severe penalties had been inflicted on prostitutes, brothels had been raided and destroyed and hundreds of them had been sent to prison. But before a month had elapsed a hundred more had taken their places, and those punished were not reformed. Severe laws compelled secrecy; they did no more. The teachings of virtue and morality had been powerless here. Nature defied all human laws and moral teachings. Moral or religious principles restrain their operation in some; human laws in some, the fear of consequences in some, yet there always have been, and probably always will be, many of both sexes who are not restrained by any of these considerations. Suppress it in one form, it immediately assumes another. Again pursued, it retreats to hiding places where darkness and secrecy protect it from the pursuer.

In India origin of prostitution had been traced back to the Vedic period. There was a custom of religious prostitution in the name of Devadasis, Jogin, Bhavin etc. This was the pious institution which got into disrepute and temples became a abodes of sex recreation. A glance of prostitution in the medieval India have been reflected. In Mughal period prostitution was recognized institution. For their proficiency and skill in singing and dancing, the prostitution were considered as one of the best sources of enjoyment and pastime for Kings and noblemen. Prevention of prostitution could be seen during the
era of Auranzeb. Prostitution continue to thrive during British regime and even after 1947.

Today it exists in every big city and town of the country, even though no authentic information is available about the number of prostitutes and the persons involved in the trade. But the number is fairly large and the profession is percolating to new areas. Methods and techniques of the profession have been developed and perfected on a commercial basis. It has become a commercialised on an open and organised scale involving ruthless third party interest of the procurers, pimps and brothel keepers.