FROM TRAVELING FOR ENJOYMENT TO TRAVELING FOR EROTICISM: TRACING THE NEGOTIATION BETWEEN SEX AND TOURISM WITH REFERENCE TO SOME FAMOUS NON-ASIAN FILMS

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Abstract. Tourism is not only a form of short-term migration that involves excessive consumerism in a colonial setting, where the paying client is served in the way in which colonial elites were served, by servants whose mobilities tend to be far more limited. There's more than this, as there is religious tourism, business tourism, intellectual tourism and some other types. However, tourism bears in its consumerist excess the urge to engage in sexual experiences. Sex has been a part of tourism for a very long time. As Martin Oppermann says, "While some countries may be more renowned for the availability of commercial sex, sex tourism exists everywhere". Men (predominantly) travel from more developed countries to less developed ones in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean for sex that is either not available or more expensive or qualitatively less pleasurable at home. But this is not restricted to men, because there is now a stream of discreet travellings by affluent western women to places in the Caribbean and Africa, where sex with local men is explicitly anticipated. However, Heidi Dahles and Karon Bras also note similar relationships developing between local beach boys (who develop an 'entrepreneurial romance' style) and western women tourists in Indonesia. According to many recent analysts, sex is not motivated purely by the "consummation of commercial sexual relations", and there are "complex processes by which individuals choose to seek sexual gratification, first within prostitution and secondly as part of the tourist experience". Whether characterised as *"sex"* tourism (commercial sex with the locals) or *"romance"* tourism (commercial sex with the trappings of a "real" relationship), this practice has inspired a good deal of academic research in the social sciences and popular literature as well. This paper offers, therefore, a critical analysis of the selected films focusing on the varied motivations that

contemporary popular culture passionately pursues in its quest to gratify sexual impulses, even within the context of tourism.

Keywords: consumerism, sexual gratification, prostitution, tourism

Travel as *"displacement"* has long been associated with experimentation, growth, and transformation—possibilities of being *"Other"* to oneself. Certainly, there are aspects of female sex tourism that resonate in positive ways: empowerment (the realization of, or receptivity to, desires and subject positions that would be considered taboo at home) or its opposite (a dismantling of the self whereby power is repudiated, a more powerful impulse in male travellers) or, of course, some constellation of these and other motivations. Undoubtedly, sex and tourism are not confined to wealthy international male tourists travelling to exploit poor local women, although that is common enough. We know that prostitutes travel too and, sometimes, they are international tourists, working at conference venues, international hotel districts, casinos and resorts. In Germany, for example, "the large share of foreign prostitutes actually means that in many sex tourism settings it is the prostitute who is the business tourist, an aspect of sex tourism that deserves more attention". Oppermann also reminds us that white slavery was common well into the twentieth century, with young women abducted and sold into foreign brothels. Similarly, not all prostitution is heterosexual, and there is an enormous complexity in the diversification of sexual desires and services. Further, sex tourism is not confined to the sexual services on offer to clients: red light districts are routinely listed as attractions in most tourist cities, and this voyeuristic tourism may be a prelude to further investigation or a sexualized end in itself. In addition, there are all manner of sexual spectacles that encourage a mild form of sexual voyeurism. British author Chris Ryan suggests that Sydney's tourist-packed Mardi Gras and similar events in San Francisco and Auckland have a strong voyeuristic, sexualized quality, particularly among the largely heterosexual crowds. Nor is prostitution all of a

piece, indeed it is precisely because prostitution in some parts of the world varies from the (often) sordid *brief* and unelaborated nature of client–prostitute relations in the west that men are particularly attracted to sex-centred travel to specific places (Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines, for example) where this is not the case (Opperman 1998, 46).

The desire for the consumption of bodies in a physically exploited colonial world has its particular history in popular culture and the entertainment industry. It does not simply emerge out of need or opportunity, but relies on images that are already burnt into our retinas. Tales about Oriental and exotic men who seduce European women were among the first box office hits of the emerging film industry in Hollywood. The silent movie *The Sheikh*, starring Rudolph Valentino, is among the earliest successful films of this genre, which, to a large extent, was as much about colonial propaganda as it was about desire and repression. The images of the colonial Other, who is characterized by his violent masculinity and boyish smile alike—the infantilized colonial Other who is sexually menacing—have continued to shape fantasies and imaginations of how exoticized and Orientalized men look and what they do for metropolitan White women: fulfill them sexually and liberate them from the tedious tasks of everyday life.

Female audiences were made to sense that there might be something far more interesting waiting for them than household work and monotonous labour. An adventurous life full of opportunities for self-actualisation was, however, not to be found where they lived but in the exotic lands of Orientalist fantasies, which by that time had utterly real counterparts in the colonised world. And like the colonised subjects in the Global South, the women in these texts had to turn into obedient subalterns (Pratt 2007, 26).

The production of popular cultural artefacts that promise similar gifts is enormous, giving way to tourism industries that promise fulfilment of these dreams. Productions such as *Eat Pray Love* have greatly contributed to an increase in tourism to specific countries or

regions (such as Bali) and resonate in a large corpus of texts. As a form of cultural mobility, such images and stories trigger specific cultural practices, social strategies, emotional reactions and economic processes rather than simply reflecting them. We have not considered these movies for our project, but only a few, which we felt were enough. Watching them again and again, we found ourselves consuming film after film in which body after body was consumed (Kempadoo 1999, 63).

We assume that without telling their monotonous stories about sex tourism, these films, all based in countries of the Global South, would not get much attention. Just as books about Africa in which no *scandalous* love story occurs would not sell well, these films receive attention only when a dark-skinned person depicts a dependent lover giving up his or her ego, language or behaviour as a result of unequally distributed power relations. The films all deal with what Skinner and Theodossopoulos call cultural-sexual tourism, which can be seen as the extreme result of *stranger fetishism*, where postmodern consumption constructs the stranger as an impossible (or unreachable) figure. Here, the consumer places himself or herself in the position of the stranger with the help of commodities, as if it were possible through certain products, e.g. coconut products. Sara Ahmed assumes that consuming a stranger involves "a transformation in the subject who consumes" (Opperman 1999, 258). This kind of transformation is the focus of all five movies that we analysed: a transformation into the exotic Other through the consumption of the exotic's body. The sexually connoted exoticization of difference is, in the sense of bell hooks, directly given in scenes of some of the movies, where the exotic Other is "eaten" or bought in relation to fine food.

All the films share the idea of showing the unequally distributed power and resources of the European sex tourists and the local lovers in order to transfer this interpersonal inequality into an international one, which automatically leaves the spectator with the everlasting argument that the support of these exploited lovers helps them more than it harms them. This dilemma has been voiced by

Foucault and is felt by many people in the West, where the "primitive" Other is the target for Westerners' own selfish pleasure. Bell Hooks points out:

> It is precisely that longing for the pleasure that has led the white west to sustain a romantic fantasy of the 'primitive' and the concrete search for a real primitive paradise, whether that location be a country or a body, a dark continent or dark flesh, perceived as the perfect embodiment of that possibility (Garrick 2005, 501).

The films that we will discuss are *Sand Dollars (2015), How Stella Got Her Groove Back (1998), Die weiße Maasai* ('The White Masai', 2005) and *Paradies: Liebe* ('Paradise: Love', 2012) all of which take place in settings that are favourite destinations for female sex tourism: the Dominican Republic (*Sand Dollars*), Jamaica (*Stella*), Kenya (*The White Masai* and *Paradise: Love*). All these movies are well-known, and some of them have gained considerable critical recognition. *Sand Dollars* was selected to be screened in the Contemporary World Cinema section at the 2014 Toronto International Film Festival. The film was selected as the Dominican entry for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 88th Academy Awards. *Heading South* won the Marcello Mastrioanni Award and CinemAvvenire (Cinema For Peace) Award at the 2005 Venice Film Festival. *How Stella Got Her Groove Back* received the Best Film award, and its actresses, Angela Bassett and Whoopi Goldberg, won the Best Actress award at the 1999 Acapulco Black Film Festival. *Patong Girl* received the Grimme Prize 2016 in the category *'Fiction/Special'*. Nina Hoss, the leading actress in *Die weiße Maasai*, received the Bavarian Film Prize. *Paradies: Liebe* was awarded Best Film Production at the Austrian Film Awards, as well as winning the categories of Best Director and Best Actress (Margarethe Tiesel).

WATCHING SAND DOLLARS (2015)

It starts with common images. Tropical scenery, a bit sad. Some actors speak Spanish, for which subtitles are provided. This creates

a feeling of authenticity because this is the language of the people. We watch players in the sex tourism business in the Dominican Republic, embodied by Geraldine Chaplin as Anne, the older woman, tourist and client, and Yanet Mojica as the younger one, Noeli, a sex worker. There is also Yeremi, Noeli's lover, who wants to live with her. Noeli is pregnant and Anne is in love (with Noeli). Anne wants both of them to travel to Paris. But Yeremi and Noeli cheat on all their clients and leave them heartbroken.

In a great colonial house, Anne and the other wealthy tourists talk about how everything was grander in the past. This scene crucially shows Anne's desperation by making use of specific language practices and discussion topics. The elegantly dressed White elite, who constitute the new colonisers in the Dominican Republic, spend their evening discussing the economy and politics of the land, which they claim to know so much more about than the Dominicans themselves. While Anne tries to keep up appearances, the neocolonial discussions fade, and Anne's true problem, her love for a Dominican girl, emerges as the focus of the film. The language used in this short scene is a highly elaborated political lexicon which is used to display the great gap between the White elite and the Black working class.

Besides language, gifts create connections between people. A tourist gives Noeli a necklace as a token of his everlasting love. She takes it to the pawnbroker for 400 dollars. Bodies do not have this power: they are delicate, thin, worn out, old and vulnerable. When the pain and the lies become unbearable, Anne phones home. She speaks French, a soliloquy on the phone. Nobody talks to her, except for her grandson, who is telling her about his faeces. Her connection to the world of her descent is trapped in children's language, talk about excrement and silence. French language, however, remains. Yeremi asks Noeli about what Anne does to or with her. Noeli's gaze is all we see. In this lesbian love story, which is also a story of exploitation, some things remain unspeakable. Bodies collapse, everything is ruinous. Anne meets an old friend. They talk in English. He shows her photographs of a man whom

both of them once loved. Now this love has come back. Anne discusses her problem with her friend and tells him that she wants to stay forever. But Noeli does not phone. Problematically, Anne's decision about staying is not rooted in herself but rather in Noeli's behaviour. In a short dialogue with her friend, Spanish is made into the language of emotional blackmail. Spanish, Noeli's language, the language of the suppressed, is used to linguistically emphasise the situation of suppression in which Noeli finds herself. The friend tries to win Anne back to the life they once had together by using French, the language in which Anne converses with her son and grandson.

> Anne: But, you know, if she doesn't phone, *na voi* …
> Friend: Well, that's good news
> Anne: *Me marcho*
> Friend: Good idea, you need to leave. *Changer les idées.*

Sad White gaze, wounds that do not heal. The exploitation of southern bodies. Sadness in a luxurious home. American English articulates ancient rights. That the past was better is a topic that needs French. A business call needs English. Personal matters too: "I'm very much in love with a Dominican woman". And life goes on.

After the necklace, Noeli receives a visa in her passport. Another token of everlasting love. But she will not wear red shoes on the Champs-Élysées. She leaves with Yeremi on a motorbike. This is the end of the film, and it is a relief: it is good that everything falls into ruins so that Noeli and Yeremi can raise their child away from late capitalism and neocolonialism.

WATCHING HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK (1998)

> *I didn't come all the way down to Jamaica to become a slut*
> How Stella Got Her Groove Back

Stella is a romantic comedy about a highly successful, self-sufficient African American woman, played by the stunning Angela Bassett,

who has lost her "groove". She books a trip to Jamaica (based on a television commercial featuring an alluring Rasta man cavorting on the beach), where she meets a very attractive and much younger Jamaican man who enables her to get it back. The film is a full-blown Hollywood fairy tale, complete with a seriocomic turn by Whoopi Goldberg as Delilah, the homely but irrepressible sidekick. The movie does not, of course, raise the spectre of racism, but neither does it worry the issue of class. Rather, it negotiates alterity on the basis of exoticism. What begins as romance tourism, however, turns into the real thing. The "groove" that has been lost (and found), while cast in terms of "having a man in your life", has much greater implications in terms of Stella's self-definition. In its simplistic idealisation of ethno-sexual intimacies, Stella foregrounds only the age difference between her and Winston (Taye Diggs), whom she meets at a posh resort in Jamaica. His status as a desirable—but in no way taboo—"exotic" is established by implicit comparison with a couple of goofy African American athletes on holiday in the same hotel. That status also imbues him with a certain authenticity and wisdom against which Stella's mere common sense and worldliness are bound to fail. Winston's "difference" may be understood in terms of stereotypes that cast the Jamaican (even when he is bound for medical school at Stanford) in a series of binaries that valorise his superiority, not only to the boys from home, but to Stella as well. It is Winston who encourages Stella to follow her bliss (building furniture) rather than returning to her high-powered job in finance.

When Winston first approaches her in the hotel's outdoor café (over breakfast, not late-night cocktails), our expectations naturally prepare us for a hustle. It turns out that, far from being a hustler, he is staying there with a friend and seeking legitimate work. Having just graduated from university, he is resisting his father's wish that he attend medical school and thinks, instead, he might want to be a chef. The film takes great pains to distance Winston from any association with the common "trade" while preserving the sex stud aura glimpsed in the television commercial that first lured Stella to

Jamaica. Not content merely to allow Winston a "natural" nobility, the film stages an awkward meeting between the couple and his arch and disapproving aristocratic parents in their stately mansion.

Winston follows Stella to New York and surprises her at the funeral of Delilah—another sign of his preternatural sensitivity. Yet their relationship does not unfold seamlessly in the States, for he is childlike and enjoys watching simple television shows and playing video games with her son. She is at first reluctant to introduce him to her family. He feels hurt. One wonders, though, despite their physical attraction, what they might possibly have in common. Stella suggests as much. Winston proposes; she hesitates; he has been unable to convince her that age does not matter. He complains that she always wants to be in control. At last, he gives up. He tells her he is returning to Jamaica to attend medical school (this will realign him with the patriarchal imperative). Maybe it's his decision, finally, to "man up", but at the last possible moment, the camera cuts to Stella awaiting him at the airport escalator. This is pure Hollywood schmaltz. They embrace, and the film ends with her parting question**:** *"Ever hear of Stanford"?* No state schools for Winston!

What is the nature of the "groove" that Stella gets back? The early expository scenes make this clear. The film opens to a scenic panorama of wooded hills at dawn, but almost immediately zooms in on a jogging woman and then abruptly cuts to an office sequence in which that same woman—Stella, smartly dressed in a black business suit—is seen impressively fast-talking her way through a series of lucrative financial deals. She moves briskly and competently through these scenes. The film then cuts to a male colleague who appears to be envious and who must, a few shots later, plead for her services to do some damage control on his behalf. At first, she says she's too busy, but then relents. The next sequence finds Stella in an austere-looking spa where women sit in identical seats with identical robes and mudpacks on their faces, soaking their feet in identical tubs. This is where we meet Stella's sisters, who provide us with some necessary information. She is divorced and has a son; she works too hard (which we already

know), and her sisters believe she needs a man. One of them is planning to fix her up with a judge. Stella says she doesn't need a man. Sure.

The next sequence is at the airport; Stella is seeing her son off. He will be spending two weeks with his father. The boy reluctantly turns back to face his mother. She asks what's wrong. He implores her to "have some fun". Following this, the camera pans to a highway out of the city into the hills, and we are introduced to Stella's magnificent home, spacious, with glass walls, immaculately appointed. The glass windows are important because they allow us to see it is raining outside. Stella is alone in the great room, tinkering on a grand piano. The house is a metaphor for Stella, beautiful but incomplete. She turns on the television set and sees a travel ad for Jamaica, portrayed as a sexy and romantic getaway, into which she projects herself. As she admires a close-up of a comely man in dreads, the phone rings, and it is "Judge", the man Stella's sister wants to fix her up with. Indeed, he is an occupation rather than a person. His dry, effete voice and dialogue are juxtaposed with scenes of the Rasta man. We know who wins out. Stella calls her best friend, Delilah, who lives in New York City, to propose a trip to Jamaica. Delilah does not answer, so Stella leaves a message. She immediately calls and leaves another message telling her to forget about the trip; she can't get away. Cut to Stella in another area of the house, a greenhouse/potting shed. It is still raining. Stella reaches for an empty pot as Delilah calls back and convinces her to take the trip. Just as this sequence juxtaposes Judge and the Rasta man, so too does it force the viewer to contemplate the difference between the idealised Stella and the endearing but decidedly funky Delilah (who is later killed off with much pathos). Beauty is rewarded, homeliness punished or, perhaps, punished so beauty can be sufficiently domesticated.

We do not need to know much more in order to understand how "romance tourism" will figure here. Stella's world is materially showy but lacking in romantic love. Too much self-sufficiency, it is

suggested. What is more, as a successful woman—and an African American one at that—she is upsetting the natural order of things. She likes to be in control. A hint of a more "womanly" Stella is revealed in the potting room; this presages her later admission to Winston that her true passion is building furniture, with its resonance of nesting and nurturance. It is significant that she does not wish to study architecture so as to build houses themselves. Stella is out of touch with her "inner woman". Even her young teenage son is wiser than she is—a prescient reminder that age (even life experience) is not a signifier of sagacity. A similar juxtaposition—that between the sexy Rasta on television and the "judge"—points toward a valorisation of the primitive exotic as against the educated and more "appropriate" professional. Finally, the natural beauty that surrounds her home is dampened either by her highly disciplined jogging feet or a soaking rain. Stella's "groove", then, might be her unacknowledged desire to return to a *more "natural"* (*i.e.* patriarchally sanctioned) feminine ideal. Motherhood, apparently, is not sufficient; however, it does further enhance her womanly credentials, especially as contrasted with the characters in *Heading South.*

Stella relies on several twists to what we might consider the "dominant" narrative of female sex tourism. Though we might imagine, and the research suggests as much, that many female sex tourists travel to places like the Caribbean because sex is hard to come by "up here", Stella implies no such thing. Stella's "problem" is not related to her age, except to the extent that it has allowed her to achieve a tremendous amount of professional and financial success and raise an adorable and precious son. She is forty-something, but she's a knockout. The camera is not shy about lingering over her many attributes. What Stella needs to do is to recast her life, and she does so under the romantic tutelage of a man young enough to be her son. At the same time, the film does not permit her to engage in casual sex (other than with Winston, but by that time the film has established him as a serious love interest) or cavort with common "beach boys", because that would be

disruptive to the patriarchal ideal she is to embody. Hence, her love object needs to be an almost appropriate mate. (The "almost" is what drives the romance plot.) Of course, he is too young for her, but this, the movie argues, is his strength. Of course, his class credentials are impeccable. Of course, he will become (in the happily ever after, it is strongly suggested) a prosperous doctor who will take care of her, even as she takes care of future clients by helping them to "feather" their own nests. (Clearly, she is prosperous enough to effect this lifestyle change on her own.) So what's the more disturbing takeaway? Between, let's say, an uptight and fun-challenged beauty, on the one hand, and a witty and charming plain Jane, on the other, the beauty will always come out on top. It gets better. Between a highly successful and mature career woman and a barely post-adolescent boy from the island of Jamaica (this is not Paris or London we're talking about), who's going to be dominant? The boy, of course! Between an age-appropriate professional man from home and that same barely post-adolescent boy, who's going to get the lady? The boy, of course! And these outcomes are all glowingly endorsed by the film.

Stella's departures from McMillan's novel are telling and underscore the extent to which the movie seeks to more subtly align its main characters with patriarchal ideals and soften Stella's black particularity. In the first place, McMillan's Stella is a far saltier character than her film counterpart, both in terms of her language and behaviour. She's not convinced that being a "slut" in Negril is the worst thing one could do. Unlike the Angela Bassett character, she does not avoid black vernacular speech. What is more, she has some problems with "feminine odour" and, from time to time, opts to forgo 8/19 the panties when dressing for the evening. Finally, she's commodity-driven, an over-the-top exemplar of rampant consumerism. Evidently, the writers felt she needed some cleaning up. Here's how they did it. The novel kills off Delilah before the narrative begins. So, the movie, by keeping Delilah alive for a while, allows her to embody Stella's racially distinct voice and gutsy personality. (Whoopi Goldberg's presence saves the movie from

terminal blandness.) This leaves Stella free to inhabit a more idealised (and ladylike) persona. Delilah's presence in the movie, moreover, is a constant reminder that outer appearances are aligned with inner worth. This becomes clear on the first morning in Jamaica when both characters stand side by side on the beach in preparation for a run (which Delilah, by the way, forgoes). Beauty wins out every time. The movie also remakes Winston; in the novel, he is poor, despite having a doctor for a father. More importantly, he rejects medical school in favour of becoming a chef. Evidently, a humble chef-hero was not found to resonate in quite the same way as an aristocratic doctor-hero would in terms of patriarchal imperative.

WATCHING THE WHITE MASAI (2005)

We begin with a beach and a voice that speaks about memories of a holiday. They should have left it that way: a beach upside-down and a voice that babbles along. Why not? But the voice belongs to a woman who is on vacation at a Kenyan beach resort and, unfortunately, wishes to stay there to live with a man. Therefore, we have to leave the beach.

The man is Jacky Ido, who pretends to be a Samburu warrior, and the woman is a revenant of Leni Riefenstahl: tall, blonde, big eyes, although the author of the autobiography is dark-haired and average-sized. The beach resort is the Africana Sea Lodge in Diani Beach, now closed. It is as it is, and the babbling Leni-woman goes shopping for dope with her dopey fiancé. "Look, a Maasai!", he shouts, as we see Jacky in his first scene in the film. There he is, the Maasai, in the very typical pose of the Maasai warrior that can be found in each and every travel guide.

The couple have some problems in Mombasa. Chased by three Kenyans who probably want their money, the chased and the chasers run through the crowded streets of Mombasa without being

observed by any of the Mombasan people around. Just as if they were extras from another movie, they are not included in the action of the film. It is then that the two Maasai show up in the middle of the food market as the saviours, the phoenixes. The Maasai-Jacky says, "Jambo. Any problems?" The fiancé says, "We are a little lost. Which way to the ferry?". Big eyes. Subtitles throughout, translating English into German. Then there are gazes. The Maasai-Jacky turns to his fellow Maasai and says something hard to understand. Now there are no subtitles. We can only guess that this is Maa for "Let us show them the way to the ferry". More gazes. Many Africans on the ferry, but they do not talk to the strangers, again, as if they were not there. Just as they do not seem to be there in Likoni, where the couple are again overburdened by their environment and do not ask anybody for the matatu to Ukunda. The Maasai warriors return to the plot as the saviours and guide the couple to the matatu.

The woman, fiancé and the Maasai take the *matatu* from Likoni to Ukunda, and are dropped off right in front of their hotel at Diani Beach. This is ridiculous, because in reality no matatus go to Diani Beach. The woman says, "Wanna come with us for a drink?", and Jacky asks his co-Maasai something that is hard to understand. The resort photographer says, "Picture please. Smile please. Thank you. Karibuni". The resort security guard says, "Stop! Residents only". The woman says, "Sie sind meine Gäste! They are my guests!" – "Sorry, residents only". – "Wait, wait". – "It's ok, […]" (something that is hard to understand).

While one wonders why somebody should take the Likoni ferry forth and back, wearing Maasai folklore working gear in a Mombasa market, the film goes on. They go to a bar, which they say is the Bush Baby Disco, even though it looks like the Shakatak, a disco that really exists in Diani. "Do you wanna dance?", the woman asks. Jacky replies something hard to understand. The DJ plays E-Sir featuring Brenda, "Moss Moss: slowly, slowly we will get there".

The heat of the night and the music cast a spell on the woman and the others. The dopey fiancé appears and starts a fight with the Maasai. He pushes the Maasai away from his woman and says

something hard to understand. We assume that this is Maa for "Hands off". But it is too late.

The woman decides to leave her fiancé and stay in Kenya. Had she decided to stay in Thailand instead, she could have seen how the pattern of her film also existed elsewhere, as a repetition of colonial tropes of love and greed and passion, a globalised plot. Just like the take of the fiancé in bed, mosquito net around him. Will we not see this yet again in *Paradies: Liebe?* But it is as it is. She goes back to the Bush Baby Shakatak Disco and meets people whom she can ask about the whereabouts of the Maasai. He went home, they tell her.

"Where is home? – Barsaloi, in Samburuland. – How do I get there? – Take a bus to Nairobi. – Nairobi. – In Nairobi, you ask a bus to Maralal. – Maralal. – In Maralal, you ask for Elisabeth. – Elisabeth". Kenya is a really smooth country to travel in. It seems as if nothing can hinder a tourist from getting around with the only three landmarks that are necessary to find one in a million. Nairobi, Maralal, Elisabeth. The prospect of ending up in a far-away place needs the help of the last landmark, a European lady who can help to find the intended goal: Barsaloi and the Maasai, who is actually a Samburu.

So she leaves: the beach, the resort, her life, everything. And finds the bus and rides on it all night. Next to her sits a woman who is sick. "Are you ok? – Malaria. Very bad. – Oh. – Are you a doctor? – No". The stereotype jumps out of this scene and grabs our throats and we are depressed, just as we were when we were connected to *Hitler,* the *Oktoberfest, Sauerkraut* and *Heidi Klum*.

Maralal is not mentioned in the guidebook. It does not matter. It seems as if the woman has been travelling without a travel guide anyway. And without a visa. Her flight has left her fiancé as well, and the first part of the film leaves an aftertaste of sex tourism that should not have been. It should have been the feeling of wildness, love and liberty. This feeling is transmitted through gazes out of the bus window, where we again find the already familiar pose of the Maasai warrior. We switch off the TV set and go out for lunch.

WATCHING PARADISE LOVE (2012)

While Teresa is on her way to a well-deserved holiday in Kenya, everything is prepared for her. Men clean the pool, and a bus waits for her and the other newly arrived guests. A tour guide introduces them to the local language, Swahili: "Jambo! Hakuna matata". As Teresa repeats these magic words, the bus reaches the gate of the Flamingo Beach Resort at Shanzu. Staff members sing the song Jambo Bwana for the new guests. Long, symmetrical, static takes give it a disastrous ambience. Then the room, the view, a monkey on the balcony: this is paradise.

Love comes next, as Teresa takes a drink at the bar. She sits with a friend. "This is crazy. The air. One feels different. The smell of it all". Her friend has been there before, she knows how it is: these black bodies, how they smell of coconut, how one wants to bite this skin. The biting of black coconut skin can be seen throughout the film: biting of skin while sitting on a motorcycle, biting while dancing. Beautiful bodies with large genitals. She has taught her Kenyan lover some German: "geiler Bock" – "horny ram". Shrill laughter. Foreignness is tempting, and it is quite often flavoured with the teaching of completely unspeakable words, which are not unspeakable due to their taboo meaning, but rather to the unbelievable foreign combination of consonant clusters without any vowel to fix the linguistic problem. Austrian words like "Speckschwartl" – "bacon rind" or "Blunzengröstl" – "roasted black pudding" contradict Swahili phonology. These words are used to expose the Other, in this case, Josphath the waiter, who gets ridiculed. More shrill laughter. And Josphath is unable to pronounce the words. We are unable to bear the shrill laughter.

Later, they talk about their pubic hair. They will not shave themselves because here, in Africa, anything wild and natural will be appreciated. "They take you as you are". And the friend leaves, with Musa, her lover, on the motorbike she gave him. Teresa goes to the beach and meets Beach Boys. "Karibu, komm here -

Welcome, come here - Willkommen Afrika - Welcome to Africa - Hakuna matata - No problem.

Later, dancing in a small café and making an attempt to have sex. As long as no language is involved (dancing, gazing), the paradise is intact. Once language comes in (at the bar, during sex), it is spoilt. "Let me give you my gift". Teresa meets another man, Munga, whom she provides with a sentimental education. But even then, everything is ruinous, love and money, this cannot work. Teresa goes to a small bar and meets another Beach Boy. He is concerned: "Ich kümmer mich an" – "I care on you". She replies, "Ich kümmer mich an" – "what is this supposed to mean?" You'd better speak proper German".

Stereotypes and clichés are consciously transferred. In probably the most cringe scene, when a hired male sex worker dances for the four Austrian women, the scene is made even more cringe through its verbal exaggeration of spoken clichés. There are scenes in which the women yell, "We want an African dance!", "This is Africa! This is being wild! Is this foreplay?", "Look, like a carnivore!" and "Mombasa express!".

Sex, lies, sadness, greed. A display of colonial cruelty, bodies possessed by others, the colour of the skin as the dividing principle.

Rudolph Valentino's last words are said to have been, "Don't worry, chief, it will be alright".

Conclusion

There is much debate about whether reality precedes representation or it is just the opposite. Studies examining the links between sex tourism in representations and reality have explored a variety of topic areas, and report that it is the representation, *i.e.* the "production of desire" or, more precisely, the films which draw people to specific destinations in the pursuit of sexual pleasure. Other studies also find that sex has always been there in the "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each

other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of dominion and subordination, like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today" as Mary Louise Pratt, in her groundbreaking study *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (Pratt 2007, 59), points out. At a general level, we can say that if tourism comprises an important part of ritual life in late modernity, then we should not be surprised to find sexuality so ingrained in the aspirations and practices of tourists, because a heightened sense of sexuality and playfulness typically accompanies human rituals. In the case of western societies that have generally surrounded sexuality with all manner of taboos, injunctions and rules, it is little surprise that for most of the history of tourism, sexual encounters were widely hoped for and encouraged. We can say that, throughout the world, sexual taboos are often stringent, freedom of sexual access is often obstructed and difficult, and the attainment of sexual pleasure is often blocked by social, economic or physical interventions. At the same time, the media and cultural forces of globalisation pour out a steady stream of suggestions and images that sexual pleasure, fulfilment and fantasy are not only desirable but also properly attainable, healthy and good. Here is the Dionysian impulse being projected onto a global screen, and all forms of repression and denial of the body are being eroded.

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