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Tourism's Role in Sri Lanka's Adoption Practice
- Representations of Children's Homes

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Supervisor: Urban Larssen

Author: Daniel Cidrelius

ABSTRACT

The prevailing gaze on foreign adoptions of children is to a great extent supported by tourists' reflections over children's homes and translations of local circumstances outside of their homelands. Because many of these foreign persons who engage themselves in communications regarding the adoption phenomenon are adoptive parents certain things are focused while others are completely or partly unexplored on the adoption area. For instance, when turning to the dominating literature and research ideas are normalized about the good life only being possible to live in foreign adoptive parents' birth countries. On the whole, the adoption act is represented as a just and well-intended intervention in the adoption discourse.

My study is grounded in fieldwork carried out in Sri Lanka during two extended visits of approximately six month between 2007 and 2012. The fieldwork includes an ethnographic collection of reports, articles, newspaper items, official Swedish State documents, marketing of charter trips to Sri Lanka and life-histories from persons who grew up in Sri Lankan children's homes as well as participant observations in such children's homes. Altogether, I investigate some cultural processes involving links between the tourism to Sri Lanka and the Sri Lankan adoption practice which contribute to making a deeper understanding of how the order of things has been outlined in adoption contexts. My main argument is that the historical and contemporary tourism plays a greater role than what one generally imagines.

Regarding the frontlines of anthropological research I explore the ways in which forms of individual and collective life is reflected over and valued as well as how persons are constituted as citizens through reflexive practices as a part of a citizenship project transcending the borders of the nation-state. Put on its edge the thesis concerns the question of how individuals should live as citizens.

Keywords: Sri Lanka, child adoption, children's homes, tourism, citizenship

SUMMARY

To reach a deeper understanding of a few cultural processes involving links between tourism and adoptions in this thesis I reason about some changes the Sri Lankan adoption practice has experienced since the days before the Western colonial period until the contemporary post-colonial condition. What is the role of tourism in this process of change? In what ways have tourists contributed to forming opinions on adoptions of children? What accounts are given by the locals in the context of the adoption phenomenon? According to my reasoning tourism plays an essential part and I show, moreover, that historical and contemporary tourists' reflexive translation practices make significant contributions to public opinion on local and transnational adoptions, although the variety of local perspectives is surrounded by silence.

In reasoning about human traveling during vacation periods and in discussions on children's growth in children's homes outside of Sweden the links between tourism to Sri Lanka and adoptions of children to other countries may indeed be difficult to notice. It depends on the case that studying tourism is quite a challenge and that tourists easily escape elegant definitions simultaneously as the dominant literature and research on the field of adoption in most cases focus on adoptees in the receiving countries while there is a lack of voices from the locals in the giving countries.

When speaking of tourism I generally refer to human traveling involving a temporary migration to another country. Thus, an individual traveling to another country can be categorized either as a temporary migrant or a tourist. This wide characterization of tourism and tourists is put into practice because I am foremost interested in tourists' accounts on the order of things in adoption contexts. Strictly, I focus on foreign person's reflections over children, their mothers, children's homes as an environment of growth and translations of circumstances outside of their homelands.

Regarding the frontlines of anthropological research I explore the ways in which forms of individual and collective life is reflected over and valued as well as how persons are constituted as citizens through reflexive practices as a part of a citizenship project transcending the borders of the nation-state. Put on its edge the thesis concerns the question of how individuals should live as citizens.

My study is grounded in fieldwork carried out in Sri Lanka during two extended visits of approximately six months between 2007 and 2012. The fieldwork includes an ethnographic collection of reports, articles, newspaper items, official Swedish State documents, marketing of charter trips to Sri Lanka and life-histories from persons who grew up in Sri Lankan children's homes as well as participant observations in such children's homes. This methodological approach is mainly based in my curiosity to know about an upbringing in a children's home and what life one may lead after a temporary stay in a Sri Lankan children's home. The interest in learning about these issues is related to the case that I was born as a Sri Lankan citizen and at the age of three months in the beginning of the 1980s was involved in a family project which offered me opportunities to be constituted as a Swedish citizen.

Exploring how the order of things has been outlined in the context of the adoption phenomenon is a central issue of the thesis. In fact many of the foreign persons contributing with knowledge in the adoption discourse are adoptive parents and persons working with adoption issues. When turning to the dominating literature and research on the adoption area it seems for instance that (an unmarried) mother has no choice but to give up her child for adoption simultaneously as a transnational adoption is represented as a just and well-intended intervention. Contrary to such opinions my ethnographic material shows how social norms can be negotiated and that the children's home is a place among others for constituting culturally competent citizens.

The informed consensus having been constructed over the years by adoptive parents in transnational public spheres is grounded, not in empirical knowledge, but in their own opinions on the order of things in adoption contexts. Thus, voices from, among others, persons with life-histories from children's homes have been marginalized. As indicated by my ethnographic interview material with these informants it is indeed difficult to foretell the upbringing in children's homes and making predictions about the life one may lead as a citizen after a temporary stay in a Sri Lankan children's home.

Although I have traveled to Sri Lanka as a kind of tourist in order to investigate the adoption practice it can be seen that the future gaze on adoptions not only will be grounded in tourists' accounts but also in the knowledge taking form in the life-histories of citizens who grew up in children's homes and the ways in which they give voice to their perspectives in various contexts.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka's adoption practice has experienced many changes from the days before the Western colonial period until the contemporary post-colonial condition. What is the role of tourism in this process of change? In what ways have tourists' accounts contributed to forming opinions on adoptions of children? What accounts are given by the locals in adoption contexts? Reasoning about these questions in this study it is my intention to create a deeper understanding of a few cultural processes involving links between tourism and adoptions. The main argument of the thesis is that the historical and contemporary tourism plays a greater part in adoption contexts than what one generally imagines.

The thesis is based on a fieldwork among children growing up in children's homes in Sri Lanka, which is the country localized on the island next to India's most southern east coast. The fieldwork was carried out during two extended visits of approximately six months between 2007 and 2012. Many actors on the adoption area in Sri Lanka were interviewed and different tourists' reflections and translations of the order of things in adoption contexts have been studied. Moreover, I have collected material in the form of reports, articles, newspaper items, official Swedish State documents and inspected some Swedish travel agents' marketing of trips to Sri Lanka. The ethnographic material and the variation of sources I have studied shed light on several unexplored links between tourism and adoptions in general.¹

Exploring how the order of things has been outlined on the adoption area is a central issue of the thesis. In fact, many of the persons contributing with knowledge in the adoption discourse are personally involved in the adoption practice in different ways, for instance, in the form of adoptive parents and persons working with adoption issues. Thus, certain things have been focused while others are completely or partly unexplored. In particular, images are generated of children's homes as poor environments of growth and ideas are normalized of the good life only being possible to achieve in foreign adoptive parents homelands.²

My own involvement in the adoption practice started in the beginning of the 1980s when I was adopted from a children's home in Sri Lanka to Sweden. It has triggered my curiosity to learn about what it may be like to grow up in an institution and what life one may lead after a temporary stay in a Sri Lankan children's home. My interest in learning about these issues is distinguished from other actors on the adoption area. For instance, many

¹ Drawing the line between ethnographic material and literature has occasionally been difficult, for instance, because certain sources that appear academic should rather be seen as a kind of ethnographic material. I have sought to treat that problem by characterizing the author or the organization that produced the publication.

² Rather than defining what constitutes 'the good life', I claim that it could be considered as meaningful project different persons strive to achieve in the world.

authors and researchers on the field of adoption are principally interested in explaining that adoptions constitute a legitimate way to create a family by way of reflecting over (unmarried) mothers' possibilities to raise their children and presupposing that life after a temporary stay in a children's home becomes destitute in the giving countries. Consequently, I have traveled to Sri Lanka to reach an understanding of the Sri Lankan adoption practice.

My thesis takes a relatively traditional grip of the adoption discourse in applying qualitative methods. For instance, I have conducted participant observations in a few Sri Lankan children's homes and shed light on life-histories from informants who grew up in such children's homes, which is a comprehensive aim of the thesis. Thus, I have gained insights regarding the reasons children are placed in the children's homes and been able to relating experiences from the period in the children's homes to normalized ideas in adoption contexts.

Concerning the frontlines of anthropological research the thesis relates to the ways in which actors reflect over children's homes as an environment of growth in foreign adopting countries, value life in children's birth countries after a temporary stay in the children's home and constitute adoptees as citizens in a context where foreign adoptive parents' homelands enable the way toward the good life. Moving on, I shall describe how I approach the tourism phenomenon.

From 'Grand Tours' to Adoption Travels

Considered as a contemporary phenomenon, tourism emerged from so called peregrinations or educational trips that have been undertaken by European nobility sons as far back as the 16th century. The educational trips were called 'Grand Tours', from which one etymologically may derive the English word 'tourism' as well as the Swedish words 'turism' and 'turist' (Blom & Nilsson 2005:32). According to anthropologist Malcolm Crick's (1989) exposition of a range of social scientific studies the investigations oscillate between representations of tourism to other countries as something good or bad. Though, in Crick's view, the tourist phenomenon has not been given the proper theoretical or empirical focus it deserves, partly because the voices of the local population are surrounded by silence and because anthropologists have tended to shed light on the effect of tourism on cultural aspects in the destination country. Considering the complexity of the tourism system, Crick suggests that one should theorize with precaution. However, there is a need for detailed studies that creates bodies of social scientific data which distinguishes itself from other types of cultural representations and of great importance to focus on the variation of local voices because

tourism in many ways concerns “our” culture rather than the one of the destination country. All in all, Crick claims that researchers of tourism in concrete detail could explore the links between power and knowledge, the generation of images of ‘Others’, the creation of the local population and authenticity as well as the consumption of images. Those are as basic for the tourism phenomenon as they are to the anthropologist’s ethnographic material (ibid:330).

Some of the challenges Crick posed for the tourism research have been picked up by the anthropologist Victor Alneng (2002), theorizing tourism and tourists in Vietnam. Alneng points to a range of events that have moved tourism studies forward to the frontlines of research. Nonetheless he claims that the research on tourism basically stands in front of the same challenges noted by Crick more than ten years earlier, for instance, regarding the creation of the local population and ‘the Others’ voices.

By way of introduction I mentioned that it was my intention to create a deeper understanding of a few cultural processes involving links between tourism and adoptions. I have found several studies on the tourism phenomenon and many articles in the database *Annals of Tourism Research* and the journal *Tourist Studies*, but not a single study or article focusing on links between tourism and adoptions. Consequently, in reconciling the tourism research with my anthropological study on the adoption phenomenon, I have considered it an important task to collect ethnographic material on spot in Sri Lanka and shed light on the variation of voices within the local population.

Similarly to many other countries in Asia, Sri Lanka has a long history of adopting children within the country and lately to other countries. Often, the Sri Lankan local population is discussed in terms of a strict division between the Sinhalese Buddhist majority group and the Tamil Hindus who make up the largest minority group. Such reasoning contributes to simplifying the constitution of the local population and fragmenting the religious multiplicity. The focus of my study, however, includes only Sinhalese and Tamil adoption practices while Sri Lankan Muslim adoption practices are excluded. Consequently, this thesis should be seen as a starting point for mapping the country’s adoption practice.

Indeed, the links between the tourism to Sri Lanka and adoptions of children to other countries could be difficult to notice in reasoning about human traveling during vacation periods and in discussions on children staying in children’s homes outside of Sweden. There are a few reasons to this difficulty. First, studying tourism is complex. Second, tourists easily escape elegant definitions. Third, the main focus of the dominant literature and research on the adoption area explores adoptees in the receiving countries while there is a lack of voices from the local population in the giving countries.

When speaking of tourism I generally refer to human traveling involving a temporary migration to another country. Thus, an individual traveling to another country can be categorized either as a temporary migrant or a tourist. This wide characterization of tourism and tourists is put into practice because I am foremost interested in tourists' accounts on the order of things in adoption contexts. Strictly, I focus on foreign person's reflections over children, their mothers, children's homes as an environment of growth and translations of circumstances outside of their homelands, for instance, concerning ideas on what it may be like to grow up in a children's home and meanings about what life one may lead as a citizen in the giving countries after a temporary stay in a children's home.

In what follows below I focus on some interesting links between tourism and adoptions emerging in the existing source material in text form on the adoption area in Sri Lanka. Foremost, the source material consists of a number of reports, articles and local newspaper items. It shows how adoptions have been practiced historically, the reasons for contemporary placements of children in institutions and how the adoption activity during the 1970s and the 1980s paved the way in the beginning of the 1990s towards an amendment of the adoption law, stating the advancement of local adoptions. Altogether, this material provides an historical background to the role of tourism in Sri Lanka's adoption practice.

HISTORICAL ADOPTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTS

In Sri Lanka, the existing source material in text form is limited. Though, as my exposition of this material shows it contains some prominent cultural processes involving links between tourism and adoptions, a few actors' reflections over the adoption practice, and representations of children's homes as an environment of growth. Taken together, the adoption area seems relatively understudied.

The jurists T. Sri Ramanathan (1963) and H. W. Tambiah (1972) describe Tesawalamai. Tesawalamai was the Jaffna Tamils'³ so called 'customary laws', meaning those customs and traditions that were followed without having been constituted by any juridical authority but over time came to be considered as law. The codification of these 'customary laws' was completed by the colonial administrator Claasz Isaacs in 1707 during the Dutch colonial period (see for instance *ibid*:200). The content of Tesawalamai concerns, among other things, rules for cast practices, marriage, and adoptions that were followed several years before the Western colonial period. Certainly, they underwent changes over the

³ That is, the Tamils who have been living in northern Sri Lanka since the days of yore.

years until today. Tambiah mentions, for instance, that both the Portuguese and the Dutch modified certain ‘customary laws’ and that some adoption practices have been outdated. Moreover, Tambiah states that the adoption practices of Tesawalamai are comparable to those practiced by the Kandyans (that is, the Sinhalese within the Kandyan kingdom). The Kandyans’ ‘customary laws’ were codified by the colonial administrator John D’Oyly during the British colonial period. D’Oyly describes the structure of the Kandyan kingdom as a farmers’ aristocracy and that the whole of society was divided into a number of work related cast groups marrying within each cast group. Also, caste played a central role in adoption contexts. For instance, the child must be of the same caste as the adoptive parents. Moreover, the adoption had to be publicly declared and recognized in order to entitle the child of his/her heritage rights (D’Oyly 2011:v, 193).⁴ From my point of view, it can be seen that the codification of the Tamils’ and the Sinhalese’s ‘customary laws’ constitutes a part of a cultural process that was made possible by the historical European tourism to Sri Lanka. Each codification is based on information that was collected on spot in the country through interviews with local persons. The point I want to make here is that the colonial administrators codifying the adoption practices can be seen as a social category of tourists producing knowledge to be used in certain ways by the colonial powers. Those historical tourists’ reflections over the adoption practice and translations of local circumstances exemplify a type of source material laying the foundation to a cultural understanding of the order of things in local adoption contexts.

As I mentioned introductorily, tourism is a difficult concept and tourists easily escape elegant definitions. This complexity makes it even more complicated to compare historical temporary migrants and contemporary tourists. For instance, because there are significant differences between colonial administrators and charter tourists as regards behavior, motivations, expectations and meanings ascribed to experiences and meetings with the locals. However, essential similarities could be shown through the fact that both of these social categories of tourists reside outside of their homelands temporarily and maintain the possibility to give an account of their experiences and impressions to other individuals on spot and to significant others in the home country. Given my interest in links between tourism and adoptions the similarities between the historical and the contemporary tourists’ reflections and translations are essential to focus because they lay the ground for an understanding of Sri

⁴ D’Oyly’s book was composed in the beginning of the 19th century but remained incomplete when he passed away. Because the text has been reproduced in several publications over the years I state the publication year of my copy of the book.

Lanka's adoption practice, although the variation of local voices in this context is surrounded by silence.

Regarding the contemporary local adoption practice I have come across a handwritten unpublished thesis produced by a social worker by the end of the 1950s (see Abeyratne 1959). In this thesis it is mentioned that no previous study had been conducted concerning adoptions which could be related to the case that most adoptions were practiced outside of the law. Abeyratne has interviewed 15 adoptive parents adopting in accordance with the legal procedures. Their motive for adopting legally was that they wanted a birth certificate which would guarantee the child's entrance to public schools. Some of the reasons for the adoptive parents' choice to adopt were that they had no children of their own, they wanted a sibling to their own child or that they had no son in their family. Among the adoptive parents in the thesis there was a preference for boys as they imagined it would mean less responsibility to raise them and more future income simultaneously as the boy would carry on the family name. Further, some adoptive parents had concerns whether the child was born out of a good caste, came from a respectable family and had a prosperous horoscope.

Historically, Abeyratne claims that orphans were adopted by their relatives but many of the couples interviewed stated that they had no interest in adopting their relatives' children. In particular, because they imagined the relatives would bother them in their family life during the child's upbringing. Out of the 16 children adopted 13 were born out of wedlock. The adoptive parents had received information of the possibility to adopt the child from hospital staff, friends, neighbors or relatives. According to Abeyratne many unmarried mothers gave their children for adoption while those who wanted to keep their children awaited a difficult battle which they in most cases would lose. Therefore, Abeyratne claims that under such circumstances an adoption is in the best interest of the child. The children, in their turn, would not be informed that they had been adopted because the adoptive parents wanted to keep it a secret. In fact, the adoptive parents assumed the child would lose its confidence in them if the adoption was acknowledged.

The link between tourism and adoptions in Abeyratne's study is clarified when seeing the thesis as a way into the occupational role of the social worker. Social workers in Sri Lanka are employed by the State Department of Probation of Child Care Services (DPCCS). Emerging during the 1950s, this authority was heavily composed of British thoughts on how deviant youths should be treated, both in England and in Great Britain. Running through these thoughts was the idea that neglected children would become potential problems and ineffective citizens. Rehabilitation and crime preventive actions rather than punishment were

considered as scientific and progressive methods for preventing future potential threats to society (see for instance Amarasuriya 2010:49-50).

In other words, the profession of social workers emerged out of British temporary migrants' ideas on how deviant youths should be treated. Contemporarily, social workers play a great part in adoption contexts, for instance, in their work to pass judgment on unmarried mothers' capacity to bring up their children and in determining what individuals could be considered as legitimate adoptive parents, locally and transnationally, who are welcome to adopt children from Sri Lankan institutions. Thus, the profession of social workers maintains a connection between the British temporary migrants' social norms on the family, the marriage, and the institutionalization of certain children who have been adopted by foreign tourists traveling to Sri Lanka to realize their family project.

As regards adoptions from Sri Lanka to other countries, the Colombo University library contains a seminar report in which Government servants, among others, give accounts on the adoption activity occurring in the beginning of the 1980s. Around 700 foreign adoptions were made annually and most children went to Sweden. Specifically, the report reveals that certain categories of children were given for adoption. The largest category concerned the children of unmarried mothers who would be ostracized if they kept their children, although some admitted that they had rather placed the child temporarily within a voluntary organization whereupon they would have taken care of the child on their own. However, many such organizations were engaged in the adoption activity for economical benefits. The final recommendations of the report consist in establishing a central authority that would collect research, promote local adoptions and prevent abandonments of children. From my reading of this report it is possible to see that the tourism contributed to expanding the country's adoption practice constructing it simultaneously as local and transnational. It is exemplified in the case that many children were adopted by Swedes traveling to Sri Lanka in order to create an adoptive family. How did Sri Lanka's adoption practice normalize the years to come? What was the role of Swedish tourists in Sri Lankan adoption contexts? In comparison to other foreign adopting countries, could general patterns be sorted out regarding tourism and adoptions?

Some of the answers to the above raised questions can be traced in a study conducted by the jurist Kalyananda Tiranagama (2006) on adoptions of children from Sri Lanka to other countries. The study is based on hundreds of adoption cases legalized at the district Courts of Colombo and Mount Lavinia, visits to several institutions, interviews and a review of

newspaper items concerning adoptions. Altogether, this study gives a glimpse of the adoption practice in Sri Lanka emerging in the beginning of the 1980s.

According to Tiranagama, the foreign citizens' demand for children was not met by the supply of institutionalized children. That situation led to the rise of so called 'baby farms' where pregnant women delivered children who were given for adoption. Running 'baby farms' with the purpose of offering babies to foreign tourists became a lucrative business in the 1980s until the beginning of the 1990s. A Swedish radio reporter shed light on that business and revealed a child trafficking racket that had been going on since the end of the 1970s.⁵ The racket involved a Sri Lankan businessman, a Swedish woman in Sri Lanka, and the Swedish adoption organization Sri Lanka Barns Vänner (Friends of the Sri Lankan Children, my translation). The businessman also ran hotels and provided transport services to the foreign adoptive parents. Annually, around 200 adoptions were made from the businessman's children's homes when the intensity of the adoption activity was at its peak. The businessman had no formal position within the Sri Lankan adoption bureaucracy but dominated it through his political connections and friendship relations to political authorities on the highest level (ibid:4). In this context it is made clear that the Sri Lankan adoption practice was highly influenced by the tourism phenomenon through the fact that many foreign adoptive parents, not just from Sweden, to a great extent contributed to intensifying the adoption activity. Moreover, it contained elements of market rationalities and specific ways of adopting children which would become criminalized. Similar patterns emerged in Thailand and Vietnam (see for instance Lindgren 2010:88, 90, 94-98).

By the mid-1980s there were frequent reports on 'baby farms' in local newspapers in Sri Lanka. The Government was forced to intervene. Tiranagama (2006:9-14) provides the perspective of the legislators, altogether made up of negative attitudes towards adoptions to other countries. In 1992 an amendment was made in the adoption law aiming to limit the foreign adoptions. In 1995 a new offence called "trafficking" was introduced in order to criminalize illegal adoptions and punish those engaging in facilitating informal adoptions. But according to Tiranagama the material substructuring his study indicates that trafficking of children for foreign adoptions still occurs, although in a legalized form, for instance, when children are offered to foreign citizens instead of locals and because the foreign adoption field is monopolized by a few individuals and organizations (ibid:56-57). There is, however, a law (2007) in Sri Lanka regulating the annual number of foreign adoptions. Now I shall give an

⁵ See also the Swedish magazine *Sydasiën* (1982-2006) where more reports are available.

account of the way in which children's homes are represented on the Sri Lankan adoption area.

The Charisma of Children's Homes

In most cases the institution makes up the place from which children are adopted, both locally and transnationally. Though, historically other types of adoptions constituted the normative practice. For instance, the social scientist Swarna Wijetunga (1991) conducting a study for the Norwegian Save The Children describes that two types of adoptions were practiced in the traditional Sinhalese society, either with the aim of instituting an heir or for obtaining familial assistance and providing parental care for another's children. The second type was such that poorer families sold or surrendered their children to affluent families. Motivated by the need to introduce some control and prevent such adoptions the British introduced the Adoption Ordinance.⁶

In general, Wijetunga mentions that the family has constituted the central unit for caring of children, the sick, and the persons with disabilities. However, with the advent of the British and the Christian missionaries this situation changed. Wijetunga suggests that the colonial administrators and the missionaries improved the children's situation by rising children's homes (ibid:1-2). From my perspective this exemplifies how historical temporary migrants in Sri Lanka played an important part in laying the foundation to the social construction of children's homes. Moving on, I shall look at the way in which the children's homes are constructed as an environment of growth in the existing text material on the Sri Lankan adoption area. What is the consequence of the fact that the source material in most cases has been sponsored by Western charity organizations? How could this information of the children's homes be used in adoption contexts? Those questions are answered below.

Investigating the needs of institutionalized children in Sri Lanka makes up one of the aims of Wijetunga's study because Save the Children had received many applications concerning economic assistance from children's homes. Thus, Save the Children required information on Sri Lankan institutions before initiating a program. In relation to Wijetunga's search for relevant literature there were only two studies of systematic and comprehensive character on children's homes in the country. The first was conducted in 1970 concerning eight children's homes run by the All Ceylon Buddhist Congress. The second was carried out

⁶ It was introduced in 1941 and resembled the British Adoption Ordinance from 1926 (see for instance Gooneratne 1994:138).

in 1985 focusing on State run children's homes. In this context both children's homes and the social construction of those homes appear to be an understudied area.

Wijetunga's study includes an investigation of 394 children from 39 children's homes dispersed in different locations in Sri Lanka. Moreover, interviews were conducted with caretakers, teachers, parents and social workers. Most of the children's homes were run by various religious organizations. Three of the children's homes were run by the State. Altogether 96 % of the institutionalized children were over 5 years old. Only a few of the children could be categorized as orphans, that is, when both parents had passed away. The primary cause for institutionalization was related to the dissolution of the family, for instance, because the parents had separated. No connection was found between children born within large families and the institutionalization. Further, Wijetunga notes that the State run homes were devoted to offering direct and specialized attention to neglected and abandoned children. As soon as these children had been rehabilitated they were either reconnected with their parents, rendered adoptable or placed in non-State run children's homes for long-term institutionalization. Preparing the children for a future life, making good citizens out of orphans and giving them a chance to develop their skills and realizing their full potential, were repeatedly stated as the objectives of running these homes (ibid:24). In relation to Wijetunga's study, it seems to me that the children's homes make up places where many older children with parents were staying.

In another and more recent study the social scientists Ramanie Jayathilake and Harini Amarasuriya (2005) have composed a report for Save the Children in Sri Lanka focusing on children's homes. The study comprises an investigation of 86 children's homes in different provinces and includes interviews with children and caretakers. A range of problems are pointed at in cases where children have been institutionalized, both in State run and non-State run children's homes. For instance, it is considered a problem that children were placed in institutions far away from their family homes. Moreover, children state the lack of privacy, dignity and individuality within institutions. The study also makes clear that approximately 80 % of all children in non-State run children's homes, generally considered as homes for orphans, in fact had at least one living parent. In the perspective of the parents the institutionalization of their child had solved caretaking problems. Strictly, the parents had not abandoned the children and did not intend to surrender them for adoption. A comprehensive conclusion drawn in the report is that alternatives must be sought to institutionalizations, for instance, through supporting families in difficult situations.

Because children give voice to their experiences of staying within children's homes, this study can be considered unique. If most of the institutionalized children have parents that they want as caretakers, then it becomes understandable that the institutionalization is experienced as a negative environment of growth. Moreover, the fact that the children's experiences replicate the ideology of Save the Children, that children should grow up within a family, clearly affects the representation of children's homes and the range of strategic interventions to be implemented. Explicitly, parallels could be drawn here to the dominating adoption literature in the USA and Europe that is influenced by the fact that most authors and researchers are adoptive parents. The descriptions of the children's homes as environments of growth depict institutionalization as a poor alternative to an upbringing within a family. Such descriptions are then used as a means to explain to other and potential adoptive parents that adoption constitutes a legitimate way to create a family.

Beside the reports from Save the Children I found several newspaper items in the archive at the Lake House Library shedding light on informal adoptions, locally and transnationally, as well as adoptees' journeys back to Sri Lanka. Also, I came across an item giving an account of the UNICEF-report called 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind'. It is a statistical analysis that was conducted in 2007 on all non-State run children's homes in Sri Lanka. According to the item the report shows that only 12 out of 488 children's homes⁷ complied with the criteria for individual caretaking of institutionalized children. Further, it is claimed that the total number of children in institutions adds up to 19 000. Out of every tenth institutionalized child 3 had both parents alive, 5 had one parent living, and 2 were orphans. An authority person states in the item that the report should, among other things, be used to improve the current caretaking within children's homes and prevent the institutionalization of children.

From the collected material reviewed to this point it can be seen that the charisma of children's homes is depicted in negative terms. It remains unclear what experiences children carry with them from an upbringing within a children's home and what life they lead as adult citizens after the institutionalization. However, some foreign adoptees make journeys back to Sri Lanka in order to find their birth parents. This phenomenon is given attention in the nature scientist Ruwan Illeperuma's study (et al 2004) concerning the occurrence of DNA-based parenthood tests. The doctors at the laboratory where these tests were performed told me that they had done many such tests over the years on mothers having adopted their children to

⁷ 52 of these were institutions for children with disabilities.

foreign citizens. In some cases the tests had been made because there was a risk that the woman pretended to be the biological mother of the foreign adoptee. From my interpretation of this study it seems to be the case that the search for the birth mothers could be seen as a symbolic manifestation of tourism's role in Sri Lanka's adoption practice, partly because the foreign adoptee embarks on a journey back to the birth country as a kind of tourist but mostly because the tourism phenomenon made it possible to adopt children from Sri Lankan institutions.

Summing up, in relation to the links between tourism and adoptions it can be seen that they relate to cultural processes in European contexts rather than Sri Lankan, for instance, regarding the rise of the children's homes and the role of social workers to constitute good future citizens. Moreover, some links between power and knowledge are exhibited in the representations of children's homes, particularly because the information is produced for and communicated to a reading Western audience. The information generates images of children's homes as poor environments of growth for cultural citizens and provides authenticity to normalized ideas on adoption as a just act. Taken together, the good citizenship appears to crystallize in foreign adoptive parents' homelands.

As a way to deepen the understanding of these cultural processes and reflexive translation practices as well as to gain insights on the everyday life in children's homes I conducted a number of interviews with a range of actors on the adoption area in Sri Lanka. Before describing that part of the ethnographic material collection process in more concrete terms a few theoretical thoughts on my methodological movements on the adoption area are discussed as well as a central problem in this context.

THE PROBLEM OF TRANSLATION

Studying Sri Lanka's adoption practice means exploring a field existing in action, involving many actors and maintaining links to several places at once. In order to conceptualize the field I have found the anthropologist Aihwa Ong's and Stephen J. Collier's term 'global assemblage' useful (2005:8). According to Ong and Collier a 'global assemblage' can be seen as a domain where forms and values of individual and collective existence are problematized or put at stake in the sense that they are exposed to technological, political, and ethical reflection and intervention. The ethical reflection is related to questions of value and moral and simultaneously also to ethics in a philosophical sense which concerns reflections over the problem how an individual should live that are surrounded by political and technological problems giving distinct forms to so called regimes of living.

Stephen J. Collier and the sociologist Andrew Lakoff (ibid:23) explain that the concept of ‘regimes of living’ refers to tentative and situated configurations of normative, technical and political elements that are brought into alignment in situations that present ethical problems, that is, situations in which the question of how to live is at stake. Moreover, they state that the word ‘regime’ indicates a method or system of government, including principles of reasoning, valuation, and practices that are characterized by a provisional consistency and coherence. In stating that such regimes relate to questions of how one should live they mean: first, that the questions concern reasoning about and acts with regard to ideas on what is rendered good; and second, that the questions are involved in processes of ethic formation, that is, the constitution of subjects, individually as well as collectively.

In the previous section when focusing on a few prominent cultural processes involving links between tourism and adoptions it became quite clear that the question of how Sri Lankan children should live and in what environment they could grow up within was put on its edge. Some believed the children should be adopted while others problematized the adoption activity in Sri Lanka. Essentially, I use the concept of ‘regimes of living’ to show how connections between social norms concerning the family, the marriage and the children’s homes constitute regimes of specific ways of living where questions of how one should live is put at stake and how one should act in relation to ideas regarding the good life in processes of ethical self-formation. In particular, I consider situations where social norms guide local parents to surrender their children to institutions while foreign citizens adopt these children, but also how such acts are presented as just and have become related to ideas of the good life.

Moreover, Collier and Lakoff claim that the use of the term ‘regimes of living’ characterize a type of analytic work that is neither theoretical nor strictly empirical but methodological. In my study I use this concept as a tool to map a field of investigations by grasping both empirical connections among sites and conceptual connections among problems, for instance, concerning the case that most actors reflecting over children’s homes as a regime of living and translating circumstances in foreign adopting countries are foreign adoptive parents depicting adoption as a legitimate way to create a family. To counter this bias I have considered it an essential task to put into practice a perspective that is as unconditional as possible during the ethnographic material collection in Sri Lanka and particularly focused on voices from persons with life-histories from various children’s homes which are marginalized in the adoption discourse.⁸ Now, having shared my theoretical

⁸ Specifically, this perspective is applied to approach an understanding of how the order of things has been outlined in adoption contexts.

thoughts on the field of adoption I continue discussing the ethnographic material collection process in concrete terms.

The engagement to collect material to my thesis resonates with what the anthropologist Hugh Gusterson describes as a ‘polymorphous engagement’ (1997:116). Gusterson suggests that anthropologists should interact with informants dispersed over a number of places as well as conducting an eclectic data collection from various forms of sources in many different ways. Moreover, Gusterson explains that this polymorphous engagement also involves an eclectic mix of other research techniques such as formal interviewing, extensive reading of magazines, journals and official policy documents as well as shedding light on elements of popular culture.⁹

In this passage I shall describe a type of archive material substructuring the thesis. At the Royal Library in Stockholm I have studied the marketing of trips to Sri Lanka from a few Swedish travel agents between 1970 and 1990. In this particular material one can take a close look at the construction of expectations being built up before tourists go on vacation in the form of sights and experiences that can be made in the destination country. The creation of these expectations are basic for the tourism industry and in adoption contexts I suggest that the images generated of the vacation area implicitly may have substantiated motivations to adopting a child, at least in the beginning of the emerging charter tourism when ideas prevailed about the charter countries social and economic underdevelopment in comparison to the so called industrialized countries.

Moreover, at the Swedish Intercountry Adoptions Authority (MIA, formerly the Committee for Intercountry Adoptions, NIA), I have collected a large amount of official documents consisting of, among others, travel reports and information magazines. The travel reports provide insights into the row of official trips conducted by NIA-representatives to Sri Lanka and the adoption activity that occurred in Sri Lanka between 1976 and 1991. These travel reports demonstrate how Government servants, considered as a particular social category of Swedish tourists, reflected over children, their mothers and the children’s homes as well as their translations of local circumstances in Sri Lanka as a giving country in adoption contexts.

As I mentioned earlier most of the ethnographic material laying the foundation for the thesis has been collected during two visits in Sri Lanka over a period of five years. During both of these visits I have stayed a few months in the country, visited the same children’s

⁹ See for instance Mani Ratnam’s movie (2006) about a complex adoption of a Sri Lankan girl.

homes, and spoken to the same persons on the adoption area. Thus, I have been able to make comparisons between all the children's homes that were visited as well as all the interviews I conducted with local persons. Further, I have been able to change and deepen interpretations of the ethnography which would not have been possible if I had only collected material during one period. In the light of these facts my thesis can be characterized as a 'longitudinal study' (see the anthropologist Charlotte Aull Davies' discussion 2002:175-177 [1999]). Shedding light on this division of the fieldwork is essential in order to illustrate several areas of the adoption field. Therefore, below I am openly describing the way in which the material has been collected, although the presentation may appear slightly incoherent.

The first part of the material collection was conducted over a period of three months starting in November 2007. Introductorily, I studied the Sinhalese language intensively by taking private tuition classes under the supervision of an elementary school teacher. I also made plans for how I would grasp an understanding of the adoption practice, discussed my project with local persons, located a few children's homes and searched for information on adoption and institutions on the Internet. The first two weeks I went about in the southern parts of the country. Thereafter, I traveled around most parts of the country. Among other places I visited six universities where I presented my project. Altogether, this period in the country gave me a basic knowledge of the context of the Sri Lankan adoption practice and the existence of various children's homes.

During a period of approximately three months beginning in November 2011 I conducted the second part of the material collection. This period I was particularly interested in conducting participant observations in children's homes and meeting persons who had grown up in a children's home. In part, because the dominating adoption literature primarily focus on adoptees in the receiving country and that the limited amount of sources on the adoption area in Sri Lanka mostly shed light on children's homes and institutionalized children. During this period I gained insights into what it may be like to grow up in a children's home in Sri Lanka and how life as a Sri Lankan citizen could turn out after a temporary stay in an institution. Now I shall translate a few sentences from the interviews which I have conducted with actors on the adoption area and some ethical aspects of the ethnographic material collection.

Variation of Voices

The first part of the material collection I interviewed three authority persons, six NGO-workers, two representatives of a political party, one retired caretaker of children, and a representative of an adoption organization from a European country. Further, I visited

fourteen children's homes where the caretakers were interviewed. All of the interviews were conducted in English, noted by hand, and started from questions prepared for these interviews. The reason for preparing questions in advance was related to my knowledge about Sri Lanka. Concerning the adoption practice I had no other knowledge besides the fact that Sri Lanka officially stood behind the UN Child Convention and promoted local adoptions before the transnational. Principally, the pre-posed questions aimed at learning about historical aspects of the local adoption practice, when the practice also became transnational, the revolving towards a primarily local adoption practice in 1992, and the consequence of that for institutionalized children.

A drawback with pre-posing the questions manifested itself in the way that certain questions were sensitive to answer, for instance, when asking caretakers to specify the ethnicity of the institutionalized children. That was related to on the ongoing conflict during this period between the Government and the LTTE (that is, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam). One caretaker who was interviewed in the beginning of this part of the material collection stated, among other things, that the neighborhood surrounding the children's home considered it with suspicion because some children came from the northern and eastern parts of the country which to some extent were controlled by the LTTE. On the one hand, this provided food for suspicious thoughts that both the children and the caretaker had relations to the LTTE. On the other hand, if the children had escaped from LTTE-controlled areas, it constituted a risk speaking about this because such information had to be prevented from leaking out to LTTE-members.¹⁰ Given these circumstances I neither posed questions regarding the children's ethnicity in the following interviews with caretakers nor about their religion because, to some extent, it is related to ethnicity. In this context it is essential to shed light on the religious plurality in Sri Lanka. There are, for instance, Buddhists, Hindus, Christians, and Muslims in the country. Most of the Sinhalese are Buddhist while the Tamils primarily are Hindus. A minor part of the Sinhalese and the Tamils are Christians which adds up to the approximated number of Muslims. When many European and some Sri Lankan researchers reason about the conflict this religious plurality tends to be excluded. In that way the conflict is characterized in terms of a polarization between Buddhists and Hindus. The sociologist Susantha Goonatilake (2001; 2006) illustrates that the conflict is far more complex. In relation to my thesis I recognize the religious plurality and conclude that the

¹⁰ See for instance the NGO-report by Human Rights Watch (2004) where Tamil children give accounts of being used as soldiers in the LTTE's struggle.

children's religion varies in those children's homes I have visited whether they are run by Buddhists, Hindus, Christians, Muslims or the State.

From my interviews it appears that children's homes in Sri Lanka can be divided into a hierarchy where the foreign sponsored non-State run institutions are represented as the best and the State run as the worst. However, it is difficult to confirm such a sharp division of children's homes. In a UNICEF-report (see Roccella 2007) where a statistical analysis has been carried out over the number of children's homes in Sri Lanka, it is described that at the time of the making of the inquiry 488 children's homes were run by non-State actors while Sri Lankan citizens composed the main sponsors of children's homes. The Government provided economical support to 203 of these institutions. According to estimation there were 21 State-run homes. The difficulty in making such a strict division between non-State foreign sponsored children's homes and State institutions run by the DPCCS (the Authority handling adoption issues) consists in the case that even the DPCCS is sponsored from other countries and co-operate with foreign sponsored children's homes (see for instance Amarasuriya 2010).

In sum, I have visited the type of children's homes representing the larger part of the existing institutions in Sri Lanka, that is, those run by non-State actors. The reason for this is not that I have avoided the 20-something State-run children's homes but that I neither had any idea whether the institution was run by the State or a non-State actor nor if it received foreign or local funding. To repeat, the information of the whereabouts of a certain children's home was primarily achieved through interviews and in conversations with locals. It was often the case that I did not have the address to the institution but just got on a bus towards the area where it was supposed to exist. On spot I entered a tuk-tuk (that is, a motor driven three-wheeled taxi) and told the driver to take me to the children's home. Consequently, I arrived without making an appointment in advance and in some cases I arrived elsewhere. In spite of the fact that I arrived unannounced the caretakers spared me a moment and answered my questions.

The ethnographic interview material collected during the first part of the fieldwork offered me possibilities to reflect over issues that would be important to study further. On the whole, it seemed central to conduct participant observations in children's homes and meeting Sri Lankan citizens with a life-history from an institution.

The second part of the material collection was conducted over a period of about three months from the beginning of November 2011. In order to gain as much as possible from this visit I traveled to Sri Lanka during the summer of 2011 to re-establish contact with individuals who would be able to satisfy my interests. In relation to citizens with a life-history

from a children's home I was interested in learning about their experiences from the upbringing in the institution, what they were doing today, and what visions they had for the future. To reach information on these issues I had not prepared any questions in advance in order to allow the interviewee to express his/her story. A disadvantage with this method could be composed of cases where one subject is brought into the light during the latter interviews but not in the former. In general, the same issues came up in all of the interviews. However, as Aull Davies points out (2002:169 [1999]), it is important to bear in mind that when interviewing individuals about their life-histories what is being collected are remembered life. Obviously, different persons remember and consider separate events and present his/her history in various ways. That may sound self-evident but the dominant literature and research on the adoption area represents the foreign adoptees' period in the children's homes in a way that encourages adoptions from their birth countries in spite of the fact that neither children's nor adults' experiences of institutionalization have been studied. Consequently, I focus on marginalized voices in the adoption discourse. Broadly speaking, that constitutes a classical anthropological deed. Though, not without its problems. Particularly embedded in this deed is the problem arising when some anthropologists make themselves spokespersons for an underprivileged group of individuals in scientific contexts. Crick has characterized this problem in terms of the 'noble savage syndrome' (1989:311-312). The meaning of this syndrome is composed of the risk that the anthropologist may provide a simplified picture of local voices and fragment a field of complexities. Here parallels can be drawn to the way in which foreign adoptive parents writing books or conducting research on the adoption phenomenon make themselves into advocates for so called adoptable children and depict the children's homes as a negative environment of growth. My way of handling this problem consists in collecting material as unconditionally as possible on spot in Sri Lanka¹¹, appreciating the variation of local voices, and conducting an eclectic data collection from separate sources in many different ways. As an example I also conducted interviews with three social workers, three caretakers of children, an employee at a children's home, a local adoptive parent, and a person administrating a foreign sponsored godchild project. Besides the conducted interviews I visited five children's homes. Participant observations were made at three of those institutions in combination with voluntary work as an English teacher.

All of the persons I have interviewed during the fieldwork are considered as informants because they have provided information leading to a deeper understanding of Sri Lanka's

¹¹ That is, intending to seek an understanding of how the order of things has been outlined in adoption contexts rather than rendering adoption as a legitimate family project.

adoption practice. However, embedded in the labeling of persons as informants lies a complexity and there are divided meanings regarding the appropriateness of this terminology. Crick (2001:177 [1992]) claims, for instance, that ‘informant’ is a charged term in respect of its implication of obligations, duties, payments for services and contract-like arrangements as regards the availability of the informant to the anthropologist. Moreover, Crick notes that the term puts the historical role of the anthropologist as a servant to the colonial power on its edge, whose subjugation of the country in question localized the anthropologist in an ambivalent position in relation to the local population. In contrast to Crick’s depictions of the relation between the anthropologist and the informant such a relationship was the reverse in most of my interviews during the material collection. It is demonstrated by the fact that I foremost interviewed authorities and caretakers, that is, individuals having a great influence over children’s life situation in Sri Lanka. Now I shall reflect over my own position and the ethical considerations it has generated.

Situated Ethics

My role as a Sri Lankan adoptee was recognized and repeatedly put on its edge during the fieldwork. Largely, it was related to the case that I had traveled to my birth country as a kind of tourist with an intention to collect ethnographic material for the thesis.¹² Because I could not claim any formal belonging to the country I was denied access to the National Archives during the first part of the material collection. But given the fact that I was often identified informally as a Sri Lankan I got access to children’s homes and possibilities to conduct interviews which would have been difficult to make if the person was born outside of Sri Lanka. Consequently, I have carefully de-identified and anonymized persons represented in the thesis. Moreover, no economical payments have been offered and I have informed of the possibility to pull out of the project. Broadly, this conduct follows the guidelines for an ethical material collection developed by the American Anthropological Association (2009).

The fact that I was adopted from Sri Lanka has partly substantiated my motivation for conducting the study precisely in relation to Sri Lanka’s adoption practice. However, the primary factor of motivation consists in the fact that foreign adoptive parents in general maintain the privilege of interpreting the adoptees’ situation in the receiving countries and translating circumstances in the giving countries, seemingly constructed during their visits to foreign countries for various reasons. Because my thesis is grounded in anthropological

¹² Distinguishing tourists from anthropologists can be quite difficult (see for instance Crick (2001 [1992])).

methods local perspectives are privileged and the ways in which the informants give accounts of the order of things in different contexts.

As regards my own experiences of conducting a study in my birth country it has enriched me in many ways, particularly by staying in a country where my appearance is similar to the locals and because I have been able to pick up skills in the Sinhala language as well as participating in cultural practices within the country. Experiencing this on the side of the material collection has been important to me and stimulated reflections concerning the case that I was adopted from this country. At the same time I like to emphasize that my interest in problematizing how the order of things has been outlined in adoption contexts has grown as I have been working with this project and that my own engagement has become part of my academic interest to study questions of different environments of growth and ways of living.

Given the fact that I have grown up in Sweden with an adoption history that started in a children's home in Sri Lanka while holding a Sri Lankan citizenship, it is possible to imagine that I run the risk of giving a biased account of children's homes and the country in general similarly to the way adoptive parents romanticize the adoption act and presuppose that children's homes make up a poor alternative compared to an upbringing in a foreign adoptive family as a citizen of their homeland. That problem is handled through my motivation to give an account of Sri Lanka's adoption practice that is as contextualized as possible and focusing on the variation of meanings on the adoption area. In the following passage which ends this chapter I present the structure of the thesis.

DISPOSITION

The thesis consists of seven chapters creating a deeper understanding of a few links between Sri Lanka's adoption practice and the tourism phenomenon. The next chapter gives an account of my ethnographic material from a children's home in Sri Lanka. The third chapter focuses on an understudied link between the historical European tourism to Sri Lanka and the social construction of children's homes. Chapter four shows how the charter tourism to Sri Lanka contributed to making Sweden into one of the largest receiving countries of Sri Lankan adoptees. In the fifth chapter normalized ideas within the adoption discourse are discussed. The sixth chapter presents voices from Sri Lankan citizens with life-histories from children's homes. The last chapter explores the fruitfulness of cultivating the citizenship concept in my ethnographic material.

2 A FEW DAYS IN A CHILDREN'S HOME

In this chapter an account is given of my ethnographic material from one of the children's homes in which I conducted participant observations. It provides insights into living within a Sri Lankan institution quite distinguished from dominating representations of children's homes. Particularly, because I was motivated by seeking an understanding of the everyday life in a children's home instead of offering explanations that legitimize the adoption act.

By way of introduction I give an example of how children's homes are represented on the adoption area taking Gertrud Hägglund's book (1987:15-17 [1982]) as a starting point, whereupon I proceed to my own ethnographic material. While writing the book Hägglund was employed as a welfare officer at Adoptionscentrum (the Swedish Society for International Child Welfare, translation taken from Kats 1992:21 [1981]), that was one of the first Swedish adoption organizations to administer migration processes of Sri Lankan children to Sweden. Hägglund describes the environment adoptees may have grown up within against the background of a children's home she herself has visited in India. According to Hägglund many small and badly nourished children occupied the same room and were not cared for individually due to lack of time. In describing the children's home in this manner she experience feelings of shame and admits that it may undervalue the caretakers and the maids' child caring work. Simultaneously Hägglund explains that it could be difficult caring for the children properly due to limited resources and the staffs' lack of education. Further, Hägglund claims that the children have a low status in the society because they were born out of wedlock. Taken together, Hägglund is of the opinion that it is better to adopt the children to Sweden.

Representations of Hägglund's type make up a traversing theme within the dominant literature and research on the adoption area until today. In most cases such representations have been created by different social categories of tourists visiting the giving countries for various purposes. The situation within the children's home is translated as poor and in comparison to an upbringing in the children's birth country it is presupposed that an upbringing as a citizen within a foreign adoptive family's home country is better. The expectations I had before visiting children's homes in Sri Lanka were to some extent similar to those images produced by Hägglund's representations. However, during my voluntary work as an English teacher I reached another idea as regards the life one may lead in a children's home.

Instead of getting access to the children's home I was expecting to conduct participant observations within, I received a call from a person in my social network in Sri Lanka in the

middle of November 2011 enlightening me of the following: “You will do voluntary work as an English teacher in a children’s home. I have a friend who will provide access to children’s homes and take care of you. You can stay there daytime but need to check in to a guest house.” Repeatedly I was also made aware of the fact that there were rules in Sri Lanka and that foreigners usually were denied access to children’s homes. It seemed, however, that an exception could be made in my case because I at least had the appearance of a Sri Lankan.

Mrs Sita (fictive name) enabled access to children’s homes, an interview with a social worker and a local adoptive parent by way of introducing me to influential persons who became interested in my project. One of the homes Mrs Sita and I visited was, in similarity to the institution Hägglund reflected over, available to children below the age of five years. For instance, they could have been abandoned in a hospital after being born. Then the police would take the children to the Court where a decision was made concerning the institution that should care for them. This home was run under Buddhist management. Approximately thirty children stayed here with varying religions and had their origin in different parts of the country. When they had become too old to stay here they were separated according to gender and placed in other homes. This home, which earlier had made up a foreign citizen’s bungalow, employed one caretaker and ten “mothers”, that is, women taking care of the children. Moreover, a pre-school teacher visited the home regularly. We paid a visit to her during her drawing class. At first the children became shy and stopped drawing. Mrs Sita suggested that they should sing a song. Many of the children sang along. Some loudly, others whispering. A few did not sing at all and appeared mainly surprised over our visit. In this situation it was easy to find support in dominant ideas of Hägglund’s type. However, instead of passing judgments on the home and the staff as well as valuing the children’s situation as destitute, I communicated with them on their mother tongue as much as a could with the few words and phrases I had learned. I also spoke to the children in English and participated in drawing their pictures. Interacting with the children in this way I gained insights into the importance of putting into practice a perspective that is as unconditional as possible and the fact that interpretations of events varies from person to person.

The main part of the material from the voluntary work as an English teacher was collected from a children’s home I fictively name the Palm. This home was constructed in the 1930s and was run under Christian management without foreign sponsorship. Currently there were thirty-five girls here between the ages 5 and 18. All of the girls were Tamils but one who was Sinhalese. This girl, who was 15 years old, had strongly opposed being removed from this home a few years ago because she felt at home here. Introductorily, I spoke to the

caretaker for about an hour and explained that I wanted to observe what the girls were doing during the day and avoid disturbing their routines. The caretaker said that the girls had much work with their final exams in school and their dancing practice before the show that would be held on Thanksgiving Day (a holiday celebrated primarily because this home was run by Christians). I was, however, welcome to visit. Altogether, I stayed four days in this children's home.

On the day of my first visit to the Palm Mrs Sita and I arrived around three o'clock. The caretaker welcomed us and showed us to the room where I could hold the English classes. The room was huge. It contained some forty school benches, a storing place for diverse materials and a space for leisure activities in the back of the room as well as a theatre stage with drapery in the front. As we arrived into the room twenty-five of the girls were studying while the others remained in school. The caretaker introduced me in English and explained that I would hold English classes. She asked me whether I would be standing here by the teacher's desk or preferred the girls sitting in a ring formation in front of me. A ring formation sounded like a good idea. Then a girl went to find me a chair which was placed in the back of the room. In front of the chair the girls unrolled three carpets on which they sat down.

I introduced myself and told them about my project. Then I asked them to state their names and age. Thereafter, I showed some pictures of Sweden. After each one of the girls had seen the pictures I spoke to the caretaker and asked her to tell me about the home. She was the responsible person for all of the girls and had one woman helping her to look after the children. In her office there were folders with information on the reason for each girl's placement in this institution. Only the caretaker knew of their life-histories. Because the girls did not openly speak between one another about the reasons for their staying here the caretaker suggested that I should talk in private with each of the girls and in her presence. Given the case that a comprehensive aim of the thesis is to present life-histories from adult Sri Lankan citizens who grew up in children's homes I did not find it necessary to take part of the girls' life-histories. Moreover, interviews with children involve ethical questions as well as approvals from their parents or legal caretakers, which I would not have had the time to wait for. The caretaker rang the bell to inform the girls that they could continue their chores and I got the opportunity to explore their everyday life.

Some of the girls described the structure of a day. On weekdays they woke up at 05.00. On Saturdays and Poya-days (that is, holy days for Buddhists and Hindus occurring each full moon) they got up at 06.00. Sundays meant waking up at 05.30. The Morning Prayer started after they had arisen from bed. Thereafter, they arranged the dormitory and the study room.

The girls were divided into teams responsible for different areas each week. After each area of responsibility had been taken care of they had their breakfast whereupon they washed themselves and went to school. The school was situated within the area of the children's home, however, children outside of the institution also came here to study. The girls studied until 13.30. When school was out for the day they washed themselves and changed clothes. Between 14.00 and 15.00 they did their homework after which they had various afternoon duties.

The afternoon duties meant tending to the garden, the kitchen, the dining room, the chapel, the toilets and the dormitory. One girl showed me what the others were doing. The first team of girls was cleaning the toilets. The second team tended to the garden where potatoes, vegetables, fruits and spices were grown. After a while when their chores were almost done I spoke to a few of the girls. More and more girls gathered around me in a ring formation. Above all they wanted to hear me sing.

After my brief singing appearance it was time for the girls' dancing practice. On Thanksgiving Day they would perform for parents and locals. An older girl made sure that the younger as well as the youngest group danced correctly. Then she practiced on her solo act. While I watched the dancing practice Mrs Sita assisted the caretaker to install Skype enabling communication with one of her brothers who resided in a European country. Mrs Sita and I left the home around six o'clock and returned the day after.

Arriving at around ten o'clock the next day the girls greeted me collectively saying: "GOOD MORNING, UNCLE!" The girls were sitting in the back of the room playing games. Most of the school benches had been put away because the Christmas holiday drew nearer. Then some girls would stay in the institution, others would stay with their families and a few of the girls who had grown too old could not stay here anymore.

I started the English class. The girls were given twenty minutes to write down a memory from staying at the Palm which would be read aloud to the class. After three girls had presented their stories the caretaker informed us that the tea was ready. While we were drinking tea the caretaker explained what had occurred in the south of Sri Lanka. A nun had been remanded into custody allegedly accused of having sold children to foreign citizens. Though, the nun had been released on bail because the allegations were false. As this subject concerned adoption issues I curiously inquired into the need for adoptions in Sri Lanka, why is it that the children cannot be taken care of by their parents or relatives? The caretaker claimed that everything concerned financial issues these days and that the contemporary family constellation in the country was made up of the nuclear family, that is, the mother, the

father and their children. “In the past support was given within the extended family, now it is not like that anymore.” The caretaker interpreted this change as a sign of societal collapse. The English class continued after the tea break. As the girls had presented their histories I suggested that we could play bingo, in order to practice numbers. After the girls who came on the first, second, and third place had made their gestures of victory we went outside to enjoy the amazing weather.

In the garden we played badminton and I participated in one of the girls’ games. However, the sun became too hot for me. Therefore, a girl offered me a chair that was put in the shadow. As time passed even the girls found it too hot to play. Then they showed me the love-birds and the fishes at the home. The caretaker rang the bell. It was lunch-time. Because the girls would rest after lunch I returned about an hour later.

As I arrived, the girls were occupied with their garden chores. Therefore, I got an opportunity to speak to the caretaker who was interested in hearing my opinions of the institution. I was impressed by her caring work and considered the facilities of the institution to be good. Reconnecting to our conversation on adoptions earlier this day I asked whether adoptions were made from this home. According to the caretaker adoptions were complicated. Partly depending on the adoptive parents and particularly because the children might find it difficult accepting the adoption. The caretaker was dedicated to giving the children a good upbringing at the Palm.

Competitive Games

On Monday Mrs Sita and I arrived at around three o’clock. Most of the girls were still in school. Some had not eaten their lunch while others were rehearsing their dancing steps. Initially, fifteen girls attended to the English class. Today they should describe their future ambitions, what sort of work would they like to do after leaving the Palm? Most of the girls wanted to become teachers of Tamil while a few would like to be nuns. After all of the girls had presented their future ambitions Mrs Sita suggested that they should sing a song. YEEEEAYYYY!!! They screamed. After a few songs had been sung we went outside to play. Earlier this day the caretaker had mentioned that the children in the home were taught to be competitive. During my observation of the games it became clear that the games provided a space for playing out competitiveness.

The older girls took the part as game leaders in the way that they suggested what games could be played, divided the children into groups, and acted as judges. In the first game the girls were divided into two teams standing in a line turned against the other team at

approximately ten meters from each other. Five meters from each team an area was marked in a ring formation in which a branch was placed. Each girl received a number which, when the game leader called it, meant that the girl should run and reach for the branch. From my point of view, the game was played seriously. It could be exemplified by the strongly expressed dissatisfaction at a girl who ran even though her number had not been called out. In this situation it can be seen that the girl was being taught her place within the team and that the rules of the game should be obeyed. In this way she was given an opportunity to improve her ability to control herself in relation to all-embracing systems of rule.

The second game was the tug-of-war. It involved the girls being divided into two teams who lined up against each other with the youngest children in front. They stood closely together holding the next person around the stomach while the girls at the front held each others' hands. Playing the tug-of-war means that the girls from the other team should be pulled over to the other side. One of the girls at the front of the line was weaker and could not let go as her hands were too tightly held. On the one hand this struggle shows how the individual is given an opportunity at an early age to develop a physical and psychological capacity to constitute oneself as an independent subject preparing the individual to make progress within a group against another one in society.

The third game also involved dividing the girls into two teams, similarly to when they perform their duties at the home. The girls were standing in rows beside one another. A ball should be thrown over ones head to the girl behind. When the last girl in the row had caught the ball she should run and place herself at the front of the row. This was repeated until each girl had performed this transferring of the ball. A girl became sad and decided to quit the game. Although it seems to be a part of the everyday life to perform in front of temporary visitors, for instance, through singing and dancing, I realized my own presence may have contributed to increasing the levels of prestige. Therefore, I turned to her asking if she was alright. She wiped her tears away and turned her gaze towards the sky. As the next game started she participated and performed well. Her team won.

In respect of the competitiveness I had observed during yesterday's games I composed an exercise for the next English class intended to teaching the children to see one another more as fellow humans rather than competitors. The exercise was outlined in the way that each person should say two positive things to the girl sitting next into. When each girl had said something positive to one another I asked a girl to get the caretaker. I expressed my thanks for having been allowed to stay at the Palm and hoped that the girls had benefitted

from the English classes. As I left the home they collectively said: “PLEASE COME BACK, UNCLE!” It was difficult saying goodbye.

COMPETENT CITIZENS

Summing up, conducting voluntary work as an English teacher became a way to access children’s homes and seeing how the children acted as individuals and a collective in relation to me and in front of the caretakers. From my observations of the games I got an insight into how the girls interacted with each other on their leisure-time within the children’s homes. The games stimulated competition between the participants and contributed to increase the children’s capacity for self-regulation. Moreover, it can be seen that the games were a part of the efforts made to teach the children to think, feel and act in certain ways, for instance, in the way the children were trained to be competitive. Considered as a regime of a particular way of living it appears the children’s home made up a space among others for constituting culturally competent citizens in relation to ideas of the good life in Sri Lanka.

Certainly, the situation for children growing up in children’s homes today is difficult to compare to how it might have been historically and will surely vary from one children’s home to another. Approaching an understanding of what it may be like to grow up in children’s homes and what life one may lead as a citizen after having stayed in a children’s home would require an empirical investigation on spot in a giving country that includes interviews with persons having grown up in children’s homes. However, no such study has been conducted on the adoption area. Instead ideas similar to Hägglund’s representations have been established about the poor environment of growth in the children’s birth countries in relation to growing up as a citizen in foreign adoptive parents’ homelands in the adoption discourse until today. That simplification and fragmented image has been normalized because most of the publications on the adoption area have been authored by adoptive parents rendering adoption as a legitimate family project. Then, how did the Sri Lankan children’s homes become spaces for rendering children adoptable? This question is explored in the next chapter.

3 THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF CHILDREN'S HOMES IN SRI LANKA

In this chapter I shed light on an understudied link between the historical European tourism to Sri Lanka and the social construction of children's homes in adoption contexts. This link can be seen in the connection between different tourists' social norms concerning the family, the marriage and the caretaking of children in Sri Lankan children's homes. In this context I claim that colonial administrators and missionaries (that is, the actors who in most cases stood behind the rising of the children's homes) could be categorized as tourists in the sense that they stayed outside of their homelands as temporary migrants. Indeed, there are significant differences between colonial administrators and missionaries and charter tourists, for instance, as regards intentions, motivations, and expectations. Simultaneously, there are central similarities concerning the historical temporary migrants' anxiety over children's upbringing and contemporary tourists' reflections over children's homes and translations of circumstances of the order of things in adoption contexts. Applying this wide perspective on tourists I show how the social construction of children's homes is supported by the historical connection to the early travels of Europeans and their activities in the country which contributed to making the children's homes into places where children are rendered adoptable. Introductorily, an account is given on how the European colonialism changed local caretaking practices of children. Then, I present a few interviews conducted with persons on the adoption area. Finally, I look closer at the role of social workers in adoption contexts.

HISTORICAL CHILD CARE PRACTICES

Historically, caste practices substructured social norms for caretaking of children and legitimate forms of co-existence between men and women in Sri Lanka (Bryce 1953; de Silva 2002; D'Oyly 2011; Sri Ramanathan 1963; Tambiah 1972). Moreover, temples as well as large-scale agriculturalists played an essential part in offering social security to children and families (Jayathilake & Amarasuriya 2005:85). With the arrival of the Western colonial powers new ways of child care practices were introduced. It is related to the case that the marriage, in a Christian sense, became central in determining the legitimacy of certain forms of co-existence.

That is exemplified in the political scientist Kumari Jayawardena's study (2007:4-5, 22) showing how the Portuguese colonial administration encouraged the soldiers to marry local women, whereupon they were converted to Catholics. Creating a society of hybrids (that is, so called mix-races) that would support the Portuguese colonial administration in each colony, Jayawardena argues, was the purpose of these marriages. According to the historian K. M. de

Silva (1977) the Portuguese stayed in Sri Lanka from the beginning of the 16th century until the middle of the 17th century, when the Dutch eliminated the Portuguese rule of Sri Lanka's coasts and took the role of colonial power over the larger part of the country until the end of the 18th century when the British rule started. Jayawardena (2007:31-32) provides examples of the ways in which the Dutch were concerned with the marriage and argues that it aimed at creating a class of loyal subjects under the Dutch colonial administration.

Given the fact that the pre-colonial social support systems were restricted by the colonizers' activities and that, at least in relation to the literature material used in this thesis, no extended institutionalized child care practice existed in Sri Lanka, it seems plausible to assume that most of the children being born outside of the marriage or for different reasons became orphaned were taken care of within the hybrid society or by the churches which the Portuguese and the Dutch temporary migrants rose.¹³ Below I focus on a motivating factor for building children's homes within the country.

THE PROBLEMS OF HYBRIDITY

Taking as a point of departure the anthropologist Ann Laura Stoler's argument (2002:70, 87) that the children's homes were characteristic of the Dutch, the French and the British Empires aimed at preventing the growth of a future generation of paupers and prostitutes I show that the hybrid nature of the children substructured the rise of children's homes in Sri Lanka in the beginning of the 19th century.

The increasing reproduction of many children between the colonizers and the local women during the Dutch colonial period could be seen in the account provided by Robert Knox staying in Sri Lanka in the years 1660 to 1680 (Knox 1958 [1681]). Knox was one of the British prisoners being placed in local communities of the Kandyan Kingdom under the rule of Rajasinghe II (1635-1687). All of the prisoners, independent of their home countries, were men who had relations with local women.¹⁴

Knox is a central person in adoption contexts. It depends on the case that he adopted a girl who was the result of the relations his countrymen entered with local women. A reason for adopting the girl was that she would perform domestic work and take care of him in the autumn of his life. However, the girl was abandoned at the age of 7 when Knox managed to

¹³ However, the historian of religions Peter Schalk (2000a:29) has shed light on the existence of children's homes during the Dutch colonial period in Sri Lanka through his reading of a travel account from 1712. A close friend of the traveler was of Swedish origin and the father of a hybrid child in a children's home.

¹⁴ From an estimation given in the sociologist Susantha Goonatilake's study (2001:10) the number of prisoners added up to a 1000 persons.

escape from his imprisonment and returned to England. This is the first documented adoption where a foreign citizen adopts a Sri Lankan born child simultaneously as it indicates the birth of many children that could be adopted against the background of their hybrid composition.

As a result of the British subjugation of Sri Lanka in 1815 by means of taking control of the Kandyan Kingdom even more hybrid children were reproduced. That has been described by the historian Brendan Gooneratne and the literary historian Yasmine Gooneratne (1991) writing a book about the colonial administrator John D'Oyly. Among other things they depict his diplomatic relations to the court of the Kandyan Kingdom, his contribution to the fall of the Kingdom and mentions that he used parts of his salary to support and educate the children of British soldiers who had returned to England. Further, an account is given from a soldier's letter in which the soldier imagines that the 19th regiment he was a part of had reproduced more children than any other regiment. This soldier also states that, to prevent himself from doing worse things than on the battlefield, he consumed alcohol and took local women. Moreover, Jayawardena exemplifies that the 65th regiment in Sri Lanka in the beginning of the nineteenth century – together with five other regiments – included boys below the age of 16 years old belonging to the British working class. Those unmarried and sometimes orphaned soldiers stayed in barracks, separated from the higher officers, and had relations with local women.

From 1818, when the final rebellion against the British was defeated, it could be seen that the borders between the colonizers and the locals became sharper in general, but also in particular between the ruling temporary migrants and the hybrid children in Sri Lanka. It is illustrated in the rise of children's homes in the country. For instance, the first corner stone of a children's home was laid by the governor of Sri Lanka in 1823 and sponsored by a person who donated fifty acres of land to the home, according to social scientist Swarna Wijetunga (1991:2). Below I demonstrate that this initiative may have been motivated by and related to the debates occurring in the centre of the British Empire and other metropolitan centers.

The Rise of the Children's Homes

The anthropologist Harini Amarasuriya (2010:49) provides examples that many debates concerning children were held during the 18th and 19th centuries in Great Britain. Those debates included assumptions of the nature of the children, their bodily and spiritual health, and how juvenile delinquency should be handled. In fact, 52 Acts concerning the welfare of children in England were consolidated in the years 1885 to 1913.

Moreover, Stoler claims (2002:122-123) that nursery schools were constructed on a large scale by the 1830s and several more from 1848 onwards, in England, Belgium, Germany, Holland, and France. Supported by a political liberalism they composed training places for working class children who would be saved from an immoral future life. Perhaps, as Amarasuriya discusses (2010:50), they became training places where the children were taught how to conform under the prevailing ideals of caring promoted by the middle class at that time.

Also in Sweden there are examples of the children's bodily health being put at stake during this period. The historian Svenbjörn Kilander (2008) describes how the so called 'mountain colonies' (fjällkolonierna), where parents sent their children in order to save them from the dirty city environment, resulted from the quick industrialization process in the decenniums around the year 1900. According to Kilander the 'mountain colonies' made up a project aimed at increasing the societal hygiene through particular efforts directed to all Swedish children being incorporated into the industrial society of Sweden. At the 'mountain colonies' the children were educated receiving knowledge of Sweden as well as of how to act as Swedes. Thus, the children would learn that even their leisure-time could be consumed to the benefit of society.

An essential feature of Stoler's point of view is composed of making comparisons between the colonial empires and studying both the differences and the similarities as well as how they may overlap one another from the metropole to the colony and from the colony to the metropole (2002:210). Among other things Stoler shows how the rise of children's homes in the Dutch Indonesia, to some extent, composed a part of a reformation project directed at children being born out of relations between the colonizers and the local women. In general these children posed a classificatory problem putting ideas of European identity at stake, particularly in the colonies. Moreover, Stoler exemplifies how children, in certain politicized French discussions, were presented as "fruits of lamentable weakness as well as physically and morally marked by the defect and mediocre quality of the mother" (ibid:68). This particular gaze on the children and their mothers Stoler derives to the prevailing European ideas on racial hygiene and anxieties that racial degeneration could create social effects and political consequences.

Further, Stoler claims that there was an anxiety over the case that boys would grow up to become anti-colonial revolutionaries and that the girls would be used for prostitution unless they were put in the children's homes where they were given education, vocational training and strong doses of moral instructions. Beside these social effects Stoler presents a range of

reasons to the case that prostitution in particular was rendered as a problem that could cause political consequences. Broadly speaking, prostitution involved moral transgressions¹⁵, ideas concerning racial degeneration¹⁶, and in the final extension a destabilization of the order of society. In fact, prostitution could and often increased the number of syphilis-cases, resulting in non-productive European men/colonizers.

In relation to the problem of hybridity demonstrated by Stoler, Jayawardena claims that parallels could be drawn to Sri Lanka, illustrated in the case of a certain British missionary family's history in the decenniums around the year 1900. During this period there was such a great number of hybrid children in the country that several areas were talked about as 'little England'. Because the British missionary was married to a Sinhalese woman and the father of four hybrid children, Jayawardena suggests that most likely he was aware of the problems facing such children. That awareness seems to have substructured his intention to rising a children's home in Sri Lanka. For instance, he was anxious that the girls would be used for prostitution. Moreover, an example is given that the plantation owners were aware of the children's homes in the highlands but avoided visiting them because of their guilty/bad conscience. Altogether, Jayawardena states that the placing of those children in institutions contributed to preventing the realization of two recurrent colonial nightmares.

In sum, the problem of hybridity composed a motivating factor for the rising of children's homes and binds together the temporary migrants' social norms on the family, the marriage, and the reasons for placing certain children in children's homes. The anxiety over the children's upbringing in the colonies was based on a discourse of racial hygiene with overlapping links between the empires leading to the development of a particular gaze on the children and their mothers. Among other things the children should be separated from the mothers and placed in the children's homes. Today a similar anxiety prevails concerning the children and their mothers but it is handled in another way. For instance, in the adoption discourse it is considered that (an unmarried) mother has no other choice than surrendering the child to a children's home and that it is better for the child to grow up as a citizen in the foreign adoptive parents homelands. How did such cultural ideas become normalized? Below an answer is traced to this question.

¹⁵ That is, sexual intercourse outside of the Christian idea of 'the family' considered as a heterosexual union between a man and a woman (preferably) of the same ethnicity who were married with children.

¹⁶ For instance, the risk of reproducing even more degenerated hybrid children.

LEGITIMATE FORMS OF CO-EXISTENCE

The ruling temporary migrants' introduction of the Marriage Ordinance changed the gaze on legitimate forms of co-existence during the British colonial period in Sri Lanka. Taking my ethnographic interview material as a starting point I illustrate a few effects of this ordinance in contemporary adoption contexts. However, in contrast to dominating ideas within the adoption discourse I shed light on a space for negotiating social norms supporting the adoption act in some cases. First, I give an account of interviews with two caretakers of children and one caretaker of women in need. Second, I explore how contemporary social workers carry on certain moral values and ethical rules (that is, ideas of how one should live) established by the temporary migrants during the British colonial period. Altogether, I demonstrate that the changed gaze on legitimate forms of co-existence contains an embedded link between the tourism to Sri Lanka and the social construction of children's homes.

The first interview was conducted with a caretaker at a children's home established by British temporary migrants by the end of the 19th century. That home's transnational adoption activity started in the beginning of the 1920s.¹⁷ In other words, this is one of the first institutions from which Sri Lankan children have been migrated from their birth country to grow up as citizens abroad.

While waiting in the entrance to the children's home to conduct the interview I have a look at a montage of pictures put on the notice board. The pictures show Sri Lankan children who had been adopted to a number of adoptive families in Germany. Meeting the caretaker I introduce myself and describe my project. Thereafter, I question the case that those children had been adopted transnationally instead of locally. Were they so called 'special needs children', that is, the children primarily adopted to foreign adoptive parents. The caretaker says that the children were in full health. There exists, however, a number of reasons to the case that local adoptive parents reject certain children. For instance, in cases where information of the child's background story is missing, the mother is too short, the baby is too dark, weighs too little, is physically or psychologically unhealthy, and if the child's horoscope is bad. Two of the children in the pictures were darker than the other three who were golden brown. According to the caretaker, one of the lighter children, who was a boy, had a mother of short length. Consequently, the child was rejected by becoming local adoptive parents because there was a risk that the boy would grow up to be of short length. Moreover, the caretaker described that the surrounding society did not accept unmarried mothers with

¹⁷ A caretaker at another home also stated that the foreign adoptions were started in the 1920s, indicating the emergence of the transnational adoption practice in Sri Lanka.

children. Thus, the mother had surrendered the child to the children's home. Though, rather than the unmarried status of the mother the lack of the father's name in the birth certificate constituted a great obstacle for local adoptive parents to adopt the child.

Further, the caretaker explained that foreign adoptive parents did not consider that a problem. The local adoptive parents, however, wanted to know the whole background story. Was the mother married? Had she been raped? If a Tamil man had raped a Sinhalese woman the child was rejected by a Sinhalese couple while the reverse constituted a rule if a Sinhalese man had raped a Tamil woman. Muslim children were not given to this home but would be accepted. In contrast to Buddhists and Hindus a Christian couple rejected no children because of religious belonging, health state and astrological aspects. Although the caretaker mentioned that Buddhists and Hindus would not reject a Christian child because in their view small children had no ideas about religion. Taken together, the caretaker seemed to imply that nationality and astrology in combination with an unknown father constituted the main obstacles for adopting a child locally.

Furthermore, the caretaker described that beside the child being given a family through the foreign adoption the children's home also received reports from the foreign adoptive parents, for instance, in the same way the German adoptive parents had done by sending pictures which I looked at before conducting the interview. In some cases the foreign adoptive parents also returned to the home in the future. Though, as regards the local adoptive parents neither did they return nor did they send reports. Certain local adoptive parents preferred keeping the adoption a secret from the surrounding society, depending on the case that childlessness constitutes a stigma in Sri Lanka.

Clearly, in adoption contexts social norms of the marriage seem to make persons think, feel, and act in certain ways, for instance, when an unmarried mother surrenders her child to a children's home and when married childless couples adopt in order to realize the social expectation to reproduce the generation. A reason to this case can be derived to the introduction of the Marriage Act in 1847 which, according to the social scientist Wimala de Silva (2002:217), prescribes the marriage as a monogamous relation. Thus, the marriage in a Christian sense was rendered superior while other forms of co-existence were considered immoral from a juridical perspective but also in social terms. Strictly, because the Victorian ideas were based in the consideration of the marriage as a life-long union between a man and a woman. Therefore, divorce went beyond the boundary of decency while, for instance, the Sinhalese Buddhists considered the marriage as a secular agreement between families for the reproduction of the generation simultaneously as divorce and remarriage was accepted

(ibid:213-214, 217). Considered as a regime of living I claim that the marriage involves a technology for governing citizens within societal value systems.

The second interview was conducted with a caretaker at a Christian children's home that neither did local nor transnational adoptions. The caretaker at this institution stated that he and his wife had adopted a child of a sexually abused mother. After speaking for a while I asked the caretaker to share his ideas on abortion. "As a Christian I consider abortion to be murder or a sin. In Sweden it is different. Sweden was one of the first countries introducing the concept of living together. In Sri Lanka the law states that you should be married. Between the ages of 18 and 21 a certain permission is needed, but at the age of 21 the law states that you should get married. Laws are created because persons need to be controlled and as means for individuals to make certain decisions, for instance, getting married. Children should be made after the marriage. Not before that. It is a good law." Altogether, the caretaker claimed that the surrounding society would wonder how an unmarried woman got pregnant. In the absence of the father she would be considered to be a prostitute or a person with a poor character. In this context the marriage seems to have the function of a normative ritual of citizenship belonging where the capacity to act in accordance with cultural values is put at stake.

In most cases the negotiation of the above described situation is represented as the unmarried mother's only alternative within the dominant adoption literature. The fact that unmarried mothers can negotiate this situation in alternative ways was exposed in an interview I conducted with a caretaker of women in need. The home was started in the 1980s to assist mothers and their children. The caretaker stated that the youngest mother coming here was 13 years old and the eldest was 43 years old. In average the women are in the ages of 20 to 25. They belong to different social classes and arrive from various parts of the country.

Moreover, the caretaker described a case in which the girl had continued to live with her family while hiding her pregnancy. One day she experienced stomach aches. The mother brought her to the hospital where the baby was born. On the way to the hospital the mother hit her daughter. She was in chock due to her daughter's pregnancy. The home assisted in the reconciliation process between the family and the daughter. The problem was solved in the way that the family would act as the caretaker of the child while the girl was sent abroad to work for two years. She was expected to earn sufficient of money to care for her child.

In other cases, if the family rejects their daughter wanting to keep the baby, the home may assist the girl to find a job while temporarily staying at the home and receiving support to care for the child. In due time, the family may accept that the daughter has given birth to a

child. Then, according to the caretaker they will create a history that excludes others from knowing what has occurred. Consequently, the girl could get married. The family finds a ‘second-class husband’ (that is, a divorced man) for their daughter. As soon as they get married it becomes possible to pretend that nothing extra-ordinary has occurred.

As my ethnographic interview material above shows unmarried women can negotiate their situation in other ways than surrendering the child to a children’s home for adoption.¹⁸ A reason behind the case that this space of negotiation has not been illustrated in the dominating adoption literature could be derived to the fact that in most cases it has been authored by adoptive parents rendering adoption as a legitimate way to create a family. In such a way certain cultural ideas are normalized on the adoption area. In the next section I shed light on the way in which the role of social workers contribute to conserve certain ways of living within a Sri Lankan welfare context.

NORMATIVE WAYS OF LIVING

Since the 1940s the Sri Lankan society has been governed through a welfare model which, according to the social scientist Swarna Jayaweera (2002:21), involved a momentum in the social development that continued at least until the mid-1960s. The welfare model included free education and health services as well as a subsidized food scheme depicting Sri Lanka as a success story.¹⁹ In adoption contexts the role of social workers could be seen as a part of a form of governing that the anthropologist Jonathan Inda (2006:10) calls social-rational governing or welfarism. Explicitly, because the duty of social workers to some extent involves conserving normative ways of living such as monogamous marital relations between men and women and determining what individuals could be considered as legitimate adoptive parents capable of raising good future citizens. In what follows below I show from my ethnographic interview material how social workers in their occupational role support some moral values and ethical rules that conserve the social order in accordance with the Sri Lankan welfare model.

The social worker Mrs Vijitha (fictive name) handles adoption issues at the State authority DPCCS. I met her on several occasions to discuss family relations in Sri Lanka and her many years experience as a social worker. Historically, there was, according to Mrs

¹⁸ The adoption researcher Pien Bos’ unique anthropological study (2007) shows that unmarried mothers in South India maintain a similar space of negotiation.

¹⁹ Though, in relation to the political scientist Rohan Gunaratna’s study (2001 [1990]) of the subversive events starting in the beginning of the 1970s there are several problems related to the characterization of Sri Lanka as a success story.

Vijitha, no stigma attached to being an unmarried mother. The locals accepted unmarried mothers. Therefore, they could keep their children. When speaking of adoptions today Mrs Vijitha says that young boys and girls are tightly bound to their parents. She explains that a code of ethics is followed by the children within the family. However, some youths claim that they are going to tuition classes in order to meet their partners. In doing so, they go beyond their parent's rules. Then, the parents may distance themselves from their child and the child resulting from the "unethical relation" saying: ok, now you cannot stay here anymore. Indeed, Mrs Vijitha says, the parents may change their opinion upon hearing that the couple is "doing good" (that is, when living in a house, the man is working, the children are raised in a good way and achieve good results in school). That the couple is 'doing good' is not particularly related to how much money they are making. The parents are happy if they get by on their own. It seems to me that Mrs Vijitha describes a flexibility in the ethical rules within families enabling unmarried couples to keep their children and live an autonomous life in accordance with ideas of the good life in Sri Lanka.

Further, Mrs Vijitha describes her occupational role as a social worker and gives an account of a visit she had made in a woman's home. That woman was married but had children with different men and produced illegal arrack (that is, an alcoholic beverage). Her husband was working as a fisherman. As a result he was away from home over longer periods. Then, the woman had to make money somehow in order to provide food for the children. One of the children had been adopted by a local couple outside of the legal procedure. During the visit it turned out that the biological mother did not want to surrender the child for adoption because it would mean being permanently separated from the child. Mrs Vijitha made the decision that this biological mother was not 'morally fit'. In Mrs Vijitha's perspective this could be seen as a unique case. Before the DPCCS (which arose in the 1950s) it was not possible to conduct adoptions legally without the consent of the mother. Now, as the mother was considered to be immoral, it was possible. She was denied the right to care for her child.

The social worker's role to determine what persons are moral or immoral seems to be based in a particular moral prescribing monogamous marital relations that was established through the Marriage Act by the temporary migrants during the British colonial period. In this way it can be seen that social workers in their occupational role supports ethical rules within a Sri Lankan welfare context meaning that certain children are adopted to local adoptive parents as in the case above or cared for at children's homes until they become adopted to foreign adoptive parents.

Taken together, I claim that the family, the marriage and the children's homes constitute specific regimes of living that are partly conserved by social workers in accordance with the welfare model. Deviations from these normative forms of co-existence are stigmatized as they appear illegitimate or unrelated to cultural ideas of the good life as a Sri Lankan citizen.

TEMPORARY MIGRANTS' CITIZENSHIP PROJECT

Summing up, before and during the Western colonial period in Sri Lanka the local child caring practices were supported by caste practices. With the arrival of the historical temporary migrants questions of how one should live were put on their edge and new ways arose for child caring, in particular concerning the children born out of relations between the colonizers and the local women. During the British colonial period the colonial administrators and the missionaries handled the problem of hybridity by rising children's homes with the intention of forming good citizens. The rise of the children's homes was based on an anxiety over certain children growing up to become anti-colonial revolutionaries and prostitutes that in the end would destabilize the social order. The maintenance of this anxiety could be related to what the sociologists Nikolas Rose and Carlos Novas (2005:439) names as a 'citizenship project', that is, the way in which authorities have thought about certain individuals as potential citizens and how authorities have tried to handle them, for instance, by means of constructing buildings with the expectation that they would encourage particular ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. In my opinion the children's homes could be seen as such buildings where the everyday life of the hybrid children were put under control simultaneously as they were fostered to loyal citizens in the colonies.

As time passed by the children's homes became places from which children were rendered adoptable. To a great extent, it is related to contemporary anxious ideas about the mothers having no other choice but to surrender their children for adoption and that an upbringing in a children's home represents a poor alternative in relation to growing up as a citizen in a foreign adoptive family's homeland. Against the background of my ethnographic interview material I have shown that there exists a space for negotiating social norms supporting the adoption act in some cases and a flexibility in ethical rules (that is, ideas of how one should live) within families enabling unmarried mothers and couples to live an autonomous life in accordance with perceptions of the good life in Sri Lanka. However, social workers play an essential part in upholding certain moral values and ethical rules that conserve normative ways of living within a Sri Lankan welfare context.

Finally, the historical tourism plays a great part in Sri Lankan adoption contexts. It can be seen in the link between the Europeans' early traveling to Sri Lanka and the social construction of the children's homes. Embedded in this link lies a connection between the temporary migrants' social norms of the family, the marriage, and the children's homes. That connection, together with dominating cultural ideas in the adoption discourse, contributed to making the children's homes into places from which children are rendered adoptable. In the next chapter I shed light on the role of the contemporary tourism in Sri Lanka's adoption practice.

4 THE CHARTER TOURISTS' FAMILY PROJECT

In this chapter I give an account of a connection between the contemporary tourism to Sri Lanka and representation activities on the adoption area. In what ways have traveling to Sri Lanka contributed to forming ideas about the country? What is the role of expectations and motivations in the generation of images of local circumstances and the country's population? How did tourists' reflections over children's homes and translations of the everyday life outside of their homelands contribute to making Sweden into one of the largest receiving countries of Sri Lankan children? Taking these questions as a point of departure I illustrate how tourism plays a great part in Sri Lanka's adoption practice.

TOURISM AND TOURISTS

Sri Lanka is a country with a long history of visiting travelers having arrived for different purposes and staying in the country during a range of periods. Before 1972, that is when the country's current name was officially constituted, 'Ceylon' was the most commonly used naming of the country. Though, as the reader may have observed I have used the name Sri Lanka to speak of the country, independent of the period that has been discussed. In fact, speaking about Sri Lanka in terms of 'Ceylon' means shedding light on the country's experience of Western colonialism that started in the beginning of the 16th century coming to an end in 1948. Speaking with the words of the literary scientist Edward Said (in Shields 1991:5), the use of 'Ceylon' could be seen to involve a process of symbolic exclusion resting in the superior position of the speaker, in which 'the superior' maintains the power to position a long range of possible relations to 'the inferior' without losing the upper hand.

Because this thesis has been written in Sweden I, as the author of the text, avoid using the term 'Ceylon' as this name positions the country in the periphery in relation to Sweden and several other European countries maintaining colonial links to Sri Lanka. Such colonial links were based on travels to the country and compose a presupposition for the ways in which the idea of Sri Lanka has been formed in different temporary migrants' reflections over their experiences and translations of circumstances within the country. Against the background of this reflection, in a similar way to the tourism researchers Hazel Tucker and John Akama (2009), I localize the following reasoning of tourism and tourists in a post-colonial context.

The way in which the tourism phenomenon is approached significantly effects the study. For instance, Crick (1989:312-313) describes a difficulty in studying the tourism phenomenon because it can be seen as a highly complex system and the result of an

intersection of several further phenomenon which in themselves can make up strategic starting points for analysis. Another complexity in tourism studies lies in defining who can be categorized as a tourist. Crick suggests that tourists have different motivations for traveling and that a singular definition of tourists run the risk of failing to clarify the construction of the international tourism system.

Moreover, the historian Hans Magnus Enzensberger (1996 [1958]) put reasoning about the concept of tourism on its edge when rising the question: how can tourism as an historical phenomenon be delimited from something that has always occurred, namely human traveling? Enzensberger suggests that contemporary tourism is characterized by leisure travel while historically humans were forced to travel, for instance, because of economic or climate associated reasons (ibid:122). This delimitation would be difficult to apply in adoption contexts given the reasoning I conducted in chapter three, regarding the connection between the European's historical journeys to Sri Lanka and the social construction of the children's homes, and also in relation to potential and becoming foreign adoptive parents motivations for making a journey where the primary goal seems to be realizing a family project through adoption.

Because an overall aim of the thesis is made up of deepening the understanding of a few cultural processes involving links between tourism and adoptions I have chosen to apply the tourism researchers Thomas Blom's and Mats Nilsson's (2005:10) definition of tourism as a temporary migration where, as a rule, the journey back to the homeland has been determined in advance, compose an all-embracing idea of how tourism can be characterized. Through this wide characterization I shall, for instance, shed light on how historical travels to Sri Lanka have contributed to forming ideas of the country and different tourist's motivations for visiting the country.

Nils Matson Kiöping can be seen as an early Swedish tourist that visited Sri Lanka motivated by educational and business purposes. He could introduce himself as H.M:s ship's lieutenant and was one of the 20 000 Swedes working for the Dutch East India Company, from the middle of the 17th century until the end of the 18th century (see for instance Schalk 2000a:28; Arne 1952:157). According to the historian of religions Peter Schalk (2000abc) Kiöping was one of the first Swedes leaving traces from his journeys to Sri Lanka. After visiting the country in the 1650s he published a travel account titled "A Short Description of Travels and Peregrinations (my translation)".²⁰ Moreover, Schalk states that Kiöping

²⁰ Schalk (2000a:28) also notes that the Kandyan King Rajasinghe II learned about Sweden these days reading a book he was offered from a Dutch diplomat.

oscillates between fear and amazement of the unknown as well as implicitly putting the Swedish culture in relation to other countries. All in all, in Schalk's opinion, Kiöping's representations of Sri Lanka could be compared to the image of an exotic market place with natural products. Clearly, in this context, traveling offers tourists opportunities to form ideas of local circumstances outside of their homeland.

Further, the archaeologist T.J. Arne (1952), who maintained familiar relations to "our missionaries", has gotten the impression that it was not only the will to convert the heathens and saving souls that led the Swedish missionaries to other countries but "also the Swedish adventurous spirit, the longing to see the unfamiliar, and proving their strengths in a tempting exotic environment" (ibid:34-35). Moreover, Arne mentions that the Church of Sweden's largest missionary field was localized in South India and in Sri Lanka as well as providing an example out of a missionary magazine from 1906 stating that "[e]ach Swedish man and woman shall know and be aware that currently the mission is Sweden's most essential connection to the peoples of nature and the exotic culture peoples. In fact, the mission is our spiritual colonization in other parts of the world" (ibid:34). Here, it may be seen that even the missionaries played an important role in bringing stories to Sweden concerning their motivations and expectations of their visits in Sri Lanka as well as how they generated images of local circumstances and the local population.

Because there is a tendency in the dominating adoption literature to establish the year 1960 as a point of departure for the Swedes' discovery of the world, the above described temporary migrations are central for my reasoning in this chapter. The adoption researcher and adoptive parent Madeleine Kats (1992:19-20 [1981]) states, for instance, that the Swedes started to travel in the 1960s and in the adoption researcher and adoptive parent Barbara Yngvesson's anthropological study (2010:44) a representative of a Swedish adoption organization claims that the Swedes are a homogenous population without a colonial past making Sweden into a well prepared ecological ground to plant and let the idea of adoptions from other countries grow.²¹

Most likely, both Kats and the representative of the adoption organization associate traveling in terms of going on a vacation. However, focusing only on contemporary tourism the missionary's historical role in the social construction of the children's homes is excluded. What is more, in the information brochure from the Delegation for Human Rights in Sweden (2007) light is shed on the first Swedish slave trade expedition to Africa, embarked upon as

²¹ Although Yngvesson reasons about the adoption phenomenon in terms of a stratified reproduction system, her study contributes to normalize the same gaze on adoptions found in the adoption discourse.

early as in 1646. In that context the adoption literature's delimitation of tourism and Swedish tourists' historical travels make up a problem, in particular because the setting aside of Sweden's colonial past is used as a pretext for presenting adoption as a legitimate means to create a family to other and potential adoptive parents. Below I shall illustrate a few links between the tourism phenomenon and Sri Lanka's adoption practice.

THE ADOPTION TOURISM TO SRI LANKA

Tourism in various forms and under different periods has composed a supposition for the conducting of adoptions from Sri Lanka to other countries. As mentioned in chapter three the missionaries activities and rising of the children's homes played a great part in the emergence of the transnational adoption practice. A contemporary example of this case can be seen in the author Birger Thuresson's account (1992) of a Swedish missionary marrying a Sinhalese pastor and their starting of a children's home in Sri Lanka in the years around 1970. The explicit aim of the children's home was not to adopt children to other countries. Although introductorily this is what actually happened. That the first child was adopted to Sweden is related to the case that a Swedish couple learned about the children's home from reading about it in the Swedish media. However, the adoption activity from this home was quickly cancelled whereupon it was generally considered as a business within the country.²²

Another example of the contemporary tourism's role in Sri Lanka's adoption practice has been noted in a book produced by the Swedish Intercountry Adoptions Authority (MIA, previously the Committee for Intercountry Adoptions, NIA) and authored by the adoption researcher Cecilia Lindgren (2010). Here, interviews with persons who were working within NIA, the Swedish Society for International Child Welfare (Adoptionscentrum), and the Swedish Social Service are presented. Several of the interviewees depict the 1960s and the early 1970s as a period characterized by a will to improve the world and talk about 'an ambient of salvation', 'a pioneering spirit', and 'the birth of a people's movement' to define the force behind the engagement for the early adoptions (ibid:50-51). Further, they state that there was a conviction that 'this is what we should do'. Concerning Sri Lanka it is mentioned explicitly that it was the tourism that contributed to start and increase the number of foreign adoptions from this country by the early 1970s. Many Swedes took the chance to find a child for adoption. Thus, a great number of children were adopted privately from children's homes

²² Market rational aspects of the adoption activity are discussed further on in this chapter.

close to the tourist areas (ibid:88-89). Below I show the way in which such opportunities are connected to the establishment of a need for vacation in Sweden.

Medical Interpretations of the Everyday Life

Similarly to the way in which the historian Svenbjörn Kilander (2008) puts the uneasily defined tourism concept as a base for an understanding of and an explanation to the Swedish industrial capitalist society I shall shed light on some factors that substructured the flow of Swedish charter tourists adopting children from Sri Lanka and deepen the understanding of a range of cultural processes involving links between tourism and adoptions.

In studying the Swedish society's handling of the quick process of change it underwent the decenniums around the shift of the century 1900, Kilander argues that a close connection can be seen between the increasingly higher tempo in society and a need for vacation. According to Kilander, the prescription of a need for vacation both in a preventive way and for therapeutic purposes can be seen in the medical literature by the end of the 19th century, in Sweden as well as in Europe (see for instance Shields 1991:79). Through the launching of the diagnose of neurasthenia (that is, overstraining and psychic exhaustion as a consequence of the upturned societal tempo) from the beginning of the 1880s, it seems a long list of symptoms obtained an explanation (Kilander 2008:43). Ideas about highly developed and civilized culture societies being haunted by neurasthenia were normalized during this period. However, Kilander states that it was not each and everyone who could get affected by neurasthenia in "our nervous century" but mainly privileged members of an increasingly more nervous bourgeoisie that had to emancipate themselves from the everyday life.

Kilander reasons about the question of what one could do for those who were caused by nervous discomforts as a consequence of society's progressive nature (ibid:41). The road to salvation was found in the pure air and calm environments of the mountains. For instance, Jämtland (a landscape in the north of Sweden) was considered as a healthy area where sick persons and local as well as foreign tourists from Great Britain traveled to get some rest and consume immaterial primary products such as air and untouched nature.²³ Considered as a regional area for curing ones health, Jämtland made up a peripheral place in relation to the central areas of industrialism, that is, the cities. Therefore, a small town like Åre offered a

²³ Thus, the mountain areas became social meeting places for various categories of tourists, some with trans-colonial links to Sri Lanka, at least from the beginning of the 19th century until the First World War (see for instance Nilsson 2010:14-15).

promise of recreation. A possibility facilitated by the development of transport and communication areas linking the cities to the smaller towns.

Clearly, against the background of Kilander's study the everyday life in Sweden was rendered unhealthy according to medical interpretations. Largely, such a perspective of pathologization on the everyday life emerged as a consequence of the quick industrialization process the decenniums around the year 1900 creating a need for vacation.²⁴ The idea of the need for citizens to recreate themselves can also be seen in the focus on the individual's health and leisure activities in political contexts, transnationally as well as locally (see for instance Holguín 2005; Seaton 1999; Löfgren 1999; Gorsuch & Koenker 2006; Baranowski 2001). In the next section I shed light on a politicization of Swedish citizen's leisure-time paving the way for the development of the charter tourism.

Vacationing Correctly

The historian Per Åke Nilsson (2010:44) studying the tourism development in Åre exemplifies the way in which the leisure-time in Sweden was politicized in respect of a statement from a Government servant in 1939 indicating that working persons in Sweden should learn how to handle their vacation and make it into a period of relaxation. The statement seems to imply good and bad ways of spending ones vacation as well as a will to prevent a dystopy, namely that the workers would return as overstrained as before taking the granted and predetermined time off. Consumed correctly the idea was that tourism both in a preventive and a therapeutic way would compose a cure for ill-health and ineffectivity.

Moreover, that Government servant claimed the following: "Bakers should not spend their vacation with other bakers and the same goes for each union and working factions. If we can contribute to 're-plant' larger groups in a new environment during vacation times, make them happier and so on, then we will also contribute to making them healthier and efficient workers" (ibid:43-44). This was stated in connection to the creation of a 'People's Movement for Vacationing', demonstrating, according to Nilsson, a firm belief in social engineering that the social tourism partly grew out of as well as an expectation grounded in this form of tourism that bridges could be built between persons in order to prevent the risk of conflicts.

From this politicization of the leisure-time in tourism contexts particular overlapping similarities can be made to the adoption phenomenon, for instance, regarding the engagement

²⁴ Simultaneously, in accordance to ambivalent European medical interpretations between the 1850s and the 1930s, the historian Anna Crozier (2009) points out that in reverse, the separation from the civilized life could affect the working capacity of Europeans as well as their racial constitution while staying in the colonies.

for the early adoptions which were supported by a will to improve the world and in the initiative to pick up children during vacation periods to be “re-planted” in Sweden. The question of how certain children should live and in what environment they should grow up within is put on its edge in this situation and can altogether be seen as surrounded by reflections and problematizations related to the idea of the good life as a citizen within the foreign adoptive parents homelands. What factors were essential for the development of the Swedish charter tourism?

World Curiosity and Changes of Working Conditions

According to the author Thomas von Seth (2008:15) writing about charter history the charter traveling in Sweden started in the second half of the 1950s but spread quickly to other countries. That the first development emerged in Sweden was not coincidental. During the Second World War many Swedes bought a radio, where reports from other countries were broadcasted. This, combined with the introduction of the TV in 1956, increased, according to von Seth, the Swedes curiosity of the world.

Further, Nilsson (2010:60) claims that the emergence of the Swedish welfare State was not affected in the warring years. The privileged position of Sweden after the Second World War with an intact industry and a screaming need for reconstruction in Europe contributed to making Sweden into a highly productive country. In the struggle for workers the working schedule was reduced by way of introducing three weeks of vacation in 1951 and forty-five hours of work per week in 1957. Moreover, the industrial vacation as a concept was constituted in 1956 through a law forcing the employer to give the worker a coherent vacation unless other agreements had been made. Finally, the real wages were increased uninterruptedly until the middle of the 1970s. In other words, Swedish citizens had the time and the money to spend on travels abroad.

Furthermore, during the Second World War a heavy development occurred within the flight industry. Von Seth (2008:28) describes that the instruments for navigation became more precise, the velocity was increased, and the planes could fly farther without transit stops for re-fuelling. After the Second World War there was an abundance of aircrafts laying the foundation to the emergence of international tourism. When the great airlines bought new passenger planes the small charter companies took over the used planes providing transportation to tourists to the vacation areas. Taken together, according to Blom and Nilsson (2005:69), this illustrates how changes in society develop the tourism simultaneously as tourism also affects the societal development.

Introductorily, Nilsson notes (2010:66) that the charter tourism was characterized by being highly collective and involving significantly more societal groups than “the working class”. Among the mass of tourists who traveled abroad in the 1960s and 1970s, the ethnologist Orvar Löfgren (1990:38) claims that there were persons for whom traveling abroad may have seemed completely utopian or rather unthinkable previously. For instance, it was not middle-class persons used to speaking foreign languages having previous experiences of travel that embarked on charter trips but groups of Swedes in need of the charter trip that had been organized in advance by the travel agencies that welcomed them on spot and would be available to them in the destination countries.

Clearly, from the above reasoning it can be seen that several factors substructured the emergence of the charter tourism in Sweden. In what follows I shed light on the development of tourism in Sri Lanka and some ways in which the tourism affected the societal development in the country.

PLEASURE-SEEKING ADOPTIONS

The Sri Lankan tourism project was established by the Prime Minister in 1966. It could be developed relatively unrestricted, partly because there were no influential groups in opposition to tourism but foremost because the tourism project was developed in close co-operation with foreign experts whose primary function, according to Crick (1994:27-28), consisted in fostering the tourism development, not in raising questions about the benefits to the country of such a development.

Moreover, Crick (1989:315) claims that the tourism to Sri Lanka was depicted as an easy opportunity to economic development because it was grounded in natural resources such as sand, sun and a friendly local population. Crick (1994:31-32) provides examples of slogans promoted to the locals declaring that the tourists should be met with a smile, not by outstretched palms asking for money. In 1967 a characteristic theme was launched for the reception of foreign travelers: Tourism – Passport to Peace. In this context I claim that the particular social engineering ideology of the tourism project is brought into the light as well as the expectation that bridges could be built between foreign tourists and locals that would contribute to an amnesia of past periods and decrease the risks of conflict.

According to Crick, the tourism development was characterized by a steady increase over the years and as it appears no significant changes occurred whether UNP or SLFP (the two dominant political parties in Sri Lanka) were governing the country. Since 1969 the percentage of visitors stating pleasure as a reason has always been above 75 % and frequently

around 90 %. Statistics (in *ibid*:195) shows the arrival of 407 000 visitors in 1982, 337 342 in 1983, and 317 734 in 1984, partly due to a 52,6 % decrease of visitors from India. In relation to this statistics it seems that a relatively large number of visitors stayed in Sri Lanka over a period containing armed conflicts between the Government and the locals (see for instance the historian K. M. de Silva 2005), which evokes the question of what pleasure may mean from the perspective of different persons. What is of particular interest for my thesis concerning this statistics is the fact that Swedish and Danish tourists, according to one of Cricks informants (1994:120), made themselves a reputation of wanting to adopt children. Indeed, depicting adoptions as a pleasure-seeking activity is difficult but the reputation of Scandinavians adopting children tends to reflect the forceful impact of these tourists activities within the country. In the following section I investigate the role of a couple of travel agents' marketing in adoption contexts.

VACATION DREAMS

Taking as a point of departure the historian of ideas Klas Grinell's study (2004), treating the marketing of the world and world images in Swedish foreign tourism, I shed light on the way in which Sri Lanka has been staged as a vacation paradise in material from the Swedish travel agents Vingresor (1970-1989) and Fritidsresor (1980-1990).²⁵ What I find particularly interesting is how this material offers a possibility to approach a motivation to adopting children during the charter tourists' vacation in Sri Lanka and an understanding of the tourists' expectations of the country.

According to Grinell the marketing depicts that which could be considered positive while the negative images are excluded. Moreover, he sorts out a permeating theme in the travel catalogues he has studied, namely that the destination countries are denied co-evalness. Applying the concept of co-evalness, developed by the anthropologist Johannes Fabian (2002 [1983]), Grinell illustrates how the marketing constructs the destination countries as different and lesser developed in several ways in comparison to Sweden. Similar depictions can be distinguished in the material I bring out into the light.

Von Seth (2008:75) notes that Vingresor was one of the first travel agents to arrange so called long flights to Sri Lanka and Gambia as early as in 1971. Both Sri Lanka and Gambia were marketed in Vingresor's catalogue (1970) as relatively cheap destinations far away in relation to Sweden. Therefore, it can be seen that the marketing was directed to Swedes

²⁵ The material, consisting of travel catalogues, price and information brochures, is accessible at the Royal Library in Stockholm, Sweden.

earning sufficient of income and having the capital and the time to spend on a journey. The fact that the trip was arranged by a travel agent may have created a feeling of comfort contributing to making a trip to Sri Lanka, a country that one only might have heard about on the radio, seem like a nice place to visit during the vacation period.

Reading the title of Vingresor's catalogue (1974) "The World of Vingresor" it can be seen that Sri Lanka, as an independent country, was uplifted and included in the travel agent's world where countries were transformed into vacation dreams. However, at the same time Sri Lanka was excluded: "Ceylon is another world. Here grows [tea, certain trees and bananas]. The island is like a living grocery, fruit, and flower store" (ibid.). Below the text an image depicts a beach where a person is on his way toward the water, a palm, the hotel, and a couple walking in the water.

The way I see the above marketing is that it partly demonstrates that parallels could be drawn to Nils Matson Kiöping's accounts of Sri Lanka during the 17th century as an exotic market place with natural products but primarily a theme that runs through all of the travel catalogues, namely the differencing of Sri Lanka. The image of the beach could be seen as a contrast to the stressful life in the cities of Sweden simultaneously as it also excludes the everyday work of the locals. The contrasting of the countries and the focus on specific environments or places is one way in which Sri Lanka is denied co-evalness to Sweden and staged as a vacation paradise for Swedish tourists.

An example of Grinell's claim that most images in the marketing constitute positive depictions while the negative are excluded is shown in Fritidsresor's travel catalogue (1981) describing that "[everything is not positive.] The poverty is unending and tragic, simultaneously to familiarize with it is beneficial for us coming from a welfare corner of the world. Moreover, the hotel standard is not particularly noteworthy and the rooms are sparsely furnished." In my opinion the representation of the poverty indicates that the country exists in a condition of ill-health simultaneously as the poverty is transformed into a tourist attraction constructing expectations of what could be seen during the vacation. The negative aspects that are excluded can be exemplified in the case that the tourism phenomenon is based on similar structural arrangements being established during the colonial period. Thus, on the one hand, the social stratification between tourists and locals and within the local population tends to be upheld. On the other hand, there is a problem arising in the case that what the tourists see and experience has been created through the tourism phenomenon. Indeed, there is a great risk that tourists' understanding of the destination country becomes formed by the tourism. Altogether, the marketing plays an essential role here regarding the kind of stories being

created before and under the vacation as well as what histories will be told in the tourists' homelands.

In the same catalogue expectations are evoked on the kind of experiences tourist could do during their visit by going on organized expeditions. A certain expedition invited charter tourists to have lunch in "the old colonial town of Galle and watch the Devil dancing" (ibid.). According to the travel catalogue the Devil dancing is "for us Scandinavians something beyond reality. [Dances] that are still practiced 'for real' all around the island. We will also see barefoot dancing on glowing charcoal and persons being hung up in the skin of their backs by metal hooks. Scary and amazing. Price 18:-" (ibid.). My interpretation of this quote is that it allows potential tourists to step into a kind of dream world going beyond the Swedish everyday life and visualize un-Christian acting and unfriendly behavior. It could also be seen that the expedition not only has been pre-programmed with expectations of what tourists can view but in fact what they should see. This fact trivializes the authenticity of the Devil dancing because it is performed on demand for tourists when they arrive as a group on a certain time to photograph and record the spectacle (cf. Holguín 2005:7). Further, the use of the word 'still' exemplifies how Sri Lanka is denied co-evalness in the way that it depicts Sweden as a country farther evolved where Devil dancing is associated with the past.

The above given analysis can be linked to Grinell's claim (2004:49) that the history of tourism could be interpreted as a history in which human relations are transformed into commodified relations. It means that the laws of the market governs the tourism and what governs the market is, according to the anthropologist Edward Bruner (1991:241), Western fantasies defining what stories should be told. As a matter of fact it can be seen that tourists pay to see simulations strongly affected by and created out of their own ideas.

On another expedition described in Fritidsresor's travel catalogue (1981) tourists can look at "amazing views spreading out with intensively green hills as far as the eye can see. [...]. In these areas the temperature is lower and the air higher. It feels almost like a beautiful Scandinavian summer day. [...]. One can easily understand how this area was the British vacation paradise during the colonial period." The point I like to make here is that this travel catalogue discourse provides opportunities to, consciously or unconsciously, appreciate the British transformation of the hill country into a great tea plantation. Moreover, I claim that the comparison between climate conditions offers tourists a nostalgic understanding of life, as it

were, during the colonial period as well as an opportunity to re-experience that life.²⁶ In this context the marketing quite explicitly recreates asymmetric relations between the tourists and the locals and given the case that the hill country was a place where many hybrid children were reproduced at the tea plantations there are, as I mentioned in chapter 3, several children's homes in these areas. Below I demonstrate how children and children's homes are focused in the marketing indicating implicit links between tourism and adoptions.

In the travel catalogue from Vingresor (1983), it can be seen that potential tourists are divided and distinguished into specific groups of consumers that are given various forms of discounts, among others “[high discounts for children providing great opportunities for each Ving-family to travel cheaper].” In a strategic way adult tourists are encouraged to travel with the whole family. Put in relation to the fact that many charter tourists traveled to Sri Lanka to adopt children during this period, that marketing could be seen as an implicit complying with these foreign citizens' will to realize themselves as families during their vacation.

In contrast to Vingresor's encouragement of making family trips, Fritidsresor (1981) could not recommend families with small children going to Sri Lanka because “food for children and so on has to be brought from home.” This marketing can be interpreted in many ways but it seems to me that Sri Lanka to some extent is not capable of offering food for children in terms of Swedish standard. Local circumstances are defined as poor in comparison to Sweden indicating that an upbringing in Sweden could be better.

As a final example of an implicit and close link between tourism and adoptions in the marketing I shed light on Vingresor's information brochure (1975) “Welcome to a nice vacation on Ceylon”. In this brochure it is mentioned that “friends are easily made on the island wherefore it is good to bring some practical small gifts such as inc pens, color pens for children, razors. If you have sufficient of space in your luggage you may also pack some out grown children's clothes and toys to offer at any children's home” (ibid.). Encouraging potential tourists to bring small gifts says something about the local social, economic, and hygienic condition of existence. Simultaneously, it can also be seen that tourists are made aware of children's situation and that the children's homes are almost transformed into tourist attractions. Taken together, this marketing renders local circumstances unhealthy tending to enhance initiatives to adopt children from the country. The point I want to make is that the marketing creates “authentic” images denying the country of co-evalness in relation to

²⁶ For instance, a Swedish woman experienced that life in the beginning of the 20th century while visiting her sister and her husband who owned a tea plantation in the Kandyan hill country (see for instance Ahnlund 1979:7).

Sweden. In what follows below I shed light on the struggle of Swedish Government servants to develop a legitimate adoption activity and how some Swedish adoption organizations established their activity in Sri Lanka.

JUST ADOPTIONS

According to the adoption researcher and adoptive parent Madeleine Kats (1992:21 [1981]), the Swedish State Committee for Intercountry Adoption Issues (NIA) emerged as a response to the great interest in Sweden for foreign adoptions in the beginning of the 1970s. NIA included dominating actors on the adoption area who were engaged in the development of the foreign adoption activity. One of these actors was Madeleine Kats who was simultaneously the chair person for the Swedish Society for International Child Welfare (Adoptionscentrum) (see for instance *NIA informerar* 1973d:2; 1990d:5). Between 1976 and 1991, the NIA-representatives conducted a range of travels to Sri Lanka and authored a number of travel reports.²⁷ The travel reports can be seen as symbolic manifestations of the tourism's role in Sri Lanka's adoption practice where forms and values of individual and collective existence are problematized in the sense that they are exposed to political and ethical reflection and intervention, for instance, through reflections over children's homes as regimes of living and translations of local circumstances in Sri Lanka.

Broadly, the first official journey to Sri Lanka (NIA 1976a) was conducted in order to discuss terms of agreement and routines with the authorities and the persons involved in the adoption activity. Reading this travel report one learns, among other things, that the Swedish adoption organization Adoptionscentrum (AC) initiated contact with Sri Lankan Government servants both on the local and the State level in 1974. The reader is also informed of the existence of a private or informal adoption activity beside the AC's activity resulting from the cheap charter trips. Concerning the informal adoptions NIA noted the tendencies of a trade in children. Thereafter, NIA continually maintained contact with the Sri Lankan authorities to handle this problem (see for instance NIA 1977b, 1978c, 1979d, 1980e, 1982f, 1984g, 1986h, 1991i). As an example it is mentioned that "according to local statements the trade in children following from the mass tourism to Sri Lanka in the 1970s was quickly organized in the same way as the prostitution and the narcotic trade" (NIA 1982f).

²⁷ The referencing to these travel reports is made by stating NIA followed by a year and a letter. However, NIA (1991j) constitutes a diary entered letter from NIA to the Swedish Embassy in Sri Lanka concerning the foreign adoptions.

Moreover, Crick (1994:61) who was staying in Sri Lanka in the beginning of the 1980s mentions that an illegal trade in children to tourists occurred from which lawyers were said to make huge amounts of money while the mothers only received a small share. Further, Crick claims that Sri Lanka had a reputation of being one of the worlds center for trading with children during this period, where certain travel agents were involved in arranging expeditions to connect tourists with children. Crick exemplifies this case in referencing to one of the country's largest English language news papers, the *Daily News* (1982, 20 July, reference in *ibid.*) and to an anthology problematizing relations between the tourism phenomenon and the locals (see for instance Garcia 1988).

The social scientist Asun Garcia (1988:109-113) claims that as soon as the tourists arrived to the country they were given offers to adopt children, even those uninterested in adopting. For instance, Garcia was asked by the accommodation owner if he knew of any families in Europe who would like to "help" a family with many children through adopting one of the children and paying a certain amount to the family. The accommodation owner would administer the donated money in the same way he had done to other families. Because the supply in adoptable children was not met by the demand Garcia claims that so called 'baby farms' had emerged, that is, an industrial-like mass production of children that was developed to the extent that a particularly codified language was used to imply that children had been born who could go for foreign adoption (*ibid.*:113). Though, Garcia states that those mentioning the massive production of babies received a negative response all round with the explanation that in the developing countries it was a tradition to have a large number of offspring. Given the case that also tourists uninterested in adopting were asked Garcia suggests that they may have told this story in their homeland to persons who, for various reasons, preferred going personally to the country in order to make an informal adoption.

That Swedish charter tourists adopted informally during this period has been discussed and accounted for in several contexts, among others in Tiranagama (2006), *Sydasien* (1982-2006), *NIA informerar* (1973-2004), NIA's travel reports (1976-1991), and Lindgren (2010:89, 98-102). Moreover, the social worker and adoptive parent Ingrid Stjerna (1981:22) reasons about the case that Swedes adopted informally. Stjerna states that the expected time for receiving a child for adoption was long in Sweden. In fact, she describes that adoptive parents adopting through the adoption organization Adoptionscentrum had to wait 3 to 4 years by the end of the 1970s until they received a child. Consequently, it becomes understandable that they would choose informal ways to adopt. Taken together, Stjerna claims that the question of foreign adoptions is centered on the issue of providing parents for a child without

a family. Simultaneously she also claims “that it is the child’s representative in the giving country, and that country’s authorities, maintaining the right to control such *re-plantations*. It is quite a responsible task that is as questioned an act over there as the reception of the child here” (ibid:22, my emphasis).²⁸

A Swedish adoption organization that represented Sri Lankan children in adoption contexts was SLBV (Friends of Sri Lankan Children, my translation). This organization was started by the end of the 1970s by parents who had adopted children from Sri Lanka (see for instance *NIA informerar* 1990a:11). Many of the children being adopted via Swedish adoption organizations came through SLBV, foremost because of the co-operation with the Sri Lankan businessman who ran children’s homes as well as hotels and transport services for foreign adoptive parents (see for instance Tiranagama 2006:4). The forming of this organization can be seen as an example of a reaction against the case that only NIA and Adoptionscentrum were authorized to support Swedish citizens to create their family through an adoption in Sri Lanka. As a representative of what Stjerna spoke about as a re-plantation of Sri Lankan children, it seems to me that the organization’s name aims at stimulating emotions in potential adoptive parents that it would be a friendly act to embark on a journey to the country explicitly motivated by adopting a child. However, this adoption organization’s handling of its responsible task would become questioned over the years, in Sweden as well as in Sri Lanka, for instance, in *Sydasiën* and in local Sri Lankan news papers as the adoption activity was characterized by elements of market rationality and specific ways of adopting that became criminalized in Sri Lanka.

Moreover, the adoption organization BFA-A (Children Above All – Adoptions, my translation) initiated their adoption activity in Sri Lanka in the beginning of the 1980s (see for instance Lindgren 2010:88). It depended on the case that the chair person met a Swede working in Sri Lanka. Lindgren does not mention what this Swede was working with but in NIA’s travel reports (1982f) an account is given that there was a “Swedish colony” in Sri Lanka these days that had emerged in Gampola, becoming a central area for Swedes working on a large-scale dam project. The dam project was sponsored by SIDA (the Swedish International Development Agency) and included workers from a Swedish construction company who became engaged in the social programs run by the company’s local legal adviser and his wife in Sri Lanka. In their leisure-time the workers assisted the couple to

²⁸ Using the word ‘re-plantation’ in this context is important to focus on because it illustrates how the adoption act is promoted as just and constitutes a part of a social engineering ideology that relates the idea of the good life to growing up as a Swedish citizen within a Swedish adoptive family.

renovate the children's home that they made adoptions from to other countries. Through this construction company the couple was introduced to the adoption organization FFIA (the Parent Association for International Adoptions, my translation).²⁹

All in all, a range of factors are essential for the way in which each adoption organization established their activity. A common element is constituted by the fact that Swedish tourists visited Sri Lanka for various purposes and found it just to adopt and/or bringing together other tourists with Sri Lankan children. When Swedish citizens turned to one of these organizations they were put in a queue. As potential adoptive parents their family projects were given a structure. During the period they stood in line they had to fill out blanquettes with information of their life-history, sufferings from diseases, economical status and other forms that would be distributed and managed by State bureaucracies in Sweden as well as in Sri Lanka. Thereafter, a judgment was made in regard to their capacity to become adoptive parents tending to put their health in focus. The outlook for adopting formally when the persons were considered too old, unhealthy or ill were highly restricted (*NIA informerar* 1984b:2). Below the NIA-representatives travel reports are taken as a point of departure for exploring a few consequences of this situation.

THE INTENSIFICATION OF THE ADOPTION ACTIVITY

The travel reports from the NIA-representatives' official visits to Sri Lanka play a great part in Sri Lanka's adoption practice, particularly in respect of the reflections over children's homes as environments of growth and the translations of local circumstances in Sri Lanka. Strictly, the travel reports can be seen as powerful mediums for standardization and evaluations of the way in which the adoption activity should proceed (cf. Löfgren 1999:81, 76). In what follows below I provide some insights into the adoption activity that was intensified in connection to the charter tourism to Sri Lanka.

On Friday 19th March 1976 the NIA-representatives were taken on a guided trip to a few children's homes in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan Government servant taking them on the tour also combined it with unexpected visits to certain children's homes. The NIA-representatives had been promised to get a comprehensive picture of the children's homes and the troubles that faced them. When visiting one of the children's homes it was noted that "the children were poorly looked after, dirty, wore ragged clothing, appeared inactive, stood or sat down completely indolent" (NIA 1976a) and at another institution the area of the home was

²⁹ Moreover, a family within the "Swedish colony" was interested in making an adoption and NIA expected more requests as there were quite many workers staying in the country during this period (NIA 1980e).

considered small though it had a nice garden. The children, in their turn, “were well-looked-after and active” (ibid.)

During their next official visit the NIA-representatives met the man who would become the contact person for the adoption organization SLBV (Friends of Sri Lankan Children, my translation). When meeting this man the NIA-representatives considered that “he demonstrated a great pathos and interest in adoption issues distinguished from prevailing attitudes, in particular as regards the single mother’s situation. To a great extent he appeared to understand European thinking which had made a strong and sympathetic impression on the Swedish families he had met. In his perspective it was impossible for an unmarried woman in Sri Lanka to keep her child and that, in many cases, the time until she received State support was too long” (NIA 1977b). The NIA-representatives checked this information with a Sri Lankan Government servant negotiating with AC (the Swedish Society for International Child Welfare) to become their contact person. Thereafter, it was affirmed that the alternatives for the woman were such that “[she] could either surrender her child to a reception home for adoption or in the worst case to a children’s home where the poor standard could affect the health of the child to such an extent that it would pass away. If there was neither possibility to place the child in a reception home nor at a children’s home, the mother was entitled to a small economic social security benefit to manage herself and the baby until she could place the child in a children’s home. [...]. Due to the stopping of the adoption activity the prevailing situation was disastrous – the children’s homes were overcrowded with children and it was impossible to place children in the institutions” (ibid).

Also, the health of the adoptive parents was put in focus during their visit to the country. The NIA-representatives give an account of a statement from the SLBV’s contact person explaining that “the guest services emerged as a service to the visiting families. They must stay close to the children’s home, make comfortable trips, receive support from each other, consume qualitative food and stay in rooms of a high standard, otherwise they run the risk of being sick during their visit in Sri Lanka. Moreover, the organization must be able to contact them quickly to inform them of the visiting hours and eventual changes” (NIA 1984g).

The adoption activity from the above mentioned children’s home was highly intense. “[About] 4 families a week arrive to Sri Lanka through the agency of SLBV, meaning there are always up to 12 Swedish families there at the same time during their 1, 2 and 3:rd week of the visit in Sri Lanka. [...]. Excursions are arranged for the adoptive families, for instance, to the family project and the home for handicapped supported by the SLBV’s charity department. Moreover, small lectures are held on Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka’s problems. A

voluntary worker from SLBV is on spot at the children's home supporting the Swedish adoptive families" (NIA 1980e).

In contrast to most representations of children's homes by the NIA-representatives the above described home was depicted as "perfect even in accordance with Swedish standard" (NIA 1979d). After the official visit in 1980 the following summarizing reflection was made "the spreading of rumors regarding international adoptions still occurs and is regularly brought into attention in the local media and in the Parliament. [The organization co-operating with SLBV] is obviously an object for much jealousy and rumors in Sri Lanka due to its efficiency, neat organization and large-scale activity." The NIA-representatives in their turn concluded that "the need for international adoptions and the children's and the poor families situation is indisputable" (NIA 1980e). When visiting this children's home during their next official visit the NIA-representatives stated that it distinguished itself "in a conspicuous way from other institutions in Sri Lanka and the Third World because of its high standard, the high number of caretakers and so on. The children are given the best possible caretaking one can imagine and medical inspections are conducted regularly several times a week" (NIA 1982f). In this context it can be seen that children's homes, not just in Sri Lanka, were gazed at and interpreted as environments of growth from a medical point of view (cf. Foucault in Grinell 2004:13).

Primarily, this institution distinguished itself from other institutions, for instance in Sri Lanka, because it was sponsored by adoptive parents standing in line to adopt children from this home (see for instance NIA 1991i). Whereupon it had been revealed that the SLBV's contact person supplied children for adoption on the side of the co-operation with SLBV he explained that it was difficult to decline families visiting Sri Lanka, some being SLBV-families supporting his own charity projects. According to NIA (1991j) the great amount adoptive parents had to pay for their children was considered remarkable. However, NIA seems to have been aware that the SLBV's contact person had a rumor of being too effective as he was taking children directly from the hospitals offering them to foreign citizens already by the end of the 1970s (NIA 1978c) as well as his intentions to constitute one particular Swedish adoption organization as the only intermediary of Sri Lankan children (NIA 1991i).

In 1992 an amendment was made in the Sri Lankan adoption law that limited the possibilities to make transnational adoptions, contributing to a radical decrease in foreign adoptions. In 1995, when the informal adoptions were criminalized in Sri Lanka, twenty children were adopted to Sweden. Thereafter approximately two children per year arrived until 2010. Because Sri Lanka opened up the country for foreign tourists already in 1966 one

can imagine that foreign adoptive parents, not just from Sweden, constituted a warmly welcomed social category of tourists. At best, the making of an adoption seemed to require a stay in the country up to five weeks, presupposing that all adoption acts were properly outlined (see for instance *NIA informerar* 1979b:15). During this visit they stayed at hotels, consulted lawyers to legalize the adoption acts, spent money in the country and created relations to the locals, which could be seen as an apt illustration of the goal of the tourism project; bringing in foreign capital and the realization of the peace keeping aspect arising when locals connected tourists with children. Moreover, it can also be seen that the child being adopted symbolically represented a promise that the adoptive parents and the adoptee would make return trips in the future considering the bonds that were made to Sri Lanka. Although the intense adoption activity was relatively short approximately 13 000 foreign adoptions were registered in the years 1970 to 1995 and Sweden became one of the largest receiving countries.

SOUVENIRS FROM THE VACATION PARADISE

Summing up, in this chapter I have described different forms of traveling to Sri Lanka during various periods. I gave examples of educational, official, missionary and pleasure travels. Explicitly, I wanted to illustrate that tourism in various forms enable the temporary migrants to give accounts of their experiences made on spot in the destination countries. These accounts generate images of ‘the Others’ and contribute to creating “the rest of the world”. For instance, it can be seen that Kiöping’s account, the travel agents’ marketing of the destination country as a vacation paradise, and the NIA-representatives’ reflections over children’s homes as regimes of living and their translations of local circumstances in Sri Lanka exhibit a correlation. This correlation demonstrates how Sri Lanka became involved and subordinated in a process of symbolic exclusion resting in the superior position of the speakers in which they maintained the power to position a whole range of possible relations to the country without losing the upper hand.

In order to understand how the need for a vacation was created I described the correlation between the increasingly higher tempo in the Swedish society and the normalization of medical interpretations of the everyday life. Distancing oneself from industrialism’s central areas to peripheral areas became a cure for the progression of society simultaneously as ideas of the lack of civilization in the colonies was considered to affect the Europeans’ health and working ability.

In the same beat as the Swedish society progressed tourism became available to an increasing number of citizens in the population through changed working conditions. The possibility to take a vacation was supported by expectations that the legally obligated leisure-time, consumed correctly both in a preventive and a therapeutic way, composed a cure for ill-health and inefficiency. From such reasoning it can be seen that tourism was substructured by a politicization of the leisure-time which should be spent according to certain rules.

Between the 1940s and the 1960s the Sri Lankan society was governed through a social-rational government form (that is, a welfare model). The launching of the tourism project during the middle of the 1960s can be seen as a beginning of a transition from the welfare model to a governing of society where market rationalities play a greater part, depicted by the anthropologist Jonathan Inda as a post-social societal governing (2006:13-17). Particularly, this form of governing aims at making individuals realize themselves as free and autonomous citizens that prudently calculate their dispositions towards risks while avoiding to put their trust in welfare related rights.

In relation to Sri Lanka it can be seen that the locals connecting tourists with children acted as entrepreneurs who, in parallel with the State, took part of the responsibility to handle adoption issues simultaneously as they realized the peace keeping aspect of the tourism project. Instead of stretching out their palms asking for money they connected pleasure-seeking tourists, for instance from Sweden and Denmark, with children to complete their family projects. As regards Sweden, on the one hand, it can be seen that the Swedish charter tourists traveling to Sri Lanka to adopt informally performed a kind of entrepreneurial conduct. This conduct indicates a calculating and prudent disposition towards the future in the sense that it considered neither the State nor the adoption organizations authorized by NIA as trustworthy actors to support their family projects. On the other hand, the tourists who adopted formally through the adoption organizations realized themselves as self-regulating and ethical citizens within the frame of a politics of life relating the adoption act to cultural ideas that rendered the life conditions as a citizen in Sweden better than in Sri Lanka.

As a consequence of the charter tourism to Sri Lanka the adoption activity to other countries was intensified. A uniting factor to the case that many Swedes adopted during their vacation in Sri Lanka was related to their view that it was just to make an adoption and/or connecting other tourists with Sri Lankan children.

The case that Sweden became one of the largest receiving countries of adoptees from Sri Lanka could to a great extent be derived to the way in which the NIA-representatives reflected over the children, their mothers and the children's homes as regimes of living and

how they valued Sri Lanka as a giving country. Conceptualizing the travel reports as a kind of dialogue with Sri Lanka it depicts asymmetrical relations and a subjugating of the variation of voices from the locals.

Taken together, in this chapter I have illustrated how tourism plays a great part in Sri Lanka's adoption practice, particularly regarding tourists' reflections and translations of the everyday life in this giving country that can be derived to the receiving country's cultural self-understanding. Related to ideas of the good life it appears as if an upbringing as a citizen abroad was better in every imaginable way compared to a life as a Sri Lankan citizen. In the following chapter I shed light on the way in which the children, their mothers, the children's homes and the giving countries are spoken about in the literature and research on the adoption area

5 KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN THE ADOPTION DISCOURSE

In this chapter I discuss the production of knowledge in the discourse of adoption. What does it mean that the dominating adoption literature has been authored by adoptive parents and aims at reaching out to other and potential adoptive parents? What ideas are normalized? Is it possible to distinguish a pattern in the prevailing gaze on adoptions? By way of introducing this chapter I shall give an account of an incident occurring when I visited a children's home in Sri Lanka during the first part of the fieldwork that can be related to dominating ideas in the adoption discourse.

A building arises in front of me that seem to be from the days of the colonial period. Above the entrance a great white Jesus statue greets visitors with its arms outstretched. Speaking to the hotel staff where I was staying I received information of the existence of this home. They mentioned that a children's home was located close by. Though, neither did they know the name, the address nor the telephone number to this institution. Yet I decided to make my way there. The bus ride to the area where the institution was supposed to be placed took approximately twenty minutes. When I got out of the bus I entered a tuk-tuk, that is, a motor driven three-wheeled taxi. Five minutes later I stood in front of the children's home.

I estimated the area on which the children's home had been placed to the size of four football fields with some additional houses and a few green areas. Among other houses there was a large two level dormitory, a house for school activities, some houses for the sheep, the pigs, the geese, and the cows, as well as a house for dining and a recently built house.

I walked towards one of the houses and stepped inside. Approximately thirty boys in the ages 5 to 20 years turned towards me with curious and investigating eyes. I greeted them saying 'ayubowan' while taking a bow with my hands put together in front of the tip of my nose, that is, a respectful way of greeting. The boys responded to my greeting in the same way. More and more boys entered and lined up in front of me. A boy standing next to a female voluntary worker asked me in English the reason for my visit. I was shown to the caretaker of the institution, introduced myself and inquired about the enterprise.

Having worked here for seven years the caretaker informed me that there were ninety boys registered in the institution. They stayed here for a range of reasons, for instance, because their parents could not care for them due to economic circumstances or bad health and that the children may be orphans, street children, malnourished or abandoned. However, neither local nor transnational adoptions were conducted. The caretaker explained that it depended on the troublesome bureaucratic processing. The boys could stay here until they were 18 years old. During their stay they were educated, offered food and vocational training.

To some extent the institution was sponsored by the State but the greater part of the running of the home was based on donations, local as well as foreign. Moreover, the home was self-supportive and maintained a large part of land where various crops were grown.

After our conversation approximately twenty boys showed me around the area. During the tour I noticed that some of the children were playing games. It appeared as if they were having fun although the games did not involve commercialized toys frequently used in Sweden. Other boys studied at their school benches. The rest of the children seemed to be divided into groups and performed certain duties. One group of boys had been given the task to skin a goose. They really wanted to show me how it was done. As each feather was picked off the exclamations of the goose became louder. The boys in their turn executed the task. Upon finishing it they carried the goose to the kitchen, which had been donated by a Dutch charity organization, where the master chefs were waiting to prepare it.

When the show was over and the tour had been completed I met the voluntary working woman and her daughter. They had their origin in a small village in the eastern part of the Netherlands. The voluntary working woman told me there was an adopted boy from Sri Lanka in their town that was very well-off. As I told her that I had been adopted to Sweden as a small boy she put the palm on her chest and stated, while expiring: 'you're so lucky!' Hearing this I was somewhat surprised but it sounded familiar. In the same way that the voluntary working woman imagined that it would have been unfortunate growing up in the children's home and presupposing to some extent that an upbringing as a citizen in another country was better I shall demonstrate that a similar cultural self-understanding has been normalized in the adoption discourse.

SPEAKING OF THE CHILDREN, THEIR MOTHERS, THE CHILDREN'S HOMES AND THE GIVING COUNTRIES

To a great extent the knowledge within the adoption discourse has been produced by adoptive parents. Taking as a starting point Ingrid Stjerna's book (1981) which was authored more than 30 years ago I expose some central themes characterizing the dominating adoption literature until today. Thereafter I shall shed light on a long line of books where these themes emerge.

A first theme is composed of the fact that Stjerna was working as a social worker with adoption issues, is an adoptive mother, and directs the book to potential and other adoptive parents as well as other persons working with adoption issues (ibid:88, 91). For instance, Stjerna defines the everyday life in the giving countries as socially unhealthy and claims that most of the children being adopted would have been excluded from society due to their lack

of family connections. The foundlings and the abandoned children need an alternative to growing up in the overcrowded institutions, according to Stjerna. Particularly, such ideas have been formed by temporary migrants' reflections over children's homes as regimes of living and translations of local circumstances in the children's birth countries being put in relation to the receiving country's cultural self-understanding (see for instance NIA's travel reports 1976-1991 and Hägglund 1987 [1982]).

A second theme interconnected with the first one is composed of the case that Stjerna grounds her ideas on adoption in research concluding that an adoption supports the best interest of the child. "Thus, it is the responsibility of the social worker to conduct the re-plantation" (Stjerna 1981:112). As I mentioned before, speaking of adoptions in terms of a re-plantation indicates a firm belief in social engineering where an adoption is presented as a just act and related to ideas of the good life as a citizen in Sweden within an adoptive family.

The adoption researcher and adoptive parent Elisabeth Bartholet (1993), writing about family bonds in adoption contexts, gives a similar account as Stjerna to the reason others should adopt and why policy makers should facilitate the adoption process. However, in the view of Bartholet a facilitation of the adoption policy would not change the circumstance that the adoptive family relations have been constructed on a ground of human misery, for instance, because the biological parents are assumed to surrender their children voluntarily due to wars or some other disaster. According to my interpretation of Bartholet's perspective the biological parents are represented as passive simultaneously as their space for negotiation is reduced. A temporary placement in the children's home seems to constitute an awkward alternative. The situation in the giving countries is rendered unhealthy. In relation to the fact that Bartholet authored the book in the USA it can be seen that she, in general, involves 'the Others' birth countries in processes of symbolic exclusion where a whole range of relations are structured and normalized of adoption as a legitimate way to create a family.

In Sweden the authors and adoptive parents Dan and Lotta Höjer (2005) have written a book about adopted children that in part could be used as guidance for the pre-school. In a similar spirit as Bartholet it is stated that the social stigmatization of unmarried women in the giving countries substructures the act of surrendering the child. It is not clear what this statement is based on, however, in the beginning of the book information is given that it has been produced in co-operation with Ingrid Stjerna and two adoption organization representatives that have reviewed the facts provided in the text. Moreover, frequent referencing are made to authorities on the adoption area, for instance, to an adoption researcher and adoptive parent claiming that adoptees can "heal the wounds resulting from

their first period of life” (ibid:37). In fact, some twenty years after the publication of Stjerna’s book the same information is repeated and enhanced on the adoption area.

It is not only in Sweden that the children’s early life period in the giving countries is considered unfruitful and rendered as an unhealthy environment for growing up within as a citizen. The adoption researcher Rene Hoksbergen (et al 1987) studying the integration of adopted children from Thailand arriving to the Netherlands during the 1970s describes, for instance, that a number of research activities have been conducted since the Dutch adoption research started in 1975, in most cases stimulated by adoptive parents and adoption organizations. This is also the case for Hoksbergen’s study. The result of the study shows that the chances for adoptees become the best when they step into the adoptive family as young as possible because many foreign adoptees suffer from a period of neglect. “Thus far the prevailing research points to this fact. Similar conclusions could be extracted from reports from Sweden and Germany” (ibid:19). The co-operation between adoption researchers and adoption organizations in different countries tend to contribute to the presentation of adoption as a legitimate way to create a family on the adoption area, indicating a biased perspective.

Gertrud Hägglund (1979), writing about being adopted to Sweden, for instance, departs from her experiences as a welfare officer at the Swedish Society for International Child Welfare (Adoptionscentrum), emphasizing the essence of speaking to adoptees about their background and composing an understanding of the birth country. Primarily, the book is directed to parents interested in adopting older children and also useful for educating nurses, social assistants, pre-school teachers and several others. The children Hägglund speaks about in the book are those that she categorizes as abandoned, that is, “[t]he children living in overcrowded institutions until they as very young persons are forced into rough living conditions. [...]. That is, the children without a family. What we can give them in their new homeland is a home, [...]. However, we cannot compensate the child for everything. The child has not always been looked after by his/her adoptive parents. [All of these things are circumstances that we need to consider, and we can only do everything to help the child in every way further]” (ibid:9-10). It seems to me that the environment of growth within the institution is represented in negative terms while the life after a stay in a children’s home is predicted to become destitute. Considered as a collective adoptees make up a category of persons with internal flaws, according to Hägglund’s reasoning. Altogether, the period before the adoption is rendered socially unhealthy affecting the adoptee’s development to a citizen within the new homeland. Something that, for instance, adoptive parents reading the book are

made conscious about and obviously could not be held responsible for if the child needs hospital care, psychiatric treatments or face troubles during its schooling.

Over the years discussions have been conducted of the adoptees origin and how adoptive parents should approach it. The adoption researcher Cecilia Lindgren (2010:138-139) notes a shift of perspectives in the adoption handbooks produced over the years. Introductorily, the origin was spoken about as a background.³⁰ Then, there was a shift to seeing the origin as a part of the current situation, the way of life and a part of the identity. The message, also enhanced by results from the prevailing research, is that the life of the adoptees does not start anew but continues in a new context.

An example of how this perspective on the origin is enhanced in the dominant Swedish adoption research can be seen in a study focusing on the foreign born adopted youths' identity and adaptation (see Cederblad et al 1994). Most of the 211 foreign adoptees participating in the study had been intermediated via the Swedish Society for International Child Welfare (Adoptionscentrum) between 1970 to 1977. According to the researchers there were signs indicating that some of the adoptees had adapted less well and were traumatized from the period before the adoption even though they had been adopted at an early age. "All youths have started their life under difficult circumstances. The mothers have been poor, perhaps sick, most probably relatively malnourished or wrongly nourished. There was no maternal care, the conception care was primitive or non-existent, the neonatal period was difficult. [...]. That the predominant number of adoptees have developed well probably depends on the adoptive family's ability to compensate many of the earlier handicaps" (ibid:99-100). According to my interpretation of this quote it appears as if the biological mother's way of life distinguishes itself radically from the living conditions of Swedish women. Moreover, it can be seen that the adoptees participating in the study are constituted as citizens with a restricted functioning ability while the adoptive parents in comparison to the biological mothers seem to be socially and biologically more fit to raise so called adoptable children.

If the family becomes a poor environment of growth in Sweden, so called § 12-homes have been developed where adoptees as well as other children and youths may be placed when considered problematic in different ways. In a report on the rehabilitation of adopted children, authored by a rehabilitation assistant and the institution manager at the Folåsa rehabilitation home (see Eriksson & Sundqvist 1999), persons at Folåsa were studied. Folåsa constitutes a knowledge center for other institutions under the Swedish State Institution

³⁰ Similarly to Häggglund's reasoning above.

Committee (SiS) for the advancement of knowledge and rehabilitation development related to the group of foreign adopted children. The authors state that the group of adoptive parents seldom or never have been in contact with authorities as a consequence of their own problems and that they, moreover, have experience of and are expected to manage their own problems by the surrounding society. In the report the reason for placing children in the institution is connected to the difficulties the adoptee is assumed to have brought with himself/herself before arriving to the adoptive family. “[It is] the reasons for making the adoption instead of the actual adoption constituting the problem” (ibid:20).

Furthermore, the authors shed light on the different behavior of adopted boys and girls. For instance, it is stated that girls send out signals that could be misinterpreted as sexual invites while the boys are considered to be aggressive. “Cases of promiscuity and other sexually related problems are more common within the adoptee group in comparison to other persons placed on particular youth’s homes” (ibid:20-21). In referring to a study conducted at institutions in Stockholm the authors claim that “[clearly], there is a significantly higher part of the group of adoptees with brain damages (4 % compared to about 1 %) in the other group. The biological mothers may have suffered from difficult life conditions, experienced a complicated pregnancy, had infections, been exposed to environmental toxic waste, abused drugs and suffered from malnourishment” (ibid:21). Even the adoptive parents give accounts of “particular problems like learning how to ride a bike or that the child’s scheme of movements could be the result of some form of neurological damage” (ibid:21). If the given statements could be seen as a specific gaze on adoptees and their mothers it carries many similarities to the 19th century European considerations about racial hygiene and anxieties that racial degeneration could produce social effects and political consequences in the colonies as well as in the metropolitan centers. A significant difference, however, is that the prevention of potentially subversive citizens are handled within the frame of a professionalized activity based in scientific methods for knowledge development and problem solving of a rehabilitating character. The similarities and the differences in the gaze on the children and their mothers during the colonial period and in the contemporary post-colonial condition illustrate a periodically and transnationally overlapping connection between social norms on the family, the marriage and the case that some children are placed in particular children’s and youth’s homes. The explicit aim of the caretaking appears to be the encouragement of certain ways of thinking, feeling, and acting related to ideas about the good citizenship in Sweden.

In sum, the knowledge production in the adoption discourse can be seen as a domain where forms and evaluations of individual and collective existence are problematized in the

sense that reflections are made over the ways in which children and mothers, for instance in countries outside of Sweden, should live and what cultural environment is worse or better to grow up within as a citizen. When the foreign adopted person's birth countries are contrasted to the foreign adoptive parents homelands it can be seen that the giving countries are denied co-evalness with the receiving countries.

In the doctoral dissertation of the adoption researcher Malin Irhammar (1997), focusing on identity formation during the adolescent period of a few foreign born adoptees and the meaning of the biological and ethnic origin it is, for instance, stated that "[i]f one compares the image of the biological family and the adoptees ideas of what life they might have been living had they remained in the giving country with their life condition today, then the adoption composed a stepping stone from poverty to material welfare" (ibid:145-146). Here is an example, in my opinion, that the upbringing as a citizen in the foreign adoptees birth countries is presented as poor in contrast to growing up in a Swedish adoptive family simultaneously as the focus of the dissertation indicates that biological and ethnic aspects, rather than social circumstances, are significant for the identity formation of adoptees within the Swedish nation-state.

A further example of the reasoning about foreign adoptees in Sweden and the ways in which the giving countries are contrasted to the adoptive family's homeland is shown in the adoption researcher Katarina von Grieff's doctoral dissertation (2000), shedding light on adoptees from Latin America and their ideas about growing up, their life situation and Sweden as a socialization culture. Von Grieff's dissertation explores a range of essential areas in the adoption discourse. For instance, she has spoken to persons working professionally with adoption issues in Colombia and interviewed adoptees that have been placed in § 12-homes, that is, particular rehabilitation homes for youths in Sweden.

One of the purposes of the study is to show images of Sweden as they emanate through the experiences of foreign adoptees. However, in the view of von Grieff adoptees make up living paradoxes in themselves shaping images of both poverty and wealth as well as having an origin in countries with lacking democracy, widespread corruption and lawlessness (ibid:8, 6). A conclusion drawn in the dissertation is that "[i]n spite of all the difficulties the adoptees have experienced both in their birth countries and in Sweden everything points to the case that they probably would not have had a better life had they remained in their birth countries" (ibid:207). Indeed, against the background of the dominating literature and research on the adoption area which I have explored until Von Grieff's study it is possible to distinguish a pattern in the way in which the authors and the adoption researchers discuss the children, their

mothers, the children's homes and the giving countries. The discussion is substructured by their own cultural ideas of the order of things in adoption contexts, contributing to the normalization of the prevailing gaze on adoption as a legitimate way to create a family.

The adoption researcher, child psychiatrist and adoptive parent Frank Lindblad (2004) reflectively summarizes the knowledge situation of the foreign adopted citizens' life situation in Sweden. In his view the adoptees are doing sufficiently well in order to conceptualize adoption as a good solution to the caretaking of orphans and providing involuntarily childless couples possibilities to become parents. The educational level of the adoptees is presented as a joyful result while the risks of psychiatric problems complicate the image. Though, he firmly believes that the problems facing adoptees could be solved by the society in a good way as Sweden, in terms of societal development, appears to have come further than the giving countries. Particularly because a better developed counseling can be given as regards health problems and that the adoptive parents easily can obtain qualified neurological treatments as well as the case that there are persons within, for instance, the child psychiatry, with experiences of the particular questions that arise in relation to foreign adoptions. However, Lindblad states that the research on the foreign adoptees must be further developed and widened. "Still we know far too little about the consequences behind the over risks of serious psychiatric problems. Without knowing the reasons it is difficult to create directed preventive efforts and develop new forms of rehabilitation" (ibid:215-216). It seems to me that this reflection indicates that the adoption practice should be seen as a legitimate way to create a family and that there is a challenge in thinking about what the adoption research could focus on in the future.

NORMALIZED IDEAS

Summing up, the knowledge in the adoption discourse has been produced by adoptive parents and is directed to other and potential adoptive parents and persons the foreign adoptees are expected to meet during their upbringing within the hospital care, the psychiatry and the education institutions. Taken together, adoption is presented as a just act related to ideas of the good life as a citizen in the adoptive parents' homeland while the giving countries are involved in processes of symbolic exclusion where a whole range of relations are structured and normalized.

The period before the adoption in the children's birth countries is rendered socially unhealthy. The mothers of children in children's homes are represented as biologically degenerated and assumed to lead a life which is different in many ways from the living

conditions of the adoptive mothers. Supposedly, these differences in combination with cultural representations of children's homes as poor environments of growth affect the children to such a degree that they are constituted as persons with restricted abilities while the adoptive parents appear to be socially and biologically better fit to raise children who are rendered adoptable, in comparison to the children's mothers and the caretakers. Indeed, a continuity is established between the period before the adoption and the life in the new context simultaneously as images are enhanced of the improved living conditions in the adoptive parents' homeland.

The biologically conditioned language being used to represent anomalies in the giving countries and dysfunctions of the mothers and their children temporarily staying in children's homes is to a great extent supported by abstract constructions contributing to the normalization of certain ways of seeing "reality" producing just ways of intervening (cf. Calhoun 2004). Principally, the authors and the researchers reflecting over and translating the everyday life outside of their homelands have created dominating ideas imprisoning individuals in and from other countries in one or several personality types (cf. Giddens in Herzfeld 1993:178).

The prevailing gaze on the adoptees, their mothers and the giving countries carry on many similarities to the 19th century European ideas on racial hygiene and anxieties that racial degeneration could produce social effects and political consequences. In the gaze on adoption being normalized in the dominating adoption literature a pattern emerges. It shows that the consensus having been constructed over the years through adoptive parents forming of opinions in the adoption literature, which in the words of the philosopher Nancy Fraser could be denoted as a 'transnational public sphere' (2007), is based on their own cultural ideas on the order of things. One way of widening the knowledge on the adoption area is, on the one hand, to study how complex issues have been simplified and how perspectives are fragmented. Simultaneously, on the other hand, it would be a challenge for the future adoption research to deliver meaningful knowledge of value to a multitude of cultural citizens.

The setting of an agenda in such a way that adoption is presented as a legitimate way to create a family involves the marginalization of voices on the adoption area. The voices of adoptees have been included in the dominant adoption literature. Although to a great extent the authors and the researchers have maintained the precedence of interpretation, enhanced normalized ideas of the meaning of the period before the adoption and how it appears to affects adoptees in their new cultural context as well as intermediated information about adoption as a just act. Against the background of these circumstances I have considered it an

important task to focus on marginalized voices in the adoption discourse. In the next chapter I explore what knowledge is put in motion when informants with life-histories from Sri Lankan children's homes speak up.

6 GROWN UP IN A CHILDREN'S HOME IN SRI LANKA

In this chapter I shed light on marginalized voices in adoption contexts. Voices from persons with life-histories from the children's homes have not been presented before in the adoption discourse. Therefore, those person's memories from the upbringing in the children's home and descriptions of their way of life after staying in an institution constitute essential statements within the adoption discourse. In particular because these life-histories put knowledge in motion that may nuance biased and normalized ideas on the adoption area. Below I portray and discuss the life-histories of the informants who grew up in Sri Lankan children's homes.

Meeting persons with life-histories from children's homes was one of my main purposes with the second part of the material collection in Sri Lanka. Eleven persons consented to being interviewed, though because all of the interview material became too large to include in the thesis I focus on five of the informant's life-histories which are related to the others concerning differences and similarities and various emerging themes. Their fictive names in the thesis are Mr Saman, Mr Hemante, Mrs Shantipriya, Mrs Kumari, and Mrs Indika. The prefixes Mr and Mrs indicate a respectful way of addressing these persons in a Sri Lankan context given the case that I have traveled to Sri Lanka as a kind of tourist lacking greater skills in the dominating languages spoken by the locals, that is, Sinhala and Tamil. Thus, most of the interviews were conducted in English in similarity to the conversations I had with a few of the informants when we met in everyday contexts.³¹ The fact that I have a life-history from a children's home in Sri Lanka partly contributed to the case that these informants agreed to meet me, though my impression is that they were happy to share their life-histories and appreciated to be brought into the focus of attention.

I met the informants by making requests to caretakers at children's homes and asking the informants if they had friends with life-histories from children's homes whom I could interview. In spite of how I got into contact with an informant I have considered whether the person's memories were influenced by loyalty and/or gratitude debts to the children's homes and the way in which the interpreter affected the interview situation. From the variation in and between the informants' life-histories it seems to me that these person's memories and accounts are characterized by their own respective cultural ideas of the order of things in which different aspects are presented as positive while others are seen as negative.

³¹ The interviews with Mr Hemante and two other informants were conducted with an interpreter.

As regards the age of the informants the youngest was around 15 years old while the eldest were above 50 years old. The others were between the ages of 20 to 35. In the public sphere of employment in Sri Lanka the informants are represented within transnational NGOs with child care activities, within the tourism industry and as entrepreneurs. Some live with their family members and others stay in their own houses and a few live in apartments owned by the children's home. Primarily, the reasons for being placed in a children's home are related to problems within the family. Therefore, most of the persons have had some contact with a family member or a relative each month more or less regularly while growing up.³² The exact number of years each informant has spent in the children's home varies but amounts up to at least ten years, which should be seen in relation to the fact that individuals in general only can stay in the home until they reach the age of 18 years.³³ Broadly speaking, the informants stayed in the children's homes over the 1970-1995 period, that is, the period when the adoptions from Sri Lanka to other countries were the most intense and the representations of the children's homes were the most frequent.³⁴

In general the children's homes in which the informants grew up in could be localized to the western and central provinces, were managed under Christian conduct and sponsored from abroad. Thus, I have collected voices from persons with life-histories staying neither in Buddhist, Hindu or Muslim homes nor in State institutions. In that way the ethnographic material is limited. However, it is not my intention with the following presentation to make generalizations from the life-histories but relating them to normalized ideas in the adoption discourse.

MR SAMAN: "I KNOW WHAT THE CHILDREN NEED"

The first person I met with a life-history from a children's home was Mr Saman being married with children to a woman from the children's home he grew up in. Meeting him at the guest house in which I was staying, he was well-dressed in his blue stripe shirt, the dark trousers, and the shining leather shoes which matched the shoulder bag. While speaking on the patio we watched the landscape of roofs and roads crowded with traffic. This became one of several meetings with Mr Saman when we exchanged parts of our life-histories. Because of my own life-history from a children's home I have considered it reasonable, from a methodological

³² Only one of the informants knows neither of the parents nor of other relatives.

³³ However, the eldest informant only spent five years in the children's home.

³⁴ The exceptions concerns the two eldest informants who were placed in children's homes in the 1950s and the 1960s and the youngest who stayed in the children's home in the first decennium of the 21st century.

perspective, to answer the informant's questions about it as they themselves have shared parts of their life-histories to me.

In the beginning of Mr Saman's childhood the everyday life was constituted by constant family quarrels. His mother became fed up, entered a relation with another man and surrendered the responsibility of caring for Mr Saman and his two brothers to their father. The father suffered from a heart attack and passed away when Mr Saman had just turned 2 years old. Before passing away the father had made a request that the children should be placed in a children's home. In connection to the father's passing away the relatives took over the house. The sons could neither stay in the house nor were they invited to stay in any other relative's house. Because both Mr Saman and his wife are low-wage earners they have difficulties saving money in order to buy their own house. The adding up of these circumstances resulted in the case that they were given an apartment that was owned by the children's home. This first part of Mr Saman's life-history does not make up a unique case. It reflects most of the other informants' early life-histories, for instance, regarding the reasons for being placed in the children's home and the fact that they have received assistance from the children's home in several ways after they have moved out.

Mr Saman achieved good grades during the compulsory education. However, after school he preferred to work instead of going for university studies. Having tried a number of jobs he received his current employment, with the assistance of his older brother, within a transnational NGO maintaining an activity for children. Mr Saman is engaged in his work and explains: "Having experience from growing up in a children's home, I know what the children need. Someone looking after them." Contrastingly to the knowledge production in the adoption discourse about persons with life-histories from children's homes, what Mr Saman in fact states is that growing up in the institution provided certain experiences which could be applied in his working life.

Moreover, Mr Saman describes that he and his brothers have been looking for their mother. They received information of her whereabouts but could not find her. "Mom knows where we are but she is not looking for us." Although Mr Saman and his brothers have no contact with their mother, her relatives and their deceased father's relatives they have taken positions in society which, according to some experts and professionals on the adoption area, appear impossible to occupy after temporarily staying in an institution. Mr Saman's elder brother is earning a high salary working for a company in Sri Lanka while the youngest brother is employed as a construction worker in Dubai. The NGO which Mr Saman works for is dispersed all over Sri Lanka meaning the employment involves much traveling. He gladly

tells me that he goes by the A/C-bus (that is, the air conditioned one), which is more expensive than the regular bus and much faster. Mr Saman interprets this as a sign of being successful.

There are two themes that are not emerging from the portrait of Mr Saman. The one theme which a few other informants have described is that they were corporally punished during their upbringing in the children's home. The fact that institutionalized children are corporally punished has been documented in other studies (see for instance Wijetunga 1991; Jayathilake & Amarasuriya 2005). However, regarding Mr Saman's institution I have been informed by one of the informants, who have been employed there, that no corporal punishments are given. In general, corporal punishment is not something unique to children's homes but exists also within families.³⁵ The second theme which is not shown concerns situations where Mr Saman's life-history has been turned against him in the everyday life. Such situations are accounted for in some of the following portraits. Mr Hemante, in his turn, has other perspectives and experiences which I illustrate below.

MR HEMANTE: "I FORGOT ABOUT THE FAMILY"

Similarly to Mr Saman, Mr Hemante is employed within an NGO. When Mr Hemante was 2 years old his father met a new woman. Therefore, the mother had to provide for him and his sister single-handedly. He was 6 years old when he was placed in the children's home. The mother wanted to separate him from the environment of drugs in the area in which they and their relatives lived in at that time, that is, in the years around 1990. The contact with the father ended with the parent's separation. Thus, only the mother and the sister came to visit him in the institution.

In the beginning of his stay in the children's home Mr Hemante missed his mother and sister, though as time moved on he got friends. A consequence of this led to the case that he "forgot about the family" (in the sense that he did not constantly think about it). He and his friends became close companions. In fact, they are friends even today. I met some of Mr Hemante's friends when we played cricket outside of the children's home where he grew up. Participating in this social activity I got insights into how Mr Hemante's relations both to the institution and to his friends within and outside of the home are partly upheld on the cricket ground after the period in the children's home. From the perspective of Mr Hemante it was a blessing growing up in this home and he never felt lonely. Overall, this idea about the

³⁵ For instance, an NGO-worker who I interviewed explained that the NGO had initiated programs against citizens punishing their children corporally and advocated alternative methods for disciplining.

upbringing in the children's home being a good experience is shared by most of the informants. A few informants consider parts of their upbringing as less well, in part because they were corporally punished.

Asking Mr Hemante to describe a day in the children's home he tells me that he and the other boys in the home were very busy. "We got up at 05.00, made our beds and dressed ourselves. 05.30-05.40 the Morning Prayer was held. Before breakfast we did some cleaning. School started at 08.00 and finished at 14.30. Then, we went back to the home to wash ourselves and our clothes, have lunch, play, shower and study. Before dinner we prayed and prepared things for the next day. After dinner we studied and at 21.00 we went to bed." Most of the informants give similar accounts of the days in their respective children's homes and say that the routines have contributed to making them orderly and independent.

In Mr Hemante's children's home each child had at least one sponsor from abroad. Mr Hemante had two, one from Canada and one from New Zealand. The sponsors wrote letters and sent money. Mr Hemante was happy to receive the letters. Moreover, he could extend his collection of stamps. I ask him whether there was any jealousy between him and the others if someone received more things from the sponsors than the others. It was never an issue, he explains. "We were like brothers." In this context light is shed on the children's homes transnational links which in part were established through the historical tourism to the country but also through the case that the sponsors sometimes visit the children's home when vacationing in Sri Lanka. Moreover, concerning Mr Hemante's view on his relation to the other boys in the home, it provides insights that the upbringing enabled the creation of sibling-like relations outside the family within the birth country.

Today Mr Hemante is unmarried but he has a girlfriend in one of the NGO's children's homes for girls. I ask whether he would share his life-history to a potential girlfriend who did not grow up in a children's home. "The girl's parents would accept me. It happened in the past. Now I am another person. I have a job and plans to make a career." This quote exemplifies how Mr Hemante constitutes himself as a person in relation to ideal Sri Lankan citizenship ideas. In similarity to some other informants he has no problem sharing his life-history from the children's home to others. Though, one of the informants remember that some teachers during the compulsory education occasionally put his life-history at stake by calling him 'the children's home boy', which is a denigrating term associated to the social problems of the parents. Such societal ideas are handled in different ways by the informants and become more or less essential to negotiate in particular situations and during different periods of life.

MRS SHANTIPRIYA: “SOCIETY MAKES YOU AN ‘ORPHAN’

In contrast to some of the other informants Mrs Shantipriya has experienced situations in which it was problematic speaking about her upbringing in the children’s home. The home received her as newly born and never heard from her mother again. During her childhood and adolescent she missed her parents but came to consider some of the caretakers as “mothers” as well as seeing those girls with a similar background as herself as sisters to one another. Moreover, Mrs Shantipriya explains that her high spirituality supported her to a great extent during her period in the children’s home. Supported by her spirituality she has found the motivation to study and achieve certain aims in life.

In her childhood Mrs Shantipriya wished to be adopted, locally or transnationally. Though, “[n]o one came to adopt me and none of my friends were adopted.” Could you have told the caretakers that you wanted to be adopted, I ask her. “You cannot ask the caretakers to be adopted. They choose who will go for adoption.” This can be seen as an example of the children’s home as a regime of living that indicates a system of governing where principles for reasoning, evaluations and practices of adoptions are put on its edge, particularly in respect of acts where ideas of the good are at stake concerning an upbringing as a citizen in Sri Lanka or abroad.

Mrs Shantipriya describes parts of her upbringing in the children’s home in the 1960s and the 1970s as less well. “In those days there was no understanding of the children’s rights. They always beat us for no reasons. If someone had done something wrong they punished us collectively.” Mrs Shantipriya describes that a stick was used for correcting their behavior depending on what kind of rules had been broken. I ask whether she came to respect the caretakers when they punished her in this way. “You didn’t have a choice. You lost your respect for them when they beat you even though you hadn’t done anything and if you told them you were sad they beat you even more.” However, she explains that the conditions have changed in the children’s homes today in comparison to the period when she stayed in the institution.³⁶

In society, social values and norms on how individuals should grow up matters for the way in which one will be considered by other members. I ask Mrs Shantipriya if she remember any occasion where others have inquired about her life-history. “My history is painful. Society looks down on me if I relate it. [...] I explain that my parents passed away in

³⁶ The eldest informant, on the other hand, describes how the caretakers contributed to making him and the other children happy and that the experiences from the period in the institution are passed on to his own children. Today he is sad that he and his siblings could not complete their childhood in the home.

my childhood. [...]. When people find out about your status... If you come from a good family it is ok but if you were born out of a stigmatized family it is difficult to be accepted. It is a kind of taboo. You don't speak about it and you're discriminated if you describe it." Mrs Shantipriya also says that the word 'orphan' brings out charged emotions within her and considers it painful to be categorized as such. "It is not a choice one makes; society makes you an 'orphan'. Consequently, this categorization can make up a stigma that has to be handled in strategic ways during one's life in order not to risk status degradation.

Moreover, Mrs Shantipriya explains that nowadays she seldom has to answer questions about her upbringing. Though, as an employee within an NGO she participates in meetings with influential persons and individuals with university degrees. "The way in which you present yourself is essential at these meetings. They ask me if I am a PhD. I'm not, but I have lots of experience. I don't reveal my status and keep a distance. Otherwise, I could lose my reputation. Usually, well-educated people don't care but in society some individuals are determined to find out about certain things. Then you have to keep a distance." Consequently, controlling what kind of information is shared to others can be seen as a strategy to negotiate one's position in a society where status is essential.

Mrs Shantipriya provides another example when her life-history can be turned against her. Doing her vocational training Mrs Shantipriya met her husband. They were married some years and had a child. Then they had an informal divorce. "If I get formally divorced it may affect my daughter's chances of getting married. The boy and his family may believe that if the mother is divorced then the daughter may do the same." According to Mrs Shantipriya this means that she, with a life-history from the children's home and as informally divorced, carries a double burden that may ruin her reputation and affect the future generation. However, Mrs Shantipriya is proud over her achievements thus far in life and considers writing a book about her life. On the next occasion we met Mrs Shantipriya served home cooked Sri Lankan food and we continued speaking about her book project and other visions for the future.

MRS KUMARI: "AUNTY' TAUGHT US HOW TO TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES"

Similarly to the other informants with life-histories from a children's home, Mrs Kumari has great plans for the future. Currently, she works as an entrepreneur and lives with her children while the husband is working abroad. Before the placement in the children's home she lived in an area with a high poverty rate. She explains that her grandmother looked after her and that she at the age of 4 years acted as a servant to a family and their children. While the

grandmother performed diverse odd jobs she simultaneously had difficulties caring for Mrs Kumari. Thus, at the age of 6 years she was placed in the children's home. "My grandmother was like a mother and a friend to me. I don't know why my parents never looked after me." Initially, adjusting to life in the children's home was difficult but after a while she got some friends that she still meets today. As regards the reasons for placing Mrs Kumari in the institution they are related to the dissolution of her family and her grandmother's inability to care for her. This is important to recognize because the main causes for the placement in the institution are often discussed in terms of the unhealthy social condition in the giving countries and the mother's status as unmarried.³⁷

At the children's home where Mrs Kumari grew up a particular time schedule was followed. To some extent she leads her life according to a similar schedule and routines today. Usually, the day starts at 04.00 and ends around 21.00. Mrs Kumari says that she is precise and appreciates when things are done in her way. It depends on the case that 'aunty', that is the name used for referring to the caretaker in the children's home, taught the children to take care of themselves. In her view it is unfair to claim that 'aunty' should have given individual love to each and everyone, however, she feels that she was motivated to develop her skills. Mrs Kumari's overall view is that the children were treated as royal children.

Mrs Kumari describes that it was difficult growing up without parents. She sometimes wonders why they did not look after her but does not resent them. Then, she tells a story of a girl who did not like to be put in the children's home and thus made plans to join the army after she had left the institution in order to start a war against the parents. Mrs Kumari, in her turn, proposes another idea. "If you can love your parents although they were bad, then later in life you may love a partner." Explicitly, she indicates that the partner's parents will take the role of new parents. In this perspective it appears as if a person growing up without parents later in life may create parent-like relations while it is generally considered that so called orphans should be adopted, locally and globally, against the background of the good life only being possible to achieve within a (nuclear)family and at best within a foreign adoptive family as a citizen in their homeland.

Asking how Mrs Kumari met her partner, she says: "I was dating one of his friends [but the friend's mother didn't like me because I grew up in the children's home]." Further she

³⁷ Moreover, a caretaker who I interviewed stated that the contemporary struggle to establish a successful family contains a paradox as it may contribute to dissolving the family, for instance, when women migrate abroad to work. Then, in some cases the man will feel lonely and spend his money on alcohol leading to the placing of the children in the institution.

states that the new partner proposed to her almost in a joking way. An ‘old girl’³⁸ and friend of Mrs Kumari threatened him by saying that if he would break her heart... Soon after the marriage Mrs Kumari found out that her man had an affair with another woman. He explained that he married her because he felt sorry for her, depending on the case that he saw her as an orphan girl. In this case Mrs Kumari’s life-history was turned against her although it is her experience of growing up as a royal child in the institution. This exemplifies the way in which a normalized societal idea of how individuals should grow up can constitute itself in the everyday life. In adoption contexts such ideas contribute greatly to denying the children and their parents of their agency. Thus, voices of unique life-histories, certain experiences and various cultural ideas of the order of things are passivized.

Speaking of adoptions Mrs Kumari considers it beneficial if the adoptive parents are economically well-off and receive the child in a good way. She, on the other hand, says that she would never give her children for adoption. According to Mrs Kumari children are surrendered for adoption because they result from unplanned pregnancies. “The brother, a relative or someone else has made the girl pregnant. She will be ruined if she is 16 years old but if it happens at the age of 20 it may be ok for her to care for the child on her own. [The problem] is that the child may constitute a burden to the girl. Thus, surrendering the child for adoption could benefit the child.” Further, Mrs Kumari states that she knows of a girl who kept the baby although it was unplanned. “It is ok, as long as she doesn’t explain what actually happened.” In this way it can be seen that possibilities of negotiating social norms to some extent are controlled by what information is communicated to others while others knowledge of certain parts of one’s life-history may be viewed problematic when related to ideas of the good life.

Before the interview came to an end I inquired about her visions for the future. “I have many plans. [One potential plan is moving to Japan], perform the same kind of work and give the children a good education. From an early age they should learn that studying is important. After that they can choose what they want to do. Without education you can’t move upwards in life.” If Mrs Kumari will realize the vision of giving her children a good education in Japan, then she could also reconnect with a friend she grew up with in the children’s home. This friend, which she today only speaks to via an Internet based social medium, married a Sri

³⁸ That is, a woman with a life-history from a children’s home. This expression was also used by other informants. For instance, one informant said that today the caretaker at her children’s home was an ‘old girl’ while another informant stated that an ‘old girl’ stayed with her and her sister in their house after they had returned to Sri Lanka from working abroad.

Lankan man and moved there a few years ago. Other informants also stay in contact with their friends from the children's home via social media.

Regarding Mrs Kumari's future plans it can be seen that they are characterized by visions that other members of society who did not grow up in a children's home struggle to achieve. If, in general, there are no remarkable differences between growing up in a family and in a children's home in the childhood in relation to what kind of citizen one becomes, then the question of which one of these regimes of living is better or poorer is put on its edge. Certainly, it will vary from case to case. In the case of Mrs Indika described below the placement in the children's home affected her life situation in several different ways.

MRS INDIKA: "MY LIFE IS BETTER THAN THOSE WHO GREW UP WITH THEIR PARENTS"

There exists a range of circumstances to the case that the informants were placed in the children's homes. Mrs Indika and one of her sisters were placed in a children's home in the beginning of the 1980s. "We belonged to a rich family, had a house, a car and were living in a good area." Though, after her mother passed away the father started drinking. The father passed away when she was 8 years old. Then, a friend of the family made sure that she and her youngest sister were placed in the children's home.

The home was started more than a hundred years ago by a foreign Christian woman after a local woman had asked her to look after her child. Mrs Indika claims that it was a good home and that each child had a sponsor. Primarily, the sponsors had their origin in countries such as Sweden and Finland, depending on the case that each child placed in the home was photographed. Afterwards, the photos were intermediated to other countries where the church was established and the members of the church could support the caretaking of the children. In this way it can be seen that a technological intervention (that is, the photographing) exposed Mrs Indika's life situation by shedding light on her upbringing in the children's home. The persons viewing the picture were motivated and expected to offer their support. Considering the case that children in other countries were growing up in different ways to some extent contribute to making an upbringing in a children's home seem worse than growing up in a family and results in presenting certain acts, such as sponsoring, as just.

During her period in the home Mrs Indika was sponsored by a Swedish citizen and her sister by a Danish citizen. Though, the sponsors' addresses were never revealed to them. According to Mrs Indika the staff at the home was anxious that the sponsors might be sought up after the children had left the institution. "I would like to thank him for everything he has

given me and the possibilities that were opened up to me.” Today Mrs Indika is doing quite good and would like to invite the sponsor to Sri Lanka showing him what his contributions made for her. If they had been able to develop a long-term relationship, then normalized ideas of the destitute life as a citizen in the birth country would have been nuanced.

Because each child growing up in Mrs Indika’s children’s home had sponsors no adoptions were made to other countries. Adoptions had been conducted during the governing of the previous caretaker but Mrs Indika’s caretaker preferred that the children grew up in Sri Lanka. Mrs Indika, in her turn, had no desire being adopted, neither to Sweden where her sponsor lives nor locally. For instance, Mrs Indika’s uncle expressed a wish to adopt her. At that time the grandparents were her legal guardians. “My father had told them; don’t give my children to anyone! My uncle wasn’t married and felt lonely. That is the reason he wanted to adopt me. However, no adoption was made.”³⁹

I ask Mrs Indika to share some memories from growing up in the institution. “I felt scared and lonely the first day, as I arrived.” However, she did not miss her parents but describes that she and the other children in the home became like a family. Moreover, she explains that they had certain duties such as washing the younger children and cleaning the home. Further, she states that some children preferred staying in the children’s home rather than with their families, for instance, depending on family related problems in their home and because they had access to a TV and a playground in the children’s home.

At the age of 18 years when Mrs Indika had completed her compulsory schooling and became too old to stay in the children’s home she moved into the house of her elder siblings. The house was built for them by a Finish missionary who had come to Sri Lanka to realize a vision. Hearing what had occurred in Mrs Indika’s family he offered his assistance, almost in the same way that missionaries have done since the days of the British colonial period.

Turning 22 years old Mrs Indika got married to her husband (who has not grown up in a children’s home) and migrated to the Middle East for working purposes. Both she and her husband found employment with high salaries and stayed there for ten years. “Thereafter, we used all of the money we made to build a house in Sri Lanka.” Today Mrs Indika can be said to live the ideal of a successful Sri Lankan citizen. It depends on the case that she is married, with children, has a house, a car and a company of her own. I ask her how she considers her life situation. “It is God’s grace. [...]. In my life I have had a biblical verse as a guiding line:

³⁹ Moreover, a few other informants state that certain persons desired to adopt them in their childhood. Their parents or guardians, however, struggled to keep the family together, for instance, by placing the children temporarily in a children’s home.

“Though your father and mother forsake you, I will never forsake you’. My life is better than those who grew up with their parents and my brothers and sisters are doing well.”

THE RISE OF THE SUBJUGATED KNOWLEDGE

Summing up, in this chapter I have focused on voices from persons who grew up in Sri Lankan children’s homes. Their voices give accounts of life-histories providing them with specific experiences that contain both positive and negative aspects, previously unexplored in adoption contexts. Because most of these informants have grown up in children’s homes over the 1970-1995 period when the representations of children’s homes were the most frequent in the adoption literature and the adoption activity the most intense in Sri Lanka, their voices constitute important statements in the adoption discourse. The knowledge mobilized by their voices indicates the difficulty in foretelling the upbringing and in predicting the life as a Sri Lankan citizen after staying in a children’s home. In this way the life-histories challenge normalized ideas in the adoption discourse.

The informants who grew up in children’s homes have varied experiences though most of them have good memories from their upbringing in the institution. They do not belong to any specific class in a Marxian terminology but comes out of different class positions making up a heterogeneous minority that shares a history of growing up in a children’s home. In Mrs Kumari’s case it can be seen that the placement in the home meant a step towards a higher class position while Mrs Indika to some extent took a step downwards. Principally, as regards the other informants no change occurred in the class structure. The possibility for parents to temporarily place their children in the children’s home makes up a part of the Sri Lankan welfare model. Therefore, most of the informants have had contact with a family member during their upbringing. Moreover, the routines in the institution have contributed to making the informants orderly and independent. All of these informants use their Christian faith as a force for motivation that paves the way for achieving their aims in life. In the context of the Sri Lankan welfare system it can be seen that the children’s homes make up a place among others to constitute culturally competent citizens.

I shall give some examples of the way in which the period in the children’s home contributed to forming a qualitative life. Mr Hemante and Mrs Shantipriya state that they created family-like relations to other persons during their upbringing. Mrs Kumari describes how she developed her ability to act independently within the children’s home. Mrs Indika claims that the contributions from the sponsor opened up possibilities. Mr Saman says that the experiences he made in the institution became useful in his current employment. Certainly,

the fact that some informants have been corporally punished while staying in the institution indicates a lack of quality precisely in the same sense when such disciplining occurs in the parents' home.

Although a change has occurred regarding the circumstances in children's homes today compared to when these informants grew up and the situation varied at each informant's institution the informants, in similarity to other Sri Lankan citizens, have been shaped into individuals striving to and participating in the social life of society by educating themselves, creating families and occupying positions in the employment sector. In contrast to many other citizens the informants have been sponsored by foreign citizens. It is to a great extent connected to the case that they as persons with life-histories from a children's home in general have been categorized as 'orphans' and included in ideas stating that a local or a transnational adoption had been in their best interest. However, such a categorization is unfair because most of the children in institutions have a family member that they want as a caretaker but who cannot take care of them for various reasons. Altogether, such a categorization contributes to symbolically excluding children from their families and normalizing ideas of adoption as a legitimate way to create a family. Moreover, the categorization creates associations that an upbringing in a children's home makes up a poor alternative to growing up as a citizen in foreign adoptive families' homelands.

Life after the stay in the children's homes has been shaped in different ways. Though, the informants receive assistance from the institution, for instance, by funding their further studies, employing them within the NGO or finding employment outside the NGO, and providing a place to stay in case they could not live with any of their family members. A few informants stay with family members or have created their own families. Others have married or plan to get married with a partner from the children's home while some have met partners outside of the children's home. The friendship relations that were created during the upbringing in the institution are maintained still today. A few informants have no problems speaking about their life-history from the children's home while others have experienced that certain societal ideas could lead to being stigmatized in different situations because of their life-history, for instance, when related to romanticized ideas of how one should grow up. Such stigmatization and degrading of the informants citizenship status is ungrounded in relation to my ethnographic material.

Focusing on marginalized voices in the adoption discourse I have demonstrated that several areas remain to be explored on the adoption area, not only in Sri Lanka but also in a global perspective. In particular, the unexplored issue of ideal environments of growth and

cultural ideas of the good life. Although I have traveled to Sri Lanka as a kind of tourist, it can be seen that the gaze on adoptions in the future will not only be substructured by tourists accounts but questioned by the knowledge taking form in the life-histories from citizens having grown up in the children's homes and how they give accounts of their perspectives in various contexts.

7 CULTURAL CITIZENSHIPS

In this chapter which completes the thesis I reason about tourists' cultural ideas that the citizenship in their homelands constitutes the most privileged and desirable. Introductorily, I summarize the central issues of the thesis. Thereafter, the citizenship concept is discussed in relation to my ethnographic material. By way of conclusion, I illustrate the ways in which the informants with life-histories from children's homes constitute themselves as Sri Lankan citizens.

In relation to the questions I posed introductorily in the first chapter, it has been shown that tourism plays a greater part in the Sri Lankan adoption practice than what one generally assumes and that historical as well as contemporary tourists' contribute to changing and normalizing a certain gaze on adoptions, although the voices of the locals in most cases are surrounded by silence since the days before the Western colonial period until today.

The insights emerging from my thesis differ from normalized ideas because I as far as possible have been putting into practice an unconditional perspective to reach an understanding of the order of things in adoption contexts. For instance, the account of my ethnographic material in chapter three shows how certain social norms leading to the surrender of a child for adoption can be negotiated. Moreover, the descriptions of my participant observations in chapter two nuance the image of the children's homes as negative environments of growth. Considered as a regime of a certain way of living, the children's home makes up a place among others for constituting culturally competent citizens.

Though, when contextualizing the Swedish charter tourists' family project in chapter four, which I was involved within in the beginning of the 1980s, I illustrated that many tourists' translations of local circumstances in Sri Lanka enhanced the environment of growth in children's homes as a welfare problem simultaneously as the possibilities of a good life within the country were described as restricted. Largely, such representations contributed to depicting an adoption as a just and well-intended intervention and making Sweden into one of the greatest receiving countries of Sri Lankan born children.

Often during my upbringing I have wondered what life one may lead as a Sri Lankan citizen after having stayed in a children's home. When turning to the dominating literature and research on the adoption area, that was explored in chapter five, I noticed that in many cases the authors and researchers were adoptive parents forming opinions that it is better to grow up as a citizen within an adoptive family in their homelands. Adoptive parents' translations of circumstances outside of their birth countries can be seen as a point of entry to an understanding of their role in the world as cosmopolitans. It depends on the case that their

reflexive engagement transcends the borders of the nation-state and involves ‘the Others’ welfare in the contemporary global society. In this context the philosopher Immanuel Kant’s thoughts on world citizens are brought into light in the way that adoptive parents take on a borderless responsibility for the best interest of children in promoting the adoption act. However, because most adoptive parents do not reflect over the case that their engagement is supported by their privileged position, historically established gender and race hierarchies are enhanced in the world. Thus, as I show in chapter six, it is important to focus on marginalized voices as they put knowledge in motion that may equalize asymmetrical communication relations and articulate a change of perspective. In what follows below I discuss how foreign adoptees can be considered as contemporary cosmopolitans in the sense that they, in similarity to many adoptive parents in the world, hold a citizenship transcending the borders of the nation-state.

FOREIGN ADOPTEES’ COSMOPOLITAN CITIZENSHIP

Taking the social scientist Bart van Steenbergen’s book (1994) as a point of departure I enter into a discussion with a range of researchers reasoning about the citizenship concept. Several of the researchers start from T.H. Marshall’s theory of the citizenship’s gradual extension from a civil citizenship in the 18th century, to a political in the 19th century, to a social in the 20th century, which marked the final step of the development and resulted in the emergence of the welfare State. A central question treated by the researchers is how Marshall’s theory can be extended in order to be applied in contemporary contexts.

Essentially, Marshall’s theory shows that the citizenship concept is dynamic and that participation in society is central, for instance, through studying at the university, making a career, and establishing a family that generates individuals contributing to the welfare of society. Though, as the philosopher Nancy Fraser and the historian Linda Gordon note (ibid:93) Marshall’s evolutionary periodization relates to white British working men’s experiences of citizenship and presupposes rather than problematizes contemporary gender and racial hierarchies. Furthermore, van Steenbergen states that Marshall is often criticized because he did not reflect on citizenships transcending the borders of the nation-state which, for instance, is the case in relation to my ethnographic material when Sri Lankan children are adopted to Sweden. In fact, foreign adoptees’ citizenship is constituted within a border transcending or a cosmopolitan context.

In this context I suggest, in similarity to the sociologist Bryan Turner (ibid:158-159), that it may be fruitful to focus on the cultural constitution of the citizenship which indicates

membership in a certain society. Given the fact that the foreign adoptee is displaced from his/her birth country to the foreign adoptive parents' homeland the consideration of different cultural citizenships is essential to shed light on, particularly because the citizenship in the receiving country is ascribed a superior position in the adoption discourse.

Similarly to the philosopher Jürgen Habermas' reasoning (ibid.) about the inclusion of 'the Others' in the context of the current European integration process, I shall discuss the constitution of foreign adoptees' citizenship in a border transcending context. In contrast to historical cosmopolitans such as intellectual immigrants or voluntarily displaced persons within the diaspora I claim that foreign adoptees represent a part of those contemporary cosmopolitans being pulled up with their roots and involuntarily departed from their birth countries against the background of dominating ideas about good and bad cultural citizenships that are generated and expressed by engaged actors on the adoption area. For instance, some adoptive parents state that foreign adoptees being included in Sweden enjoy the privilege of holding the desirable Swedish citizenship.

In general, however, it seems difficult to associate non-European appearances to the Swedish citizenship. The adoption researchers Tobias Hübinette, who is an adoptee, and Carina Tigervall, who is an adoptive parent, have shown in a unique sociological study (2009) that both foreign adoptees and adoptive parents are excluded from ideas of "authentic" Swedishness in many ways and in different situations.

Holding a Swedish citizenship means that the individual simultaneously is a European citizen. In fact, all citizens within the European Union's membership States in the beginning of the 1990s became European citizens by way of the third phase of the European integration process. Then, social integration became the most important focus, not only economic and political co-operation. In this way it is possible to speak about Europe, as the sociologist Gerard Delanty (2002), in terms of a cosmopolitan public sphere where discussions are held on a transnational level between the holders of the European citizenship.

The anthropologist Chris Shore (2000), studying how EU-bureaucrats intend to realize the European integration project, shows that the culture concept is used as a political instrument to facilitate the solidification of Europe and the fostering of a European identification, for instance, through 'the citizenship', 'the passports', and 'the Euro'. Those symbolic representations for the unification of Europe, in combination with a rewriting of history, provide authenticity to 'the European culture' simultaneously as they contribute to marginalize historical conflicts which have made co-operation between the countries difficult. On the whole, Shore is skeptical towards the possibility of the realization of the

Europeanization of Europe, which can be described as an internal colonization project (ibid:27).

From my perspective there are many reasons to explore the possibility that this internal colonization project could become realized. It depends on the case that, in contrast to the previous projects of conquest, it is supported by co-operation rather than competition. Although today the EU might not be socially recognized and exists in a state of economical crisis, the organization enjoys juridical legitimacy on a transnational level. Juridical legitimacy could, as I discussed in chapter three in relation to the Marriage Act and noted about the vacation law in chapter four, in a relatively effective way become meaningful and guide human acts in a long-term perspective.⁴⁰

All in all, foreign adopted cosmopolitans' citizenship appears fruitful to discuss in this context because it may contribute to creating a deeper understanding of current cultural processes in European adoptive parents' homelands. Now I shall describe how one can live a meaningful life as a Sri Lankan citizen with a life-history from a children's home beyond cosmopolitically engaged actors' hierarchization of cultural citizenships.

SRI LANKAN CITIZENSHIP FORMATION

Considering an upbringing in a children's home as a period of human misery and predicting the life after a temporary period in, for instance, a Sri Lankan children's home as destitute, an adoption seems like a just and well-intended intervention. The inclusion of children within a cosmopolitan or a border transcending citizenship project can be seen as a short-term solution to a problem that has been articulated by dominating actors on the adoption area. Similarly to the anthropologist Anthony D'Andrea (2007), reaping the fruits of the Foucaultian exploration of how one should and can live in moral freedom today, I demonstrate below how the life-histories from the informants who grew up in Sri Lankan children's homes bargain with normalized ideas in a long-term perspective.

In particular, the negative charisma of the children's home is supported by tourists' children's homes representations and derived to adoptive parents' communications in cosmopolitan public spheres such as the dominating adoption literature. After its charisma of inferiority has been uncovered with qualitative methods, which I put into practice in chapter two, three, and six, the children's home appears as a fundamental Sri Lankan welfare institution or as a temporary home-plus-opportunities. The children being placed in children's

⁴⁰ Moreover, as van Steenberghe suggests (1994:7) the contemporary anti-European tendencies may be more directed at the EU-bureaucrats rather than at the unification of Europe.

homes grow up in an environment where other children in a similar situation stay and knowledge from persons that in many cases have grown up in children's homes is put into practice. Moreover, the children come into contact with local and foreign citizens supporting them through sponsorships or visiting the home for different purposes as many children's homes compose nodes in a globalized adoption culture.

In relation to the informants who have shared their varied memories and experiences from Sri Lankan children's homes, it seems paradoxical to make local and transnational adoptions because the temporary stay in the children's home has paved the way to an active participation in cultural spheres. None of the informants identify with the children's home but acknowledge that the period provided experiences that could be used in their current occupation, contributed to developing the capacity for self-reliance, generated family-like relations and friendship bonds, and that the sponsors' contributions opened up possibilities. In some cases the placement in the children's home resulted in extended possibilities which the family could not offer. It depends partly on the children's homes transnational links but mainly on its well-established network within the local society that can contribute with houses, employment, and material resources for higher education after the stay in the children's home. Furthermore, the children's home appears as a unique place to meet a partner to marry. In this context the upbringing in the children's home makes possible a participation in the Sri Lankan welfare society on an equal level in relation to many other members of society. Moreover, it seems to me that, whether one leads a life as a cultural citizen in Sri Lanka or has been adopted abroad, it is difficult to predict where the good life will be formed and that the citizenship involves a constant strive for autonomy. Taken together, the children's home embodies an environment for fruitful explorations of cultural citizens with skills paving the way towards meaningful ways of living in the birth country. However, given the limitations of my ethnographical material theorizations should be made with precaution. Certainly, there are life-histories from children's homes exemplifying alternative ways of living, equally important to focus and explore.

Moreover, it can be seen that the informants with life-histories from Sri Lankan children's homes not only constitute persons being physically and socially developed during their temporary period in the children's home but also make up an economic and political force of substance given the active practice of their cultural competences in the Sri Lankan society. For instance, their movements within the country could be related to both economical achievements and acts in accordance with normative ways of living, indicating that they are well aware of where they are going and how to achieve their goals in life. Migrating abroad,

in the case of Mrs Indika, could be seen as a tactical move formed within a self-formative practice in order to build a house in Sri Lanka. Though, the Sri Lankan citizenship ideal is not only restricted to the nation but includes visions similar to Mrs Kumari's about moving temporarily or permanently abroad to give the children social possibilities to creating a cultural citizenship with fragile borders.

To conclude, the Sri Lankan citizens with life-histories from children's homes which I have been interacting with in this thesis should be seen as autonomous persons with cultural competences enabling a moral life in freedom.

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STATISTICAL APPENDIX

The statistics presented here consists of variations, for many reasons, which is why it should rather be seen as estimations.

Statistics from the Department of Probation and Child Care Services (DPCCS) in Sri Lanka concerning adoptions:

Within Sri Lanka	transnationally	to Sweden
The years between 1964 and 1999: 14393	12899	3078

To other countries in Europe between 1964 and 1994: Holland 3271, France 1556, Denmark 930, Swiss 829, Germany 774, Italy 459, Belgium 281, England 270, Norway 223, Iceland 80, Finland 58

Statistics from the official Statistics Sweden (SCB) concerning birth countries of foreign born adoptees:

Total number of adoptions from Sri Lanka between 1932 and 1999: 3465

From Sri Lanka between 1932 and 1946: 0. The first registered adoption occurred in 1947.

Between 1948 and 1968: 26, 1969-1979: 1026, 1980-1990: 2220, 1991-1999: 192

Statistics from the Swedish Intercountry Adoptions Authority (MIA) concerning children who migrated from Sri Lanka to Sweden later to become adopted:

Total number of adoptions from Sri Lanka between 1973 and 2011: 3406

Between 1973 and 1979: 811, 1980-1990: 2326, 1991-1999: 248, 2000-2011: 21

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Law on Foreign Adoptions in Sri Lanka

Regulation over Intercountry Adoptions: The number of Adoption Orders that may be made by all courts for the Calendar Year 2007 in favour of applicants referred to in Section 3(5A)(b)(i) shall be one hundred and fifty (150) only.