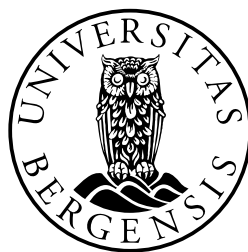# Sexuality Among Youth on Maracuyá Island:

Navigating the Complex Crossroad of Latin American and Caribbean Social Life

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CONTENTS

SEXUALITY AMONG YOUTH ON MARACUYÁ ISLAND

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTE ON ETHICS

I have given a lot of thought to ethics in my fieldwork, as ethics in ethnography are even more significant than usual when children are involved. Many of my interlocutors were young adults, but still minors, and therefore in a vulnerable group. It is my job as an anthropologist to do no harm, and to follow the American Anthropological Association's code of ethics (AAA Ethics Blog 2012). In accordance to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data's advices regarding my project, I have collected verbal informed consent from my interlocutors themselves and from the minors' parents. I have also anonymized my fieldnotes from the first day in the field.

Further, I must clarify that I have chosen to use pseudonyms for both the island, the school, and everyone I have met during my fieldwork. This is due to the sensitive topics, e.g. sexuality and religion, that are covered in this thesis, the fact that the island is so small that the risk of people recognizing each other is high, and of course that many of my interlocutors are minors. I find it extremely important not to expose people unnecessarily, therefore I have on some occasions created composite characters to illustrate certain stories and events. I have never added unnecessary fiction, and I depict the surrounding circumstances accurately and reproduce sentiments correctly.

NOTE ON LANGUAGE

My interlocutors and I have communicated in multiple languages, – mostly in Creole, English, and Spanish, but also a little bit in Miskito – which has made this fieldwork exciting and exhausting. To bring out the vividness and authenticity of the island, the islanders, and our encounters, I have chosen to keep some key words and expressions in Creole and Spanish. Words that do not resemble the English translation, such as *buay*, *gyal*, *panga*, and *barrio* (boy, girl, boat, and neighborhood), will be put in cursive, while Creole words that do have resemblance, such as de, dis, dat, dey, dem, and nevah (the, this, that, they, them, and never) will be kept as is. This is to avoid disrupting sentences too much, while simultaneously express and preserve the genuineness of the Creole language.

GLOSSARY

Casa de Cultura	Maracuyá Island's House of Culture
Creole	The islanders that speak Creole-English and are African-Caribbean. Their ancestors are a mix of African slaves and European settlers.
Flor de Caña	The traditional, Nicaraguan rum
Mestizo	The islanders that speak Spanish, and who's families are originally from the Nicaraguan mainland. Known on Maracuyá Island as "Spaniards"
Miskito	The islanders that speak Miskito and are indigenous to the coast of Nicaragua. Known on Maracuyá Island as "Indians"
Toña	Nicaraguan beer

CREOLE WORDS

Beisbol	Baseball
Black buays	Young, Creole men
Bonki	Butt
Bredda	Brother
Buay	Boy
Dat	That
De	The
Dem	Them or they
Den	Then
Dey	They
Deyr	Their
Dis	This
Clear	Light skin color
Ganja	Marihuana or weed
Gon'	Going to
Gyal	Girl

Likkie	Little
Nevah	Never
'oman	Woman
Panga	Small, wooden fishing boat
Reach	To arrive
Stirrin'	Cooking
Sweetheart	The "other" girlfriend/boyfriend
Wining	Thrusting and rotating of the pelvis and rolling of the waist
Werk	Work

SPANISH WORDS

Barrio	Neighborhood
Cabaña	A small hut
Colita	Butt (literally means "tail")
Comedores	Small, family-run restaurants, often in the front yard of a home
Dignidad	Honor
Fiesta	Party
Fresca	Cold drink
Fritos	Fried chicken
Gracias	Thank you
Gringo	White person
Motos	Motorbikes
Platanos con queso	Plantains with Nicaraguan cheese
Primo	Cousin (male)
Pulperia	Grocery shop
Recarga	Cellphone recharge
Respeto	Respect

MAP OF NICARAGUA

Figure 1: Map of Nicaragua retrieved from Google Maps.

Figure 2: Two young fishermen on Maracuyá Island preparing their *panga* and fishing equipment.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The sun is about to set over the North Part of Maracuyá Island, and I notice that the ocean is forever color-changing; from glowing turquois and emerald where the water is shallow, to a bright and foaming white where the waves hit the coral reefs, leaving the vast and deep ocean darker in a mesmerizing sapphire blue. The mix of native palm trees and exotic fruit trees renders the island green and lush, and the multiple sandy beaches surrounding the island are, although alluringly white, made colorful by the fishermen's brightly painted *pangas* (boats). The island is small enough to walk around in a couple of hours, but big enough to get lost between vibrant *barrios* (neighborhoods), humble and unhabituated hillsides and jungle-covered headlands.

I am sitting with a small group of men on my porch, enjoying a glass of *Flor de Caña* – the traditional Nicaraguan rum – mixed with fresh coconut water while joking and chatting about island life. On Maracuyá Island, life happens on, under and by the sea. I notice fishermen coming home from work in their *pangas*, loaded with fresh lobster, fish and beautiful conch-shells. Teenagers are walking home from school in their dark blue and white uniforms – the girls with beautiful hairdos, and the boys with golden chains around their necks. The elders are sitting in rocking chairs outside colorful brick or tin houses, waving and smiling at people walking by and chatting with neighbors in both Spanish, English-Creole and Miskito, while the youth are looking at their cellphones, listening to music from loudspeakers, practicing baseball or hanging out on street corners. I can smell the rain from the heavy midday shower, fresh seafood being fried in my neighbor's backyard, and the newly baked coconut bread sold from windows in family homes. There is also a distant smell of rotting fruit and vegetables laying in baskets unsheltered from the sun, and the occasional whiff of *ganja* (weed) being lit up and smoked. Over the loud music from two of my friends' phones, I hear taxis and motorcycles slowly drifting past, honking their horn at whatever opportunity they might get, men clicking their tongue and shouting remarks – both friendly and rude – to the few foreign girls around, the bell from an ice cream cart being patiently pushed around the island by a hopeful islander, and birds and

chickens quirking and clucking in tree tops and gardens. In a couple of minutes, the sun will go down, the island will become quiet, and the only thing you can hear is the distant country and reggae music from a couple of local bars and restaurants, dogs barking in the distance, and the waves crashing onto the shore. My friends are laughing loudly, and I turn my attention back to the conversation. "… But somehow, when I woke up, my girlfriend's best friend was lying next to me, and we were naked! I thought 'What happened?' and I couldn't believe it, because there was no condom!"

Subject and research questions

In the preface above, I have chosen to include a glimpse of an ordinary conversation between me and a small group of young men, as it captures what this thesis essentiality is about; how teenagers and young adults live their everyday life and are coming of age in a turmoil of values and sexual expectations. On Maracuyá Island, Nicaragua, sexual behavior[1] is expressed open and freely by both men and women, it is common for both men and women to have more than one sexual relationship simultaneously, and for men to father many children with different women. Simultaneously, however, the youths need to follow strict moral codes shaped and upheld by the religious institutions on the island.

In this thesis, I will draw on, yet also challenge, Peter Wilson (1969, 1973), who claims that the Caribbean society is built on a dialectical relationship between the two value systems of respectability and reputation. As principles of social structure, reputation demands of men to be sexually active and father many children, while respectability demands of women to practice chastity until legal marriage (Wilson 1969, 1973). In other words, there is a gendered aspect to the value-dualism, where women are more concerned with respectability, and men with reputation.

"Crab Antics", Wilson's (1973) influential ethnography, is based on fieldwork in the tiny, English-speaking Caribbean island of Providencia located only a few hours by *panga* from Maracuyá Island. People are often traveling these routes to visit family when the weather allows

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[1] When I use the term sexual behavior, I refer to behavior with sexual connotations, such as dancing sensually against a partner's groin, or actual sexual acts.

it, and in fact, many of the Maracuyá Islanders' ancestors have migrated from the Colombian islands and vice versa. The value systems, Wilson (1973: 188) argues, are powerful enough to describe different societies in the English-speaking Caribbean, due to the islands' parallel historical experiences as British colonies.

Maracuyá Island, then, would be the perfect entry point to examine Wilson's (1969, 1973) model. My own ethnography will show that men indeed follow the moral codes that the principle of reputation provides, however, women are expressing behavior that contradicts the value of respectability. On an analytical level, I approach gender as an aspect of everyday actions – behaviors, speech utterances, gestures and representations – associated with masculine or feminine identity. This understanding drawn from Judith Butler (1988, 1990, 1993) and her theory on gender as stylized repetition of acts. Gender identity is, according to Butler (1988: 520-522), "a performative accomplishment compelled by social sanction and taboo." Ultimately, and necessary, gender norms are embodied in the person performing and repeating them (Butler 1993: 22). Values, such as respectability and reputation, will of course shape these norms.

Furthermore, I follow the concept of intersectionality to illuminate different dynamics in society that shapes gendered behavior, such as class, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, and religion. The latter three will be explored thoroughly throughout this thesis, however, since the teenagers and young adults I interacted with on Maracuyá Island expressed similar gendered behavior across ethnicity and class, I intentionally have not discussed this to any depth.

The seemingly changing aspects of the value-dualism on the island leads me to draw on Louis Dumont (1980, 1986) and his understanding of value hierarchy and reversal of values. This framework is especially suited to analyze conflicting behaviors and attitudes. In short, Dumont sees cultural meaning systems, or ideologies in his words, as an effect of overarching or paramount values – things or states of affairs considered better than anything else. All the other values in an ideology, such as the meaning system of Maracuyá Islanders, obtain a specific rank based on how they contribute to the realization of the dominant value. In India, for instance, "purity" is regarded the paramount value, and all things and social groups are ranked accordingly, from the purest Brahmans to the most impure "Untouchables" (Robbins and Sommerschuh 2016).

Dumont (1980, 1986) does not take gender into consideration when analyzing the Indian caste system, whereas I find this to be of utmost importance in the Caribbean, and on Maracuyá

Island in particular, as gender is an integral component of social, economic, and political life. Also, according to Kamala Kempadoo (2004: 26), "Few feminist have sought to navigate the disorderly terrain of contemporary Caribbean sexuality in any depth," especially among youths, and, with my ethnographical work, I seek to add new dimensions to the anthropological understanding of young sexuality in the region. Importantly, the values of respectability and reputation are indeed gendered, and as the reality remains that respectability is unattainable for most of young, male Maracuyá Islanders, I need to complexify Dumont's understanding of the single, paramount value. Thus, I propose an analysis based on the value-pair of respectability and reputation, rather than a single value, as overarching on Maracuyá Island. In the "Analytical approaches" section in this chapter, I will elaborate and propose a clearer definition of both Wilson's and Dumont's arguments.

Moreover, the young Maracuyá Islanders are navigating yet a crossroad of social norms, politics, and religions, as the island is Caribbean, but the country it is a part of – Nicaragua – is Latin American. With this in mind, I have developed the overarching research question, with three sub-questions that correspond to the chapters in this thesis:

How are notions of sexuality lived, shaped and expressed by Maracuyá Island youths, who simultaneously are navigating within a complex intersection of Spanish, African and Nicaraguan indigenous heritage and Latin American and Caribbean social norms and values?

1. How do women on Maracuyá Island balance expressions of sexuality and the value of respectability, and why do they act out sexuality in a different manner than the moral society expects them to? How is it possible for Maracuyá Island women to obtain respectability while simultaneously taking on multiple sweethearts?

2. How is the Caribbean value of reputation and the Latin American value of machismo understood and lived by young Maracuyá Island men, and how does this challenge earlier anthropological understandings of these concepts?

3. How does young Maracuyá men navigate between the established value of reputation and an emergent notion of fatherhood that idealizes the homebound, caring father?

Introducing Maracuyá Island and the cultural crossroad

While Nicaragua is a Spanish-speaking, Catholic, Latin American country, its Atlantic Coast is inhabited by people of Afro-Caribbean and indigenous heritage (like the Rama, Mayangna[2], Garifuna, and Miskito peoples), and most of the inhabitants of Maracuyá Island are English-speaking Creoles who follow different Protestant churches. In the recent years, Spanish-speaking Nicaraguans from the mainland and people from various indigenous groups from the Atlantic Coast have migrated to the island, supplying English-Creole with Spanish and various, but mostly Miskito, Caribbean dialects. Because of this, the slave trade, and the fact that European pirates appeared on the coast of Nicaragua in the 16th century, the islanders' heritages are indeed mixed (Harrison 1985: 38). Most of the Maracuyá Islanders I have talked with, state that they feel disconnected from Nicaragua, as they have their own cultures, languages, and Protestant religions. Still, they are expected to follow Nicaraguan and Catholic laws and norms. As already mentioned, this ultimately leaves Maracuyá Islanders in a complex cultural crossroad and conflicting value systems, which they are navigating within every day.

Maracuyá Island is located east of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. According to local mythology, before the pirates found their safe haven there, the island was inhabited of a fierce tribe practicing cannibalism. One of the stories told is of an unlucky Spaniard being roasted and eaten, only leaving a bed of coals mixed with bones and the charred remains of a hand and a foot for his comrades to find. The tribe accused of eating the conqueror, was the now extinct Kukra Indians, a subgroup of the Mayangna engaged in hunting, fishing and agriculture. The barefooted, pierced and unclothed (except for a small loincloth) people refused all relations with strangers. In the 18th century, they held off pirates and buccaneers from entering the island by reputation alone, backed up by three meters long lances equipped with sharpened crocodile teeth. However, noticing that the Kukras were not many in numbers, the buccaneers stormed the island. The locals speak of numerous of sunken ships filled to the brim with gold and treasures. Only if you dear to dive alone, you might find the gold. If you chose to bring someone, however, you will be captured by the ghosts of the buccaneers and stuck in the ships forever.

In the 18th century, the European settlers started to arrive, coming from Jamaica, the islands of San Andrés and Providencia, Belize, and the Cayman Islands, bringing their slaves. Mostly men

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[2] Commonly known as "the Sumus", which is emically considered a derogatory name.

arrived, and many of them got their black slave mistresses pregnant. The settlers became involved in trade with the Miskitos on the Miskito Coast[3] and the locals captured turtles for food and made crafts with their carapace. Meanwhile, the slaves worked the island's sugar cane – and cotton plantations. When slavery was abolished, people of European and African heritage began to intermarry, resulting in a mixed population (Dennis 2000: 206). The Atlantic Coast has been cut off from the rest of Nicaragua for centuries; Maracuyá Island, along with the eastern half of present-day Nicaragua, was a British protectorate from 1655 until 1894, when the Nicaraguan government claimed the area and leased the region to the US until 1971. During Sandinista rule in the 1980s, the Atlantic Coast became a major problem for Nicaragua, when its people resisted the policies of the new government. The new and centralized government had a vision of population homogeneity, which outraged the people of the Atlantic Coast, as the ethnic diversity in the region was ignored. To find a peaceful solution, the government agreed to a negotiated cease-fire, and a recognition of the ethnic diversity was restored, along with the right of self-governance for the indigenous people. In 1987, the Sandinista government promulgated a new constitution that included the creation of autonomous regions on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, but still, the regional governments remain under the authority of the executive and legislative powers of the Nicaraguan government (Vilas 1990, Schechterman 1993, Gonzalez 1997 in Sánchez 2007: 11). This cut-off from the rest of the country has led to a marginalization of the Creole and indigenous population. Level of unemployment reaches 90 percent, illiteracy exceeds 50 percent and only 30 percent of the population has access to potable water. In addition, they are argued to have a fraught relationship with the mestizo justice system, and to suffer from systemic inequality (Goett 2015, Sánchez 2007). Consequently, Maracuyá Island and the Atlantic Coast are not the average Latin American, or even Nicaraguan, regions in terms of politics, language, history, religion and cultural traits.

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[3] A kingdom that included todays Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua and the eastern coast of Honduras.

ESTABLISHED PERSPECTIVES

Sexual morality in the Caribbean and Latin America

As mentioned, there is lacking explicit attention to sex in recent feminist Caribbean work, Kamala Kempadoo (2004: 26) states in her book "Sexing the Caribbean". Likewise, in a book review of "Sex and the Citizen" (2011), edited by Faith Smith, Tonya Haynes (2013: 91) expresses the same concern:

> There is an ongoing silence on sexuality that coexists with Caribbean feminist scholarship and queer theorizing which reveal the connections between geopolitics, political economy, coloniality and sexuality, in ways that are not always/often recognized in canonical gender and sexuality studies

Further, Kempadoo (2006: 10) argues that contemporary studies of Caribbean gender "continue to emphasize informal polygamy and multiple partnering, and sex as linked to virility, fertility and procreation. They also link sexual expressions to violence against women and girls, material considerations for young people and women, and to pleasure, identity, and power for men." Indeed, almost every early ethnographical report from the Caribbean mentions a double standard of sexual morality (see Clarke [1957] 1999, Davenport 1961, Otterbein 1966, R.T Smith 1956, M.G Smith 1962, Lewis 1966, Horowitz 1967, Wilson 1973). Furthermore, Wilson shows through earlier research how his model of respectability and reputation is applicable for multiple Caribbean islands, including Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad (See Herskovits 1947, Clarke [1957] 1999, Greenfield 1966, Gonzalez 1969, 1970). Consistent with the value-dualism, men are often described as virile and portrayed in terms of having a sexual freedom which they are expected to exploit. Women, on the other hand, are described as constrained in their sexual activities before and after marriage and are expected to moderate their behavior (Wilson 1969: 71). These significance of these values, according to Brown and Chevannes (1998), is evidenced in recent gender studies, which show that men in the English-speaking Caribbean expect their female partners to be respectful towards them in public, to practice monogamy, to raise children, to cook and clean, to manage the household finances, and to treat their friends well. Women generally accept these standards, and in return, they expect men to provide money for the household and for

their children, to be affectionate, to treat children with care, to avoid being physically abusive, and to not spend money on other women or gambling.

When people generally paint a picture of Nicaraguan and Latin American sexuality- and gender stereotypes, they will probably envision a macho man and a submissive, pure woman. Roger Lancaster (1992: 92-93) defines machismo as a "system of manliness", which empowers womanizing, gambling, drinking, sexuality and acts of independence and risks. Their manliness is threatened if they don't meet these norms (Hagene, 2010: 31). While exploring the role of love in the reproduction of gender asymmetries, Turid Hagene (2010: 31) points out that machismo was explained by Nicaraguan women as a practice that "means that husbands require wives to serve them and, often, to ask permission to go out, whereas the men could do whatever they liked." Purity, on the other hand, is the female counterpart to machismo, and it demands women to stay "pure" until marriage. The woman, according to the simplicity of the stereotype, is supposed to either be a self-effacing, suffering and enduring mother or a modest, withholding young lady (Melhuus 1998, Linkogle 1998, Lancaster 1992, Hagene 2010). The value of purity is so significant for Nicaraguans that it is lived and embraced over a nine-day long Catholic festival named "La Purísima" – "The Purest" – every year. This is a festival only celebrated in Nicaragua, and it can be argued to construct and shape people's national identity (Leví 1992 in Linkogle 1998: 3.7). Needless to say, gender norms and roles are parts of that identity, and this sets a foundation for what is considered as paramount values in Nicaragua.

Although machismo is a Latin American term, it seems safe to argue that the ideology and behaviors connected with the term can be found in Caribbean societies as well. Clarke ([1957] 1999: 96) states that in Jamaica, the proof of a man's maleness is the impregnation of a woman, and R.T. Smith (1956: 141) argues that for a Guyanese man, "To have children all about is a matter of pride rather than shame, for it proves he is a 'man', strong and virile." Similarly, purity and respectability both contain the same focus on chastity before marriage.

(Non)Monogamy in the Caribbean

Although all countries on the American continent, Nicaragua included, forbid polygamy, a substantial body of literature shows that non-monogamous social structures are quite common in many Caribbean islands (Kempadoo 2004: 15). Edith Clarke (1999) observed as early as in 1957

that rural-based women in Jamaica could determine the type of sexual relations they entered into with men – if it was to have a variety of lovers or having one man and being faithful to him. Still, she argues, a woman "is only considered 'really' a woman after she has borne a child" (Clarke [1957] 1999: 66). Thus, male polygamy seems acceptable, while women's sexual activity remains labeled as promiscuous if she can't prove procreation or is in a domesticized arrangement (Kempadoo 2004: 22). The tradition of Caribbean men to reassure power and authority through sexual relations with "other" women, according to Raymond T. Smith (1996), should be understood as a response to the marginalization of men's social prestige in a matrifocal society that deeply values the mother-child bond. In the same way, Errol Miller (1991) explains male non-monogamous behavior in the Caribbean as arising from black men's struggle to overcome racial oppression, to patriarchy and to their desire for status and power in society. Women are viewed as passive subjects – pawns in men's quests to obtain these desires – and their sexual lives are constructed by this.

In the 1980's, Graham Dann (1987) did a study in Barbados, revealing that women could also have more than one relationship simultaneously. This non-monogamous behavior was, according to Dann (1987), solely depending on the woman's economy, and her free sexuality should be viewed as a key to understanding the inadequacies and deficiencies of men – as young boys, they learn that matriarchy, male absenteeism and outside affairs are the norm. This consequently would construct the boys' future sexual behavior, including mutual sexual exploitation, pregnancy as proof of sexual competency, and a double standard around sexual loyalty. In this theory, the Caribbean woman is portrayed as sexually irresponsible. In the same manner as Barry Chevannes (2001: 216-217) claims that the African Caribbean man "is not a real man unless he is sexually active," Jamaican anthropologist Fernando Henriques (1962: 419), grants normalcy to "outside" sexual relationships, especially between upper-class men and black working-class women, to the fact that "The ordinary healthy male if deprived of sexual intercourse for a long time is liable to disregard any moral conventions which impose restraint, and indulge himself where and when he can."

Indeed, past studies on non-monogamous behavior places an understanding on Caribbean men's desire for sexual freedom to meet norms encompassed by their paramount value of reputation. Women's sexual interests were tied up to procreation and monogamous marriage,

encouraged by the value of respectability. Although a project named The Women in the Caribbean Project (WICP)[4] provided a counterimage of female sexual behavior and identity – some middle-class women were having outside relationships that were not tied to financial security or procreation –, "Women's sexual agency and their sexual needs, desires, and behaviors have for the most part been concealed in studies of family and kinship", Kamala Kempadoo (2004: 23) argues (see also Senior 1991). A gendered construct of female sexuality has been proven hard to change, Kempadoo (2004: 24) states, however, at the end of the 1990's, Mohammed and Perkins (1999: 110-11) found that women were starting to shift their notions on femininity to include self-fulfillment and self-actualization of their individual goals, and that the importance of childbearing could undergo change for Caribbean women. Nonetheless, few contemporary scholars, Kempadoo (2004: 24) argues, has sought to navigate the disorderly terrain of Caribbean sexuality in any depth, and certain dominant images of Caribbean womanhood has remained fixed. Topics on sexual desires, agency, and identity has barely been raised in earlier literature, Kempadoo (2004: 24) claims, with the result that the subject of sex often remains subsumed in discussions on gender relations. In contemporary studies, however, women's agencies are brought into discussion (see Seabrook 1996, Kempadoo and Doezema 1998, Ryan and Hall 2001, Kempadoo 2004, Brennan 2004).

ANALYTICAL APPROACHES

Respectability and reputation

The structure of Caribbean life is the dialectical relation between respectability and reputation, Wilson (1973: 9) explains, a relationship he names "Crab Antics" – the title of his book. Crab antics[5] is a behavior where people spend a lot of time quarreling and maneuvering for an

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[4] The Women in the Caribbean Project was launched in 1979 and sponsored by the Institute of Social and Economic Research (today the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies), in Cave Hill in Barbados. The project sought to address the need for scholarly work on the role and status of Caribbean women (Massiah 1984)

[5] Interestingly, the crab for Maracuyá Islanders is the symbol of their emancipation. Fiesta del Cangrejo – the Crab Soup Festival – is held every 27th of August, where they *stir* crab soup and have cultural performances to celebrate the anniversary for the abolition of slavery. This is not connected to the metaphor of crab antics

advantageous position in life – it resembles the behavior of crabs who have been put in a barrel and try to climb up. As soon as one of the crabs reaches the top, another one of the crabs below pulls it down in its own effort to climb. Only the strongest crab gets out of the barrel eventually, and the rest of them remain in the same place. In other words, people use their advantages obtained from respectability (if they are "somebodies" who have resources and family connections) or reputation (if they are "nobodies" who only have their personal skill as fishermen, lovers, fathers, handymen, dancers, etc.) to "climb out of the barrel" (Rosberg 2005: 95).

As already explained, Wilson (1969, 1973) proposes that the value-dualism of respectability and reputation is gendered, but most importantly, it reflects class and race. His theory aims to provide an analysis of Caribbean societies as total social systems, by isolating "the principles of thought and sentiment that produce not only actual behaviour but also the groupings segments" of these societies (Wilson 1973: 7, Besson 1993: 16). He is concerned with highlighting the principles, such as respectability and reputation, that are structuring people's moral and social systems (Besson 1993: 16). Wilson (1969) interprets the two domains as in constant tension with each other, because the one set of values and expectations conflicts with the other – men are expected to father many children with many women while women are expected to perform chastity until marriage. This "schizophrenia" (his words 1992: 119) between respectability and reputation is the historical legacy of colonial rule in the Caribbean. Respectability, if we are to believe Wilson, was brought in by the colonizers, while reputation is the traditional Caribbean value. Thus, respectability is a value that entails Euro-American ideals and moral absolutes – the standards derives from the upper class, where judgment and thoughts on moral worth are also forced on the lower class. The strongest institutions imposing respectability are the marriage system, the church and the school, where the moral codes embedded in the value are often found (Wilson 1973: 229). In the foreword of Crab Antics (1973), Sidney W. Mintz explains it like this:

> Respectability, for Professor Wilson, is the summation of colonial dependence: the axis of social assortment in a world originally designed for others by the European holders of power. A stratified system of classes embraces the colonial population; they differ in the access to respectability, since its availability depends in the last instance upon their access to other kind of validation in the class system. They may embrace its significance, live with the need of attaining it, seek it actively; but when all is said and done, it is their

socioeconomic position that ultimately declares their having – or lacking – respectability (Mintz in Wilson 1973: x).

Reputation, on the other hand, is a response to colonial dependence and to the accompanying elusiveness of respectability. It serves as some kind of compensation for the scarcity of respectability in systems where socioeconomical equality is more or less unattainable for most people. Reputation in that way depends upon individual achievement measured by, and against, the performance of one's peers (Mintz in Wilson 1973: x-xi). In other words, Wilson (1973) connects reputation with egalitarian relations and respectability with class ranking.

From Wilson's work, according to Richard Burton (1997: 163) a "Crab Antics school of Caribbean anthropology" has sprung out, where Abrahams (1983) deals with speech behaviors among men in the Caribbean, Hylland Eriksen (1990) looks at liming, or hanging out, in Trinidad, Brana-Shute (1989) similarly explores male social life in Suriname, and Daniel Miller (1994) offers an empirical study of modernity in Trinidad, focusing on public rituals such as Christmas and Carnival, while Burton (1997) himself explores the origins, development, and character of Afro-Caribbean cultures. He (1997: 159) spends some time investigating the dialectic of respectability and reputation while looking at the complexity of carnival in Trinidad, where he ascribes the value systems as "worldviews", where respectability is enforcing social hierarchy and self-restraint, and reputation is encouraging self-affirmation and equality. Further, Burton (1997: 168), drawing on Olwig (1993), argues that reputation and respectability are mimetic cultures that has been "creolized" in the Caribbean, where the colonized group uses the values to oppose and define itself over and against the colonial order. Then, turning to Daniel Miller (1994), Burton (1997: 168) proposes that through the domain of reputation, Caribbean men mimic the behavior of white men during slave- and colonial society who got prestige from drinking, womanizing, and gambling. Meanwhile, the female-centered culture of respectability actually endows a "double oppositionality", as the values encompassed in respectability are opposing both its traditional society and the male value of reputation. Burton states that he owes his idea of double oppositionality to Littlewood (1993: 295 in Burton 1997: 169), who argues that West Indian women are "respectable, not as a fixed characteristic but in relative to men," and that "Black women have been 'close' to White men in a 'double opposition' …, through sexual relations between masters and household slaves, and through their opportunity to enter domestic work, teaching, and nursing."

Furthermore, there is a straightforward opposition between respectability and reputation, which is reinforced by the binary oppositions of the home and outside. Drawing on Wilson (1969, 1973), Burton (1997: 162), summarizes the whole West Indian[6] culture based on opposing values, whereas the first five of 26 oppositions in his schema is as follows[7]:

Home	Street
Respectability	Reputation
Inside, private, yard	Outside, public, rum shop
Female	Male
Family	Friendship networks (crew)
Hierarchy	Equality

In sum, both class, race and gender influence the different orientation to respectability and reputation. Primarily, respectability is especially the concern of the upper class who perceive their respectable lifestyle as a foundation for status and wealth. The lower classes also share this value system; however, they are more oriented towards the principle of reputation and its egalitarian ethos (Besson 1993: 16). Women, according to Wilson (1973: 234), are the strongest forces for and possessors of Eurocentric respectability. He explains it by referring to Afro-Caribbean women's close association with the master class during slavery and their involvement with white churches (Besson 1993: 16). So, respectability is reinforcing social hierarchy by emphasizing education, marriage, the home, self-restraint, and work, while reputation, the counter-system of respectability, is based on equality, friendships, hanging out, and its main institutions, such as the street and the bar rooms, are informal. Reputation, as mentioned, is determined by fatherhood and sexual prowess, but also from life experience and skills such as storytelling, boasting, insulting, and musicality (Wilson 1973: 154-158). Furthermore, another element connected to the values is age. Men, as they become older, become less interested with the domain and dynamics of

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[6] Maracuyá Island is located in the West Indies – a region of the North Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean that includes the island countries and surrounding waters of the Greater Antilles, the Lesser Antilles and the Lucayan Archipelago.

[7] Burton's full schema is based upon oppositions provided by himself and scholars from what he calls "The Crab Antics school of Caribben Anthropology": Abrahams (1983), Hylland Eriksen (1990), Brana-Shute (1989), and D. Miller (1994).

reputation, such as womanizing and going to bar rooms, and more interested in respectability through going to church and get legally married.

Moreover, Wilson (1973: 230) believes that Caribbean societies cannot become independent as long as respectability remains a paramount value. Reputation, he argues, is the one true, Caribbean value system. Although developed fifty years ago, he proposes that his ethnographic approach can still be a useful ethno-historic element into contemporary and future research about Caribbean ideas, practices and behaviors. Much of these has persisted no matter how much the society seems to have change (Wilson 2007: 22). This claim of validity will be tested throughout my thesis, as I have witnessed gendered behavior on Maracuyá Island that contest Wilson's notions of respectability and reputation. Following Dumont's (1980, 1986) notion of value theory, I propose to understand behavior that oppose the moral society as values being reversed in certain contexts, such as during Carnival in Trinidad or on Saturday nights in the bar rooms on Maracuyá Island.

Value theory

Indeed, the islanders have a complex meaning system, with competing values, such as respectability and reputation, machismo and purity, Latin American and Caribbean social norms, Protestant religion and Catholic government, and a modern way of life and deep connection to history and culture. Therefore, I have chosen to mainly draw on value theory in order to develop an understanding of the young islanders' social life, especially regarding their sexual behavior. I find it important to discuss sexuality, as it is very evident in social life, while at the same time it contradicts moral and ethical values. I have chosen to emphasize a structural framework because I have witnessed a stability in the social aspects of people's lives on the island. This was made clear to me when a 96-year-old father and grandfather – a Creole man from one of the founding families on the island – stated that he never had a wife because he could not accept that the women he loved always had sweethearts around the island.

Dumont (1980, 1986) is best known for his holistic theory stating that the elements of a culture – its values – take a hierarchical form and are ordered in relation to one another by the culture's paramount value. So, whereas classical structuralism considers cultures to be made up of binary oppositions in which each element is as important as the one to which it is opposed, Dumont (1980)

finds that one of the elements of the opposition always rendered a higher value. Furthermore, he suggests that in cases of hierarchal opposition, the higher ranked element can in some contexts encompass the lower ranked one, and together they make a whole.

Dumont (1980) expands upon his studies of the Indian caste system to produce his theory of hierarchy. He looks at how "purity", as a paramount value, is understood in relation to its opposition of "impurity", and how social groups and things are ranked according to degree of this. This hierarchy, however, is not an unbroken chain of decreasing value, but made up of several levels which again are ranked in relation to each other (Dumont 1980: 239). As mentioned, the Brahmans are the purest, while the "Untouchables" are the most impure, yet, also, priesthood (the Brahmans) and the royalty (the Kshatrias) stand in a hierarchal opposition to each other, where priesthood encompasses royalty. Crucially, this implies a distinction between (religious) status and (politico-economic) power – a separation that fundamentally separates Indian history from that of the West. In India, the king is ranked below the Brahman because power is not valued as much as purity. However, when the context includes politics, the hierarchal relation is reversed, and the Brahman is characterized as inferior to the king. Ideology, then, is operative on the primary level of totality, while on the secondary, politico-economic level, kings get temporal authority over the priests (Dumont 1980, Rio and Smedal 2009: 4).

Dumont (1986: 279) explains this understanding of hierarchy as follows: "The elementary hierarchal relation (or hierarchal opposition) is that between a whole (a set) and an element of that whole (or set) – or else that between two parts with reference to the whole". Thus, hierarchy is an "order resulting from the consideration of value" (Dumont 1986: 279). In addition to his studies of the caste system, Dumont (1980: 239-245) stresses his theory of hierarchal opposition through the image of Eve and Adam, and how she was created out of his ribs. Adam and Eve are on the same level as "man and woman", however, because Adam created Eve, he also encompasses her. We can distinguish two levels in this example: On the higher level, there is unity, and on the lower, there is a distinction, and these two levels – or relations – constitute the hierarchal relationship (Houseman 2015: 253).

Levels cannot be separated from contexts in a Dumontian schema, Signe Howell (2002: 267) argues, and at the same time, Dumont is more comfortable with using the word "levels" instead of

"contexts", because "levels" implies a "depth view" and position situations hierarchically[8] (Dumont 1980, Eriksen 2008: 163). So, when moving between levels – that is, when moving between contexts –, reversals might occur, and we realize that an element that is highly valued in one context, may be subordinate in another context, and distinguished from what it previously encompassed. Thus, instead of seeing values as matters of individual subjects, Dumont understands values as the grammar of a culture, where the values are expressed in the way that culture is organized (Robbins and Sommerschuh 2016)[9].

Gender of the values and the values of the person

"Hierarchy is universal," Dumont (1986: 265) states, and in a modern society we are not able to see or recognize a dominating principle of hierarchy – it is "at the heart of the unthought" (Dumont 1980: xvi). Conversely, this vantage point offers some problems, Marit Melhuus (1990) argues in an examination of Dumont's approach to gender, modernity and hierarchy. Melhuus (1990: 153) points out that Dumont "leaves an impression that the modern notion of equality is wrong, false and artificial", whereas Rio and Smedal (2008: 234) notes that, for Dumont, "hierarchy was not the freak – individualism was". Individualism, in the Western notion, is coupled with egalitarianism: "Our two cardinal ideals are called equality and liberty. They assume as their common principle, and as valorized representation, the idea of the human *individual*", Dumont (1980: 4) states. Melhuus (1990: 155-156) acknowledges this, however, it is the following part of Dumont's argument she has problems with: "… humanity is made up of men …. This individual is quasi sacred, absolute; there is nothing over and above his legitimate demands; his rights are only limited by the identical rights of other individuals" (Dumont 1980: 4). With this, Dumont has seen past the necessity of the construction of womanhood, Melhuus (1990: 156) argues, and points out, by turning to Dumont's own example of Adam and Eve, that it is the relation between the man and the woman – the couple –, and not the individual, that is in the center of modernity. Indeed, when concerning gender, Melhuus (1990: 153) maintains, both modern practice and modern

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[8] I will mostly use the word "context" further in this thesis, as it can be problematic to grasp the word "level". I quote R.H. Barnes (1985: 10) in his discussion of Dumont: "Those who wish a concrete definition of levels are bound to remain frustrated".

[9] For further elaboration of Dumont's notion of hierarchy, see Madan 1982, Raheja 1988, Parry 1998, Parkin 2003, Celtel 2005 and Rio and Smedal (2009).

thinking are based upon hierarchal assumption, yet, simultaneously, we are infused with values of equality. Indeed, as Melhuus (1990: 153) asserts, "Had Dumont been interested in gender relations he might have seen that his idea of hierarchy is not as radical and difficult to grasp as he himself claim!"

Similarly, Signe Howell (2010: 159), argues that to insist on the existence of only one dominant value is an analytical constraint. While looking at androgynous persons and objects among the Lio in Indonesia, Howell (2002: 171) found that "it is not possible to make a general gendered opposition between maleness and femaleness, each associated with its own activities and sociocultural domain because, not only do these overlap, but their relative value is not constant" (Howell 2002: 171). The priests in Lio, for instance, constitute gendered modes appropriate to the contexts, making their biological sex less important. Maleness and femaleness represent separate qualities, meaning that both men and women, Adam and Eve, might be superior without a shift in levels (Howell 2002: 171).

On that note, I will continue to argue, in line with Melhuus (1990), that in order to apply a Dumontian approach for my analysis, I need to conceptualize a gendered value-pair as the paramount, encompassing values structuring social life on Maracuyá Island. To include gender in a value-hierarchy analysis produce knowledge which, as seen here, affects Dumont's notion of hierarchy, making it less rigid and static. Importantly, one need to distinguish between the gender of the value and the gender of the person handling the value. Indeed, in Maracuyá Island society, it is possible to identify certain general patterns of maleness and femaleness corresponding with reputation and respectably, as the islanders' notions of morality regulates their gendered behavior. Yet, this does not apply to all men and all women and to all contexts (see Howell 1996: 256 and chapter three and five in this thesis).

My forthcoming exploration of sexuality on Maracuyá Island will also take into consideration that resistance theory might be a fruitful path to follow, however, as Lila Abu-Lughod argues in "The Romance of Resistance" (1990), this analytical approach tends to romanticize resistance as something positive. Additionally, I follow Saba Mahmood's (2005) line of thoughts that one should not confine agency solely to frameworks of resistance. Conversely, this reduces the agency of the human, especially religious subjectivity, and one should rather understand how the interiority of the subject is changed when norms and values are inhabited and

performed. Ethnographically, Mahmood shows how women in the piety movement in Egypt cultivate virtuous dispositions through embodied practice – for instance, they pray because they are aware of virtue in daily life (Mahmood 2005). This, and my own ethnography from Maracuyá Island, leads me back on the path of understanding social behavior on the island as a structural phenomenon derived from the paramount values of respectability and reputation.

OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

In this first chapter, I have introduced Maracuyá Island, the islanders, and the cultural crossroad they are navigating within. Moreover, I have discussed respectability and reputation as analytical terms, and presented value theory, which is the analytical approach I am following throughout this thesis.

Chapter two will set a scene and frame my fieldwork. First, I will deal with methodology, my motivations for this fieldwork, and ethics. Further, I will re-introduce Maracuyá Island and explore the contemporary situation in Nicaragua. During my six months in the field, political riot broke out on the Nicaraguan mainland, which affected the islanders in many ways. This chapter will also provide a brief contextualization of the ethnical tensions on the island.

In chapter three, I will explore, in correlation to my first sub-question, the female domain and the value of respectability. I discuss religion's role in shaping the value, thus also the social life of Maracuyá Island. Then, I will explore how women express their sexuality in a different manner than the moral codes embedded in respectability demand them to and analyze this in two different manners: as resistance and reversal of values.

In chapter four, I will discuss the male values of reputation and machismo, and how social life is constructed around these two values. I will also seek to add new dimensions to Wilson's understanding of reputation by arguing that machismo must be understood as the former value's flipside. I will also show through ethnography how reputation is built and how young men find themselves in a hopeless situation when they are not in a relationship.

Chapter five builds on and is an extension of the previous chapter, and I continue to discuss reputation. Here, I connect the value to fatherhood and ask why many young Maracuyá Islanders state that they do not have a father. In the Caribbean, the ideal father is the one who can protect

and provide economically for their children. However, I will propose that a new, more Western notion of fatherhood based on caring is appearing on the island, leaving men in a paradox on how to be a good father. Lastly, through Dumont's value framework, I will look at how men with the lowest reputation – homosexual men – are able to reverse their reputation.

Figure 3: Teenagers hanging out after school.

CHAPTER TWO: FRAMING MY FIELDWORK AND SETTING THE SCENE

BACKGROUND AND METHODS

In 2016, I was living in León, Nicaragua, and studying development as a part of my bachelor's degree in social anthropology. Here, I did a three-week fieldwork in a rural, mountainous village located next to the Honduras border, where I focused on gender relations, teenage pregnancy, and the consequences of the country's strict anti-abortion legislation. At the end of my stay in Nicaragua, I visited Maracuyá Island, and I noticed that the islanders were living and behaving differently than people on the mainland. I knew already then that I wanted to look further into sexuality and gender relations, and Maracuyá Island made an excellent location for my research, with its interesting and complex crossroad of Latin American and Afro-Caribbean history, religion and politics.

My interlocutors and the field

On Maracuyá Island, people are mainly either a mix of or distinguished by three different ethnicities; Creole, Mestizo, and Miskito. As briefly explained in the introduction, the Miskitos are descendants from an indigenous group, the Chibchans from South America, and has resided in the Miskito Coast – the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua where Maracuyá Island is part of – since the beginning of the seventeenth century (Holm 1978: 95). Therefore, they are recognized as indigenous peoples. Around 1640, the inhabitants of the Miskito Coast were joined by Africans surviving the wreck of a slave ship off the coast, Holm (1978: 1) explains, and after this event European buccaneers and slave owners brought their slaves and settled on both the Miskito Coast and Maracuyá Island, creating what is known as the Creole population. Meanwhile, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Spanish conquered and gradually "hispanicized" the western part of Nicaragua, which was inhabited by the Aztecs and Mayas. However, the Spaniards ignored the Atlantic region due to its lack of mineral wealth or agricultural potential, and it was

not until the 1870s, during a rubber boom, that Spanish speaking people from western Nicaragua began settling on the Miskito Coast. These people are officially known as Mestizos, and this is the national identity of Nicaraguans constructed by the government (Soto Quiroz and Díaz-Arias: 2007). As Baron L. Pineda summarizes in "Shipwrecked Identities: Navigating Race on Nicaragua's Mosquito Coast" (2006: 7): The Nicaraguan official system of socio-racial categorization recognizes Miskitos as indigenous peoples, the Creole as an Afro-Caribbean ethnic group, and Mestizo as the population of the Pacific part of the country who reside in the Miskito Coast.

Nevertheless, Maracuyá Islanders themselves do not necessarily use these terms in day-to-day life. Although many people of different ethnic groups have intermarried and created a mix of ethnicities, the ethnic boundaries still exist and are demonstrated in the slang the islanders use about each other. When I use the word "group", this reflects the distinction between Jenkins' (1994) group and category. He argues that a group is rooted in processes of internal definition, while a category is externally defined and is a product the nature of power imbalances between groups. In Maracuyá Island's case, though, the line between the two terms are blurred, as the islanders are both internally and externally defined.

Also, the islanders regard themselves as of "different races". In 1967, Michael Banton argued the need to distinguish between race and ethnicity, because race, in his opinion, refers to the categorization of people, while ethnicity has to do with group identification (Banton 1967). In other words, it is the identification between the negative "them" versus the positive "us", and between exclusion and inclusion (Banton 1983). However, the boundaries between race and ethnicity is blurred, according to Hylland Eriksen (2002: 6), because ethnic groups have a common myth of origin, which relates ethnicity to descent, which again is tied to race. Nonetheless, I have chosen to follow Banton's advice, and to use the word "ethnicity" throughout this thesis. On Maracuyá Island, the Creoles refer to themselves as "Islanders", while naming Mestizos, anachronistically, as "Spaniards" and the Miskito as "Indians". Miskitos and Mestizos also consider themselves "Islanders", though not "Indians" or "Spaniards". The Creoles are referred to as "Creoles" by the other islanders. Further in this chapter, I will look at how ethnicity is understood and played out on the island and show how these terms are used.

When I speak of the different ethnic groups throughout this thesis, I have chosen to follow Amanda Minks' (2013) choice of words. She has done anthropological fieldwork in the region, and in her book "Voices of Play", she refers to the Creoles as "Creoles" and the Spanish speaking Nicaraguans as "Mestizos". I will use the term "Miskito" and not "Miskitu" as she does, as it is more widely used, both by newspapers and their own political party YATAMA[10]. I'll refer to the general population as "islanders". In other words, I have chosen to move away from using local terms, as these are often considered by different groups as degrading or incorrect by certain groups.

My main field site has been a secondary school, Isaiah School, with Creole, Mestizo, and Miskito students from all over the island. As most schools on the island, it is religious in terms of Protestantism, and 100 young women and 56 young men attend classes there. I have been acting as a student in 9th, 10th, and 11th grade rather than an assistant or a teacher because of my limited, but ever growing, knowledge of Spanish. This gave me a great opportunity to balance power relations between the students and me, and it put me in the perfect position for participant observation. The students, and especially a few of them, both girls and boys, became my friends and main interlocutors. I met them every day at school, at the beach during the weekends and in their homes, and they invited me to come to their churches. At school, I have participated in debates about abortion, machismo, sexual education, and women's rights to work outside the house, learned traditional dances, practiced proverbs in Bible class, scratched my head alongside other students during math class, played kickball during physical education and eaten *fritos* (fried chicken and plantain) and *platanos con queso* (fried plantains with cheese) while chatting and gossiping during the only 15-minute break of the day. The school is very popular among every kind of islander and is housing students from a variety of the island's Protestant churches. It is also open for everyone who can afford to pay up to around 500 cordobas for the monthly fee. This is equivalent to 14 euros or two and a half days' worth of pay for a fisherman or a builder, making it possible, but expensive, for students from every social class on the island to attend the school. As I will explain further in this chapter, there is a high correlation between ethnicity and social class on Maracuyá Island, where the Creoles are at the top of the social stratification system, and the

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[10] YATAMA stands for "Yapti Tasba Masraka Nanih Aslatakanka" – literally meaning "Sons of Mother Earth" (NACLA 2016).

Miskitos on the bottom. Naturally, then, most of the students are Creole, but many are also Mestizo or Miskito.

Outside this arena, I regularly met, hung out with and had deep conversations with a handful of young, Creole men and a couple of women in their late 20s and early 30s. They all lived in my *barrio* and was working as fishermen or in the tourism business. I also made friends with a couple of young, Miskito women in their 20s, living in other sectors of the island. They all agreed to be a part of my research and wholeheartedly shared their life experiences, opinions and jokes. In other words, the teenagers and young adults I have interacted and talked with, are from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, and they live in different *barrios* on the island.

METHODOLOGY

Main methods

I indeed got to learn how to use my whole body as a tool while doing research. I mainly collected my ethnography by doing participant observation, and this method involves, as Bernard (2011) explains, to experience the lives of the people you are studying as much as possible. It is to speak their language, stay out late dancing, drink beer at the bar room and solve math problems in school. "If you are a successful participant observer, you will know when to laugh at what people think is funny, and when people laugh at what you say, it will be because you *meant* it to be a joke," Bernard (2011: 274) wittily points out while explaining the method in "Research Methods in Anthropology".

Sometimes, I would also use informal interviews, both inside and outside school (see Bernard 2011, O'Reilly 2012: 99, Madden 2010: 19). Often, I let my interlocutors talk about what they were passionate about and wanted to tell me, other times I asked them a simple question which opened up for conversation. I only did semi-structured and in-depth interviews a couple of times – once at school with a small group of friends, once with a young man, Jordan, who became my closest friend and interlocutor, and with a few of the island's wise and elders (Bernard 2011). Because I was doing my research at a school, I was also able to practice a few unconventional and exciting methods; I gave the students homework, where they could answer a series of questions regarding their passions, dreams, and hopes for the future, but also about issues concerning gender

roles, machismo, ethnic tensions and sexuality. The students were very eager when they got their homework, but it was only a few of them who handed them in, sometimes weeks after the deadline. I also, as already mentioned, participated in debates, went to *Casa de Cultura* – House of Culture – with a class to learn about their culture and customs, I assisted in building a library, I attended both Mother's Day and Father's Day ceremonies, and got to feel and experience the day-to-day life of a Maracuyá Island teenager. As I learned during my time on Maracuyá Island, I needed to walk a mile in someone else's shoes, not to become an islander per se (although buying and wearing a pair of "island shoes" – fake Nike slippers three sizes too big for me –, was making people comment that "you's a real islander now"), but to empathize with my interlocutors and to try to learn about their lives from within the context of their own lived experience and perspective – something anthropological research indeed depends on (Willerslev and Bubandt 2015: 7, O'Reilly 2012: 86).

I was not allowed to take photographs or videos of any of the students or activities at school, but I was fortunate enough to be able to audio record important events, discussions, lectures and interviews during recess. Without my recorder, I would have been struggling to keep my head above water, as much of the information I gathered during class was in rapid Spanish, Creole, or a mix of both languages. Therefore, all my ethnography that is based on conversations or experiences happening inside the school walls are, by the help of a translator when needed, written in English with Creole or Spanish words where I find it important to bring out the genuineness of what is being said. Because of the audio clips, I have been able to transcribe these dialogues directly. Outside school, however, I never used my tape recorder, and rarely my notebook. In the evenings, I would make fieldnotes and write down conversations. Thus, all ethnography from outside school is paraphrased from these notes.

Ethical considerations and challenges

At the beginning of my fieldwork, I attended a formal meeting with the school board to discuss my project and to get informed consent from both the school and the parents of my interlocutors. Subsequently, I wrote a letter to every parent at school explaining my research, before the director arranged a meeting on my behalf where she informed and got consent from the parents. On my first day at the school, I presented myself and my fieldwork to the students, and got informed

consent from them as well. I reminded them frequently about my research, and specifically asked for consent to include conversations and situations happening outside the classrooms when needed.

When studying minors, it is important to remember what de Suremain (2014) argues in "Ethics in Ethnography. Anthropology Confronted by its 'Little Demons'": The asymmetry of power relations between the anthropologist and the child leads the anthropologist to adopt sensitive research practices. An example of this is Nancy Mandell's (1988) "least-adult"-role that involves attempting to become an insider, or as "least adult" as possible. Through this research role, "the researcher suspends all adult-like characteristics except physical size" (Mandell 1988: 435). The goal is to erase differences between the adult anthropologist and the young person being observed. I found myself undertaking this often at the school, doing my best to appear, talk, and behave like the teenagers. This role was reinforced by me being present in the classroom as a student and not a person of authority. Although I always made sure that they knew I was doing research, I found it important to be their friend and someone they would welcome into their groups (see Fine and Sandstrom 1998). Gaining the teenagers' and the teachers' trust was not an easy task. I let them decide the pace of our relationships, and instead of pushing my questions on them, I let them come to me when they were ready. During my first weeks, many recesses was spent alone on a bench in the school yard. This all changed when I accidentally was sitting next to the school's secretary at a baseball game. Like the other teachers, she had barely looked at me until that day, and after the winning game, we were hugging and cheering together. The teenagers started warming up to me when I attended church, met them at the baseball stadium or at the beach, and when I finally managed to kick the ball just right during kickball.

Overcoming the trust barrier was my big breakthrough, though my toughest challenge, the languages, would challenge me a bit longer. To not know if I had understood or interpreted something correctly, or to not be able to communicate with people kept me from understanding the community as well as I wish I could. In school, Spanish is the official language, which means that the teachers were always speaking in Spanish, and the students also should, but they often answered in Creole. Many the students could not speak Creole at all, and others had trouble with their Spanish. Most of them, however, were fluent in both, leaving them switching between the two languages mid-sentence. Talking one-on-one with people was no challenge, and almost every Creole speaker understood what I said if I spoke slowly and with Creole words and sentences. The

students were eager to teach me their languages, as they were very proud of being bilingual or even multilingual, and even though they tried to speak to me in Creole and Spanish, it did not take more than a couple of "Excuse, one more time?" before they switched to English again. However, the curve of understanding Creole was skyrocketing every day, and a few months into the fieldwork I could understand almost everything people were saying, and they could understand me. Although I spent a month on the mainland doing a Spanish course, this language was a tougher challenge, and lacking a Spanish teacher on the island, I participated in an online Spanish course every morning before school.

I have also met anticipated challenges, like my "otherness", spatial boundaries that only exist because of my gender and ethnicity that keep me out from the inner *barrios* of the island, and of course "Island Time" – a concept I've battled and since become friends with.

SETTING THE SCENE

Maracuyá Island today

Maracuyá Island today is a small melting pot of ethnicities, languages, and customs, which makes the island vibrant and vivid. The small island is divided into five *barrios*: Large Bay on the west side of the island, Little Bay in the south, South Part on the east side, Papaya in the northeast, and North Part in the northwest. The locals also refer to Large Bay Number Two as a *barrio*, and it is located within Large Bay. White, sandy beaches surround most of the green and lush island, although the island does not bear as many fruits as it used to. In 1988 a hurricane named Joan crossed the Caribbean and destroyed Maracuyá Island. "[Maracuyá Island] practically disappeared from the map," The New York Times (1988) reported[11], and according to locals, their livelihood at the time, which was relying heavily on coconut plantations, would be gone forever. A government official told president Ortega by two-way radio after the storm that "All the houses have been destroyed, not one single home still has a roof … 95 percent of the trees have been knocked down" (Tweedale 1988). Hurricane Joan left thousands of Maracuyá Islanders homeless, many hurt and three killed. To this day, islanders explain, people are still trying to fix up Maracuyá

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[11] A version of this article appears in print on October 24, 1988, with the headline: Hurricane Kills 111 in Caribbean And Leaves Thousands Homeless.

Island, and there is still a scarcity for fruits and vegetables as the locals didn't have the energy or money to plant new trees. The ones who did plant new coconut trees, got them stolen shortly after. Fortunately, the islanders soon found their own kind of gold again – lobster and fish. Sometimes even what they refer to as "white lobster" – drugs, mostly cocaine, dropped into the ocean by busted drug mules passing the island by boat on their way from Colombia to North America. However, drug money is fast money on the island, and it tends to not stick around for too long.

Although the islanders suffered an enormous tragedy, Maracuyá Island has indeed risen from the ashes and today it is a beautiful and diverse island. From Mount Happy, the highest point on the island at around a hundred meters, you can take everything in; colorful houses, white secluded beaches, churches, big and small farms with animals running freely, busy streets and even a small financial district. The economical center of the island is found in Large Bay, and in the main street entrepreneurs have set up small *pulperias* (grocery shops), bar rooms, *comedores* (restaurants), internet cafés, and small shops selling everything from clothes to utensils. The harbor is also located in this *barrio*, so is the bank, a few foreign owned hotels, the public high school, the town hall, the baseball stadium, the cultural house, and other official buildings. This part of the island is always buzzing with people doing their everyday errands, fishermen coming home and leaving in their *pangas*, students going to school, small vendors trying to sell coconut bread or sunglasses, and it is where most of the newer population of the island has resided.

Ethnic tensions

It was recess during school, and a group of friends was gathered around a small table outside the blue and white school. The students were eating their *fritos* (fried chicken). drinking *frescas* (cold drinks*)*, chatting and laughing. Chickens, dogs, and even small puppies were running around the school yard, and the fresh ocean breeze was welcomed in the hot afternoon sun. Shelly, a 16-year-old Creole-Miskito girl sat on top of the table, while Andrea, also Creole-Miskito and the same age as Shelly, stood beside her. Ethan, a 19-year-old Mestizo boy, was sitting on his scooter, but moving towards the table when he heard our discussion about the discrimination of their Miskito friends and family. Sara, only 12-years-old and also a mix of Creole and Miskito, was sitting with her friends on the other side of the table, rarely saying a word. They were all dressed in their blue, white and

red uniforms, although some wore red track pants, as they were about to have physical education.

"Well, in my family… I don't discriminate her, but I love to… I don't think it as discrimination …" Ethan said, and pointed to Shelly, who answered, "Dat is discrimination!" promptly, rolling her eyes and throwing her hands to the side.

"I think it as molestin', you know, I like to disturb!" Ethan laughed, making Shelly more annoyed. She pointed out that, "Ethan, dat is discriminatin'! Dat is discriminatin'!"

"No, I don't do it in a discriminatin' kinda way, I do it in a friendly kinda way." Ethan was still laughing, with Shelly not giving up, continuing her argument. "It is discrimination, is like if you insult somebody, but nicely!"

The whole group laughed, and Ethan tried to justify his point; "But I do it… I nevah do it around, like, people, because I do it around, like, us, where I, I…"

"Mhm!" Shelly expressed loudly, placing her hands on her hips, notifying the group that she had won this discussion. "I do it when, like, she's home, but I don't do it if people can hear it, I don't do it in dat kinda way… You can't beat me, jus' because you not *gringo* (white), now you makin' me feel bad!" Ethan moaned, throwing his hands up above his head.

"Eheem," Shelly coughed, "when it's discrimination against Miskito… Indigenous people… I can't personally change dat… Change people opinion on what… On how to live dey life, so if dat's dey opinion of somethin', I cannot change it!" The rest of the group agreed with a loud "Mhhmmm!"

Sara, one of the younger girls, said quietly, "You should keep it to yourself if you don't have anythin' nice to say," with Andrea agreeing that, "Shouldn't say it in a mean kinda way."

"I agree", I said, "and I think all people should be treated the same way". Ethan nodded, and took the word again.

"I don't have a problem, ehm, I'm not…. Say like, people are racist. I, completely, I don't like dat, because people are the same! We have everythin' de same! Maybe our skin is a

likkie (little) bit different… I know dat there were slavery, so maybe people think dat we black people are less. Less than… Than… I don't agree dat, because people, we are de same way, we have heart, we have hand, we have foot, we are all de same, is jus' dat our color, God made us all different and unique, and everyone will have dey own identity. I do it in a lovin' kinda way to my cousin," he winks at Shelly, "but I would never discriminate against a person. Because, for me, when I hear people, like, molest in de classroom, I have seen in my classroom dat dey would call, like, two of dem are Miskitos in there, and dem discriminate dem, say dat dem are thief and dis and dat. But I don't like it! I would nevah tell de person dat, because… I might tease you, but I try to do it in a not hurtful kinda way, I don't wan' hurt you. I tease in a lovin' kinda way, but I don't tease in a way dat would hurt you…"

"I jus' think dat everybody has opinion towards de other, because, like, let's say, you're a *gringo*, and I'm a… Negro," Andrea interrupted, making everyone laugh. "Okay! So, I talk about you, and you talk about me, because we're different! But still, we're different, but still we're alike. Because if you cut off dis skin, it's blood and it's all de same."

This conversation casts light upon how the young islanders navigate the ethnic tensions and stigma they face on Maracuyá Island today. As Andrea concluded – the islanders are different, but still alike. According to anthropologist Fredrik Barth (1969), ethnicity is a social process, which is created in the meeting between people. He argues that the ethnic group must be defined from within, and is defined through its relationship to others, and this relationship is highlighted by social boundaries. In Maracuyá Island, there is a strong focus on maintaining the ethnic boundaries, however, the island's youths are starting to challenge and ask questions, and it seems that the different groups are slowly becoming culturally more similar. This, Hylland Eriksen (1992) explains, also occurred in Trinidad, where a cultural "creolization" of the population of Indian descent was happening in the same period as they were going through an ethnic revival with a strong emphasis on boundary maintenance.

After the Nicaraguan revolution in the seventies throughout the eighties and the devastating hurricane, Maracuyá Island has experienced a flourishing number of inhabitants, and these ethnic meetings have become more frequent, creating conflicts. As already mentioned in the introduction, thousands of people from mainland and the coast of Nicaragua have moved to the island, and the

island has also attracted a small number of expatriates from North America and Europe. The Creoles, the Miskitos, and the Mestizos often have fragile and restrained relationships. Although the former two argue about who came to the island first and therefore has a claim to it, most of the tensions seem to stem from a clash between different customs, identities and languages, and of course a battle for labor and income.

On Maracuyá Island, there is a high correlation between ethnicity and social class. One can distinguish between the ethnic groups not just by appearance and cultural traits – from skin color and facial features to languages – but also where they are in the socio-economic landscape; in the North Part and Papaya mostly Creoles reside, but there is also a small mix of other ethnicities. The Miskito population mostly live in Large Bay number two, in a *barrio* called "Miskito town". In Large Bay number one and South Part, there is a large mix and a high diversity in ethnicities. The different neighborhoods show different grades of poverty, where the Miskito *barrios* certainly are among the poorest, with big families living in tiny tin shacks. The members of the different groups often hold notions about each other's way of living, with the Creoles often stereotyping the Miskito as "thieving" and "lazy", while themselves are "hard working" and "honest". The Miskitos, however, view themselves as just as hard working as the Creoles, maybe even better, and stereotype the Creoles – *dem black buays* (boys) – as "troublemakers". According to one of the students at Isaiah School, the *barrios* where people grow up and live, also affect people's personality;

> A young person from South Part, they are social, outgoing, some are a bit dim, most likely wealthy from a good family. Since South Part is the residential area, in contrast, Hill Road's [in Large Bay] young person is more arrogant, oddjobber, most likely in gang, violent.

Similar to what Harald Eidheim (1969, 1971) found while studying the Sami in northern Norway, there is a negative stereotyping of the indigenous peoples of Nicaragua – the Miskitos –, which creates a stigma towards them. Eidheim tells of a Sami people who present themselves as Norwegians to others, keeping their true identity a secret. In the same way, the Miskito never talk about themselves as "Indians" on the island. Theories of social class always refer to systems of distributions of power and ultimately social ranking. Every Maracuyá Islander agrees that the Miskito population is treated differently from the Creole population, and I want to argue that there exists a poorly hidden social stratification, where the Creoles are regarded as the social winners

and the Miskitos the losers, with the Mestizos in-between. In Marx' (1976) view, social class and economy are heavily interrelated, and social class is defined according to its relationship to the productive process in society. In capitalist societies, Marx claims, there are three main classes; the bourgeoise – the owners of the means of production; the petit-bourgeoise – also owners of means of production, but with no employees; and the working class, which members depend on selling their labor to the capitalists (Marx 1976, Hylland Eriksen: 2002: 7). On Maracuyá Island, the money is in the sea, and whoever has a boat can make a living – which is what most of the islanders do, Creole or Miskito. Nevertheless, most of the land on the island is owned by the Creoles, and it is either Creoles or foreigners who own tourist businesses, which provide for the island's main income besides fishing. The Creoles, adopting a Marxist view, are the capitalists. The Mestizos often own small *pulperias* or other shops, and therefore would fall under the second class – capitalists who do not employ others outside their family in order to make a livelihood. The Miskitos, then, besides fishing, frequently work in hotels, restaurants, or as fishermen on commercial fishing boats. In other words, the division of labor is indeed correlated with ethnic membership. Still, there is opportunity for social mobilization, starting with education for the youths. Although the stratification of social classes affects people's opportunities to get decent education – often youths, boys in particular, start fishing or working instead of studying –, many families send their children to private school if they can afford it. Furthermore, work within the church provides one of the most promising chances of upward mobility. Some of the most respected people on the island, much due to their work with the church, are of Miskito descent or kin through marriage. Also, there is a chance of social mobility through marriage, though legal marriage is not very common.

A consequence of ethnic pluralism – the presence of two or more peoples within the same political space – is the possibility for ethnic conflict (Esman 2004: 50). The tensions amongst the island's different populations have risen and turned into a conflict after the municipal election in November 2017, when the people were voting for either a Sandinista mayor or for YATAMA, the Miskito party. A 34-year old Creole business owner told me this regarding the election;

> For me, it was not much of a choice [whom to vote for]. It was only two parties to vote for here. It's either de mayor, who is a Sandinista, or de Indian party. I even voted, for de first time in my 34-year-old life. Couldn't let dem Indians win, because dey would have gotten rid of us.

There is a fear among the Creoles that the Miskito population will try to "take over the island" if they get political power. Eventually, the Sandinista won the election, and this turned into a riot with violence among Creoles and Misktios, houses were burned to the ground, and guns were fired more than once. When I arrived on the island in the beginning of 2018, the riots had settled down, but the relationships were still tense.

A religiously diverse island

Even in their religious part of life, ethnicity plays a role. A member of a Pentecostal church explained that:

> We all use' to go to de same church, you know. But den dem Indians didn't want to mix with dem Creoles, and dem Spaniards didn't want to mix with dem Indians. Dat's why there are so many churches

For Maracuyá Islanders, religion is a big part of the everyday life. Most of the islanders are Evangelical in some way – Baptists, Adventists, Moravians and Pentecostals. There is also a Catholic Church and some Jehovah's Witnesses, and the number of churches is a fascinating aspect; at least 14 different churches are scattered around the small island. Even though some people have special reasons, such as following traditions, the type of worship, the preachers' languages, the music for attending a certain church, they all have the love of God in common.

In contrast to the rest of Nicaragua, most Maracuyá Islanders are not Catholic, meaning that the population is further disconnected from their country and government. In fact, Maracuyá Islanders are under laws that are heavily influenced by a religion they do not follow, as it can be argued that the lines between state and church in Nicaragua are severely blurred. In 2006, before the national elections, president Daniel Ortega entered an agreement with the Catholic Church and a former president, Alemán, to ban therapeutic abortion in exchange for the Church's support of his candidacy (Bradshaw 2008: 69, Kampwirth 2008:122). The agreement was named "El Pacto" and Nicaragua still has an anti-abortion legislation to this day. Furthermore, the islanders are rather focusing on God than the Virgin Mary, and you will often hear "I'm doing fine, thank God," or "If God is willing," in daily conversation, and on the weekends, the island becomes quiet while the churches are full of life.

Nicaragua in distress

"You know there's a war going on in Managua? Well, not a war, but, you know, a war," a 14-year-old young man told me with his eyes focused on his desk. I had just told him that I needed to get to the capital or to travel out of the country for my VISA update. During my fieldwork on Maracuyá Island, a political riot broke out in Nicaragua. On April 18th, 2018, people began protesting in the streets against the government's reform to the social security system. Two days before, the president of the Nicaraguan Institute of Social Security (INNS) announced a package of reforms that would save the entity of from bankruptcy by increasing the contribution of workers and employers to the INNS, and at the same time reduce future pensions and create an illegal tribute to the pensions of five percent. Students started to rebel against the government and demonstrate against the reforms, against corruption, and demanding freedom of the press (González 2018). On the hundredth day of the protests, and exactly one month after I left the country, a total of 448 people had been killed, according to human rights groups, almost 3000 people injured, and almost 600 people missing. These people were mostly civilians (Nugent 2018).

The riots never broke out on Maracuyá Island, although people were very concerned and afraid. Almost everyone had family and friends on the mainland, and there was always a fear that violence would break out on the island as well. "My mama says is better dem don't protest here. We on Maracuyá Island are understanding what is happening, but we don't demonstrate. I agree with her dat is better...," a 17-year-old girl told me during recess on a school day, before the president ordered the schools to close without revealing when they would open again. The director was heartbroken and frustrated:

> I don't know what to tell you. I don't know when de school is going to open. Is de government dat have shut dem down. Is so bad what is happening! The food and products from de mainland is going to be so expensive, and dey are already expensive! I think it's good dat people stand up for demselves, and I am very happy dat de people won, but at what price? So many people dead! I'm kind of glad de protests didn't start here, but at de same time, maybe we should say somethin' …

Roadblocks was put up on the mainland, which cut all kind of supply to the island. Most critical was food, gas and alcohol, which made people more afraid of an uprising. "Here, you have nowhere to hide," one of the locals told me while being anxious about robberies and violence now

that people were getting hungry and thirsty. Two weeks before my scheduled departure, I was advised to leave the island and Nicaragua, as things were getting heated and there was a good chance of not getting off the island altogether if I waited much longer. In Managua, the night before I left the country, I could hear gunshots and explosions. On September 29th, Ortega declared political demonstrations illegal, but Nicaragua's people do not seem satisfied with their president yet (La República 2018).

Figure 4: One of Maracuyá Island's 14 churches.

CHAPTER THREE: RESPECTABILITY CONTESTED – SATURDAY WINE QUEEN VERSUS SUNDAY CHURCH MADONNA

Introduction

One hot afternoon, just before Easter Week, Veronica, a 14-year old girl from one of the poorest *barrios* on the island, invited me home to meet her family, and then to go to the nearby beach for cooling off. Her family was a mix of Creole and Miskito heritage, and they were better off economically than many of their neighbors. Her father had a well-payed job**,** was known to have a good reputation among his peers, and her parents were able to sustain a clean, well-maintained two-story brick house and pay for private school for their children. Her mother was working in the house, taking care of her four children, while also working in a *pulperia*. Veronica brought her 6-year-old sister and 11-year-old brother to the beach, and Nathalie, her 15-year-old neighbor, also came along. We brought a board to paddle on, and after a while of playing in the water, the girls met two boys, and the four teenagers were paddling far from the shore, leaving the children in my care. An hour or so later, Nathalie came swimming back, and Veronica was still out paddling further away with the two boys. Nathalie was suggesting that Veronica might like one of them. Another hour went by, and I saw Veronica stepping out of the water.

"Dem takin' me out to sea!" she yelled angrily. Nathalie looked at her without saying anything.

"What do you mean, taking you out to the sea? Who?" I asked.

"Dem *buays*, dem takin' me out to sea! You know, dem gon' rape me and put a baby in me and make me raise it alone. Dem say so," she said, more calmly this time. Nathalie shrugged her shoulders. The children were quiet.

"What? Who? Not your friends?" I asked.

"No, no, dem fishermen, dem. I begged dem a ride, but I got away, no problem. Hey! Dem gon' take me out to sea! Why you leave?" She shouted to one of the boys whom she'd been paddling with. He laughed. The boys must have taken the board and left Veronica at a nearby wharf.

"Is no joke! Dem gon' rape me," she said again, and began smiling. Nathalie was still not reacting to the news and was complaining that she was hungry.

"Excuse, Linda, I be back," Veronica then said eagerly with a big smile, and ran over to another young man, talked to him for a few minutes, and came back. "Him want take me for a walk, but I'm 'shamed," she said, blushing.

"Oh, do you like him?" I asked, and she answered that she thought she did, but she decided not to go with him because she was hanging out with me. The sun was starting to set, and as the children were getting hungry, we collected all our money and went to get pizza at a beach restaurant. The children were shivering with cold, but Veronica was determined not to go home. After showing me how to dance sensually to a popular song on the island, she asked to borrow my phone, and called the young man she was talking with earlier. He came over with his friends but remained a couple of meters away. After a while, Veronica and Nathalie joined the group of young men, who were moving to the darkness of the beach, and I could only see their silhouettes – people hugging or kissing.

"Nah, I don't like dat *buay*," Veronica shrugged when she came back, leaning in for a whisper and a laugh "I have a secret boyfriend. Not him. No one knows for a year and a half!"

This whole incident lasted a few hours, and it indicates not only a normalization of rape culture and an understanding about family life, but also a female behavior that goes beyond the pure, submissive, and respectable. Respectability, according to Wilson (1973), is deeply connected to motherhood and chastity before marriage, something the ethnography above highlights. In fact, the value is so embodied in Veronica, to the point that she is more concerned about the possibility of becoming a single mother than the physical and emotional pain an encounter like she experienced can create. On the other hand, just minutes after being held against her will and forced

to engage in sexual activity by a group of men, escaping only by jumping out of a boat, Veronica was flirting with multiple boys, laughing, and dancing to a song about sex.

The young woman's behavior can be interpreted as displays of female sexuality, which does not come without a price – the woman's respectability –, Bahamian scholar Angelique V. Nixon (2015: 199) proposes. She points out that her own Bahamian mother was deemed as sexually deviant and outlaw because of her many boyfriends throughout the years and her topless Cabaret dancing at a large hotel. Throughout this chapter, I will seek to gain a better understanding of sexuality amongst young Maracuyá Island women and show how they challenge Nixon's notion of sexuality relating to respectability.

First, I will show how religion has shaped the value of respectability, but also the value of reputation, on Maracuyá Island. The fact that most people on the island follow Protestant religions also shape their notions towards gender roles and gendered behavior, often in favor of the woman.

Then, I will discuss how displays of sexuality before marriage represent an opposition to the paramount value, yet it is very common for young women to do so. Adolescence is indeed an area where female sexual agency is produced, and, according to Eggleston, Jackson and Hardee (1991: 81), who did research in Jamaica, love and curiosity are motivating factors for young women to have sex, however, the most encouraging factor is the passage from childhood to adulthood. Thus, I will explore how contrasting behaviors like Veronica showed above can be analyzed in different manners – as a as rebellion against power structures or as a reversal of values. As a basis for my analyses, I will look at *wining* – the kind of dancing Veronica displayed at the restaurant. Wining is the most common form of dancing on the island, and it includes sensual, rhythmic, and rolling hip movements, rotating and thrusting of the pelvis, often against the groin of a partner. Wining is a dance that focuses on the hips rather than any other part of the body, but the *colita* (butt) also gets a lot of attention from the islanders. Although this form of dancing has a reputation of being "dirty", provocative and sexual, wining is an established and genuine dance form in the Caribbean and should be understood as such. Wining is done in every situation possible – from children's' birthdays to nigh clubs. However, in the clubs or on the beach at night, wining is indeed done with sexual connotations.

Although I am mostly using the gendered notions of the two cardinal values of reputation and respectability in this thesis, this was not Wilson's primary focus in "Crab Antics" (1973). In

fact, his main argument is that reputation relates to egalitarian relations and respectability to class ranking, which I will explain further in the coming section.

"Black crab nevah get outta basket yet!"[12]

Authority in reputation, according to Wilson (1973: 227-228), arise from social recognition in a matrix of relationships – the value comes from an involvement with the world. A man can earn reputation in different spheres of his life. He might be a terrible fisherman, yet a great father, and that will balance his reputation. Further, reputation serves as a strategy to compensate for people's scarcity of respectability in a society where socioeconomic equality is unattainable. Indeed, respectability is a constellation of values by which a population might be stratified into social classes, and with respectability, power attaches to a position rather than person, and judgement is made of the whole person. The individual, in that sense, is a prisoner of such judgements – one can only be respectable or not respectable. Hence, on Maracuyá Island, the Miskito part of the population rely heavier on making a good reputation for themselves than the founding Creole families, who already have earned respectability and is in the top level of the island's system of social stratification. In the end, although it is a female domain, men also strive for respectability, still, they can only gain it with age and social maturity in form of marriage and economic security. Therefore, they spend most of their life involved in the system based upon reputation (Wilson 1969: 78).

Let me illustrate how respectability and reputation in relation to class is manifested on Maracuyá Island, by comparing two families living within the same household[13]: Mr. Abraham, the owner of the house, is a Creole native to Maracuyá Island. He is from one of the original families on the island, a family that also founded the oldest church. He is in his fifties and legally married with children and grandchildren. As a young adult, he left the island to work overseas, and created a life for himself in the States. Now he travels between the States and Maracuyá Island, as he has established a home both places. Mr. Abraham has long ago moved out of the domain of reputation and into the domain of respectability for the mentioned reasons above. Don Gustavo, a

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[12] A saying from San Andrés not far from Maracuyá Island. See Rosberg (2005: 95)
[13] This was the same household I lived in during my six months on Maracuyá Island

70-year-old Creole man originally from the mainland coast, is working as Mr. Abraham's help in the house. He is a poor man, living with his stepson in a tiny room. Don Gustavo has other adult children, and he struggles to take care of the 16-year-old Mestizo boy, Santiago, who is the son of his late wife. Don Gustavo does not drink, does not hang out in the streets, and he works hard from sunrise till sunset. Still, due to his class and despite his old age, he cannot fully subscribe to the domain of respectability. Still, he is well recognized in the domain of reputation due to his skills as a handyman, his work ethics, and, most importantly, his ability to father and taking care of both his own children and his stepson. Santiago, on the other hand, is fully devoted to obtaining reputation, as he drinks rum with his friends, acts out as a "*bad buay*", skips school, and hangs out in the streets.

This ethnographical description does not include women, simply because there were no women, except me, present in the household. Mr. Abraham's wife lives in the States, and Gustavo's wife and Santiago's mother died when the boy was just a few years old. Yet, the description above shows the difference between the gender of the value and the gender of the person upholding the value, as Mr. Abraham, who indeed engage in the domain of respectability due to his age and social status, shows that for men, respectability does not entail premarital chastity or motherhood, but other elements that are considered feminine, such as involvement in the church. In other words, different values encompassed in respectability and reputation, as I will show further in this chapter, correlates to the gender of the person. Nevertheless, as more women than men engage with the value of respectability, it seems fruitful to move away from this household to further contextualize this value. First, however, I find it important to explore how religion has shaped the paramount values on Maracuyá Island.

Religion's role in shaping respectability and reputation

As already mentioned in the introduction, the Latin American concept of purity and the image of Madonna, derived from an idealization of the Virgin Mary, is quite similar to the Caribbean value of respectability. Correspondingly, on Maracuyá Island, moral discourse rooted in religious principles remain one of the most powerful forces structuring social life. As in Providencia, as Wilson (1973 100) described, the church in Maracuyá Island demands premarital chastity for girls, sober living for men, and self-improvement for all. This is a responsibility for the family and the

household, and the ideal standards of respectability. In the coming section, I will show how religion shapes morality and creates values on the island and how the church advocates for restraint or abstinence in many aspects of daily life, including sex and alcohol:

"Welcome, welcome! You's friends with my daughters, eh?" A man greeted me with open arms, shouting over the loud singing of a woman inside the small, white and blue Pentecostal church. I was already fifteen minutes late to the Labor Day congress, yet in reality, fifteen minutes early due to island time, and the polite man offered me a blue plastic chair in the shade of a palm tree outside the church. After a long while, Nathalie finally showed up. She told me that Veronica was grounded for walking in the streets too late at night, though I learned later that it had something to do with her boyfriend and that her mother had finally found out about him. Nathalie disappeared behind the church, and I went inside to sit with some of the other youths I knew from school. It was hot and humid inside the church, and buzzing with conversation, singing, and crying from young women's babies. It was mostly girls attending the congress, although more and more boys were arriving throughout the day.

"If you are wearing tight pants, you are not allowed to dance, because de church can't promote dat kind of dressin'!" One of the adult leaders of the congress shouted before the performance of a dance Nathalie and a group of girls had been practicing for.

"I see too many *likkie gyals* (little girls) wearing dem tight pants, and I am wearing tight pants myself, but is not right for *likkie gyals*! The same with short skirts, you are not allowed to participate!" The woman continued, before the dance routine started. Nathalie, who had spent a lot of energy and time to practice in the weeks before, was standing outside the church, not participating in the dance. She indeed wore tight jeans, but not any different from other young women joining as audience in the church. She was standing in the doorway, with a halfway smile, looking at the other girls who danced without her.

Throughout the day, young people from across the island were singing, dancing and acting God's words and will. During one of their performances, Satan appeared, portrayed by the youths as three creatures; a werewolf, a scream-masked person, and a colorful witch. Satan, in this play, was there to lure a girl into going to a party, which her friends already had said no to. Her friends would rather go to the best party on the island – the party in the church.

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Satan started to pull the girl's arm, and her friends pulled the other, shouting for Jesus' help. Ultimately, her friends won the struggle, and she decided to go with Jesus. This was a metaphor for the many temptations youths come across every day. A few moments later, a woman around 45 years old, with red dreadlocks and scarred skin, wanted to tell her story:

When she was seven, her adult life begun. She was raped by her five different stepfathers, her uncle and her cousin. At eight years old, a family member broke her leg while raping her. She grew up to a life of drug addiction – crack, cocaine, weed, alcohol – and prostitution. She showed us her wounds, she had been shot four times in the legs and one time in her head, and knife stabbed in the arm. She had to go to jail for a while and lost her children. She never got to know her youngest son, who is now 14 years old. However, she found her salvation in Jesus, admitting she was a bad person. Her sweat was dripping from her face, and she was screaming into the microphone.

"Is dis how you want to live your life?" She shouted to one of the girls, commenting that she could feel the girl stray already at a young age.

"Do you want a husband who treats you well all your life, who never hurts you? Dat's only Jesus," the lady continued to another girl. She walked around the room, looking at everyone sitting there. It was quiet in the church, except for the sobbing of a few people. At the end of her speech, that she pointed out was important to make the youth understand that they should quit doing drugs, smoking and drinking and to treat their mother right, the teenagers all stood up and moved to the front of the church, where they sang, cried, and got blessings from a priest.

First and foremost, I find it interesting to discuss the woman's statement that Jesus is the only husband who will treat women well. Research from Latin America specifically, but also Europe and Africa, show that Pentecostal Christianity "has the power to inculcate a domestic ideology that transforms patriarchal family structures" (Soothill 2007: 69, see also Gill 1990, Brusco 1995). This is also a crucial point to the shaping of the value of reputation I will discuss further in the coming chapter.

Pentecostalism is argued to have the power to transform gender relations and gender specific behavior (see Gill 1990, Brusco 1995). Lesley Gill's (1990) research from La Paz in

Bolivia shows how women, mostly poor and marginalized single women migrated from the countryside, use religion to deal with both gender- and class-based problems. As my findings from Maracuyá Island, Gill (1990: 709) noticed a paradox between the teachings and ideals of the church and the women's reality. Women, as on Maracuyá Island, make up the bulk of the Pentecostal church in La Paz, though the doctrine, teachings, ideals, and leadership of the church has a patriarchal chore. However, she argues, the teachings of the church also modify male behavior that is harmful to women, such as violence, drinking, and gambling. This improves women's well-being and economical position, because money stays inside the home and are not used in the cultural domain (Gill 1990, see also Brusco 1995). Elizabeth Brusco (1995) also finds that Pentecostalism, though in Colombia, places importance and status for both women and men in the domestic domain rather than the public. Brusco's (1995) central claim, in accordance to the title of her book "The Reformation of Machismo", is that men who are going through a Pentecostal conversion drop their "macho" way of life for "evangelical beliefs". The man's new moral code and values are now realized through his family and his role as a provider (Brusco 1995). This ultimately benefits the woman, who can live with a "new man" who is less typical "male" (Gill 1990: 717).

As Wilson (1973: 100) also found in Providencia, respectability for both Bolivians, Colombians and Maracuyá Islanders is obtained through the church, for both men and women: "Simply to go to church is a mark of being respectable; but it is important that those who claim highest respectability attend church as a family or a household." Women, Gill (1990: 712) argues, are expected to be morally superior to and spiritually stronger than men. Yet, they are regarded as intellectually inferior to and more fragile emotionally than men. Thus, when the Pentecostal church in La Paz advocates for abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, sexual intercourse for non-reproductive purposes, and dancing, women subject themselves to these rules to become morally empowered. Gill (1990: 714-715) demonstrates this in her ethnography about Rosa, a single mother who loved to dance at fiestas. Rosa, after divorcing her husband due to his drinking, beating and his lack of economical support for the family's domestic needs, decided to attend a *fiesta* (party) where she danced with a man and got tipsy. On the way home from the party, she started to think: "I don't like this. I wasn't born to make people gossip, and there is no man who can accompany me to these *fiestas*. It's not a good idea to go alone." Rosa said she felt lonely and was afraid to that no one would take care of her if she got too drunk. Consequently, she decided to join the Pentecostal

church because of its rules of no drinking and no dancing. This behavior, as witnessed in the church in Maracuyá Island, is inspired of the devil.

Importantly, and in contrast to both examples from Bolivia and Colombia above, Maracuyá Island has not "turned Pentecostal", although there has been numerous of Christian revivals on the island, which is evidenced by the many different churches. It has been an evangelical Christian island since the mid-1800's, when missionaries found their way to the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua (Danneberger 1951). Moravian missionaries from that time stated that "these people were altogether godless," and that the locals were to such a high degree insensitive before missionary work that they had to leave the island in 1987 (Offen and Rugeley 2014: 81). The Anglican and Baptist missionaries, however, had more success on the island and with time, many Protestant religions, including Pentecostalism and Adventism, have become central (Minks 2013: 151). Nevertheless, it is very likely that the islanders, and especially the female, benefit from these religious moral codes in the same way as Colombian and Bolivian women.

In other words, as Brusco (1995) also found, the churches on the island set a moral standard where people's values are centered on the family, and therefore excludes certain negative, male social behavior. Jordan, a 26-year-old man and one of my main interlocutors, proved this before Easter, when he told me he had "*take on a new gyal*" (got a new girlfriend), which made him "*tip de rom*" (stop drinking rum). "Because in life you need make a change," Jordan assured, and proudly explained that he was trying to be a good Christian. This behavior is an example of the foundation for the balance between reputation and machismo, as I will discuss in the coming chapter, yet also a consequence of the Maracuyá Island churches' quest to transform gender relations, such as domesticating men and morally empowering women.

Young and respectable

On the small, plastic polluted beach, a fisherman was packing up his net and bucket of sardines after trying his luck in the unruly ocean. I was sitting on the stairs leading down to the beach, observing the fishing method fishermen had told me was almost impossible nowadays due to over-fishing in the region.

"*Gyal*, tell me what good!" Ray, a 19-year-old Creole man stopped on his way to get some more *recarga* (recharge) on his phone, wearing ripped jeans and a t-shirt, the most common outfit for young men on the island besides basketball shirts and shorts. The air was heavy, it had been raining the whole morning, lighting and thunder was rolling across the sky, and the sun was trying to push through the heavy clouds. We talked about his mother, who was pregnant by an unknown man – even Ray did not know who the father was. He prayed the baby would be a girl. "Too many *buays* in de family already," he smiled. In the distance we heard my neighbor, 70-year-old Gustavo, talking to another fisherman who sold his catch of the day from his bike. Gustavo bought some yellowtail snapper, which he showed us and walked down to the beach. I told Ray that I could happily stay here for a long time.

"Yes, you have to marry a local. Or pay a fee. Better to marry," Ray laughed, with Gustavo playfully singing and slaying the fish in front of us, using a large machete.

"Lucky me that it is possible to have more than one boyfriend here, then!" I jokingly replied, nodding to my *cabaña* (little hut) where my fiancé was working on his computer.

"Yeah *gyal*, is completely normal to do dat! Well, you have to get separated if you already marry, but no worry, is no problem!" Ray answered enthusiastically, before the sky opened again, and he excused himself and ran towards the *pulperia*.

To have multiple sweethearts is expected of men, but also practiced by young women. Veronica, for instance, has several sweethearts, but one boyfriend. "You can have as many as you want. But's dangerous if dey find out," Veronica told me a couple of nights after the night at the beach. Female sexual behavior outside relationships have been mostly understood in procreative or economical desires, and dominant images of female Caribbean sexuality have indeed been treated ambiguously. Earlier research states that Caribbean women are faithful to one partner, yet accepting male non-monogamy as a natural condition of masculinity (Kempadoo 2004: 23) At the same time as "having sweethearts", as they say in Maracuyá Island, is heavily condemned, female promiscuity is accepted if children are the result and justified if the reason behind their behavior is rooted in economic security. Conversely, young women on Maracuyá Island express sexuality in a more open manner than previous literature from the Caribbean suggests, a behavior that includes whom they chose to enter relationships with.

This challenge the notion of respectability as Wilson (1969, 1973) portrayed it. When he (1973: 70-75) describes respectability through his ethnography, he turns to, among others, Isaac and Lena's union on Providencia. Lena has obtained respectability through her domestic role. The 28-year-old woman is in complete charge of the household, and only leaves her home to visit friends – who mostly are women – and kin, or to go the store. Every Sunday she goes to the Baptist Church, and although the couple are not properly married, she wishes they could be. Lena, then, is a respectable woman within the limits of her socioeconomical status. Her respectability is manifested in her churchgoing, her common-law[14] union, her children, and her home.

At first glance, I find this understanding of respectability problematic, as it does not take into consideration youths. Also, it places the woman in the domestic domain, and the value ultimately is dependent on her role as a mother. Moreover, Veronica and other young women display behavior in the same manner as Santiago – they drink rum, take on multiple sweethearts, hang out on the beach and in the streets, and dance sensually in bar rooms. As mentioned in the first chapter, there is an important difference to the gender of the value and the gender of the person; Veronica is seen here to act within the value of reputation, which is not uncommon on Maracuýa Island, however, it is indeed contradicting Wilson's model from Providencia.

In "Women and Change in the Caribbean", Jean Besson (1993) criticizes Wilson for the very same reasons. She does acknowledge that his theory has strengths, especially regarding the clarification of the social life of Afro-Caribbean men, however, she proposes that it actually obscures the understanding of the Afro-Caribbean woman. Besson (1993) is particularly concerned with how Wilson portrays women as passive imitators of the Euro-American cultural values making up respectability. She argues that women as well are part of the domain of reputation and shows this through her own ethnography from Martha Brae, a peasant community in Jamaica, and through regional comparative literature. Women here are participating in both landholding, indigenous cults, entrepreneur skills, titles and procreation. They also compete for status, both among themselves and with men (Besson 1993: 22). She also states that Wilson falls into the exact same trap that he himself pointed out that other anthropologists of the Caribbean has done: He centers the woman in a preoccupation with the family and the household, which he has adopted a

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[14] A common-law union is when the couple lives together long enough to sustain stability. Thus, they are considered "married" without going through a formal ceremony and getting a marriage license. This union is very common in Nicaragua and is granted legal standing (Envio 1984, Oxford Dictionaries 2018).

Eurocentric interpretation of. As Powell (1984 in Besson 1993: 31) notes: "The dynamics of women's lives are not clearly understood, mainly because of assumptions which apply for men but not necessarily for women. There has been a one-sided emphasis on women's role in the family and limited recognition or systematic assessment of their non-familial activities."

Similarly, Richard Burton (1997: 208) also expresses concern with some of the gendered aspects of the "Crab Antics school of Caribbean anthropology", where the respectability and reputation-dualism is understood as binary oppositions, and men and women inhabit distinct, yet complementary cultural systems, each with a value system of its own. It is especially the gendered dichotomy of indoors/outdoors that correspond to respectability/reputation that troubles Burton, because, as Daniel Miller (1994) also witnessed, there is a total inversion during carnival, when women take to the streets to celebrate, while men are seeking to participate in inner-oriented activities. This dichotomy troubles me as well, as women on Maracuyá Island link the two spheres by owning land and businesses, taking on other work outside the home, and going to the bar rooms for socializing. Men are also seen working in the domestic sphere – mostly in their yards, picking fruit and vegetables, but also, as I will discuss in chapter five, they are moving towards care work in the family as well.

Still, I argue that the two value systems of respectability and reputation are indeed gendered, but they are not closed off-spheres for either men or women. This relates to my understanding of gender as performed, repeated acts. An old man, as seen with Mr. Abraham, can indeed subscribe to the value of respectability, and Veronica is interested in gaining reputation, by having multiple boyfriends and displaying sexual behavior. However, reputation is not Veronica's paramount value – respectability is. Moreover, young men cannot gain respectability, and reputation then become their cardinal value. Thus, we have the gendered value-pair. Furthermore, I want to understand respectability in relation to young women as more connected to purity and self-restraint than to motherhood, to education than to domestic work, and, of course, as Wilson (1969, 1973) also points out, to the church above all. Again, the question remains: How is it possible for women to behave sexually, to make a reputation, and similarly keep their respectability?

Reversing respectability

After I asked Veronica if this was okay to have more than one boyfriend, she looked at me like I was clueless, then she playfully hit my arm. She laughed and started to complain about difficulties in her relationship to one of her sweethearts:

> "Ah, him so vex with me now! Him go on a date with a *gyal*, and I got so mad, so I kiss him friend. Oh my God!" She swiftly looked sad and defeated, but then excitedly asked me to borrow my phone.

> A few hours later, after sunset, the young man who she had been talking with showed up with his young cousin, and they brought Veronica to the darkness of the beach. After half an hour or so, the two young men disappeared on a scooter, and Veronica came back with a sad look on her face.

> "Ah, we had a fight! Him too aggressive. Him beat up people. I don't like dat. Nah, what if him aggressive to me? I ignorin' him now… You know, my friend is thirteen and her mama is so angry at her! Because she found out dat she's having sex with her boyfriend, at thirteen. So angry she is!" Veronica went from irritated to smiling in seconds.

> I asked if she have ever had sex.

> "Ssshhh… (placing her finger on her lips). Yes, with my boyfriend, a couple of times," she answered shyly, "but my parents don't know. I will marry him soon."

> A car parked right in front of us, and I did not get to answer her. It was Victor, a 30-year-old Creole man with a baby and a seemingly steady girlfriend. Victor was a well-known man on the island, with a good reputation. He dressed nicely, spoke "proper English", and was educated. Everyone knew that he had multiple girlfriends. He and Veronica spoke for a couple of minutes, while I was talking with some other friends, and when he drove away, she was blushing.

> "Him say I his *gyal*!" She exclaimed and laughed, before joining me with the rest of the group. Fifteen minutes later, she again asked to borrow my phone to call Victor.

> "Ey! I ready now. Is Veronica! You occupied? With a *'oman* (woman)? Ah. Ah. Ah. Okay, bye!" She hung up.

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"Him occupied with a *'oman*," she said, rolling her eyes, "But I call my friend, but ah, him too aggressive," she complained, but dialed his number anyway.

Veronica is here behaving the opposite way of what is morally expected of her. Nevertheless, she is not alone in doing so. Nathalie, for instance, was teased by her friends for being hungover on a school day, after a wild night in the bar rooms. Furthermore, another night in a bar room, I got acquainted with two women; Alicia, 25 years old, and 40-year-old Magdalena. Alicia showed me her wedding ring and told me that she had a husband and a couple of children, when Magdalena interrupted to explain that her friend's husband was violent. Alicia nodded and shrugged her shoulders, before turning her attention to two male German backpackers. The rest of the night, both Alicia and Magdalena were drinking, flirting and wining with the men. When it was time to go home, Alicia stayed behind with one of the backpackers. This did not catch any attention from the locals, who knew the women and their husbands, and the behavior seemed very ordinary.

Meanwhile, when the sun is up, Veronica and almost every woman on the island, behave in a different manner to obtain respectability. Veronica dresses properly in her uniform at school, she usually sits with her female friends during recess, although it is very common and unproblematic to have both male and female friends, and she agrees when the teacher talk about how to practice good, moral behavior. In church, she says "Amen" to sermons about the sins of drinking or cheating, and at home she does not talk about boys at all and she follows her parents' rules. Veronica is normally not allowed outside after dark, but on special occasions – like when an anthropology student from Norway comes to visit after school or during Easter Week – she is permitted to bend the rules.

At first glance, Veronica's different behaviors reflects Erving Goffman's (1959) thoughts on social life as a performance, where people express "front stage" and back stage" behaviors, depending on the context. People play different roles in their everyday life, Goffman (1959) argues, shaped by time and place, but also by values and social norms in the society at large. In short, front stage behavior is performed when we are in a public setting and are aware of our actions. This could be in church, at school, at work, on the bus, and at the beach. Back stage behavior happens when we are alone or at home, and we step out of our front stage character and are able to relax. However, as Veronica shows when she must follow her parents' rules, we still behave in a certain matter at home as well. Although Goffman's approach is good to think with in

order to understand how certain situations shapes Veronica's behavior – it is expected of her to dress nicely and sing in church, yet also to flirt and wine in the bar rooms –, the relevance of a "front stage/back stage" framework is limited in my analysis, as most of the behaviors that both affirm and contradict moral and ethical social codes on Maracuyá Island are indeed performed front stage.

Following Louis Dumont's (1980, 1986) approach to reversal of hierarchy, however, can offer a fruitful understanding of Veronica's contradicting behaviors. As mentioned in the introduction, hierarchy for Dumont (1980: 239) is essentially the presence of an "encompassment of the contrary", and in certain contexts, or "levels", the paramount value is distinguished from what it previously encompassed. In comparison to my own value-reversal analysis of Veronica's sexual behavior as an opposition to the value of respectability, André Iteanu (1990) also draws on Dumont's idea of hierarchy as "the encompassing of the contrary". Iteanu (1990: 49), in his study of the Orokaivan society, states that when analyzing relations in certain Melanesian societies, two seemingly incompatible conceptions of social life – or rather, two hierarchically ordered levels of value – need to be considered. On the higher level, the society appears to be generating relations through an all-encompassing ritual system, though on the lower level, the central role is played by a rather unpredictable state of non-differentiation that stands in stark contrast to the western notion of the individual. In brief, Iteanu (1990) studied a value system, where the first conception asserts that social persons, objects and supernatural beings only exists in the appearance of relations when created as such by the encompassing ritual system known as *pure*. *Pure*, then, is the repetition of prescribed actions and of the totality of traditions that form the collective identity of the Orokaiva (Iteanu 1990: 42-49). Further, and in contrast to *pure*, the value of *jo* refers to an inner condition that is at the origin of society and action. For the Orokaiva, a social person is always unique, and as the social person grows, indirect manifestations of his *jo* start to appear. *Jo*, in its natural state, needs to be concealed, however, during rituals, *jo* appears two times – once as the source or immediate cause of the rite, and another time as a phase of non-differentiation. So, *pure* encompasses *jo,* yet in certain contexts the latter will be superior. Iteanu (1990: 42) explains through events – the origin of each ritual – the reversal of the hierarchy:

In the creation of events *jo* is seen as superior to, and as bringing about, the action qualified as *pure*. Thus everything that happens in the universe originates at a level where *jo*,

expressed through social persons, temporarily has precedence over *pure* ritual action. However, even at this level, where jo is pre-eminent, it cannot express itself independently of a minor *pure* action, since otherwise it would remain totally hidden and thus be deprived of any effect in creating events.

In Maracuyá Island, *pure* can be compared with respectability and *jo* with sexuality. Outside bar rooms or other informal settings, displays of sexuality remains hidden. Especially the concept of having sweethearts are never talked about outside these settings. There are many more examples in the ethnographical literature that shows that the inferior value becomes superior in some contexts. Signe Howell (1985:178-179), for instance, shows how the values of hot and cool is present in the Chewong society, and how these values are reversed. In Peninsular Malaysia, cool is superior to hot, which is shown through multiple aspects: The cool state is associated with health and curing and it is characterized by non-human beings (i.e. the beings on Earth Six where the "original people" live and the leaf people in the forest, who are associated explicitly with the cool state – their food, world and blood is cool while humans have warm food, weather and blood). The cool beings cannot contact the human world, but humans can contact them by making a cool environment. This is done by bathing in rivers, restraining from intercourse, bathe their face in cool incense smoke and to do the ritual in the forest, which is said to be a cool place. By making their environment cool, the Chewongs are symbolically drawing the different worlds together, eliminating what sets them apart. Childbirth, however, introduces a change of levels, and the mother and child must be exposed to heat. They do this so the baby can be revealed to the human world only.

Howell's essay on equality and hierarchy among the Cheowong is published in "Context and Levels", edited by R.H. Barnes, de Coppet and Parkin (1985). In this volume, we find that Dumont's theoretical approach has been applied to African contexts as well. Dominique Casajus (1985) questions why the Tuareg, and especially the male, veil their faces. He, as Dumont, Iteanu, and Howell, analyze this in terms of two values structuring their culture. Again, depending on contexts, the veil signifies the superior relationship between men and God and the saints, and on the other hand it reminds the Tuareg of the close and inferior relationship they have with malevolent spirits of the dead.

As demonstrated, Dumont's theory of value-hierarchies seems to have a near universal application – that is, if we use Dumont's very own comparative approach; "by applying what can readily be known about it from societies, such as India, where hierarchy is, as Dumont puts it, 'clear and distinct'" (Dumont 1980:262 in Rio and Smedal 2009: 5). Dumont stated that "hierarchy is in the heart of the "unthought" of modern ideology" (Dumont 1980: xvi), meaning that hierarchy is so unimaginable for Westerners because of the significance of individualism. In India, Rio and Smedal (2009: 4) clarifies, hierarchy is fundamental to the notion of the whole society, while in the Western case, egalitarianism is coupled with the notion of the individual – a notion that is non-negotiable. Thus, in the West, the hierarchal impulse can only express itself as discrimination, making it difficult to recognize Dumont's theory as universal (Rio and Smedal 2009: 5).

Nonetheless, Dumont has been heavily criticized for applying a structural analysis that is too reductionist and unverifiable, mostly because of his work with Indian caste system. Scholars like Gupta (1984), Bailey (1991), Berreman (1971), and Marriott (in Dirks 2001) have perceived Dumont as, for instance, being too textually derived and not allowing for resistance and mobility among lower castes in India. Dumont's work is based on traditional Indian texts, and, in his approach, the features of the caste system seems to be unchanging. Yet, in reality, the caste system has changed in various ways. One of the most engaged critics of Dumont's work is McKim Marriott, who casted doubt upon Dumont's use and choice of data. Further, Marriott faulted him for making "ideology" seem distant from the interactions that actually produce the ranks and orders that make up hierarchy in Indian society (Dirks 2001: 56). Bailey (1991 in Lardinois 2017: 344) criticized Dumont of limiting the analysis to the single value system of purity/impurity, and of reducing the culture of the Indian sub-continent to religion, while Gupta (1984) pointed out that Dumont's understanding of hierarchy is faulted in his application to the caste system. The different castes articulate numerous ideologies often in opposition to another, Gupta (1984) argues and it is difference rather than hierarchy that is the essence of the caste system. Moreover, Berreman (1971) also considered Dumont's approach as flawed, as it fails to consider power structures that may exist independently of caste.

Dumont, however, attributes all criticism of his notion of hierarchy to the mindset of the Westerner; if an Indian were to criticize his notion of hierarchy, he must have been "westernized, secularized, or worse, or opiated by Marxism", he argues (Dumont 1980: xi-xvi, 66 in Singh 2014:

38). Also, contributions to studies of social and cultural change, such as Joel Robbins' "Becoming Sinners" (2004) and Annelin Eriksen's "Gender, Christianity and Change in Vanuatu" (2008), have challenged earlier critiques that consider Dumont's theory as too bounded and integrated to open for understandings of cultural change, as they show how his framework is applicable to their own ethnographic work.

I mention this critique of Dumont, mostly from the Indian context, because it has a general relevance. Questions of social and cultural change and agency is as relevant in Latin America and the Caribbean as they are in India. However, it is important to acknowledge that by understanding my ethnography from a structural approach, I do not so much enter the discussion about agency, which is the capacity of individuals to break away from socio-cultural structures and act independently to generate change. One of the frameworks within anthropology that has explored the possibility of social change, however, is resistance theory – an approach that could possibly provide a productive understanding of sexuality. Female behavior that goes beyond or contradicts the moral norms on the island could be understood as "everyday forms of resistance", a term coined by James C. Scott (1985), against dominating values such as respectability. In the coming section, I will explore how sexual behavior or activity, especially female, but also male, could easily be understood as resistance or a way of "blowing off steam" in a strict moral society (see Kempadoo 2004, Brennan 2004).

Sexual behavior understood as "blowing off steam" or rebellion

> Saturday night was the antithesis of Sunday morning, and at worse, Saturday night was like the devil, full of temptation, sexual deviance, and damnation, keeping sinners from worshiping on Sunday and asking forgiveness (Nixon 2015: 197).

Angelique V. Nixon, author of "Resisting Paradise" (2015), grew up in the Bahamas, where she noticed the two opposing forces that Maracuyá Island women battle ever weekend – the "Saturday Night Club/Dancehall Queen" versus the "Sunday Morning Church/Church Mother". Nixon (2015: 197) reminisces her own teenage years, where she herself rebelled against the Saturday

night/Sunday morning-dichotomy – she did both until Saturday night won her over. Her grandmother complained that "Young people who get tear up and loose at da corner bar, dance an' ting on Sat'day night and den can't get up and come to Church" – because she herself could do both *"rat bat"* (Bacardi rum) in the evening time and still manage to come to church the next morning. Nixon (2015: 197) wants to call this constant battle a side effects of the (colonial) Christian fundamentalism – what Caroline Cooper (1995) names "repressive respectability". If such piety and respectability can exist, Cooper (1995) argues, there must be a space where one can blow off steam. In other words, one way to understand why young women are acting out a sexual behavior beyond what society expects them to, is through resistance and rebellion.

In recent years, Caribbean women's agency are brought into discussion as studies of sex work in the Caribbean are growing due to the global spread of sex tourism since the late 1980's (Sharpe and Pinto 2006: 250). Kamala Kempadoo (2004), for instance, claims that heterosexual serial monogamy is not the only norm in the Caribbean, and in "Sexing the Caribbean", she shows how a diversity of sexual practices flourish throughout the region, including informal polygamy as well as bisexual and same-sex relations. Kempadoo (2004: 2) proposes that to understand Caribbean sexuality, we must think beyond the dichotomy of respectability and sexuality. Women forge rebellion and resistance through many different sites, for example by participating in the informal economy of sex work. Thus, we must account for the daily and "embodied sexual practices, identities, knowledges, and strategies for resistance of the colonized and postcolonial subject without lapsing into notions of an essential native sexuality" (Kempadoo 2004: 2). Sexuality, in her view, is both an embodied practice and a "rebelling pillar" in Caribbean society (Kempadoo 2004: 40). Likewise, Denise Brennan, in "What's Love Got to Do with It?" (2004) reveal how women who sell sex, though also men, display active agency over their own sex lives through marginal sexual spaces. Women, she claims, see sex work as a legitimate way to raise money for their family – either to build a house or to send their children to school –, and in that way they are rebelling against dominant sexual ideas and norms.

One way of "blowing off steam" on Maracuyá Island is the sensual dancing known as wining, and undoubtably, it is tempting to certain understand behaviors, attitudes, movements and gestures as possible traits of rebellion or resistance. If we are to think back to Veronica and her night on the beach, one can understand how this framework indeed is appealing. First, Veronica is

standing face to face with the negative flipside of the island's values – machismo. The cultural construct of machismo gives men power over women, so do the moral norms that derives from values such as reputation and respectability. Certainly, Veronica is both battling patriarchy and a "repressive respectability", which can be argued to lead her to use her body and sexual agency as "weapons of the weak" (see Scott 1985). Her wining and flirting only minutes after the incident in the *panga* could be understood as rebellion against these power structures that allows men to behave in this manner and young girls to be put in situations like this to begin with. Actually, feminist work in the social sciences has from the 1970s has sought to "understand how women resist the dominant male order by subverting the hegemonic meanings of cultural practices and redeploying them for their own interests and agendas" (Mahmood 2005: 6).

However, as Abu-Lughod concluded in "The Romance of Resistance" (1990), resistance is often romanticized, and understanding behaviors solely as resistance can prevent us from analyzing power structures and operations which caused this behavior to begin with. Moreover, a focus on resistance might draw the anthropologist's attention away from other experiences or actions that do not fall into this framework:

> My argument […] has been that we should learn to read in various local and everyday resistances the existence of a range of specific strategies and structures of power. Attention to the forms of resistance in particular societies can help us become critical of partial reductionist theories of power. The problem has been that those of us who have sensed that there is something admirable about resistance have tended to look to it for hopeful confirmation of the failure – or partial failure – of systems of oppression. Yet it seems to me that we respect everyday resistance not just by arguing for the dignity or heroism of the resistors but by letting their practices teaches us about the complex interworkings of historically changing structures of power (Abu-Lughod 1990: 53).

Especially women across the Muslim world has been interpreted as actively resisting power structures, and now, after the sex-tourism boom in the region, also Caribbean women are often understood as rebellious subjects. Abu-Lughod (1990) shows through ethnography on Bedouin women in Egypt how they indeed put up resistance to social power in many creative ways – they use secret and silence to hide knowledge from men, they smoke in secret, resist marriages, and make fun of men through stories, poems, and songs. These actions might seem like "weapons of

the weak", where women, like Veronica for instance, act out subtle, but powerful, forms of everyday resistance (see Scott 1985). Yet, the Bedouin women also support the existing system of power, Abu-Lughod (1990: 47) argues, for example by veiling, and this pose an analytical dilemma. The solution, she proposes, would be to interpret resistance itself as a diagnosis of power to understand why the resistance was produced in the first place. On this, she is taking a cue from Foucault (1978: 95-96), who famously argued that "Where there is power, there is resistance", but she flips the argument over and rather proposes "Where there is resistance, there is power" (Abu-Lughod 1990: 42).

Saba Mahmood (2005: 9-10) asks rhetorically in "Politics of Piety" if it is "possible to identify a universal category of acts – such as those of resistance – outside of the ethical and political conditions within which such acts acquire their particular meaning" and criticizes Abu-Lughod for her lack of problematizing the universal assumption surrounding the desire of being free from subordination. Mahmood (2005) worked with grassroots women's piety movement in mosques in Cairo, which brought her to arguing that agency goes beyond freedom. She proposes that existing feminist approaches, such as poststructuralist accounts, confuse rather than clarify understandings of gendered subjects. She wants to move away from thoughts that rely on secular discursive frameworks built upon ideas such as autonomy, self-fulfillment and resistance – frameworks that erase religious subjectivity and agency of Islamic women. Instead of confining agency to the pattern of resistance to norms, Mahmood wants to show that norms also can be performed and inhabited, and therefore have the possibility to structure the interiority of the subject. For instance, women in the piety movement in Egypt cultivate virtuous dispositions through embodied practice – they pray because they are aware of virtue in daily life (Mahmood 2005, Deeb and Harb 2013: 17). In the same way it can be argued that Maracuyá Island women pray on Sundays, dress properly, and behave in a certain way in formal settings due to an embodiment of their paramount value of respectability.

Conversely, according to the moral code of the island, it is certainly not respectable to "*wine yuh colita*" (move your butt) against men through the night, drink beer and *Flor de Caña,* wear short skirts and plunging shirts, and have multiple sweethearts around the island. In some contexts, this could indeed be understood as a direct rebellion to the power structures that have shaped the value of respectability. However, in line with Abu-Lughod (1990) and Mahmood

(2005), I want to move away from theories that romanticize certain behavior as exclusively resistance or understanding displays of sexuality as statements of being free from subordination. Although people on Maracuyá Island indeed put up resistance in certain contexts, the complexity of their social life cannot be reduced to this. Likewise, though more harshly, Michael Brown (1996), is concerned with the love anthropologists have for resistance theory:

> In an influential and prescient essay, Sherry Ortner worried that an overemphasis on domination and conflict would overwhelm the other face of social life, cooperation and reciprocity (1984:157). She has been proved right. If there is any hegemony today, it is the theoretical hegemony of resistance (Brown 1996: 729).

In "On Resisting Resistance", he continues to argue that there exists a totalizing focus on power as a theoretical framework and ethnographic *raison d'être*, and that, although all social life indeed entails degrees of dominance and subordination, resistance to such power "can no more than explain the myriad forms of culture than gravity can explain the varied architecture of trees" (Brown 1996: 733-744).

Moving back to a structural point of view, as I will propose to do here, does not mean to deprive the individual of his or her agency. As Marshall Sahlins (1999: 412) argues, "Although in theory structure is supposed to be a concept antithetical to history and agency, in practice it is what gives historical substance to a people's culture and independent grounds to their actions". Moreover, while comparing culture and language, he stated that:

> Just because what is done is culturally logical does not mean the logic determined that it be done ─ let alone by whom, when or why ─ any more than just because what I say is grammatical, grammar caused me to say it (Sahlins 1999: 409).

On Maracuyá Island, then, where a multitude of values are shaping everyday life, it seems more fruitful to turn back to structuralism and particularly value theory. Following Louis Dumont (1980, 1986) and his thoughts on value-ideas, one can understand why the islanders allow choice in particular situations, such as on Saturday nights, and how these choices are acceptable in relation to the paramount values of reputation and respectability. Veronica, for instance, as Mahmood (2005) described, has embodied the moral norms embedded in respectability, yet the informal

situation she was in during that night on the beach allowed her to display a certain behavior, such as wining and flirting.

Concluding thoughts

Respectability, a value created and shaped by religion, is the ideal norm for women to follow on Maracuyá Island. However, young women display a sexual behavior, for instance by wining, that oppose this value, an act which is fruitful to understand, according to Kempadoo (2004) and Nixon (2015), as a rebellion or resistance to power structures or simply to "blow off steam". I have shown through ethnography how this framework indeed is appealing to apply. On the other hand, acts of resistance are often romanticized, in Abu-Lughod's (1990) words, and are removing much needed focus from the power structures that are creating the behavior in the first place. Furthermore, Mahmood (2005) suggests that we should move away from thinking that people are rebelling because of the universal assumption that everyone desires freedom, and rather understand norms as integrated and embodied in people, causing them to act in certain matters. In my view, Maracuyá social life, and especially female sexual behavior is too complex to reduce or romanticize to acts of resistance, and I propose to rather look closely at the values that shapes everyday life. For this, I turn to Louis Dumont (1980, 1986) and his theory of value-hierarchy, suggesting that in certain contexts, values are reversed, and people are allowed to behave in different manners than the moral society expects them to. In the coming chapter, I will continue to follow Dumont's approach as I explore the values of reputation and machismo.

Figure 5: Young men hanging out outside an abandoned building named "Five Star Hotel", while students are walking home from school.

CHAPTER FOUR: RETHINKING REPUTATION

Introduction

"When dem *gyals* got, like, eleven or twelve, dem start to get hot. You see dem every evenin' after school, jus' sittin' outside dat house over there, waiting…"

We all turned our attention to the abandoned brick house across the street, witnessing girls in school uniforms talking to young men on *motos* (motorbikes). My neighbor, John, and his friend, Rob, who had just made the statement, were about to sit down with Jordan and me. The three young men were all Creoles with the same similar socioeconomic backgrounds, and they all lived with their families in the same *barrio*. Also, all of them had children who did not live with them. Rob was the youngest at 20 years old, Jordan was 26 and John was 34. They all worked odd jobs such as fishing, fixing lobster traps, delivering goods around the island, and helping farmers with their cattle and horses. John and Rob brought us some fresh sugar mangos from John's fruit garden, and we all chewed into the sweet fruit. The sun was about to set, meaning that school was just finished, and crowds of students were making their way home.

"What do you mean, get hot?" I spoke louder than intended, almost screaming over the loud country music playing from John's phone.

"Dem wan' have sex! Is true! Is a five-star hotel right there! I know some people filmin' what goin' on there. I seen it," Rob continued, and I asked if the boys are as young as the girls when they start having sex.

"Nah, dem *buays* be older. Dem not as mature. See, first time I had sex was with a 40-year-old *'oman*! I was fifteen! Dem *'oman* more experience," Jordan said with a big laugh, followed by hoo-ing and laughing from the other men.

"Is true!" John exclaimed, laughing, with Jordan making a move with his hands, looking like he was rowing a boat. It was obviously a sign for sex, but the other men were laughing, asking him what he was supposed to show with those movements – it was certainly not the

sign for sex you should use today. Bumping fists together or scratching the woman inside of her palm is better signs, they agreed.

"But she not from here. I nevah see her again," Jordan cried, compelling another round of heavy laughter.

"Hoof!" John looked serious and thoughtful. He had a 16-year-old daughter living on the mainland, who was coming to visit him in a couple of days.

"So, the girls are eleven and the boys are much older?" I asked and looked over to the abandoned building again.

"No, dem *buays* got maybe… Like 15 or 16. But is not sure dem will have sex, but at least dem *gyals* are being hot! Ready for it! Is crazy," Jordan explained.

John were still "hoof"-ing, and his body language – throwing his hands in the air, shaking his head – was showing a contempt towards the attitude, even though he must have himself been very young when his daughter was born.

"Yeah, man, is too young," Rob agreed, with all the men nodding in silence, looking again over at the "Five Star School Hotel", which Rob told me the islander nicknamed the building because of all the sexual activity going on there. I sometimes spotted the same men sitting on the brick wall in front of the building, hanging out with friends and whistling when girls walked by.

I often found myself talking about sex and relationships with my interlocutors, especially young men, but occasionally also with young women, as they shared their stories wholeheartedly. Most of the time, they talked about their own experiences, rumors about other people, and joking and making fun of each other. Sex seems to be an interest for the islanders just as ordinary as fishing or baseball. For instance, on a regular Sunday, at a baseball game, a baseball player in his mid-20's approached me in front of my friend Jordan and my fiancé and asked if I wanted to have sex with him. "You can try it, once or twice, and see if you like it. If not, you can continue sleepin' with your boyfriend. Right, man?" He looked at my fiancé, who answered with a laugh, as he had found himself in scenarios like this multiple times during our time on the island. I politely declined the baseball player's offer, whereas he answered "Well, think about it," gave me a hug, fist bumped

Jordan, and shook my fiancé's hand before he ran back to his teammates. "Don't mind him," Jordan laughed and shook his head, and we all went back to drinking our *Toñas* (local beer) and watching the game. Indeed, men are expected on Maracuyá Island to demonstrate sexual potency, however, it is not morally accepted of me – or any other woman – to accept his offer. This of course creates a paradox where men are expected to have sex and women are expected to perform chastity, whereas the conversations above point to an understanding of sexuality, and especially female sexuality, that contests earlier research from the region.

In this chapter, I will discuss how reputation is constructing social life and gendered behavior on Maracuyá Island. First, I will discuss Wilson's understanding of this value, especially regarding its relationship to the Latin American value of machismo. Wilson perceive machismo as integrated in reputation; however, the Maracuyá Islanders are challenging this view by showing how machismo in fact can destroy their reputation. Here, I seek to add new dimensions to the understanding of the two values. I will argue that machismo is in fact a negative flipside to the positive value of reputation, and that men need to balance these values in order to gain respect. Further, I will show how nicknames are the foundation of reputation-building for youths, and how not having a girlfriend or any sweethearts is very problematic for young men, and the cause of many rivalries on the island. Moreover, I move back to discuss the paradox between respectability and reputation, where men on Maracuyá Island are named "killers" for getting intimate with a girl, while young women are facing humiliation and being called derogatory names, such as "slut" or "whore".

Reputation and machismo – Two sides of the same coin

Wilson (1993: 70-75) shows how to make a good reputation through the portrait of Isaac, who lives in Bottom House, the blackest and poorest community on Providencia. Isaac has a reputation that precedes him, even though he is both black and poor. The 35-year-old man has six children, five of them with his common-law wife Lena, whom I introduced in the previous chapter. He has built their own house and a canoe, he has a good and clean appearance, and he is known as a great joker across the island. Additionally, Isaac works abroad in Panama and San Andrés, and is able to bring back remittances to the household and goods for his friends and neighbors. All of these attributes and skills, especially his virility, proves his manliness, and Isaac can enjoy his good

reputation among his neighbors in Bottom House. Furthermore, these are qualities all men on the island strive towards, and even though he might never be treated as an equal by those of higher status, he certainly has their respect.

On Maracuyá Island, reputation is obtained in the same manner, but with a consciousness of not "showing machismo". As a consequence of the cultural crossroad the islanders are venturing within, not only Caribbean values shape the islanders' social life, but also Latin American ones, such as machismo. In Nicaragua, machismo is an emic category, and, according to Cymene Howe (2006: 232), used to describe, and sometimes justify, some men's behavior, including fighting, drinking, womanizing, recklessness, cockiness, attempting to subordinate and control women, and demonstrations of physical prowess. Conversely, machismo has also been understood, although to a lesser extent, to embody positive male gender attributes such as generosity, stoicism, courage, pride, formalness and respectability (LeVine 1993:80). Also, as Marit Melhuus (1998: 360) points out, "… women do not want a soft husband. They want a hardworking, responsible and respected husband – a true man," which would imply that he needs to be macho in some sense of the word. Nevertheless, machismo, as a set of behaviors and a social concept, has become a way of showing "all things negative" about Latin American men in many settings (Gutmann 1996, Lancaster 1992, Hagene 2010, Melhuus and Stølen 1996). However, as Melhuus (1998: 360) also states, these stereotypes are no more than stereotypes, and, as I will show through ethnography from Maracuyá Island, the actual picture is more complex.

Francisco, a Miskito man living in "Miskito Town", the poorest *barrio* on Maracuyá Island, has made his reputation in quite the same way as Isaac on Providencia. He has four children with his common-law wife Patricia, and a couple of grown-up children who lives on the mainland. His younger children, who live with him and his wife on the island, go to private school, he has his own *panga*, though the motor is broken, his own *moto*, and he is working on a commercial fishing boat earning a decent wage. He likes to drink rum and is rarely at home, still, he takes his wife with him out to party sometimes. He is a strict father and does not allow his teenage children to stay out late, have girlfriends or boyfriends, drink or party. He also, as many respected men on Maracuyá Island, attend church with his family on Sundays. A respected man with a good reputation on Maracuyá Island, then, is the one who can be tough without being violent, to treat

women good without being weak, and to conceive many children without abandoning responsibilities as a father.

In other words, the islanders understand machismo as a negative flipside to reputation. Actually, fatherhood and sexuality are missing in the islander's notion of machismo and it is solely understood as a negative concept surrounding violence, inequal gender roles, and male superiority. One afternoon, two stepsiblings, a boy and a girl, were fighting in a playful manner during class. They both threw punches and were quite aggressive before the girl shouted "Esto es machismo!" (This is machismo!), and they finished their fight laughing. Further, in Isaiah School 10th grade-classroom during a debate, machismo was introduced by the female teacher as "a belief" and "a part of a person that is difficult to change," with the student's challenging her, debating that the man only has to be machismo if he wants to:

> "How is machismo learned?" Julio, standing in front of the blackboard together with two of his fellow students, shouted in Spanish over all the noise from his classmates. The students were discussing themes relevant to Women's Day, as the celebration was a few weeks away. On the wall opposite the school gate, behind to the makeshift *pulperia* (grocery shop) selling *frescas* (cold drinks) and snacks during recess, was the hand painted manifestation of this subject; two murals of violence against women. One of the wall paintings showed a man beating a woman with a belt while she was sweeping the floor, whereas the other illustrated what could be interpreted as the moments before an (sexual) assault – a man covering a woman's mouth while dragging her from behind. Both paintings were completed with big, red prohibition signs.

> Isabella, the girl standing next to Julio, took the word; "Machismo is learnt at home, so we ought to teach children that no gender is stronger or weaker than the other."

> "Do you think both genders are capable of doing the same things?" Julio asked Isabella, who firmly answered, "*Sí, claro* (Yes, of course). Some say that just because some are women, they will not be able to lift a water bucket, or just because they are men, they will not want to wash the dishes. It should not be this way. They should do both things. If a couple is at home, both have to help to get the chores done."

"What is machismo?" Julio then asked his classmates, with Isabella responding that machismo happens when men want to control women's every step or action.

"Everyone should be equal. It's very important that sons treat women better, not because they may be their mother or sister, but simply because they are women. It's important to teach our children that no gender is superior to the other. *Gracias*," Julio finished, and looked at his classmates, before meeting the female teacher's eyes for validation.

"Anyone else? What is machismo?" The teacher shifted her attention from the group to the rest of the class.

"When a woman is hit, and he thinks he is more powerful," one of the students answered, whereby the teacher questioned how it is possible to change machismo in a sibling or a parent.

"Talk to him. Advise him and tell him that it's bad," Hannah, the third member of the group answered, with Isabella announcing that, "What I would do is go talk with my brother and find a way to make him stop fighting with and mistreating my mother!" The class did not respond to this statement, and the chatting and buzzing continued, making the teacher angry.

"If you can't shut up, I show you the door. Please. If you won't shut up, there is the door!" She shouted and pointed to the open door. As soon as the noise quieted down, the teacher continued, "I can show him that it's not always necessary to be right, but what else can I do? Machismo in a person is very difficult to change, because it's already a belief. What other method could a woman, or a sister, or brother use to change machismo in others, apart from teaching?" The students mumbled quietly.

"Tell him that if he keeps his machismo, he won't be able to find a girlfriend!" Julio exclaimed, followed by laughter from the students.

"I have a question," the teacher continued, "if I say that if he acts with machismo, I will react with machismo – is it eradicating machismo or creating more?" Everyone agreed that it is creating more.

"If a boy grows up around people that show machismo, is he necessarily going to show it as well?" Hannah asked her classmates.

"Only if he wants to," a couple of the students agreed, before the next group prepared their presentation and discussion about women working outside the household.

Figure 6: Murals on a school wall showing that machismo is prohibited.

For young Maracuyá Islanders, then, machismo does not relate to the ability to father children or conquest women. Many of the islanders had not heard about machismo at all and questioned what the word meant when they heard it. Consequently, the concept of machismo does not encompass the same meaning in the Caribbean as in Latin America, and, in my view, cannot be used in the same manner. In fact, Wilson (1969: 73) himself, while using Puerto Rico as an example, also found that machismo is not an emic term in the Caribbean in the same manner as in Latin America, but rather a part encompassed by the value system of *dignidad* (honor). Thus, his understanding of machismo is as follows:

> Evidenced in sexual prowess, made manifest in the conquest of many women and the ability to father children, readiness to fight, particularly in response to a challenge usually offered in the form of an insult, in drinking and in any form of activity culturally defined as the prerogative of males (Wilson 1969: 72).

Therefore, machismo can be understood as a measure or reflection of a man's worth or *dignidad*. "*Dignidad* demands recognition", Wilson (1969: 72) continues, and a man can obtain recognition from various, yet formalized, demonstrations of behavior and etiquette. The performance and expectations of this behavior is then summed up in the concept of *respeto* (respect). Anthony Lauria (1964: 65), who also worked in Puerto Rico, defines *respeto* as a "proper attention to the requisites of the ceremonial order of behaviour and to the moral aspects of human activities." In other words, *respeto* is the image of a man made up and confirmed by the opinions and reactions of the people around him (Wilson 1969: 73). Wilson (1969: 74) does not compare *respeto* with respect in the Caribbean, but with reputation, because it attaches to sexual and marital matters, yet also to skill in all male activities and to fulfillment of obligations. As with *respeto*, reputation is both an accumulation of personal worth, and a collection of signs of that worth.

In other words, Wilson (1969) understands machismo as integrated in the value of reputation. Maracuyá Islanders, as I have shown, challenge this understanding by displaying their attitude towards violence, sexuality, relationships, and fatherhood. Reputation, which for the islanders encompasses womanizing and fatherhood, is regarded as a positive value. Machismo, on the other hand, must be understood as the negative flipside of reputation. Hence, the two values cannot be combined in the way Wilson proposes, but rather as two sides of the same coin, where the islanders try to move away from machismo, while simultaneously trying to move towards

reputation. These two values need to be balanced, which I will show through this conversation with Ray's brother, a 30-year old man named Aaron:

> "Well, to be honest, I have one *gyal*. And one more, but to be honest, I could have like three… Or four. But I tellin' de truth! I nevah lie!" Aaron confessed in a nonchalant manner, after listening to his friend talk about how he wanted to marry his one true love.

> "So, your different girlfriends know about each other, then?" I asked Aaron, who was wiping sweat off his forehead and stood up to catch the ocean breeze.

> "Yes, I always true!" He exclaimed, seeming a bit offended that I would question his loyalty.

"To show machismo", as the islanders put it, is to destroy his own reputation, and therefore he must find a way to be macho and tough without negative attributes. As Aaron expressed – he will engage in numerous sexual affairs with different women, but he will not be unfaithful towards any of them. "The sense of a man's strength is the foundation of his reputation," Wilson (1973: 150) argues, and on Maracuyá Island as in Providencia, this strength is measured in a man's virility. Importantly, as Wilson (1969, 1973: 150) also points out, virility is more than sexual potency – "It is a constellation of qualities by which he achieves a place in the world of others where he is both an equal and a unique person."

As I discussed in the previous chapter, men are encouraged and expected to have more than one sexual relationship simultaneously, and the unspoken rule seems to be that it is acceptable, although disrespectful, to sleep with other people as long as their partners do not find out. "You can have a sweetheart in every *barrio*. Your mama will be mad at you de first time you do dis, but de second time, she won't care. And dem *buays*, dem will cheer you on," Ray told me. Multiple anthropologists have witnessed male non-monogamy behavior all over the Caribbean, which is again ties into the value of reputation (see Kempadoo 2004, R.T Smith 1996, E. Miller 1991, Clarke [1957] 1999, Henriques 1962, Dann 1987, Chevannes 2001). This social behavior appears to be a pattern across the islands; however, Maracuyá Islanders arguably breaks this model. As demonstrated, women on Maracuyá Island often display the same non-monogamous sexual behavior as men, and, case in point, during my fieldwork, the two brothers' mother were pregnant with a mystery man who was not living with their family.

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Throughout this section, I have sought to add a new dimension to Wilson's understanding of machismo and reputation. Of course, I also need to consider the historical and global changes Maracuyá Island has gone through since Wilson wrote his book nearly 50 years ago. Naturally, these values have changed over time, especially with more focus on machismo in school, in the news, in social media, and in the national discourse generally. Therefore, Wilson's (1973) analysis might have been more applicable to Maracuyá Island at the time of its publication.

"Who dat?" – Nicknames on Maracuyá Island

Nevertheless, the values are still evident in Maracuyá Island social life today, and for young men, I would argue, it is harder to balance reputation and machismo, as they often do not have children and therefore not obtained these qualities as seen with Francisco and Isaac. Consequently, machismo is often more visible throughout their adolescent years. Fighting, drinking, infidelity, womanizing, and doing drugs makes a "*tough buay*", something that is expected of the youth. During adolescence, they also get nicknames that identify their reputation.

Often, nicknames are made up from Spanish and Creole words from different animals or animal characteristics – like Shark, Bull, Ganso (Goose), Caballo (Horse), Pollo (Chicken), Crab or Perro (Dog). People not only have nicknames based on animals, but also from food stuff, vegetables, fruit and other random objects – like Arroz (Rice), Apple or Razor. The nicknames are based on the individual's appearance, their personality, on things they have said or done during their childhood or teenage years, what they do for a living and so on – in other words, their experience. If a man is a farmer, he is likely to be named Toro (Bull). If he is small, he might get the nickname Chihuahua. One man introduced himself as Snail – he asserted that he did not know where the nickname came from, all he could say was that he absolutely did not get it "by being slow in bed!"

Nicknames are so integrated that family members sometimes do not associate people with their given names. One day, I was asking for John at his house, and one of his male family members answered with "Who dat John?" I said his nickname, and the man laughed, "Ah! You should say so! No, him out fishin'." Frank Manning (1974) also found a striking prevalence of nicknames amongst Afro-Caribbean males when doing research in Bermuda. Manning (1974: 128) sees

nicknames as an important social function as "symbolic individuators", where the nicknames confer a mock-identity on their bearers. The nicknames are a part of an exchange of verbal insults that are built on exaggerated masculine prowess – just as I have witnessed on Maracuyá Island (Manning 1974: 130). In other words, I would like to state, a nickname is a means for young men to gain a reputation without relying on negative behavior.

It is not that common for women to have nicknames, and if they do, they are not as theatrical, mocking and identifying as men's nicknames. I would like to argue that this could be due to the fact that women are orienting around the value of respectability, and they therefore should be addressed properly and bear respectable names (see Burton 1999: 49). Although, I did myself get nicknamed "White Gyal" – a name mocking my appearance, however, I had already obtained respectability in the sense that I was wearing a ring, living with my "husband"[15], and did not have any children outside marriage.

"I wish dem shoot all dem buays"

Indeed, a massive part of young men's reputation relies on their ability to have sexual relationships, and if these norms are not met, the frustration gets very overwhelming and all-encompassing. Young Maracuyá Island men find it challenging not to "*take a gyal*" (get a girlfriend), and this is negatively affecting their social life, to the point of them complaining that they "can't take it no more":

> The three young men, Jordan and his friends, were preparing their fishing equipment – a very small and beaten up *panga*, some broken paddles, a net, and a bucket of small sardines. At the same time, Roger, a 34-year-old Creole working in the tourist industry, drove past us, gave us a shout, and 10 minutes later he was back with a bottle of *Flor de Caña* and his four-year-old son.

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[15] Because my fiancé and I wore rings and had been living together for many years, the islanders considered us as married by common-law.

"Finally, my day off! And de perfect day to share dis one!" He said, placing the big bottle of rum in the middle of the table and his son in a chair, handing him a smartphone. "Is like my birthday!"

Roger was very agitated, because the bank didn't have any money for him this morning. The situation in Nicaragua was worsening every day, and now even the bank was giving the islanders trouble.

"Is going to get wild here. Imagine when there's no groceries. I gon' go from shop to shop, not finding anything. People are gon' break into your home to get a bottle of rum. Or kill you!" He said with a sigh, while pulling his hair and scratching his scalp, looking defeated.

The rum bottle got emptier and the conversation got deeper. Jordan was back from his fishing trip, with no luck, but still satisfied. We talked about the current situation in Nicaragua, about neighborhood gossip (the latest; a 22-year-old boy from South Part went missing a week ago. It is probably a drug related crime, and they do not expect him to show up alive). Jordan told a story about how he was on a date with a girl at the local bar, and he saw his girlfriend approaching.

"Man, I jus' jump over de brick wall over there, and jus' ran, ran, ran! Dem *gyals* jus' gon' fight each other." He shrugged his shoulders.

"Aaaah, I need a *gyal*! There no *gyals* here, man! Right, *bredda* (brother)?" Roger suddenly exclaimed and looked at Jordan, who responded with a slow nod. "Is impossible for me to get a girlfriend here. The *buay-gyal* ratio is like one to ten," Roger continued.

"One to ten?" I was not completely buying his statistics.

"Yes, I promise you, man! I was with a *gyal* who's a nurse, and she told me, it is one man per *'oman* here on the island!"

"Oh, man, in Bluefields, there so many *gyals*!" Jordan declared and looked up at the sky, grinning. "And in the Keys, ooh, I had four *gyals*, and dem still waiting for me. Dem hot for dem island *buays*!" Jordan had recently returned from a trip to the mainland, where he had found some work fixing lobster traps.

"In Bluefields, *primo* (cousin), but not here! Every man gets like 80 years old. And all dem *'omen*, dem get cancer and shit. Even people who get shot or is in an accident, see, dem nevah die! I wish dem shoot all dem *buays*! Even me! I volunteer, man, because dis is crazy! I need a *gyal*!" Roger sighed, and put his hands behind his head, looking defeated.

"Yeah, if you look around North Part, you gon' see men walking everywhere, but no *gyals*! You see dat?" Jordan added.

"Well, what about this little man's mother?" I turned my attention to Roger's little boy who was watching cartoons.

"Nah, she was like a one-night-thing. Ah, is such a competition! You see, as long as you can see dis side, I have family, and as long as you can see dat side, I have family," Roger was stretching out his arms, "And every other *gyal* is taken. Is a big competition, I'm not lyin'! So, you got to be fucking lucky or have a fucking lot of money!"

"And if you did get a girlfriend, would she be the only girlfriend you have?" I tried.

"Oh, I would be de best man! I would give her everything I could and be de best. I promise, man," Roger answered, "See, one time, a friend gave me a bag, and I didn't even look into the bag. He jus' told me to take care of it. I didn't think about it, and went out, drinkin', and when my friend came to get it, he showed me de inside of de bag! 20 000 dollars, man! In 20-dollar bills! I was fucking angry, man, because I could have lost dem. I was careless dat day. And my friend said, 'I know I could trust you with dem.' Well, I nevah took one dollar out of dat bag. Dat shows you what kind of person I am."

"Where was all that money from?" I asked.

"Drugs, of course. Where else you gon' get dat kind of money? People know, if you suddenly have a lot of money, go out to eat and so, dem gon' know you in drug business," Roger claimed, and Jordan silently agreed.

The rum bottle was nearly empty, and Roger decided to take a last sip, before getting himself and his boy into the car.

"Are you sure you're going to drive after drinking so much rum?" I was concerned about his child.

"Sure, dis is normal!" Both him and Jordan laughed at me being nervous. "Dis is nothin'!" Jordan exclaimed, with Roger continuing "And after, I gon' to go to my friends, talk about life, drink some more rum and do some drugs. Get real high."

During this conversation, Jordan bragged about his girlfriend and his sweetheart getting in a fight over him, while Roger responded with frustration and irritation that he himself did not have any relationships at all. The reason behind this, he concluded, was because of the competition on the island and had nothing to do with his abilities as a man or a boyfriend. Likewise, the teenagers at school talked about the rivalry among young men on the island, and how they refer to their female conquests as "kills":

The bell rang for evening recess, and all the students scattered around the school yard, trying to find a good lunch spot that offered both breeze and shade from the scorching sun.

"Remember dat *gyal*, Ethan, de one you wanted to kiss? And my cousin got her instead?" Andrea was teasing her friend and classmate while walking towards their favorite table. When we sat down, she turned her attention to me.

"You see, when a new *gyal* comes to the island, and she is beautiful, all of dem *buays* want to kiss her or be with her. So, dey make it a competition – who can kill it. Is kill time! Like, dey jus' want to kill time with the *gyal*. Ethan, explain, you de *buay* here!"

Ethan mumbled something in Creole, laughed and shook his head. Shelly ran up to us with her hands full of tacos and *frescas* for the group, and joined the conversation.

"Alright, let me explain! So, if somebody – a new *gyal* – reach…," Shelly started, but got interrupted by Andrea who insisted that the boy should not have a girlfriend.

"… You know who [I'm talking about]?" Shelly lifted her eyebrows to her friends, and everyone started laughing.

"So, dis *gyal*, she just come here, so every *buay*, all dem *buays*, say "Oh, she's so pretty!" Shelly flipped her hair, while Ethan rolled his eyes and mumbled, "Not really, not really."

"So, dem *buays*, dem gon' talk about her, how dem like her. So, next *buay* gon' say he like her too...," she continued, with Ethan commenting, "Not me!"

"… And everybody gon' start going around she, begging for a kiss or trying to… Errrr…." Shelly seemed too embarrassed to finish the sentence, which made Ethan laugh hard.

"But dey only do it if dey… One person is interested, den everyone is interested in her," Andrea continued.

I asked if it was some kind of competition.

"Exactly," Ethan answered, with Shelly pointing out that then they have "already killed her… Killed dat."

So, although Roger has his son, his reputation is at stake if he is not able to "*kill a gyal*" or get a girlfriend. He explained that he would be a loyal boyfriend, yet I want to argue that there is a gap between what Maracuyá Islanders say and believe is the right thing to do – their moral – and the things they in reality do. This could be tied to the idea that a sexually exclusive couple set the ideal base for a healthy relationship. The Maracuyá Island belief system establishes the monogamous and heterosexual couple as natural, optimal, and morally prouder, and stigmatizes non-monogamous alternatives as unnatural, dysfunctional, or even perverse (Ferrer 2018: 819). As I explained in the previous chapter, and as Wilson (1973: 100) also found in Providencia, monogamous marriage and the nuclear family is the ultimate referent for morality.

"He's a killer, she's a slut"

"Dey like it!" Shelly exclaimed after I asked what the girls feel about boys chasing them and naming them "kills". "Most of dem like it!"

"Dey like it because all these guys are chasing them. But they don't have... De biggest of idea dat what happens was happening already to every other *gyal* outside de school property!" Andrea said, and made everyone smile in a way that showed that they were thinking of someone special. Their eye contact got interrupted by the bell signaling that another class was waiting for them.

"Oh, man, English!" Shelly sobbed.

"But what if a girl "kills it"?" I asked while they were collecting their garbage, which they would throw on the ground a couple of seconds later.

"Dey gon' call her names… Slut… Or whore…" The three friends agreed.

"We're talking about sexism!" Shelly exclaimed with her head raised.

"So, if a girl does it, she's called a slut, but if a boy does it…," I tried, but was cut off by Shelly before entering the classroom: "He's a killer! Murderer!"

For young, men being a "killer" is a means to an end on the quest of gaining a good reputation, however, for women, Barry Chevannes (2001: 216-217) argues, acting out their sexuality in the same manner as men do, can come with risks:

Becoming an African Caribbean man privileges one to engage in all the above forms of sexual relationships: from the promiscuous and casual to multiple partnerships (which in effect is unrecognized polygamy). A woman has no such license. Beyond casual relationships, she is stigmatized: whore, prostitute, jammette, mattress, loose.

In the previous chapter, I showed how female sexual behavior in the bar rooms or at the beach are considered normal, meanwhile, the teenagers are saying that a woman will be called names if she behaves outside the norm. Human social behavior is certainly contradicting, and as a social anthropologist it might be just as exciting and frustrating to work with (see Berliner et. al 2016). If we are to believe Nietzsche, contradictions are "signs of health; everything absolute belongs to pathology" ([1896] 1966: 154 in Berliner et.al 2016: 6). It is here Dumont (and Pocock 1957: 11) is particularly good to think with, as he understands societies as complex ideas, and, although he sees society as the relation of ideas that connect those who enact them, not every acting individual can identify these ideas. Furthermore, the contradictions and ambivalence the youths illustrate in the ethnographic description above say something about the values that are important in the context that they are currently in. This conversation took place during school hours, on the grounds of a church and a school, the students dressed in uniforms and with other students and teachers around them. In other words, they were in a formal situation where respectability and reputation serve as the primal values, and it shows in the way they are talking about female sexuality. In this context, and in relation to respectability, a girl who acts out her sexuality is called derogatory names, yet, in the bar rooms or on the beach, she likes the attention this gives. Here, in the contradictions, we

again understand how value-hierarchy is an encompassment of the contrary. Just like "The Candomblé adept does not lie," Roger Bastide (1955 in Berliner et.al 2016) argues when exploring the simultaneity of opposing behavior in Afro-Brazilian rituals, Maracuyá Islanders do not lie when they are displaying social behavior. Also, in the contexts of late nights in the bar rooms, a young woman can earn reputation due to her abilities as a dancer or having many sweethearts. Again, this challenges Wilson's (1969, 1973) understanding of reputation as an exclusively male value.

Concluding thoughts

Throughout this chapter, I have empirically shown how Maracuyá Islanders challenge the previous notions regarding the Caribbean and Latin American cardinal values of reputation and machismo. The ideas I have presented in this chapter derives from Wilson's (1973) ethnography from Providencia, which serves a good basis for my analyses. Although "Crab Antics" was published in 1973 and some aspects of the values might have changed, the value of reputation in itself has remained paramount. Yet, I find that my work from Maracuyá Island can add new dimensions to Wilson's work, as my own ethnography is based on interactions with teenagers – a group of people that is not too directly visible in his analysis. The gendered notion of reputation, in my view, cannot be reduced to sexual potency, virility, or fatherhood, and the concept of machismo must also be taken into consideration. I understand reputation and machismo as adjacent values – two sides of the same coin, and a male Maracuyá Islander must balance these two values in order to become a respected man with good reputation.

Further, I have shown how reputation relies on the ability to be virile and conceive many children without abandoning responsibilities as a father, to be tough without being violent, and to treat their family and women good without showing weakness. Consequently, it is difficult for young men to balance reputation and machismo, as they are not yet fathers or have their own household. Also, many young men find themselves in a problematic situation when they are not able to get a girlfriend, as this keep them from managing their reputation. Lastly, I have shown the complexity of the value-dualism and how the youths are voicing contradicting ideas and opinions towards female sexuality. Next, I will continue exploring the value of reputation, and move into the domain of fatherhood.

Figure 7: Man playing with the children during a 7-year-old girl's birthday party.

CHAPTER FIVE: UNDERSTANDING "WE HAVE NO FATHERS"

Introduction

"Right now, a lot of *likkie gyals* get pregnant, but you know, de fault is dem *buays* too, because maybe de condom break or dem don't use dem. Most of dem *buays*, dem just leave de *gyal*, dem won't mind her anymore. So, de grandma takes care of de baby. Many of my friends, dem got kids with two or three different *gyals*, and dem don't mind dem anymore. For me is no good."

Jordan and I was walking down the dusty road, past colorful wooden houses with men relaxing in their hammocks on the front porch and women washing clothes or *stirrin'* (cooking) for evening dinner. Jordan complained about the heat, sweat dripping from his forehead, and he couldn't understand why I would want to take a walk in the middle of the day.

"But you don't have any kids, right?" I asked rhetorically, because we had known each other for four months, and talked about this before. He laughed shyly.

"Yeah, I got one. Around one and half. Him named after me. I don't know why his mama pick the name." He looked the other way, towards some mango trees.

"What, you never told me that!" I was surprised that he had kept this a secret after all the talks we have had about our lives. He became quiet for a couple of seconds.

"Maybe… Well, you nevah ask," he answered, still looking away.

I did not want to comment on his statement, as I noticed how uncomfortable he seemed. Instead, I asked who takes care of the little boy, as I had never seen him with his dad.

"With his mom and my sister often. Him call my sister 'mom', so dem really close. Like, every weekend, I gon' mind him," he answered with a shy smile.

"So, was the baby planned, or…?" I tried.

"Well, sometimes, ehe… Like, de *'oman* say she got de shot, so de *buay* don't wear protection."

"But was this what happened with you two?"

"I don't really…" He shook his head and laughed nervously, clearly uncomfortable in the baking heat. By now he had removed his basketball shirt and tucked it around his neck. His curly, black hair was wet from sweat.

"So how old is the mother?" I asked to change the subject a little bit.

"Oh, she much older than me! Like 32-something!" He exclaimed, and I asked why they were not together.

"I told you, she gets jealous. She sees me with other *gyals*, she start fightin'… Most of my friends have kids, and dey never mind dem. I don't want do like dat," he answered, before we finally got to a *pulperia* where we could buy some *fresca* to cool down. I never saw Jordan with his little boy, even though I met him nearly every day for six months.

As Jordan concludes, it is typical for young men on Maracuyá Island to have children with one or more women, and to not "mind them". Minding children, for Maracuyá Islanders, means to provide for them economically and to protect them, which is a reflection of the Caribbean notion of fatherhood. Moreover, Jordan's considerations around the subject echoes Wilson's thoughts on reputation and my interpretation as understanding machismo as the value's flipside. "Children are evidence of a man's virility. For to their conception he has contributed the blood and the soul. Hence children are part of oneself – a part to be proud of," Wilson (1973: 127) argues, and, as in direct relation to Jordan's position, Wilson explains the significance of being a father in the Caribbean:

But what is important about a man's relation to his children is that they are the evidence and embodiment of his maturity and manhood, and through them he earns respect in the society at large, especially among his peers. Fathering children is a sign of strength, not necessarily in the muscular sense but in the sense of character and spirit. It is said of a man who fathers many children that he has "strong blood" – and it is the blood that contributes the spiritual and vital part of the person in his conception. Such a man also has charisma to

attract women and make them want him to father their children. If after they are born a man continues to show an interest in his children, he is recognized as being even stronger and more of a man. Virility is far more than sexual potency (Wilson 1993: 150).

In this chapter, I will discuss the paradox that presents itself in relation to the islanders' paramount value of reputation and the fact that many men seemingly abandon their responsibilities as fathers. First, I will show through ethnography how the notion of fatherhood is changing on Maracuyá Island, from focusing on economical and protective aspects, to an emergent[16] Western notion of fatherhood, based on Christianity and the image of the married, caring father who provides for his family. Furthermore, Tracey Reynolds (2009) argues that Caribbean fathers have, because of slavery and migration, been historically denied access and opportunity to live up to the Western ideal of fatherhood, and they are therefore are struggling to be accepted as "good" fathers. This is problematic, because when saying that one is "denied access and opportunity", it suggests that the Western notion of fatherhood is the most natural ideal for men in the Caribbean as well.

Both Latin-American and Caribbean men have been stereotyped in both in the public and in anthropological studies as purely disciplinary or protective and non-affective. I will explore throughout this chapter how this stereotype gets challenged by Maracuyá Island men. Again, I will use Dumont's (1980, 1986) theory of hierarchy to show how the Western ideal in fact is encompassed by, but also in an hierarchal position to, the Caribbean notion of fatherhood and ultimately the value of reputation, and how in certain contexts this new ideal is brought up as more important than the traditional.

First, however, I will explore the role of the father as it has been understood in anthropology and how history has shaped the contemporary marital and sexual norms on Maracuyá Island.

Conceptualizing fatherhood

The experience of fatherhood varies within and across cultures and is linked culturally to variations of the social structures, such as kinship patterns (Tripp-Reimer and Wilson 1991). Also, in anthropology, there exists a distinction between two kinds of both "fathers" and "mothers" – the

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[16] Here I am drawing upon Raymond William's (1978) definition of "emergent" as "new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationships [that] are continually being created".

genetic father and the pater, and the genetic mother and the mater. The pater and mater are socially recognized fathers or mothers. According to the Roman law, the pater is a man who can prove that he is married to the child's mother, or, as the South Sudanese proverb states, "Children belong to the man to whom the bed belongs" (Holy 1996: 16-17). John A. Barnes (1961: 297, 1964) suggested as early as in the 1960s that these traditional distinctions of fatherhood and motherhood are inadequate for analytic purposes. He proposed to add another distinction: the genitor – cultural father – and genetrix – cultural mother. The genitor is not the genetic father per se, but a man who is believed by members of a community to have impregnated the child's mother. In all societies, the role of the genitor is assigned on the basis of cultural rules and beliefs. Fatherhood, then, is socially constructed, because the father can only be identified through his relationship to the mother (Holy: 1996: 22). Likewise, genetrix is the culturally defined mother. Holy (1996: 21) claims that genetrix is determined by natural facts and a physical reality, however, new reproductive technologies, such as egg donation and surrogacy, and adoption, challenge the understanding that the genetic mother and genetrix are mutually inclusive (see Bertilsson 2003, Melhuus 2000, 2015, Melhuus and Howell 2009).

In certain social contexts, genetrix may be temporarily removed from the social category of mater. This is exemplified in the conversation with Jordan above, where he pointed out that his son calls Jordan's sister – the boy's aunt – "mom" because of their closeness. Furthermore, Jordan does not acknowledge his own genetic father as his pater, as he left Jordan and his mother without a word when he was 11 years old. Instead, Jordan regards his stepfather, who, together with his mother and himself, provides income for the household of six adults and one baby, as his pater. Moreover, "The anthropology of the Caribbean has been the battleground for competing theses regarding family structure," Deborah D'Amico-Samuels (1988: 785) stated in the beginning of a book review of Rubenstein's "Coping with Poverty" (1987), and especially men and their roles as fathers are contested throughout the literature. Margaret Mead once famously said that fathers are a biological necessity but a social accident, a statement that is visible in studies throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century (Cabrera 2003: 250). Caribbean men have often been portrayed as failures, irresponsible and deadbeat, yet, as Timothy Schwartz (2016) argues in "Explaining Caribbean Family Patterns", anthropological research from the region shows that Caribbean children almost always had fathers, and that they have been eager to claim paternity. With this in

mind, it is necessary to provide some historical backdrop of kinship relations and the notion of parenthood on Maracuyá Island.

"I love my mama. She is de root, like on de coconut tree right here. I ain't nothin' without my mama," a young, Creole man told me as he was showing pictures of his family. Maracuyá Island is a matrifocal society, in the sense that a woman – often a mother or the eldest daughter – head families and that fathers play a less important role in the home and in bringing up children. The term "matrifocal" was in fact termed by R.T. Smith (1956) to describe black Caribbean families:

> The household group tends to be matri-focal in the sense that a woman in the status of 'mother' is usually the de facto leader of the group, and conversely the husband-father, although de jure head of the household group (if present), is usually marginal to the complex of internal relationships of the group. By 'marginal' we mean that he associates relatively infrequently with the other members of the group, and is on the fringe of the effective ties which bind the group together (R.T. Smith 1956: 223).

Family patterns on the island are indeed flexible and fluid. It is not rare to see cousins living together with their grandmother, sisters taking care of their brother's children, two or three generations living under the same roof, young single mothers living with their parents, or even teenagers living with their neighbors. You will also find mothers and fathers living with their children within the same household, even though some islanders define this as unusual. Historically, the shaping of contemporary sexual and marital roles on Maracuyá Island is directly linked to slavery. Islanders tell stories of how their white, male ancestors took black slave women as lovers, and thus created the Creoles:

> "Yeah, de first family dat was here, cause I know… Dem slaves, dem didn't have like, no surnames, dey jus' have like, say, first name, cause dey didn't give dem a name, like…" Ethan, sitting on his scooter under a palm tree, was explaining his ancestry. He considered himself a Mestizo man, still, his ancestors were European slave owners and African slaves. Andrea and Shelly, however, were stating that they were Creole-Miskito, and proud of it.
>
> "Dey took deyr masters' surname," Andrea, who was eating cookies, interrupted.

> "No, no, because de master's *'oman*… De crew… Dem mix deyself together, and dat's how we come from… Dat's how our colors mix and some people now will still come out with a clear skin, but not me, and mix with black. Eeehm, I mix with…," Ethan continued.
>
> "Mestizo… Spaniard!" Shelly teased, pointing at Ethan's skin.
>
> "Mestizo. Haha… Spaniard… And some people dat are pure Creole come out with clear skin sometimes because of deyr blood, and because of deyr blood dey have… How do you say… My great grandfather… What name was he?" Ethan asked the rest of the group, and they discussed the name thoroughly, not agreeing on the name.
>
> "My grandmother told me dat he was… Eeeh... He was… His mother and father was black! Real black! And he came out green eyes and… Gringo, you say," Ethan said enthusiastically, and with that he sparked an intense and long debate about his grandfather's skin- and eye color.

Slaves were the property of the master, slave women were rewarded when they had children because of the labor force they produced, and slaves were not allowed to marry or to establish a common home. This consequently meant that children would follow the maternal lineage, and it formed an extra-residential mating system and matrifocal household structure that is still visible on the island today (Dechesnay 1986: 1). Furthermore, migration has also shaped the matrifocal household, and people have left Nicaragua for various reasons, such as avoiding political turmoil, for instance the Nicaraguan revolution, fleeing natural disasters, such as Hurricane Joan, and seeking higher wages (Sausner and Webster 2016: 486). For Maracuyá Islanders, and especially underemployed youth with limited local economic and educational opportunities, "shipping out" provides the chance for higher wages. Also, Maracuyá Islanders have the advantage of speaking English, hence they are often sought after in the international job market. Consequently, men in particular are leaving the island in hope of taking work on large fishing boats, on cruise lines in the States, and other jobs outside the island. Secondly, one of the most important aspects of the shaping of fatherhood on Maracuyá Island is the value of reputation, which arguably leads many islanders to become parents at a very young age.

"Sexo es jugar" (Sex is play)

According to Loaiza and Liang for the United Nations Population Fund (2013), Nicaragua has the highest adolescent pregnancy rate in Latin America, with 28 percent of women giving birth before the age of 18:

> "Many teenage girls get pregnant here on Maracuyá Island…," I mentioned to the small group of girls who were eating their tacos and *platanos con queso* during recess, everyone sitting in a small circle on the ground, smacking their thighs as ants were biting their exposed skin. I had just spotted a condom wrapper lying on the ground, and the girls were giggling and blushing.

> "All de time," Vilma, a 14-year-old Creole girl, answered promptly.

> "All the time?"

> "All de time!"

> "So why do you think this is?" The girls looked at each other, smiled, and didn't know what to answer right away.

> "Dem like, mom too young, and dem don't think!" Vilma mumbled in Creole, pointing to her forehead.

> "*Sexo*!" Veronica exclaimed in a singing, playful voice.

> "*Sexo es jugar!*" She continued sternly, making the girls giggle loudly.

> "I know… There are certain things you can miss… Forget it… Somebody irresponsible, when dem have child, dem gon' give it to maintain it," Veronica said, meaning that some girls will give the baby away for someone else to take care of it.

> "If you done maintain one, you maintain all! (If you take care of one child, you will take care of all the children!)" Vilma reasoned quickly.

> "You think so? Because if I maintain one of your children, and you go look another one, I don't wanna, I don't wanna…" Veronica continued, shrugging her shoulders and lifting her eyebrows. She was saying that if she takes care of a man's child, and he gets another girl pregnant, she will not take care of his other baby.

"Mhm... Just so," Vilma agreed, and turned her attention to a girl climbing a rock to buy a *fresca* from a lady behind the brick wall.

Maracuyá Island's family structures are fluctuating and unstable, often with absent fathers, which Marques and Ebrahim (1991: 194-198) stresses, are typical backgrounds for girls who get pregnant young. Indeed, research on teenage pregnancies touches upon troubled family relations as a typical and frequently distinctive feature (Berglund et. al 1997: 4). While examining the complex social, economic, cultural and psychological context of adolescent pregnancy in Nicaragua, Berglund et. al. (1997: 1) discovered that:

> Exposure to the risk of becoming pregnant seems at first glance to be voluntary in spite of the fact that most women have both direct and indirect experiences of the traumatic consequences that may follow an unplanned pregnancy. They know that having unwanted children often leads to infant malnutrition, child abuse, family instability, and difficulties in caring for all the children, as well as keeping them off the street and supplying them with their material as well as educational needs. They are also generally quite aware of the medical risks of an illegal abortion and of the problems in raising many children under the poor economic conditions affecting the majority of the Nicaraguan population today. The entire future of a pregnant girl is placed in jeopardy, since at best she will not be allowed to stay in day school, and in the worst instance, she may be expelled from school. Thus, it simply does not make sense when seen from a supposed modern, rational, common-sense point of view that so many Nicaraguan women subject themselves to the risks that accompany unprotected intercourse.

During the Mother's Day-celebration at school, I talked to 16-year-old Oscar, who did not have a mother or a father. "They are dead," he said, "or really, I just say they are dead because they left me with my grandmother." Benji, a 15-year-old boy was also joining us. He did not want to hang out with his mother, even though she waved at him multiple times.

> "You know, dem kick pregnant *gyals* outta school, but dem *buays*, dem nevah get kick out. You know why, because dem can't prove it was dat *buay*," Benji stated while looking at the mothers and students eating. Oscar looked over at Benji and opened an umbrella that was lying next to him to give me shelter from the sun. "No thanks, I'm working on my tan here," I answered jokingly, whereas he laughed and commented that "You's gon' be the

blackest person in Norway!" I laughed and told them about my sister who will never get a tan no matter how many hours she spends in the sun.

"Ah, she must be beautiful," Benji sighed and pretended that he was daydreaming.

"Yeah, and now she's pregnant as well!"

"Well, den she's not beautiful anymore!" Benji shouted, and the boys started to laugh.

"Yeah, *gyals* who get pregnant early is psychos," he concluded, before slowly running towards the tables of food.

Because it is so evident on Maracuyá Island, the issue of teenage pregnancy was raised many times during my fieldwork. Oscar concluded in a homework about thoughts on teenage pregnancy that "I believe it's the exposure to a sexual culture at a young age, being taught that it's fine to do that stuff, not having a sense of caution or awareness" in the same manner that Veronica states that sex is "just for fun". To understand this further, I gave the students the mentioned homework about teenage pregnancy, where I questioned why there is so many single mothers on the island. One of the girls answered that many girls get pregnant "*Porque ellas quieren satisfacer sus deseos sexuales y no se controlan hasta el matrimonio*" – "Because they want to satisfy their sexual desires which are not controlled until marriage." Another girl replied that "Parents do not communicate, do not support, do not talk about sexuality to their children," and a third girl claimed that "Girls do not protect themselves, and because they are having sex when they are very young", while another girl blamed it on the father's negligence. Another aspect of teenage pregnancy is the religious principles that have created the absence of possibility of abortion. None of the students mentioned this in their homework, and I have never heard anyone talk about it on the island. I argue that to have an abortion is almost unthinkable for most Maracuyá Islanders partly due to their paramount values of reputation and respectability. In fact, when I asked if they agreed with Nicaragua's strict anti-abortion legislation that outlaws even therapeutic abortion when a woman's life is at risk, some answered that they had never heard the word "abortion" before.

The sexual culture Oscar was referring to can be related to the influence from media and music, the lack of parent-child bonds and lack of proper sexual education (see Jagdeo 1984, Wulf 1986). It should also be understood in relation to the importance of reaching adulthood. Maracuyá Island youths know about the risks of having unprotected sex. As Veronica concluded when she

nearly got raped: "Dem gon' put a baby in me and make me raise it alone," and a classmate of her reasoned that "Some get a baby jus' to get de man," with another girl commenting "Mhhmmm! But him got to maintain it!" In high school they talk about sex and contraception, the pharmacy on the island sells condoms, and some hotels also give out free condoms for both tourists and locals to use.

The Caribbean father as a protector and provider

As established, men on Maracuyá Island habitually become fathers very young, often before they are capable to provide for their children. Indeed, as Wilson also noticed in Providencia: "A man who fathers many children by many women is 'stronger' than one who has only a few" (Wilson 1973: 151). One afternoon, John came over with fresh coconuts, hoping to share a bottle of *Flor de Caña* and great jokes. He brought his friend Kendrick, who was showing me some pictures of his girlfriend who lives across the sea on the mainland:

> "Dis my *gyal*, see…" Kendrick said proudly, and swiped his smart phone intensely. "… And dis my daughter. She is one year, but she lives on the coast!" He continued swiping through pictures of babies, selfies, and his girlfriend. "Dis my other daughter," he continued, quickly explaining the situation. "She darker, you see, like me. She jus' under a year. She darker because she has a different mother. See, I had a *gyal* and she was pregnant. I was at a party with my friends, and I remember going to bed and locking de door. But somehow, when I woke up, her best friend was lying next to me, and we were naked! I though 'What happened?!' and I couldn't believe it, because there was no condom!" Kendrick laughed a little by this and shook his head and threw his arms up in defeat.

> "So, after one week, she was callin' me, sayin' she felt sick and tired, and yeah… She also got pregnant. But can you believe! Dey still friends!" Both Kendrick and John were shaking their heads, but the laughter was not far away.

> "And dem against me and my new *gyal* of course. Dem want mess dat up. But I want to marry her! When she finishes school, maybe…" Kendrick said dreamingly, obviously in love with his new girlfriend.

"Hah, but her mama don't like you, so you can't ask her," John chuckled, making Kendrick sigh and pick up his phone to show me more pictures of his daughters.

Certainly, fatherhood offers a young man like Kendrick a public statement of heterosexuality, virility, and masculinity. As Jordan also mentioned, it is very important for the islanders to mind their children, especially economically, and to protect them. Kendrick also expressed that he was working hard on Maracuyá Island, away from both his daughters, to be able to take care of them. In the same manner, Veronica and her friend Vilma, concluded that a man's role in life was to work and protect their children:

> "Wash… Cook… Clean…" Vilma answered quietly when I asked about a man's responsibilities on Maracuyá Island.
>
> "You mean the woman?" I asked, because I thought she misheard me.
>
> "Mhm! And mind de children… Send dem to class…" She said, counting her fingers.
>
> "Wash and clean! You say for de man?!" Veronica interrupted her, placing her hands on her hips, rolling her eyes.
>
> "What de man do in life…" Vilma asked quietly to herself, but raised her voice seconds later. "*Werk* (work)… Maintain de family…"
>
> "Maintain de family…" Veronica was mimicking, while eating her taco. "There only two things. *Werk* and maintain!"

Indeed, many fathers spend time focusing on economical securities for their families. Although most of the islanders own their own *panga* and fish for their families and to sell to their neighbors and friends, several of the island's male inhabitants, such as Kendrick and Francisco, are working on the sea or overseas, meaning that they will be away from the home in long periods. Four months of the year, Maracuyá Islanders are put to a test as a big part of their local livelihood disappears – lobster fishing is banned from March 1st until June 30th. This makes for a lot of idle hands, and men are unable to fulfill their roles as economic providers. Like witnessed in Jamaica, men might leave their families because of the embarrassment of not being able to adequately provide for their families (Gopaul-McNicol, 1993). Hyman Rodman (1971: 177-178) explains, through his findings

from Trinidad, how this ineffectiveness has a role in structuring matrifocal households and male absenteeism:

> The man is expected to work and earn for his family; his status within the family hinges upon how adequately he provides. Unfortunately, the lower-class man is involved in much unemployment, under employment, poorly paid employment, and unskilled employment. Because of these handicaps in his occupational role he is frequently unable to fulfill his provider role. This situation is so all-pervasive that it has ramifications for the entire system of family and kinship organizations.

Rodman (1971: 181) continues to argue that this makes fathers and men lose authority and esteem in the family, and they therefore go out to seek gratification elsewhere, mainly in relationships with male peers or other women. His major point is that there exists a "lower-class value stretch":

> A lower-class person, without abandoning the general values of society, develops an alternative set of values. Without abandoning the values of marriage and legitimate childbirth he stretches the values so that a non-legal union and illegitimate children within that union are also desirable. The result is that members of the lower class, in many areas, have a wider range of values than others within the society (Rodman 1971: 195).

This interpretation of Caribbean social systems maintain that the society is based on a single value system that is stretched, or a system with alternative values – like Wilson (1973: 220) noticed, it seems like Rodman cannot make up his mind on this one. Still, the "general values of society" – marriage and legitimate childbirth – are not at all general for the Caribbean society, Wilson (1973: 220) argues. In fact, these are values of Western or metropolitan societies, which the middle and upper classes idealize. As seen with Rodman, anthropologist often analyze their research through "traditional" categories of kinship, gender and sexuality. According to John Borneman (1997: 574), anthropologists have been universalizing "marriage and the family" as a translatable form, thus, Western values and ideals have been understood as the paramount values also for non-Western societies, such as Maracuyá Island, which also has contributed on the stereotyping of the non-affective Caribbean father.

"Where has dad been all dis time?" – The changing notion of fatherhood

This idealization of Western ideals, originating from Christianity, becomes more and more evident in Nicaragua and Maracuyá Island. In fact, the Nicaraguan government, the Sandinistas, is enforcing a social order of Christian family values to its people, making women responsible for maintaining and keeping the family together as a unit and men responsible for keeping authority in the household (Jubb 2014: 290). Indeed, the nuclear family of a homebound father, mother, and their children should form the basics of the family structure, although the extended family, friends, and *compadrazgo*[17] are still very influential parts of Nicaraguan social life. Borneman (1997: 573) argues that the Christian idea of "the sacrament of marriage", defined in terms of institutionalized procreative heterosexuality, is nearly universal:

> Today, 'marriage', exalted as the 'right to found a family' has established itself as global ideology and is explicitly protected in the constitutions of most countries in the world […] Marriage and the 'protection of families' is often claimed as a universal human right, more basic to 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' than meeting other human needs, such as, for example, the need to eat, to work, or to love (Borneman 1997: 573-574).

Undeniably, religion, politics, economy, globalization, and media can be argued to shape and transform the notion of family life and parenthood on Maracuyá Island: "We would find it strange to see a family with a mom, dad, sisters, brothers […] Because most of us don't have a father around, or didn't grow up with dem," Nyomi, a 15-year-old girl, told me while she was making a vase for her mother as a Mother's Day-gift. She guessed that about eight percent of her classmates had a dad to celebrate in the same manner as they did with their mothers. "Is very popular dat many people don't have dads. Is because de fathers don't want to take responsibility for deyr kids. When I think about it, I think maybe a lot of people think 'Where has dad been all dis time?', Nyomi continued, and explained that her own father died a few years ago. Here, Nyomi both acknowledges that Maracuyá Island is a matrifocal society with unstable family patterns, yet, at

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[17] Compadrazgo is a set of relationships between a child, its parents and its godparents. It is the traditional ritual practice of coparenting. An infant's parents select a compadre (cofather) and comadre (comother) for the child's baptism; the compadres act as protectors and they are to serve as parents should the biological parents die (Lancaster 1992: 63).

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the same time, the statement confirms the new understanding that the nuclear family should be the ultimate referent to family structure.

Furthermore, in between Mother's Day and Father's Day, Nicaraguans celebrate Children's Day the 1st of June, which allows children to play all day long at school and make fun of their teachers. "Is de only day in de year we can play and make as much noise as possible," one of the girls told me during a water balloon fight. They also got presents from their friends and brought candy and homemade food to share at school, and on this day, the parents should show appreciation towards their children. Jordan explained jokingly how he was upset by his mother not giving him a present for Children's Day:

> "I ask my mom if she gon' give me a present, but she don't! I say, 'Why, you no gon' give me somethin'?!'" he told me enthusiastically with a big smile.

> "Oh no, poor you! Well, did you give something to your son?" I laughed.

> He shook his head no and looked to the ground.

> "Why not?"

> "I really don't know dat," he said, clearly embarrassed.

> "Well, I didn't get anything from my parents today either, they should have sent me something, don't you think?" I jokingly answered, making him laugh and agree.

This conversation indicates that it usually is the mothers, and not the fathers, who are expected to give their children gifts. Again, Jordan's discomfort when confronted with why he did not pay any attention to his own child during Children's Day, indicates the same transformation towards a Christian and Western notion of fatherhood that Nyomi suggested.

"Globalized Fatherhood", edited by Inhorn, Chavkin and Navarro (2014), explores transformations like this all over the globe. Just like witnessed in the Global South, Maracyá Island faces challenges around un- and underemployment and consequences of male migration to other countries. Inhorn et. al. (2014: 6) also points to the loss of state institution in the wake of neoliberal privatization, and show men are responding to these intersectional trends in a rapidly globalizing world *as fathers*. The different chapters in the book capture the creativity, hybridity, and

transformations in these men's lives as "emergent fatherhood"[18], which involves new forms of fatherly affect and caretaking (Inhorn et. al. 2014: 7). Scott North's contribution to this volume, for instance, explores how attitudes towards fathering in corporate Japan are changing from a stereotypical image of the father as stern, distant and minimally involved in the home to a more paternal involvement in family work. This is similar to my findings from Maracuyá Island. Francisco, whom I mentioned in the previous chapter as a man with a good reputation on the island, makes a good comparison and case in point to the changing notion of fatherhood:

Whenever I was visiting them, Francisco showed how much he loved his children by hugging and kissing them, serving them food, and by creating strict rules, such as staying at home after sunset, in order for them to be safe. He expressed sadness when he talked about being away from his family during lobster season, yet, he was proud of his work and looked forward to work on the commercial fishing ship. Still, he had children with another woman in another part of the country, who did not get the same emotional care as his children on Maracuyá Island. As witnessed, this emergent value of emotional care creates a paradox in relation to the paramount value of reputation. I want to propose an understanding of the changing notion of fatherhood in terms of values, however, I do not agree with Rodman that the Caribbean values are "alternative values" or that Caribbean fathers are denied certain ideals, as Reynolds (2009) proposed. Rather, I suggest a Dumontian (1980, 1986) understanding of the Western ideal of fatherhood as a value encompassed in the Caribbean notion of fatherhood, which is based on the value of reputation. Thus, the Western ideal is not as important as the Caribbean ideal, yet, in some contexts, such as when a youth discusses family life with a Western anthropology student or during Children's Day, the values are reversed, and the Western notion of fatherhood seems dominant. Secondly, the church promotes Western ideals of family life, however, this is not in the domain of reputation, but respectability.

However, as pointed to earlier, Dumont's model of value and hierarchy, conceived as the ultimate abstraction of society, leaves no room for change, as Marit Mehuus (1990: 161), among others, have argued. Melhuus (1990: 161) notes that to debate change in relation to Dumont would be like "playing tennis without an opponent", as social change in this regard does not seem as a

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[18] Emergent fatherhood is based upon Inhorn's (2011, 2012) earlier work on "emergent masculinities", which focuses attention on the ongoing, relational and embodied processes of change in the way men enact masculinity (Inhorn et. al 2014).

great interest to him. How, then, does this framework allow values, such as fatherhood, to change like I have argued it has on Maracuyá Island? As briefly mentioned in the first chapter, some years after Melhuus' (1998) critique, Joel Robbins (2004) re-ignited the debate on understanding social change within a structural approach. Through his ethnography from Papua New Guinea, Robbins (2004) shows how the Urapmin people go through social change as they are turning Christian. Indigenous ideas about social structure are in a conflict with Christian ideas of morality, and traditions are deemed sinful in this new context. To understand how the Urapmin are "becoming sinners", Robbins (2004) draws on, among others, Dumont's (1980, 1986) theory of paramount values. When adopting a Dumontian framework, Robbins (2004: 12) argues, one can define situations in which people live with two cultures at once where distinct paramount values are in struggle with one another.

With this in mind, one can understand how, on Maracuyá Island, the value of reputation, which encompasses fatherhood, both the Caribbean and the Western notion, does not need to have been altered for people to behave differently in certain contexts. As already mentioned, I suggest that one need to distinguish the different notions of fatherhood as two separate ideals, both encompassed in reputation, but at different levels, making it possible to appreciate and act out both of them in different situations. To make this argument clearer, I want to turn to a group of men who does not behave within the frames of reputation, namely homosexual Caribbean men.

Reversing reputation – Gay men on Maracuyá Island

> Discrete genders are part of what 'humanizes' individuals within contemporary culture; indeed, those who fail to do their gender right are regularly punished (Butler 1988: 522).

As explained, reputation builds upon the ability to father children – it is the public statement of heterosexuality, virility, and masculinity. Accordingly, as Corrales and Combs (2013) describe, there is a continued battle for homosexuals in the Caribbean. Multiple nations have buggery laws, and there is no way of denying the widespread stigma, harassment, discrimination and acts of violence towards them. This is also the reality for Maracuyá Islanders. Homosexual men are

marginalized, as they fall outside the accepted norm of masculine behavior. First, it is important to discuss the understanding of what it is to be homosexual, or gay[19], in this region. Marit Melhuus (1998: 368) argues that it is not possible to embrace the status of the homosexual man as he is understood in Anglo-American discourse in a Latin American community. She turns to Almaguer (1991) who points out the two different sex systems, which are divided by one major point, whereas "The meaning of homosexuality in the European-American context rests on the sexual object choice one makes - i.e., the biological sex of the person towards whom the sexual activity is directed... the Latin American/Mexican sexual system confers meaning to homosexual practices according to sexual aim - i.e., the act one wants to perform with another person" (Almaguer 1991:77 cited in Melhuus 1998: 368). In other words, in Latin America it is the sexual act itself that is stressed in the understanding of homosexuality, and not biological sex of the persons involved. Likewise, in Nicaragua, Roger Lancaster (1992) finds that the Nicaraguan *cochón*[20] and the Anglo-American "gay", although both pointing at sexual identities that transgress heteronormativity, has important differences. Only the passive participant in the sexual activity is branded a *cochón*. The other man, the one who penetrates, Lancaster names the "he-man" or *cochonero*, is generally not considered as homosexual. In fact, the experience of penetrating another man anally could be a source of virility and masculinity. In the same manner, Melhuus (1998) draws on Prieur (1996, 1998), who states that it is the act of penetration that distinguishes men from women. To penetrate is to be a man, and to be penetrated robs a man of his manhood and it feminizes him. Penetration represents a crossing of the body's boundaries, and boundaries, as Mary Douglas ([1966] 2002) has shown, is often connected to pollution and danger. Latin American men fear becoming homosexual if they are penetrated, thus polluted with femininity (Prieur 1996: 94). Conversely, when I asked Jordan what it means to be gay, he stated that it is two men living together, and both of them are "*cochones*". Interestingly, he did not put any attention to sexual activity, but the structure of their household.

Moreover, and in resemblance to what I found on Maracuyá Island, virility and the ability to beget children are important parts of being a man. Homosexual men deny themselves this

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[19] The islanders use the word gay or *cochón*. *Cochón* refers to the sociocultural construction and sexual identification of Nicaraguan men who express femininity. The word is generally used in a derogatory way and can be deeply offensive and insulting.

[20] As this word can be considered offensive, I use the word here only to illuminate the differences between the two sexual models.

possibility, hence, Melhuus (1998: 376) argues, virility is not part of their male identity. Consequently, this might remove any chance for homosexual men on Maracuyá Island to gain reputation or respect. One day during Bible class, Oscar told me about the challenges they face on the island:

Oscar, with his newly cut, black hair and perfectly ironed uniform, was sitting next to me in class by coincidence. He was a bright young man who read Shakespeare in his free time, learned Alan Walker-lyrics perfectly after we met, suggested important debates for the class, and wrote deep poems to reflect his life. Around us, the class was making a fuzz while the young, female Bible teacher read out loud from a sheet she had made about the Book of John. Oscar pointed to another girl in class who was drawing on the blackboard behind the teacher.

"She is crazy. Like, bipolar or something," he whispered. "Here on the island, mental problems are masked as being crazy, and they don't get treated properly. I'm depressed myself but it's not chronic or very bad like that. It's because of my lifestyle, you can say…" Oscar shared wholeheartedly over the teacher's reading. Although being Creole, he spoke in fluent English, as he liked to practice the language. "People like me often get depressed. You know, hedonic people," he continued, and I could not help but to answer him, even though I did not want to be disrespectful towards the teacher.

"My grandma always uses that word to describe outrageous people," I answered quietly, and Oscar laughed with me.

"Well, but it is true! Also, for gays. You get spotted out, shunned, abused… You're considered the devil's child. Quote on quote – God did not make you in this way." He talked fast, rolled his eyes and shook his head. The teacher did not mind him talking, and he continued on.

"Here on the island it is a big emphasis on social acceptance. It might not be a lot of us people that are different, but it is noticeable. The most bisexuals or homosexuals express themselves as very hetero, even picks on the openly gays. I have a friend who was beaten up and picked on by other homosexuals. Though, they were in the closet, they were in denial. You know, the most homophobic are often gay themselves. I don't like people in

general, but this makes me like them even less. People here think that being gay is something you choose yourself, like it's not genetic. This angers me". Oscar continued talking, a little louder now, with passion and anger in his voice, yet a defeated look.

"There was a guy who worked here, he was a janitor, and he was openly gay. The people from this neighborhood beat him up every day when he finished work. They beat him up in the middle of the street and no one cared! And then he's like, 'It's fine, it's fine', and he thinks that it's his fault! It's not right!" Oscar took a deep breath, trying to cool himself down, and I asked him why this was upsetting him so much.

"Well, because I am… Well, somewhat bi myself…" He answered honestly and proud and explained that he was in charge of work against discrimination and gay- and sexual abuse through a national youth organization. Another teacher appeared in the door as a sign of too much noise from this classroom, and Oscar went silent.

Actually, being bisexual is relatively acceptable throughout Latin America. Joseph Carrier ([1985] 1999: 77-78) writes that this "lack of stigmatization provides prospective active participants with the important feeling that their masculine self-image in not threatened by their homosexual behavior." Again, this has something to do with who penetrates and who gets penetrated. Nevertheless, as Melhuus (1998: 377) states, as long as the definition of being a man is tied to heterosexuality, as seen in Maracuyá Island, there is not really any room for being a "gay man". This is both revealed and challenged through the ethnography I will lay out next, which happens over a time period of a few months. When we first met, Jordan did not want to admit that any islanders could be gay. Yet, after a long time of establishing trust between us, he did acknowledge that there were some gay men on the island, and that they are severely mocked:

"Wow, he is a good dancer!" I exclaimed, looking at a young man dancing in the middle of a group of girls in the loud and crowded bar room.

"Yes, well, him a gay man…" Jordan answered shortly.

"Still a good dancer, though." I looked at Jordan, who had stopped smiling.

"Yes, but him a gay man and I don't like dancin' as a *gyal,*" he commented, and stared at the dancefloor. I asked him if there are many gay people on the island. Jordan waved his finger in front of my face, with a stern look.

"No, no, no. Dey are from Managua. Dey are not from here."

I met the young man on the dancefloor on several different occasions during my fieldwork, and it was obvious that he lived on the island. In fact, I met him when I was shopping with Jordan in a *pulperia* in another neighborhood a few weeks later. I asked if he knew the man.

"Oh, him like…" Jordan stood up on his toes, started walking, rolled his hips and fanned his face with one of his hands, with his other hand resting on his moving hip.

"You mean he's gay?"

"Yeah, dem *buays* here, dem like to pinch him in the *bonki* (butt). Dem really molest him. One time, on de beach, dey strip all his clothes, and ran away with dem," Jordan laughed hard at his own story.

"Is everyone like that to him?" Jordan could see that I was not too impressed by this.

"No, him got friends, but people like to molest him," he answered, before starting to talk about something else.

In the same manner, a couple of days later, I was hanging out on the street during sunset with John, Rob and my fiancé, André, when the same man walked past us. This was a normal way to spend evenings on the island – listening to country music from bad phone-speakers, relaxing with friends, showing funny videos, and shouting and whistling to everyone walking by.

"Fish," the two men yelled through a thin voice, resembling baby language. The man responded with shouting something back in Creole, smiling. I was used to this kind of shouting of different nicknames – a way of saying hello. John shouted at Fish again, and I asked him who it was, even though I had met him before. I wanted to know why they called him Fish.

"Fish!" John answered, and Rob continued by saying that they call them that because of how they walk.

"Them, who?"

"Dem gay people!" John and Rob answered simultaneously.

"Are there many gay people on the island?" This was the second time I asked that question to someone, hoping to get a more sincere answer this time.

"Yeah, a few of dem," Rob answered.

André asked John later that evening if Fish was his friend, or if they were mocking him, because it was hard to tell apart this exchange from friendly exchanges.

"No, no, no, I got no friends like dat," he answered, very short and conclusive.

"I have a lot of friends that are gay, and I don't mind it," André answered, but the guys went silent, not wanting to discuss it further.

The nickname Fish is built on feminine traits, and it takes away the person's masculinity, hence his chance of building his reputation. Interestingly, I got aquatinted – in the sense that we danced a couple of times – with another gay, young man on the island. His nickname was Moves. "De best dancer on de island", he was labelled by both men and women. When my Dutch friend, Louisa, told me Moves was gay during his dance performance at the end of a female beauty competition, I responded with a short and biased "No, he's not", simply because of the way people had described their relationship to gay people on the island. "He's not gay, right?" I asked the islanders that I was there with – three men from my neighborhood. "Sure is! Look at him, a great dancer! We know him! MOOOOVES," they cheered when Moves was dancing on the stage.

In every society that is heteronormative, such as Maracuyá Island, there exists a moral sex hierarchy, where sexuality that is "good", "normal", and "natural" should ideally be heterosexual, marital, monogamous, reproductive, and non-commercial. "Bad", "abnormal or "unnatural sex" is any sex that violate these rules (Rubin 1984). Gayle S. Rubin (1984: 151) explains the system of sexual value as following:

Marital, reproductive heterosexuals are alone at the top erotic pyramid. Clamouring below are unmarried monogamous heterosexuals in couples, followed by most other heterosexuals. Solitary sex floats ambiguously. The powerful nineteenth-century stigma on masturbation lingers in less potent, modified forms, such as the idea that masturbation is an inferior substitute for partnered encounters. Stable, long-term lesbian and gay male couples are verging on respectability, but bar dykes and promiscuous gay men are hovering just above the groups at the very bottom of the pyramid. The most despised sexual castes currently include transsexuals, transvestites, fetishists, sadomasochists, sex workers such as prostitutes and porn models, and the lowliest of all, those whose eroticism transgresses generational boundaries.

In other words, as shown in my ethnography, gay men are situated low in the sexual stratification system, and on Maracuyá Island, they are almost at the bottom. However, I have also shown that gay men like Moves challenge the Western understanding of social stratification, which is why I continue to suggest a Dumontian (1980, 1986) understanding of the concept and the hierarchy as value based. Indeed, there is a correlation between how people handle the values in the hierarchy and how people are socially stratified. Moves, for instance, does not have to work on his masculinity by taking on several girlfriends or fathering many children. His reputation is built on the stage during dance shows rather than in the streets. Here we witness what Dumont means when he is saying that hierarchy is not an unbroken chain of decreasing value but made up of several levels which are again ranked in relation to each other (Dumont 1980: 239). As already mentioned, dancing on Maracuyá Island can be considered one of these levels, as it is a value that are deeply integrated in their culture and it expresses in many ways how the culture is organized. Dancing is encompassed in, but also subordinate to, the value of reputation, and as Dumont suggests, in moving between levels, reversals occur. Moves, as a part of the social group of "gay men", which can be argued to be ranked on Maracuyá Island as the men with the worst reputation, does indeed get his status reversed when he is dancing. This reversal is ultimately expressed through his nickname.

So, by following Dumont's (1980, 1986) theory of values, one can understand how it is possible for the islanders to sometimes behave differently than the paramount values expect them to. This part of social life, then, has nothing to do with a value-stretch or an alternative set of values

as argued by Rodman (1971), but rather a change in levels and a reversal of values in certain contexts. As Kendrick showed earlier in this chapter, his wish was not to impregnate two women with only months between, however, the value of reputation allowed him to get drunk and express his sexual potency. On the other hand, the best friend of Kendrick's girlfriend behaved in a completely different manner than the moral society would expect her to, yet, at the party, a reversal of values took place and she was able to flirt and sleep with him. Still, there is an unwritten rule saying that the girlfriend or boyfriend should not know the sweetheart, which makes this example out of the ordinary. Still, Dumont's (1980, 1986) theory on how certain behavior are allowed in certain contexts becomes clear when Kendrick pointed out that the two girls are still best friends but are angry at him for "*taking a new gyal*". To father illegitimate children, then, should not be understood as a value stretch, but rather a temporarily shift in levels, allowing this to happen. Still, having children with multiple women ultimately leaves many children without a father in their home, and more often than not, fathers are not capable to provide a desirable income for every one of his children. In that case, he has left all his responsibilities as a father.

Concluding thoughts

In this chapter, I have shown how the notion of fatherhood on Maracuyá Island is changing into more westernized ideals, which creates a challenge for fathers. Their paramount value of reputation encourages men to show their virility by fathering many children, while simultaneously demands them to mind their children properly. Minding children is based upon economical and protective aspects, and, because of unemployment, underemployment, and low wages, many fathers choose to leave the island in order to make money and meet these norms. Consequently, this collides with the new idealization of fathers as homebound and caring. Moreover, fathers who cannot (or will not) provide for their children are regarded as leaving their responsibilities and their role as a father. Thus, many children on Maracuyá Island are living without a father present, both in economical and emotional terms. Subsequently, this has led to statements like "[On Maracuyá Island,] people don't have dads", at the same time as the most important value for the islanders indeed is fatherhood.

I have suggested to use a Dumontian lens to understand how, in certain contexts, a Western ideal can be appreciated, yet it does not alter the paramount value of reputation. My analysis here

is based on ethnography about gay men on Maracuyá Island, as they are arguably denied the chance to work on their reputation, since they generally do not father children or conquest women. However, in certain contexts, a reversal of values occurs, which allows also gay men to earn reputation outside their usual contexts, like on a stage. In the same manner, the notion of fatherhood has different outcomes in different settings, which indeed creates paradoxes on how to be a good father.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have followed, yet also challenged, Peter Wilson (1969, 1973), who claim that the Caribbean society is built on a dialectical relationship between the two value systems of respectability and reputation. Respectability, in his approach, is the domain of women, and reputation the domain of men. I only partially agree with Wilson here, as I have witnessed gendered behavior across the values. Women, as witnessed with Veronica, do also crave a good reputation in the same manner as men, and some men, as Wilson also acknowledges, move into the domain of respectability when they age and marry. Nevertheless, since only a few on men Maracuyá Island are able to access the domain of respectability, it makes sense to approach the values as gendered.

Further, I have examined the values separately and in relation to the youths on Maracuyá Island. Here, I found that respectability was shaped and molded by the island's churches, and is in that manner quite similar to how Wilson (1969, 1973) conceptualized it regarding gendered behavior – that women should perform chastity before marriage. Also, the value emphasizes education, marriage, the home, self-restraint, and work. However, in certain situations, such as on the beach at night or in the bar rooms and clubs, young women on the island challenge the value of respectability by displaying sexual behavior that goes beyond the moral codes embedded in it. This behavior could be wining, as Veronica and other girls frequently displayed, having multiple sweethearts, or actual sexual acts, as demonstrated by Kendrick's story from the night he slept with his ex-girlfriend's best friend and got her pregnant.

Thus, I sought out to understand how young women, who during school, church and at home was fully immersed in the domain of respectability, were allowed the freedom to express a different kind of behavior during informal situations. For this, a framework of resistance seemed fruitful to apply, as Caribbean women's agency has been brought to discussions the past decades, where actions such as wining has been understood as a rebellion or as blowing off steam in a strict and repressive society (Kempadoo 2004, Brennan 2004). On the other hand, a 96-year-old man complained that he also experienced that his girlfriends through the years were having outside affairs with other men, something that suggests that the female behavior rather should be understood in structural terms. Indeed, I have witnessed a stability in the social aspects of people's

lives on the island, yet, I was still intrigued by the conflicting behavior and how to comprehend it. For this, I turned to Louis Dumont (1980, 1986) and his work on value-hierarchy and reversal of values.

In short, Dumont's approach to hierarchy is an "encompassment of the contrary", where one paramount value encompasses all other values in society. However, on Maracuya Island, I have argued that there is a need for understanding a value-pair as overarching, as, generally, women and men respectively subscribe to the gendered value systems of respectability and reputation. In his theory, Dumont opens up for the possibility of value-reversal in certain contexts, meaning that values such as sexuality – the opposition to respectability – is considered of higher value in some informal situations, such as in bar room or on the beach. In this manner, one can understand how Veronica, Nathalie, Andrea, Shelly, and other young women on Maracuyá Island are able to challenge the moral norms without jeopardizing their respectability.

The same framework can be applied to the analysis of young men's behavior in relation to their paramount value of reputation. Reputation, as established, is based on equality, friendships, and hanging out, and is determined by fatherhood and sexual prowess, but also from life experience and skills. Wilson (1969) sees the Latin American value of machismo as integrated in reputation; however, my ethnography shows that young Maracuyá men contest this interpretation. Machismo, according to the islanders, is a solely negative concept which entails behavior such as drinking, gambling, and violence. It is mainly youth who display this behavior in order to gain reputation as a "tough *buay*", but as they become fathers, they navigate away from machismo and towards reputation. In this regard, machismo should be understood as the flipside of reputation, and a respected man with a good reputation is the one who can be tough without being violent, to make money without spending it outside the household, and to conceive many children without abandoning responsibilities as a father.

Further, men's responsibilities as fathers are changing on Maracuyá Island, with the emergence of a new understanding of fatherhood. Traditionally, the most important aspect of fatherhood in the Caribbean has been to "mind the children" – to protect and provide for them. Today, however, the Christian and Western image of the father as married, homebound and caring is enforced by both the Nicaraguan government, the church and the media as an appreciated value. This ultimately leaves Maracuyá Island men like Jordan, John, Kendrick, and Francisco in yet a

paradox they must navigate. I have analyzed this emergent fatherhood as a value also encompassed in reputation, which makes it possible for men to move between the values in different situations. For most young men, the streets, bar rooms, and beaches are the institutions of reputation, and sexual freedom is a part of this value, hence the need for value reversal in this setting is limited. Still, as shown with gay men on Maracuyá Island, value reversals do occur for young men as well. Moves, for instance, has been able to gain a good reputation based on other factors than womanizing and fatherhood. His dancing, often done in a formal setting, on a stage the government, school or church have put up, and in this context, has earned him respect and reputation from his peers.

So, throughout this thesis, I have shown how young men and women on Maracuyá Island navigate a complex crossroad of Latin American and Afro Caribbean values, norms, religion, history, and politics. Their social life is shaped by a turmoil of different expectations, especially regarding sexuality. In order to analyze the conflicting behaviors that the young islanders express in relation to their paramount values of respectability and reputation, I have adopted a feminist and structural vantage point. Thus, I avoid romanticizing or reducing their behavior as acts of resistance or rebellion and can rather show through value theory how certain behavior is approved in different situations.

Future research

Come down, bredda Willy, come down

Come see what de man had done

He take out de knife, stab up de wife

And see how de blood down run

- Traditional Palo de Mayo-song

Throughout this thesis, I have had a focus on dancing, or wining, as an important aspect of Maracuyá Island social life. However, what I have intentionally failed to discuss, is how wining, especially during Palo de Mayo, is a symbol of the cultural change happening on the island. Palo

de Mayo is a vivid and vibrant monthlong cultural celebration of both fertility and the Creole population of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. During my fieldwork in 2018, however, colors and festivities were replaced with darkness and fear, as the riot on the mainland drained all joy from the people. A journalist was shot and killed in Bluefields, which is the heart of Palo de Mayo. Consequently, the festival got cancelled, though on Maracuýa Island, a few dance shows and Palo de Mayo-themed parties were arranged in different bar rooms. Still, before the riots, Palo de Mayo was of great interest to me, and I frequently asked people about it. I was under the impression that Palo de Mayo should be celebrated as it always has been – with colorful, revealing outfits, heavy reggae- and country rhythms and sensual dancing. "Our culture is how we dance – how we shake it", a young woman shouted in class during a debate on Maracuyá Island's cultural heritage. The church, however, condemn this dancing, and at school the teenagers are only allowed to practice and perform what is called "Ribbon Dance" – an earlier and more elegant form of the Pole Dance. In other words, the islanders' traditions are, in Robbins' words (2004), turned sinful. I am currently writing an article about the Nicaraguan celebration in a time of distress, which will be published in "Betwixt and Between" this coming fall. However, it should be interesting to further explore how the islanders undergo social and cultural change, how this is tied to sexuality and religion, and how it affects not only everyday life, but also traditions such as Palo de Mayo and, as I discussed in chapter five, gender roles and norms.

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