The Colonial Heritage of Mestizaje in Granada, Nicaragua

by

Ruth María Martínez Cervantes

B.A. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua 2004

M.A. New Mexico State University 2008

A thesis submitted to the

Faculty of the Graduate School of the

University of Colorado in partial fulfillment

of the requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Anthropology

2016

This thesis entitled:
The Colonial Heritage of Mestizaje in Granada, Nicaragua
Written by Ruth María Martínez Cervantes
has been approved for the Department of Anthropology

_____

(Type committee chair name here)

_____

(Type committee member name here)

Date_____

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we
find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards
of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

IRB protocol # _____

ABSTRACT

Martínez Cervantes, Ruth María (Ph.D. Anthropology Department)

The Colonial Heritage of Mestizaje in Granada, Nicaragua

Thesis directed by Associate Professor Kaifa Roland.

Mestizo identity has been long used as a way to homogenize the cultural and biological diversity of Nicaragua. Mestizo, as a hegemonic identity, refers to culturally modern people (no indigenous cultural practices) who live in urban areas, speak Spanish and practice Catholicism. Government representations in tourism narratives reignited a colonial identity, contrary to the official multicultural national discourse (Chapter 2). Tourism, its economic effects, along with its cultural impact indicate that mestizos as well as indigenous people are going through an identity crisis rooted in the intense cultural destruction of the colonial policies continued during the creation of the Nicaraguan nation-state (Chapter 3). Such ethnic disruption affects mestizo identity, mainly because it remains, at best, broadly defined. My analysis glimpses into the direction of new investigation of the redefinition of the mestizo identity from the inhabitants of Granada and western Nicaragua (Chapter 4). Granada is where the process of mestizaje has been most noticeable and tourism most pervasive.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my sponsors Dr. Tom Lennon and Dr. Charles Wheeler for all the economic and moral support through all these years. This project would not have started if not for your trust in me.

Also, I want to thank my advisors PhD. Kaifa Roland and Payson Sheets for all the words of encouragement, guidance, time, advise and always having the right words to lift up my spirit when I needed it the most. I am forever grateful.

My sincere thanks also go to my committee Dr. Steve Lekson, Dr. Jen Shannon, and Dr. Joe Bryan for their time, comments, and help, especially for their quick responses for the defense.

Last but not least I want to thank my parents, brother and sisters for their support through the years in school, fieldwork and writing process. Thanks for never giving up on me. Dr. Rani Alexander thank you for the encouragement to start this journey.

CONTENTS

TABLES

FIGURES

Chapter I. INTRODUCTION

Granada

I live in Xalteva, the old Indigenous barrio, or at least that is how Granadinos identify it. My place, a recently constructed house following the central patio-and-corridor of colonial style houses, is about ten blocks from downtown. It is two in the afternoon, and I am walking along the narrow streets and I can feel the heat. The sun is merciless and the humidity creates a stupor almost unbearable. The large colonial houses have their doors wide open to let the air flow in along the corridors and patio. As I begin my stroll far from the city center at first the streets are quiet, only few people walking; the houses although with the doors opened (locked metal gates protect the entrance) people are nowhere to be seen. Cars drive by every once in a while, almost no noise on the streets but the televisions with the novelas on, it is time of the siesta (the typical nap) still practiced in some places in the city. The neighborhood is in transition: houses are rebuilt in styles other than the colonial style, while others are kept in colonial styles, many others are in ruins although people inhabit them, and a few others are completely abandoned.

 As I move closer to the downtown Parque Central I can see the recently renovated luxurious hotels, hostels, lodging houses, art stores, bakeries, Spanish schools, restaurants and dinners placed strategically on the main streets. Some of these are recently renovated, but others are deteriorated mixing the new with the old, the foreign owners and the local enterprise. Here Granada is awake! The mood has changed. Hundreds of people move and walk on the streets, some on the sidewalks. Most of them are Granadinos who walk back and forth from work, running errands or just enjoying the city, with an increasing number of "cheles", "gringos" and tourists, readily identifiable by their clothes, cameras, languages, accents or the ubiquitous handheld brochures and maps.

The noise of the honking cars, motorcycles, buses, buggies, the constant renovation of buildings, dogs barking, people talking, and kids yelling are deafening. The sidewalks are packed with people selling fruits, clothes, CDs, DVDs, crafts, beggars, passers-by who stop in the stores, ice cream parlors, and food carts. The streets and sidewalks are filled with leftovers, rotting fruits, construction material and debris, plastic bags all of which attract stray dogs, also leaving a mixture of different odors.

Once I reach downtown the cathedral is the most prominent building, in front of the parque central surrounded by expensive hotels and fancy restaurants, craft stores, and buggies parked along the street waiting for the next tourist to hire them. Four stalls, one on each corner that sells the famous typical vigorón dish, guard the park. Vigorón is a dish of pork rinds, manioc, and cabbage and tomato salad over plantain

leaves. Lots of tourists walk around the park; locals and foreign sit on the benches to read, talk to friends, take pictures or have a cold drink to take in the view of the Mombacho volcano and the city.

Moving forward towards the Lake, walking on the Calzada (stone paved) street tourism reaches its highest points: five blocks of a pedestrian boulevard with restaurants, hotels, hostels, cafes, bars, clubs, pubs, tour operators, and arts and crafts stores. The street runs from the cathedral all the way to the shores of the Lake. Despite Granada being the spot for cultural tourism in Nicaragua, Calzada Street provides only a single restaurant that offers typical Nicaraguan food. The stalls of typical food in the park do not usually receive foreign tourists. At the end of La Calzada is Lake Cocibolca, there Granada lies dormant again (fieldnotes).

Here I provide a snapshot of the contrast between the historical center of Granada and the rest of the city. There, in the historical center is where the tourism industry develops, is what every visitor comes to see. Thus, is the location on which I focus my research.

Introduction

My field notes above describe the resident and tourist view of Granada, Nicaragua. This is the place where narratives and representations of Nicaraguans occur, I am interested in determining the effects of tourism narratives and the government discourse of the identity of Granadinos. Here, tourism becomes the social and historical context where this process is occurring. The Nicaraguan government continues to represent, via tourism, Nicaraguans as mestizo, while silencing other indigenous and afro-descendant communities.

Mestizo identity has long been used as a way to homogenize the cultural and biological diversity of Nicaragua. Mestizo, as a hegemonic identity, refers to culturally modern people (i.e., no indigenous cultural practices) who live in urban areas, speak Spanish and practice Catholicism. Government representations in tourism narratives reignited a colonial mestizo identity, contrary to the official multicultural national discourse. The government and tourism narratives affect the way Nicaraguans view themselves and how others see them, reinforcing mestizo identity follows whitening colonial policies.

The tourism industry has become relevant to the Nicaraguan economy for its perceived potential as a development tool, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization; although such assertion is debatable in Nicaragua (Hunter, 2011), there is no denying tourism is a force. Like a strong wave that fills and reaches each alley- small or large- and then retreats with the seasons signaling its path; economic development or not- tourism is surely transforming the places and people it touches.

Although coastal and marine tourism, ecotourism and community-based tourism are the most representative forms of tourism, there is an increasing importance of cultural tourism in the colonial cities of Granada and León marked by influential narratives about Nicaraguan national identity.

Given that tourism has become an important and complex socio-cultural process that affects local people and tourists through goods, information and culture, I intended to analyze the impact of Nicaraguan national narratives of tourism in the city of Granada due to its importance as a national heritage site for its colonial architecture, preserved for international and national tourism, with narratives that focus solely on the colonial heritage, history and glory of the Spanish conquistadors who founded the colonial city. Furthermore, the government neglect in terms of research, preservation and conservation of pre-colonial sites as well as the lack of inclusion of indigenous groups in the national construction underscores mestizo national identity.

The government has erased and silenced the indigenous past as well as the present indigenous contribution to the nation, while celebrating a colonial mestizo identity in which the European character is the most important (Field, 1995). Along with a history that claims the disappearance of the indigenous community and culture in the 19th century. The neglect of research, preservation and conservation of pre-colonial sites, as well as the lack of inclusion of indigenous groups in the national conversation furthers this.

Government representations in tourism narratives reignited a colonial identity, contrary to the official multicultural national discourse (Chapter 2). Tourism, its economic effects, along with its cultural impact indicate that mestizos as well as

4

indigenous people are going through an identity crisis rooted in the intense cultural destruction of the colonial policies continued in the creation of the Nicaraguan nation-state (Chapter 3). Such ethnic disruption affects mestizo identity, mainly because it remains, at best, broadly defined. This unexpected result glimpses into the direction of new investigations on the redefinition of the mestizo identity from the inhabitants of Granada and western Nicaragua (Chapter 4).

Mestizo as an identity and mestizaje as a process are central to the historical development of the country, clearly stated throughout this dissertation. However, during my fieldwork it was clear that most people did not know what mestizo - the widely proclaimed national identity- meant, generating new questions for future research in what seems unexplored territory in Nicaragua.

Granada's main attraction is its architectonic heritage, although other features are important like the Lake, islets and volcano (Hardman, 2010). According to Weiss (2007) heritage should be related to "providing recognition" and identity to subaltern and minority groups within a society (Weiss, 2007). However, more often than not heritage actually represents what authorities, either local or national, consider worth remembering, and establishes what is significant or worth celebrating for dominant groups or the ruling class (Shackel, 2005:35). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1995) argues heritage is the revived appreciation and re-valorization of historic events, festivals, features or architecture, bringing them back to life through display. "Heritage is created through a process of exhibition (as knowledge, as performance, as museum display). Exhibition endows heritage thus conceived with a second life (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1995:369)" meaning it can be constructed with little consideration to actual history. In

colonial times the Granada government pushed indigenous people out of sight rendering them invisible. Government, national and international recognition of Granada's architectural heritage continues to silence indigenous people while reinforcing the mestizo identity, yet mestizos do not know about their own identity.

As a tool for the present, argues Paulsen (2007), heritage is a way to maintain a connection to the past; however, the efforts to preserve places, events, or ways of life are "deliberate" fulfilling objectives or needs in the present. They are constructed in a context to make them worthy of consideration. "Hence, such cultural sites are dynamic and performative, reinforcing and constituting personal and collective identity through narrative encounters and experiences with the objects in that destination place and space (Jamal and Hill, 2008:22)." Nicaragua's government restoration and preservation efforts in Granada's Spanish heritage are done in order to fulfill the ideal modern country imagined after independence, consequently, thus intentionally, reinforcing the mestizo national identity.

Heritage, from the nation-state perspective, is or may be used to claim equality among all the citizens naturalizing a "common past", but the narratives created around the sites do not account for minorities or their various understandings of heritage places (Weiss, 2007:415). Granada's architecture only represents the mestizo population, denying the presence of indigenous groups, underscoring the Spanish colonial history of Nicaragua, silencing the prehistory, history and identities of the black and indigenous populations inhabiting Nicaragua. As this research indicates, mestizos may have little connection to these heritage sites as well.

Adding value to locations, buildings or ways of life makes heritage viable for the tourism industry. Heritage sites increase in number in response to the demands of tourism and its never-ending need of new and different places to offer as destinations (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1995). Heritage and tourism are compatible because of the creation of places and images for the public. The creation of places is not only designed at the local level, it is also shaped by the influence of outside entities (Hall, 2006:110).

In tourism, places can be commodified for leisure (Britton, 1991). "Certain places and sites (with their landscapes, social practices, buildings, residents, symbols and meaning) achieve the status of tourist sites because of their physical, social, cultural – and commercial – attributes (Britton, 1991:462)." Places generate revenue because of their significant, special or unique (real or imagined) attributes, status, and production of memorabilia regarding that particular space (Britton, 1991). The commoditization of a place begins when a destination is defined "as a worthy investment of leisure, time and money (Rothman, 1996:526)." This requires the packaging of a site, promotion, a marketing strategy, and idyllic descriptions, thereby transforming it into an exotic and unique symbol (Rothman, 1996).

Using heritage as symbolic of national identity for tourism is problematic because it relies upon already contested representations of the past and stereotypical symbols of identity of a country (Palmer, 1999). While the tourism narratives of heritage places may be inaccurate or false, repetition of such constructions may popularize them, thus affecting the discourse of national identity. Then identity, heritage and tourism are interconnected through socio-political and economic association shaped by individuals and places (Henderson, 2001).

The Spanish city of Granada was built around 1524, located explicitly near indigenous communities for their exploitation; built on the shores of Lake Nicaragua, it was inhabited by a people known today as Xalteva. Granada is recognized for its privileged location, economic importance as a city port in the past and a touristic center today. It is advertised as the first Spanish city in mainland that still stands; renowned for its colonial architecture Granada's importance remains restricted to the colonial period, erasing the indigenous past, thus denying its historical contribution to the present, based on a history that diminishes the role of the indigenous people in the construction of the nation.

Government investment in the conservation and preservation of the colonial character of cities like León, Granada, and Ruins of León Viejo for cultural tourism determines just what is worth remembering; meanwhile defining what heritage is (Scher, 2011). Thus, the relevance of Spanish dominance is strengthened over the indigenous experience.

I argue that the Nicaraguan government takes an active position in presenting tourists with a modernized (not indigenous) Nicaraguan community by silencing the indigenous past, and presenting only the progressive European history of the country; such narratives gives a partial representation of the Nicaraguan identity to foreign visitors; at the same time it projects and naturalizes Nicaraguan identity as "mestizo." Similarly, Babb (2004: 553) contends, "how Nicaraguans view themselves and construct themselves both frames and is framed by outsiders' perceptions of them as people and as a nation. Whatever economic, political and cultural advantages or disadvantages tourism may bring in its wake, it is also responding to and remaking Nicaraguan national identity." The introduction in the 1990's to the tourism industry provided Nicaragua a new opportunity to remake itself through the narratives of heritage

tourism. The narratives of Granada and the way tourists perceive the Nicaraguan community, affects how Nicaraguans view themselves.

In this research I use tourism as a social and historical context where the Nicaraguan government is reinventing itself to present to the outside and the inside, promoting further a mestizo identity. The prolonged silencing of indigenous and afro-descendant people creates a void in terms of historical research. Despite the centrality of mestizos in the history of western Nicaragua, my research indicates that mestizos themselves are neglected in terms of historical and anthropological research.

Theoretical Framework

Postcolonial theory is the lens I will use to evaluate how Nicaraguan national identity and history naturalizes mestizo identity at the top of the social scale, while it erases indigenous people in the past and the present.

Postcolonialism as a theory analyzes, challenges and critiques western knowledge and power from different fronts. For example, it critiques humanities because it considers its knowledge production as universal, while post-colonialism attempts to include knowledge from the rest of the world as valid and make it more representative. Social sciences are based on western knowledge ignoring non-western cultures. In feminism the post-colonial approach has contributed to the recognition that in society constructed by men, women were placed in a role as passive objects, excluded and disempowered.

Postcolonial theory emerged from the analysis of literary sources as a critique of Western institutions and discourses (Radcliff, 2005). "Discourses did not exist in isolation but served to legitimize and to underwrite very real powers of domination and exploitation (Van Dommelen, 2011:3)." It studies the link between Western imperialism and its production of culture; how the production of knowledge and culture separates the West as rational while establishing the East (or the rest of the World) as irrational, and the way these representations are created in order to control and have power to manipulate "the other." The West controls the rest of the world by creating it in every aspect (Kapoor, 2002).

Postcolonial theory is interested in issues of representation (how the "colonized" are represented from the Western perspective) and discourse; it is a critique to oppression. Postcolonial theory focuses on the way texts portray cultural identities, agency, and responses of the colonized to the colonizer's culture. In colonial narratives, the subaltern is placed at the bottom of the social scale, justifying the Western entity's colonizing project, given that "the other" needs saving (Lunga, 2008). "Postcolonial theory challenges epistemic violence; that is, it questions the undervaluing, destruction, and appropriation of colonized people's knowledge and ways of knowing, including the colonizer's use of that knowledge against them to serve the colonizer's interests (Lunga, 2008:193)."

The postcolonial critique intends to reveal the subtexts of the imperialist's narrative that subjugates the knowledge dismissed because they have been created by the subaltern. These knowledges are located at the bottom because of the subaltern's lack of access to the scientific method that is so highly valued by the West. Furthermore, this

10

raises questions on how history, power, and narratives are naturalized (Spivak, 1988).

"Postcolonial approaches speak to the violence towards, and the marginalization of, postcolonial subjects and knowledges whose exclusion from metropolitan status is embedded in notions of cultural and racial difference (Radcliff 2005:292)." This critique challenges the power dynamics, hierarchies and discourse through which "third world" countries have been formulated and maintained (Radcliff, 2005).

"Postcolonial studies responds to this need by postulating itself as a theoretical attempt to engage with a particular historical condition. The theory may be named 'postcolonialism', and the condition it addresses is best conveyed through the notion of 'postcoloniality'. And, whatever the controversy surrounding the theory, its value must be judged in terms of its adequacy to conceptualize the complex condition which attends the aftermath of colonial occupation (Ghandi, 1998:4)." It attempts to look in depth, analyze and question historical constructions as well as to better understand the colonial past (Ghandi, 1998).

More and more postcolonialism is used to analyze the cultural, social and economic shock in developing countries with the introduction of tourism and its secondary effects on identity and representation, subjects central to tourism (Hall and Tucker, 2004). Research in postcolonialism focuses in four main themes: hegemony, language and text, place and displacement, and theory (Hall and Tucker, 2004, chapter 1, location 338, para. 1).

The link between tourism and postcolonialism is the implementation of tourism as a neocolonialist enterprise, based on a foreign economy, which is dominated by the local elite.

Trouillot (1997) provides a clear perspective of the production of history as an interpretation of the past in the present, asserting that history is not an accurate description of past events. In the production of history, "silences and mentions" are necessary to form a comprehensible history. However, in this production process the historian is the one to decide what is relevant and what is not. In Nicaragua, the claim that indigenous groups had disappeared by the end of the 19th century is an active silencing, or what Trouillot (1997) has called erasure. This historical production demonstrates the uneven power and inequalities between the winners and losers given that "history is not neutral or natural"; historical narratives demonstrate the uneven power of their actors. It is a reflection of power, a "story about those who won (Trouillot, 1997:48)." Nicaraguan history banalized the indigenous past, and erases them in the present by homogenizing them as mestizos. This theoretical approach can promote construction of "alternative (pre) histories" to give voice to subaltern communities (Trouillot, 1997).

México and Central American History

Nationalism is the process of creating or maintaining nations, as the product of politicians and intellectuals, followed by social classes that benefit from the creation of the nation state. Each of these players has a role in creating a national identity for their own benefit (Kohl, 1999).

When nations are created, a common past is invented "for political, economic and social reasons (Kohl, 1999:231)." Important factors account for the ways national identities are created, like the presence or absence of indigenous people and the material remains from the past.

Individuals living in the same nation share behaviors, communication, and ways of thinking. National identity is constantly changing (Kohl, 1998) and is permanently contested given national identity is a "very personal concept as individuals draw upon the differing identities available to them in order to construct their own sense of who they are and how they fit in (Palmer, 1999:34)." Knowing and controlling the past, as most national governments do, legitimizes control of the present, especially because there are many ways to interpret heritage and history (Kohl, 1998).

In the construction of nations, archaeology and history have been drawn upon to elevate the past within national boundaries; they are also used to create a sense of unity and equality among the diverse population that inhabits the nation (Trigger, 1984). Countries like Mexico, Honduras, and El Salvador have used the archaeological past to construct their mestizo national identities.

Mexico uses archaeological remains to establish a narrative of the nation's history. During the 1880s the Mexican national project was solidified when the country's intellectuals revalued the mestizos as "the most vigorous force in Mexican history (Brading, 2001:524)." At the same time, archaeological projects were funded and a great monument was built on Avenida de Reforma dedicated to the last Aztec emperor.

México. During the Mexican revolution in 1910, nationalism took full form and adopted the indigenous past as an important part of the government's ideology (Brading,

2001), which in turn influenced the ideology of the Central American governments. The revolutionary government revised Mexican history to set its beginning in the Aztec empire instead of the Spanish conquest (Alonso, 2004). Archaeology and anthropology were used to determine how much of the Aztec culture survived: "only through these studies could the means be found to convert Indians into Mexicans and thus create a nation based on 'racial equilibrium, cultural fusion, linguistic unification and economic equilibrium (Brading 2001:526)."

El Salvador. In El Salvador, at the end of the 19th century, the liberal government promoted the stereotype of the Indians as barbarians. However, by 1920, the government started actively attempting to integrate the indigenous population by manipulating and glorifying the indigenous past, peasant lifestyle, and their cultural manifestations. They recovered the image of Atlacatl, a Cuzcateclan hero who - according to popular knowledge - resisted the conquest. In 1928, the government founded the Salvadorian History Academy mainly for archaeological research. But this revalorization of indigenous values was merely an intellectual movement, while the contemporary indigenous people were struggling to maintain their way of living because the government was taking away their land. The 1932 indigenous massacre revitalized the intellectual mestizaje movement, in an attempt to integrate the indigenous communities to the national project (Soto Quiros and Diaz Arias, 2007).

Honduras. In Honduras, the process of *ladinización* erased the indigenous population that did not belong to the Moskitia coast in the Caribbean. However, indigenous populations were later incorporated in the national narrative with the excavation and restoration of the archaeological site Copán as part of the mestizaje

14

strategy, performed in order to fill a cultural void. The Honduran narrative argued that Maya greatness had disappeared, but some of it remained in the present day mestizos. This movement further minimized indigenous diversity once the country was claimed as absolutely of Maya descent, denying the existence of other ethnicities in the past or present. Honduras also unearthed an indigenous hero, Lempira, who resisted the Spanish conquest, however this hero had no relation to its ethnic group the Lencas who survived the colony, meaning "Lempira was an Indian whose blood ran through the veins of Hondurans, but not in those who were direct descendants of its ethnic group (Soto Quiroz and Diaz Arias, 2007:112)." In 1926 the currency name changed to the fabricated indigenous hero Lempira, a movement, which not only erased the indigenous heritage but also erased the black communities who inhabited the Caribbean Coast. The memorializing of the indigenous hero placed the indigenous people and culture as a thing of the past, meanwhile transforming the indigenous of the present into Ladinos. The final silencing was accomplished in 1943, when the Moskitia department on the Atlantic Coast was renamed Department of Lempira, memorializing once again the disappeared indigenous people as well as denying the existence of any meaningful presence of afro-Caribbean populations (Soto Quiros and Diaz Arias, 2007).

      Costa Rica. In Costa Rica - like the other Central American countries – the Spanish populations settled among indigenous groups resulting in cultural and biological miscegenation as in the neighboring territories. During the 18th century the term "ladino" became the umbrella to designate the great variety of mixtures among indigenous, black and European. By the end of the century mestizos became the majority of the population. Because of the low number of slave imports to Costa Rican territory, there were low

numbers of "pure African" blood engendering a *blanqueamiento* (whitening) understood as the integration or mixture of African blood to non-black populations. The population increase of the 18th century was due to the increase of the mestizo population, and despite the "whitening" process the African component was present and significant (Soto Quiroz and Diaz Arias, 2007).

Foreign writers described the population as white, such argument from the inside was possible due to the increasing ladino group which comprised 60% of the population and lived in the central valley, while blacks and Indians where displaced to the rural areas in the Caribbean and Guanacaste. Due to colonial guidelines discrimination grew at the end of the 18th century. The indigenous groups who survived as an ethnically different group in the central valley were rapidly destroyed and integrated during the introduction of coffee plantations and transformed into peasants. "Hence, the prevailing reality facilitated 'the new emergent social class' far more identified to their Spanish ancestors to impose a vision of their world, reproduced and amplified through the education system (Soto Quiroz and Diaz Arias, 2007:61)." Since 1851 the government started designating the mestizo and criollo population as white, formulating a narrative attempting to create a racially homogenous state, created and based on the self-image of the ruling class. However, it was difficult to fully eliminate the image of the Indian, so they were constructed as something of the past while the remaining indigenous people were placed outside of the nation-state project (outside the central valley) cutting all links with them. The vision of a racially pure (white) national identity persists in Costa Rica (Soto Quiroz and Diaz Arias, 2007).

I consider Soto Quiroz and Diaz Arias to follow along the blanqueamiento argument in the historical development of the nation state in Costa Rica. In my perspective they are not critical enough to notice that just like in the other Central American countries the black and indigenous population mixed with the European engendering mestizos, however neither country constructed a white identity. Their argument or lack thereof seems to support the concept of a racially white majority in Costa Rica.

Guatemala. Guatemala's situation was different from the other Central American countries. Guatemala's indigenous population was larger than any of the other ethnic groups. The segregation policies of the colonial period continued after 1871 to maintain a caste society. Segregation grew stronger with new policies that aimed at the exploitation of the indigenous people and the removal of their land. Simultaneously, the ladino group became the dominant class with the introduction of coffee. In Guatemala three ethnic groups existed: Indians, *Ladinos* and *criollos*[1]. However, between 1839 and 1871 segregation reduced them to two groups: *República de Indios* and *República de no-Indios* (criollos and Ladinos). Such extreme position persisted until the peace accords of 1996. During this period only the Ladinos were considered as part of the nation, even though the government considered the only way to achieve modernity was to "civilize" the Indians. The country was thus divided between a homogenous ladino population and an indigenous population excluded from its citizens' rights. The economic crisis of 1929 evidenced the fragmentation of the nation. The revolution of 1944 was in search of social

---

[1]Criollo was the name given to those who had European parents but were born in the Americas.

justice denied for centuries to indigenous groups, however, this stopped with the 1954

coup (Soto Quiroz and Diaz Arias, 2007).

Nicaraguan History

Nicaragua's construction of the nation-state was conceived into what Trigger

(1984) has called Colonialist archaeology. In the colonies, the colonizers had no reason to

bolster or glorify the local past. In contrast to countries like Honduras, Mexico and El

Salvador, the Nicaraguan national project stressed Indians' simplicity to justify European

domination. Autochthonous people were portrayed as incapable of change and thus

without history (Trigger, 1984:360-363). "Colonialist archaeology… served to denigrate

native societies and peoples by trying to demonstrate that they had been static in

prehistoric times and lacked the initiative to develop on their own (Trigger 1984: 363)."

In the present, this means that indigenous communities remain ignored as they were in

history and in desperate need of integration to the modern Nicaraguan state portrayed in

tourism.

Two external colonizers mark Nicaragua's colonial history and territory: the

Spanish who took over western Nicaragua (Pacific watershed and Northern Highlands),

and the British who dominated the Caribbean divided into Autonomous Region of the

North Atlantic (RAAN) and autonomous Region of the South Atlantic (RAAS) (Figure 1).

The cultural differences between the two colonial powers and the way of control over the

territory continue to divide Nicaragua into "two socio-cultural realities (Cunningham

Kain et all. 2013:6)."

Figure 1: Map of Nicaragua

Great Britain dominated the Caribbean through economic and commercial alliances, acting more as a "protector" power (of their economic interests) creating an indirect rule, in that development emerged the Miskito group - from contact with English pirates and Africans. The British protectorate supported the Miskito expansion in detriment of other ethnic groups who inhabited the Caribbean. Meanwhile, the Spanish

colonized western Nicaragua, which effectively changed the indigenous way of life (Rossbach and Wunderich, 1985).

In 1860 the British government recognized the central government sovereignty over the Caribbean territory through the Managua Treaty, yet it asked for the autonomy of the Caribbean, thereby creating the Moskitia Reserve. The reserve ran from Cabo Gracias a Dios in the border with Honduras to San Juan del Norte (Greytown) in the border with Costa Rica, along the shore with the boundary to the west varying through time. The capital of the Reserve was placed in Bluefields and was directed by a Miskito king. The Managua treaty agreed to give the reserve autonomy (Rossbach and Wunderich, 1985). However, it was not precise how the reserve's autonomy should function creating constant conflict between the western Nicaragua government and the Miskito king. Nevertheless, the continuous conflicts between the two governments over the reserve lasted for 34 years (Rossbach and Wunderich, 1985).

In 1894 the western Nicaraguan government ended the autonomy of the reserve, occupying Bluefields militarily, and deposing the king on February 12th, incorporating it to the country as a department (Rossbach and Wunderich, 1985). The incorporation of the Miskito Reserve was under the control of president José Santos Zelaya, following a nationalist view which ensured, as well, the benefits of the canal route the United States desired to build on the San Juan River; in so doing fulfilling the dream of an integral nation state (Kinloch Tijerino, 1985).

The effects of the reincorporation, as the Nicaraguan government dubbed it, were negative for the inhabitants of the Caribbean and these very much persist: economic stagnation, internal colonization, racism and discrimination. However, according to some

Caribbean writers "The Coast [Caribbean] already feels part of Nicaragua (Brooklin

Rivera cited by Kinloch Tijerino, 1985:58)."

In Nicaragua, the development of the construction of the nation-state is similar to

that of Honduras and El Salvador but profoundly marked by its geographical location

(geopolitics) with the potential construction of the inter-oceanic canal, the permanent

political struggle between the cities of León and Granada, and the struggle for control of

two different colonies. Between 1859 and 1893, the Nicaraguan government attempted

to construct a mestizo national identity, alluding to an ethnically homogenous nation. The

project was more intense on the Pacific littoral and Northern Highlands of the country,

despite the integration of the Miskito Coast in the Caribbean in 1894. Later, in 1893,

during the liberal revolution, the new president and his wealthy liberal constituents

continued this strategy by constructing an image of the backward, primitive and ignorant

Indian. The liberal government tried to convert Indians into *ladinos* and take their

communally-held land (Soto Quiroz and Díaz Arias, 2007). An already strained situation

became more complex when the Miskito coast was "incorporated" into the national

territory in 1894; and again, in 1906 when the government decided to abolish the

indigenous communities. However, this law was later retracted in 1914 by the new

conservative government in order to obtain support by the native groups.

According to Field (1998) the mestizo strategy had some success in Nicaragua

between 1919 and 1922 during the United States invasion, when the indigenous people

and the rest of the population had a sense of unity against the foreign power. This

sentiment was furthered by Augusto C. Sandino's liberation war and his discourse of the

indo-Hispanic race, which eliminated, at least briefly, the construction of separate ladino

and Indian, unifying them in a popular nationalism. Sandino's discourse was a direct

reflection and influence of the "*indigenismo*" movement from Mexico that revalorized the

indigenous heritage. The opposition to the imperial invasion united Nicaraguans. This

was the period when mestizaje became most successful (Soto Quiroz and Díaz Arias,

2007).

From 1933 to 1979, the Somoza dictatorship continued the concept of a

completely mestiza Nicaragua, followed by the Sandinista government from 1979 until

the end of the civil war in 1990. Both Somoza and Sandinista governments took the

position that indigenous people had disappeared by the end of the 19th century (Field,

1998). However, the emergence of indigenous movements after 1990 challenges the idea

that Nicaragua is homogeneously mestiza. But how did this idea persist in Nicaragua?

The promotion of stereotypes of Indians as barbarians and backwards at the end of the

19th century pushed indigenous people to lose their identity markers like language,

clothes, and practices. The detachment of indigenous markers gave the government the

opportunity to take away their land because they were no longer defined as indigenous

(Field, 1998).

Hooker (2005) thoroughly defined three different versions of the mestizo national

identity in 20th century Nicaragua, which placed indigenous communities in the past and

silences them in the present: Vanguardismo, Sandinismo and "mestizo multiculturalism"

(Hooker, 2005:15).

Vanguardismo, a poetic movement of the 1930s, identified Nicaragua as an indo-

Hispanic country; influenced by the *Indigenismo* movement of Mexico it reevaluated the

role of indigenous communities, yet underplayed its position. Vanguardismo represented

the conquest as a friendly encounter, and the mestizo the product of the vigorous male Spaniards and passive indigenous females, thus justifying the power and control of mestizos (Hooker, 2005).

Sandinistas ideology between the 1960s and 1970s rejected the friendly encounter of the conquest, acknowledging the violence and aggression required for such enterprise. Sandinistas underscored the importance of the indigenous in the mestizo culture and identity, rejecting the naturalized power hierarchy and delegitimizing the control of the elite. However, Sandinismo assumed as well that indigenous populations had disappeared in the 19th century, thus supporting the understanding of Nicaragua as a mestizo nation. Nicaragua had an indigenous past but a mestizo present. Sandinismo searched for anti-imperialist struggles in history, while denying issues of race and gender, assuming that land struggles were related only to class issues: "Sandinismo found an 'authentic' Nicaraguan identity rooted in indigenous resistance to imperialism and class exploitation, but this new nation was still mestizo (Hooker, 2005:31)."

Mestizo multiculturalism developed in the 1990s, recognizing the presence of various cultural and racial groups in the Caribbean but maintaining the ones in the Pacific watershed and the central highlands without recognition or rights, converting the country into mestizo precisely because of the nation's diversity. Such recognition followed in 1986 after the Caribbean communities demanded rights to self-government, multicultural citizenship, maintaining cultural identity, organizing under their cultural traditions, and holding communal lands. While mestizo multiculturalism seems to acknowledge diversity and accepts that Nicaragua is a multicultural state, the government has not fully implemented those rights. Furthermore, those rights were not

given to indigenous groups in the Northern Highlands or Pacific watershed (Hooker, 2005). Hooker (2005:33) argues that denying the existence of black and indigenous groups reinforces the power structures with mestizos at the top of the hierarchy, hence removing all meaning from multiculturalist claims. Even when multiculturalism is accepted, the Nicaraguan elites considers mestizo to be the largest group of the population, therefore, the most important.

Indigenous communities in Western Nicaragua

In many Latin American countries the pre-colonial cultures have been studied through different means: archaeology, history, linguistic and cultural anthropology. In Nicaragua, as I mentioned earlier archaeological research is limited at best, thus relying mostly in ethno-historical evidence of Frays and conquistador's documents of the varied populations. This is furthered limited to mostly western Nicaragua, as the Caribbean territory was only later explored and colonized.

The indigenous groups in Nicaragua are broadly divided into those with Mesoamerican characteristics located in Western Nicaragua and those with cultural affiliations to the South American Chibchas, inhabiting the forests of the Caribbean (Newson, 1987). It is important to note this geographical distribution given it continues to play an important role in current Nicaraguan politics: the west is civilized - mestizo, while the indigenous and afro-descendant communities inhabit the Caribbean. Western Nicaragua at the time of contact was inhabited by three major groups: Chorotegas,

24

Maribio and Nahuat-Pipil. These groups organized in chiefdoms, practiced intensive agriculture, and complex rituals around temples and idols (Newson, 1987). In general government, scientists and intellectuals perceive them as more complex than the populations to the east (Newson, 1987: 48). I consider this interpretation to be a current representation of the Caribbean, rooted in racist policies of colonial times, not an accurate analysis of archaeological or even current cultures of the Caribbean territory.

The Sumu, Matagalpa, Rama, Jicaque, Paya and Lenca are the largest groups who inhabited the Caribbean. Historians characterized these groups as tribes, egalitarian and described them as not possessing complex religious systems. They practiced agriculture but relied heavily in hunting and gathering, and fishing as well (Newson, 1987).

After the conquest and under the Spanish crown many indigenous groups disappeared. The death toll while not accurately determined rises to the hundreds of thousands in Central America due to diseases and "systematic killing, overwork, and ill-treatment (Newson, 1987:11)." Those who survived were later integrated into the nation-state systems, while the ones who died were somewhat replaced with the introduction of African slaves.

In Nicaragua as in many other Central American countries, governments used the extinction of indigenous languages to argue the disappearance of indigenous communities; although this is an important blow to indigenous culture, it did not mean their destruction. It did not mean either that they became ethnically mestizos. Nicaraguan intellectuals considered this to be the case, conceptualizing identity in narrow terms of language and blood "purity" (Gould, 1998:8). Yet, in the 19th century

25

dress, customs, housing and the way of production were some of the markers outsiders

and government officials used to separate indigenous people from ladinos and mestizos.

In 1890 the identity markers of indigenous people were clear: dressing, language,

and social organization differently from those of the mestizos. They practiced slash and

burn agriculture, hunting, crafts and communal cattle raising (Gould, 1998). According to

Gould (1998:3), it was their struggle for survival against the nation state and the crown

that kept the indigenous ethnicity alive, not specific traits like language or dress.

The myth of the ethnically homogenous country has furthered the destruction of

indigenous communities. The process of mestizaje during the second half of the 19ᵗʰ

century and the first half of the 20ᵗʰ century saw the explosion of multiple fronts like the

church, the state, liberal and conservative politicians, intellectuals and the elite in order

to, if necessary, forcibly integrate indigenous people to agricultural capitalism.

> That process combined real violence – land expropriation and coerced labor – and the
> symbolic violence that discredited indigenous identity, exacerbated cultural
> alienation, ad enhanced the elites' claim to rule the nation. Both forms of violence
> were mutually supportive, for the rejection of an indigenous and the acceptance of a
> mestizo Nicaraguan identity usually involved the withdrawal of claims to communal
> land and a loss of community-level political and cultural autonomy (Gould, 1998:9).

Indigenous people have an important role in the political and economic activity of

the country from 1850 until the 1920's which has been silenced; such silencing was

accomplished only after several years of violence over indigenous culture and land: by

1920 the indigenous communities of western Nicaragua did not have any of the external

ethnic markers intellectuals and government officials expected to separate from

mestizos. According to Gould (1998:18): "the community evolved into the last ethnic 'marker' for many Indians. Membership in a Nicaraguan Comunidad during the early decades of this century entailed notions of group endogamy, common origins, land rights, religious and political autonomy, and a bitter history of conflict with ladino neighbors." Simultaneously, the term mestizo (the biological mixture of European and indigenous) became the term which represented the entire nation, indicating the successful process of mestizaje – the myth of Nicaragua mestiza – making any claim of indigenous identity, ethnicity or community illegitimate.

Up to 1990 such claims, of the existence of indigenous communities in Western Nicaragua were considered illegitimate and continue to be for the majority of Nicaraguans and politicians. These communities became more "visible" when nine leaders of communities that identify as indigenous got together to create a federation to organize the indigenous communities of Western Nicaragua (Gould,1997). Around 1993 Membreño Idiaquez documented around 15 indigenous communities in seven different departments in western Nicaragua.

According to the census data from 2005, the results indicate that out of the total national territory of 130,373 square kilometers, 49.3% belongs to indigenous territory divided in 48,399 square kilometers in the Caribbean, 14,003 square kilometers in the Central Highlands and 64,305 square kilometers in the Pacific watershed (Censo, 2005). In terms of population, the census from 2005 yielded a total population of 5,142,098, with 443,387 (8.6%) belonging to the seven ethnic groups and two afro-descendant communities, divided as follow: Miskito, Mayagna-Sumu, Rama, Chorotega, Nahoa, Cacaopera, Xiu-Sutiava, Creole or Kriol and Garifunas (Censo, 2005), (Table 1).

Community	Origin	Language	Departments they inhabit	Population (2005 census)
Miskito	Chibcha	Miskito	RAAN, RAAS, Jinotega	120,817
Sumu-Mayagna	Not discussed	Sumu	RAAN, RAAS, Jinotega	9,756
Garifuna	Arawak, Caribs and African	Garifuna, creole English and Spanish	RAAS	450,000 estimated around the world
Creole-Kriol	Not discussed	Mixture of English, African and Indigenous languages	RAAS, RAAN	19,890
Rama	Not discussed	Rama and Kriol	RAAS	4,185
Chorotegas	Mangue	Some Chorotega and Spanish	Madriz, Nueva Segovia, Jinotega, Matagalpa, Chinandega, Masaya	46,002
Cacaoperas	Not discussed	Some Ulua and Spanish	Matagalpa	15,240
Xiu/Hocan Xiu/Ocanxiu/ Sutiava	Not discussed	Some Hokan and Spanish	Chinandega and León	19,949
Nahoas/Nicarao/ Nahualt	Not discussed	Nahualt and Spanish	Rivas, Matagalpa, Jinotega	11,113

Tabla 1. Ethnic groups of Nicaragua. This information may vary depending on the source. http://www.pueblosindigenaspcn.net/

Back in 1987 the Sandinista government established the Autonomy statute

regulating the ethnic groups that inhabit the Caribbean, this and other laws the

Sandinista government established in the 1980s did not address the ethnic communities

of Western Nicaragua, indicating the out-of-sight condition of these groups in

government policies since the 1900s. According to Membreño Idiaquez (1993:148) it

suggests that:

>one, the ethnic groups from the PyCN[2] did not have the geopolitical importance that for several reasons the ethnic groups from the Atlantic did receive: two, the highest functionaries in the Sandinista government were not completely convinced the ethnic communities from the PyCN were really ethnic communities, therefore, did not merit special treatment, as they had done with the communities in the Atlantic.

The recognition of the ethnic groups of the Caribbean was a geopolitical strategy,

given that the United States government used the demands from these ethnic groups to

destabilize the Sandinista government. In order to deal with this situation, the Sandinista

government established the autonomy statute for the Caribbean of Nicaragua. A large

number of members of the party believed that peasants from the PyCN identifying as

indigenous was opportunistic to earn (undeserved) benefits.

>these communities, unlike the Miskitos, Sumus or Ramas communities, did not possess the characteristics that seemed to be present in authentic ethnic communities: racial phenotype (skin color, etc), other than whites or mestizos, speaking a language other than Spanish, having communal lands in opposition to private property, inhabiting the forest or semi-forested regions, hunting and gathering with rudimentary tools (bow and arrow, etc.), etc. (Memebreño Idiaquez, 1993:149).

---

[2] It refers to the ethnic groups who inhabit the Pacific watershed, Central and Northern Highlands, today it organizes some of those ethnic groups under the name PyCN.

The government perceived these communities should be treated as different
socioeconomic class like peasants or artisans. National intellectuals shared this
perception, as well. Historians and anthropologists believed these communities if not
destroyed during the colonial period, disintegrated with the cultural and demographic
changes brought about with the introduction of agrarian capitalism. Then the ethnic
communities from the Caribbean took a similar position, considering those groups'
claims are illegitimate given they are mestizos.
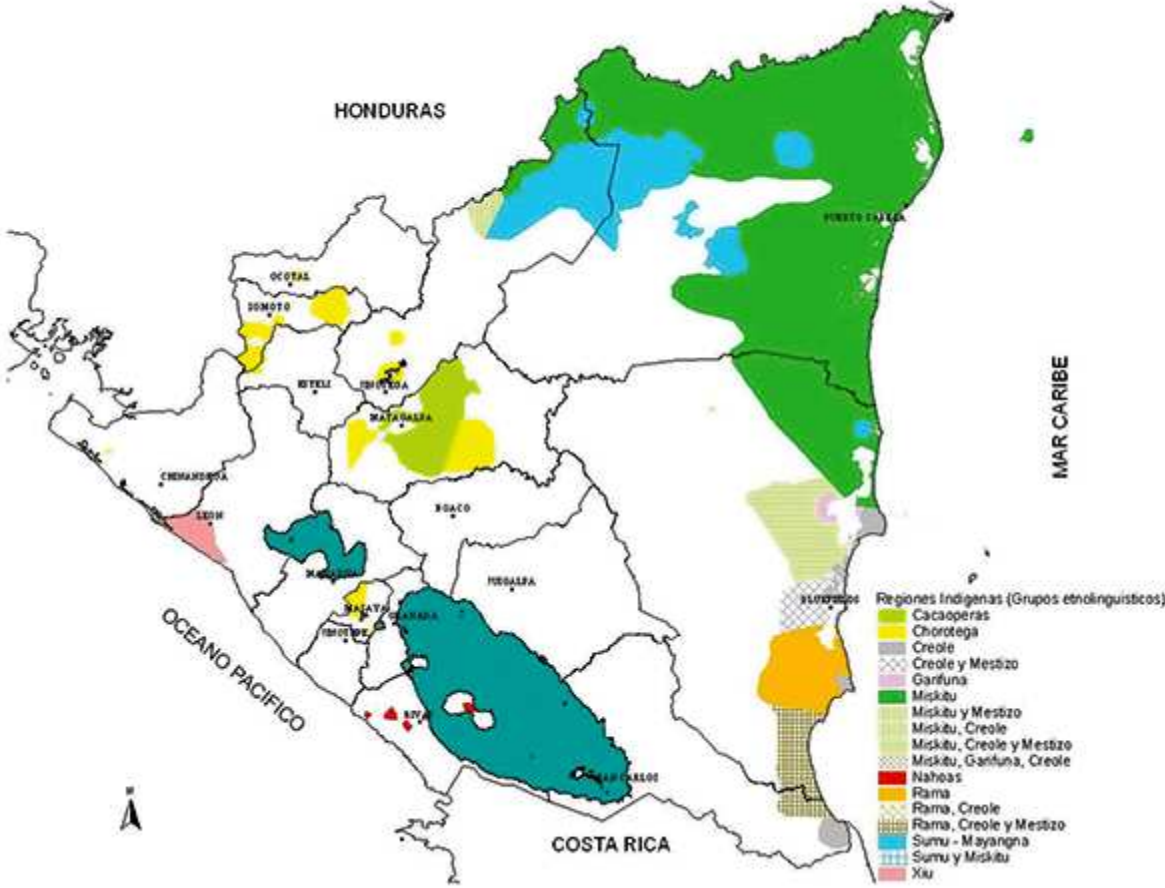
Figure 2: Map of the location of indigenous groups in Nicaragua:
http://www.pueblosindigenaspcn.net/component/content/article/84-caracteristicas-
socioculturales-de-los-pueblos-indigenas-del-Pacifico-centro-y-norte.html

Direct and indirect forms of discrimination still surround these communities arresting their development, however, any form of justice would require the acknowledgment of their ethnic identities and historical attempt of survival and recognition.

Terminology

This research discusses the subject of identity, mainly of mestizo and indigenous populations. Race and ethnicity play an important role in the identities in Nicaragua today, as they did in the past. As such a brief discussion of these terms and how they change through time, as concerned how Nicaraguans perceive them are crucial for this study. I start with the biological concept of race and how it changes though time. Then I discuss the term ethnicity. Finally, I examine how these two terms are used in Nicaragua.

The term race has been in use since the 1700s in the western hemisphere. Initially, this referred to a group of people with a common ancestor, associated to family lineage; a concept that did not take relevance to external physical characteristics like skin or eye color. Around the same time, the botanist Linnaeus already considered cultural aspects like attitude and body paint as one with biological characteristics, like being tall and having "red skin". However, western Europeans since early times considered black populations as inferior. Especially the English considered themselves superior based on their knowledge of Roman and Greek culture, the beginning of capitalism, the accumulation of private property and private wealth in contrast to communal living and

practices (Wade, 2000). Christian versus non-Christian also played a role in separating

Europeans from other groups even if their concept of race was not so clear.

In the 1800s scientists deemed groups of human beings to be different because of

their race given that they showed innate characteristics that were transmitted from one

generation to the next. It was then that different types of races were considered to be

evolving towards a superior stage, with Europeans at the top of the ladder (Wade, 2000);

in this period race considered biological and cultural aspects as one and the same. What

was considered to be their race

In the 1860s the abolition of slave trade and later of slavery, saw the rise in new

race groups based on religion and new theories to justify the control over Africans,

Asians and Native Americans. Such theories were then based on (what where perceived

to be) innate characteristics supported by scientific facts. These ideas were coupled with

imperialism, which also attempted to justify violence against "uncivilized" groups (Wade,

2000).

In the 20th century, scientific racism introduced eugenics. With Darwin's theory of

evolution, races were understood as not innate, instead, populations change through time

adapting to their environment, but these theories were not completely understood.

Scientists adapted them to social Darwinism where superior groups were deemed fit to

control less developed groups. This century saw contradictions in the concept of race:

Franz Boas challenged the concept of race and Mendel's discoveries challenged the idea

that the characteristics transmitted from one generation to the next were immutable

(Liss, 1998). Boas believed there were differences between races, but these did not mean

one was superior over the other; thus, all races were equally capable. The development of

certain groups beyond others was determined, instead, by their local evolution, history and contact with others groups (Liss, 1998).

By the second half of the 20th century, the consequences of the black social movement in the United States, the racist Nazi regime in Germany and the Second World War finally ended scientific racism, this became explicit in the UNESCO declaration stating all human races are equal and the physical differences do not indicate a difference in intelligence (Wade, 2000). By this time, most scientists concluded that races in biological terms do not exist but in reality are social concepts. "The notion that races exist and are clear physical characteristics, and even that some are superior to others is the result of historical processes which, can be argued, originated in the colonization by Europeans of other parts of the world (Wade, 2000:21)." Race is a social construct, real in as much they affect people in their everyday lives.

The term ethnicity appears in academia after World War II, however, it derives from the Greek word *ethnos,* which means nation. Ethnicity refers to the cultural differences, establishing the borders between a social group and another, while race focuses on the external physical characteristics. Groups may establish cultural differences, or create a sense of solidarity to achieve certain goals, either control of resources or gain political power, contrasting to the idea that ethnicity is a basic human need to identify and separate from other groups (Wade, 2000).

Ethnicity may also refer to the cultural differences but associated to a specific geographical place, being born in Nicaragua, instead of Costa Rica. People use it to determine differences and similarities. Ethnic identity is not unique or stable but rather flexible and fluid contingent on the context.

Ethnicity has become more relevant given globalization has increased the contact between people from different regions, coupled with nationalism, the effects of colonialism and migration intensified the feelings of belonging somewhere in order to leave others outside (Wade, 2000). Just like the term race, its development depends on a particular history.

Although we can consider race to be in terms of biology and ethnicity about culture, in everyday live these are not so clear, and the way ethnicity has come to replace the use of the term race makes it even more complex. For example: if "phenotypical features used in the racial discourse are distributed along a specific area", meaning "it is possible to build an ethnic identity within a racial category (Wade, 2000:30)." In Latin America the miscegenation process between blacks, Indians and Spanish mixed the biological aspects (race) with culture and geography (ethnicity) making it more difficult to separate the different "races" from ethnic groups.

In Latin America the social sciences consider the study of black populations through the lens of race, while research on the indigenous groups is done through the framework of ethnicity, based mainly on the idea that indigenous characteristics are not related to phenotypical features, but cultural ones like clothing and language. However, in colonial times the indigenous groups were viewed as another race.

After independence the state of Nicaragua conceived the indigenous and black populations as racial groups, who did not fit in the recently constructed mestizo country (Hooker, 2012). The large geographical areas where black and indigenous population persisted after independence, the government classified them as savage and uncivilized. The new fragile nation in order to represent itself to the exterior had to face the question

if it was a white, black, Indian or mestizo nation, "which was crucial for its prestige in the international hierarchy of nations (Hooker, 2012:332)." This was the base for the construction of the nation – Nicaragua defined itself as mestiza in contrast to the black and indigenous populations - in order to belong to the western civilized nations.

The presence as well as the political power of indigenous groups in the central highlands and black and indigenous populations in Caribbean did not fit the racist idea that only white people could be civilized and able to have political power. This argument justified the control of the territory and the populations within it. Their territories were considered Nicaraguan but their populations were considered as "outside" of the nation because indigenous and blacks "were not fit for citizenship (Hooker, 2012:342)."

As I will discuss below, the state continues to maintain a racist position towards afro-descendant communities and indigenous populations with a mestizo perspective where non-mestizos population have little to no political power.

Discrimination in Nicaragua separates the country into two geographical spaces: the Pacific (watershed) and the Caribbean, considering indigenous and afro-descendants as the other. It also fails to recognize the existence of indigenous groups in the Pacific watershed and Central Highlands (Cunningham Kain et all. 2013). This argument is important to the conclusions in this research. Colonial racist policies continue to shape the attitude and access of non-mestizos populations in Nicaragua. The increase of tourism, economic dependency, coupled with the government representation of a mestizo nation recreate the uneven colonial relationships reinforcing racism placing whites and mestizos on top.

Throughout the dissertation, the people I talked to use the term "tradition", which I followed as well. Tradition commonly refers to an "inherited body of customs and beliefs (Handler and Linnekin 1984:273)" that are constantly changing. Nevertheless, tradition is an interpretation of the past in the present, characterized by continuity and discontinuity. Cultural representations take into account prior or past cultural symbols giving tradition continuity, but the understanding of continuity is made in the present (Handler and Linnekin 1984:273). Thus, I use the term and consider that others used it as what the people I interviewed perceive to be currently local or Nicaraguan cultural customs and games, in opposition mainly to foreign customs like Halloween, video games or soccer.

Also, the terms Indian and indigenous are used throuhgout the dissertation. In my argument I used the term indigenous, but many of the interviewees used the term Indian which I quote directly. I use the term indigenous given the negative connotation indian carries from colonial times to the present. In western Nicaragua, calling a person Indian is an insult in most contexts, but indigenous individuals clarified that many indigenous people themselves use the term Indian because it is the term they do know and recognize, while indigenous carries no meaning.

Methodology

This research primarily attempts to determine the effects of tourism on identity. As a Nicaraguan and a professional archaeologist I noted the lack of interest in archaeological research on the prehistory of the country, as well as, the great emphasis

36

tourism and government investment placed on historical or colonial sites as destinations. It did not only involve the government, but the population neglected, forgot or plainly rejected their indigenous and African past. Although, the majority of the population is mestizo according to census data, their multi-ethnic background is not relevant, underscoring the fact that issues of identity are not openly discussed in western Nicaragua. I identify myself as mestiza with indigenous, afro-descendant and white ancestors but with little knowledge of indigenous or African culture - past or present. It begs the questions, why did my relatives not transmit their customs through the generations? And having gorwn up in Managua why some traditions were transmitted (chosen) over others?

Hypothesiszing that this may be a reflection of colonial racism, I intended to analyze the effects of a continuous representation of Nicaraguans as mestizos to tourists and Nicaraguans. Thus, I initially wanted to do my fieldwork in the first two Spanish colonial cities of the country: León (Viejo) and Granada because of the importance of cultural tourism in the latter and the first for its rank as a World Heritage Site. My intention to work in León Viejo and Granada was to compare locals' and tourists' perspectives of the tourism narrative around these heritage sites and the way it affected the locals' identity.

I began with archival research at Instituto de Historia de Nicaragua y Centro America (Institute of History of Nicaragua and Central America) in order to search for information relevant to the development of Nicaraguan identity as well as the development of indigenous identity among the groups in the territory.

37

After two months of archival research I moved to Granada for nine months. There I lived with an extended Granadino family in the old Indian barrio of Xalteva. I started to do interviews in the Convent Museum San Francisco so people could feel more comfortable talking to a stranger. As the number of interviews grew the direction of the research switched, I became more interested in talkingwith local Granadinos than tourists because there was more depth to the question of what characterizes mestizo characterizes mestizos, their identity or the lack thereof in the population. These new questions took me outside the Convent and into interviewing artisans, teachers, tour operators, other institution's personnel and street vendors. I also looked for indigenous people in Granada to corroborate Field's argument that Nicaragua is not a completely mestizo country. However, I was not able to find them, not in the center of the city nor the outskirts of Granada where artisans are relegated.

At the end of the nine months I moved to León Viejo. León Viejo is a small town with few tourists (national or international), despite its classification as a World Heritage Site. I started interviews with the guides of the site, the local families, people who had worked there temporarily, teachers and the elderly of the town. However, for some reason I still cannot explain I could not get the population to open up to me. They refused to speak about the subject of identity, they told me about their lives in the town but when it came to their identification they answered they did not know about that subject. In April of 2014 an earthquake of 6.2 in the Richter scale hit west Managua and León Viejo with the epicenter in the Momotombo volcano just a few kilometers away from León Viejo. Because of the difficulties conducting interviews with the population, dangers of

continuing the earthquakes and the possibilities of a volcanic eruption I went back to Granada.

I moved back to my old Granadino family and continued to interview the local population. Because Granada and the main tourist center is located downtown – in the old Colonial center – it is where I focused my interviews. There I found a complex connection between the mestizo identity, colonial Granada, tourism and the government tourism narratives.

In my search for indigenous people I contacted the Consejo Nacional de Pueblos Indigenas del Pacífico, Centro y Norte (National Council of Indigenous People of the Pacific, Center and Northern Highlands). During a meeting in the city of Masaya I was able to talk to seven indigenous people from four different indigenous communities who belong to the council. My interviews with them focused on issues mainly on identity and the effects of tourism within their territories and at the national level.

Overall I conducted over 50 structured interviews plus 20 more unstructured interviews. I participated in several of the museum activities with children, large tour-operator visits at the museum, cultural city events, and touristic events like the International Festival of Poetry. Living with a granadino family also provided important insight when I asked about places or people to visit for the research. Several discussions arose when I asked about indigenous people in the area and the complex Spanish heritage Granadinos have. Similarly, I had relevant conversations with people in the Convent mainly about the perception of the Granadinos and their pride. Living and sharing in the center of the city helped to take in the behaviors of Granadinos in the city,

in touristic places and outside of them – those places only Granadinos visit and know about.

To continue this research in the future I believe it is necessary to move forward into the market, the outskirts of the city where most of the population with less access live, as well as visit the communities who live nearby in the islets to understand their perspective of who they are and how tourism and its narratives affect them.

Granada es Nicaragua, el Resto es Monte!

From my experience, Granada is bourgeois, to put it in words, and is very different from the rest of Nicaragua, the rest of Nicaragua doesn't see itself that way, it is not the same identity, if you visit León or another colonial city it doesn't feel the same. Maybe because Granada was the first [Spanish] city of power in Nicaragua which has lasted among generations, families and the society (Interview with Leilani).

Granadino prides himself in being cultivated because the greatest intellectuals, presidents, statisticians, and personalities come from Granada, it raises our profile. But if we look closely there is great deficiency now, el Granadino doesn't read, doesn't listen to jazz or blues, doesn't visit art exhibitions, [or] support its folklore or traditions (Interview with Robert).

Francisco Hernández de Córdoba built the Spanish city in 1524, one of the oldest colonial cities on the continent. Despite several attempts to destroy it in 1665 and 1685 by Henry Morgan, and finally in 1858 by William Walker, Granada still stands. The city was an important economic center for its privileged location on the shores of Lake Nicaragua – connecting the city to the Atlantic Ocean via the San Juan River. During colonial times and after the independence in 1821, Granada was a flourishing port,

becoming "Spain's showcase for elegant colonial buildings and high society (Hardman, 2010: 30)."

Les Field's debunking of the myth of mestizo Nicaragua – the historical construction that insisted indigenous people had disappeared in the 19th century in western Nicaragua - led me to question how this played out in Granada and if I could find people who self-identified as indigenous, where the Spaniards' architecture and history has underscored a colonial mestizo identity. I chose Granada as my field site because of its historical importance during the colonial period, as one of the first cities built in the territory and its economic relevance as a lacustrine port with access to the Caribbean. Although, much of its economic relevance has subsided in terms of industry and agriculture, Granada is placed ahead- again – as a must visit place in Nicaraguan tourism. The relevance of Granada as research site is due to its history and colonial architecture – a palpable representation of Spanish dominance – currently the main stage for cultural tourism in Nicaragua.

The department of Granada comprises a territory of 1,039.68 square kilometers, divided into five municipalities: Granada, Nandaime, Diriomo, and Diriá (Instituto Nacional de Información de Desarrollo, N/D). The national census of 2005 calculated the population of the Department of Granada at 168.186 inhabitants, with a mostly rural population, with people between the ages of 15 and 64 representing 59.9% of the population (Instituto Nacional de Información de Desarrollo, N/D). Growing tourism is shows significant tendencies in the economy of the city. In 1995 the tertiary sector was the largest in the department with a 46.5% and the Primary as the second largest. In 2005 the secondary sector rose to the second position and the tertiary increased to a

54.1% taking the first position. The growth in the sector is due to the increase in commerce and tourism[3] (Instituto Nacional de Información de Desarrollo, N/D: 43).

Today, Granada is an important tourist destination in Nicaragua because its architecture reflects part of the colonial history of the country. The center of the town maintains the colonial mansions with façades and red roof tiles, while the abundance of Catholic cathedrals and churches are evidence of the Spanish socio-cultural power over the region (Figure 3).

Figure 3. View of downtown Nicaragua. Photo taken by the author

---

[3] The economic sectors are divided in three: primary – agriculture, cattle raising, fishing, and forestry. Secondary – mining, manufacture industry and construction. Tertiary – electricity, water, commerce, transportation and communication, financing establishments, communal social and personal services (Instituto Nacional de Información de Desarrollo, N/D).

Tourists visit the city to observe the Spanish buildings, view the interior house-gardens, and experience the friendly people. Furthermore, one can revisit colonial times, claims the Nicaraguan Institute of Tourism, by doing a buggy tour along the colonial streets (Instituto Nicragüense de Turismo, 2012). Granada offers the tourists several colonial places to visit like the National palace, Casa de los Leónes, the central park, the cathedral, the convent and San Francisco church where the city's museum is located, its folklore related to Catholic events, and some food delicacies like the famous *vigorón*[4].

An increasing number of European and United States citizens have moved to Granada, attracted by the beauty and low prices; currently, many of the downtown colonial houses, hotels and restaurants are owned by foreigners (Babb, 2004). While strolling around town, there are few hints to the pre-conquest inhabitants of the locality of Granada. Its history, as presented by the Nicaraguan tourism institute, starts at the construction of the Spanish city by Hernández de Córdoba in 1524. The history of the population of Xalteva the old Indian barrio's history is ignored. Even when the Xalteva barrio exists in the city and a large Catholic Church and plaza dominate the view, the indigenous history is pushed out of sight. Tourists do not get to hear or read about the pre-colonial populations. Because of the subject of my research on identity I decided to use as a key research site the Museum Convento San Francisco located one block east from the central park - the local Granada museum – which centers on the history of the city (Figure 4).

---

[4] Pork rind and manioc with salad, served on plantain leaves

The museum also provided a place where visitors could feel safe in a comfortable space to sit down and to talk to a stranger.

According to the narrative guides provide to tourists, the Convent was founded by the first congregation of *San Francisco de Asis* in 1529 under the name of Convent of the Immaculate Conception, later controlled by the Dominican congregation and finally by

Figure 4. View of San Francisco Church, located next to the Museum of the same name. Photo taken by the author.

Fray Bartolome de Las Casas[5]. In 1830 all religious congregations were banned from Central America because the new independent nations initiated with a liberal

---

[5] Fray Bartolome de Las Casas was a central figure in colonial policy changes for a better treatment of indigenous people, resulting in the later capture and exploitation of African slaves (Martinez Diaz, 1986).

perspective trying to diminish the control of the church over the population. Thus, the building was used as a university, then a school (which later became a vocational center) and as a hospital during the national war (1856-1858). It was abandoned for several years and finally restored in 1989 under Swedish funding and used as a museum. The San Francisco church, located right next to the convent, is part of the original building. Currently, the National Institute of Culture (INC) manages the museum, while the church is under the Granada diocese.

The museum was built originally with adobe, volcanic rocks, and *talpuja[6]*. It was designed with a colonial style of several patios connected through corridors to one another. The current museum entrance is a small patio with one of the walls decorated with representations of the different historical periods of the city. This area connects to the central patio through a lounge used to control the access to the museum. The central patio now holds the museum surrounded by the corridor with seven rooms. The management offices are located on the north side of the main patio. On the east side of the main patio is an even larger patio with an unused bar, the local library and the exposition of the pre-colonial basalt statues. To the south of the main patio is the San Francisco church. The museum is located around the central patio adorned with Cuban palm trees and a fountain, the rooms around it contain the different expositions: the first contains itinerary expositions and can be empty for large parts of the year. The second room exposes different religious effigies, mostly saints that were excavated during the last renovation of the museum. The third room exposes a large model of the city of

---

[6] Talpuja: Soft volcanic tephra, white in color.

Granada, accompanied with several historical pictures of the city and important historical members of Granada society. The next room is the archaeological room with an exposition of two indigenous games *el palo volador* and *tepenaguazape*, then the visitor can observe the different ceramic types for the different pre-colonial periods between 500 B.C to 1500 A.D. Moving towards the back patio is another room with an exposition of metates and the only room with brief information on the use of metates. At the end of this room is the exhibition of about 20 basalt statues discovered on the islets in the Nicaragua Lake; the only information about the statues is the relative date of its "discovery" by Ephraim Squier. Nontheless, the local population who led Squier to the locations from which he removed them knew the archaeological sites and statues.

The museum was a starting point to talk to visitors interested in the history of the city, but around town are several other places to visit. The central park with the cathedral, surrounded with hotels, bars, restaurants, souvenir shops and street vendors (Figure 5). From the park moving towards the Lake is *La Calzada* street recently closed down for a pedestrian street full of bars, restaurants, clubs, hotels, hostels, guest houses, street vendors, arts and crafts sellers, beggars, art stores, Spanish schools, tour operators, etc.

Tourists can also visit the old market, not only to see the vendors with fresh foods but also the old market building, an historical edifice. The old train station, recently rebuilt to house a technical college, and as part of the reconstruction of downtown for tourism purposes. *La Casa de los Tres Mundos* another historical building, today a cultural house and art school, where tourist can view plays, paintings and other forms of art usually for free or for nominal prices.

The Lake is very accessible with a new walking path to the pier, where tourists can feel the breeze of the Lake, go into the water, kayak or visit some of the 365 islets. Some of the islets are now privately owned with hotels and restaurants. Granada provides a great variety of opportunities for all kinds of tourists and price ranges.

Granada continues to enjoy a great location, as it did in the past because itconnects to other important tourist destinations in Nicaragua: Mombacho volcano, Ometepe Island and San Juan del Sur. Mombacho volcano watches over the city and it offers one of the two cloud forests on the Pacific watershed.
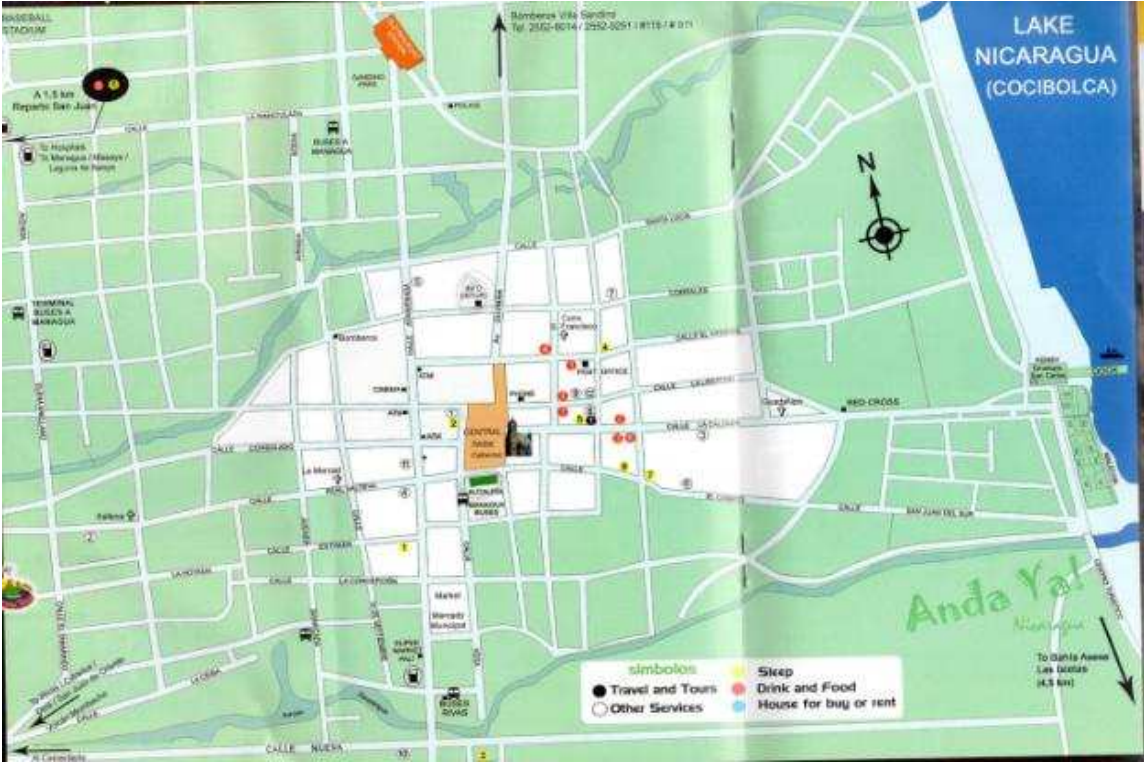

Figure 5. Tourist map of Granada. Magazine Anda Ya!

Visitors come here for its hiking trails in the cloud forest, the spectacular views – in clear days- of the Lake, Granada city and other views, and the unique volcano flora and

fauna. Several tour operators offer visits to the volcano and zip lining on its hillside. From the Granada port, tourist can take a boat to visit Omepete Island. The island is of volcanic origin with two volcanoes, one active (Concepción) and the other dormant (Maderas)–. Tourists also visit Ometepe for hiking trails around the volcanoes or hikes to the top. The water is good and so are the beaches for visitors to jump in the water. Today the island is a biological reserve and its forests are protected. Granada is halfway from the capital and San Juan del Sur, a new surf hub. Although San Juan offers many adventure activities, most tourists go to enjoy the beach, the water, surf, fishing and other related activities.

Despite the increasing number of tourists and promotion of Granada as the must-see-place of Nicaraguan cultural, the history remains of the colonial past and mestizo culture. Very little is known about Granada before the conquest and the construction of the Spanish city. One of the few investigations attempting to go back beyond colonial history is an archaeological project initiated in 2008 by the University of Calgary. A group of national and international archaeologists started excavations at the site of Tepetate on the shores of Lake Nicaragua, next to the modern city of Granada. The site of Tepetate is believed to be the indigenous town of Xalteva during the Spanish contact (McCafferty, 2009). From previous surveys, the site of Tepetate was estimated to be a large and important Chorotega site extant at the time of contact. The project's objective was to increase understanding about the migration from central and southern Mexico of the Chorotega and Nicarao people to the Pacific watershed of Nicaragua. However, given the advanced looting of the site and lack of evidence of Spanish contact, excavations moved to the site of El Rayo (McCafferty, 2009).

Excavations at the site of Tepetate yielded an occupation around 900 to 1250 A.D., unexpectedly pre-dating the contact period by 200-300 years. A later occupation is possible, but this evidence came from surface material. Furthermore, looting, development and soil acidity heavily affected the evidence from the excavation.

In 2009, excavations started at El Rayo in order to determine the presence of ethnic markers of cultural groups migrating from Mesoamerica to Nicaragua. The site El Rayo is also located on the shores of the Lake near Granada, but about 20 kilometers away from the city. El Rayo is a multi-component site containing a cemetery and a domestic context associated with a shrine and several burial urns independent from the cemetery. The site is dated to an occupation from 300 to 1350 A.D. Excavations at El Rayo are ongoing, but apart from these research activities few systematic investigations have taken place. It is important to note that the government has not invested in the project in any manner whatsoever.

One small project the government did fund was the San Pedro site in the department of Granada, on the shores of the Lake Nicaragua. The site was discovered in 1992 due to the denunciation of looting. Emergency excavation started in 1998 in areas that were deemed preserved. The dig lasted a month from August to September, with an area of 60 square meters and following natural stratification. San Pedro yielded domestic contexts associated to trash middens, isolated burials and a cemetery. According to ceramic typology the site was occupied between 1350-1550 A.D. (Espinoza Perez, Garcia Vasquez and Saganuma, 1999).

Despite the abundant archaeological evidence in Granada and surrounding areas, well documented mainly by Ephraim Squier in his book *Nicaragua; its People, Scenery,*

Monuments and the Proposed Interoceanic Canal with Numerous Original Maps and

Illustrations of 1852, he describes abundant archaeological sites in the islets of the

Nicaraguan Lake; islets from which he removed several basalt statues on display today at

the Convento San Francisco Museum in the city of Granada (Figure 5).

Given the importance of Squire's book – especially for its study on the

interoceanic canal – is not possible for the government to claim ignorance about the

plentiful archaeological and indigenous evidence in Granada. Tourism is one of the

Figure 6. Basalt statues from zapatera Island. Photo taken by the author

enterprises that can put in motion the interest if not of archaeological research per se, at least of some insipient archaeological tourism; nevertheless to date, this angle has been neglected by the government and the private sector.

CHAPTER II. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION,

DISCOURSE AND TOURISM NARRATIVES

I don't know if it's the educational agenda from MINED or the transformation of values in the society making the youth not feel identified [culturally]. Our labor is to reinforce national identity through the research and lectures on Granada traditions specifically on intangible heritage, which is what people usually don't really identify with. People understand better the historical buildings, but when we talk about the dances, riddles, sayings they know them but don't identify with them. They think identity is visiting the islets [in the Nicaragua Lake], visiting [the] Mombacho [volcano], the historical buildings but not beyond that.

[Some] foreigners know more about what [traditions] characterizes each department; mainly what [tourism] marketing focuses on. On Wednesdays what we do with the children is take the tour around the museum, we explain to them the difference between the tangible heritage like the pottery or basalt statues. Then later we talk about intangible heritage and read legends. We interact with them [asking] what they know about their ancestors, what have their grandparents told them. Then we play with "el bolero, el yoyo" to recover traditional children games because with globalization children don't play traditional games anymore.

Foreigners know well [about Nicaraguan traditions] because before they arrive they search for information, so they come knowing who we are supposed to be, but we haven't learned that [who we are].

With high school students we talk about the characteristics of Granada's arts and crafts, local legends, food and popular characters. It's good for them to know the difference between national dishes and the local ones. That way, we hope, our [Granadino] traditions don't disappear [which is], another negative thing about the introduction of tourism. I think Granada wasn't ready for this phenomenon [tourism] because everything is more expensive, taxes on houses, I can vouch they [taxes] have risen and I don't live in a residential zone. What I mean with that is a lot of people migrated or sold their houses in the historical center. We have lost that, people going out on to the sidewalks for tertulias [talks] at night where the kids would play, grandparents telling stories or things like that, but not anymore. Most of those houses are closed now because they are lodges, hotels or something like that. I think that is not conducive to heritage conservation, or making it stronger, but I hope our work here can reach its goal. (Interview with Karla).

Introduction

The government is moving towards a cultural policy that provides low income families access to cultural places, cultural education about identity and heritage, a new perspective of the indigenous past, new forms of representation, and changes in the constitution to protect indigenous people's rights. Such cultural policy couples neatly with the sustainable tourism strategy. But how are these policies and strategies experienced in everyday life?

Tourism, alongside decentralization, free trade agreements, privatization and the introduction of neo-liberalism are some of the interventions to rescue Latin America's economy (Hunt, 2011). Along came tourism targeting Latin America's cultural and natural wealth, making them popular destinations. At the end of the war in 1990, Nicaragua introduced tourism as a development tool; since then the number of visitors has increased relatively steadily. However, Nicaragua has to compete with neighboring countries that provide similar offerings in terms of natural resources tourism can exploit as destinations. Thus, in order to move beyond sun and beach destinations, as well as increase the number of visitors, Nicaragua has created a strategy of sustainable cultural tourism. Nevertheless, the discourse contrasts heavily from the practice.

I discuss here the subject of representation and the role the government has in presenting an exotic, unique and exuberant tropical destination full of pristine forests and beaches, all ready to provide pleasure to visitors. This is in contrast to the cultural policies and tourism strategy discourse since 2007, as well as the discourse of Nicaragua as a multiethnic country.

Discourse: Cultural Policy and Tourism Strategy

As Rosa (2001) argues the introduction of tourism is closely linked to cultural policies that create a milieu where the host community appropriates the roles established by the tourism industry, thus the local population convincingly performs to the visitors.

The Sandinista government created a clear cultural policy in February of 2007, where it stated that the national government recognizes the different cultural expressions: ethnic, linguistic, religious, folkloric and idiosyncratic because of its centrality to the Nicaraguan people. Given the importance of the cultural expressions the government is willing to rescue, protect and save their identity and national culture, to reaffirm Nicaraguan dignity, pride and sovereignty (Gobierno de Nicaragua, 2007, para. 4). This policy follows through with the changes in the constitution of 1987 when the Sandinista government declared Nicaragua to be a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country, recognizing the presence of indigenous and Afro-descendant groups in the Caribbean region of the country, ignoring then the indigenous groups of the Northern and Central Highlands and Pacific Watershed (Cunningham et all. 2013). Nevertheless, it recognized a multicultural origin comprised of mestizos, indigenous and Afro-descendants.

The cultural policy goes hand in hand with a tourism strategy to create sustainable tourism centered on Nicaraguan culture, history and traditions (interview with Leilani Campbell, representative of Institute of Tourism). The government acknowledges the link between tourism and culture, assuming that the use of culture in

the tourism industry will deepen the roots of the Nicaraguan people underscoring the national resources and heritage. The government will be the one that watches over this interaction between culture and tourism to ensure "Nicaraguans beliefs and ways of life are respected, whether indigenous, mestizos or Afro-descendants (Gobierno de Nicaragua, 200, para. 5). According to the government, a program of sustainable tourism requires the protection, conservation and rescue of the national culture. Furthermore, the local community needs to be involved in the decision-making process so Nicaraguan social values are respected, because it is Nicaraguan culture that makes the country a new and different destination.

The creation of the Cultural Tourism Office in the Institute of Tourism in 2011 attends the need to promote cultural tourism, not just for foreign visitors but also for Nicaraguans to know more about their own culture. "Based on the previous statement, the sustainable tourism development strategy establishes as a primary objective conservation and revitalization of the natural and cultural heritage, especially the most valuable for their touristic development in a sustainable way (Gobierno de Nicaragua, 2007)." This statement explains that the most valuable Nicaraguan heritage will be developed through sustainable tourism mainly for the enjoyment, of foreigners.

According to the discourse, the community first and then the government will be involved in the protection and conservation of heritage and cultural traditions, however, those cultural elements will be protected for tourism, implying cultural expressions will be protected for tourism purposes not their cultural value, but because of their monetary one. This suggests, as well, that it will not be the community who makes the decisions but the government concerning what and when cultural expressions will be protected. In

55

other words, tourism is the reason for conservation and revitalization of culture and heritage, not the intrinsic cultural value of traditions and heritage, but due to their ability to create new destinations, especially of those places deemed more valuable to Nicaraguans, for the enjoyment mainly of others. Therefore, the government, private enterprises, and tourism enterprises will be in charge of deciding what and when to protect heritage, far outside of the decision of most Nicaraguans.

The image of Nicaragua has been refashioned for tourism as a multiethnic and multicultural country; according to the discourse those multiple identities are embraced, while in reality those policies that are intended to open access to subaltern groups are rarely applied. Representation in tourism continues to provide images of a homogenized cultural identity.

Representation

The government is the primary producer of touristic representations of the country as such "creating" places, sites and people. In the context of tourism, spaces are no longer merely physical entities but are socially created, produced and contested locations (Pritchard and Morgan, 2001). In this sense, tourism "… exert[s] cultural power in terms of how tourism imagery constructs peoples and places (Pritchard and Morgan, 2001: 167)." "Tourism is used politically to articulate… the preferred vision held by or about a particular people (Hollinshead, 2004, chapter 2, location 921, para.1)." In other words, tourism is used as a political strategy to refashion people, places and history. Such representations are thought and constructed to meet a specific objective before being

advertised to a targeted market (Hollinshead, 2004). Then touristic representations can indeed create new meanings so as to redefine the local value of the community for that group of tourists.

Tourism and representation are inextricably linked in the search of westerners for authenticity to gaze upon the exotic other (Mellinger, 1994). Such representations are used for advertisement, as a way for tourists to experience a destination before setting foot in a new place. "… The tourism industry not only represents populations and revered cultural territories, but may be said to make, to de-make and to re-make those very locales (Hollinshead, 2004, chapter 2, location 1021, para.1)." These representations commonly highlight what is exotic, pristine or unique through romanticized images shaping stereotypes tourists accept as authentic. In this process, representation dislocates the host community from the reality of poverty much of the local communities' tourist destinations endure (Albers and James, 1998).

Pictures are the most common medium of representation, and the most highly valued due to the ability to denote objectivity: "the photograph's perceived ability to capture truth-in-pictures leads to it replacing direct experience as a crucial source of knowledge (Mellinger 1994: 758)," while hiding how the person behind the lens retouches the images to present a desired picture. Before visiting, pictures are the element tourists use to know a place, a people, and a culture; "photographs - already-seen become powerful tour guides that can lead passive sightseers on fetishized and voyeuristic voyages for authentic exotic experience (Mellinger, 1994:758)." Photographic representations of places, people and their culture are the reflection of tourist expectations of the destinations they wish to visit.

Pictures convey a reality altered and modified to hide or present a story depending on the interest of the photographer. Observers, travelers and tourists appropriate those images accepting them as real, thus expecting a similar experience as that embodied in the images they observe. In this way representations are powerful, creating false expectations of destinations and the people who live there. In turn, tourists idealize host communities through the pictures and other forms of representation in tourism, in which the struggles of their daily lives are erased (Albers and James, 1998). The acceptance of such representations of places and people are read and understood accordingly to such imagery; tourists believe those representations are real (Pritchard and Morgan, 2001).

Homogenization, decontextualization and mystification are the ways tourism representation manipulates images to engage tourists to visit new destinations. Thus, homogenization is used to represent all ethnic groups in the single culturally dominant group. Decontextualization, on the other hand, is the process in which people are reduced to craftsmen or dancers, without any historical background except a recognized feature of cultural heritage. And mystification is the use of poses to represent local communities as happy individuals waiting to provide for the tourists and serve them, "ignoring the inequality that commonly underlies their relation to tourists (Albers and James, 1988:154)."

Furthermore, the representations of touristic places and destinations can create unequal relationships between locals and visitors through the use of colonial discourses, given that tourism narratives target western visitors encouraging westerners as colonizers and locals as colonized types of interactions (Simmons, 2004). Such

representations are complemented with narratives that formulate specific versions of

destinations and local communities to attract visitors with discourses that focus on the

courageous male who conquers distant uncivilized places, establishing the superiority of

Europeans over the rest. The discursive elements of contemporary tourism narratives

use arguments of privilege, desire and sightseeing. Privilege provides access to unique

places others cannot visit. The narrative of desire paints the image of visiting pleasurable

destinations or those outside modernity. And sightseeing, gazing upon the other,

becomes a spectacle and fanciful play providing the illusion of freedom (Simmons, 2004,

location 1420, para. 2).

In Nicaragua, the official government touristic website visitnicaragua.com offers

information about Nicaragua by type of destinations visitors desire to visit: adventure,

beach and sun, colonial cities, the Coffee Route or Water Route. This official website is

important to unveil the way the government is representing the country and its

inhabitants to the tourism market.

As I mentioned earlier, images are the main medium to convey information or

representations of a place or a people. This official website has abundant images of the

country that I am using here to discuss the governmental representation of Nicaragua. In

the main page the images running in a loop are of important natural features, recognized

destinations or important landmarks like the Masaya volcano and the volcanoes within

the territory of the department of León. Both images show these geographical features

without tourists (foreign or international), locals or tour guides. A third picture is an

overview image of the Somoto canyon with a tourist in the foreground, a posed picture of

a tourist enjoying the view and the natural beauty of the place. A review of the images

posted on the website, specifically for the colonial cities shows only destination places, rarely are these places associated with the local people who work and live there, even less their ethnic backgrounds or cultural expressions.

Within the narratives of the website the destinations are described as exotic and unique. The beaches are depicted as paradise and majestic; the forests are "enchanting" and "magical." The colonial cities are portrayed as "charming" and "delightful." This type of illustration of tropical destinations is common in the Caribbean and other Central American countries. However, the descriptions of Nicaraguans are clearly missing. Traditions, culture, folklore, dances, music and food are almost completely absent. Although weekly cultural events are posted on the website, there is no permanent information about Nicaraguan traditions, fiestas, celebrations or parades, nor about the multiple ethnicities, languages and traditions that should be the basis of sustainable tourism.

Like many other tourist destinations, the government portrays the country as an exotic and unique destination with pristine nature to be explored and discovered by new visitors. Furthermore, it implies the locals are waiting with open arms to entertain or serve the tourists. The government representation contrasts heavily with the official government discourse, the cultural policies and the tourism strategy of 2007.

Despite the changes in the constitution and the discourse of a sustainable cultural tourism, the representation of Nicaragua is about their geographical destinations, the natural beauty of the country instead of the rich cultural expressions. Indigenous, mestizos and afro-descendant Nicaraguans are consistently excluded from tourism representation. The various cultural expressions are synthesized to certain events in a

few cities, all located in the Pacific watershed. In other words, homogenizing the great variety of cultural expressions to mestizo; other groups and territories in the country are neglected. Two of these colonial cities are León and Granada, while the third, Masaya -- with a large population of indigenous people is categorized as the cradle of Nicaraguan folklore -- implies an unknown origin of the cultural practices indigenous people continue to perform in the city, thereby denying their indigenous identity and as such the origin of the so called folkloric traditions (Garcia,1994).

Touristic Destinations

The way the government frames touristic information highlights what is important to show to the tourist, what is considered worth visiting and what is not. The routes used in the country establish paths, people, places they should visit and the purpose of such visits.

An interview with Teresita, a representative of the Intitute of Tourism in the city of Granada, provided ample information about the Colonial and Volcanoes Route, where Granada is central. Below is a summary of the communication with her. My interest in this section is the centrality of Granada in the country's tourism industry evidenced in the tourism routes. Also, the way the routes the government constructed create a specific path and way of thinking about them leading the tourist into what the government and industry wants tourist to visit, experience and observe.

In Nicaragua, the Institute of Tourism defined several touristic routes to travel around Nicaragua. Granada is in three of these routes: The Colonial and Volcanoes Route travels along the Pacific watershed starting in Chinandega, passing through León, Managua, Masaya, Granada and Rivas. However, most attractions are in León, Granada and Rivas. A second route is the Water Route that goes through the San Juan River, the Nicaraguan Lake to Granada as the historical scenery of colonial times, pirate invasions and the construction of fortresses for the protection of Nicaraguan territory from foreign invasions in the colonial period. A third route is the Gold Route which prolongs the trip over the San Juan River to Rivas to show the way gold seekers took to reach California from the United States in the East Coast in the mid-1800s during the gold rush. Other routes to visit are the Sandino Route and the Coffee Route. The Sandino Route goes through the mountains and valleys of the Northern Highlands of Nicaragua where the hero hid during its revolutionary fight. Finally, the Coffee route, also located in the Northern Highlands intends to rescue the culture of that area.

The Colonial and Volcano Route offers colonial cities, ethnic groups, local expressions, food, folklore, and religious traditions. The last investment for this route is a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank, which focuses on the development of touristic destinations in rural areas, while communities around the volcanoes are prioritized. Touristic areas near the beach do not widely benefit from this project. The objective is for these two sectors – beach and rural areas –to be linked given that tourists are searching for both types of destinations. There is a growing tendency towards community based rural tourism, adventure tourism, natural reserves or living with the communities (Interview with Teresita, representative of Institute of Tourism - Granada).

62

The presence of Granada in these three routes: Colonial and Volcano Route, the Water and Gold Route from the start define a historical period the government, tourism industry and visitor focuses on, erasing from the start other historical periods, framing a specific point in time, architecture style, ethnic group and cultural expressions. It marks from the onset where and for what to look; it becomes a blinder, highlighting what is present in this route, the road, and the path tourists should follow.

Cultural Policy and Education

Accordingly, the cultural policy of the Sandinista government is more involved than previous governments in managing cultural elements and expressions through museums, cultural events, formal education, heritage sites and the reuse of cultural houses for local museums, further controlling the hegemonic ideology. Given governmental concern about transculturation -- an important negative effect of tourism, as well as video games and television shows -- in 2013 the government started with a small cultural program in the Museum Convent San Francisco in Granada as illustrated through the vignette that opened this chapter. There, students from 8 to 12, and 14 to 17 years of age, from public schools would tour the convent, participate in cultural lectures about Nicaraguan culture, learn about important characters of Granada's history, listen to traditional Granada tales and stories, and learn and play traditional Nicaraguan games. These workshops intend to encourage nationalism and local pride, as well as knowledge about the indigenous past. Given this program was a success, in 2014 the Museum Convent San Francisco, together with the Institute of Culture and the Education Ministry

started a new program, performing archaeological excavations with middle school students. The main objective is for children to learn about archaeological heritage preservation.

Such cultural programs allow the government to further manage what students consider relevant Granadino cultural expressions and what identifies them as Nicaraguans. However, it is important to note the impact of inviting children and young students to learn more about their country, culture and people. Several times the tour guides provided useful information about indigenous people in Nicaragua, nevertheless, this information related to indigenous groups in the past with no mention of indigenous communities in the present.

I interviewed Karla, Gisel and Johnny, the museum guides, in the cool cloudy mornings of the rainy season. We sat down on rocking chairs facing the central patio facing the tall palm trees, next to the entrance hall of the museum. The wind entered the patio blowing west from the Lake, making the interactions more pleasant. Our conversations were fluent and ranged on subjects of identity, tourism along the government projects in the museum as well as other perspectives of the tourism in general.

During my interviews with the tour guides at the museum they showed preoccupation with transculturation, foreign influences and the loss of Nicaraguan identity and culture. They observed students' lack of interest, knowledge or care for heritage or history of their city. They considered this was more prevalent with students from private schools who seemed to know more about foreign cultures, with little regard for that of their own country. The tour guides believe foreign, mostly western people

imposed their western customes on Nicaraguan culture like Halloween, via tourism,

globalization and lack of education as culprits.

One of the guides from the convent commented:

There is an objective, an orientation from the president to educate and conserve
heritage, and work on the subject. It is interesting despite the political ideology, what
matters is rescuing the culture, "lo nicaraguense", we are losing it. More evident here
with foreigners visiting, children want to dress or talk like them. Now all the bars and
restaurants celebrate Halloween, distorting the Aguizotes (indigenous celebration in
Masaya), there is no need to bring a celebration from other places 'cause we have our
own. Now there are stores that rent the costumes [for Halloween]. They
[Nicaraguans] are changing their culture, this is what we want to avoid. If we can't
stop [the restaurants] from celebrating [Halloween] we want the youth to know their
own [culture], maybe not change their mentality but know what we have it, that it
exists and not lose it. Some people are trying to rescue Granadino dances, the only
one left [performed] is atabal, they want to rescue el cartel similar to Los Aguizotes
and La Yeguita, [now] it is only danced during San Pedro [festivities] in Diria
(municipality of Granada). This is the government [that was] most involved and
concerned for education, culture and health.
This project started as a government initiative so children [will] appropriate and
protect their culture and heritage. We can see that we Nicaraguans don't know our
own heritage. This happens when people don't know; if we don't know something we
can't take care of it. What happens with our families and archaeological sites, during
constructions people find objects and looters destroy the site. When archaeologists
show up they can't recover the history. Here we want to work with children in
activities where they can learn. Primarily we work with children of low-income
families, kids who haven't had the opportunity to visit much, many of them have
family problems so they can come here to enjoy and forget about those problems for a
while. These activities are coordinated with MINED (Education Ministry) so the visits
go along the school plan and lessons but it is very hard to do. There are great
weaknesses in the school plans to teach students about culture. It is a shame that
students visit Hacienda San Jacinto (a historical site) in September but after that they
know more about it. The local channels interview them about the reason for the visit
and they answer because the school took them or a fun trip; they don't understand
the reason, or value of the history they learn when they visit.
With high school students, we want to take advantage of the fact they are going to the
university so we teach them about Granada. We work with a Granadino theme and
local traditions. We only work with schools located in the urban center of Granada, we
don't work with the other municipalities. We are trying to reach schools in rural areas
by the Mombacho volcano (Interview with Gisel).

The museum was a really important starting point to begin to understand the connection between the government, the education system, tourism and the local population. The guides noted that before the current government there was no real interest in the subject of culture. The Sandinista government gave a direct order for children to receive complementary education about Nicaraguan culture and identity. However, there is already a problem with children who do not feel identified maybe because there is no longer transmission from one generation to the next due to foreign influence deeply affecting Nicaraguan identity. The museum guides and director consider the program to be having good results among children because they are participating, maybe it is not changing them but it does spark the curiosity of children and gives them information to think about their culture.

The orientation from the government is to promote culture through museums, making a series of invitations via MINED so schools know which days they will come for their visit because schools rarely bring students to the historical centers, not only in Granada. I've heard they don't go to the museum in Managua -- just a few [schools] and only in specific dates they visit Hacienda San Jancinto. They only focus on those dates [to visit the museum] but these [the local museums] are open all the time.
The experience with the kids is about the dances, legends, focusing in Granada. We all know about the popular Nicaraguan legends, but only a few know the local ones. We have seen that some [of the kids] know the legends and can tell some parts of it but don't know the names. Others know the names but don't know the story. We are here to tell them about the origins of the legends, read some of them so they get to know them. We try to rescue the old games because now the kids focus more on [watching] the television. I ask them what they want to play and they answer: football (soccer) and forget the traditional games. Everything is soccer, everything is about foreign culture, it does not only come in through the eyes but also through the ears and it causes that we slowly lose our own identity.
We've had a good response because all the groups have participated... Sometimes teachers ask for other groups to come [besides the programmed groups] (Interview with Johnny).

From this I gather that there is a clear concern from the government about the adoption of foreign cultural expressions and are attempting to entice students from a young age to think about their identity, heritage and culture. Although, during my research in Granada, as I will discuss later, this preoccupation was notably present among the local population in Granada, artists, museum guides, government representatives, indigenous people with whom I talked. The experience of the tour guides becomes relevant to understanding the way children perceive themselves as Nicaraguans and Granadinos, and the lack of knowledge about their culture and history. This phenomenon is present throughout the dissertation, congruent with what I call an identity crisis – which I will discuss later – among the mestizo population. This crisis, due to the undefined identity of mestizos causes this group to want what foreigners bring; they continue to aspire to the mestizaje ideal that light skin and hair color, western cultural expression and products are better than those from within the territory. They are still trying to whiten themselves.

The objective of the museum cultural program is for children to understand they have a heritage worthy of pride that the heritage of the indigenous people is valuable and it has not been recognized. The Nicaraguan population should not be ashamed of the indigenous blood or legacy. The guides also attempt to explain why and how Nicaraguans have lost interest in that specific part of their history.

> We want them to leave here knowing the difference between intangible and tangible heritage, what is heritage, that they leave feeling proud to be Nicaraguans, that they know there is no need of transculturization, that we have plenty of history and culture to know about, the significance of our indigenous legacy. We also are heavily marked by the Spanish, and it is because the lack of love for our indigenous people. It offends

us when someone calls us Indian, god forbids someone call us Indian. And the worst is we use the term "Indio pata rajada" (stupid Indian –literally means Indian with a broken leg) when someone makes a mistake and they ask: where did you leave the horse? Or which mountain do you come from? I tell them who the Indians were, what they did. I explain to them that it was the Spanish who taught us to think like that. They wrote to the king telling him about speaking animals that is how they described the Indians, since then we feel shame of our own race (Interview with Gisel).

The guides' focus on Nicaraguan games, legends, and tongue twisters make them realize this problem comes from the education children receive from their families, making this identity crisis deeper. Because the identity crisis might originate during the colonial period, the continuous introduction of foreign cultural expressions through centuries indicates this is a generational problem. The guides' work helps children perceive indigenous heritage in a different light, however, indigenous communities are not mentioned or their existence recognized during these talks.

First we take them around the museum. We try to rescue traditional games because kids now only want Nintendo, Disneyworld, the internet. We have children games like Doña Ana, las cebollitas, los pollitos, ombligate, rayuela, el bolero, el yoyo. Here we have them play and jump. What we do is rescue Nicaraguan stories, "los cuentos pinoleros" like uncle coyote and uncle rabbit, legends, myths, the traditions, tongue twisters, all those things that identifies us as Nicaraguans. Kids appropriate the stories like "el duende, la carreta nahua" stories their relatives told them, then we tell them about the importance of our heritage. We tell them how in the past kids sat down to listen to stories and that is how the legends and myths started, and the reason that these were told as lessons so children don't misbehave, then they start using their imagination. We might not change everything because the house is the first school. If their houses are filled with play stations, Nike shoes, fashionable clothes, or [if they] visit different countries they lose our traditions. But here they get something they can share with family, friends and neighbors. It is satisfying for us to contribute a little to the construction of their culture. I tell them if you like to surf the web why don't you search about what is ours, 'cause now we say "chido, o que buena onda, pura vida" and the kids laugh because they know they say it, using outsiders'

slang[7]. I incite them to use Nicaraguan words. I ask them what do we say when we are doing well? "Diacachimba![8] (Interview with Gisel).

Government action evidently intends to rescue Nicaraguan traditions, however, this may also involve homogenizing and essentializing music, dance and food. Public cultural events reproduce those essential expressions. "I'm working with the tourism cabinet attempting to put up activities, sites and spaces that once belonged to Granada like the Xalteva plaza. I have a plan for next year to regain, restore, or collect events like La Carreta Nahua, El Cartel, La Yeguita, activities that used to be displayed this time of year [fall] (Interview with Mariano)". The tourism cabinet goes hand in hand to promote cultural events with the main objective of bringing more tourists during the low season. "We want to put a show with the virgin's apparition in the [Nicaragua] Lake and leave it as an established event that happens every year, make it an annual tradition. We are searching for activities linked to the cultural and religious traditions of the city (Interview with Mariano)". In Granada such events not only reproduce essential heritage to Nicaraguans but also to foreigners. These representations are widely spread because their performance is in public spaces, where everyone is invited to observe and listen. Even more, schools from around the city participate with their own dance or music groups. During government events such as this, mestizo as an identity is rebuilt, performed, and reinforced. Although some changes have occurred with the government promoting indigenous pride, which may be altering the concept of mestizo, moving from

---

[7] These are Costa Rican expressions they use to convey joy or happiness. This means children are absorbing foreign expressions instead of using local ones.

the heir of European culture to mestizo being the heir of indigenous culture; yet, the indigenous groups who survived through the colony are never mentioned.

The government has changed its position towards the indigenous past, showing interest in promoting pride in indigenous culture, however, indigenous people are banished to the past and today's national identity remains singular: mestizo; thus, supporting the hegemonic national identity, continuing the exclusion of indigenous groups from western Nicaragua and the Caribbean, peasants, and populations of African descent who do not fit the mestizo identity. That is, those who do not speak Spanish as a first language, practice Catholic religion and live in the cities are excluded because they do not fit in the concept of mestizo (Gurdián, 1998:467). Interestingly, mestizos themselves cannot muster what ii means to be mestizo beyond the biological explanation of the mixture of the ethnic groups.

The lack of reflection from the government on ethnic and national identity issues at the local and national level indicates an interest to preserve the hegemonic narrative of a homogeneous population. Nevertheless, Nicaraguan intellectuals are drawing more attention to the heterogeneous Nicaraguan society to further awareness towards indigenous and African descent groups who have been long ignored and silenced.

Another important change is the government attempt to allow access of low-income families to museums at the local and national level indicating an interest to preserve culture and their events in places like the Convent Museum San Francisco that used to be for the wealthy, those with well-known last-names. The governmental programs opened spaces for the majority of the population; trying to involve them through different programs is a new step from the government. For example, like those

70

involving students from public schools or creating local museums in different

neighborhoods to hold data on local myths and legends where the neighbors can learn

about their own history, these programs did not exist through previous governments.

The museum Convent San Francisco holds different cultural events free to the public, but

their participation is still small. Even though this is positive, it also means the

government is reinforcing their ideology further, protecting and conserving a mestizo

identity and heritage while ignoring and silencing those groups who do not fit the

national mestizo stereotype.

> The activity in the convent is very nice because they work with poor schools, there
> are parents who didn't even know the Convent [museum] existed, or are ashamed to
> go in 'cause people are shy about it [afraid to go in]. Some people don't go in to [the
> free] activities at La Casa de los Tres Mundos to watch films or plays. Those who
> arrive are mostly foreigners who read the board outside and watch them (Interview
> with Mariano).

> I believe these are governmental policies that culture reaches all social classes, that is
> why she [the director] created Saturdays of Culture … the objective was for the
> artisans to come offer their products along with dance performances. We invited
> universities, schools, everybody with the idea that Nicaraguans visited the museum
> for free. We worked hard and only 20 or 30 people would show up, it was upsetting.
> So, we still have a long way to go in terms of [Nicaraguans] feeling really identified
> [with our culture] (Interview with Karla).

Don Mariano is the Granadino I talked to the most. He is a 65-year-old man, born

and raised in Granada. The first time I met him was at his colonial house, which he claims

is one of the first original colonial houses in Granada that outlasted all the different

destructions of the city. The house is located a few blocks from the central park with a

71

colonial façade decorated with *veraneras* (climbing plant) that cover half of the front wall from bottom to top. As I entered the large and tall wooden doors, I went into the living area. This is a large room decorated with several paintings, sculptures and a small collection of archaeological pieces. The living room was divided in two sitting areas with short rocking chairs in front of the main doors and a second sitting area with taller rocking chairs placed around a wooden table. The tall ceiling was covered with red roof tiles. The living room led to a small central patio with various plants, a couple of parakeets in a cage and two small dogs. Don Mariano's mother was lying down in a hammock next to the patio. The rooms are located around the patio, so is the kitchen and the colonial style bathroom. The house smelled like it had been recently cleaned with a strong smell of cleaners. The parakeets and dogs were excited with my presence barking and chirping, plus the street noise of horses, and cars was noisy and it made it hard to hear the soft spoken man in front of me. At that time Don Mariano was in a wheel chair due to a fall that broke his right leg. Our conversation started on the subject of tourism and identity, over the course of my research by we met several times in different places around the city and talked about several topics from physics to art. He made it clear that he was involved in the cultural activities of the city and his opinions were relevant to my project. Don Mariano is affable and open, easy to talk to. We talked for long periods of time for coffee or lunch, and during artistic presentations about Granada's history, Granadinos, tourism and politics. He was interested in establishing cultural performances, bringing cultural and religious activities to the front of tourism instead of having architecture be the main tourist attraction of the city.

Artisan and Indigenous People in Nicaraguan Tourism

During fieldwork I noticed that in Granada artisans were rarely involved in the tourism industry but high-end products like purses or wallets were sold at stores in the pedestrian street of La Calzada. In the city of Masaya the sale of arts and crafts is directed heavily to tourists and visitors but the craftsmen are rarely visible. The craftsmen in Masaya are commonly known to be indigenous people, but their recognition lies in the work they do, if they are acknowledged, no relationship is established between their identity and their products. The support the government provides like workshops and their minor inclusion in tourism routes links artisans to their products but their cultural identity remains hidden.

Angelica provides a general view of the issue, while Norwin speaks of a different experience, then María José provides a more central position. Finally, Will states a lack of connection between tourists and artisans.

> In the context of tourism you won't find indigenous people [in western Nicaragua] and if you do [it] is in the commercial context of crafts. "Oh so nice an artisan doing something", they [the government] extract what they can sell. In the case of San Juan de Oriente, clay (manufacture) before the 1950's was produced by women. In the time of Somoza in 1956 the Bank of Nicaragua promoted crafts, which introduced men in the production of ceramics. The momentum provided a fresh means of subsistence and the craft wasn't lost, but they only extracted the clay artisans and not the people as a whole. What I mean is they made the indigenous identity invisible. That is, an artisan identifies with his work not as indigenous from the indigenous community because this craft is productive, maybe the whole family is involved, but their identity is with the clay not the indigenous community, because I know how they are organized. They bring the tourists and all, but what the tourists see is an artisan not an Indian working the clay with its ancestral heritage; because what he does with his hands has an origin (Interview with Angelica).

Angelica is an anthropologist from the indigenous community of Monimbó. Her parents and grandparents are monimboseños. I contacted Angelica through the organization of indigenous communities of the Pacific Centro y Norte (PCyN). We talked during a meeting of the organization in Masaya, in the barrio of Monimbó near the pier of the lagoon. We sat on a bench outside of a small health clinic where her office is located, surrounded by large malinche trees. It was late, the sun was going down and the breeze made a nice environment, although reggaeton music was playing loudly made the conversation difficult to carry on. As an indigenous person she considered the issues of identity relevant and the effects of tourism on it.

Norwin has a considerably different position than Angelica. Norwin is a potter from the indigenous community of San Juan de Oriente. I met him in the Granada museum. I asked him for an interview because of the existence of the indigenous community and his work with archeological ceramic. He is one of the few potters who makes replicas of archaeological pottery from Western Nicaragua. I went to visit Norwin at his house and shop in San Juan de Oriente. We talked in the living room of his house located on the main street of San Juan.

In the indigenous community of San Juan de Oriente (in the Department of Masaya) members of the community were pleased that the government was supporting the potters of the city with their introduction into the Colonial and Volcano Route, by showcasing those artisans who lived within the 500-meter long touristic corridor in the city. Furthermore, the government is encouraging those artisans who focus on pre-colonial replicas through competitions and special rewards to the best work. Despite

74

their inclusion in tourism, the existence of the indigenous community and the link to the

production of clay is omitted, ignored, and silenced in the tourism industry.

> Thank god now we are receiving a lot of support from the government, which is promoting competitions among pottery with pre-colonial designs. The government celebrates it each year around November 18th the day of the artisan. It is a national event, and there is a special reward for pre-colonial art [pottery design from archaeological ceramics]. Something big they did, the *logo Nicaragua is unique, original*, is basically like el Güegüense, los agüizotes, our art is like that. The government is helping a lot in the community including the municipality in the volcanic and colonial route for 400 or 500 meters. Thus, the government painted the sidewalks white along 500 meters. [It is] the only city in the Department of Masaya. The government along with the Austrian cooperation also provided showcasings for those artisans in the corridor inside the Colonial and Volcano Route. The tourism cabinet is always there to help with any project as well (Interview with Norwin).

In Granada the situation for artisans is different. They are banned and isolated

further than in the Department of Masaya or the municipalities of Granada were artisans

and their products are widely known. Although there is support for the artisans of

Granada through fairs where national and international tourists can value their products,

they are not integrated in the touristic corridor within the city of Granada. It is important

to note that artisans in Granada also consider their craft as an important part of their

identity, which they desire to share and show foreigners who Granadinos are and what

they make.

First I talked to Will a 40-year-old man. He is a craftsman who works with fine

wood to make quality furniture, who has worked his adult life with his father-in-law's

workshop. He remembers how Granada used to be a center for furniture making and his

craft was profitable. At the beginning of tourism in Granada, craftsmen were an

important part of the industry but now they are not mentioned in tourism. I met Will in his father-in-law's workshop. There we discussed the history of the shop and their specialty in Colonial style furniture and doors that are common in downtown Granada, although these are not in great demand anymore. Their shop was located in the back of a long house in the patio; the shop is an open area roofed with zinc, next to an open patio with chickens and dogs roaming free. Will regretted the situation of craftsmen and the lack of work, which moved to the Pueblos Blancos (White towns) where people usually go to make their furniture. Will's experience makes evident his craft is not part of tourism in the city.

> The tourist comes and is looking for something new, most tourists are sent to Masaya or Pueblos Blancos, here [Granada] we have shops to make quality furniture that meet the expectations [of tourists], but tourists arrive to La Pólvora fortress and pass by. There is little information for the tourist to visit [the artisans]. We've had few tourists visit [the shop], in the beginning of tourism a lot of them visited (Interview with Will).

Later I talked to María José, who works with leather, making male shoes. María José lives a few blocks from one of the main streets in Granada. Her house functions as a workshop, house and store where she produces and sell the shoes she and her brothers make in the backyard. She and her brothers inherited the craft form her father, although today the shoe brand is under her name only. I interviewed María José in her house while she managed and sold shoes, in what would generally function as the living room. The area was small, with several shoes and tools for the crafts, it felt stuffed and crowded with people coming in and out, cleaning and the smell of the chemicals to stain the

leather filled up the room. The room was dark since the only window was closed so we

sat in front of the door for some light. We talked about her beginning as a craftswoman

and the difficulties she and other artisans have because they are not part of the tourism

industry.

> Tourism is very important cause in tourism fairs we get to show our products. We make exotic styles [of shoes], these are attractive combinations with alligator textured leather - fake - but in leather. Tourists like the national shoes, especially people from Guatemala, nationals like them, ticos [Costa Ricans] like them.
> It's great for us that INTUR is promoting culture, this way we sell more shoes. That way we have more contact with the foreigners who come to our country, it is essential for us given our market is small and is already saturated, we need new markets to expand outside Nicaragua. It is important they come because they see our Nicaraguan identity, what is autochthonous to Granada, the small industry the saddlers, textile production and weaving (Interview with María José).

María José's argument is that fairs are helpful and the government helps through

them but they are not really integrated to the tourism industry, which is shocking given

that Granada is the center of cultural tourism in Nicaragua; yet, Nicaraguan or Granadino

culture is not really part of the touristic circuit. Artisans want to show what is really

Granadino, however, it is represented solely in the colonial architecture of the city.

The government has a discourse and narrative that portrays tourism as a panacea,

a great tool for development. With that vision they have created a cultural policy to go

hand in hand with sustainable tourism where culture takes center stage.

Nevertheless, the discourse of the respect and celebration of a multiethnic country

are not accomplished. Tourism still focuses on the exotic and pure geographical features,

where culture is not commonly mentioned. Furthermore, the nation is homogenized

further as mestizo through the governmental programs. However, those programs are

giving access in cultural events to low-income families.

Indigenous communities remain silenced, isolated and ignored despite the

creation of laws that protect their rights. Their cultural expressions as well as artisans'

crafts are part of the tourism industry but their connection to their identities is hidden.

> We are trying to rescue our own identity otherwise I wouldn't have really followed my father's footsteps [by] opening the business, [it] is like keeping something of Granada. It collaborates with tourism, because we belong, we project that we really are artisans, we have the craft in our blood but all that [foreign] influence has destroyed our own culture, we see it in all those places in La Calzada. We need a place where our culture is promoted; there we can integrate all of our industries (Interview with María).

CHAPTER III. TOURISM

Introduction

Tourism was adopted in the early 1990s in Nicaragua as an economic strategy, promising economic development to Nicaraguans. Tourism is only one of many economic interventions that characterize Latin America's modern history in order to overcome poverty. Despite the introduction of neoliberal policies poverty is still increasing; or what Hunt has called a "globalization crisis" (2011:265). As a reaction to the economic situation, tourism has been encouraged as a fast track to development (Hunt, 2011; WTO, 2012). Tourism is now a global theme as an economic development tool for developing as well as developed countries (Rosa, 2001). Neoliberal economic policies force the creation of markets for local products that do not interfere with the developed countries' production; instead they promote nontraditional but local products like tourism (Scher, 2011).

Many developing countries have employed tourism in order to participate in the global economy, because of its perceived potential to fight poverty and increase exports. Among the various positive effects of tourism are: resiliency of the host community, generation of foreign exchange, direct and indirect employment, and the stimulation of consumption by foreigners. Furthermore, it often generates favorable conditions for underprivileged communities (Croes and Vanegas, 2008). Such premise is based on tourism's potential as a mode of development that is associated with economic growth.

Tourism employs natural and cultural resources that are readily available for exploitation. In addition, investment for touristic projects will directly and indirectly affect local communities like road improvement, access to potable water, and electricity. Furthermore, the traditional ways of living, as well as arts and crafts of less developed countries attract the tourists, therefore, linking the local markets with the international consumers (Cole, 2008: 56-57).

The effects of tourism go beyond the economic realm, they dive into every aspect of a society. This research looks at the effects of tourism on western Nicaraguan identity in the city of Granada, the first colonial city and capital of Nicaragua is today the most visited place for its cultural tourism. Following Babb's argument (2004) that in order to introduce Nicaragua as a touristic destination it requires a refashioning of the national identity, imposed from the inside (government) and reinforced from the outside (tourists). It is through the modification of the identity for tourism the government is reinforcing a mestizo national identity. This is an identity engendered during the colonial period that intended to gloss over the multiple ethnicities existing within the territory, in order to destroy the cultural diversity of indigenous and afro-descendant communities, in order to introduce them to capitalism as peasants via mestizaje (Field, 1998; Dore, 2002).

I argue that the lack of national public presentation of indigenous archaeological sites, unlike colonial cities (Granada, León, León Viejo), in Nicaragua is because the nation tries to present a history that only goes back to the Spanish conquest; furthering the mestizo identity on already vulnerable identities of other ethnic groups within the territory. The touristic narratives of the city of Granada as a proud Spanish colonial city

80

belittles the violent disenfranchisement of local indigenous people from their lands in the past and impoverished situation in the present.

Theoretical Framework

Tourism has become an international market with two major players: the visitor and the local (Silverman, 2002). It has become a fluent method of communication between its players (Schwimmer, 1979:232 cited by Walker 2005:66) or what Appadurai (1990:296) has called "global cultural flows" where tourists and hosts mutually influence each other via the construction of site narratives for tourism, as well as the creation of governmental laws for the protection of heritage, to continue the construction of national identity. This influence is furthered by the exchange of goods, culture and information.

Tourism refers to a brief period of time used to travel away from one's own place and a break from the routine, in search of pleasure; even though tourism is conceived as leisure, it requires great investment of time and effort to make it happen (Urry, 1990). During this break, it is common to observe other people and places, looking for things the tourist had anticipated before going on the trip (Urry, 1990: 1). Tourists' observation exists in contrast to the observation of their daily life and people they encounter routinely. Tourism implies a journey, staying in places other than one's residence with the purpose of returning to the original place of departure; which involves "gazing" upon the "other" (Urry, 1990).

MacCannell considers tourism to be a western enterprise; visiting places, peoples, or things is a western phenomenon (MacCannell, 1999: 42) and a symbol of status (Urry, 1990). MacCannell contends that "modern" (read western) people are losing their close connections to other people and looking for them in other people's "real life." Thus, people are pushed to search for their own "authenticity" in the way of living of the "other." The demands and pace of life of "modern" people only allows for the outside observers to see what the toured others want them to see - the public sphere of their lives instead of the intimate or private side. "Modern" people, then, need to travel to observe "primitives," in order to contemplate the intimate parts of their lives, where "authentic," real life occurs (1999: 92-93).

Places become attractions when knowledge and information is produced about a site and such information is later disseminated (MacCannell, 1999:41) through ads on television or magazines (Urry, 1990: 2-3), which attracts a large number of people to participate in tourism (Urry, 1990). However, those places constructed for tourism homogenize relevant cultural aspects of a place, thereby providing inaccurate information of the sites or people (Palmer, 1999).

The practice of "sightseeing" is a "ritual" that starts with the actual trip and arrival to a different location. People, places or things are chosen for display as tourist attractions. In this industry, the action of selecting a site over others for protection indicates interest to construct a sacred place worth of reverence. Such construction makes a "claim on the tourist" of what is valuable and highlights a particular narrative or history, homogenizing social, historical and cultural realms (MacCannell, 1999).

MacCannell (1999) argues authenticity is tainted once the tourist has idealized the "primitive's" way of life. In tourism, when the observation of the other occurs, the primitive fits into the expectation by "acting" or "performing" an event, ritual, or dance for the tourist to observe; or what the author has called "staged authenticity." Such authenticity is staged through hotels, specific places that are open for tourists to visit, and "exotic" performances created under the tourist's idealized expectation before the actual visit (Urry, 1990).

Authenticity is commonly mentioned in tourism; however, it is rarely explained. Authenticity "is a quest for that unity between the self and societal institutions (Cohen 1988:373)." According to Cohen (1988), authenticity depends on the tourist, because tourists are not a homogenous group. Each tourist is in search of different experiences, and they have different criteria to judge what experiences are more or less authentic. Some tourists may seek deeper authentic experience, while other tourists may be less interested in them. Tourists whose intentions are more about fun may have no interest in authentic cultural and historical narratives. Thus, authenticity is contingent on the visitors' expectations of the trip; it depends on what the tourist is interested in experiencing (Cohen, 1988).

In the case of tourism, authenticity is mostly used to understand the perspective of the tourists and not the host community, as regards the question "which traits of their own culture they consider to be authentic (Cohen 1988:374)." In Nicaragua, folklore dancers suggest that theatrical performances in auditoriums are not authentic because they use different steps, clothing and music, but most important they are not performed

on the street by common folk, but by dancers who learned them in specific classes, thus, it was not transmitted orally from one generation to the next.

There was concern from artists about the loss of authenticity and the foreign influence in Nicaraguan dances, costumes and traditions. There was further concern about the Nicaraguan public who accepted the cultural transformations implying that it was all right; then, making it authentic for the foreign public.

Estalin and Ronald showed their concern about the influence of foreign aesthetics introduced in performances. Bayardo, a representative of the government also indicated the importance of maintaining cultural authenticity.

I met Estalin through Don Mariano, Estalin was his student in Casa de los Tres Mundos where Estalin currently works as a Drama teacher for children. La Casa de los Tres Mundos is a colonial house in downtown Granada, just half a block north of the Central Park and the Granada Cathedral, in front of the Plaza de los Leones. The entrance façade of the house is built in stone, with a second story and a wooden balcony visible from the outside. The door opens up to a wide hall, then a paved central patio. In the hall an employee receives those who want to enter the house and if desired presents souvenir choices, many of them locally produced arts and crafts. The corridor surrounding the first story has different painting, photo and drawing expositions, with rooms that serve as office or other exhibition rooms, while the central patio serves partially as a classroom for theater, music, painting or language classes. Sometimes more than one at the time. La Casa de los Tres Mundos is necessarily busy with kids playing and learning in the main central patio. Although the house continues to the East. The patio is now dirt and has several trees and decorative plants. The corridor again gives way to other offices. At the

east end of the house is a small theater for plays or movies, music or poem recitals.

Moving north from this room is another patio. On the west side of the patio is one of the

Granada radio station, on the right are the drawing and painting studios where teachers

and students meet for lessons.

I interviewed Estalin in La Casa de los Tres Mundos at his office in front of the

main patio around four in the afternoon as the sun was going down. He was in his office.

Although the afternoon was cool he closed the door to the office given the number of

children and adults in the main patio making our conversation difficult. Soon it was hot

inside the office but we continued talking for about an hour about his craft and

experience on the subject of culture, cultural change, identity and tourism.

> Several dance groups came to perform el Güegüense, I don't like saying el Güegüense
> is not only that [is also a play]. They come to dance, it is a mistake to do something
> without knowing, they came to dance el Güegüense and who knows where those
> dances come from because those are not really the dances [from el Güegüense],
> people clapped instead of saying that it was wrong. The foreigners when they watch
> this they believe it, thus changing the performance because is accepted with applause,
> these things affect culture (Interview with Estalin).

I met and spoke to Ronald in the Convent San Francisco. A cruise arrived to San

Juan del Sur, a Pacific shore port about an hour and a half south of Granada. The tourists

were arriving in busses, brought in by Carelli Tour – a Costa Rican tour operator. I

wanted to see the museum narrative, the interactions between the guides and the

tourists, and tourists' reactions to those narratives and the exhibitions so the museum

director invited me to observe. Carelli tour contracted the dance group to perform for the

tourists. It was a great number of tourists, so the time required for all the tourists to go

85

around the museum and the dance took about two hours. Afterwards the dance group changed out of their costumes and sat down for a break on the south corridor of the main patio. Then I approached the group and started talking to Ronald, he and the rest of the group are from the indigenous community of San Juan de Oriente. They know and practice pottery production, the main industry in town and cultural dances. Ronald was the first to discuss the subject of authenticity from the perspective of Nicaraguans and what it meant for them – what they called street performers – the changes folklore dance studios made and continue to make to the dances.

Traditional Nicaraguan dances are a source of pride for those who perform them. Dancing for tourists, showing them and eventually to the world some of the Nicaraguan traditions, in order to bring more tourists to Nicaragua is an important job, to show the real Nicaraguan traditions, not those modified by the influence of ballet. Not only dances, but traditions are changing through time and are necessary to show Nicaragua has a variety of valuable traditions, so, there is no need to take others. Besides it is part of the performers' job keeping them authentic.

> Our dance and music is original, the role I play is a satire of el Viejo y la Vieja dance, when people see the dance, they interact with the dancers, they are enjoying themselves you can see their smiles, their demeanor, the way they laugh at you, is not necessary to speak the same language to know they like what I do. And that is my reward, knowing that my performance is liked by the people I'm performing for, may be in the future a video will go beyond the [national] borders, and they will say this is a memory of Nicaragua, this is el Viejo y la Vieja, that way we leave a legacy that moves around the world so the curiosity grows about what we [Nicaraguans] did, what we do, and eventually they will come to watch the dances from Nicaragua. This is the wealth we have, something to be proud of. In the future when I have my own kids I want to teach them what I can. It is rewarding, it's worth the time and the effort but now the dances have changed, they have been mixed with ballet, I mean Nicaraguan dances. El paso simple, el paso cruzado, el acuartillado or whatever they

want to call it, it has been modified. One group does the steps different from another group, now it integrates ballet in the Nicaraguan dances. Yes, it looks pretty; it looks fancy when they watch it but the identity of the dances is disappearing. Now they dance with slippers, before they used caites (type of sandals) or danced barefoot. The women's clothing has changed a lot, the skirts are shorter; it has changed too much. I can't deny it looks good, but we need to preserve what is ours. What would happen if a traditional fiesta didn't have chicha or nacatamal, instead it had maruchan and coke? It wouldn't be traditional. Lots of other things have changed through time and is necessary for people to know we are a beautiful country, beautiful women, beautiful sights, food, dances, and we have nothing to envy from another country (Interview with Ronald).

There is also a great concern from the government to maintain authenticity in the Nicaraguan traditions so tourists observe what is originally Nicaraguan and prevent traditions from being transformed and fitted to tourists' expectations. During my conversation with Bayardo (below) at the Convent San Francisco during a late afternoon presentation from the Institute of Culture, Institute of Tourism and Spanish cooperation on the subject of cultural tourism in a room filled with stakeholders, Bayardo explained that he has worked at the Institute of Culture for several years in different positions. I met him several years ago during my internship through the Institute of Culture as one of the members of the National Heritage office. Due to his presentation on the intangible heritage and tourism, we discussed the subject of authenticity and the governments' position on it. At the end of the presentation we had a snack and talked, while the rest of the audience ate and talked around us. He commented:

We conceive tourism from the perspective of the visitor who comes from the outside instead of the internal factors, I mean the community, the values and meaning they give to their heritage. A key concept for the appropriate heritage tourism management is authenticity. We all know the general process to make nacatamal, but when we watch the advertisement of nacatamal made with Lizano sauce... it can be

87

done, but visitors and the next generation will or may believe nacatamal is prepared with Lizano sauce. We [the government] are working for authenticity, for heritage tourism management meaning preserving the elements that validate and make traditions our own (Interview with Bayardo).

The government asserts that the local community should be in charge of portraying themselves as they are, instead of changing for the tourists. Then it becomes dangerous when traditions are established to be performed annually for foreign tourists when it is not performed for the local population first.

Here we see a concern from the government as well as performers for the introduction of new styles from the outside. While Estalin and Ronald are concerned with the particular changes in music, dressing or steps in Nicaraguan dances, they do not specify their influence. They are clear that they are not willing to accept them because that renders the dances inauthentic. The government at the same time, seems to be concerned with possible changes the local population maybe doing to meet the expectations of tourists to attract more visitors, and the impact of such changes in future generations accepting them as historically accurate. This falls into what Cohen (1988) called emergent authenticity I explained above or the renovation/creation of traditions. Traditions, like any other social construction changes through time to meet the needs of the new generations.

Nicaraguan Tourism

After 1990, Nicaragua's reentry to a globalizing world, the adoption of neoliberal policies, and the failure to receive international aid in order to stabilize the country after ten years of civil war, led to the adoption of tourism development (Babb, 2004; Barany *et all*. 2001). Since then, the national government started creating the conditions to attract more international visitors. The Instituto Nicaragüense de Turismo (INTUR, 2009) indicates that in order to increase tourism, the government formulated laws in 1999 like the incentive to the Tourism Industry Law (Law 306). Then in 2004, the General Tourism Law (Law 495), allowed tax-breaks to all those imports and sales related to touristic enterprises (Hunt, 2011:270).

Tourism is defined in Nicaragua as "the activities performed by people during their trips and stays in different places, other than their regular surroundings, for a continued period of time for less than a year to relax, for business, or other reasons than to obtain wages in the visited place (Nicaraguan Tourism Institute, 2010, Introduction)." Since 2001, tourism has become the country's most important economic export (Zapata, et all. 2011: 729). Tourism is considered an export because travelers spend foreign money on local services. In 2002, as part of the National Development Plan, the government encouraged tourism as a way to reduce poverty. In 2005, tourism represented 5.7% of the gross domestic product, employing 6.4% of the working-age population (Vanegas and Croes, 2007:5). The investment of over 47 million Córdobas

(Nicaraguan currency)[9] between 2007 and 2010 increased tourist arrivals to over 3 million individuals during the same period, which represented 37% growth. The visitors generated over 1 billion dollars in income in that three-year period (Government of Nicaragua, 2011).

In 2010, tourist arrivals grew to 8.5% in Nicaragua with more than 1 million visitors. More than 60% of the international visitors came from other Central American countries; 24.5% were North Americans, while Europe only represented 7.1%. Tourism investment generated over 7,000 non-permanent jobs and over 2,000 new permanent jobs (Instituto Nicaragüense de Turismo, 2010). According to the statistics provided by the Nicaraguan Tourism Institute, 25.1% of the tourists visited colonial cities, followed by Managua and the beaches of the Pacific Coast with 20.5% and 16.2%, respectively; with volcano climbing, hiking, and swimming being the main activities performed by visitors (Instituto Nicaragüense de Turismo, 2010: 30- 31).

Developing countries, like Nicaragua, are targeted for "adventure tourism" in which tourists want to visit the tropical forests and the abundant natural and cultural resources. Tourists are in search of a "unique" experience, the readily accessible inexpensive labor, and the possibility of obtaining cheap properties and the open policies for investment in such countries (Zurick, 1992, 610). This tendency is observed in the places and activities most commonly done in the country. The beaches located on the Pacific Coast are among the most important touristic destinations in the country. Places like Montelimar beach, in the department of Managua owned by the Spanish chain

---

[9] The equivalent in dollars is $ 2,473,684 dollars approximately.

Barceló, and San Juan del Sur in the department of Rivas now visited by over 40 cruise ships per year, are two of the most visited coastal areas. The highlands of Nicaragua are visited for the pine forest and coffee farms.

The cities of León and Granada are attractive because of their colonial architecture, mainly the plazas and Catholic churches (Babb, 2004:546-547). In terms of cultural tourism, Babb states that despite the support and display of traditional events like music, dances, costumes, food and "rituals," little of the indigenous past is represented or evoked[10].

Eco-tourism, "an experiential context emphasizing travel to natural areas that benefits local ecosystems and communities (Barany et all. 2001: 98)" has increasingly become an important part of Nicaragua's touristic offerings. This form of tourism has the objective of protecting natural and cultural resources with the goal of sustainability, while the visitor receives education about the ecosystem and the observation of diverse flora and fauna (Barany et all., 2001). One third of the total area of the country is covered by forest, with varied lowland rainforest, cloud forest, pine forest, and wetlands, making ecotourism an even more viable possibility, though the infrastructure for its full potential is still lacking. Despite the fact that a large part of the territory is protected through national parks, the national deficit makes it impossible to afford the cost of actual

---

[10]Babb (2004) here fails to explain the connection between tradition and indigenous cultural expressions. Tradition commonly refers to an "inherited body of customs and beliefs" (Handler and Linnekin 1984:273) that are constantly changing. Nevertheless, tradition is an interpretation of the past in the present, characterized by continuity and discontinuity. Cultural representations take into account prior or past cultural symbols giving tradition continuity, but the understanding of continuity is made in the present (Handler and Linnekin 1984:273). Thus, when Babb refers to traditional events this does not mean that those are indigenous cultural representations.

protection. The increase in the number of private wildlife reserves counters the

government difficulties in protecting national biodiversity (Barany et all., 2001: 101).

A relatively recent offering is community-based tourism, which started around the

2000s, with some 34 projects in 2007. This type of tourism is related to ecotourism but is

increasingly adding other products like culture, agriculture, and arts-and-crafts.

Community-based tourism is:

> Any business organizational form grounded on the property and self-management of
> the community's patrimonial assets, according to democratic and solidarity practices;
> and on the distribution of the benefits generated by the supply of tourist services,
> with the aim of supporting intercultural quality meetings with the visitors (Zapata et
> all., 2011:727).

Community-based tourism aims to maintain community management. In

Nicaragua, community based tourism makes use of natural and cultural resources,

history, and rural activities. This has become a complement to other traditional economic

activities like agriculture, cattle-raising, crafts, and fishing. The objective is to reduce

economic instability for the communities engaged in it (Zapata et all., 2011:730).

Despite the increase of alternative forms of tourism in Nicaragua, it continues to

be generally controlled by international investment; hence, the investors are in charge of

the planning and execution of much of this venture. The government, in order to avoid

scaring away much-needed investment, has instituted few laws to protect national and

local entities from the possible negative impacts of tourism (Hunt, 2011). Using San Juan

del Sur Bay, a major tourist destination as a case study, Hunt (2011) argues that the

government's attempt to use tourism for development has caused the opposite effect.

International investment companies' control of the industry, at least in San Juan del Sur,

has resulted in (sometimes forceful) displacement of people from their land, destruction

of their environment and some of their traditional ways of living (hunting and fishing);

animals are disappearing, along with the fish and lobsters, the hardwood has also been

affected. Since local *sanjuaneños* have been relocated, they have less access to water and

electricity. Unemployment persists, despite the increasing arrival of visitors, the growing

presence of hotels, hostels, restaurants, *comiderías* (diners), bars and clubs, and

foreigners buying property. The local communities are even more affected by the new

foreign owners raising the price of products that has led to increasing scarcity. Hunt

(2011:272) explains:

> Increasing foreign exchange leads the government to aggressively court investors. By
> favoring aesthetic enhancements over community-identified needs, tourism restricts
> the capital accumulation to those already involved in its production, namely the
> wealthy. With opportunities for local residents restricted to either the initial
> construction efforts, or later work in security and vigilance, the nature of tourism
> development only exacerbates the extreme wealth divide in this country.

Cultural Tourism in Nicaragua

The official governmental narratives in Latin America highlight cultural and

biological diversity as an attraction for tourism; however, in the everyday lives of their

citizens such diversity is not appreciated (Melendez Obando, 2012).

In fact, tourism in Nicaragua provides the opportunity to remake the nation

contingent on the government's ideology by refashioning its history and heritage to meet

its needs (Babb, 2004), such that whenever something Indian is mentioned it is as something from the past, ignorant and distant from the "white" modern western Nicaragua (Gudmundson, 2012). This white western – mestizo - Nicaragua has silenced indigenous and African descent groups placing them at a distance in the Caribbean (Gudmundson, 2012:280-281), putting forward the hegemonic identity.

Unlike other places in Latin America who use indigenous identity to increase tourism, the indigenous communities of the country are overlooked, except for the popularly known indigenous communities of Monimbó, located in the city of Masaya, and Sutiava, in the modern city of León, yet they are not necessarily part of the tourism circuit as an indigenous community. Babb asserts, "the Nicaraguan 'Myth of *Mestizaje*' powerfully erases cultural difference so that one finds only passing references to enduring indigenous peoples and places (2004: 548)." She argues, furthermore, the Plaza *Güegüense* in Managua reinforces the mestizo identity celebrating the miscegenation that occurred centuries ago. The cultural identity memorializes the natural resources, the hospitality of the Nicaraguan people, and their traditions but none of it "celebrates" its history[11].

The fieldwork in Granada suggested the population desired to exploit cultural tourism as a way to attract a different type of tourists, different from those mass tourism attracts (i.e., those visitors who would bring negative effects). Instead they should focus in the creation of yearly cultural events that attract tourists during the low season,

---

[11] *Güegüense* derives from Nahuatl and means "old"; it referred to the council of elders in the pre-Hispanic and colonial period. It also refers to the indigenous play and dance the natives used to mock the Spaniards. However, different interpretations of this play have concluded –not without contestation- that *el Güegüense* was in fact mestizo, the basis of Nicaraguan national identity.

similar to those performed in other countries. However, those cultural events would

represent only mestizos. It is important to note that these activities are not currently

performed for the community to value their traditions and continue to enrich their lives

but will be "created" to perform for the tourists, to keep the economy running. As

mentioned earlier, if the community is involved in commodifying their culture this could

be positive for the community as long as they learn about themselves and show what

they prefer instead of catering solely to the tourists; indeed, eventually the repetition of

such performance to tourists might invigorate cultural fervor among the locals and

national tourists who visit these new traditions or refashioning of older ones.

> It's not worth it to watch tourism with negative effects, instead I believe we should organize local activities that allow us to establish activities more permanent like Mexico, Petén in Guatemala, like Panama, worldwide known festivals that are done during the low season for the economy during this period, and we need to develop cultural and religious tourism in the city. We are trying to create a food festival for the Easter season. Each time has their food types, so we can have activities based on that. During Christmas the stuffing, pies, "sopas borrachas "(cake soaked in rum), we have a contest for that. We did two or three this year and last year but few people came because of the investment. A lot of people don't have money to make these dishes (Interview with Mariano).

When I asked Mariano about why these traditions were disappearing he added

that (local) people were bored of coming to see them. The Granadinos had seen them for

years so they didn't want to do them anymore, but now that the tourists were visiting

they could do it again, for them. At other times, during several interviews and talks with

him, he provided different reasoning for the cultural changes he is witnessing in Granada.

At another time he concluded that the transmission from one generation to the next was

broken, so the heirs of traditions stopped making traditional foods or clothing because

they had left the country or believed that it was not important to continue with the

traditions.

The new age of tourism may bring a revival of cultural traditions. It would be

necessary, though, that the government consider Nicaraguans and Central Americans as

an important segment of tourism who can enjoy and contribute to cultural tourism for

this to succeed economically and socially.

> We want to rescue the traditions from Easter. Before, the streets would be filled with carpets of colored sawdust; I think those events can be attractive if done regularly and with quality. You can have performances on the streets, preserve some street performances like El Cartel, La Yeguita or the Viacrucis on the Lake where hundreds of boats go adorned with flowers. It is a beautiful thing, a route among the islets ending in a small chapel over there.
> I volunteer with other scholars to study the research of Perez Estrada and Pablo Antonio (Nicaraguan poets and writers) on folklore to rescue it and put it on display during annual events because there is some celebration every month but people don't do it anymore. There are a number of activities we can put into scene (to make plays or street theater), we used to have games, contests, things that can be done for the national tourism. Tourism is not only so Europeans and gringos come. For me, tourism is mainly for us, then Central Americans, and Europeans and Gringos (Interview with Mariano).

According to the official discourse, the government's perspective on cultural

tourism is that it needs to be protected from destruction in a physical sense and in terms

of meaning, yet for this to happen it requires the local community to be in sync with their

traditions. A community that does not understand or value its culture will replace it with

another. For cultural tourism to be productive it needs to be authentic. Authenticity and

identity may be preserved through polices that support traditions and the respect of the

heritage buildings.

Given that cultural tourism is the new tourism alternative, the government

considers two key factors:

Sustainable tourism from the cultural perspective has 2 basic objectives:
1. Tourism shouldn't change the physical features of heritage. In the case of intangible heritage, it shouldn't alter its function or meaning of traditions.
2. Performances should be executed in their traditional way, and like any other economic transaction the community should receive benefits from it.
Our government is supporting community tourism because we believe it follows these two objectives and it is the challenge for sustainable tourism. Clearly, we need to provide basic conditions for sustainable tourism. First the community has to feel identified with their traditions, if the community doesn't realize the value and meaning of their heritage, unfortunately it will be difficult to preserve. Second, it is important to have policies that strengthen local identities, aiming to preserve that authenticity of physical and traditional heritage (Interview with Bayardo).

However, the level of cultural tourism that is actually presented to tourists in

Granada consists of the historical center (colonial Granada) and the museums, and some

information about fishermen's' livelihood. I obtained this information through interviews

with two Granadino tour operators: Leo and Terra Tours. First, I interviewed Leo, the

owner of Leo Tour. His office is located in La Calzada, the room is small and seemed dark

and hot. The guides receive the tourists at the door and explain the tours they offer. Leo

Tours is focused in rural community tourism taking tourists to the island and to meet the

local fisherman, where Leo himself grew up. Given that the small room where the office is

located we met outside, on a table in the next door restaurant, a canopy protected us

97

somewhat from the sunlight while we talked about the origins of his enterprise. People - tourists, locals, street beggars, children going back from school walked by on La Calzada. It was early afternoon and no tourists would stop at the bars or restaurants but the music was playing loudly and the usual Nicaraguan charm had waiters calling on the passers-by to come into their respective restaurant or bar. Leo is a young entrepreneur, who is very relaxed and open to tell his life story, who considers his work as a way to help tourists really know Nicaragua not in the superficial or commercial way other foreign tour operators present Granada.

Terra Tours, Leo Tours competitors, is also located in La Calzada one block east from Leo Tours, although they focus on higher-end customers who would rather visit the city than rural areas. The office is in a large corner house, the rooms transformed into an office. There I met Jaime, the receptionist of the office. I went in into a large office that had their doors wide open, with a large living room for tourists to wait inside while their guides and ride picked them up. It was decorated with images of tourists in the different destinations they offer and tourist books from Nicaragua. The desk where Jaime was sitting in was in a separate room from the one tourist use to wait, he had a computer with a telephone and several documents organized. The area was spacious, the open doors provided a sense of fluidity and tranquility from the multitude and noise outside. I talked to Jaime for a while, he was cordial but formal, yet he provided ample information on the type tourists they receive and the information they provide on the culture of Granada.

Leo Tours provides some cultural information about the way of living of some of the families who live on the islets in the Nicaragua Lake, however, this information seems abbreviated and not necessarily widespread among the tour operators. This information

does not talk about the locals' history or their past, or their identity but it does show the economic situations and alternative ways of living in Granada.

> We support rural families; we buy fruits, drinks or beer from the local restaurants in order to support them. Our objective is to support these families so eventually they can have their own small businesses, as we rise they will too, to prepare them for when massive tourism arrives. We know tourists are bored of the large cities and constructions. They want to get rid of that and enjoy a little bit of nature because in their developed countries they only see buildings. Here they can see the birds, flora, and fauna, experience the difference with our culture. If we visit the islets we stop by the local families and tourists observe the way they live, how they weave their fishing nets, we tell them how these families have changed, we focus on the history of Nicaragua to let them know where and who we come from (Interview with Leo).

In an interview with Terra Tours, I asked about the type of tours they offer in the subject of culture in Granada:

> In Granada, the most looked after services are history, culture and nature. Those who do it the most are Europeans. In the culture tour, [the focus] generally is about the buildings, the colonial houses, churches, the museum and the fortress.

Then I asked if these tours included the subject of archaeology.

> In the museums there is pre-colonial pottery, a representation of pre-colonial house; in the museums we visit those areas of the museum.

Thus, I inquired if they discussed the pre-colonial era outside the museum or if they visited specific places for the subject. He answered:

In Granada there is no such thing. There is a pottery museum. There is a museum that has a collection of pottery and statues, but if they want to see it in their natural setting we would have to visit the Zapatera island, but the ones in natural state are damaged, destroyed and totally unrecognizable. Then Zapatera is a destination considered only for archaeologists, but we are clear that the sample there are damaged by exposure to the elements and the community (Interview with Jaime).

Above José explains the limited range of cultural information they provide to tourists, however, this information provides one of several ways of living among Nicaraguans.

Despite the government narrative, private enterprises, and at the local level the city of Granada is interested in establishing annual events to revitilize their own cultural practices, commoditizing their culture. Tourism as an economic activity has led to commoditization of culture - the introduction of material or events for exchange in the market. When these can be traded or exchanged, they become goods and, or services (Cohen, 1988: 380). The commoditization of culture can be explained by the shift from modern to postmodern times, change that has affected mass tourism, transforming travel in a search for a "romantic" but individual experience; changing as well the interest from nature to culture, and the protection of sites in addition to observation of places (Urry, 1990: 93 – 100).

Don Mariano is very adamant about the desire to use several religious activities so these can be reinstated for tourism purposes. Nevertheless, others argue the objectification of cultural traits for the market homogenizes and essentializes culture (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2009).

Zurick (1992) and others recognize the social and environmental impacts of tourism. Tourism may lead to acculturation of host communities due to the uneven relationship between hosts and tourists. Culture is re-constructed and commodified, according to Greenwood 1989 (cited in Zurick, 1992:618).

> Treating culture as a natural resource or a commodity over which tourists have rights is not simply perverse, it is a violation of the people's cultural rights. While some aspects of culture have wider ramifications than others, what must be remembered is that culture in its very essence is something that people believe in implicitly. By making it part of the tourism package, it is turned into an explicit and paid performance and no longer can be believed in the way it was before. Thus, the commoditization of culture in effect robs people of the very meanings by which they organize their lives.

Although in Granada cultural tourism has not taken the proportions Don Maríano and others want, it seems possible the commoditization of culture can have a revitalizing effect in the local culture, increasing their knowledge and pride in their heritage (Bunten, 2010; Ruiz-Ballesteros and Hernandez-Ramirez, 2010; Ruiz et all., 2008). The commoditization of culture through tourism can have positive and negative effects at the level of the community. The possibility of empowerment, enrichment and revitalization of the community through tourism make the enterprise attractive despite the possible negative consequences of increasing inequality among the members of the community and the destruction of the local culture (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2009).

It is widely argued that the commoditization of culture leads to the loss of meaning and interest in the cultural event offered to tourists; once it becomes commoditized, it is viewed as less authentic because "rituals" may be tailored or

101

recreated to "the taste of the tourists (Cohen, 1988: 381)." However, Cohen (1988) also

contends that "new" representations of cultural performances may eventually be

recognized as authentic, reevaluated, or empower communities by choosing how to

represent themselves to the public. The commoditization of culture may raise awareness

of identity and ethnicity; it may also revitalize cultural forms by practicing and "staging"

them for tourists. Given that is the population and not the state who is attempting to use

their culture in tourism Granadinos may feel empowered reevaluating their culture in

order to present it to tourists. They are the ones deciding what they want to show, and

how they want to do it.

However, if there is investment on cultural tourism from the government, it is not

really evident for me or those involved in the industry. The interest to use culture to

attract tourists is localized, it is not the government supporting the Granadino

community. Yet, recently the Institute of Tourism opened two archaeological sites for

tourism one in the department of Granada and one in the Department of Masaya.

Archaeotourism

Granada's downtown is protected and conserved to retain its colonial

architecture; meanwhile, pre-colonial sites are unprotected and many of them have been

destroyed in the name of development.

Archaeological tourism, a part of culture and heritage tourism, can be defined as

"travel designed to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the

histories and people of the past (Hoffman et all., 2002:30)." Nicholas and Fraser (2004)

contend that archaeotourism is the commoditization of "intellectual aspects of the past." Silverman (2002: 883) pointed out that archaeological tourism is "a historical discourse… a vehicle for having a voice and mobilizing resources." From these different understandings of archaeotourism, I conceive it to be more than just the commoditization of the archaeological remains and artifacts, but also of the produced archaeological knowledge and the narratives that surround the archaeological site.

Nicaragua is rich in archaeological sites. However, few places have been excavated, preserved, and protected for national or international tourism, even when there is interest by tourists to visit historical places identified as either indigenous, colonial or mestizo. This is evident in the demand for archaeological places like Tikal, Guatemala, and Copán, Honduras, ethnic communities featuring Maya people near Lake Atitlán, Guatemala, or colonial cities like Antigua, Guatemala, and Granada, Nicaragua (Sanchez Cripsin & Propin Frejomil, 2010: 168). Tourism of cultural places reflects how one community differs from another, highlighting the unique patrimony in each (Lopez Olivares & Obiol Menero, 2005: 213).

The lack of preservation of indigenous archaeological sites by the Nicaraguan government indicates little interest in the inclusion of this part of the nation's history in tourism narratives. Furthermore, it denies any relevance to that specific part of the history, and the histories of current indigenous people underlining the relevance of partial colonial history and mestizo identity, even when the government does not clearly explain it.

Leilani provided information about new government funded cultural projects. I was connected to Leilani because of her position in the Institute of Tourism as the

director of the new office of Cultural Tourism. We sat in a large room with a wooden table

with several chairs around in a glass room, cold from the air conditioning and with few

decorations made the interview feel very formal. Although we could see the people

passing by there was little noise. We started talking about the cultural projects the

government was working on and ideas for the short term future in cultural tourism. The

conversation was very formal with direct questions and answers until I mentioned the

subject of identity on Western Nicaragua, Leilani of Kriol identity changed her demeanor,

she became more personal and relaxed parting from the government discourse. She had

strong and useful perspectives on the subject of mestizo identity in western Nicaragua

which are discussed in the next chapter.

New government-funded tourism projects targeted two archaeological sites that

opened to the public in the second half of 2015. One site is located in the department of

Masaya and one in the department of Granada. The one in the Department of Masaya is

the petroglyphs of Cailagua, one of the only known petro-glyphs that depict the

Mesoamerican god Quetzalcoatl or feathered serpent. The general goal of the project is to

revitalize the culture of Monimbó, an indigenous barrio and the history of the

department.

> The Cailagua petroglyphs in Masaya, in coordination with the municipality,
> community, the Institute of Culture and Institute of Tourism promote the
> conservation of these vestiges. The project includes the revitalization and the cultural
> stronghold of [the people of] Monimbó. In Masaya we are supporting a book about the
> history and culture of the department. Masaya possesses one of the most outstanding
> national folkloric expressions (Interview with Leilani).

Nevertheless, the fact that Monimbó is popularly known as an indigenous barrio is not mentioned, but its folkloric expressions are recognized. However, when we talk about folklore, it implies that the author is unknown, silencing the indigenous communities of Masaya, assuming that those who started those traditions disappeared long ago, cutting off the connection between pre-colonial indigenous groups and those living in the present in Monimbó and other cities in the department of Masaya.

The second archaeotourism project takes place in the Department of Granada, on the island of Zapatera, located on the Nicaraguan Lake. This island is located about two hours away by boat ride from the city of Granada. The distance from the city raises the prices making it really expensive to visit the island. Furthermore, the island does not provide the conditions for tourists to stay overnight, and already the trip takes four hours of the day, so the time to visit the sites, the museum and trails is limited. The hotels are located on the opposite side of the island that was revitalized, and once again because of the distance from the city and the method of transportation Zapatera becomes an expensive destination.

> Granada will soon have a new destination on the Zapatera Island with the rehabilitation of the Zonzapote, which includes 14 replicas of the basalt statues in the Convent San Francisco. We are building a community museum on the island and conditioning the trails to the archaeological sites. There is another project for the revitalization of the archaeological sites on Ometepe Island. I should point out that these wouldn't have a real impact without good promotion of what is being done. That is why it is so important all the parties involved work together on promotion of the destinations, and data collection relevant to be in the news, specific events, web pages for the projects and the other actors involved in this process (Interview with Leilani).

Archaeology is a public enterprise with several stakeholders with as many different interests (Clark and Anderson, 2015), like the site itself, indigenous or descendant (mestizo) communities, local residents, local and foreign tourists, archaeologists, the central government and the tourism industry (Silverman, 2002). These stakeholders want accessible reading, understanding and identification with the site information. Yet in tourism, indigenous or descendant communities are distanced from their own heritage. This means "the alienation of contemporary inhabitants of a landscape from tangible remains or intangible practices of the past (McAnany and Parks, 2012:81)."

Heritage distancing is a long process initiated in the colonial times, disconnecting the past from the present by valuing the archaeological sites but disenfranchising current indigenous people. Furthered by the national narratives of the disappearance of indigenous people dispersed via formal education (along with diseases, colonization, migration, forced resettlement, and the discourse of mestizaje (McAnany and Parks, 2012); Oland, 2012). Once an archaeological site is "created" for tourism destination, a site is claimed and controlled by the central government for tourism purposes, working along foreign specialists for conservation, archaeologists for research but not the local communities, at the same time restricting their access to previously open territory. Furthermore, the past is once again constructed by foreigners, telling their (indigenous) histories from foreign archaeologists making them more inaccessible to descendant communities. The formal education system does not include indigenous history, belief systems; instead they undervalue them, while focusing on European history.

Tourism also opens the possibility of "selective recreation and reconstruction of the past," in turn, "leads to a local production and construction of cultural continuity between past and present (Silverman, 2002: 884)", continuity that is highlighted and transformed for the purpose of tourism. Silverman (2002) argued that tourism then becomes the "excuse" to de-contextualize the history of some in order to emphasize the history of others.

Furthermore, Giraudo and Porter (2010) caution about the possible negative consequences of top-down cultural tourism, as a development project. It can separate descendant communities from the archaeological sites that become part of the touristic industry; in my research this was evident in the low number on Granadinos who visit the local museums.

Although this is an important step forward for the government, it still does not match their discourse that the community is involved in the decision making process or revaluating their traditions. Neither has the interest in archaeological sites as tourism destinations increased archaeological research, this has not resulted in the revision of pre-colonial or colonial history, or the histories of those indigenous communities or their survival, nor the vindication of indigenous identity beyond the laws established in the constitution. The steps forward from the government have not sparked the discussion on the subject of identity indigenous or otherwise.

Tourism and Identity

The central question of this research is about the effects of tourism on identity. Many of the people with whom I talked thought tourism was affecting the youth, the way they speak, dress, behave and how they relate to other members of the community. There were reports that young males and females try to change their looks and behavior to emulate foreigners, to not be themselves. These changes may account for the break up in the transmission of traditions from one generation to the next. If the youth start behaving like foreigners, they will not participate in their local cultural events, they will not learn them, thus they will not transmit them to their progeny. Nevertheless, Nicaragua cannot close itself to the world, globalization and tourism. Some Granadinos felt it was not tourism in itself but globalization in general that was causing the changes in the community affecting identity, added to an intrinsic lack of identification or care for what is local or national.

Indigenous communities are believed to have the borne the effects of tourism although mestizos may also be on the receiving end of cultural changes. Indigenous communities perceived to have no control over the tourists who visit their territory, argue there is no respect to their way of living, causing devastating effects to their identity, pushing further an identity crisis and reinforcing a whitening ideology from colonial times.

Evelyn and Angelica provide their position as indigenous people, Karla gives her perspective from her participation with children at the museum and Fernando's view from his experience in the cultural activities of the city.

> We can deny the changes, closing ourselves to tourism, you can't always have the same thing 'cause otherwise I wouldn't be wearing these clothes or have this phone, I wouldn't have anything from outside influences. But tourism is negative; it affects the identity of young people, male and female, how they are exposed to human trafficking, to bulimia. In Monimbó, now more cheles are coming, although I don't know if it's good or bad but boys they start behaving like them (tourists), talk like them, think and even the way to relate to others, cause we are really close to our family. However, foreigners aren't. The youth says: I don't go out with my dad! (like tourists do). Now they are looking for this type of relationships, too. Even in relationships with their partners, you know we don't distance ourselves (from our family), we took that from foreigners, which debilitates our family relationships, which is very important. I mean, as it benefits it damages. It benefits us in terms of the economy but it affects our identity. They consume drugs, alcohol and bring it to the family (Interview with Angelica).

Furthermore, in terms of relationships young people reject their community members because of their looks, attempting to whiten themselves and their kids with western partners, following racist colonial ideas. Males try to act like tourists, playing sports they never practiced before, changed their accents to sound foreign, they desire to change everything on the outside, certainly affecting their culture and identity.

I interviewed Evelyn at the same meeting I met Angelica, during the reunion of the Pacifico Centro y Norte indigenous organization. Angelica is from the indigenous community of Salinas de Nahualapa in the Department of Rivas. Evelyn is a young woman, deeply involved in the indigenous organization. She was, as well as the other

participants I interviewed during that meeting, concerned about the identity of young

people in their communities and the intersection with tourism that is directly affecting

this population. Evelyn and the others were very frank and outspoken despite the

informality of the meeting because they considered the subject very relevant to the

present development of tourism in western Nicaragua and the lack of protection to their

territories, culture and identity. I talked to Evelyn for about forty minutes, because she

believed the issue was pressing in Nicaragua in general, thus she gave me clear examples

of the loss of identity and culture. She explained:

> We were talking about identity and the youth and the advantages and disadvantages
> of tourism. One of the disadvantages was the loss of culture: women change their
> mentality, they don't want the Indian from their community, they all want the chelito
> with blue eyes, a white baby not a black baby. Men, now, you can't even tell what they
> speak because they don't speak English nor Spanish. We don't even speak Spanish
> well and now we are making one up. Guys show up to the pulperia with yellow hair
> because they are only on the beach with a surf board, they don't want to work
> anymore. Consuming drugs, yellow hair, and speaking with a new accent. It's a loss of
> your identity and culture. Honestly they are confused (Interview with Evelyn).

The effects of tourism and globalization are also evident in the students who visit

the museum in Granada. They talk about video games, cell phones, and soccer to the

detriment of playing Nicaraguan games. They do not know the names, rules or words to

the traditional games.

> We are trying to preserve Nicaraguan games; we bought boleros, yoyo, for the
> children's games. Because of globalization they don't pay attention to national games
> anymore (Interview with Karla).

Others considered tourism to have had some effect on identity but it remains small, not meaningful enough to be a problem. Yet, the changes affect how some Granadinos look, speak and live. Don Mariano and guides at the museum suggested talking to Fernando for his involvement in the cultural movement in Granada, his connection to the Convent and Casa de los Tres Mundos and other cultural organizations. I did the interview with Fernando, an architect by profession, in the museum in one of the long corridors of the central patio. We sat on the rocking chairs next to one of the large planters adorning the corridors, although it was hot in the afternoon the breeze from the Lake came in through the central patio moving the palm trees. The museum as usual had few visitors and it was quiet inside. We talked for about an hour of his involvement in the community and his perspective of tourism, indigeneity and identity in Nicaragua. Fernando contributed:

> Transculturation hasn't been too strong. There is one small group of hippies, Argentineans have influenced a few locals, who wear sandals, grow their hair and make imitation jewelry, it is a cultural behavior of those itinerant people. There are some Granadinos who are in the park living like those guys (Interview with Fernando).

Finally, others believed that the cultural changes had nothing to do with the introduction of tourism, but that acculturation had other causes. Don Mariano considered newer generations, the heirs of the local traditions, had moved away to do anything but, following those traditions because it was not economically advantageous. Even though tourism may not be affecting identity, there is a problem with it and the tourism industry

111

is reinforcing it because the lessons to prepare and serve food and drinks excludes Nicaraguan dishes and drinks but excel at teaching foreign cuisine.

Furthermore, Nicaraguan waiters provide better service to foreigners with the conception that foreigners will give better tips than Nicaraguans or those Latino tourists who pass as locals. This behavior encourages a colonizer-colonized relationship, where the western tourist continues to have control over the local economy. And in order to keep attracting their capital the industry shifts to please them. The problem then is the dependency it creates and maintains of developing countries over developed ones.

> I don't see the relationship between the loss of tradition and tourism. We are losing it because the families who cooked these meals, most of their descendants have done something else with their lives, they don't believe making them is productive. I remember when I was young we would go to buy turtles from this lady's house somewhere 'cause it was better than the other lady who made it. Now her kids work at the bank, business administrator in Managua or left to the U.S. to clean toilets. That people who did all the deserts like motajatole, el ayaco, indio Viejo, now we are losing it. Traditional Nicaraguan food is disappearing because there is no tradition to do it anymore, no dedication. Now there is the Luxemburg tourism school where they teach you to make Romanov fillet and things like that, the drink instead of traditional drinks they teach you the whiskey sour, I don't understand it. I think it's good that people are learning to serve, they have improved a lot in Granada because we need a high quality service for tourism, it has improved over time. But it also has a negative effect on the nationals because waiters help the gringo – I mean foreigners– and the national is not worth it because foreigners leave them ten-dollar tips (Interview with Mariano).

Then again Estalin inferred that tourism had nothing to do with the changes in identity, but considered the influence on young people comes from the television or in general from globalization. He notices showbiz and artists' lives are more important than learning about our origins, our history, and culture.

112

[Identity loss] is not because of the foreigners but when channel two started showing the Spanish [soccer] league, everyone talks football. Before it was Ricky Martin, if he changed his hair everyone else did it, now is Puyol or Cristiano Ronaldo, if they dress one way or another. Music is also being influenced by the outside now is reggae and everybody wants to look like that (Interview with Estalin).

Estalin believed that in the case of Granada the lack of identity or the adoption of foreign cultural expressions was a problem rooted in colonial times, because the identity of Granada was about absorbing the foreigners' culture, so tourism was not the reason for acculturation but an innate lack of identity. This issue will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Tourism as a Response to Neo-liberalism and Globalization: Development or Dependency?

Nicaragua, a poor and highly indebted country, has introduced the tourism industry to the economy.   Tourism is encouraged in developing countries by international institutions like the World Bank and UNESCO as a form of economic development.

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), poor local communities can engage in the production of goods and services for visitors, or in the management of community-based business in order to increase their income. Nevertheless, the WTO notes that tourism is not the solution to eradicate poverty, but it aids in its reduction.

The World Tourism Organization affirms in its portal *Tourism and Poverty Alleviation* (2012) that "tourism is the primary source of foreign earnings for the world's 48 least developed countries;" furthermore, it "generates 45% of the total exports in services in developing countries." In 2010, tourist arrivals increased in developing countries to 6.7%, generating 940 million dollars. After the 2008 global economic crisis, tourism came back stronger in developing countries with 8% growth and 443 million international tourists, contrasted with that of developed economies with only 5% growth.

Because of the potential of tourism as a developmental tool, various institutions like the United Nations World Tourism Organization, World Travel and Tourism Council, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and International Monetary Fund have created different tourism programs for economic growth (Zapata et all., 2011).

In Central America, tourism is funded by bilateral and multilateral donors with the intention of reducing poverty following Millennium development goals such as linking poor communities to economically productive enterprises and looking for the equal participation of women in economic activities. The seven countries of Central America acknowledge that tourism increases their competitiveness at the global level (Ferguson, 2010).

Despite the previous arguments, some authors claim tourism creates an economic and cultural dependency reinforcing neocolonialism between metropolis and periphery. Tourism profits have little effect on host countries because the infrastructure and international chains benefit western capital (Zurick, 1992); tourism then has exactly the opposite effect than that expected. "Structural inequalities resulting from historical

relations between developed and developing nations, in fact, are reproduced and

exacerbated by international tourism, thus contributing further to the pernicious effects

of pleasure travel as it continues to favor the economies of the Western nations (Zurick,

1992: 610)." The loss of control of certain resources to foreign companies may further

underdevelopment, increasing the gap between the rich and the poor by highly localized

development or enclave development. It also fosters neocolonialism.

Effects of Tourism in the Economy and Safety

During my research in Nicaragua I found different responses when asking about

tourism effects. Although some people thought it had positive and negative effects, only

one person considered tourism as something completely positive. However, most

thought it had negative effects because the city and Granadinos themselves were not

ready to deal with the side effects of the new industry.

Granadinos perceived the economy to be the most positive effect of tourism,

congruent with the development tool the government perceives. It improves the local

economy with new small businesses, which helps the local families to have new sources

of income, and access of locals to new restaurants, gives the opportunity to the local

government to remodel and refashion the city, to keep it clean and neat. Besides, the

owners are preserving and protecting an important identity feature, as is the colonial

architecture of the historical downtown of Granada. Tourism is giving options in terms of

accessible and quality dining places, as well as high-end restaurants for those who can

115

afford the international cuisine. Furthermore, it is a reason for the locals to prepare themselves in a second language to work in the tourism industry or other industries.

> Tourism is not affecting Granada, to the contrary, before the tourists [came] there was no interest for the streets to be clean. They are protecting what is colonial so there is motivation, tourism is a motivation, and people are learning English. Tourism is beneficial for us and the future generations (Interview with Angela).

Angelica, a young woman, sells crafts at a craft shop in one of the main stores located around the parque central. She complements her income doing manicures and pedicures. She states tourism is a changing force in the city, a positive one, providing new employment opportunities. She claimed the city is more "civilized" because it looks clean, there are new people and the economy improved. Angelica appears to perceives tourism as completely positive industry because it attracts foreign (white) tourists which makes the city look more western, advanced, more civilized with white people and plenty of touristic places to visit.

> There are two aspects to tourism. A positive one is that it has improved the economy at the household level, at least, and municipality; people with small businesses have found a new way for a family [to gain] income. A lot of small family businesses emerged like hotels that found an answer to the economic crisis. Lots of new diners and bars give options to the tourists; there are also the expensive, high-end restaurants of international food for people with money, 'cause now Granada is not like in the beginning [when it was] visited only by backpackers. Backpackers used to go to the market to buy tortillas, tomatoes, cheese and a soda for lunch. There weren't that many options of dinners with regular food with acceptable prices and food (Interview with Mariano).

Nevertheless, Angela's position is unique. His position towards tourism is more intricate. His position towards tourism was positive because he believed the industry brings new possibilities, however, through several discussions and interviews he stated it required more control from the central government to have the desired positive effects. As it will become clear later, my findings are the negative effects of tourism outweigh the positive ones.

Javier has a similar position to Angela. Javier is the son of the owner of Chicheria Paris. This is a historical place inside the city. For almost two hundred years the chicheria (where they make and sell chicha from corn) sold the traditional drink in different parts of the city like the old railroad station or downtown, currently they are located in a main street of the city but not close to the touristic center in downtown. Javier is a civil engineer, at the time of the interview he was out of a job and raised exotic fish in his backyard to sell to pet stores to support his mother and the house given that selling chicha and vigoron are not profitable in their location. Their house, where the chicheria is located as well, is on an important street of the city but they are not selling enough to support themselves. The house is located on a corner, with only one door open making the living room and chicheria very dark, the house looks rundown and dirty, with several dirty fish tanks pressed to the walls giving the sense that no one is taking care of the place. The room has two plastic tables with plastic chairs around them, a third table with plastic containers holds the salad, manioc and pork rinds to prepare the vigorón. On the floor, under the table is the pail from which they serve the chicha. We talked for a while during which time only one customer came in. Javier was positive about the effects of tourism in the city, but he looked worried about keeping the family business a float. It

117

was clear that it was not profitable any more since tourists stayed mainly in La Calzada, and few tourists ventured beyond downtown. Despite the fame amassed during several years, the Chicheria is not part of the touristic circuit of Granada. He said:

> There has been prosperity; the problem is the political situation that affects tourism. People here [west area of Granada] came to visit La Pólvora. Some years ago it was open but now is closed down because they haven't fixed it. If they reopen La Pólvora, it could become another center and integrate this area to the historical center. Tourism is positive 'cause people come looking [visiting], but as I tell you this area is not integrated [to the historical center] everything has moved down to La Calzada (Interview with Javier).

Javier perceived tourism as positive for the economy, however, it is localized to a specific spot –mainly La Calzada where most of the restaurants, bars, hotels, and hostals are concentrated, and the Parque Central; while leaving large parts of the city with only those visitors who dare to leave the beaten path to see the rest of Granada, outside those areas highly promoted in the industry. Very few tourists risk leaving the well-known downtown for the outskirts of the city, meaning that small businesses outside the center do not receive many visitors.

Angelica and Javier are eager to receive the economic benefits of the industry, which may cloud their judgment as to deny any possible negative effects. Or perhaps they truly perceive the industry as only bringing positive effects to the city and the country.

The negative effects were perceived in different levels. An important one was the economy of the Granadinos did not match up to the cost of tourism in the city. The majority of Granadinos cannot access restaurants and bars; these places target foreigners, which is associated with white visitors. Despite the benefits of having the

option to try foreign dishes, the majority of the population could not afford to visit the restaurants.

Also tourism increased the prices in house taxes, food, drinks, car rides, restaurants and hotels around the city making it harder for a population with an already strained economy to live in the center of the city. This has forced many families to abandon downtown, which has caused a perceived domino effect in terms of culture and identity, and pressured those who live outside of downtown to pay higher taxes and food prices to live in a touristic town, which they can barely afford to enjoy.

> …prices in the city have risen. In general, a vigorón used to cost 25 pesos [córdobas] now costs 50 or 60 pesos [córdobas]. You would go to the park and buy a vigorón with a cup of chicha or a cup of cacao and didn't spend 50 pesos [córdobas]. Now you spend 120, tourist prices! The buggy that was 7 córdobas to take you around the city, those ones in the park, the other day I was with Patricia and she asks me why don't we take a buggy to the pier? They charged us $45 dollars… (Interview with Mariano).

> Services are too high, now in downtown you can't rent a house for less than $500 dollars, $1200 dollars, $2000 dollars (per month), it becomes restrictive, only someone with back up investment can do it and with a quick return to cover the expenses, rent, electricity, water and the employees (Interview with Fernando).

Fernando, an architect by profession but also deeply involved in the cultural scene of Granada perceives the constraints tourism brings. Fernando and Don Mariano suggest tourism may improve the economy but not enough to cover the price changes it causes in every aspect of the city. Regular Granadino family activities like eating at the park or taking a buggy to run errands becomes inaccessible or just unfair to the local community. It becomes impossible for local Granadinos to open a business in the downtown, because

of the high prices only foreigners or people with economic power can participate in tourism.

> Hotels have increased their prices too high, for a small room is $ 50 dollars, with that I go to the Holiday Inn and if it's a weekend for $50 dollars you can stay three days, so how are they charging so much? People can't afford it, what they do is search for a house to rent with several people, and they cook whatever they want, they go to the market and buy (Interview with Mariano).

Don Mariano goes further and makes it evident that the prices are high even for tourists. However, Don Mariano's statement may seem contradictory to Fernando's statement that the house prices have risen, that these are no longer affordable. Both statements are saying that Granada is becoming more exclusive to the type of visitors they are attracting. Clearly this does not mean that there are no other places with lower price ranges. The government is attempting to bring tourists who are willing to spend more money in the dining services and hotel rooms, besides backpackers.

Safety was also a concern. The rapid introduction of tourism and the lack of organization from the local and central government brought out several dangerous situations from an increase in prostitution to providing the opportunity of pedophiles taking advantage of the socioeconomic problems of the country. It was clear that those interviewed believed the government needed to take an active role in the protection of the population, and conceived of the facelift of the city to be quick makeovers with no real meaning or deep changes. Concluding that tourism was rushed, there is no organization or clear objective from the state or other institutions but to bring foreigners

120

into the country with little consideration to the secondary effects. And when tourism is practiced this way it may not even be worth having.

 A recently built strip of restaurants, bars and coffee shops has resulted in pressure for Nicaraguans to sell their properties on this street because of the noise until late hours, the danger it presents with alcohol as well as the presence of thieves and prostitutes. Fernando, Mariano and Robert paint a clear picture of this.

Robert is another member of the Casa de los Tres Mundos organizaton. He is a painter who teaches children and adults his skills. Robert is also involved in the organization of the abundant cultural events, thus he is outspoken on tourism in the city and its consequences. I spoke with Robert in Casa de los Tres Mundos, in the small back patio of the house where the studio is located. We sat in a small desk in front of a doorway that led to the street. Other painters were working and talking near us while tourists entered and exited to see the paintings. The room area was overrun with paintings from the different artists who sell them to tourists. Robert was clearly upset about the way tourism was carried out in the city where foreigners are taking control over properties valued as heritage, and the city – from his perspective – encouraged this behavior by looking the other way.

> We work every day trying to make things better so this beautiful city, if you can call it that, can have a different projection because what we have now in Granada is a huge canteen from the cathedral all the way to the Lake, cause everywhere with the increase of tourism, cultural and economic development goes along with prostitution, crime and drug addiction increase as well. In the end we have streets filled with a bunch of kids hanging outside around at 11 pm, [they] don't have mothers or fathers, but they roam the streets and nobody controls them (Interview with Robert).

[The street] la Calzada has turned into the heart of bars and restaurants in Granada, I personally disagree [with it] because I think there should be more control and municipal organization for citizens' security; the police should be there permanently because there have been assaults, fights, robberies, gun fights, I don't think it is that nice. Those people have also raised their prices unbelievably, what you used to pay for one dinner now is three times or more. Those are negative effects of tourism... There are a number of retired people from the United States and Europe who come to live here, they film in the house and make porn movies with little boys and girls. There was a case with one person going to jail and the other was extradited. There is no control, I don't know if the police don't really know, or they don't want to see it. My point is the authorities need to be careful with tourism. The cops should be in the park at night 'cause it's dark there and anything can happen and when I say anything I mean anything. There on the benches they do whatever they feel like. The point is the negative effects maybe aren't worth the positive effects. The city looks better, really. People paint their houses and all, and you see some sort of economic boom, but is all make up that comes off with Ponds C [makeup removal lotion] because there is no clear objective or coordination among hotel association, touristic industry, cultural and tourism cabinet and INTUR (Interview with Mariano).

Granada needs more attention from the citizens, the government, and private investors. We are dangerously close to the violence on the street during daylight. Those are negative things for the tourists, insecurity affects everyone. It is hard to control the tourism industry because it's like controlling people. Prostitution and drug addiction I've seen in Granada. Regrettably, La Calzada was thought as and designed so people could walk freely, to enjoy, but it has become a large open sky canteen, where prostitutes walk openly, girls showing themselves with no control from the authorities or the police. There is violence, fights, unfortunate scenes, and the same young boys drinking. That is not the point of a pedestrian street, it is a place to enjoy. But here, is breakdance, the gigantona, anything, on the street children won't leave you alone sniffing glue or begging (Interview with Fernando).

Some people perceived that Granada has changed its image because of tourism and the consequences like alcohol consumption, drug addiction and other vices related to tourism. Furthermore, the projection of Granada, Nicaragua to the world via tourism is that of a party place that promotes vices and the exploitation of children as beggars. That is not the real Granada, it is not the way Granadinos behave. Tourists do not really see

122

what they have to offer, but the street -- although thought to be a safe enjoyable place where people could walk freely -- has become a dangerous place, targeting those whose only care is partying. Granada is the center of Nicaraguan cultural tourism but what people observe, local and foreign, is alcohol consumption, and exploitation of the local population.

Don Mariano and Fernando may feel they are losing control of their city to foreign people who do not care about it. Tourists arrive and leave soon after, they do not care about the violence, prostitution, alcohol problems, and poverty the population suffers. They visit Granada for "culture" but what they see and experience is a long strip of bars and restaurants. The city transformed to meet the desires of the tourists or what they think tourists want, without little regard to Granadinos. Even more, there has been an increase in prostitution, drug trafficking, and drug addiction, which may be annoying for tourists but they do not have to live with it every day.

Some of the tourists, of course actually care about the local situation; the best example is the growing number of foreigners who move to live part or full time in Granada. Not all tourists are equal, while some may just drop by for fun others may really care and learn about Nicaragua and its people.

Granada indeed has changed to fit the tourists' expectations, although not in matters of culture but in the type of place the city, the government and the industry perceive it was necessary to attract more people or make them stay longer. The party town reality is certainly not how Granada, the cultural tourism center, is represented in touristic discourse. In the next chapter it will be evident that there is little information on Nicaraguan or Granadino culture within the city. The problem, I believe, is that tourism is

centered too much on the restaurant strip instead of being distributed among the city, attracting more people.

Furthermore, Nicaragua receives few benefits from mass tourism like the arrival of cruises in the Pacific Ocean. Also, the country receives the negative image of an unsafe country in terms of food and sanitation. It is also important to note that, although it has some positive effects in the economy, it is not actually producing economic development. The employment it provides is for waiters, tour guides, helpers, cooks or receptionists. And when it comes to business owners, the large majority is of foreign origin, thus the money does not stay in the country. Yet again, the negative effects seem to outweigh the positive ones. If anything, Granada needs more investment for tourism to be profitable, in terms of the economy. Other negative effects of tourism also need attention in order to reduce the issues of safety, and control property sales. At the moment tourism is perpetuating dependency from foreign institutions to support an industry that is not paying its due.

> The cruise ships that arrive use Costa Rican tour operators, they provide the transportation service, they pay thousands of dollars that don't stay in Nicaragua, some of them don't even enter Nicaragua, if they do, they don't let them eat or drink because they are told this country is dangerous [not clean to prepare food or drinks] (Interview with Mariano).

> In general tourism has positive and negative elements. The positive element is that it generates movement in some sectors of the Nicaraguan economy. A few years later after 1992, the ascending curve meant that next to other economic sectors it has risen among the top ones in the country, although is not strong enough to generate more jobs and better paid jobs, because the kind of tourists who come, backpackers, produce very low income per day. Nevertheless, it brings all the vices. Hotels, hostels and guesthouses are not really full except during some specific seasons of the year

124

when there is a lot of people and you can really say the city is full, because they do come. I don't know exactly how many cruise ships come during the year, here come the large buses and they don't buy a bottle of water, they come into the city go around the Casa de los Tres Mundos, the park, the convent, the tower in La Merced, here they only use the bathrooms.

Talking about the employment, it is true tourism has captured some of the workforce, but this type of tourism will not replace or even reach the economic level industrial Granada had in the 1980's. The industry disappeared or is sensibly reduced, the local workforce and the income they generated to the city doesn't exist anymore and tourism is incapable to reach it yet. It doesn't even require educated people because it demands receptionists, porters, people to clean up, waiters or bartenders but it doesn't hire professionals. The professionals are cleaning the hotel rooms of tourists, and don't think the salaries are good, then it is a problem. Tourism is good as an industry, but for it to have positive effects there have to be investment in large structures [hotels] (Interview with Fernando).

Granada and western Nicaragua seem to be going through this perpetuating cycle of development linked to dependency, given that the tourism industry is in fact mostly of international investment or loans from the World Bank. Given that the majority of owners of hotels and restaurants are foreigners; travel agencies and tour operators are from Costa Rica making the most from cruise ships, the airlines, and hotels. The money that actually stays in Nicaragua is not sufficient to generate the promised or expected development. The jobs tourism is generating are not good enough to make a living. The result is tourism, at the moment, is not developing the country but creating the illusion that it is. In Mariano's words from above, it is just make-up.

Cultural Dependency

Palmer asserts, "by relying on the images of a colonial past, the tourism industry merely perpetuates the ideology of colonialism and prevents the local people from defining a national identity of their own (1994:792)." Tourists choose their destinations based on advertisement tools such as brochures, travel books, guides, the web and pictures. The selection and use of images from the colonial times for current tourism contributes to reinforce the colonial perception. The influence of westerners in tourism reinforces and legitimizes that identity from within and outside.

Travel agencies and advertisement (local and foreign) via images of cultural heritage promote or represent a country or place, even when such representations are of a past that no longer exists. All of this incites the tourists to visit (Palmer, 1994).

Palmer's research in the Bahamas indicates mass tourism has come to increase the tensions between hosts and guests. "So many white visitors tended to emphasize the already deeply entrenched feelings of inferiority among the colored and the black population (1994:795)." This type of tourism increases tensions between locals and foreigners, because the local population is understood through guidebooks or other representations, which disseminate colonial stereotypes reinforcing a past social order with whites at the top of the ladder. In Nicaragua, the government, private industry and middle class population are preoccupied with tourists' perception of Nicaragua more than they are with the negative socioeconomic effects of tourism for Nicaraguans. These organizations and institutions build, shape and cater tourism toward foreign tourists with little regard to Nicaraguan population and local tourists, strengthening the idea that

126

white visitors and their needs are more important. It also represents Nicaragua as Spanish colonial (western) place ready to meet foreigners' desire to sightsee an exotic space. Thus, tourism emulates the economic dependence of former colonial countries, relying on western foreign capital for subsistence like they did in the recent past, also reinforcing the social order of "white" and the other (Palmer, 1994:796).

During the colonial period colonizers created cultural and ethnic stereotypes later used in tourism; the constant reproduction of images, histories, and events contribute to maintain the status quo. "All traces of the colony's past are erased so that the street names, buildings, and even education system reflect those of the colonizers' world. The heritage of the people that is handed down to the next generation is that of the colonizers', making it very difficult for the local people to develop an independent heritage of their own (Palmer, 1994:797)."

Eurocentric education, European understandings of modernity, street names, buildings, the judicial system, and representations of a western way of life continue to direct life in the Bahamas. Wealthy white families in control of history and heritage continue to preserve the British patrimony silencing black and African history of the majority of the population, furthering colonial ways of interaction. Tourism and colonialism are linked in the creation and reinforcement of ethnic and cultural stereotypes. Tourism as an economic development tool promotes economic dependency on those countries from which host communities are becoming independent. Colonial relationships survive in the tourism industry when "prejudices and racial discrimination that were part of its [colonial] underlying ideology, may still have an impact on the tourists' and the locals' perception of each other (Palmer, 1994:800)." She continues to

argue that, "the country's dependence on tourism serves to reinforce the historically implanted identity, based on the artifacts of colonial occupation, rather than the contemporary achievements of the people themselves (Palmer 1994:808)." Palmer suggests that in countries where independence did not change the colonial hierarchical relationships among the citizens, tourism interactions reinforce the subaltern identities of host communities initiated with the economic dependence between the west and the host country.

Economic and cultural dependency are linked, as Rosa shows in his research of Puerto Rican tourism. Tourism "grounds Puerto Rican cultural nationalism (Rosa, 2001:449)" because the current national identity was created to establish Puerto Rico as an exotic touristic destination- an enterprise and identity imposed by the ruling class. The tourism industry in Puerto Rico started as an external force of people in search for new leisure destinations; led by an increasing demand from the United States and Western Europe to visit tropical places mediated through photograph and film. Puerto Rico was launched as a touring place; managed by a wealthy group of Puerto Ricans (Rosa, 2001).

Rosa argues that the agendas of cultural projects were linked to tourism; the national cultural projects were constructed based on the needs to establish tourism as a new income source. While the beaches were constructed as "paradise", simultaneously, the Caribbean island culture was constructed as "exotic and exuberant" (Rosa, 2001).

Rosa (2001) contends that there is an intentional cultural milieu built around a place or country to become a tourist attraction for foreigners to visit, in order for the host community to passively accept the visitors and perform as tourists expect them to do.

Host communities have to believe themselves to be exotic and exuberant in order to create such identity among the residents. His research indicates that it is not only about the infrastructure for tourism that is needed, but a well-rounded cultural discourse in the host community to behave in the way tourists expect (Rosa, 2001).

The redefinition of the country for tourism--how it was to be represented to foreigners--demanded governmental control. In this way, only preselected elements, people, culture, art and history were to be presented, "this implies a certain power over the definition of what Puerto Rican culture is and is not (Rosa, 2001:459)."

The intellectual elite sided with tourism because, they argued, it was free from the problems of agricultural exports of coffee and sugar cane. Combined with their search of an identity separate from that of the United States, they created melancholic and romantic stereotypes whose identity was incorporated in tourism narratives. "The tourism promotion campaign…was part of an economic strategy that partook of the cultural and social ideologies simultaneously articulated by prominent intellectuals… It made possible the consolidation of a national discourse at ease with economic and political dependency (Rosa, 2001:478)."

Effects of Tourism in Local Communities – Cultural Dependency

In Nicaragua the indigenous communities were eager to participate in the industry, yet they found there to be no direct efforts from the government to help in the creation of destinations that were related to the indigenous way of living. However, it is not only a matter of negligence or lack of investment of touristic projects in indigenous

territory, but also the absence of support to indigenous people and their land. Actually the lack of effective recognition of indigenous rights in Nicaragua allowed foreigners and Nicaraguans alike to take advantage of indigenous land for their own exploitation. Mestizos in Granada also externalized their discomfort about the lack of inclusion in the tourism industry, mainly because it was limited to exploit solely the colonial architecture of the city instead of expanding it to include the arts and crafts of local artisans.

It may be that the Nicaraguan government is paternalist or is intentionally not including indigenous communities in tourism as such, yet mestizo artisans are excluded as well. There may be touristic projects in their territories but such projects do not include their identity.

I interviewed Henry and Miguel at the same indigenous organization meeting in Masaya. Henry belongs to the community of Salinas de Nahualapa in Rivas; he is a lawyer who works in terms of indigenous rights in the organization. Henry argued the formal education system needed to change radically so indigenous communities might achieve recognition of their identity and historical struggle against the Spanish crown and the nation state.

I also met Miguel during this reunion. Miguel is from the indigenous community of Jinotega in the Northern Highlands.. Henry, Miguel, Angelica and Evelyn considered tourism to be an important subject because it furthered the loss of identity and control over their territory.

> I did my research in Salinas de Nahualapa, Rivas, in places like that where there are beaches Ometepe, San Jorge, Ostional, Lago de Apanas Jinotega, and foreigners commit abuses in the [indigenous] territory. In the West, El Viejo and Sutiava is the

130

same, so [the government] is not really working intracultural tourism thus indigenous communities are not visited. That is a violation to the 169 agreement. This is a complex matter (Interview with Henry).

Despite the laws that protect indigenous communities, these are not enforced. Sometimes, even government employees are the ones who exploit the indigenous territory with touristic projects without permission from the local people. Because of the lack of enforcement or real protection of the indigenous communities, tourists take advantage of the disempowered communities.

Because my pueblo is on the shore of the Pacific Ocean it is very attractive to tourists, which is why we have land issues with foreigners because of the economic value of the land (Interview with Evelyn).

In the Central highlands we have few tourists and we have important places like the Apanas Lake in our territory (communal lands) and we don't exploit it. Who exploits it? The municipality, INTUR, it is in our land but we are not taken into account. It is a violation of our rights, it is like me selling your house. In my opinion tourism should be implemented in a respectful way towards us, attempting [to make sure] the youth doesn't forget its customs and traditions instead of learning other things that are counterproductive to the way of living in the indigenous community.
Tourism should be implemented in a way that is congruent with the traditions of the indigenous communities, tourists could come and visit the communities and that's what INTUR should sell. Tourism is not about building a large hotel but that they know how our ancestors built their houses, understand how we got our royal titles, the way we are organized, our traditions, things that are important to us.
Instead, tourism harms us. We have an INTUR representative, he owns a hotel in our territory; he never asked us about it (Interview with Miguel).

Last year there (2014) were projects and funding for ecotourism farms. INTUR agreed that Salinas de Nahualapa had potential, but the municipality did not approve it because it was not done the way the municipality wanted, they were not going to control it. So, now we are stuck here, we do what we can. From the small income we

131

receive we do some maintenance but it is not a lot. There is great potential in the thermal waters. Women are the ones who washed their clothes there, because we don't have fresh water. Now they pump it from another community. With the initial help of the municipality we built pools for visitors and place for women to wash the cloth. Intur's project wanted the tourists to feel good so they did not want the women to be visible doing their laundry. How can we move the women from their laundry site? They are the ones who have always been there? So they wanted to relocate the women outside, out of view. That became a problem.

We had support from an NGO and at the end they said we stole the money. A private hotel Punta Teonoste with several stars, they wanted to bring their people to the thermal water, they sell it in their package as theirs. The NGO said they would fund a project of thermal waters if we created a cooperative with the Punta Teonoste Hotel, like we were going to do that? It would be better if they told us to give it away, because the indigenous community doesn't have the counterpart to the hotel. The minute we couldn't afford our part they were going to eat us, why would we do that? Since we did not agree to it, the NGO said we stole the money from the project, money we never received. They were the ones who were going to execute the project, yet still they said the indigenous community took the money (Interview with Evelyn).

Although tourists visit indigenous territories, it is not the community who is in control of the resources; they are not obtaining economic benefits, there is no mention of their existence, much less their political or economic situation. However, the indigenous groups are exposed to the negative effects of tourism, while the government breaks the law concerning protection of the indigenous territories.

Clearly tourism generated desired and undesired changes in the communities; it seems like the government has expectations that indigenous, native, or descendant communities are not capable of changing, reconstructing, and representing themselves in tourism or other spaces. This is a colonialist position, the notion that these communities are fixed, immutable, thus not expected to change, objectify, rebuild and market their own cultures, reinforces the stereotype of the "Indian" outside of the modern world,

incapable of adapting to new situations, and not smart enough to participate in the

economy while maintaining their identity. Then again they are portrayed as in need of

protection; they are thereby denied agency as well as the capacity to make their own

decisions. In reality, they are, capable now as they were in the past. The indigenous

communities desire to participate in tourism, "the protagonism of the community gives

the process of objectification its peculiar features and differentiates it from the more

widespread processes of touristic objectification (Ruiz-Ballesteros and Hernandez-

Ramirez, 2010: 203)." The process of objectification by the community is, at the same

time, appropriation of their values and the addition of new principles.

However, the process I observed in Granada is more in sync with MacCannell

(1984). He does not consider tourism to be a form of colonialism, however, he concludes

that ephemeral contact between hosts and tourists does not allow for the economic or

social development of host countries look for in tourism. Thus, strengthening the top-

down relationship. "… the spread of tourism is also the spread of a new form of ethnic

interaction and relationship on the same fleeting, superficial base (MacCannell,

1984:388)." Tourism is different from other forms of interaction between ethnic groups,

it nevertheless reifies the established hierarchical order and power of western society.

Conclusion

The government is concerned with presenting authentic cultural expressions, yet

their investment in Granada towards cultural tourism is poor or not evident. Instead,

there are private tour operators providing cultural information, which means the government is not following their discourse of cultural tourism. Instead Nicaraguan tourism continues on the path that focuses on the geographical features like the volcanoes, sun and beach, and forests.

The effects of tourism are considered are found to be mostly negative. The positive economic effect it has on the local population is small when compared to the insecurity, violence and vices it brings, besides the stereotyping of Granada as a party town where everything goes. Then again, those who do benefit from the industry continue the cycle of dependency observed in colonial times. Nicaragua does not receive the benefits it should, given that it is foreigners who own the hotels, restaurants, tour-operators, airlines and cruise ships. This is paired with the actual jobs it engenders, mostly for waiting tables or low-income employments. Some of the people believe tourism is not worth the price the city is paying for what they are receiving in return.

It is important to note that the community is interested in doing cultural tourism. Artisans and artists are willing to work and perform for tourists, to show tourists what is autochthonous to Granada, their traditions and crafts. This is positive given that it is an initiative from the community, so they get to choose who they are and what they want to show the tourists. However, this might be also negative because Granadinos do not want to do this for themselves or other Nicaraguans but for tourists, which may lead to a transformation of their cultural expressions to fit the needs of the visitors.

The creation of archeological sites as new destinations is new for the tourism industry in Nicaragua, indeed. It might indicate the interest of the government for this part of the history of Nicaragua, but as of now, it has not resulted in research, or the

rewriting of the histories of Nicaraguans. Neither is there a historical vindication of the contribution of indigenous people; or acknowledgment of their existence in the here and now.

Indigenous people perceived tourism to be affecting deeply the identity of young people, especially in their communities. Mestizos considered that globalization was responsible for the changes in identity, not necessarily tourism. What is clear is that there is an identity crisis heavily marked among mestizos, although, there is also a crisis among indigenous youth. This crisis might be the result of centuries of denying the origin of the mestizo, and the lack of definition for this identity, leading to the need to adopt customs from the outside.

Overall, I believe it is clear that tourism continues a colonial type of interaction leading already vulnerable groups to further exploitation and less power, not only economically but culturally as well. MacCannell considers the tourism industry to be different from colonialism, yet similar in that "Westerners continue to write the 'true' story of the existence of other peoples (MacCannell, 1984:377)."

CHAPTER IV. MESTIZAJE

The subject of identity is unspoken, is not debated, it is in silence (Evelyn).

Introduction

This chapter discusses the subject of identity, specifically mestizaje and mestizo identity, the process and the result of the biological and cultural miscegenation of African, Indigenous and European people, which started during the colonization of the Americas. First, I examine the concepts and its changes through time. Then I focus on the mestizaje strategy in Nicaragua and the argument Pablo Antonio Cuadra and the Vanguard movement used in the 1920s to secure the myth of the Nicaragua mestizo. The name of this chapter refers to the colonial process of miscegenation biological and cultural that resulted in the refashioning of indigenous people and communities, and the dawn of what in Nicaragua is the mestizo group.

During fieldwork it was clear people I interviewed had different ideas about the concept of race and ethnicity, which they confused and exchanged, race for ethnicity or the other way around, which made this more complex.

Theory and fieldwork

Identity can vary from self-identity to that shared within a group. Group identity can be defined as: "identification of the self with a specific social position, cultural tradition or ethnic group; self-conception held in common by a group of people (Seymour-Smith, 1986 cited by Macleod 2006, 111)." Intergroup identities allow for a sense of belonging to a group and/or place, and for uniqueness while separating them from other groups (van Rekom and Go, 2006). In other words, "they locate an individual in a society (Van Rekom and Go 2006:81)."

Identity is always forming; it is constantly changing and influenced by different elements like history, place, and territory (Macleod, 2006). "Identities are never given, static or transparent; they are product of the social actors' narratives they tell themselves and others tell about them. Identities are provisional, subject to contestation shaped during power struggles, which aspire to transform some discourses as more persuasive, charged and legitimate than others (Hale, 2005:20)."

In Latin America, mestizo identity was used to establish the nation states in the nineteenth century and mestizaje was the strategy that recently emancipated Spanish American colonies used to homogenize multicultural territories. Franklin Knight wrote (in Soto Quiroz and Diaz Arias, 2007:15)

> Latin American demographic complexity was reflected in the emerging nationalism of the XIX century, and at the moment to define and confirm their nationality these countries recognized that mestizo was the most representative figure of the nation. Thus, from Mexico to Chile, this figure became with few exceptions, and in the absence of other groups, the symbol of the national type.

137

Mestizaje is, Taracena Arriola (2005) contends, a historical process, a national

project and a national identity. Mestizo commonly refers to the new hybrid race as the

product of the biological and cultural mixture between Spaniards and indigenous

individuals, denying the contribution of Africans in the nation-building process (Soto

Quiroz and Díaz Arias, 2007). However, this concept of mestizo had many variations

through time and space, which became visible during fieldwork. People had different

understandings of the term, contributing to the important conclusion that mestizos as an

ethnic group remains undefined except in opposition to the indigenous people or

indigenous identity, thus acting as a mesh that catches all those who do not define in the

present or did not defin themselves in the past as African, European or indigenous.

 Mestizaje refers to the blend of two mother cultures to engender a daughter culture,

which harmoniously homogenizes the two previous ones, only recognizing the

multicultural origin as something of the past, commemorated through folklore (Hale,

2005:35). Nationalist arguments posit that this mixture yielded "superior" beings

because it hid the characteristics of the inferior group engendering a "whitening" process

that was impossible to achieve (Smith, 2005). In this process of mestizaje, culture is

impossible to separate from biology, since these are considered mixed at the same time;

culture, intellectuals believed, was inherited along with blood, an understanding that

persists among the people I interviewed. Mestizaje then classifies individuals based on

how close or far they are to achieving the imagined ideal mestizo, creating more

differences among the population based on the color of the skin than actually integrating

them. Additionally, it assumes a passive attitude of native females where mestizo is

imagined to be the product of only violent interactions, ignoring intentional mixture from

138

indigenous women as well as from European men (Smith, 2005:583-586), considering

women indigenous or otherwise had no possible personal interests in mixing.

However, mestizaje is not a thing of the past. Oscar pointed out that mestizaje was

a continuous process. Oscar is an archaeologist and a friend who works in a private

museum that holds a large pre-Hispanic ceramic collection in Granada. I contacted Oscar

because of his job in the museum dealing with tourists and children. I met Oscar at the

museum, housed in a colonial style house in downtown Granada... The conversation was

long and full of unexpected surprises because it was Oscar who pointed directly at the

fluidity of the mestizo identity and its convergence to class and race that are discussed

later in this chapter.

> Mestizo is a mixture of two ethnic groups. Another mestizaje is with the British [in the Caribbean], another is with the Germans who came to grow coffee and during the revolution Russians arrived as volunteers. The most widely known is the European and indigenous mixture (Interview with Oscar).

Mestizaje is perceived as a process that started and ended in the past. Yet,

Nicaraguan history of warfare and violence has meant the constant introduction of

foreigners who continue to mix until the end of the last revolution in 1989-1990 with

Russians and Cubans incoming to the country. In 1990, the opening of Nicaragua to

tourism created a new wave of foreigners starting a new age of mestizaje. The

government narratives surrounding tourism promote once again the colonial

relationships engendering a new process of mestizaje as well as of cultural and economic

dependency with western countries. This process is not finished.

Mestizo was the prototype of person the recently emancipated governments desired in order to fit in the nation (Hale, 2005). However, mestizo as the ideal citizen contradicted the western European claim that racial mixing caused degeneration; thereby also undermining the western view of indigenous inferiority (Hale, 2005).

Most of the people I asked about the meaning of mestizo provided a textbook answer, for those who had an idea, like Alfredo below. Many did not know what it was or meant, some were confused about the concept. In the museum, one of the guides stated she did not know what it meant although she had heard it, claiming it was used in the Caribbean to separate the indigenous and afro-descendant communities from the rest of the (mestizo) population.

Alfredo is potter from the indigenous community of San juan de Oriente. We met through Norwin, another potter who also makes replicas of indigenous pottery I traveled to San Juan de Oriente in the early afternoon to meet Alfredo at his house, we talked in the living room which functions as part of his workshop and showcase to offer his product. I sat down while he decorated some of the pots. His two teenaged children were painting and his father-in-law was drawing Alfredo and I talked for about an hour about the government support to artisans and their introduction to tourism and its effects on identity. He also showed me some of the steps to do the replicas and the importance it has for him and his family to carry on this type of work as indigenous people and Nicaraguans, to keep something of their past alive.

> Mestizo is the product of two races or cultures, it is the product of this relationship, and I think the Spanish and the Indian, it is the mixture. I am no sure, I think that is what it is (Interview with Alfredo).

140

Alfredo's response is a textbook answer, although he was not sure if this was the right answer. Below we will see every person I interviewed had a different concept of the term mestizo, other people did not know what it was or meant but once I asked if they perceived themselves as Indigenous, they answered they were mestizos.

> Mestizo is just a concept you study in class, the product of the mixture of two ethnic groups -- just in school and that's it! You know about mestizo in October 12th. Oh! The encounter of two worlds; the day of the races. They teach you about it only during a history class for a specific date. On Independence Day they don't know what mestizo means, [it] is just about independence. Mestizo is the black [someone who works hard, who performs the hardest jobs] the one who works his ass off in the maquila, construction workers, those who have their plot of land and take their product to the market, the merchants who leave their house to sell in the market [in the city], those who rise early in the morning, the ones who stay awake – those who work [the workforce]. The mestizo lives relegated because it does not have many opportunities. Maybe now some of their rights are being claimed, now women can work, that they need to have a good position. The mestizo is camouflaged as the low class, the indigenous people are in this class, the peasant (Interview with Oscar).

Oscar arguably suggest that the word mestizo does not have any meaning today, at least in western Nicaragua. Mestizo is a textbook concept that exists on specific holidays to remind Nicaraguans of the "encounter of two worlds" and it stops having any meaning the next morning. It appears that the term mestizo has lost its meaning because the mestizaje project has been somewhat successful in western Nicaragua silencing indigenous people. If mestizo existed in opposition to indigenous identity and there are no more indigenous people then there is no need to define the term or deicide who is in or outside this group. In such a case, the origin of the mestizo as the counterpart to Indigenous has no place anymore. Given that the large mestizo population and the

141

government believe that there are no Indigenous people, the meaning of mestizo does not need to be defined. They are all mestizo, Nicaraguans, all one and the same.

Furthermore, Oscar states that mestizo is the labor force, the hardworking people, those who comprise the lowest social class and have the hardest jobs, and those who have few opportunities in life. In sum, the mestizo is the son, the heir of the Indigenous people. In the end, they are one and the same, black, Indigenous, peasant and mestizos because they are the working class, relegated and discriminated because of their skin color as well as for the type of work they perform by those who consider themselves white, not necessarily Spanish or European but at least superior to those working for them, suggesting this issue of identity is not only about race but also about class.

During the colony hybrid populations were marginalized socially, legally, economically, ethnically, and politically. They had no rights and most of the time lived outside the constituted villages or cities. Even when they were given rights mestizos were still stigmatized and left outside the boundaries of society. Mestizos and Ladinos[12] did not have a defined space in the society like the one that clearly distinguished and separated Spaniards, Indigenous, and Blacks. Their eventual access to land and socially accepted jobs helped increase the number of mestizos, which in turn helped the repopulation of Latin America between the 16th and 17th century. In Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica, mestizos became the largest group of the population, however this might have been an intentional misrepresentation by the local governments

---

[12] Ladinos refers to the population in colonial times who spoke Spanish, or indigenous people who had lost their identity markers

142

in order to erase indigenous groups and ultimately obtain their land (Soto Quiroz and Diaz Arias, 2007).

After the independence of Central America from Spain, indigenous communities were conceived of as ignorant and backwards following western concepts of evolutionary theory. Situated even socially below the mestizo population, in the period between 1870 and 1944, the Indigenous populations were perceived as "barbaric, rebellious and vulnerable to manipulation (Soto Quiroz and Díaz Arias, 2007:83);" importantly, it was during this time that the former Central American colonies started constructing their identities as nation-states (Soto Quiroz and Diaz Arias, 2007).

In this interval, mestizaje becomes a "discursive strategy" which was intended to homogenize the different groups culturally and "racially" in order to erase the divisions among them, given that the cultural heterogeneity of Latin America did not fit the idealized (European) nation-state.

Mestizaje is "an ideology based in the inferiority of the Indian population, and an unconditional – sometimes even contradictory – admiration and identification with the western society (Jean Muteba in Soto Quiroz and Díaz Arias, 2007:87)" thus placing white, westerners, or Spaniards above non-whites, Indigenous, and blacks. This "whitening ideology" is evident throughout Latin America (Norman Whitten in Soto Quiroz and Díaz Arias, 2007:87). Ultimately, this Eurocentric ideology erases the black and indigenous heritage, leaving only the white legacy as important and pertinent.

> The mestizo from the Pacific [western Nicaragua] mixed the most in order to whiten themselves or change the dark straight hair (of the Indigenous people). Still people have that complex, looking up to Spain [the west] (Interview with Mariano).

143

The lasting effects of mestizaje are clear when the population keeps idolizing western culture and ways of life, while denying their indigenous ancestry. Western Nicaragua was (and continues to be) heavily influenced by mestizaje and the whitening strategy. Tourism dependency and the role it plays in reinforcing colonial relationships between locals and foreigners reinforce colonial identities, as well as the identity crisis.

Mestizaje as a nationalist project integrates liberalism, progress, modernity and civilization that clashes with the multicultural Latin American countries. "In Latin America, the recently independent elites were faced with a formidable task: inventing a modern community (Baud and Parra, 2002:245)." Those projects to modernize the newly independent countries attempted the destruction of the cultural and biological diversity, homogenizing them by implementing citizenry (which promotes the idea that everyone is equal) in order to establish "equality" among all groups, suggesting disenfranchised groups did not need special treatment.

> Nicaragua is mestizo. If you notice, even those great last names of Spanish descent were mixed--most of those families with money have "European" and some Indian blood, some darker some lighter, they also mixed with Africans and British. In León and Masaya people are more Indian, but here, Granada and Rivas are more European and that's why you can see all those combinations of dark skin and blue eyes (Interview with Robert).

When Robert states that Nicaragua is mestizo because of the biological mixture during the colonial time, despite his knowledge of the existence of the indigenous barrios of Monimbó in Masaya and Sutiava in León, he denies the right of indigenous people to self-proclamation under the agreement 169 from the International Labour

144

Organization[13]. These groups do affirm an indigenous identity, however, because the

hegemonic concept of indigenous in Nicaraguan society which frames them through a list

of cultural traits and purity of blood they are stripped away from their self-proclaimed

identity and included as mestizos because of their biological mixing.

 However, "several indigenous and African American communities created ways to

become appropriate to the modernizing force without losing their economic or cultural

autonomy, by inventing habits to develop in the new social context (Baud and Parra,

2002:248)." They transformed and adapted to the new circumstances without losing

their identity. This may have consisted of using an identity mask to pass as mestizos, in

order to survive the cultural and physical violence the Spanish and national governments

implemented over them.

The term mestizo has different meanings today. Originally, it meant the biological

mixing of two different cultural and/or biological groups. Mestizos through colonial times

became the largest group with the miscegenation of Africans, Indigenous and Europeans

as well as the mixture of groups that already presupposed mixture like *mulatos* and

zambos becoming a large number of those considered mestizos.

In Central America, this process of merging is also known as Ladinización

[ladinoization]; and the people engendered in this process were dubbed "ladinos," which

referred to the process of de-indianization. This meant the abandonment of Indigenous

---

[13] Indigenous and Tribal People Convention 169 agreement from the International Labour
Organization states in article 1, number 2: "Self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a
fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply"
(International Labour Organzation, Para:4)

clothes, language and behavior to adopt those of the colonizers. It also referred to those

who were proficient in the Spanish language, which included various Indigenous people,

all hybrid races, blacks, and poor Spaniards. Both concepts -- mestizo and ladino -- saw

their meanings change through place, time, and context. What is known for sure is that a

great variety of groups procreated, in the end engendering the racialized system that

fostered divisions of people based on their skin color (Soto Quiroz and Díaz Arias, 2007).

All these new groups became mestizos as well.

I also suggest some indigenous people may have attempted and succeeded in

passing as mestizos in order to avoid the persistent (even today) intrusion, disruption

and destruction of their way of life, as well as the taxes and hard work imposed on the

indigenous communities. Today in western Nicaragua mestizo is a default ethnicity until

proven otherwise. This shows the fluidity between the two identities and the necessity of

indigenous people to behave as mestizo to participate politically in the country. Mestizos

and indigenous, then, are not dichotomous but may mark ranges on a spectrum.

Mestizaje in Nicaragua

In Nicaragua modernity referred to the integration to capitalism and coffee

production, which was viewed as contrary to the presence of indigenous communities,

communal lands, and their subsistence practices (Dore, 2002). Although, the introduction

of coffee in the 1890 transformed many of the indigenous groups into peasants through

the loss of their communal land, plenty became owners of private land who in the end did

146

not need to work in the coffee farms for subsistence. Instead they kept working the land

as they had for centuries (Dore, 2002).

> There may not be differences phenotypically, as people look for them. The difference
> is on the way of life and coexistence of indigenous people compared to mestizos. I
> always compared them with real life examples: the day of the dead in Monimbó is not
> the same for people in the rest of Masaya. You visit the cemeteries; you'll see the
> difference then. We spend the whole day with the dead because we live with those
> who already died, we share our food, the prayers, it is a whole cycle; it is the space
> where we can do that. While for them [mestizos]) it is an obligation, so the neighbor
> doesn't say you didn't put flowers in the grave, that you are a bad son, or bad spouse,
> bad widow. The difference is also about how we feel about ourselves, what sets us
> apart is that I have an identity and I breathe it, while the mestizo has another way of
> living, another way to view the world. A different way of being, it doesn't have the
> same way of sharing, 'cause even if we fight with our family, because we are not
> perfect, we stick together; mestizos aren't like that (Interview with Angelica).

Angelica, an indigenous woman from Monimbó stated the differences are within.

These are not physical but mainly in the way the indigenous people live as a community,

how they feel and experience their beliefs and traditions. The mestizos on the other hand,

follow their traditions as an obligation; they do not know or understand their traditions.

Their indigenous identity defines them and sets them apart. Despite the centuries of

Spanish and Nicaraguan government encroaching on indigenous communities and people

– although silenced and isolated – they persist in their way of living.

> First, it [indigenous identity] has to do with self-identification. I mean being
> indigenous or not is a personal right. I mean you have the right to say I am or I am not,
> if you consider yourself indigenous or not. It is about the perception of your family,
> your community, living in harmony and collaboration among the members of the
> family and the community, solidarity among everyone. There is also the legal
> perspective of the 169 agreement that gives us the right to self-identify, from that I
> can base my identification as indigenous because the 169 agreement [from the

International Labour Organization] first says that I have to be aware that I belong to the indigenous pueblo and that my origins are from our ancestors, which goes back to the first settlers in the territory, what we use to self identify. Other differences are the principles and values, that can be inside a community, people in that community contribute plenty, are very social but maybe you don't feel that way so it has to do with those values and how community work is incorporated. That is an important thing because not everyone has that vision to work as a collective (Interview with Henry).

Henry suggests that being indigenous is about understanding and belonging to a community, sharing and working in collectivity, knowing who one is and living that identity. Being indigenous or not is about identification from the inside nor the outside. It is not about behaving or fitting into a list of cultural traits. Being indigenous is about how they live their lives, under the principles stipulated by the community. They have the right to self-identify as indigenous but mestizos and the government - due to the homogenizing strategy of mestizaje – deny or ignore that right based on the idea that indigenous people need to have 'pure blood' or fit into a list of cultural traits like clothing or language. If they do not fit within these parameters then they are not "real Indians."

Mestizos' life – as opposed that of indigenous people – is about the individual; what they achieve is done alone. Their work needs to be remunerated; they do not work without expecting something in return. They lack the solidarity indigenous people have:

As indigenous pueblos we have a different way of organization, meaning we have a board, a local government, we have lessons during gatherings, we create our own laws and we obey them. Mestizos don't have this and they say it's crazy that we do it or respect them [the laws].
Mestizos have more opportunities because the indigenous communities are far away from the cities. It is a hardship, so the mestizo has that advantage. Indigenous women are different than mestizo women in the way of thinking, the way they are raised, how they raise their children is very different. For example: indigenous

148

women are more loving with their children. I'm not saying mestizo women don't love them [their children] but indigenous women share more time with them because mestizo women have more opportunities to study and work. They have a higher academic level, not all of them. There are problems among all groups in our country but indigenous women are marginalized further and more controlled by men, mestizo women aren't. Mestizo women are the ones that fight more for their rights; indigenous women are educated to be submissive, innocent and lack education. Mestizo women have more access to information, more opportunities to get help and indigenous women don't.

We recently did a diagnostic about violence against women [in our indigenous community], and it is very sad the situation in which they live, just from there we can sense the difference between indigenous and mestizo women. The way indigenous women want to give birth. Mestizo women want to go to a big hospital with doctors and specialists, indigenous women want to deliver in their houses, squatting down and have their midwives. [Because of] the physical work, they do have the strength to deliver naturally, mestizo women are more delicate, their work is more intellectual. Another thing is indigenous women have their kids younger because they don't study (Interview with Evelyn).

Indigenous people are bound by rules and laws established by their local government. In terms of gender there is also a great deal of difference between ethnic groups. Indigenous people live in isolation from the rest of the mestizo population, which makes their lives harder due to the lack of access to education, hospitals, good roads, et cetera. In that sense, indigenous women suffer the most. They are victims of violence, receive less education, have children at an early age and are marginalized more than mestizo women. On the other hand, indigenous women spend more time with their children. Mestizo women live in the cities, receive education and fight for their rights. However, Evelyn's position is contradictory in that she sounds upset that they have to give birth with midwives instead of having the opportunity to be able to go to a hospital, or having to do more physical work but at the same time desire that such activities be respected because they are part of their culture.

My point here is the modernizing process of the Nicaraguan government did not destroy the ethnic identity despite the disappearance of ethnic markers; some Indigenous people became peasants who held private land thereby changing their societies but not destroying them (Gudmundson, 2012): here lies the origin to the Myth of the Nicaragua Mestiza. The government built this myth along with the elite intellectuals' interests in search of a modern culture; the construction of the national identity demanded the discourse of the intellectuals and the legitimation of the government (Ayerdis Garcia, 2009). Mestizo and mestizaje strategy that reigns in Nicaragua's national imaginary today started during the colony and continued after independence representing the singularity of the Pacific watershed-center highland inhabitant who spoke Spanish, held a mestizo identity and a western education as the ideal citizen; given that, the independence movement needed a sociopolitical plan to go along with the new nation (Midence, 2008).

Securing the Mestizo Identity

As early as 1823 patriotic *tertulias* (gatherings) were initiated to create a nationalist feeling, but it was intellectuals through text and writing after independence who led the formation of the state following the colonizers' ideals (Midence, 2008).Their position towards the indigenous culture was clear: the indigenous only had worth after they had mixed with superior European blood.

150

Our culture was born during the conquest. For good or bad the Spanish ancestors held down the degenerate Indian in savagery and imposed the unfinished task to incorporate them to a superior culture. They improved their blood through the mixture, gave him a religion which can save him, a vast and almost perfect language. Since then the Indian, creole, the pure Spanish in the path of the same inexhaustible culture (Coronel Urtecho, cited in Arellano, 1969:10).

In the 1930s the Somoza government and the intellectuals put in place the "hegemonic cultural model (Ayerdis Garcia, 2009:427)" to go along with the economic changes and further advance the construction of the national culture through the legitimation of the political power, invention of the nation and of the official nationalism (Ayerdis Garcia, 2009). Modernization during this period referred to the material progress such as improvements in communication, banking systems, health and economic diversification. For these changes to take place and be institutionalized it required cultural policies, mainly the expansion and enhancement of education. And it was the intellectual vanguard movement – a group of poets and writers – who took on this new enterprise. The first task was to build a national identity in order to "cultivate self-esteem" among Nicaraguans. The government ideology and the vanguard movement were coherent to the foreign discourse of indo-Hispanics and mestizaje (Ayerdis Garcia, 2009). In search of the national identity, intellectuals attempted to increase nationalism and began historical research of the indigenous past in order to create a common binding history. National identity was built on the mestizo, the colonial heritage, and the famous Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío. Information spread through formal education, complemented with the national intellectuals and artists. It was the intellectuals who reformed the educational system based on European or the United States structure. The

results of the search for nationalism were stronger during the second half of the 20th century.

Changes in the education system reflect the search for a national culture with a restructuring of the national holidays, updating of the school curriculum, and other improvements to be on par with the rest of Central American countries. It also fomented cultural recitals for poetry, historical essays, painting and sculpture. Poetry was used to develop the mestizo national identity. The intellectuals believed arts and music contributed to the preservation of what was considered "national." The government also provided support for the Geography and History Academy, and Language Academy's search and recovery of historical documents, and printing of historical books. "During this period a coherent identity discourse, which synthetized and started the national tale through ritualized discursive practices, that feed the modern vision of the nation at the time (Ayerdis Garcia, 2009:445). According to Ayerdis Garcia (2009:448) "research suggests mestizo cultural vision (indo-Hispanic which shapes the official identity discourse) since then until today, attempted to 'gloss over' social inequalities in the umbrella of the 'imagined community' (shared by a wide collectivity) and erased and/or silenced the 'other'"; evidencing that cultural hegemony accompanies political hegemony both searching for absolute dominion, while avoiding contradictions and encouraging mergers.

During this period mestizaje took hold, providing an image of cultural homogeneity that underscored the colonial heritage: gastronomy, buildings, fables, dances and music are some of the elements used to overtly discriminate those who do

not fit in what was established by intellectuals and artists of the vanguard movement in order to establish a national cultural hegemony (Ayerdis Garcia, 2009).

The most representative poet of the vanguard movement was Pablo Antonio Cuadra. His work is the most valued in the movement, the literary movement that engenders and constructs the most successful strategy of mestizaje and whitening message. Cuadra argues that during the colony two different forms of art began: A cultural one that follows the Spanish writers from Europe and a popular or folkloric one – mestizo – neither Indigenous nor Spanish. As a writer, Cuadra believed that Rubén Darío began the indo-Hispanic unity. Darío used the indigenous cultural heritage as a rich source of authenticity and originality claiming a proud mestizo origin against the European racism of his time (Cuadra, 1982:7). Darío wrote in *Prosas Profanas y otros poemas*:

   There is poetry in our America,
    it exists in the old things;
    In Palenke and Utatlan,
    in the legendary Indian,
    and the sensual fine Inca,
    and the great Moctezuma of the golden chair.

Even when Darío writes about the indigenous populations, he referred to them as in the past, suggesting indigenous people from his perspective either did not exist or had no connection to the indigenous people of the present. Cuadra suggests that Darío's first publication *Azul* in 1888 with his poem *Caupolicán* represents the old Indigenous race as

153

something that happened long ago (Cuadra, 1982). Furthermore, it is not the Indigenous

he is trying to represent but the mestizo.

> With Rubén the Indian asks and gets the word, but the one speaking is the mestizo…
> Darío refuses to consider both factors of mestizaje as an antithesis, as contradictions –
> and except for the first indigenista enthusiasm in the prologue of Prosas Profanas –
> unites them as a synthesis. He values the Indian but he also values the Spanish
> (Cuadra, 1982:8)[14].

Cuadra (1997) considers mestizo identity to be a duality that exists in the

everyday life of Nicaraguans. In his poem *El hijo de Septiembre* when referring to the

birth of mestizo after independence from Spain on September 15, 1821 he acknowledges

indigenous and Spanish ascendency, which conformed two equal parts of a whole.

> I fought with Don Gil in the first
> Nicaraguan war, as a boy I was an Indian
> and Spanish, and they both hurt me.
> I have the bilingual scream in my two sides,
> because I was hit with arrows in my white side
> and with bullets in my dark pain (Cuadra, 1997:15)[15].

---

[14] My translation: En Rubén el indio pide y obtiene la palabra, pero quien habla es el mestizo…
Darío se niega a considerar los dos factores del mestizaje como antítesis, como contradicciones
desgarradoras y – salvo en el primer entusiasmo indigenista del prólogo de 'Prosas Profanas' – los une
iniciando una síntesis. Valora lo indio pero también valora lo español

[15] My translation: Yo pelié con don Gil en la primera guerra nicaragüense. De muchacho era indio,
y español y al unísono me herían. Tengo el grito bilingüe en las dos fosas porque me dieron flechas en el
lado blanco y balas en mi dolor moreno

In Cuadra's perspective the Indigenous population played the female role in the encounter, while the Spaniards were the males. In other words, Nicaragua had an indigenous mother and a Spanish father (Cuadra, 1963), from that mestizos are born, and the most representative individual is *El Güegüense.* Cuadra considers that el Güegüense represents the mixture of indigenous and Spanish and his behavior is a compilation of all (stereo)typical Nicaraguan behavior (1997:67):

> Created by the ancient and disappeared indigenous theater – he jumps to the stage in the new mestizo theater, bilingual, when he acts, he himself mixes and completes in himself the first satirical sketch of the Güegüense or macho ratón, our first mestizo play, anonymous, bilingual in Nahualt and Spanish with fourteen danceable musical parts, is the original, first stone of the Nicaraguan literature, a piece born during the emotional moment of the Indian and Hispanic fusion – in the gestation itself of the mestizaje of cultures to be engendered after three centuries, the prodigious synthesis of Rubén Darío which has the great value – besides its own merits as a folkloric primitive literary play – of discovering our insides in that process of gestation, particularly in the development of the tongue, in the creation of the myths, and the formation of the Nicaraguan character. In this last aspect the Güegüense has the virtue to have created the first theater character in Hispanic America, and that character, is since then an extraordinary compendium of those characteristics our neighboring countries name 'el Nica'. The Güegüense arrives to the play as a being with a past, like someone who comes from ancient times and from the people, probably an old Nicaraguan character.

Cuadra appears to force his reading to fit the mestizo in indigenous behavior in order to erase the differences between the large heterogeneous indigenous group and the Spanish and *criollo* populations. As such he erases the indigenous group by forcefully placing them in the past, giving life to today's mestizos. Though it lives in a permanent duality, they coexist in peace. Later on his book he continues to argue:

155

Like I said from the start, besides the value in itself as a literary piece, el Güegüense is an invaluable x-ray from the Spanish and indigenous encounter in Nicaragua and the beginning of their mestizaje. In the face of attitudes or superficial positions trying to create simplified political controversy between indigenismo and hispanismo, what matters is not to keep the dialectics of hate or resentment, but the dialectics of love, which studies mestizaje, learns its lessons and follows its creating process towards a fertile and vital synthesis of both heritage (Cuadra, 1997:78).

Darío recognizes both forces are in constant battle and argue for them to move beyond their differences and the struggles that have characterized Nicaraguan history even before the independence. Furthermore, the worldwide recognition of Rubén Darío in the area of literature turned him into as a sort of national hero who recognized mestizaje as a source of pride and the one who moved beyond the original duality of the territory to have a real nationalism and Nicaraguan identity.

The vanguard movement initiated the search and expression of the Nicaraguan identity. In that enterprise they affirmed the national values, rescuing them from mental colonialism – founded the national literature as a cultural reaction (nourished in Rubén Darío and strengthen in Sandino) against foreign intervention (Cuadra, 1997:94)[16].

After the vanguard movement and the Somoza dictatorship the Sandinista government took a new stand on the colonization process; however, it continued perpetuating the myth of mestizaje on indigenous populations. The new government had

---

[16] My translation:. El movimiento de Vanguardia se propuso la búsqueda y la expresión de la propia identidad nicaragüense. En esa empresa recobro y afirmo las valores nacionales – rescatándolos del colonialismo mental – *fundó la literatura NACIONAL* como reacción cultural (nutrida en Darío y fortalecida en Sandino) contra la intervención extranjera.

the position that the conquest was violent and deadly, and the mestizo is the product of

resistance who leans towards an indigenous identity instead of a European, however, the

Indigenous people were believed to have disappeared during this process.

> From that moment when the crash happened during the colony between the conqueror arriving to dominate and colonize, not to fuse their developed knowledge to generate a new force in our continent; in our country since then a heroic struggle began, a titanic struggle, a resistance to not be crushed by the different colonizing currents that tried to deny our identity, that tried to erase us, that tried to shut us down, that tried to turn us into something remote, simply a memory, to mention us in the future like something from the past. And the resistance of our people in every aspect, and in this case our artisan people, our working people, was a resistance that allowed for the forces contained to be released on July 19th (Ortega, 1982).

The myth of mestizaje comprises that indigenous communities disappeared

during the colonial period in a way that attempts to erase the homogenizing project and

effects of the mestizaje strategy during the nation-state building project at the end of the

1890's (Smith, 2005). Gould (1993) contends that the disappearance of indigenous

communities was tied to the codes used in the census that transformed the Indigenous

into ladino populations. Gould explains:

> This myth, a cornerstone of Nicaraguan nationalism, has remained believable precisely because it has both fostered and reflected the disintegration of so many Indian communities through migrations and the loss of communal land. Biological mestizaje has often accompanied such communal disintegration, providing physical evidence to support the myth. Similarly, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, ladinoization gathered force as many Indians (like the Sutiavas, living in close geographic proximity to mestizos), were shamed into shedding their dress and language (1993:394).

Field (1998) agrees with Gould's argument, acknowledging that indigenous populations still exist in Western Nicaragua and Northern Highlands. However, Field disagrees that those communities are clearly distinct from mestizo populations.

> El mestizo is what was left after the conquest. I have indigenous features, I am not ashamed of my cheekbones, my hair, my height but I see myself as mestizo, a son of mestizaje, and those who have Spanish creole features they don't see themselves as mestizos. Although they don't see themselves as Spanish but have Spanish ancestry, they believe they are superior. For example, in Masaya are the Lunas, Bolaños, the land owners, renown last names but they are mestizos and people don't understand it, people understand mestizo is the Indian that is always been there. The Spanish are the pure blood with white face, fine nose light skin, the ones with known last names and mestizo is the result of that infidelity [between Spanish and Indian]. The Catholic religion abolished our ancestors' customs, which are unknown that is also a type of mestizaje, the fusion of the Catholic saints and the indigenous traditions (Interview with Oscar).

Oscar's argument here is that mestizo is just a new name given to indigenous people after the European conquest and colonization. Indigenous features are the same as mestizo features. Those with white features do not consider themselves mestizos, although they do not necessarily consider themselves Spaniards they have a sense of superiority over those with dark skin, racializing and discriminating against them. I understand here Mestizos and indigenous people are understood here not as two opposites but a fluid range of identities.

Field (1998) contends that the boundaries between mestizo and Indigenous identities are not clear in Western Nicaragua. He states (1998:438):

> Both trait driven schema and rigid ethnic boundaries are inadequate to account for the historical specificities of identities in western Nicaragua. If mestizos are mestizos,

Indians are also mestizos. Artisanal production, "traditional" government, particular dances and musical instruments, the performance of popular drama, and community solidarity in resistance to the state may describe Indian communities in western Nicaragua, but not all these traits apply to all Indian communities...Moreover, many of these traits apply to non-Indian communities.

As I will discuss later, mestizo identity, at least for some of the indigenous population may have become an option to avoid the complete destruction of their communities actively choosing the mestizo identity. Thus passing as not-indigenous, diminishing the cultural and physical violence, racism and discrimination Spanish and later Nicaraguan governments imposed on them.

Consequences of the Hegemonic Identity

The popular revolution of 1979 in Nicaragua brought new changes to the political identity of the country, moving beyond a single identity and ideal citizen. In 1987 Nicaragua abandoned the single mestizo national identity to give way to multiculturalism a shift that occurred in other Latin American countries as well. Multiculturalism accepts a multiplicity of cultures and condemns discrimination, values specific indigenous groups' needs and their strengthening, while at the same time, rejecting their demands to land, meaningful political power and budget reasoning that these demands have expired (Hale, 2005). It seemed that multiculturalism replaced the mestizo identity, however the rights provided under the autonomy of the Caribbean have not been fully implemented (Hooker, 2005), and more to the point the changes in the law have not had any effect in transforming the state to guarantee equal access of the citizens to build on the democracy

159

of the nation (Cunningham et all., 2013). "The main problem continues to be the conformation and behavior of the Nation state: mono-ethnic, excluding in its citizenship concept, as well as in the distribution of good and services (Cunningham et all., 2013:6)."

The continued implementation of mestizaje as a strategy, discourse, and national identity, despite the alleged changes in the political identity of Nicaragua, created what I call an identity crisis among indigenous communities as well as among mestizos, although expressed in a different manner. First, the indigenous communities' identity exists mostly in negative terms, in contrast to mestizos' way of living. Second, mestizo identity crisis involves a lack of interest in local and national culture but admiration to foreign ones. And third, mestizo as an ethnic group is not defined except in contrast/opposition to indigenous identity. These are explained below.

Indigenous Identity

I was able to contact the indigenous organization of the Pacífico Centro Norte, where some 22 indigenous communities are organized to work together as a front in order to improve the ways of life of the indigenous communities to fight for the recognition of their rights, live their own way, obtain land rights, and achieve equal access as citizens of Nicaragua. I was able to interview four members from different departments of the country during a long-day meeting in the city of Masaya. I also interviewed potters from the indigenous community of San Juan de Oriente.

We spoke about their identity and that of the mestizo. The current indigenous identity stems from the colonial concept of indigeneity as a group in need of

"improvement" through mixture with European blood or it will essentially disappear. This perspective persisted through centuries because previous and current governments – in different ways – continued the colonial policies of racism against the indigenous people, furthering their isolation and shame of their traditional ways, with a main objective to take their land or include them as a cheap workforce. Due to the government and mestizo population's shaming towards indigenous communities, most continue to hide their identity or feel ashamed of it. Thus, indigenous identity is rarely embraced outside the indigenous community.

This vision stems from the colonial policies and later after independence indigenous communities were understood through western concepts of evolutionary theory, in other words the new governments considered them backwards, savages and rebellious (Soto Quiroz and Díaz Arias, 2007). This ideology persists today when indigenous communities are consistently banned from political and economic participation as I noted in the second chapter.

El mestizo is ashamed of the indigenous and violates their rights opposing the authorities from doing improvements (for us) just to discriminate. The government wants to get rid of the indigenous; the Indigenous people hold back the country, they are dumb, lazy and ignorant. Until now we haven't had someone that gives the indigenous communities the place they deserve (Interview with Miguel).

Being indigenous has never been something good, for the Indian and the non-Indian, I still remember in school they never called us indigenous, they only told us we were a mestizo country. Here in Monimbó if people want to offend you they call you Indio (Interview with Angelica).

This has to do with the education system and the history since 1524 until now, the government and the indigenous identity, for the Pacífico Centro Norte we believe they

161

want to eliminate an entire culture, a whole identity. For us, it has to do with control of the territory; those lands have royal titles since colonial times in the national public registry. I think identity is attached to the land, indigenous feel there lies the essence of life of the human beings, it provides us food and life (Interview with Henry).

As I mentioned earlier there are improvements in the Nicaraguan constitution with laws written to protect indigenous people's rights and ways of life, however, these are far from fullfilled. Despite the creation of new laws, political and economic participation remains largely mestizo (Cunningham Kain et all., 2013). Miguel's argument states mestizos continue to have control over the decision-making process, deciding over the indigenous population and territories. His perception is that these attitudes mestizos have will finally erode the communities because mestizos perceive they are holding back the development of the country or a particular area.

Angelica and Henry restate the mestizaje strategy of education denying the existence of indigenous people, or portraying them as ignorant or backwards with the intention of justifying mestizos' control over the population and their resources.

Indigenous don't identify as such and if they do, it is one in a million... but those crafts still persist like: weaving, woodwork, leather, dances, crafts that separate them as a different group. The government only uses those crafts as an instrument to increase tourism but there is no real 100% support to show in pictures or permanent museums to display their traditions where they can feel proud. Instead indigenous people feel ashamed to be indigenous (Interview with Oscar).

Despite the negative connotation of their identity, indigenous identity partially survives through the crafts the government supports because they take advantage of the tourism industry, but the connection between the craft and the identity of the people who

162

produce them is not established. Then they can feel proud of their work but ashamed of

their identity. As mentioned earlier, the government supports their craft for tourism, in

some cases, yet it disconnects their work from their indigenous identity. Oscar's point is

that the government exploits indigenous people according to the governments' needs, in

this case for tourism purposes. The lack of support towards their identity testifies to the

little importance they give to this sector of the population.

> Most people, when you say they have indigenous features or they belong to the Indian race, [mean it as] an offense (Interview with Robert).

> There is no promotion of culture and identity so people don't want to be indigenous. In the social context they perceive the Indian as ugly, physically ugly. I was listening to a couple of young boys on the street:
>   - You are an Indian
>   -No! am I like a monkey? Am I wearing a loincloth, am I naked?
>   (Interview with Evelyn).

Hegemonic identity of mestizo and the whitening strategy leads to shaming of

indigenous culture or their physical features, this is so pervasive among mestizos as well

as indigenous populations that it is offensive to call one another Indian, so people do it

intentionally to offend one another. I think it is clear that the mestizaje as a historical

process, a national project, a national identity based "in the inferiority of the Indian

population (Jean Muteba in Soto Quiroz and Díaz Arias, 2007:87)" has clearly been

successful. Its success is not the disappearance of the indigenous communities but in

turning their cultural expression into something shameful, as well as convincing the rest

of the population that they do not have pure blood or the necessary traits to be

indigenous people. In that sense, explaining why those communities who claim

indigenous identity do not deserve special rights, making their current claims of land,

respect and protection of their cultural expressions illegitimate. In this sense it will be

the mestizo population who denies the rights to indigenous people instead of the

government, who in Nicaragua already created protective laws but mestizos refuse to

enforce them because they do not believe indigenous communities exist.

Furthermore, once the Nicaraguan government claims that the country is

multicultural then it should have become easier to express indigeneity, meaning that

different groups will have different ways to express their indigenous identity, these

characteristics should not fit into a mold. There is no single indigenous identity. Today

there are a good number of indigenous groups and as such we should not expect them to

behave the same. Indeed, Nicaragua is a multicultural place. There should be no

expectation for them to fit in a list of cultural traits or practice.

> There is no prototype of the Indigenous, there are Chontales, Chorotegas, even
> Caribbean from South America who live in the Caribbean. Speaking about the
> indigenous in Nicaragua is talking about multi-cultural, multiethnic [groups] because
> there is no single one. Just in the Caribbean we have Sumos, Ramas, Kriols, Garifunas,
> we need to talk about all of them (Interview with Fernando).

The negative effects of the colonial mestizaje are extant, they persist in all western

Nicaraguans' ideology establishing the way these groups relate to each other enabling the

persistent racism and discrimination against those communities who do not identify or

behave as mestizos. Being indigenous today remains stigmatized where indigenous

people and those who have stereotypical Indigenous features with short stature, dark

skin, straight thick hair and marked cheek bones feel the need to hide their identity or feel ashamed of their appearance.

I believe tourism, with the current narratives along with the government behavior, reinforces the uneven interactions between westerners and Nicaragua population mestizo, indigenous and afro-descendant communities. While this may be a negative reinforcement it might bring to the table the subject of identity; as Evelyn said at the beginning of this chapter identity is not something the population discusses, it remains in silence. The introduction and increase of tourism might generate enough movement to start discussion on the issue of identity among Nicaraguans.

Lack of Interest in Culture

Alfredo, a potter from the indigenous community of San Juan de Oriente, specializes in making replicas of pre-colonial polychrome ceramics, although his favorite work is in replicas of Maya pottery. I asked him about identity among the population of San Juan de Oriente:

> I think there is a poverty of culture in each person. In San Juan de Oriente if we remember right there were 2 or 3 families who belonged (autochthonous) from there it was a mixture with people from outside but we still need to identify. I think we all have indigenous roots the problem is we have no interest in finding out how and why I belong to this family, why I have this last name. I'm not sure where Espinoza comes from but I need to identify with San Juan de Oriente, I need to identify myself. When talking to people I never heard them say I am this or I am that, but everybody belongs somewhere and they have to identify. For me the problem lies in the lack of interest to identify themselves. We are working to maintain this tradition (pottery) in San Juan de Oriente and what happens if we lose that spark… I admire many artists who work in contemporary art, plastic artists and there are plenty of young students

165

learning their techniques but these students don't know the origin of their craft, they don't know who taught the application of the slip, what it is called, how to polish the piece, because now we use plastic to polish. Our grandparents used river stones and sapodilla (fruit) seeds (Interview with Alfredo).

I don't think tourism influences on these [cultural] changes -- like television programs do where kids watch foreign products -- are stopping them from appreciating Nicaraguan products, instead that product is produced and sold to foreigners. There is no support from Nicaraguans to artisans, but tourists do. In Masaya they sell nice, good quality shoes but the youth does not care about that, they prefer buying shoes from anywhere else, second hand shoes (are better than Nicaraguan shoes). The people who buy that craft are foreigners, seen from the national perspective there is no support, but tourists do support them buying their crafts (interview with Oscar).

In terms of what I called the identity crisis it seems that indigenous people as well as mestizos are having a difficult time passing on their cultural expressions to the younger generations. The interest to look for what is outside or foreign, becomes another expression of the colonial period where the colonized populations have "an unconditional – sometimes even contradictory – admiration and identification with the western society (Jean Muteba in soto Quiroz and Díaz Arias, 2007:87)." Oscar and Luis' arguments suggest there is less interest in learning or using/wearing what is local which is replaced for what is foreign. Oscar also points out that for him it is not the influence of tourists but the television selling foreign products. While Oscar's arguments about the significance of television may have some validity , seeing in person what tourists have also increases the desire to own what is foreign.

 In Oscar's statement Nicaraguans want what foreigners have, while foreigners come to buy Nicaraguan products, thus it is because of tourists that some arts and crafts survive given that it is foreigners who support craftsmanship.

166

Perhaps the lack of support to local artisans can primarily be because of the lack of economic access, but also there is a refusal to use, obtain and wear Nicaraguan products deemed as low quality, mainly because of their association to artisans and indigenous people. Using foreign clothes, shoes, or renowned brands raises people's economic status, which at the same time can lighten your skin color.

Furthermore, Nicaraguans' interest in culture or traditions are sporadically related to a religious event, only then people live their culture; besides those moments, it is only felt by the lower socio-economic classes, the mestizos. The higher class, although mestizos, maintains a caste system based on the color of the skin, with wealthy families marrying among themselves, upholding the cycle of racism.

During this fieldwork I realized how the issue of identity is covert. WhileOscar suggests that people do not think about it, I found through my research they understand well enough the situation to remain quiet because they know their place in the hierarchy. This, however, does not mean the population is sitting still following the hegemonic identity imposed on them. It appears mestizos and indigenous alike break from those patterns the government, intellectuals and the ruling class desire them to follow. Especially mestizos break away from that idea that they do not have indigenous cultural expressions, they do participate and are part of many of those cultural expressions even if they do not consider themselves Indigenous. I will discuss this argument in the section of mestizos and indigenous identity.

It is a phenomenon in Granada [of] el Granadino leaving, searching for other places, not taking business risks, a few, but even less are trying to rescue our own identity. I wouldn't have opened my business (shoe production) if it weren't for my dad doing it

himself. It is like keeping something of your own, of Granada, and[it] is collaborating with the tourism industry because we project we are real artisans, we have that in our blood but all that [foreign] influence has destroyed our own culture. It is shocking to see that Nicaragua is absorbing cultural values that aren't ours. Bringing parties like Halloween is not us, liquor sales in La Calzada to the beach is not our identity, when the tourist comes [s/he] wants to know our identity but arrives to a completely different country, Granada is not like that.

It is neglect from the government and INTUR, they need to find alternatives to rescue and promote [our culture]. El Granadino adopts a variety of ideas, they adapt to acculturation, they make others' ideas their own and it shouldn't be like that. I know people from Jinotega, León, Matagalpa that I admire because they are more authentic, the lack of identity or the acculturation is obvious in Managua, Granada, in Rivas a mixture with Costa Ricans maybe a different phenomenon that in Granada, Granada is more European, more American (Interview with María José).

As introduced earlier María José is a shoemaker, and she links her craft with her family, as well as with her identity as granadina and Nicaraguan. Continuing her father's trait is saving part of her identity and offering it to the world via tourism. Presenting her work as an artisan makes her an authentic Granadina, unlike what tourists see when they visit the country and particularly the city. What tourists actually see is what Granadinos have learned from the outside, from other cultures, Granadinos identity is not about selling alcohol but – at least partially – about craft-making. However, Granadinos are open to change and easily absorb different cultural values: they have westernized. Meanwhile, other places in Nicaragua have not adopted a foreign culture like Granada.

María José notices Granadinos are losing their cultural expressions in the midst of tourism. The fact that Granada although represented as the place to experience Nicaraguan cultural tourism, tourists do not get to know all the possibilities the city has to offer. Instead tourists sightsee empty buildings without Granadinos but go drinking in foreign-owned bars filled with foreign tourists. This leads to a lack of support towards

168

artisans, who in turn will stop making their products further losing their cultural expressions. This case is different from the artisans of Masaya and San Juan de Oriente because they are integrated in the tourism corridor, while in Granada they remain hidden within the city. They are not part of the tourism industry in Granada, only the colonial downtown of the city is.

> A lot of traditions have been lost like el Cartel, la Yeguita and all that. Some have disappeared or have changed to have a different meaning. The nativity tradition of baby Jesus when kids played [cow] chubs, but it's become dangerous because of gangs so now they cannot do it at midnight. The storytelling grandfathers did at home, about the traditional folktales like la Llorona, Chicolargo and others are gone. Street theaters have disappeared too and there is basically no support for local authors, composer or artists. There is a large deficiency in cultural promotion (Interview with Robert).

There is a strong perception of loss of cultural expressions, most Granadinos' traditions have disappeared or changed their meaning through time, because the lack of interest to support culture in general. Granadinos do not celebrate them anymore. They do not participate in them anymore, and those who survive, like Oscar stated earlier, are associated to the lower economic class of mestizos, artisans, and peasants. This to me indicates the break of those who are better off not wanting to participate, they do not want to be associated with these activities, and instead they emulate foreign cultural expressions like Halloween. La Casa de los Tres Mundos where Robert works has several free cultural activities but it is foreigners or tourists who actually come to enjoy them. As an artist himself Robert has first-hand experience in the lack of interest of Granadinos in the subject of culture.

We have to learn and know more about ourselves, we need to invest time in it. We know more about when Lady Gaga is travelling, the Daddy Yankee's show, when Daniel (Nicaraguan president) is arriving and what we are as a nation we know nothing about. What am I? Where do I come from? (Interview with Ronald).

Ronald, a folklore dancer from San Juan de Oriente further states the interest of Nicaraguans in what is foreign instead of talking about important issues of identity and representation among Nicaraguans. In my estimation this loss of culture is because the main objective of mestizaje was to knock down the identity walls indigenous groups had in order to forcibly transform indigenous and afro-descendant people to the desired mestizo identity, leading to the great admiration Nicaraguans have towards western people and culture. The new force of globalization along with tourism reinforce the status-quo with Indigenous and afro-descendant populations at the bottom, mestizos in the middle and whites on top, an ideal situation for the ruling class.

Mestizos, an Undefined Group

Your indigenous people weren't eradicated in the Pacific (western Nicaragua), some were (destroyed), others transformed into the mestizo, a known group in Nicaragua. I'm not sure if they want to forget but there is a problem in their society of denying that it was there (indigenous origin) from one generation to another (they) haven't remembered it, they have lost it. It's not the same in the Caribbean; our ethnic group defines us, our way of living and our participation in the national government. I identify as kriol, that means I am afro-descendant but my ethnic group is my culture; my gastronomy, my worldview is inherited from my family, and that is how we identify in the Caribbean. In the Pacific that doesn't happen; there is a denial. Basically in tourism and the government plan we are trying to recover that (identity) but it is

170

hard to rescue something when the people don't understand it [their own culture]. Mestizos from here (western Nicaragua) have a lot of influence from other Latin American countries or the United States, creating a different identity. Also the social differences are another factor, a mestizo with a good job is not the same as a poor mestizo, they have different identities and two different worldviews. For kriol or Garifunas the economic situation does not matter, traditions remain the same. I think their whole problem is that they have never clearly defined what it means to be mestizo, they have lost it or changed it [so] that it means different things for different people (Interview with Leilani).

Leilani's perspective as Kriol (afro-descendant) from the Caribbean of Nicaragua and a member of the Institute of Tourism in the office of Cultural Tourism, Leilanis perspective is that mestizos made a choice to ignore, forget or erase their indigenous origins. They actively deny an indigenous past; they do not want to be associated with indigenous people. Mestizos' position and the lack of definition of their ethnic group makes them susceptible to foreign influences, whether through globalization or tourism.

Indeed, since independence, the mestizo identity has become a catch-all mesh to those who could not tie their blood lines to Europeans and those who were not tied to the indigenous cast either. It included every biological and culturally mixed individual who could or would not trace their blood to one of the three "original races".

The strategy of mestizaje and the colonial period shamed the indigenous people into shedding their cultural markers, as did the encroachment of Spanish population on indigenous territories, making indigenous descendants, as well as, mestizos erase their past to become something else, not one nor the other, that had no relation to the indigenous past, in large territories of Western Nicaragua.

171

Before, the advertisement (representation) of tourism was very mestizo, now we are considering Nicaragua as multiethnic, the mestizo [identity] gets lost in it [because] they don't know where the folklore come from, they don't know how to define it, they are not able to say "this is how I define my culture" (Interview with Leilani).

Furthermore, Leilani argues that when mestizos are compared to other ethnic groups in the country it becomes clear mestizos know little about their own culture, traditions, past and origin.

I read the term in a magazine for foreigners, here in the Pacific (western Nicaragua) we barely use it. In the Caribbean they use it to set apart the mestizos from the indigenous people, but I don't think is very common here (Interview with Karla).

Yet, the most common and baffling answer about the meaning of the word mestizo was that the term was unknown and rarely used in every day conversations. Again this indicates that the issues of identity remain in silence among the Nicaraguan population. Mestizo no longer needs to be explained or used to separate one group of people from another. In this case, if mestizo was constructed in opposition to indigenous people and they had disappeared – according to the majority of the population – then mestizos did not need to separate from indigenous people rendering the term unnecessary and useless.

That's the problem with mestizaje in Nicaragua, it hasn't been defined and is not the job of the government to define it, where would they start? I mean an ethnic group defines itself from their own members. The mestizos from the Pacific are too passive and I am not sure what that means.. In many instances they don't even know what it means to be Nicaraguan, being Nicaraguan means knowing about your country, how it identifies and what it means. If you notice Nicaragua is defined as a country [that is]

172

mostly Catholic, Spanish speaking, with a single ethnic group. No! There are several ethnic groups. Not even knowing what being Nicaraguan means is too passive, mestizos don't react (Interview with Leilani).

Mestizo is too broadly defined, biologically as the mixture of two or more groups, and their members have little cohesion to actually engender a definition. The largest problem, according to Leilani is that mestizos are doing nothing to understand it or even protect it; this not only in terms of their ethnic identity, but their national identity as well. Mestizos do not know about their country or its people. She finds their passive attitude to be problematic, however, as I mentioned earlier I consider that although not overtly mestizos do behave outside their expected demeanor. They are participating in indigenous cultural activities even though they do not consider themselves indigenous. This departs from that hegemonic idea that mestizos break completely away from indigenous culture.

Reasons for the Identity Crisis

I think people are changing the way they dress, [that] is the tendency through time; fashion is the reason for that. Yes, maybe my mother or grandmother doesn't dress the way we do now because they didn't have then what we have now. Also technology, the Internet you can check everything about fashion going on in the world from your house. Today we have the possibility to buy some of that; fashions move on and we can't keep the old, we've got to look for new things, try new things. Young people are also focusing more on studying than before, or taking courses from business owners and that causes changes. Five years ago we saw waiters wearing jeans or t-shirts while at work, now they have a uniform, a change brought by tourism (Interview with José).

José, is young tour guide who works at Leo Tours. He was my first contact with the tour operator, I talked to him before I spoke with the owner of the company. José works during the week and studies on the weekend. He has worked several years as a tour guide in Leo tours and other offices in town. As I mentioned earlier the office was small and dark, so we sat outside of his office in La Calzada, sitting on a bench under a tree while tourists and street vendors passed by. AS usual it was full of noise with music, kids yelling, and waiters talking to possible costumers. We talked for about thirty minutes, providing a distinct perspective on the subject of change and identity. He contributed to this argument stating that things are bound to change, intentionally as well as unintentionally due to fashion or other factors, and Nicaragua is not and cannot be isolated from the rest of the world. Nicaraguans cannot be left behind: we need to be on par with other countries. More important is that he does not believe these changes come from tourism although they come from globalization, yet they are not and should not be taken as negative. Tourism is opening the doors to a new world and Nicaraguans should take advantage of it.

> Foreigners have passed through here since the colony. Since when is Granada changing? Since it was founded, filibusters and pirates came through here. The natives wanted to be Spanish, have a known last name like Lacayo. That is Granada, we are Pellas [wealthy family] that is what we have always been. They want to have kids with blue eyes. In general, the identity in Granada is to look for what is outside and not what is inside, it will always look for what is foreign, white – not Indian. I don't think tourism affects identity. I think we have never had identity; we have taken things from others. It doesn't have anything original. Who are we? Identity in Granada I don't think so (Estalin).

The influence of tourism is likely a main reason for how Granadinos perceived

themselves and why they wanted to emulate foreigners. While the people I interviewed

believed there are multiple factors for this they all refer to foreign influences mainly

globalization (television and fashion) and tourism as explained in the previous chapter.

José above believed tourism was a way for Nicaraguans to join in the world, with tourism

as a positive force which can lead the country to be at the same level as other countries.

However, Estalin's perspective is that the reason for the identity crisis is not based

on the modern foreign influences but in those that go back to colonial times. Since then

Granadinos and Nicaraguans are looking up to western countries or culture.

The hegemonic identity established in the colonial period has caused the

admiration of the local population towards a "whitening" end-line they can never achieve.

The colonial policies of mestizaje are the main reason for the crisis of identity, loss of

tradition, and lack of definition due to the initial colonial intention to eradicate

indigenous population and erase mestizo's origins.

Mestizos and Indigenous Identity

Here, I consider the literature and the fieldwork in Granada that indicate the

'transformation' of Indigenous to mestizos' point to a survival mechanism during the

colonial period and the formation of the modern nation states; I consider it was a

response to the pressure, initially of the Crown to integrate and later to the nationalist

discourse of the 1890s with the introduction of coffee plantations and capitalism. I also

discuss the fluidity of the mestizo identity who although they do not consider themselves

175

indigenous participate and experience indigenous cultural expressions, arguments I made throughout this chapter.

I follow Field (1998) and Dore's (2002) argument of the transformation of indigenous groups instead of their disappearance. This type of behavior is documented in different parts of Nicaragua. In some cases, some indigenous groups reacted by fleeing to the mountains as documented by Rizo Zeledón (2005). The cases Foletti (1993) and Field (1998) studied indicate at least the fluidity of identity between mestizo and Indigenous as a continuum and not a dichotomy.

Once the indigenous identity markers disappeared "this could have led indigenous people to take mestizaje from the bottom as an identity mask in order to survive or adapt to the changes without radically transforming their way of living (Barahona, 2005:225)." In this case, mestizaje becomes an active decision to survive the rapid changes brought about during the conquest and the consolidation of the nation state.

Gurdián (2005) researched the fluctuating identities of the people of Alamikangban on the Caribbean watershed of Nicaragua. Gurdián (2005:468) argues that the identity of the community is constructed through the collective memories, narratives and rituals of its members but these elements change depending on internal and external factors that affect the population. Alamikangban has been affected for decades by different factors; since the integration of the Mosquitia in 1894 and forward, land became a commodity, coupled with the cultural integration policies of the central Nicaraguan government. Initially, formed by Sumu/Toongla the ethnic group was rapidly transformed into a sedentary and ethnically mixed Miskito and Sumu group under the

influence of the Moravian church. Later the arrival of a U.S. company in the 1900s brought "gringos," mestizos, Chinese, Creoles and Miskito people to the community. By the time the company left the community identified as a Miskito group. The transformation to Miskito identity was reified by the land struggle and defense of the community against the U.S. Company and Sandinista government and their effort for survival. The Miskito identity provided a niche of support during the land struggles in the Caribbean; had they remained Sumu/Toongla – a small ethnic group – they would have lost their land -- and their way of living -- as a minority.

> In the case of Amalikangban, the affirmation of individual or collective identity, has been in different moments expression of an intense process of transculturation, where the internal and external definition of the community subjects is given by the tensions engendered by the negotiations to survive, especially when faced with the assimilation and metizaje policies by the nation state. Thus, identity is not centered and non-essential (Gurdián, 2005:505).

In other words, identity fluctuation is contingent on the historical context of internal and external tensions; thus, it changes as a response to different forces in order for the group to survive. Inhabitants of Alimakangban have a dynamic and fluid identity, which transformed to face the successive moments of transculturation directed by the central government engendering survival strategies. In this case, the response has been the *miskitización* and defense of their territory against the revolution and the Sandinista government, and their most basic need of survival. Thus, Gurdián concludes that survival strategies are the ones that organize, center and contextualize identity narratives.

Rizo Zeledón (2005) evaluates another strategy for the survival of the

community: fleeing towards the mountain and living outside the reach and control of the

central mestizo government. His study is based on the peasants living outside the

imagined nation states in the agricultural frontier of Matagalpa, in the border between

the Northern Highlands and the Caribbean. The agricultural frontier coincidentally was

the territory outside Spanish control during the colonial period, in the Mosquitia

kingdom and English dominated territory. The reduction of this population to smaller

areas did not turn them into the ideal mestizo citizens, however. They have, nevertheless,

continued reproducing their ways of life beyond the control of the central government

based on solidarity and kinship.

> The peasants from the agricultural frontier will evidence the parallel process in the
> Nicaraguan nation state formation, yielding the social reemergence of a particular
> identity, unknown, but of long tradition, which shapes the hidden processes of the
> memory and national identity (Rizo Zeledón, 2005:543).

Rizo Zeledón (2005) argues that the ethnic identity of peasants from the

agricultural frontier are related to the indigenous communities in the Northern

Highlands, their identities are denied by the nation state's narrative of a mestizo national

identity. He documented these groups following the ethnic migration pattern, as well as

the nuclear and extended families of indigenous groups. He argues that the Nicaraguan

peasant is no other than the descendant of the indigenous community and that fleeing to

the mountains in search of liberty did not mean the destruction of the indigenous groups,

as Gould argues, instead Rizo considers:

> ... a real alternative to break away from the colonial and civilizing condition implicit within the nation-state model, the main cause for their migration to the agricultural frontier. This break from the community is to reinvent itself in the mountains, it hides a freeing identity which breaks away from the rigid scheme of identity associated solely to the communal land, impoverished and discriminated against as it was the indigenous community (Rizo Zeledón, 2005:561-562).

He points out the rigidity of the concept of indigenous identity to solely the possession of communal land, and asserts that occupying the agricultural frontier is a way of surviving the nation state's integration policies and establishes the cultural link between some group of peasants and indigenous people. Historically the government denied their identity because they do not conform to the traditional groups connected to land or possess "true" ethnic traits. Also attending to the concept of peasant from a western perspective: without Indigenous people. Rizo Zeledón explains peasants leave the indigenous community to reorganize around the family structure, later moving beyond towards a reproduction of the original indigenous hierarchies, social organization and kinship ties in the new territory, thus reestablishing their internal structure and negotiating with their new ecological and social environment (2005:570). Choosing to live in the agricultural frontier means their rejection of the local and national government which is the "basis of their ethnic identity (Rizo Zeledón, 2005:571)" separating them from the government "other" and its narrow ideologies.

Also, Field (1998) documented the shifting identities from mestizo to indigenous identity among female potters from the Northern Highlands of Nicaragua who in the 1980's had acknowledged a mestizo origin for their work. Female potters of "Cerámica

Negra" (black pottery) in Matagalpa and Jinotega (Northern Highlands) located the origin

of their craft three generations of women prior to them (Field, 1995). During the 1980s

the women held a proud mestizo origin, denying the official government history that

black pottery of Matagalpa and Jinotega had an indigenous origin, which shared several

similarities to the archaeological ceramic variety *Castillo Esgrafiado*.

After 1990 the women indicated that their craft had an indigenous origin

accepting the government narrative. Field considers this shift is due to the importance of

the indigenous movement in the area and the negative views of the new liberal national

government towards artisans in the 1990s; "artisanal production has become a

reinvigorated sign of indigenous ethnic identity (Field, 1998:440)." They allied with other

indigenous groups in the area who are fighting for land as a way to counter the hostilities

of the neoliberal governments.

However, little is discussed about if the women view themselves as indigenous or

only the origin of their craft, it is unclear whether there was any inquiry of why this

change in their views.

Foletti (1993) documents pottery production in La Paz Centro as persistence of

indigenous material culture, although transformed through time, it denotes continuity

from the pre-colonial past. She argues the current mestizo population appropriated it.

Although, she considers there is cultural transformation into mestizo, I argue that

continuity of indigenous production is evident in technology, shapes, functionality,

worldview, kinship relationships, and knowledge transmission of this practice. Such

persistence occurred despite the rapid disintegration of indigenous groups after the

conquest (Foletti, 1992:148). Even though she documents continuity in important

characteristics, she considers mestizo and Indigenous people to be different groups. She

claims this activity survived due to the persistence of other indigenous patterns such as

food, culture, settlement and agriculture (Foletti, 1992:149), which contradicts her

argument about the destruction of indigenous culture. Other reasons Foletti found for the

persistence of pottery are the material availability, cheap prices, and production for

household consumption, thus linking pottery production to poverty in the local

population.

The female potters in La Paz Centro self-identify as mestizos, while the rest of the

local population denigrates them as Indigenous because their practice is considered as

such, even when pottery production remains a large part of the local economy and is

renowned in all western Nicaragua. It is necessary to note that the food, settlement, and

agricultural indigenous patterns survived because the people who acquire the ceramics

continue to follow some or all of those patterns.

> Once indigenous people lose their external identity markers like language or clothing,
> they stop being indigenous. This is accepted often by indigenous people themselves,
> even if they continue to be culturally different from non-indigenous people. This
> might actually be the main reason for the current cultural mestizaje. (Smith,
> 2005:581).

Even when they lose identity markers in order to communicate better with non-

indigenous people, they stop identifying themselves and being identified by outsiders as

indigenous. This article is relevant because it indicates that mestizos do not follow the

ideal mestizo behavior of modern people who are completely separate from Indigenous

people. Some mestizos continue to follow indigenous patterns and cultural practices, and it is not only celebrated through folklore.

It is clear that indigenous communities or groups did not cease to exist but transformed, evolved or moved outside of the anthropological and governmental rigid preconceived ideas in which they were framed by society. We need new frameworks to analyze them in their own right.

This suggestion parallels De La Cadena's research in Cuzco, Peru that shows the fluidity of the identities and the empowerment of the indigenous population by changing the meanings of such words as Indian and mestizo. In Cuzco, heirs of indigenous culture consider themselves mestizos. Whereas in Nicaragua, mestizo usually refers to the Indigenous person who abandoned his/her traditional ways to adopt the ruling class culture, and thereby became a mestizo subaltern. In Cusco mestizo is someone who has economic success or formal education, yet still practices indigenous culture. "People can be [culturally] different and the same, simultaneously. I practice indigenous culture, but I'm not Indian (De La Cadena, 2004:21)." The possibility in Peruvian culture to advance, move up in the racial categories through formal education allows for the transformation of racial tags such as Indian and mestizo, although, that is not the only way to change those meanings. In this case, mestizo is used to refer to literate people or those who are economically successful and participate in indigenous ways. Practicing indigenous culture is not the same as being Indian; Indian is a colonial concept which reflects a social condition – poverty and individual failure (De La Cadena, 2004:22).

I argue something similar is happening in Nicaragua. Nicaraguans have redefined in their own way the concept of mestizos given they depart from the concept the

182

government gives them, that mestizos should reject everything indigenous. Actually, mestizos continue to follow indigenous food ways associated to the syncretic indigenous-Catholic fiestas celebrated with Catholic saints, streets theaters and celebrations with alcohol consumption.

Mestizos in Nicaragua practice indigenous culture, although they do not identify as Indigenous. And just like in Peru, this fact does not mean there is more respect to indigenous people in the past or the present. In any case, denigration towards anything that is openly Indigenous is still racialized. "El mestizaje is nonetheless vindicated and redefined by the working classes as an alternative that strengthen their political power, it does not imply a rejection to indigenous culture, even if it distances itself from indegeneity (De La Cadena, 2004:29)."

The subject of identity in Nicaragua remains widely unspoken unlike Peru, however, mestizos continue to follow indigenous patterns whether they acknowledge it or not. As well they continue to racialize and discriminate against indigenous people. The increase in tourism and the reinforcement of colonial relationships between foreigners, mestizo, indigenous and afro-descendant communities has the potential to lead to new conversations on the issues of race and identity.

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS. THE COLONIAL HERITAGE OF MESTIZAJE IN GRANADA, NICARAGUA

This research stems from my questions regarding the repercussions of the government discourse and tourism narratives on the identity of granadinos coupled with the lack of research on precolonial archaeological sites and their almost complete absence in the new industry of tourism. I chose the city of Granada as my field site because of its historical importance in the economy of the country, its foundation as the first establishment of Spanish colonizers, and its centrality today in Nicaraguan tourism.

Babb (2004) argues that the introduction to the tourism industry provided the Nicaraguan government opportunity to to remake its image to the outside. This remaking of the country's image will affect how Nicaraguans view themselves. In that sense my main question is: what are the effects of tourism on the identity of Granadinos?

In order to answer this question, I participated in several events within the city, mainly in the central park, located in the colonial downton of Granada. Moroever conducted over fifty interviews that spanned the different social sectors of the city, from the director of the Convent San Francisco and the organization Casa de los Tres Mundos to the street vendors in La Calzada and central park. I tried to focus in the colonial area of the city but I also interviewed artisans who live i outside of downtown. I was able to talk to indigenous people from four different indigenous communities of western Nicaragua, as well.

I have three main themes that inform this research: issues of representation from the government narratives, the characteristics of Nicaraguan tourism and issues of identity. I divided them in chapters but they were largely interconnected and fed into one another. I have argued that the government attempts to present Nicaragua and Nicaraguans in the tourism industry still as a homogeneous mestizo country, despite constitutional changes that evidence Nicaragua as a multicultural, multiethnic country. Such narratives are deeply affecting how Nicaraguans are perceived from the outside and how they perceive themselves.

Although these three subjects work together as a cycle I started with the government narratives because it is broader, then moving to tourism and its specificities in the context of Nicaragua, including the cultural and economic dependence involved in Nicaraguan tourism and the particular effects on mestizos and indigenous people. Finally, I discuss the unforeseen,   undefined mestizo identity as well as the fluidity of the identity.

 During my research I recognized some efforts by the government to promote education focusing onn the subject of culture and history. However, the cultural education is regarding mestizo cultural expressions, and the history refers to the population of western Nicaragua, continuously neglecting the history and contemporary presence of indigenous and afro-descendant populations of the entire country. In that respect the government continues to present a modern country, based on the ideologies of the 19th century where indigenous and Africans had no place within the country, and multiple ethnicities did not fit into the nation-state model.

The new government cultural policy, strongly connected to tourism policies, states the importance of promoting cultural tourism to encourage the participation and survival of traditions whether that mestizo, indigenous or afro-descendant. However, when it comes to everyday artisans who do participate in the tourism industry their cultural identity was concealed, while others were not part of the industry. These artisans believed their craft was an important part of the city and needed to be part of tourism, nevertheless, the industry and the government focused on areas that had nothing to do with their local territories.

There appears to have been real change in the attitudes from the government. Despite the changes in the national discourse of a multiethnic country, whatever is considered not mestizo remains silenced or hidden. The discourse of the respect and celebration of a multiethnic country are not met. Tourism still focuses on the exotic and natural pristine features of the territory, while multiethnic cultural expressions are ignored. Furthermore, culture is homogenized further as mestizo, through the governmental education programs. Indigenous and afro-descendant communities remain silenced, isolated and ignored despite the creation of laws protecting their rights.

I argue that the Nicaraguan government takes an active position in presenting tourists with a modernized Nicaraguan community, such position silences the indigenous and African past and present, and presenting to tourists only the European heritage of the country; such narratives give a partial representation of the Nicaraguan identities to foreign visitors, while at the same time, projecting and naturalizing Nicaraguan identity as "mestizo."

The government and tourism took a recent discursive turn to focus especificay on cultural tourism based on the asserted concept that culture separates Nicaragua from other Central American countries. Costa Rica and Panama, as well as the rest of the countries in the isthmus have similar natural resources tourist can enjoy in Nicaragua, however, their cultures are different. During my time in Granada I did not see much government investment in cultural tourism. In fact, it was the local community of Granada who was deeply involved in presenting their own cultural expressions to tourists. The population has taken the initiative to somewhat restart or "invent" new traditions. I consider this really relevant due to the argument on the commodization of culture. Given scholarly argument about the commoditization of culture that hold that once culture is put on the market for tourism it may change to fit tourist expectations and lead to homogenization. Since the case of Granada is a bottom-up initiative to commoditize culture it in turn may lead to revalorization of their cultural expressions.

The creation of archeological sites as new destinations is new for the tourism industry in Nicaragua, indeed. And it might indicate the interest of the government for this part of the history of Nicaragua, but as of now, it has not resulted in research, or revision of the histories of Nicaraguans. Neither is there a historical vindication of the contribution of indigenous or afro-descendant people.

I conclude, therefore, that tourism narratives are affecting identity, amplifying an identity crisis among mestizos and indigenous people who are changing their attitudes, dress, accents, behaviors, hairstyles, and the way they relate to other members of their group in order to emulate westerners. This would not be a problem if this was about adding something new to their cultural repertoire, however there is a complete

187

departure from their ethnic groups and behavior. In sum, they desire to be someone else. I believed that the reason for these changes was rooted in the introduction of tourism and new cultural expressions. I conclude that this is rooted in the racism, discrimination and whitening ideology inherited from the colony, and strengthened through the government narratives surrounding the industry of tourism, which deepen the economic and cultural dependence to western countries that receive the benefits of tourism.

For centuries the Spanish crown and later the national governments eroded the foundation of the indigenous identity, thus the origins of mestizo identity as well. Thereby created an identity crisis among both ethnic groups and a deep tension on the subject of identity furthering the racialization of indigenous and afro-descendant communities. Mestizaje successfully silenced indigenous populations, and ignored the indigenous origin of mestizos. However, currently mestizos do participate in indigenous cultural expressions departing from the hegemonic concept of mestizo as in complete opposition to indigenous people, although they deny, ignore and racialize indigenous people.

the introduction of tourism has certainly brought changes in the Nicaraguan population. The government narratives based on colonial identities create a new environment where colonial relationships are reproduced. This would constitute a negative impact of tourism, however, it may lead to new conversations about colonialist interactions, ethnic identity and racism that remain covert in the everyday lives of Nicaraguans.

***

188

Adding to these conclusions, we need to look at the way we conceive of the

identity markers of mestizos, indigenous and others. It is clear from this research that the

population has their own perceptions far from those established by the hegemonic

national identity. The general population perceives indigenous people will not identify as

indigenous openly. Rather, I found that indigenous people identify in subtle ways.

Different communities will identify through different questions. Angelica from Monimbó

states it is necessary to know how to frame the question. Instead of directly asking if a

person identifies as indigenous, one should ask if they are from Monimbó, if their parents

and grandparents are also from the community. It is unlikely indigenous people will use

the words Indian or indigenous because of the stigma attached to these words. Likewise,

in the indigenous community of the north, one should ask if he/she belongs to the

indigenous caste or ask if they belong to a renowned indigenous family. Again, they may

accept their identity without using the terms.

I've had the opportunity to observe and it depends on how you ask the question. We
have trained health personnel in how to ask the question of ethnicity from the
attention sheet when you visit the doctor. The doctor has to ask you, but he just
writes down mestizo but the choices are not? there. So we asked the doctor, why do
you feel bad when you ask them? Because I don't want to make him feel bad by asking
if s/he is indigenous or not, I'm afraid s/he feels discriminated.
But it is not about asking, it is about how you ask. At least in Monimbo you can ask
people, I mean if they are Indians from Monimbo: are you from here? Your mother is
from here? Your grandparents are from here? And the answer is yes, that person is an
Indian from Monimbo but that person is not going to say the word indigenous, Indian,
but if you keep looking in their background and know how to ask they assume their
identity, without saying the concepts printed in books we know of Indian, native, but
they say it, they confirm it. In the north you can ask: do you belong to the Indian
caste? Yes. Or do you belong to this family? If you know the last names of the
indigenous families, they are telling you they belong without saying the term. It is

about how one asks, if you know how to handle the people they will identify themselves with no problem. If you ask them are you indigenous? It is striking, shocking. People do identify if you ask the right question, is the way one asks so they don't feel bad or discriminated (Interview with Angelica).

In other cases, people will frame their identity differently, like living outside the community yet this does not necessarily mean they are denying an indigenous identity. It can take many forms, outside what is expected.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albers, Patricia C. and William R. James. (1998)
 "Travel Photography. Methodological Approach." <u>Journal of Tourism Research</u> 14. Pp. 134-158.

Appadurai, Arjun. (1990).
"Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy." <u>Theory, Culture and Society</u> 7(2). Pp. 295-310.

Arellano, Jorge Eduardo. (1969).
<u>El Movimeinto de Vanguardia de Nicaragua</u>. Managua: Imprenta Novedades.

Ayerdis Garcia, José Miguel. (2009).
 "Modernizacion del Estado y Construccion de la Identidad Nacional: Cultura Hegemonica y Politicas Culturales Durante los Gobiernos de los Somoza (1939-1969)." Tesis de Mestria, Universidad de Costa Rica.

Babb, Florence. (2004).
 "Recycled Sandalistas: From Revolution to Resorts in the New Nicaragua." <u>American Anthropologist</u> 106(3). Pp. 541-555.

Barahona, Marvin. (2005).
 "Del Mestizaje a la Diversidad Etnica y Cultural: la Contribucion del Movimiento Indigena y Negro de Honduras." *In* <u>Memorias del Mestizaje: Cultura Politica en Centroamerica de 1920 al Presente</u>. Ed. Sario Euraque, Jeffrey Gould and Charles Hale. Miami: Centro de Investigacion Regionales de Mesoamerica, 2005. 215-251.

Barany, M. E., A.L. Hammett.; B.R. Murphy and L.J. Shillington. (2001).
"The Role of Private Wildlife Reserves in Nicaragua's Emerging Ecotourism Industry." <u>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</u> 9(2). Pp. 95-110.

Baud, Michael and Alma Parra. (2002).
"Respuestas, Resistencias y Acomodos a los Procesos Modernizadores en America Latina. Viejos Problemas, Nuevas Perspectivas. Conclusiones Generales."*In* <u>Pueblos, Comunidades y Municipios Frente a los Proyectos Modernizadores en America Latina,</u>

Siglo XIX. Ed. Antonio Escobar, Falcon, Romana and Buve, Raymond Ohmestede. Vol. 88. San Luis Potosi: Centro de Estudios y Documentacion Latinoamericanos. El Colegio de San Luis de Potosi. Pp. 245-251.

Brading, D.A. (2001).
"Monuments and Nationalism in Modern Mexico." Nations and Nationalism 7(4).Pp. 521-538.

Britt, Kelly M. and Christine Chen. (2005).
 "The (re)birth of a Nation. Urban Archaeology, Ethics, and the Heriatge Tourism Industry." The SAA Archaeological Record 5(3). Pp. 26-28.

Britton, S. (1991).
"Tourism, Capital and Place: Towards a Critical Geography of Tourism." Environment and Planing. Society and Space 9. Pp 451-478.

Bunten, Alexis Celeste. (2010)
 "More like Ourselves. Indigenous Capitalism Through Tourism." American Indian Quarterly 34(3).Pp. 287-309.

Carman, John and Susan Keitumetse. (2005)
 "Talking About Heritage and Tourism." The SAA Archaeological Record 5(3). Pp. 39-41.

Carter, R. W. and R. J. S. Beeton. (2008).
"Managing Cultural Change and Tourism. A Review and Perspective."In Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Asia and the Pacific. Ed. Dallen J. Timothy and Kaye Chon Bruce Prideaux. London and New York: Routledge.

Chakravarty, Ilika. (2008).
"Heritage Tourism and Community Participation. A Case Study of Sindhudurg Fort, India." In Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Asia and the Pacific. Ed. Dallen J. timothy and Kaye Chon Bruce Prideux. London and New York: Routledge.

Clark, Dylan and David Anderson (2015)
"Past is present: The Production and Consumption of Archaeological Legacies in Mexico." Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association, 25. Pp.1-18.

Cohen, Erik. (1988).
 "Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism." <u>Annals of Tourism Research</u>. Pp. 371-386.

Cole, Stroma. (2008)
 <u>Tourism, Culture and Development: Hopes , Dreams and Realities in East Indonesia</u>. Vol. 12. Tonawanda: Channel View Publications.

Comaroff, John and Jean Comaroff. (2009).
 <u>Ethnicity, Inc</u>. Chicago: University of Chicago.

Croes, Robertico and Manuel Vanegas SR.(2008).
 "Cointegration and Causality Between Tourism and Poverty Reduction." <u>Journal Travel Research</u> 47. Pp. 94-103.

Cuadra, Pablo Antonio. (1997).
 <u>El Nicaraguense</u>. 13th. Managua: HISPAMER.

—. (1963).
"Introduccion a la Literatura Nicaraguense." <u>El Pez y la Serpiente</u> 4. Pp. 9-26.

—.(1982).
 "Rubén Darío y la Aventura Literaria del Mestizaje." <u>Revista del Pensamiento Conservador Centroamericano.</u> No. 398. Pp. 307-321.

Cunningham Kain, Mirna, Jacobson, Ariel,; Manzanares, Sofia,; Mairena, Eillen,; Gomez, Eillen and Jefferson Sinclair Bush. (2013).
"El Fraude del Mestizaje: Anotaciones sobre el Racismo en la Nicaragua Multietnica." <u>WANI</u> 55. Pp. 6-16.

De La Cadena, Marisol. (2004).
<u>Indigenas Mestizos: Raza y Cultura en el Cusco</u>. Lima: IEP.

De las Casas, Bartolome (1986).
Brevísima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias. Estudio Preliminar de Profesor Nelson Martinez Díaz. Ediciones Orbis. Barcelona, España.

Dore, Elizabeth. (2002).
"Una Historia no Modernizadora en la Nicaragua Rural: Granada."
In Pueblos, Comunidades y Municipios Frente a los Proyectos Modernizadores en America Latina, Siglo XIX. Ed. Antonio Escobar, Falcon, Romana and Buve, Raymond Ohmstede. Vol. 88. San Luis Potosi: Centro de Estudios y Documentacion latinoamericanos. El Colegio de San Luis Potosi. Pp. 225-244.

Espinoza Perez, Edgar, Ramiro Garcia Vasquez and Fumiyo Saganuma. (1999).
 Rescate Arqueologico en el Sitio San Pedro, Malacatoya, Granada, Nicaragua. Managua: Instituto Nicaraguense de Cultura. Museo Nacional de Nicaragua.

Ferguson, Lucy.(2010).
"Tourism Development and Regional Integration in Central America." (ARI).

Field, Les. (1998).
 "Post-Sandinista Ethnic Identities in Western Nicaragua ." American Anthropologist 100(2). Pp. 431-443.

Field, Les W. (1995).
"Constructing Local Identities in a Revolutionary Nation: The Cultural Politics of the Artisan Class in Nicaragua, 1979-1990." American Ethnologist 22(4). Pp. 786-806.

Foletti, Alessandra Castegnaro de. (1992).
"La Alfareria Tradicional de La Paz Centro." Romero Vargas, German. *In* Peristencia Indigena en Nicaragua. Managua: CIDCA-UCA. Pp. 146-195.

Franklin, Adrian and Mike Crang. (2001).
"The Trouble with Tourism and Travel Theory" Tourism Studies 1(1). Pp. 5-22.

Gandhi, Leela. (1988).
 Postcolonial Theory. A Critical Introduction. St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin.

Garcia Ortiz, Carmen (1994).
Antropología y Folklore. Revista de dialectología y tradiciones populares, *49*(2), 49.

Garcia Vasquez, Ramiro. (2010).
"Investaigaciones Arqueohistoricas Realizadas en Leon Viejo. Primer Emplazamiento Colonial de Nicaragua (1524-1610). Patrimonio de la Humanidad." *In* Contribuciones. Revista SAC. Ciencia, Arte y Cultura 1(1). Pp. 6-18.

Giraudo, Rachel and Benjamin Porter. (2010).
"Archaeotourism and the Crux of Development." Anthropology News . 51(8). Pp. 7-8.

Glover, Nikolas. (2008).
"Co-produced Histories: Mapping the Uses and Narratives of History in the Tourist Age." The Public Historian 30(1). Pp. 105-124.

Gobierno de Nicaragua.(N/D).
 Informe Sobre los Sistemas Nacionales de Cultura. Nicaragua. 06 February 2007. Visited on 29 October 2015 <www. oei.es/cultura2/Nicaragua/12a.htm>.

Gobierno Nacional de la Republica de Nicaragua. (N/D).
 "Ley de Proteccion al Patrimonio Cultural de la Nacion. Decreto No. 1142." Managua: La Gaceta, 1982,Visited Novembre 2nd, 2015.

Government of Nicaragua. (2011).
Technical Progress Report on National Human Development Plan as of 2010. International Monetary Fund. Publcation Services. Washington D.C.: International Monetary Fund.

Government of the Republic of Nicaragua. (1994).
"Historic Site Ruins of Leon Viejo." World Heritage Nomanitation Documentation.

Gudmundson, Lowell. (2012).
"Que Importancia Tenia el Color? Negros en los "Pueblos Blancos" del Occidente de Nicaragua en la Decada de 1880." La Negritud en Centroamerica. Raza y Raices. Ed. Lowell Gudmundson and Justin Wolfe. Editorial UNED.

Guerron Montero, Carla. (2011).
 "Heritage, Identity and Globalisation: The Case of Island Tourism in the Caribbean."
<u>Bulletin of Latin American Research</u> 30(1). Pp. 1-6.

Gurdián, Galo. (2005).
"Alamikangban: Tierra Comunal y "Fisionomias" en Nicaragua." <u>Memorias del Mestizaje:</u>
<u>Cultura Politica en Centraomerica de 1920 al Presente</u>. Miami: Centro de Investigaciones
Regionales de Meosamerica. Pp. 465-509.

Hale, Charles A. (2005).
"Identidades Politizadas, Derechos Culturales y las Nuevas Formas de Gobierno en la
Epoca Neoliberal." <u>Memorias del Mestizaje: Cultura Politica en Centroamerica de 1920 al</u>
<u>Presente</u>. Ed. Darío Euraque, Jeffrey L. Gould and Charles R and Hale. Miami: Centro de
Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamerica. Pp. 19-51.

Hall, C. Michael and Hazel Tucker. (2004).
 <u>Tourism and Postcolonialism</u>. *In* <u>Tourism and Postcolonialism. Contested Discourses,</u>
<u>and Represenations.</u> Ed. C. Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker. New Yok: Routledge.

Hall, Michael. C. (2006).
"Heritage Tourism in the Pacific. Modernity, Myth, and Identity." *In* <u>Cultural Heritage and</u>
<u>Tourism in the Developing World.</u> Ed. Dallen Timothy and Gyan Nyaupane.

Hardman, Chris. (2010).
"Granada, Grand City of Nicaragua. Once an Important Center of Power in Central
America, this Nicaraguan City Still Shines with Colonial Architecture and Tales of a
Tumultuous Past." <u>AMERICAS (English Edition)</u>. Pp. 28-35.

Henderson, Joan. (2001).
"Heritage, Identity and Tourism in Hong Kong." <u>International Journal of Heritage Studies</u>
7(3). Pp. 219-235.

Hoffman, Teresa, Mary L. Kwas and and Helaine Silverman. (2002).
"Heritage Tourism and Public Archaeology." <u>Public Education</u>. Pp. 30-32.

Hollinshead, Keith. (2004).
"Tourism and New Sense. Worldmaking and the Enunciative Value of Tourism." *In* Tourism and Postcolonialism: Contested Discourses, Identities and Representations. Ed. C. Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker. New York.

Hunt, Carter. (2011).
"Passaport to Development? Local Perceptions of the Outcomes of Post-socialist Tourism Policy and Growth in Nicaragua." Tourism Planning &Development 8(3). Pp. 265-279.
Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censo. (2006).
 VIII Censo de Población en Nicaragua.

http://www.pueblosindigenaspcn.net/. Red de Pueblos Indigenas PCN

Instituto Nacional de Informacion de Desarrollo. (N/D)
 Estadísticas Económicas. Sección Geográfica. Managua: Gobierno de Reconciliacion y Unidad Nacional.

Instituto Nicaraguense de Turismo. (2014).
Boletin de Estadisticas de Turismo de Nicaragua. Managua: Instituto Nicaraguense de Turismo.

Instituto Nicaraguense de Turismo. (2010).
Boletin de Estadisticas de Turismo de Nicaragua No. 21. Managua: Instituto Nicaraguense de Turismo.

Instituto Nicargüense de Turismo. (2010).
 Visita Nicaragua. <http://www.visitanicaragua.com>. Visited November 2015.

Jamal, Tazim and Steve Hill. (2008).
 "Developing a Framework for Indicators of Authenticity: The Place and Space of Cultural and Heritage Tourism." *In* Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Asia and the Pacific. Ed. Dallen J. Timothy and Kaye Chon Bruce Prideaux. London and New York: Routledge.

Kinloch Tijerino, Frances. (1985).
"Etnicidad y Discurso Etnico." Encuentros: Revista Academica de la Universidad Centroamericana 24-25. Pp. 57-60.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. (1995).
 "Theorizing Heritage." <u>Etnomusicology</u> 39(3). Pp. 367-380.

Kohl, Phillip L. (1998).
"Nationalism and Archaeology: On the Constructions of Nations and Reconstructions of the Remote Past." <u>Annual Review of Anthropology</u> 27. Pp. 223-246.

Liss, Julia E. (1998).
Diasporic Identities: The Science and Politics of Race in the Work of Franz Boas and W. E. B. Du Bois, 1894-1919. Cultural Anthropology 13(2). Pp. 127-166.

Lopez Olivares, Diego & Obiol Menero, Emilio M. (2005).
"El Turismo en Nicaragua. Un Analisis Territorial Contemporaneo." <u>Eria</u> 67. Pp. 209-218.

Maccanell, Dean. (1984).
"Reconstructed Ethnicity. Tourism and Cultural Identity in Thirld World Communities." <u>Annals of Tourism Research</u> 11. Pp. 375-391.

MacCannell, Dean. (1976).
<u>The Tourist. A New Theory of the Leisure Class</u>. Berkely: University of California Press.

Macleod, Donald. (2006).
 "Power, Resources and Identity: The Influence of Tourism on Indigenous Communities." <u>Tourism and social identities: Global Frameworks and local realities</u>. Elsevier.

McAnany, Patricia and Shoshuanna Parks (2012).
Casualties of Heritage Distancing. Children, Ch'orti Indigeneity, and the Copan Archaeoscape. <u>CA Forum on Anthropology in Public</u>.

McLean, Fiona. (2006).

"Introduction: Heritage and Identity." <u>International Journal of Heritage Studies</u> 12(1). Pp. 3-7.

Melendez Obando, Mauricio. (2012).
"El Lento Ascenso de los Marginados: Los Afrodescendientes en Costa Rica y Nicaragua.". *In* <u>La Negritud en Centroamerica. Raza y Raices</u>. Ed. Wolfe, Lowell Gudmunson. UNED.

Mellinger, Wayne Martin. (1994).
 "Toward a critical analysis of tourism representations." <u>Annals of Tourism Research</u> 21(4). Pp. 756-779.

Memebreño Idiáquez, Marcos. (1993).
"Las Comunidades Etnicas del Pacifico y del Centro-Norte de Nicaragua: Una existencia Negada, una Persistencia Obstinada." <u>America Indigena</u> 1-2. Pp. 147-198.

Midence, Carlos. (2008).
<u>La Invención de Nicaragua. La Letra y la Polis en la Conformacioón de la Nación</u>. Managua: Amerrisque.

Mortensen, Lena. (2005).
"The Local Meanings of International Heritage at Copan, Honduras." <u>The SAA Archaeological Record. Special Section: The Public Meaning of Archaeological Heritage. Pp.</u> 28-30.

Nicaragua, Anda Ya! (N/D)
 <u>Anda Ya! Nicaragua. Tourist directory</u>. Granada, Visited October 2013.

Nicholas, George & Fraser, Simon. (2004).
"Intellectual Propoerty Issues in Archaeology?" <u>Anthropology News</u> . April.

Oland, Maxine (2012).
Public and Postcolonial Practices in Latin American Archaeology: Engaging with non-descendant communities in Northern Belize. Chungara: Revista de Antropologia Chilena, 44(3). Pp. 467-474.

Ortega, Daniel. (1982).

"La Revolucion es Creatividad, Imaginacion." *In*. Hacia una politica cultural de la revolucion sandinista. Arce, Bayardo. Managua: Ministerio de Cultura. Pp. 83-89.

Palmer, Catherine. (1994).
"Tourism and Colonialism. The experience of the Bahamas." Annals of Tourism Research 21(4). Pp. 792-811.

—. (1999).
"Tourism and the Symbols of Identity." Tourism Management 20. Pp. 313-321.

Paulsen, Krista. (2007).
"Strategy and Sentiment: Mobilizing Heritage in Defense of Place." Qual Social 30. Pp. 1-19.

Pritchard, Annette and Nigel J. Morgan. (2001).
"Culture, Identity and Tourism Representation: Marketing Cyrum or Wales?" Tourism Management 22. Pp. 167-179.

Rizo Zeledón, Mario. (2005).
"Campesinos de la Frontera Agricola: Sujetos Sociales Desconocidos e Identidades Negadas."*In* Memorias del Mestizaje: Cultura Politica en Centroamerica de 1920 al Presente. Ed. Darío Euraque and Jeffrey Gould and Charles Hale. Miami: Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamerica. Pp. 543-574.

Roland, L. Kaifa. (2010).
 "Tourism and the Commodification of Cubananidad." Tourist Studies 10(1). Pp. 3-18.

Rosa, Richard. (2001).
"Business as Pleasure. Culture, Tourism and Nation in Puerto Rico in the 1930s." Nepantla: Views from the South 2(3). Pp. 449-487.

Rossbach, Lioba and Volker Wunderich. (1985).
 "Derechos Indigenas y Estado Nacional en Nicaragua: La convencion Mosquitia de 1894." Encuentro: Revista Academica de la Universidad Centraomericana 24-25. Pp. 92-114.

Rothman, Hal K. (1996).
 "Selling the Meaning of Place: Entrepenuership, Tourism, and Community Transformation at the Twentieth-Century American West." Pacific Historical Review 65(4). Pp. 525-557.

Ruiz, Esteban, et all. (2008).
"Turismo Comunitario en Ecuador. Comprendiendo el Community-Based Tourism desde la Comunidad." PASOS. Revista de Turismo y Patrimonio Cultural 6(3). Pp. 399-418.

Ruiz-Ballesteros, Esteban and Macarena Hernandez-Ramirez. (2010).
 "Tourism that Empowers? Comodification and Appropiation in Ecuador's Turismo Comunitario." Critique of Anthropology 30(2). Pp. 201-229.

Sanchez Crispin, Alvaro and Propin Frejomil, Enrique. (2010).
"Tipologia de los Nucleaos Turisticos Primarios de America Central." Cuadernos de Turismo 25. Pp. 165-184.

Scher, Philip W. (2011).
"Heritage Tourism in the Caribbean: The Politics of Culture After Neoliberalism." Bulletin of Latin American Research 30(1). Pp. 7-20.

Schluter, Regina. (2009).
"Heritage Tourism in Latin America. Can Turbulent Times be Overcome?" Cultural Heritage and Tourism in the Developing World. A Regional Perspective. Ed. Dallen J. Timothy and Gyan P. Nyaupane. London and New York: Routledge. Pp. 209-223.

Shackel, Paul A.(2005).
"Local Identity, National Memory, and Heritage Tourism." The SAA Archaeologicla Record 5(3). Pp. 33-35.

Silverman, Helaine. (2002).
"Touring Ancient Times: The present and Presented Past in Contemporary Peru." American Anthropologist 104(3). Pp. 881-902.

Simons, Beverly Ann. (2004).

 "A Contemporary Travel Discourse and the Popular Magazine Text." <u>Tourism and Postcolonialism: Contested Discourses, Identities and Representations</u>. Ed. C. Michael Hall and Hazel Tucker. New York.

Smith, Carole. (2005).
 "Las Contradicciones del Mestizaje en Centroamerica."*In* <u>Memorias del Mestizje: Cultura Politica en Centroamerica de 1920 al Presente</u>. CIRMA. Pp. 579-617.

Soto Quiroz, Ronaldo and David Diaz Arias. (2007).
"Mestizaje, Indigenas e Identidad Nacional en Centraomerica: De la Colonia a las Republicas Liberales." <u>Cuaderno de Ciencas Sociales</u>.

Taracena Arriola, Arturo. (2005).
"Guatemala: El Debate Historiografico en Torno al Mestizaje ." <u>Memorias del Mestizaje: Cultura Politica en Centroamerica de 1920 al Presente</u>. Miami: Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamerica. Pp. 79-109.

Timothy, Dallen and Gyan Nyaupaune. (2009).
"Heritage Tourism in the Developing World: Reflections and Ramifications." *In* <u>Cultural Heritage and Tourism in the Develping World.</u> Pp. 246-251.London and New York: Routledge.

Trigger, Bruce G. (1984).
 "Archaeologies: Nationalist, Colonialist, Imperialist." <u>Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland</u> 19(3). Pp. 255-370.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. (1997).
"Silencing the Past: Layers of Meaning in the Haitian Revolution." *In* <u>Between History and Histories: The Making of Silences and Commemorations</u>. Ed. Gerald Sider and Gavin Smith. Toronto: Univeristy of Toronto Press. 31-61.

Urry, John. (1990).
<u>The Tourist Gaze. Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Society</u>. London: SAGE Publications.

Van Rekom, Johan and Frank Go. (2006).
 "Cultural Identities in a Globalizing World: Conditions for Sustainability of Intercultural Tourism." *In* Tourism and Social Identities: Global Frameworks and Local Realities. Ed. Burns, Peter and MArina Novelli. Pp. 79 - 90. Elsevier.

Walker, Cameron. (2005).
"Archaeological Tourism: Looking for Answers Along Mexico's Maya Riviera." NAPA Bulletin 23. Pp. 60-76.

Weiss, Linda. (2007).
 "Heritage-making and Political Identity." Journal of Social Archaeology 7(3). Pp. 413-431.

Zapata, María José, Michael C. Hall and Patricia and Mieke Vanderschaeghe Lindo. (2011)
"Can Community-based Tourism Contribute to Development and Poverty Alleviation? Lessons from Nicaragua." Current Issues in Tourism 14(8). Pp. 725-749.

Zurick, David. (1992)
"Adventure Travel and Suatainable Tourism in the Peripheral Economy of Nepal." Annals of the Association of American Geographers 82(4). Pp. 608-628.