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Men at play: freedom and alternative ordering through (romantic) intercultural relationships at the beach in Zanzibar

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MEN AT PLAY:

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freedom and alternative ordering through (romantic) intercultural relationships at the beach in Zanzibar

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Maps of Zanzibar[1]

[2]

[3]

[1] Zanzibar is an archipelago off Tanzania, and consists of Pemba, Unguja and numerous small islands. For this research I focus on Unguja (Zanzibar Island), which I name Zanzibar, as in general is often done. Especially, I focus at the beach side at the southeast coast, in front of the villages Bwejuu, Paje and Jambiani.
[2] http://www.zanzibarlife.com/about_zanzibar.html
[3] http://nl.hostelbookers.com/hostels/tanzania/zanzibar/27602/kaart/

1. An introduction to the beach

So many cars are parked crisscross in the sand, it just could not be as quiet as the competing bars hold up. And already from afar, one can hear the music bursting out of the crackling speakers. Of course and again the famous Bongo Flava and old time favorite reggae and dancehall songs, with in between some American hip hop and popular music. The good thing about playing the same songs over and over again is that eventually, people know how to dance on it and can, in a drunken state, close their eyes and sing along, like being in one's own house, unhindered and comfortable. It is Friday night at Jambo, one of the most popular bars at the southeast beach. As the many cars already indicated, the place is packed. This local run bar, existing of one round bar in the middle of a sandy space, close to the Indian Ocean, with not even a fence, a defect toilet that probably never worked and a horrible sound system rules out a concurrent party at a fancy hotel close by. There, young expatriates hang around, still waiting for tourists, especially female tourists, to come over for some good times. Unfortunately, they miss out on an exciting party organized by the bar owner and his crew, but definitely made by all the different people with different colors, nationalities and religions on the dance floor. This place is *happening*, in many different ways.

In a corner are a white tourist girl and a Zanzibari guy. They are dancing. She is bare foot and dressed in a sexy yet comfortable dress. The wind blows coolness to her hot and sweaty body that constantly touches that of the dark man dancing close behind her. His dreadlocks tickle her neck as he whispers something sweet and funny in her ear. And when they hold hands while dancing, their skin colors contrast perfectly. She feels high from excitement and as feminine as can be, with a new love, manly and tough, who devotes himself completely to her. And when the heat becomes too much, the two of them decide to sneak away to the beach. Underneath the millions of stars and a bright moon she realizes this will not be the last time together with this beautiful man on this beautiful beach on this paradise island. It is the beginning of a new life. As if she gets baptized in the Indian Ocean, converted to freedom and romance.

About twenty meters away at the same shore, two expatriate women sit together. They talk, one is crying while the other tries to comfort her. It is her husband she is sad about, who has hurt her badly. She explains to her friend how she found out he cheated on her with another woman. And that was the reason he did not want to come with her to Jambo, because then that other woman, a tourist, would see him and his engaged position. While alarm bells rang already for a long time, it is only now she realized the trap she fell into, she says. The friend nods, and comments that men are terrible. She herself just realized her expatriate fling kisses other girls the way he kisses her. Every night.

Introduction

That the perfect, insane perfection can, any second, turn into the darkest black and burning nightmare, is what I often experienced at the beach in Zanzibar. Being immersed in the tourist space at the southeast coastal villages of Bwejuu, Paje and Jambiani is an experience as intense and

challenging I could have never imagined. Tourists, but especially 'Western'[4] expatriates, Tanzanian and Kenyan immigrants, and Zanzibari men alike seem to live as if each day is their last, creating a lifestyle resembling a fine dramatic soap opera, as I often concluded in field notes written down after weekends crazy as can be. While I was looking for structured and democratic marriages and steady relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women, I found chaos and anarchy. Yes, there were such 'romantic' relationships, but in a context I could have never envisioned beforehand, even though I frequently visited the coast. A lifestyle overflowing with freedom, and at the same time of abundant social control. That among expatriates and Zanzibari living in other places on the island the southeast coast is known for its ways, does not come as a surprise to me.

It is this place I aim to describe in this thesis. The beach, as I call the space where Zanzibari, expatriates and immigrants meet, is seen by its inhabitants and visitors as a place where freedom is ever prevailing and no structure seems to exist. It is a place of madness, no rules, chaos, of ultimate enjoyment, full of pleasures and temptations. Indeed, it is a place filled with the promise of ultimate freedom. However, even in a place seemingly without any rules and structures, a certain order exists, and this did become very clear at the beach during my fieldwork. It is especially this order, in this free zone, that will be focused on in this thesis. What I aim to describe here is, in a place that at first glance seems to be the ultimate freedom where everything is possible and without restrictions, where freedom has total social control, what social control prevails? What order exists at the – by its inhabitants and visitors perceived to be free – beach of Zanzibar?

Especially, my aim is to write about the inhabitants of this place and their mutual relationships. Specifically, the power relations and evolving limitations people living at the beach create and face, thus, the ways in which inhabitants of the beach order, make sense of, experience and perceive this free place. As such, one can wonder: how free is the beach actually? How do people living here experience this place? In what ways are they not as free as they expected? On what and on whom do they depend, or, how are they indeed independent? In which ways do gender and race influence lifestyles, power relations and dependencies?

The beach is a unique place as it is a meeting point for many people from different cultures and backgrounds, yet, at the same time, a place within a place, namely wider Zanzibar. Those various intersections that are caused by this localization regulate rules and restrictions that affect several relationships. Business relationships between Zanzibari and outsiders are affected, as well as romantic relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women. And, not to forget, the beach in relationship to wider Zanzibar is affected by, yet at the same time causing, specific rules and regulations. It thus is the beach that makes certain relationships possible and existing, but also subject of a particular ordering. Those relationships, stemming from 'freedom' and influenced by ordering are topic of this thesis.

For the beach to become such a specific location (as will be elaborated below), stems from the growing tourist sector in Zanzibar. While tourism in Zanzibar is a relatively new industry, nowadays it

[4] Westerners are defined as people originally coming from, or living in European countries or South Africa. Mainly these are *Wazungu*, white people actually, that can afford migration (defined here as privileged mobility) or a holiday to Zanzibar. Although also Indians and other Asians, and Africans and black people from over the world come to Zanzibar, during my fieldwork people spoke about *wazungu* when talking about 'outsiders'. Most of them are white and 'Western', thus to group them I call them 'Westerners' instead of white, as race or ethnicity is too narrow.

is the island's primary source of income.[5] In 1984, less than nine thousand international tourists arrived in Zanzibar, but after governmental promotion of this sector and because of its economic benefits, numbers of international tourists arriving rose in 2000 to more than 97,000 (Gössling & Schulz 2005: 46), and in 2009 even up to almost 135,000 (Russo 2011). In the 1990s, hotels were built in tourist areas, thus also at the southeast coast (Gössling & Schulz 2005: 46). Moreover, the development of infrastructure, a newly paved main road leading from Kitogani to Paje in the end of the 1990's and even further to Jambiani to the south, and Bwejuu northwards in 2007, led to a rapid increase of the tourist industry in the southeast. As a result, the beach at the southeast coast of Zanzibar is a place where people from many different backgrounds settle. Since it is a tourist destination growing in its popularity, Zanzibari, with a rising frequency, meet here with foreigners, be they tourists from various places throughout the world, Tanzanians, Kenyans or other Africans looking for jobs, or Westerners setting up businesses and taking up managing positions within the same sector.

The last ten years have brought major changes for the southeast coast; geographically, economically, socially and culturally.[6] Especially important to this study is the emergence of the beach community and its intercultural relationships, that have been generated by the tourist industry. Tourism has brought along the many people with varying nationalities that visit, sojourn or migrate to the southeast coast. The space at the southeast coast that is taken by tourism, the long coastline stretching from the northern part of Bwejuu to the most southern point of Jambiani; this beach is the geography on which certain specific intercultural relations take place. Among the transcultural business relationships initiated by the tourist industry, romantic relationships take place as well. To be more specific, not only do expatriates shape relationships with Zanzibari purely for tourist related business, many Western women get romantically involved with Zanzibari men. And often, those romantic couples have businesses together as well. Thus, strictly by business, love, or a combination between business and love is how Zanzibari and expatriates get connected. And exactly those relations, between expats and Zanzibari in general, but more specifically the love relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women, are topic of this thesis.

Everybody can imagine a beach. Be it because one lives there, has been there on holiday, or saw it as a décor in films, on photographs or as a topic of songs or even dreams. In order to make sense of the beach as a location of freedom and ordering, however, I shall now theorize and contextualize the beach according to the lines of the research. I envision this beach at the southeast coast of Zanzibar as a *sensational* place, different from any background or known surroundings for people that now live there. As will become clear from the below, this beach brings about different and unique practices, perceptions and emotions, that create new power relations, (in)dependencies and opportunities.

The beach: tracing the context for intercultural relationships

> 'The beach is a place of strong magic. As a material space it is a boundary zone where the hint of celestial forces is whispered by the ebb and flow of tides, a space that is neither land

[5] http://www.zanzibartourism.net/docs/policystatement.pdf, (28-03-2012)

[6] See also Gössling & Schulz (2005) and Wallevik & Jiddawi (2001) for tourism in relation to Zanzibar and Zanzibari in general.

> nor sea, a zone of uncertainty that resonates with the sound of ever-changing seas, a setting that is, by turns, calm, tranquil, and soothing or agitated, unruly, and frightening. As a cultural space it is a borderland that allows both difference and hybridity while facilitating the tactile tug of land or sea to reveal for many, but not all, spaces of heightened sensibilities that are temporary, personal, and elusive (…).' (Preston-Whyte 2004: 349).

There is something about this beach where such intercultural relationships occur. Indeed, the southeastern coastline of Zanzibar is a magical attraction for many, and magnetizing for various reasons. It is the ultimate beach holiday destination, for many Westerners an oasis to escape to from work, stress, boredom, or a place to travel to for leisure time and out of curiosity. Many do. For holiday, but also for job opportunities in a better climate, whether it is the natural or economical climate. The long stretches of beach of the villages of Paje and Jambiani provide space to relax, escape and live for people from various parts of the world: Zanzibari from other parts of the island, mainlanders and Kenyans hoping for better luck in tourism, South Africans, Europeans and Americans in search of a better life and often of a better business away from home. The tourist business is expanding and the coastline is filled with bars, restaurants, hotels, private- and guest-houses built with money invested from abroad. Here are the expatriates living and working, together with Zanzibari involved in business and/or romance with Westerners. Interesting is why so many people are attracted to the beach. What is it about the beach that makes people romanticize it? And when so many different nationalities move to the beach location, how can such a place be analyzed? What is this place?

The coastline in the southeast at low tide exists of an enormous white beach, while when the tide is high, the water comes to right in front of the line of houses and hotels build by outsiders in between the palm trees.

In their book *The Beach: the history of paradise on* earth, Lenek and Bosker (1998) describe the meaning of the beach throughout history. According to them, Westerners have virtually always been mesmerized by the beauty and magic of the beach. Already the ancient Greeks and Romans identified the beach with leisure, spent there as much time as possible, and built houses along the shore. Although in the middle-ages the beach was seen as dark, a resemblance of hell, a particular dangerous place, the Grand Tour soon again became popular for upper-class men of the sixteenth through eighteenth century. To not have seen the beaches of Italy would reduce one's self esteem and self-respect. The industrialization made the beach a therapeutic and medical place and from the

beginning of the nineteenth century the beach only gained in popularity. Europeans and Americans came to see the beach as a place for non-stop entertainment, pleasure, for 'beaching it', popular among all classes, while at the same time the beach has become a place for spirituality, healing (as for example the healthy sea wind or the salt water), reflexivity, space, freedom and solitude (Lenek & Bosker 1998).

The beach is described by Taussig (2000) as a fantasy, as the water's edge and at the same time the edge of land. The beach, he describes, has become the place everybody wants to be, by a 'remake', a culturalization of nature:

> '[T]he beach's job is not to conceal but reveal and revel in revealing just such play, announcing itself as playground and transgressive space par excellence, displaying by far all previous rituals of reversal and pleasure. The beach, then, is the ultimate fantasy space where nature and carnival blend as prehistory in the dialectical image of modernity' (Taussig 2000: 258).

Indeed, the beach is an exotic place, made safe for use with, however, some exciting nature. Here, one can identify the cultural in the natural, or vice versa. A recognizable beach is created by the manipulation of the threshold between water and land. In Zanzibar as well, for Westerners the beach is recognized as a place of leisure, relaxation, a place for sun bathing and water sports. Thus, a beach is a special place, not having much resemblance with other spaces. Its location but also its social construction creates this uniqueness and magical sphere.

Geographers as well do recognize such place-specific characteristics and attachments. Bondi, Davidson and Smith (2007) for example, describe how nowadays geography gained interest in emotion when writing about people and places. According to them, emotions are involved with places as they are with people. This emotional turn in geography can be named an 'emotional geography' which 'attempts to understand emotion – experientially and conceptually – in terms of its socio-*spatial* mediation and articulation rather than as entirely interiorized subjective mental states' (Bondi, Davidson & Smith 2007: 3). Most importantly, thus, not only are emotions felt within bodies, but in places as well, and there is an emotional connection between and among people and places. The attachment of emotion to place can be explained by differentiating between land and landscape, as is described by Urry (2007). Landscape is the adjusted version of land, and developing landscape adds a particular emotional experience to the place. A landscape thus can be romanticized, a place of beauty, and of emotion.

On homo ludens*, play, and heterotopia*

The concept of the *homo ludens*, as described by Huizinga (1938) often suits the lifestyle visible at the beach. The playful man, as a translation of the concept, underlines the importance of the concept of play within society. According to Huizinga, play has five characteristics; it is free, or, freedom; it is not similar to 'normal' or ordinary life; has a different locality and duration than ordinary life; creates order, and is in fact order, and; is not connected to any interest or gain (Huizinga 1955). Such ideas overlap with *ludology*, the study of games. From my point of view, to study games is not only to focus on games as such, but, on the other hand, to view cultures and societies as producing playful

contexts in which play might become, as Boellstorff puts it, 'a master metaphor for a range of human social relations, with the potential for new freedoms and new creativity, as well as new oppressions and inequality' (2006: 33).

According to Malaby (2009), the concept of play has not gained much attention within anthropology[7], but lately has gained more interest by new scholarly and policy-making. As such, the distinction between work and play has been challenged, and it has become difficult to relate play only to positively charged sentiments, such as 'fun' and 'pleasure'. As Malaby puts it, if we see play as a disposition rather than an activity or representation, we are better able to see the world as 'irreducibly contingent. (…) [P]lay becomes an attitude characterized by a readiness to improvise in the face of an ever-changing world that admits of no transcendently ordered account' (2009: 206). As such, play becomes a 'mode of human experience' instead of a 'form of distinct human activity' (2009: 208). In fact this means that games are not to be seen as a form or activity, but as a mode, a cultural experience, or as Malaby calls it, 'a playful disposition towards activities no matter how game-like' (2009: 209).

To view play as a disposition is, according to Malaby, 'intimately connected with a disordered world that, while of course largely reproduced from one moment to the next, always carries within it the possibility of incremental or even radical change' (2009: 210). This is along the lines of Huizinga (1955), who argues that civilization is played, it does not come from play. The play element within cultures or societies is marked by uncertainties, challenges and competitions, and the legitimacy of innovation and improvisation. As such, play is not useless or extra, it is a way of coping with uncertainties and a fast changing world. Improvisation and agency are concepts needed in a world in which nothing can be sure, and play as a disposition creates an attitude that offers a way to live.

An even deeper understanding of the concept of play, and with it playfulness, comes from Droogers, who argues that play 'is the capacity to deal simultaneously and subjunctively with two or more ways of classifying reality' (1996: 53). To play, he states, is thus a capacity, and playfulness 'the attitude through which this capacity is activated' (Droogers 2006: 81). This definition underlines the creative potential of play, the fact that play is a capacity instead of a product or application, and underlines the wider perspective as multiple realities (or the simultaneousness of different orders) (Droogers 2006:81). By using the concept of play to analyze a specific context (thus seeing the beach as a playground), one is able to recognize the multiple realities and thus various (experimental) strategies to reach meaning. While he does not envision himself as a player, the playful man, the *homo ludens*, uses symbols to give meaning to his world, to create a feeling of belonging, as if he uses the rules of a game within a certain playground, while realizing that outside this space another game (reality) is being played out (Droogers 2006).

The exotic and romantic character of the beach in Zanzibar certainly is something different for people that first set foot on this location. It is a different place where the rules from back home do not apply, a place that is ever-changing, both in size and appearance as well as in its composition and number of inhabitants. As such, the beach with its chaotic exterior and interior may be a context in which those concepts of play and the *homo ludens* can be positioned perfectly. If we look at inhabitants of the beach as people at play, we might get a better understanding of their performances and perceptions. To view the beach as an uncertain place in which a playful disposition

[7] But see, for example, Geertz (1973) on 'deep play' in Balinese cock fights.

is acted out and realized by its inhabitants, is to get a better understanding of what people do, how, and why. Even though people may or may not consider their performances a game, the disposition of play allows us to get a better understanding of the world that is called the beach, and the movements and sensations of the people living there.

Inhabitants of the beach do not envision themselves as players so much. Rather, the ludic approach is used here as an *etic* account of how members of the beach society, in particular Zanzibari men but (female) expatriates as well, deal with different realities that at first sight seem to exclude each other. It is the negotiation between such 'conflicting' realities, as for example the location of Zanzibar versus the beach, or interactional versus romantic love, that will be analyzed in this thesis by making use of the ludic approach of play. Localities and notions of love thus vary and are intertwined and chosen specific characteristics from, but also concepts as femininity and masculinity are subject to play, as both men and women at the beach may 'gather' with a playful approach a variety of cultural notions on the concepts. As such, it is (the creation of) the playground that comes to being by 'picking and choosing' from the multiple realities that will be shed light on in this thesis.

Furthermore, what will become clear throughout this thesis is how play knows various levels, as well as certain skills. A play at the beach, for instance, may be part of a larger play and thus considered as one level that will enable one to reach to betterment within the larger play. As such, play at the beach starts at one point and for various reasons, but might also end, as successes are reached for and opportunities and meaning now can (only) be found somewhere else. Moreover, even though inhabitants of the beach do not consider themselves to be players, from the ludic (and thus *etic*) point of view, it turns out that experiences and skills of play are important in order to reach for a meaningful life at the beach. Not all inhabitants possess such skills, which can influence their stay at the beach negatively.

Yet another way of linking the beach and play is described by Fainstein & Judd (1999). To use their argument, the beach can be seen as a 'place to play', as it is a site of intense and heightened consumption, excess, of extremes. However, at the same time, for some or at a certain point, this specific beach can be(come) a place of disappointment as described by Urry (2007), as pleasures related to the beach are actually encountered. Frustration, anger, disappointment, are all – as a result of over-excess and unlimited freedom, while at the same time social control is very existent – part of the same deal. And indeed such paradoxes are significant for defining the place, the beach, in Zanzibar.

Foucault's 'heterotopia' is an important guidance to place and understand the beach as it is the object of this thesis. Heterotopia are sites of alternative ordering. Such ordering is new and different, and stands in contrast with familiar and already existing social ordering. A heterotopia both horrifies and tries to 'make use of the limits of our imagination, our desires, our fears and our sense of power/powerlessness' (Hetherington 1997: 40). The space of the beach in Zanzibar is certainly an Other place, imbued with alternative social ordering. As the main actors within this space are Zanzibari directly involved in the tourist sector, expatriates, immigrants and tourists, it is no such place as Zanzibar under the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, nor is it a place comparable to other – possibly heterotopia – locations worldwide. Typical for heterotopia is not resemblance, but, as Foucault puts it, similitude, by which the reference anchor is gone, and no place can claim a privileged status or model (Foucault 1983: 9-10). Important characteristics of heterotopia are the

ultimate freedom and at the same time ultimate social control. Heterotopia are different as they 'bring together heterogeneous collections of unusual things without allowing them a unity or order established through resemblance' (Hetherington 1997: 43). It is the juxtaposition with places in the outside world that makes heterotopia places of Otherness, that makes them into being.

Heterotopia are places of 'freedoms of madness, sexual desire and death in which humans experience the limits of their existence and are confronted by its sublime terror', they are sites of 'all things displaced, marginal, novel or rejected, or ambivalent' (Hetherington 1997: 46). They are Other, as they have a different way of ordering. However, as Genocchio (1995) correctly states, to locate and define such a place is to make them a space as any other, thus is to take away their status as heterotopia. Even though this is a relevant point, the characteristics of heterotopia seem to fit the space of the beach in southeast Zanzibar, as there, both freedom (the very existence of sex, drugs, party like a rock star, dirty money, corruption, lies, theft) and social control (dependency, unwritten rules, one's freedom restricts the other one's) run free. Also, the beach is a place different to other beaches and geographies, even to other beach locations in Zanzibar. While it is not possible to describe any space as heterotopia, its Otherness and the way in which the southeast beach challenges order and notions of certainty and fixity, does make heterotopia as a specific space a just analytic tool to define the context of intercultural relationships discussed in this thesis.

The southeast beach in Zanzibar has been transformed into a space devoted to Western consumption, pleasure and recreation. It is a timeless space, where senses are opening up, and, as '[n]ature's most potent antidepressant, the beach moves us with the power of a drug, the rhythm of its tides and shifting margins reorienting our sense of space and time, its aphrodisiacal cocktail of sun and water firing our slumbering hedonism' (Leneck & Bosker 1999: xix). This timelessness and spacelessness, the experienced freedom and a distance from the known social control is not only experienced by visiting tourists, but by inhabitants as well. Indeed, not only visitors consider the perceived freedom at the southeast coast preeminently characteristic. Others, inhabitants of the beach that are the subjects of this thesis and will be discussed below, go and play along with the hedonism of tourists. They are the ones who create the magic place, being swept up by the practice of the magic exercised by tourists, and who keep the rituals existing, in place. For all, the beach seems to be the place to escape to. All subjects maneuvering within this space have crossed certain and differing boundaries in order to gain something or to (aim to) satisfy specific needs. Freedom is what can be found here, although in many ways. Yet at the same time, the place knows its own strict forms of social control, dependency and power relations.

Quite a number of different people and groups exist within this beach space, and all of them describe the place as a different one. It remains a beach, but personal experiences and motivations for sojourning differ. Furthermore, the shorter or longer temporality of stays of travelers and inhabitants makes it difficult to organize sociality of the place. As such, the in-betweenness and fluidity of the beach could remind of a non-space, as described by Augé (1995). However, while there is movement, it is not that rapid, and while stays are temporary, for some 'in between' might be lasting over twenty years. Movement simply goes too slow to be able to call it a non-space, as there is time to shape relationships not only between individual and space, but also between individuals. Indeed, many people actually move to the beach and create a life and a lifestyle. I thus rather see Zanzibar's southeast beach as a magical, bounded, hybrid place, overflowing with both freedom and social control. Although it is a different place than wider Zanzibar, it is certainly influenced by this wider

space and its cultures. At the same time however, the beach is greatly influenced by the wider world, the homelands of its inhabitants and the nationalities of tourists. Nature, or at least the culturized nature, the threshold status of the beach, influences this place as a certain image is being created. And finally, what people come to do here, who lives and travels here, with what reasons and in what way, is what makes the beach *this* beach.

It is exactly this unique place called 'the beach', its freedoms and orderings, and its influences from wider realities that I describe in this thesis. While at first sight the beach can be experienced as a place of complete freedom, certainly rules and orderings abound. By taking freedom as a starting point, I develop a structure that sheds light on actual orderings that take place. Yet again, it will become clear how such order indeed brings about freedoms, and thus how freedom and order instigate each other. In the empirical chapters, I will describe such freedoms and orderings at the beach. Those chapters, however, will also show that these orderings and structures do not work for everybody, and might bring no such freedom. But before I elaborate on the content of the chapters, let me first focus on the people that actually live at the beach, to get an even better sense of this place.

Inhabitants of the beach

The sixteen kilometers long coastline stretching from the northern part of Bwejuu to south Jambiani is almost completely filled with hotels, guesthouses and private houses. Although there are some empty spots left, much building and construction work is going on, which indicates the expected increase of tourist numbers. Along this stretch of beach exist approximately one hundred tourists establishments, of which the majority are hotels and guesthouses, but also private houses, independent bars and restaurants, kite surf and diving schools.[8] An estimated twenty thousand people live in the three villages in total, but unfortunately, no information exists on the number of immigrants and expatriates.[9] But while the research is set in Bwejuu, Paje and Jambiani, I do not focus, nor inform on the villages as such. Rather, I focus on the coastline as one space, the beach, where different groups of people meet. Such groups are tourists, expatriates, immigrants and Zanzibari directly involved in tourism. Moreover, I do not focus on short-term stays, thus not on tourists, but on long-term stays and residency. I divide the population of the beach in two groups:

[8] There are no numbers, neither is there a map with the correct number of establishments. I based the following numbers on a counting in November 2012: 50 hotels/guesthouses; 25 private houses; 20 independent bars/restaurants/ 5 kite surf schools; 3 dive schools.

[9] Unfortunately there are no official numbers of inhabitants of the three villages, let alone numbers on migrants and expatriates. Some calculations can be made, as the 2002 census indicates, South Unguja counted a population of 94,504 and a growth of three percent (http://www.zanzinet.org/zanzibar/stats/takwimu.html, 30-03-2012), which would mean that in 2012, the population of the south would be around 127,000. Each village then would count 6350 inhabitants (Assumed is that there are around twenty villages in the south of Zanzibar. This is based on maps, field notes and information given by Zanzibari). According to the Zanzibar Action Project, Jambiani counts 8,000 inhabitants, a little bit more than my own calculations (http://www.zanzibaraction.co.uk/pages/about.html, 30-03-2012). Although such numbers are not precise, it does give an impression of the size of the villages. Even while the villages differ in size, it is reasonable to assume that the three villages together have a population of 20,000 inhabitants. However, nothing is said about the number of expatriates and immigrants living in the area. But, as I already indicated above, the number of tourists is growing, and so is the space tourism claims. This logically results in a growth of immigrants and expatriates.

insiders (Zanzibari) and outsiders (expatriates and, although they are not so much part of this research, immigrants).

Outsiders at the beach came to this location especially for making part of the tourist industry, while for Zanzibari this is naturally not the case. I differentiate between Zanzibari that live in the villages and are indirectly influenced by tourism, and Zanzibari that actively participate in tourism and the associated lifestyle: those that live and wander at the beach and are part of this research. While it seems that more expatriates and immigrants are engaged in tourism and thus far more outsiders own and run businesses, Zanzibari are very visible and active at the beach as well.[10] Those Zanzibari at the beach make up half of the population present here, the other half consisting of expatriates and immigrants.

While both Zanzibari men and women are active in tourism at the beach, as is also described by Gössling and Schulz (2005), who state that thirty percent of Zanzibari working in tourism are female, solely men are part of the beach life as is described in this thesis. At the southeast coast, women work as housekeepers, in spas, sometimes as waiters or are active selling scarves and offering massages at the beach. However, Zanzibari women are not part of the social scene. Men are prevalent at the beach, during nightlife, and mingle with outsiders and tourists, while women stay home more often (as also is described by Wallevik & Jiddawi 2001). The lack of women in the beach space thus makes that the (romantic) intercultural relationships existing in this locality and described in this thesis are between Zanzibari men and outsiders.

Approximately eighty Zanzibari men are present at the beach, from which twenty-one are part of this research.[11] These Zanzibari men that are part of the research are in between the ages of eighteen and forty, with the younger ones still at the beginning of their careers while the older men could relax some more: they often are already settled, and have a business or a house of their own. Except for one Christian man, all of them are Muslim, all of them are either born in one of the three villages, or in Zanzibar Town. While all of them finished primary school, a secondary school diploma is not so self-evident. All of the men that are part of this research have a job in either a hotel, bar or restaurant, or manage, run or own an establishment. Some of them are single (although actively searching or having casual relationships), but most of them are either married or in a steady relationship with a Western woman, and some of them have been. Such commitment however, does not indicate their unavailability to others, as the empirical chapters will show. Most important, what binds them as a group is the fact that they were born in Zanzibar, and have a beach lifestyle, as they live, work and spend most of their time at the beach, and are very involved with tourists, immigrants and expatriates, in contrast to other Zanzibari.

[10] According to the study of Gössling and Schulz (2005: 48), 78 percent of the workforce in the informal tourism sector are migrants; 91 percent are between 16 and 35; 73 percent are male; 89 percent are single or divorced; 53 percent are Christian; and 47 percent are Muslim.

[11] As I mainly focus on Zanzibari men in relationships with Western women, the twenty-one men that are part of this research do not necessarily represent the total of Zanzibari men active at the beach, as their contact with outsiders is different from the larger group because of the additional romantic level. So to say, those men have a deeper involvement with outsiders, participate in a more active way in the beach life. However, there are similarities between them and other men at the beach that are less involved, as most of them are Muslim, and all are in between the same ages and work in tourism albeit in various ways (e.g. as beach boys, in hotels or bars). Furthermore, there are other Zanzibari men that are not part of this research, but indeed have (romantic) intercultural relationships at the same beach. Those men thus might be more similar to the ones that are part of this research.

One other aspect that binds those Zanzibari men together as a group, is the fact that they chose to enter the beach, the tourist sphere, in order to make a living. To become part of the beach community does seem to have different implications on shorter and longer terms. While at first this might be a risky step as lifestyles at the beach are frowned upon and even disapproved of by other Zanzibari, in the long term this step might make men increase their status within wider Zanzibar. As such, a beach life for them is an ambiguous direction in the search of a better life. In the first empirical chapter I will elaborate on this. However for now, it is good to realize how important the beach is for young Zanzibari men, as they envision it to be the only option to find a job, to make money and to become someone, even though chances remain small. As a group, thus, they distance themselves from Zanzibar society and move themselves in risky environments in the hope of getting a better life, a higher status, a wealthier life.

Aside from Zanzibari men, immigrants and expatriates, whom together I group as 'outsiders', also make part of the beach community. Literature on migration (see for example Castles & Miller 2009; Croucher 2012) makes clear that among people that migrate, a subdivision can be made between immigrants and expatriates. Although this division will not be very much used later on in the empirical chapters as I mainly focus on expatriates, it is important to mention it, as specific differences between expatriates and immigrants should not be ignored. Immigrants are, according to Neault (2007) different from expatriates as their relocation is more long-term than that of expatriates, who in general relocate more temporarily. Immigrants in southeast coast Zanzibar come to find a job in the tourist sector, coming from mainland Tanzania and Kenya (see also: Gössling & Schulz (2005).

Six immigrants are part of this research, all males between the ages of twenty and thirty-five. They are all Christians and have jobs in the tourist sector. Interesting is that the three mainlanders work as staff in hotels, while the three Kenyans have better paid jobs as managers and one of them is a dive master. Another interesting difference between them and expatriates is their fluency in Kiswahili, which results in better contact with Zanzibari. Although Zanzibari do see them as 'outsiders', their race and ethnicity (black Africans) provides them with a step ahead in comparison to the white expatriates. Furthermore, their African background provides them with a similar 'exotic' identity as Zanzibari men at the beach, through the eyes of Westerners. At the same time, especially the Kenyans are seen as closer to the expatriates (by expatriates), possibly because of their religion, sufficiency in English and level of education. As such, immigrants share an ambiguous position 'in the middle' between Zanzibari and expatriates. I have to note, however, that while these immigrants are informants of this research, as I focused on (romantic) relationships between Zanzibari and expatriates, they themselves are not the prior point of interest.

Most importantly, what differentiates immigrants from expatriates is that the first group migrates for job opportunities, while expatriates often migrate 'in search for a better life' (Croucher 2012). Such migrants are retirees, younger adventure-seekers and those pursuing economic or romantic opportunities. According to Croucher (2012: 2) it is a new trend: 'the movement of relatively affluent individuals from well-developed countries in the global north to less economically developed countries in the global south'. Particularly, such migrants move in order to increase their quality of life, and therefore such migration can also be called 'privileged mobility'. Yet another term for such relocation is 'lifestyle migration'. That Westerners in the southeast of Zanzibar mainly come to stay is an individual choice, they are not, so to say, professional expatriates. Benson and O'Reilly (2009)

describe lifestyle migration in a way that is very similar to the presence of expatriates in Zanzibar. According to them, lifestyle migrants are 'relatively affluent individuals of all ages, moving either part-time or full-time to places that, for various reasons, signify, for the migrant, a better quality of life' (2009: 609). Such migrants aim to re-negotiate a balance between work and life, look for a better quality of life, and, look for freedom from prior constraints. (Benson & O'Reilly 2009).

In Zanzibar, lifestyle migrants call themselves expatriates which is why I use this same term. At this beach live approximately seventy expatriates, who come from a variety of countries that they all consider Western.[12] While this group varies when it comes to nationality and ethnicity, remarkable is that they are all 'whites'.[13] Expatriates range from twenty to sixty-five in age, while the majority of them is between twenty and forty. All are Christian or non-religious and they work mainly for and with other Westerners. They either work at the highest positions in the tourist sector as they manage, run or own establishments, or, they have businesses that are tourist or expatriate related. While for some a better lifestyle (including the climate, perceived freedom, and attractive business opportunities) were reasons to settle in Zanzibar, for a fair amount of women amongst them, love for a Zanzibari was the prior reason to migrate. For others, they met their Zanzibari partner after migrating.

Most expatriates are engaged in a romantic relationship, be it with another expatriate, with a Zanzibari man or an African woman.[14] From the forty expatriates that form part of the research, only five are not involved in a long-term relationship. However, being in a relationship does not indicate any exclusivity, as many of them, as is the case with both Zanzibari and immigrants, can be simultaneously in a relationship and available to others. Interestingly, Zanzibari and immigrants that are part of this research are all men, while when it comes to expatriates the majority is female. From the forty expatriates part of this research, fifteen are male and twenty-five are female.[15]

Both Zanzibari and outsiders meet at the beach. This is where they live, work, meet each other, go out – this is the place they spend most time. And just as Selänniemi (2003) states that tourists feel more free and spontaneous at a place that is seen as an 'escape', I argue that this is also the case for Zanzibari men and outsiders living and working at the beach. Many amongst the two groups once came to the beach for all different kinds of opportunities, be they work related, for love or other reasons, things that were available here (and not elsewhere) made them enter the beach. The beach is located in Zanzibar but not exactly within the confines of the village communities. Even though villagers are still using the beach and ocean as a workspace (not directly related to tourism), the tourist industry dominates the scenery and makes up new rules and regulations. For those that are

[12] These countries are The Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, France, Spain, the UK, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Italy, South Africa and Mauritius.

[13] This issue of race is important as it seems that the color of one's skin indicates wealth and likeability: another color seems to mean different values, interests and friends. Even intercultural couples seem to stick to their own race when it comes to friendships. I will elaborate on this in the empirical chapters.

[14] There are some Western men involved in a romantic relationship with African women but this number is relatively small. As I focus in this thesis on the relationships between Zanzibari men and 'outsiders', such relationships do not make part of the following.

[15] Many of the female expatriates are in a relationship with a Zanzibari man. While there are more expatriate women around, this does not reveal anything about any perceived easiness with which women come to live in Zanzibar. On the contrary, many participants emphasized how the southeast is a clear 'man's world', which will become more clear in the third chapter.

involved in tourism, those escapist surroundings create new ways of living, a new lifestyle, new forms of relationships, different from where they once came from.

			Zanzibari	**Expatriates**	**Total**
Male	*In a relationship*	age 20-30	2	3	**5**
		age > 31	15	8	**23**
	No relationship	age 20-30	3	4	**7**
		age > 31	1	-	**1**
Total			**21**	**15**	**36**
			Zanzibari	**Expatriates**	**Total**
Female	*In a relationship*	age 20-30	-	8	**8**
		age > 31	-	15	**15**
	No relationship	age 20-30	-	1	**1**
		age > 31	-	1	**1**
Total			-	**25**	**25**

The sixty-one inhabitants of the beach that are part of this research are in this table categorized on their background, age and relationship status. I chose those categories as to show that Zanzibari men are generally older than thirty-one (not older than forty, however), and in a relationship. The group of expatriates is varied as it includes both men and women from varying ages. However, it becomes clear here too that most of them are in a relationship. Immigrants are not included in the table as the research solely focuses on relationships between Zanzibari and expatriates. Immigrants however did help me collect data.

An expatriate community, yet with Zanzibari men taking part, is what the beach society looks like. Therefore, literature on expatriate communities (see for example Amit 2001; Cohen 1977; Nowicka 2006) does not completely cover the scenery of the southeast. Moreover, such literature implies a bubble in which expatriates live, without much contact with 'locals', which ignores the relative dependency of expatriates on local communities, let alone the fact that local people are part of this 'outsiders world'. Migration and transnationalism, people that freely cross social and national borders (see for example Castells 2000; Friedmann 1999; Sklair 2001), imply a borderlessness that actually can be questioned in social reality. More likely, Meyer and Geschiere argue that 'global flows actually appear to entice the construction of new boundaries as much as the reaffirmation of old ones' (1999: 5). While host societies impose boundaries on expatriates, they themselves create them as well. Moreover, according to Fechter (2007), it is the boundaries rather than the flows that matter within an expatriate context. She goes on to argue that expatriates both live in a 'bubble' and at the same time are internally divided, as boundaries demarcate them from the outside, but also create various divisions within and between them.

The metaphor of living in a bubble is described by Fechter as 'a colorful, but fragile existence; one that is carefully created like a soap bubble, floating above the ground, and not touching the earth. It gleams and shimmers, displaying an exotic attractiveness, but also an ephemeral nature' (Fechter 2007: 47). As such, a bubble is independent from the social reality outside. Living, working, a specific diet, movement, social relations: all is different to, and disconnected from the outside word. Thus, boundaries demarcating expatriates are very visible, but also internal boundaries, based on gender (roles men and women take on), class (activities and related economic position), ethnicity and nationality exist. This makes living in a bubble quite intense and restrictive, with its many norms and

rules in a relatively small community. But while it seems that expatriates are exclusive and not at all in touch with a local community, there is some interaction in, as Pratt (1992) calls it, 'contact zones'. Here, in such specific spaces, expatriates are able to get in contact or communicate across boundaries, and thus traverse them (Fechter 2007).

While such a bubble is a good way of illustrating the ways in which outsiders reside at the beach in Zanzibar, it does not cover the contact between them and Zanzibari men sufficiently. Even though many outsiders seem to prefer a life at the beach without the interference of Zanzibari, they simply rely on them. And this holds the other way around as well: Zanzibari rely on outsiders at the beach. As such, contact between Zanzibari men and expatriates is on such a regular and deep basis, to use the term bubble would imply too much of a distance between outsiders and Zanzibari. However, it is not necessarily the broader Zanzibari community that outsiders deal with; rather, it is the Zanzibari men described above they are engaged with. Economically, socially, culturally, politically and romantically, there exists a mutual dependence between those two groups. For the outsiders, these Zanzibari men form the bridge between them and the rest of Zanzibar. At the same time, however, the Zanzibari men in a way stepped out of that broader Zanzibari community and now form part of the outsider's community at the beach. Even though they are Zanzibari, they take in a different position, differentiating them from other islanders, by working and living on the tourist beach.

Outsiders with different nationalities crossed borders by coming to live at the beach, and so did Zanzibari men, by making the decision to come and live here. While the latter frontier is more of an imagined kind, they do move themselves in a different Zanzibar than the one they came from, resulting in a distance between them and their original society just around the corner. As such, they position themselves (and at the same time are positioned by others) as outsiders as well as insiders in both communities; whatever suits them best in a specific context.

The fact that at the beach different groups meet implies certain intersections that both influence and create certain freedoms and possibilities, yet at the same time orders things and creates limitations and dependencies. Even though both Zanzibari and outsiders can be seen as part of a bigger group, namely the inhabitants of the beach, a strong segmentation takes place as outsiders mainly befriend other outsiders, while Zanzibari associate with their fellow Zanzibari. Although the groups do mingle, to a certain degree they seem to prefer contact with people from their 'own' background. But while this holds for friendships, romantic relationships and relations based on business are not divided along the lines of outsiders versus insiders. Nevertheless, this dichotomy does bring the opportunity of analyzing intersections of gender, ethnicity (or race, however more in the sense of allochtony versus autochtony) and sexuality. As people from different backgrounds meet, the beach not only becomes a melting pot of people, culture and backgrounds, but also one of varying notions on gender, ethnicity, race and sexuality.[16] And it is exactly here that a ludic approach enables us to make sense of the ways in which people deal with such multiple, possibly at first sight incompatible realities and notions on specific concepts, which is what I demonstrate in the following chapters.

The southeast beach in Zanzibar indeed is a place where ethnicity and sexuality seem to matter, where the one reinforces the other, where, to quote Nagel 'ethnicity is sexualized, and sexuality is

[16] As different people with different ethnicities and nationalities meet at the beach, this place can be called an 'ethnosexual frontier' (Nagel 2003): an intersection where different cultures and notions on ethnicity, race, sexuality meet, and somehow create a new, nevertheless tensioned new lifestyle.

racialized, ethnicized, and nationalized' (2003: 14). Power relations are being reinvented, and influenced by ethnicity and sexuality. Occidentalism, the idealization of the West, and orientalism, the idealization and exotization of the non-West are continually addressed. While all are part of a same surrounding, namely the beach, both Zanzibari and outsiders seem to keep their distance, based on racial, ethnic, and sexual definitions and prejudices of the other. However, this is done in ambiguous ways, as there are intercultural relationships, both short-term and long-term as well as romantic and business related. Sexuality in general is a very important aspect of the place, as one's sex and sexual performance and performativity are important status makers and breakers. Intertwine with sexuality the concepts of ethnicity and race, and status and power are inevitable outcomes.

I have to note, however, that while ethnicity does play a role, this becomes visible only in the dichotomy of outsider versus insider. While outsiders come from many different countries, thus with various cultures and ethnicities, they are perceived to be one group, and as such differ from Zanzibari, the insiders. Thus while I above mention intersections based on ethnicity and an ethnosexual frontier, by those terms I focus on allochtony and autochtony. As such, while ethnicity implies differentiation and variation, this is not so much in the sense of the many various backgrounds inhabitants of the beach have, chiefly it is about underlining a difference between Zanzibari and outsiders.

This thesis

This thesis is about freedom and ordering, brought about by (romantic) intercultural relationships at the beach in the southeast of Zanzibar. Such relationships between expatriates and Zanzibari men indeed bring about, and are based on, a certain ordering within the perceived freedom, and I divide them along three lines: 1) intercultural relationships based on business only, 2) romantic intercultural relations[17] that may or may not be accompanied by business, and 3) such (romantic) intercultural partnerships in relation to wider Zanzibar, their position within this specific locality. As such, this study will describe the why, how, what and where about the intimacy of freedom. With the intimacy of freedom I mean the personal practices of play by which people come (or aim) to establish their very ideal of freedom. And while freedom is a very personal notion, I use the concept here as a state of mind and a lifestyle at the beach, yet at the same time as a goal, as an ultimate result of playfulness that marks the ability of people to make sense of various realities, and to establish, through their own eyes, a better way of living. Freedom is intimate as it is personal, and so is the play performed in order to establish freedom. Simultaneously, many relationships I describe here are intimate, because of their romantic nature, but also because each individual adds his or her own emotions, ideas and ideals to such partnerships. On the other hand, that freedom is intimate gives way to specific orderings, as the carefulness with which freedom has to be treated creates rules and codes, thus certain (alternative) orderings. Freedom indeed does not exist without order, as one is always on the other side of the coin.

[17] Such relationships may be called romantic by nature by Zanzibari men and Western women that form the intercultural couples, and by other expats and the larger Zanzibari community, but may not necessarily have to be. As will become clear from the below, Zanzibari men do not always consider romance as the basis, but might also see other opportunities stemming from such relationships as reasons for such partnership. However, as people in this area consider them based on love, I will call them 'love relationships' or 'romantic relationships'.

The concept of freedom is important here as inhabitants at the beach in various ways come to seek a certain freedom, and seemingly believe (at first sight) that a life at the beach is more free, and with more possibilities to become freer than whatever was before. Freedom can be linked to play, as the ways in which individuals create their freedom-space can be described as a playful behavior. By using the ludic approach, as is elaborated upon in the above, it becomes possible to shed light on how people in fact make sense (and use) of seemingly conflicting realities that people face at the beach. Exactly this is what I aim to describe in this thesis: these performances and thus, this play, the means of obtaining freedom and remaining to live in freedom, yet at the same time, the orderings that come to being by such practices. Indeed, as freedom is the paradigm, I will focus on how concepts of locality, business and love produce a certain order within this perceived freedom. As such, the main question of this thesis is:

How do (romantic) intercultural relationships produce freedom and order, and in what ways do performances of play influence the worlds of inhabitants at the beach in Zanzibar?

In order to provide a better understanding of the place of the beach within a wider locality, and a useful and more encompassing background, I start the empirical part of this thesis with a chapter in which I **explore the concept of locality, by focusing on the flexibility of ties and connections between the beach and wider Zanzibar.** The way in which the beach influences freedom and ordering in wider Zanzibar, and vice versa, the way in which wider Zanzibar influences the ordering and freedom at the beach are subject of this chapter. I especially focus on the elastic ties Zanzibari men (in particular those that have romantic relationships with Western women) have with wider Zanzibar, while living at the beach.[18] I discuss how their presence at the beach influences, both increases and decreases, their freedom and performance within wider Zanzibar, and the way the wider Zanzibar community perceives them. While for the women and couples the beach is where their relationships take place, Zanzibari men still deal with wider Zanzibar: they make part of both localities. My point is that, while at first it seems that those Zanzibari men are mainly involved with and attached to the beach, they are in fact very much involved with wider Zanzibar. Moreover, their presence at the beach might even seem to be a strategic performance to increase status and freedom in the long run, controlled or influenced by social control of wider Zanzibar. From a ludic perspective, Zanzibari men play with both wider Zanzibar as well as with the beach, as they pick and choose from those realities in order to create meaning, freedom and control.

After having provided this background to the beach, I turn to the world of the beach. Chapter three provides a description of the beach lifestyle, as it deals with expatriates and Zanzibari men that meet each other at the beach because of their shared interest in tourist business. Here I focus on how **business relationships between Zanzibari men and expatriates** (both men and women) at the beach as a place of perceived freedom, create and increase dependencies and imply a certain ordering, yet at the same time provide freedom as well. This chapter thus provides an illustration of the beach as heterotopia. Power relations are performed, especially based on the juxtaposition of outsider-insider. It is this way that inhabitants of the beach deal with Otherness (by stereotyping) in order to define their world, and give meaning to the various realities present at the beach, that will be elaborated on. Questions that are at stake are: What does the context of the beach actually looks

[18] With elasticity I mean how ties between Zanzibari at the beach can be stretched and shortened in a flexible way, thus are elastic. In this way, this concept deals with the extent to which relationships with wider Zanzibar are maintained by Zanzibari men while at the beach.

like? In what ways do inhabitants of the beach rely on each other and how do they experience such reliance? This chapter shows that business relations involve specific rules and regulations that make total freedom ambiguous.

In business relations between Zanzibari and expatriates, but especially in romantic relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women various notions of sexuality, gender, masculinity and femininity from both a Western as well as a Zanzibari point of view matter. Those concepts, but also varying constructions of love and marriage are theorized upon in the fourth chapter, and empirically described in both chapter four and five of this thesis. What does such a romantic transcultural relationship look like? How do both partners (Zanzibari men and Western women) experience such a relationship and what does it actually entail? What are the reasons behind those relationships? Do they work, i.e., do people stay together and are the expectations of individuals in such relationships met? How is there – for both men and women – a difference between expectations about the relationship and the reality? My aim is to provide a clear understanding of how perceptions on love relationships may vary between Western and Zanzibari points of departure, just as visions on masculinity and femininity and the related power relations, which might cause relationships to break. By using the ludic perspective to analyze such relationships I demonstrate how individuals play with various notions that are related to romantic relationships (such as masculinity, femininity, sexuality) deriving from various realities, in order to, again, create meaning.

In chapter four I will elaborate on **such romantic intercultural relationships from the point of view of Zanzibari men**. In particular, I focus on the ways in which Zanzibari men, by having romantic relationships with a Western women, create and increase both personal and social freedom and order. How do they perceive, and perform within such a relationship, and what does that evoke for them within the society at the beach? It becomes clear that such relationships for men are a strategic move, involving both emasculation as well as an increase of masculinity, to raise a standard of living. By playing with various concepts of sexuality, masculinity and love, men increase their freedom extendedly. As such, from a ludic perspective I argue that men, by having romantic relationships with Western women, perform in a playful way in order to create a meaningful world.

In the fifth chapter I focus on those same **romantic relationships, but from the point of view of expatriate women.** The ways in which those women, by having romantic relationships with Zanzibari men and by settling at the beach, create, and both increase and decrease their freedom is described. Moreover, I elaborate on how women are part of a particular ordering, and whether they have a freedom themselves to create ordering, or are merely victims of an ordering. It turns out that their position at the beach is ambiguous, as while at first they seemed to have escaped to a freer place, in fact this beach turns out to be ordered in ways not beneficial to Western women. Also, while men pick and choose (seemingly) easy from, and are more flexible considering notions of sexuality and gender, women hold on to Western notions that eventually enlarge or underline their powerlessness, as if they are victims of ordering, and being fooled by a promised freedom. From a ludic perspective thus, it shows that expatriate women have a smaller playground, in fact do not play as well (or at all) as Zanzibari men, as it seems they are not able to combine various realities to create meaning.

Hence, chapters four and five clearly demonstrate that freedom is gendered, as men are seemingly more able to direct their lives and create independencies and strong notions of freedom, while women, on the other hand, have difficulties making their lives pleasurable, by a lack of power and

choices, and a dependency they did not envision or prepare themselves for. Furthermore, it becomes clear that freedom is related to background. While Zanzibari men feel they have much to win with their play, as is also described in the first empirical chapter, expatriate women do not seem to share such experiences. In fact, what Zanzibari men consider meaningful differs from notions expatriate women have. To them, it does not seem to be necessary to combine various realities the way men do, and they seem to consider various realities incompatible. From the chapters it thus becomes clear that play is ambiguous, as practices of play differ, just as the intensities with which play is performed, as well as the fact that its beginnings and ends are not always clear.

Chapter six provides a conclusion that links theories of heterotopia, freedom and alternative ordering, and play to the practices at the beach. I approach such practices and experiences present at the beach directly to the paradigm of the *homo ludens*, in order to show how freedom and ordering, a meaningful life can be obtained by playing with locality, business, Otherness, love, sexuality and gender. Moreover, I elaborate on how play in fact is exercised more extensively by Zanzibari men, by which other inhabitants of the beach, especially Western women become victimized.

Within the surroundings of beach side Zanzibar, various dichotomies can be found, but the juxtapositions I especially focus on in this thesis are male-female, local-expatriate and dependence-independence dichotomies, deriving from the presence of the two different groups at the beach. Both outsiders and Zanzibari create cultural constructs that define and give meaning to thoughts and feelings of men and women as part of the two groups. What makes this a complex topic is the fact that both expats and Zanzibari are the main characters, and cultural notions are flexible, bended and borrowed. Indeed, the concepts of marriage, masculinity and femininity, love, and ways of doing business are not easy to comprehend as the main actors use their own culturally defined ones, or pick and choose right at certain moments depending on contexts. What a Zanzibari male describes as a dignified marriage does not match expectations a Norwegian woman has about marriage. A South African businessman may define profit differently than his Zanzibari counterpart. While a Zanzibari woman might not be bothered with sharing household tasks with her husband, for a German woman, an equal division of tasks might stand for quality among partners and companionship. Such different cultural frameworks create debates, tensions and conflicts as people from different backgrounds and thus with different views on what is 'normal', have to live and work closely together. I thus aim to describe both sides of the story, whether I focus on men-men relations or male-female relations, the local-expat juxtaposition is ever present.

Moreover, as romantic relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women are an important focus of this research, juxtapositions of Zanzibari-expatriates are often accompanied by those of male-female. In fact, those juxtapositions are hard to separate, as Zanzibari men have ideas about women based on their own cultural framework of concepts, even though Western women do not necessarily 'fit' in that specific framework. This also holds true the other way around: Western women seem to base expectations about their (Zanzibari) partner on Western based assumptions about men, masculinity, African masculinity and romantic relationships. Often, thus, these male-female and Zanzibari-expatriate juxtapositions are inseparable. But not only in romantic relationships such conflicting notions come to the foreground. In general at the beach and in business relations, assumptions and perceptions about the Other become visible.

As a result, within (romantic) intercultural relationships at the southeast coast of Zanzibar, a variety of power relations becomes visible, that in fact give way to mutual dependencies. Indeed, such mutual dependencies appear to exist already at the very moment relationships are formed, and are ever-present, as both groups, Zanzibari men and outsiders, cannot succeed in the same way without each other. Dependency versus independency is a juxtaposition highly visible within general relationships between Zanzibari and expatriates, as both groups continue to aim for an independent status. As a result, thus, power relations come to the fore, and are grounds for tension and conflict. Not only power relations between males and females have to be defined, the expatriate-Zanzibari juxtaposition gives way to more potential conflicts. Both within intercultural business relations and romantic intercultural relationships, the balancing of power is important, sometimes even more important than a practical outcome of a particular action. Throughout this thesis, I will focus on such dependencies, as they are ever-present, both accepted as well as contested.

About the research

Six months I stayed at the southeast coast of Zanzibar, where I rented a house in Jambiani on the beach, right in the middle of the various intercultural relationships.[19] My neighbors were both intercultural couples and Zanzibari men and expatriates that were involved in business relationships together. A stroll at the beach is what my research thus was about: on my way to my neighbors for coffee or lunch, or accompanied by them just to chat while walking. Other times I drove to places to meet up with participants, be it to sunbathe with Western women, to accompany them to Stone Town to help with grocery-shopping, or to hang in bars with Zanzibari men. Going to the parties such as the famous Friday-night Jambo-night, barbecues and trips such as the Safari Blue[20] were all part of my weekly schedule. Participant observation and informal conversations were the main methods of gathering information, and the languages in which the research was conducted are English and Kiswahili.

The research topic is very personal and many participants of the research had difficulties with telling me their stories: some wanted to keep their – in their own eyes – failures to themselves, while others wished to keep their strategies or behaviors secret, as spreading them could cause trouble in their relationships. As time went by, participants of the research became more personal with me. I want to stress, however, that while this was necessary for my research, it was not per definition a professional decision to meet those people, rather, I see it as more human: relationships grew. Their stories were not 'interesting catches' to me that could be groundbreaking for my research but instead they were very moving and emotionally intense. I feel very privileged, especially on a personal level, that those participants trusted me, and wanted to share their stories with me. However, this personal affection does not always make things easier. Peoples' secrets are not being

[19] Fieldwork was conducted from July 8, 2011 until January 18, 2012, with a 2 week holiday in between in October.

[20] Safari Blue is a trip with a small boat to a sandbank for snorkeling and an uninhabited island to have lunch, existing out of the most exotic foods: prawns, octopus, squid, lobster and all the tropical fruits present on the island. Usually there is enough beer in the boat to keep the on average fifteen people happy and drunk. This is the perfect trip for Zanzibari men to take their potential Western girlfriends on. Moreover, ex-expatriates that visit Zanzibari again for a holiday love this trip. As such, it is a perfect opportunity to get to know people and learn more about intercultural relationships in leisure times.

kept secret for nothing: these are not suitable for other peoples' ears. Personal stories were full of such (to me very shocking) secrets, that I sometimes wished I did not know about them. After a while, I was amazed by the fact that I knew secrets and stories about so many people, that I could not share.

The researcher on Safari Blue: the research methods show how play can be all encompassing, as work cannot be distinguished from leisure.

Furthermore, it seemed to be quite impossible to be equally informed by both expatriates as well as by Zanzibari men. Both groups, in one way or another, pointed out that I should choose sides, whether it was by talking bad about the other group and thus hinting at avoidance, or by simply putting it out there that being involved with the Other too often would cause me my status and specific relationships. For example, to spend much time with one woman in public would make others believe we were very good friends. And while to me that would not be wrong, others established the opinion that me being with her meant me being opposite to them, as this woman would be a 'bad' person. As a result, it seemed that one informant could cost me another. As such, it was difficult to remain neutral, and moreover, for people to believe me to be neutral. And I can imagine. Why would a Zanzibari man trust me with his story if I often hang out with his wife as well? I somehow had to choose sides, and my gender and skin color helped me to do that. As a white Western woman I simply look like female expatriates. For expatriates, I was thus very recognizable and immediately my appearance makes me 'one of them'. Especially women in relationships with Zanzibari men seemed to lean on me quite a bit. As they could open their minds and hearts and at the same time be safe as I would not spread their stories, they shared many of their stories with me.

Often, Zanzibari men, especially in the beginning, saw me as a potential romantic partner, and seemed to conclude that paying attention to them was not so much about the research, as it was about me being interested in them. So when we met they tried to flirt with me, they behaved macho and told me stories they tell many girls. Openness about their performances, their 'play', was

difficult, almost impossible to reach, although at some point, as time went by, they understood I was not going to betray them or give away their stories. While Zanzibari men would never completely open up to share their stories, when I confronted them with the gossip I heard, more openness from their side would come about. Ibrahim, my key informant who introduced me to many Zanzibari men and who himself is very much involved in business relations with Westerners and has a Western wife as well, gave me valuable information, although more open about others than about himself. For instance, he never told me he married his European wife. This example shows that even the best relationship I got with a Zanzibari man is complex, as he wanted to stay available even to me, and thus could not be completely clear. While with women I had deep conversations, observing was a more useful method to get to know the ways of the men. Although they might not wanted to tell me everything, their practices made many things very clear.

Gossip is a great source of information. The southeast is as a village on an island: the perfect setting for a fine circulation of gossip. While people act like they do not know, many do know everything indeed. Especially Zanzibari men, who hang in bars daily and discuss the latest developments are very well informed. Expatriates seem to be less interested, although the place is so small that whatever happens, they are either there when it happens, or they hear it the morning after. Of course gossip is not necessarily trustworthy, but it can definitely steer in the right direction and lead to valuable and trustworthy information. Moreover, the existence of this gossip circuit and the topics people talk about can in itself already reveal much about the beach and what is important. I had the opportunity to be informed on the gossip both by Zanzibari men as well as the expatriates. Such stories, always double-checked, were surely very useful for this research.

2. Play in a wider perspective: Zanzibari men at the beach and in wider Zanzibar

> From being the one that asks for favors from family members, to the one that is being asked for favors by others. In only about a year of time, Danish underwent such a change of identity. His marriage to Astrid makes him an influential man as money, a big house and a business are also part of the deal of marrying a Western woman. Beforehand, Danish had an insecure job at his brother's restaurant, and depended on him for income. He did not have a house by his own to stay in, always stayed with family members. Now, with Astrid at his side, they together sit in front of their own house – not that big, but theirs alone. They have built the hotel together, with Astrid's investment, and while the money is gone now and incomes are scarce, it all belongs to them. His mother and sisters come over for visits and a meal or so, to enjoy his property. Danish went from being staff to having staff. Marrying a Western women seems the key to a higher position in society. It gets you from poor to rich. [21]

Introduction

This first empirical chapter is concerned with connections between wider Zanzibar and the beach, and how those places are related to freedom and ordering. Therefore, the main question of this chapter is: *in what way influences the beach ordering and freedom in wider Zanzibar, and how does wider Zanzibar influences order and freedom at the beach?* Especially, the way in which Zanzibari men who are living at the beach and who are having romantic relationships with Western women still remain closely tied, or as I call it, tied with elastics to wider Zanzibar, is the topic of this chapter. How exactly are those Zanzibari men connected to wider Zanzibar, when their lives take place at the beach? How can their presence at the beach influence, increase as well as decrease, their freedom within wider Zanzibar, and the way in which wider Zanzibar, as a community, perceives those men? Thus, in this chapter I consider play at the beach in relation to a wider perspective, and ways in which multiple realities are visible in the lives of Zanzibari men, meaningful in their play.

In the coming chapters I disconnect the beach from Zanzibar, as the beach certainly seems to be a completely different place and quite remote from Zanzibar as a community, with its own specific ordering and inhabitants. For now, I want to make clear how especially, if not exclusively, Zanzibari men who are part of the beach community still maintain close ties with the wider Zanzibar community. As Zanzibari men are living at the beach and have romantic relationships with Western women, it may seem, at first sight, that they are mainly involved with, and connected to the beach. However, a closer look reveals that in fact, those men are very involved in larger society, which seems to have a large influence on their lives and play. The presence of Zanzibari men at the beach might even be a strategic performance, in order to, in a longer run, increase their power, status and

[21] Quotes and examples of practices that I provide throughout this thesis are derived from informal conversations I had, and observations I collected during my fieldwork period. At the end of the thesis is placed a list of informants with a short description of them. For now, it is good to know that all persons I name throughout this work are living at the beach in the southeast. All names are pseudonyms in order to protect the privacy of the informants.

freedom within the larger Zanzibari society, as playfulness is best performed here. Thus, the beach does have a particular influence on the wider Zanzibar community. The other way around, wider Zanzibar has an influence on the beach, as Zanzibari men living at the beach benefit from being part of wider Zanzibar.[22] Moreover, wider Zanzibar influences the beach as exactly expectations or failures stemming from wider society might be motivations for Zanzibari men to settle themselves at the beach. Hence, the beach and wider Zanzibar are indeed interwoven. But how flexible and elastic those ties and connections are, that men have with wider Zanzibar while located at the beach, seems to depend on a specific moment and context. As such, this first empirical chapter deals with underlying structures within wider Zanzibar that are *emic* for Zanzibari men at the beach and give understanding to their play at the beach.

Before I elaborate on locality and switch to the demonstrating paragraphs, let me first turn to the concept of 'wider' Zanzibar. Even though I am aware of the many differences within, and thus the difficulties of naming Zanzibar one whole community, since the beach contrasts so deeply with its surroundings, I feel it to be appropriate to differentiate this way. Moreover, it is not my aim to get into detail about this wider Zanzibar, instead point to differences between the beach and Zanzibar, and especially clarify the ways in which the beach influences wider Zanzibar, and how Zanzibar in turn influences the beach. Wider Zanzibar thus will not be very much elaborated upon, but will be used in order to show how Zanzibari men indeed are part of two worlds, between which they can move back and forward, and of which they can pick and choose norms, values and influences as they like. Zanzibari men are not completely loose from wider Zanzibar, as they were born there, and even though they 'moved out', they still seem to be connected, and eventually might move back to it.

Wider Zanzibar is the community these men grew up in, and evidently still are part of. It is the world of their families, acquaintances, their government. It possibly is the reason why these men moved to the beach, as their circumstances within wider Zanzibar could not promise them any improvements on any level. It also is a flexible locality, as its meaning and involved emotions can differ for any of those men, as they come from different families, villages, some even from Stone Town on the other side of the island. Most importantly, wider Zanzibar is a place where Islam is highly important, and culture is attuned to religion. As a Muslim society, emphasis is on being a morally good person, thus acting alike, as is also described by Beckmann (2010). Specific cultural practices are therefore desirable, such as praying routines, while others are not, such as the consuming of alcohol. Practices at the beach are very different from those of wider Zanzibar, which makes belonging to both places rather difficult. However, as the below will show, many men do find ways to balance themselves between the two worlds they are part of. Moreover, it shows that cultures can be flexible, and that being 'in' or 'out' is not so easy to determine.

Locality and neighborhoods in the context of Zanzibar

The rising popularity of Zanzibar as a holiday destination indulges social and economic changes for Zanzibari, especially those living in tourist destined areas, such as the beach at the southeast coast, and is also described by Gössling and Schulz (2005). Their research on tourism-related migration in

[22] As described in chapter three, for example, by being able to buy and own land, and thus make outsiders to rely on them.

Zanzibar indicates that Zanzibari are confronted with both immigrants and tourists, and their new lifestyles of pleasure, consumption and individualism. Moreover, they state that this goes against local lifestyles, that would be oriented towards kinship, religion and work. Tensions are created, especially stemming from the consumption of alcohol and drugs, and the wearing of beachwear in the tourist scene. Moreover, Zanzibari perceive immigrants to take their jobs, and feel that rape and robbery would be the acts of immigrants too. Furthermore, prices have increased of both land and consumer goods, which does not make life for Zanzibari easier (Gössling & Schulz 2005). While indeed very many expatriates and immigrants are engaged in tourism and far more 'outsiders' own and run businesses, Zanzibari too are very visible and active at the beach.[23] Although during my fieldwork it became very clear that the beach is full of non-Zanzibari, I estimate that in the southeast, fifty percent of the people involved in the tourist sector are in fact Zanzibari.

In his book *Modernity at Large* (1996), Appadurai devotes one chapter to locality and neighborhoods, which is applicable to my questioning of the two bordering and overlapping communities, the beach and wider Zanzibar. According to him, locality cannot be taken as a given, and hard work is needed to keep it existing, as it has to be produced and for it to be kept in order. Not only, or per definition this holds for the geographical boundaries surrounding the locality, but also, especially for the social and cultural boundaries. As such, practices and interactions are in fact a locality and ask for maintenance. Inhabitants do make a locality, who are thus, according to Appadurai, socializing space and time. It is in neighborhoods that such localities actually are realized, that 'are contexts in the sense that they provide the frame of setting within which various kinds of human action (...) can be initiated and conducted meaningfully' (1996: 184). Moreover, such neighborhoods are 'imagined, produced and maintained against some sort of ground (social, material, environmental), they also require and produce contexts against which their own intelligibility takes shape' (1996: 184).

Against the background of wider Zanzibar, in the last two decennia a new neighborhood has been created. The beach community has taken space from Zanzibar, with the consent of Zanzibari government, and created a neighborhood of its own, a local reality, opposite to, or in relation to, wider Zanzibar. The latter, on its turn, could be considered both a neighborhood and a nation-state and it is exactly this labeling which implies different ways of connecting wider Zanzibar to the beach. To name it a neighborhood would imply a difference or the existence of boundaries between the beach and wider Zanzibar, while to a certain extent, to recall it a nation-state, or in any case, government, seems to include the beach within Zanzibar, as this tourist-driven context is part of a larger government policy concerning chiefly the island's economics. As such, the beach can be included as well as excluded from wider Zanzibar.

That wider Zanzibar community not always accepts or tolerates the locality of the beach seems to indicate two different neighborhoods. It is the practice of non-Islamic behaviors, as drinking abundantly, and the free distribution of sexuality, as dress is minimal and people are indeed sexually very active, that is condoned by members of the wider society, in particular, the elders. As such, the context of the beach is not that of wider Zanzibar, and thus a boundary is set in between. It is an imaginary boundary, however, as the beach is literally in between and among wider Zanzibar, and

[23] According to the study of Gössling and Schulz (2005: 48), 78 percent of the workforce in the informal tourism sector are migrants; 91 percent are between 16 and 35; 73 percent are male; 89 percent are single or divorced; 53 percent are Christian; and 47 percent are Muslim.

indeed taking over space originally belonging to the wider community. Yet, it is not only the wider Zanzibar community setting up such boundaries and maintaining a different context.

The beach community as well has its own ground, its own 'habitus', which might feel as being threatened by wider Zanzibar. Appadurai (1996: 184) recalls how neighborhoods have a context-generating dimension, which indicates a relationship between local and global realities. In fact, when considering the beach, it might be the case that outsiders as part of the beach community identify themselves or their context as opposite to the Islamic African world around them, possibly identifying more with Western contexts. And vice versa, a wider Zanzibar community might oppose itself from the beach by viewing it as a proof of the global character of the Western world. While this all may be, and certainly indicates the distances between the beach and the wider Zanzibar, one critical aspect must be considered, namely, the place and identity of that of Zanzibari men living at the beach.

In fact, Zanzibari men could be the indication that the beach and wider Zanzibar are one and the same, especially since their movement between the two places, their going back and forth and stepping in and out of the two places, indicates no sharp boundaries between the them. Would it be that easy to move out of one neighborhood and move into the other, and only when one feels like it, or needs to, move back like that? Or, is it in reality not a migration, a crossing of a definite boundary what these Zanzibari men do? In fact, how separate is the beach from Zanzibar?

The beach might be part of wider Zanzibar as it is used and imagined in a certain way, not only by the government, but also by its members, especially the Zanzibari men discussed in this chapter. Or it might be a neighborhood apart, as it is 'a historically produced spatiotemporal neighborhood and with a series of localized rituals, social categories, expert practioners, and informed audiences, are required in order for new members (…) to be made temporary or permanent local subjects' (Appadurai 1996: 185). My idea is that in fact the beach can be both, as it depends on the approach, the angle of incidence. While inhabitants of the beach, that may be outsiders in wider Zanzibar, view the beach as their space, their neighborhood, for Zanzibari men it might be the case that the beach in fact is part of wider Zanzibar. To them, it may be a border zone space ambiguous to enter as for the threats visible for their wider Zanzibar because of outsiders, but nevertheless their locality, and even more so, giving them opportunities not to be found elsewhere. But this implies a difference between the beach, where men without status and money have a chance, and wider Zanzibar, where such opportunities are not to be found. In fact, I argue that the beach can be seen as a distinct place while at the same time being part of Zanzibari locality, a place one can neglect when necessary or when utilized to the fullest already, but that can become of great importance and part of Zanzibar when necessary, when strategies allow Zanzibari to enter this border zone.

As such, the beach can be seen as one out of various realities for Zanzibari men. By using play as an analytic tool, one is able to understand such multiple realities being part of one person's world. It becomes clear that there is not one reality one has to deal with, but that there are in fact simultaneous different orders. The paradigm of play leaves room for such a wider perspective, and therefore is useful in this context as I argue that those Zanzibari men simultaneously make part of, and pick and choose from both wider Zanzibar and the beach community. Their play covers both realities, even though considering this research their playground is mainly the beach. While

throughout this thesis I describe playfulness and by coming order and freedom at the beach, here I turn to how this play is in fact only one disposition, part of a wider perspective for Zanzibari men.

Let me now turn to the empirical part of this chapter, where I describe in what ways Zanzibari men use the beach in order to take the lead in the wider Zanzibar community, how they thus belong to both wider Zanzibar, as well as the beach community, which might be two different neighborhoods, or as a matter of fact, the exact same locality. The first paragraph deals with how Zanzibari men are able to use the beach as a way to enlarge their influence and status within wider Zanzibar. Establishing a relationship with a Western woman seems to be the only way for those Zanzibari men to acquire wealth and influence. As such, the beach seems to be a space where Other notions of power relations count, that can be used to create a more powerful identity within wider Zanzibar. In the following paragraph, I elaborate on the perceptions of those Zanzibari men that move within the beach space on how they are placed or perceived by people within the wider community. Although the ways of those particular Zanzibari men are not always approved of, they are never considered 'out' of the larger society. Finally, I question the comfort and joy Zanzibari men get from residing at the beach. Although it seems to be a fun and exciting life there at the beach, known ways and notions are shaken up which might make men feel uncomfortable. Moreover, certainly not all men get involved with a Western woman, which indicates that chances on betterment are not even that great, and uncertainties are about. Thus, while the beach offers the potential to become rich and successful, it is an environment risky and not for everyone.

The strategy beach

> 'I drink alcohol and smoke weed, but I would rather have my parents not knowing about this. When I am drunk or high I will not visit them, I wait until I am sober again. They do not like the fact that I do such things and that is why I want to keep it from them. I will disappoint them when they see me all high. Also, when I should go to prayer but am drunk, I will not go. It is better not to go than to go while drunk. I see those times as the moment for work and play, and later when I am old, I will behave good and catch up with going to the mosque' (Kamil, Zanzibari man).

If one views the beach as being part of wider Zanzibar, it would certainly be an ambiguous frontier zone in which possibilities and behaviors come up that would not do in light and bright Zanzibar. The beach can be described as a place where Zanzibari men at the same time act heroic as well as uncontrolled and immoral. Heroic in the sense that Zanzibari men manage to become influential, wealthy and successful, uncontrolled and immoral as the ways in which they climb that social ladder may be considered questionable. While these men themselves seem to view their behaviors at the beach to be irresponsible, they also seemingly approve of it as they enjoy their lives, and think of it as an investment in their future. What exactly the beach means to these Zanzibari men, what it gives them, and what it takes from them are interesting focus points.

Most of the Zanzibari men that come to the beach are young, without much education or money, in search for a way of getting a better life. Such betterment can range from getting a job as a waiter or gardener, to simply going out at night, dancing and drinking to let go, or, as an ultimate dream to many of the men, to find a Western woman to start a relationship with. While being part of the

beach community asks for much letting go of old patterns, for those Zanzibari men, it turns out there is no another way of becoming somebody meaningful. Many men stressed the lack of opportunities at the island, and the ways in which their government abandoned them. While they were proud of being a Zanzibari (which seems to be better than being African), a failing schooling system and welfare system, not even decent electricity and water supply all seem to indicate how trust in this government is in vain. Work in tourism, and especially looking for a spouse from abroad therefore seems to be a decision easily made. Hence, the beach becomes an attractive place as opportunities may be found here.

Ibrahim, for example, describes his youth as hard, as a result of poverty. At one time, he came up with the idea to climb trees to collect coconuts he could sell to tourists. This contact with the back then new tourist industry impressed him, and after a while he managed a small and local run beach bar, where he, among other things, was active organizing tours for tourists. This he did so well that other (newly built) places started to ask him to organize tours, which gave him the status of being trustworthy in this newly established neighborhood. With his gained connections and wealth, his status and power increased greatly. From the bottom, he reached as high as possible. Even while his family was very poor when he was young (he now is in his mid-thirties), now they are quite influential. The large amount of land his family owns rose in value greatly by the increase of tourism in this area, and all of a sudden made them more wealthy. This, in combination with the successes Ibrahim gained, and his 'business mind', as he calls it himself, make that wise decisions are being taken of what to do with the land.

Most men that are part of this research are in their early and mid thirties, especially those that are, or have been in a relationship with Western women. They grew up during the times of the liberalization of the economy, and when the tourist sector started to develop. There seems to be a link between such times of changes and the paths the men choose to take in life. As there were not much opportunities to find jobs, let alone make careers, the new tourist sector turned out to be interesting, or in fact, the only sector where jobs were to be found. Nowadays, with the tourist sector being the most vital industry on the island, tourism seems to be *the* opportunity to make a decent living. Even though salaries in this sector are low as well for staff, waiters and cleaners, there are fine opportunities to grow higher, to become manager or owner of an establishment. Especially, if one finds a Western woman.

The story of Dawid describes how the best thing to do, back when he was younger, was to get out, off the island, as there was nothing much that could help him living a good life. It is a somewhat different story, but sheds a good light on how Zanzibari men at the beach experience Zanzibar.

> 'When I was around seventeen, I finished school and decided there was no future for me in Zanzibar, that if I wanted to become something, that I should leave as soon as possible. I cannot remember exactly where I got the money from, I think I asked everybody for as much as they could miss, and I went off, on the first plane to Europe. Back then they were not that strict with migration policies, it is a long time ago. There were already some other Zanzibari over there, who helped me starting a life over there. I got a job, learned the language and fell in love. I was very happy there, but when my relationship ended, I went back to Zanzibar. Luckily, my language skills, as I now could speak three languages fluently, got me a good job in tourism here at the

east coast. If it was not for my Europe adventure, my life would have looked completely different, I would not have what I got now' (Dawid).

Both Ibrahim and Dawid thus recall how it was not the government of Zanzibar that gave them possibilities to grow as men, financially and socially. Instead, they themselves, in combination with foreigners made them successful and influential men. While many men at the beach come from poorer families, some come from a background and family that could give them more opportunities. Jamal, for example, is a twenty-five year old man who owns the Jambo bar at the beach in Paje. His father happened to own the plot right at the beach and when the former renter left the place, Jamal decided to take over the business. He made Jambo a very successful place, having customers every hour of the day. On Fridays, when the weekly party is held, people drive from Stone Town to attend. Jamal is a known and popular man around and has good contacts both among expatriates and Zanzibari. And while even before he decided to open the place on his own he was trusted by many, that he owns a place now makes him more respected and even looked up to by others. That his father owns the beach plot, which is now probably one of the most expensive ones in the area, made things more easier for Jamal. He did not need to rely on any outsider for investments, and so he remains independent. While it is not sure in what ways he is involved with outsiders in other businesses, financially, he does not need to rely on a Western woman for support.

In Nungwi in the north tourists are induced by signs to dress properly, especially when going in to the village. At the beach in the southeast it is more quiet and there are no such signs. However, here too it is much appreciated to dress properly when going off the beach or hotel property, as Zanzibari can feel ashamed or angry when seeing underdressed Westerners.

Even though there are other ways to make money for Zanzibari men, especially in Stone Town which is the economic centre of the island, for many men, without higher education and especially at the southeast coast, nothing much is out there. At this coast, men that are not involved in tourism are either mechanics, fishermen or have (other) informal occupations. But many men have jobs that are

somehow connected, or for the largest part supported by the tourist sector. They work in shops, either small supermarkets or curiosa shops, as taxi drivers, or as mechanics for hotels. Even fishermen deal for a large part with outsider customers, the hotel and restaurant owners and managers. However, to many young men, it seems that such jobs are not desirable. It makes sense, in a way, that young Zanzibari men choose to live and work at the beach, as this is the place where possibly much money can be made, while other jobs offer no prospects of moving ahead.

While in reality life is not always easy at the beach, with a good strategy and a bit of luck, it certainly is a way of getting successful rapidly. The money and progress some Zanzibari men make within only a couple of years, is what other men in Zanzibar work for a lifetime and still do not get half as far. Nasir, for example, met his Alicia and moved within eight years from having a low paid and low status job, to having lived in Europe for some years, having a daughter that certainly will get education in Europe, running two tourist establishments, and living in a large house. Also Danish got, because of his marriage to Astrid, a house, hotel and thus status and influence, only within three years.

Both personal circumstances as well as status within wider Zanzibar seem to count for men when they choose a life at the beach (with a Western woman). Considering personal circumstances, men gain as they all of a sudden have the means to enjoy life in ways that were previously impossible for them to experience. While residing at the beach, they now can go out with their partners, drink as much as they want, are able to go out for dinner and trips, and the like.[24] Yet such practices put them in a position somewhat new to them, as now they are the ones that are being asked for favors, for some cash to buy a beer by others. When going out with Ibrahim, our conversations were paused time and time again by men that came over to ask for either a drink, some money men needed for their families, or even a job. While Ibrahim does not rely on his European partner for his successfulness, as his business with expatriates is what makes him so influential, it seems that because of his partner and his traveling back and forth between continents his status becomes even higher. He is a man of the world, he has been to places. This is how people perceive him, and how he seemingly wants to be perceived. As a result, when other Zanzibari men are about to travel to Europe to visit a girlfriend, they come to Ibrahim to get help with the visa application forms.

Practices at the beach thus influence men's position within a wider world. The beach and especially romantic relationships with Western women provide Zanzibari men with opportunities to not only make the best out of their lives career-wise, those circumstances open new worlds to them, as they both are able to visit other parts of the world, as well as become somebody with actual status and influence within wider Zanzibar. To become successful at the beach thus can be seen as a strategy to climb the social ladder within wider Zanzibar. Now, men can drive around with their car and thus are seen by others who go by foot and on bicycles, as wealthy. They can hire other Zanzibari to work for

[24] This counts for both beach boys that are not in a steady relationship but that are lucky every now and then to be with a tourist girl for a while, but also for men in steady relationships. Even though Western women create opportunities for men to become rich, or in any case, to have money to spend on leisure activities, I want to note that they do not necessarily live out of their partner's pocket. Rather, they earn money by the businesses set up, together with their partners, or in other cases, earn money with their own business, as for example Ibrahim and Jamal.

them, instead of they themselves working for others. They are able to support their families, can send their children to school, or even children of brothers and sisters.[25]

As a footprint of success, to build a house at the beach seems to be among the most important establishments for Zanzibari men. Those that have a relationship with a Western women, but also others that are single (but nevertheless looking for a Western woman), actually all of the men that are part of this research built a house, or were busy building a house at the beach. Not all men (openly) got help from their Western partners; some denied the financial help they had received, but obviously had got it.[26] Ibrahim managed to earn enough money by doing business with expatriates, therefore he did not need any help from his romantic partner. Ali saved money for a long time, and built a house together with a friend. Both were in a relationship with a Western woman but it is not sure to me, however, whether they received any help from them. Kamil had, once upon a time, a European girlfriend who borrowed him money in order to build a house. That he did, and eventually he paid her back all the money.

Men that migrated to Europe with their partners build houses at the beach as well. Hadi, a Zanzibari man in his early thirties who lives in Europe for years now, together with his European wife and child, and who even has a European passport, visits the island annually. While his parents-in-law own a beach house in Jambiani where they go on holiday, he himself is building his own house, a little further south. He underlined the importance of having a house of his own, and to be self-sufficient. Furthermore, he wanted to create something tangible for his family, as he felt he had to contribute to make his family move upwards, to make life better for them. While Hadi feels no desire of settling in Zanzibar again, as he now is used to life in Europe, he does feel the need to have a basis right there where he comes from.

As mentioned shortly above, to build a house at the beach is, next to it being a practical matter, a stepping stone, seemingly inerasable, that mirrors the success of those Zanzibari men. They move away from home, by going to Europe, but also by entering the world of the beach, in order to become more successful from the perception of 'home', whether it is their own perception, or that of wider Zanzibar. As such, the beach is not just an escape from poverty, from being stuck, but especially, it is a possibility to improve life in the world those men came from. Living at the beach is thus a strategy to become better, or to make life better and more comfortable. That life is based in Zanzibar (not just at the beach) is in a way envisioned by the houses men build in Zanzibar. Even though men move to unknown places, it seems their intention is to come back one day, or, in any case, to let other people know they still exist, and are part of the Zanzibari community.

That the beach can be an 'in between', a temporarily place where one can perform in specific ways and thus grow socially and financially, becomes clear by the story of Abdul. His encounter and marriage to Paula made him have a plot right at the beach, a house, hotel, and yet another piece of land to cultivate. Their love is over now, and Abdul is happy with his Zanzibari girlfriend, with whom

[25] While many men support their families in a way, not all are that wealthy to be able to buy a car, and some do work for others. However, the men that are in a relationship with Western women all made a great improvement, when looking at the financial and political influences they have now, compared to what they had before they met their partner.

[26] One man told me how he was saving up and when he had a certain amount, put it in the construction of his house. However, his low salary he usually spent on drinking, which made it quite clear he got money from his very many girlfriends in Europe, with whom he was talking daily on the phone.

he is planning to get married coming year. While it is expected from Zanzibari men to provide for their family and to have a dwelling, for many men this nowadays seems to be impossible.[27] For Abdul it would have been impossible as well, if he did not meet Paula. Now, because of his practices, he has a lot to offer his future wife, he has become a popular man to marry, as for his newly gained status and means. While in particular Abdul might have never thought this far ahead, the story illustrates how the beach is an ideal place where one can gain in various spheres. Possibly children, a house, a business, an income, travels, all can be gained at the beach.

The temporality of the beach as a place to live becomes clear by the following stories, that illustrate how the beach is in fact part of a wider world, that continues after the beach chapter is over. Najib and Mikail are both older men that previously were together with Western women. They both have been to Europe many times, and both set up a business together with their former partners. Nowadays, they are together with Zanzibari women, and while still in business at the beach, seem to have made their career, did their hard work already and now, own and run their places and do not need to fight for betterment any more. They both seem to have the 'been there, done that' mentality, and have established a certain status. The beach to them apparently was an episode in their lives that made them who they wished to become. When men reach that position, like Najib and Mikail, it is time to lean back, get involved with wider Zanzibar some more, for example by getting a Zanzibari wife.

As such, the beach may be viewed as a strategy place where one is able to better oneself in various ways, and after which one is able to 'return' to a Zanzibar community. To connect the issue of place to the ludic approach, it becomes clear that Zanzibari men indeed are involved in, and use both places, both realities. Even though the beach and wider Zanzibar do not seem to match, men creatively pick and choose from both orders in ways that are fruitful to them. In this way, play that becomes visible at the beach seems to be part of a wider play covering a wider perspective, and, at the same time, the play at the beach as well deals with simultaneous different orders. This can imply either that the beach is a space separate from wider Zanzibar, where one goes to and eventually returns from, or, as will become clear from the paragraph below, a place ever-connected, as a matter of fact, part of Zanzibar. I will now turn to the status, the 'in' or 'out' position of Zanzibari men at the beach, when it comes to their place in wider Zanzibar. What will become clear is that men are never completely outside their Zanzibari community, although they themselves are able to decide the flexibility and strength of the ties connecting them to the wider society, when at the beach.

Outside, but never out

In the above I made clear how multiple realities are visible at the beach. I elaborated on how the beach can be seen as another place than wider Zanzibar, but is not completely separated from it, as men step in and out, from Zanzibar to the beach, and back. As such, one may also call the beach a frontier zone in which young Zanzibari men find opportunities and strategies that help them move forward in life and up in society. To become part of the beach society, and to make the progressions one hoped for, implies a lifestyle that might not be approved of by the wider Zanzibar society. In this

[27] This is the perception of men I spoke to, and thus might not correspond with extended research on the topic of marriage between Zanzibari on the island.

paragraph, I will elaborate on how those Zanzibari men at the beach that have relationships with Western women perceive to remain part of the wider Zanzibar society. According to them, even though they sometimes feel that they are looked at indignantly, they believe to be never 'out' of wider Zanzibar, whatever their behavior.

> When I asked Dawid when was the last time he went to the mosque, his attitude changed completely, and I felt I hit a sensitive chord. While he first looked at me confused and remained quiet for a second, he then agitatedly started to defend himself. Apparently, he felt it was not about how often one goes for prayer, but how one feels about religion in his or her heart, that makes a good Muslim. While I agreed with him, I did ask him what his family and others around him think of this, if it is accepted what he is doing. 'They want me to go to the Mosque more often, to behave like all others do, and no, they are not happy with it. But even though they rather see me behaving differently, they see that I do it my way, and in the end they just accept it'.

The above situation draws a scene that is telling for how Zanzibari men at the beach (and in relationships with Western women) interact with wider Zanzibar society. Even though they seem to enjoy their own ways of smoking, drinking, partying instead of praying, very much, feelings of guilt are present simultaneously. As described at the beginning of this chapter, men do not want their families or villages to know exactly about what they are doing, since this behavior is out of place in wider Zanzibar. Even though I feel they are right to be afraid of disapproval from wider Zanzibar, they always seem to remain part of their society, as wider society does rely on them in several ways.

Indeed, 'bad' behavior apparently can be compensated by a man's successfulness. As Ibrahim, for example, who drives around time and again with different Western women in his car. While he must tell friends and family it is just for the sake of business, being friendly and helpful to foreigners, I doubt his (especially male) friends believe this. Furthermore, when I once went with him to a festival in the south of the island, he introduced me to some of his family members as his wife, later as his lover, yet later again as his fiancée. While he did this in a joking way, he did imply to have sexual relationships with Western women, other than his wife. Although I am not sure if everyone in his family is aware of him actually being married to his European wife, with his joking remarks he does inform them on his extramarital, or at least sexual very active behavior with Western women. Interestingly, the people he told I was his wife/lover/fiancée were not shocked, laughed a little, then, most of them, asked for a favor. It seems that his behavior is verified by the fact that he has become a successful man and thus is able to contribute to his family and village.

Moreover, his remarks about having multiple sexual relationships with Western women to members of his family seems to indicate a certain power he has. It is because of his involvement at the beach, his business in tourism and his Western wife that he is in this comfortable position, and thus can contribute to the wider society, and in this way can make up for his questionable behavior. Ibrahim actively contributes to the wellbeing of family members, friends and other villagers, as he arranges jobs for them, pays school fees for children of his brothers and sisters, and supports them in other ways. Thus, while those Zanzibari around him may disapprove of his behaviors and performances, as marrying a non-Muslim, drinking and not going to the Mosque, to criticize him might eventually result in the termination of his support to them, which is not desired. As such, Ibrahim seems to have

a certain power by being a successful businessman, even though the ways in which he has become this successful may be questioned, or, secretively be disapproved.

On the other hand, it may not be of any interest to wider Zanzibar to concern the ways in which men become successful, or grow on the social ladder. That Zanzibari men now live at the beach does not seem to bother other Zanzibari that much in general, as it seems to be a logic step in a right direction. Furthermore, being involved with a Western woman and to live at the beach gives those men many direct rewards, that seem to compensate for simultaneous 'bad' behavior. To be married or to be in a steady relationship with a Western women is rewarding for Zanzibari men, as those women give their men the opportunity of going to Europe for a while, to open up businesses with their investment, and to live in luxurious houses. Even though in a sense, men depend on Western women for a betterment of their lives, this does not seem to harm their status in wider Zanzibar. On the contrary, the fact that men become that mighty seems to be what counts, not necessarily the ways in which they make this happen.

Indeed, men who are successful by being in a relationship, having a house, a car, a business and money, seem to be highly respected because of what they accomplished. Especially their peers, who also live at the beach are very fond of such successes. It encourages them, as it shows things indeed are possible, and at the same time they are able to enjoy this particular success, as it might be shared and peers too might be supported. Families seem to be proud of this particular man because of what he has created, as for example Danish's family, who comes to visit him very often, expressed how happy they were he settled down this way. Ibrahim's father visits the hostel Ibrahim owns weekly, and sits down for a drink, or brings a fish. In this way, showing up seems to suggest that he supports his son and is proud of him.

Rumors go that families of those Zanzibari men are actually happy with such intercultural relationships with Western women, as now the money will come in easy for everyone. A whole family can, and often will, profit from a relationship between a Zanzibari man and a Western woman. Because of her, investments and eventually money is being made, which can level up the status of the whole family. This especially becomes clear from the story of a Zanzibari girl that got involved with a Western man. Although it is not clear from the stories if their relation was sexual, important is that he invested money with which she built a bar that is now run as a family business. While she moved to Stone Town in order to avoid rumors of her being involved with an outside man, her actions brought about positive changes for the whole family, as they now have a steady income and moved from being very poor, to being a family with a certain prestige.

When I asked men how other Zanzibari that are not active at the beach felt about their behaviors, they explained how there were no problems, how everything they did was just fine. Especially the flexibility of parents with their sons marrying non-Muslim and non-Zanzibari women surprised me, as I beforehand imagined this to be a tense topic that could create conflict. However, all men instead underlined how Zanzibar is a multicultural society already, thus implying intercultural marriages are no problem at all. But when I asked why then Zanzibari women do not get involved with outside men, many got uncomfortable, shortly stating along the lines of 'they are not interested in non-Muslims', after which they quickly switched topics. Others, both Zanzibari and outsiders I asked about the acceptance of intercultural relations mentioned families and society are fine with it, as it brings about wealth and a higher standard of living, and 'who would not be fine with that?!'.

Such information can lead to the conclusion that wider Zanzibar is alright with the beach-lifestyle of those particular Zanzibari men. However, given that men try to hide some of the things they are doing, especially being drunk or high, shows that not everything is taken in like that, or simply accepted. Yet, this might also stem from the fact that men themselves feel like this behavior is actually not what is expected of them, or according to what they have learned about what life should be like, how a person should behave. It might be the men themselves that are uncomfortable in their position (for example, by not going to the mosque and thus feel as if they neglect their religion), and not so much wider Zanzibar. It could also be a combination of the two: those men are aware they are being missed during prayer and therefore frowned upon, which might increase their feelings of guilt about their way of living, and thus increase their secretive behavior.

On the other hand, my previous research on beach boys in Zanzibar showed that Zanzibari did not approve of the lifestyle of those men at all. Their appearance, as if they are Rastas, and their behavior (drinking, smoking, chasing girls and being too lazy to have a real job, as it is described by Zanzibari) made others feel ashamed of their youths. This is not the way Zanzibari men should behave, people found. Unfortunately, during this time of fieldwork I did not manage to get a good perception of what Zanzibari in general thought of those men that are in a relationship with Western women, but I feel it makes sense people in wider Zanzibar share this disapproval. However, there is a difference between men that are married or are in a steady relationship with Western women, and men that are seen as beach boys, as the first group of men did achieve successes, and all are active with any kind of business, have a proper house, or children. The latter group, on the other hand, does not make such achievements (yet), and therefore might be considered lazy and dependent. A big difference thus, between beach boys and Zanzibari men in relationships with Western women, is that the latter have a certain degree of independence, may have a positive influence on society by their successes that can be shared.

Men like Mikail and Najib, who have been together with Western women but now are involved with Zanzibari women, show that ties between them and society were never really broken, but minimal for a while and easy to tighten again. While they are still active at the beach, as Mikail has a hotel and Najib a shop, they are more connected to Zanzibar again through their current romantic relationships. As mentioned above, the beach might have made it possible for them to marry a Zanzibari woman, because it has made them affluent. But at the same time, their 'return' to Zanzibar society might create more of an insider status, especially as they now are more active religiously, live more according a Zanzibari ordering. This shows that ties that men have with wider Zanzibar while residing at the beach are in fact flexible, but never cut. That they are elastic is showed by the fact that when active building a life, the elastics are elongated, completely stretched, while when men want, need, or are ready for it, worlds may come closer together again.

Thus, it seems that even though Zanzibari men are aware of the fact that their behavior is not exactly what (they think) it should be, in general they reflect on their lives as if everything is fine with others in their society. They act as if wider Zanzibar is open-minded and approves of multiculturalism, while in reality, this seem to be questionable, more of an excuse to use when necessary. However, as men turn out to be successful, as they receive much from their intercultural relationships, the means of getting to this success seem to be tolerated more easily by wider Zanzibar. Especially when those Zanzibari men share their success with others, critiques become less. Because of living at the beach, men increased their status within wider Zanzibar, which makes them less vulnerable, yet even more

powerful and influential. As such the reality of the beach might be considered as being part of a larger reality, a context that provides extra chances and room to experiment with strategies to reach meaning within wider Zanzibar.

A Swahili proverb states that one has to take a person the way he or she is, and seems to explain why Zanzibari men can never be 'out' of their society. Even though people act as 'bad' as possible, as for example as alcoholics or liars, people seem to always try their best, but might not yet have found their way. It is important to always accept people, and thus not send them away, as they cannot help it themselves. They might learn eventually. Along these lines, even though Zanzibari men in relationships with Western women may be frowned upon, their behavior, according to this proverb, needs to be accepted, just as the men. If this proverb covers a certain general mentality, this may explain why Zanzibari men seem to be able to remove themselves that far away from what they once were taught.

But if we have to take others the way they are, a specific ordering remains hard to maintain, as exceptions and violations of the rule need to be accepted or at least taken for granted. Again, freedom then seems to rule, as people are exactly that free to do as they please, especially Zanzibari men that move back and forth between, and pick and choose from two realities. How do men enjoy this new status within wider Zanzibar, and the way in which they enjoy, or at least, manage their position in between those different realities (or in that frontier zone) will be the topic of the following paragraph.

Zanzibar pride, Zanzibar joy

The presence of the beach as a result of the upcoming tourist industry is a relatively new phenomenon in Zanzibar, which therefore might be considered as an uncomfortable and uncertain place to reside for Zanzibari men. Especially the alternative ordering that defines the beach might be confusing and not always easy to grasp.[28] At the same time, however, the beach seems to be an exciting place full of opportunities and enjoyments, that thus feeds the senses in a positive way. I find it an interesting and important question to consider, whether Zanzibari men actually like to live at the beach, and to be part of (or in-between) both worlds. The ways in which Zanzibari men perceive this location and with it those new freedoms and orderings available at the beach, how they feel about their complex lives in both worlds, is what I will elaborate on in this paragraph. It seems that freedoms and opportunities present at the beach are causing feelings of anxiety, and men handle these emotions in different ways.

As it was unusual for Zanzibari men at the beach to show me their emotions, it came as a surprise to me that one day, as I was about to go and hang out with Ibrahim, already prepared for some sexual comments and harassments, I met with a side of Ibrahim I had never seen before. He looked sad and tired, that morning, as if he had been worrying all night instead of sleeping. Indeed, he told me how he was worried about his life and what he was making out of it. While he wanted to enjoy it to the fullest, he just kept on having doubts and uncertainties about what he was doing. Why could other

[28] For outsiders this might be the case as well, but for now I prefer to discuss experiences of Zanzibari men, as they are both part of the beach society, as well as wider Zanzibar.

men, as Jamal and Kamil, just have so much fun and go with the flow, while he was always in his mind? Why could he not just let go, just like the others?

While I tried to comfort him by mentioning that every person has moments of uncertainties and periods of reflection, I realized that for a long time I ignored the obvious: Zanzibari men at the beach are human too. Of course I did know that, in a way, but I never really thought of their insecurities and vulnerabilities. It seemed that because they generally present themselves as cool, strong and flirtatious, I forgot about their weaknesses. Of course, now I realized that even the strongest individuals have their off days, indeed Zanzibari men as well. Furthermore, while some Zanzibari men seemed to be born for a play at the beach, others just do not fit in, cannot handle new insecurities and sudden abundance of money, goods, women and alcohol.

Jamal is a Zanzibari man fit for, and comfortable on the beach. While he is still a young man, he is running a beach bar and is a business partner of a successful expatriate who is doing business both in Stone Town and the southeast coast. Jamal does not have a serious relationship at the moment, although there might be some girls in Europe that consider themselves to be his one and only. He has been in long-term relationships with Western women, but now reckons how he wants to be free and without any drama that love, according to him, inevitable brings about. Instead, he dates tourist girls, has sexual encounters with anyone he feels like: Zanzibari girls, mainland women, tourists as well as expatriate women, be they in a relationship or not. It might be his dislike of boundaries, constraints and troubles that Jamal is not interested in a long-term romantic relationship. In this way, it seems he uses the possibilities of the beach to the fullest, and is aware of a certain lack of limits that would be existing in any other society.

A beach festival in Jambiani organized by outsiders attracted many Zanzibari (kids) as well, and shows how tourism can bring both enjoyment for wider Zanzibar and a fading of boundaries between wider Zanzibar and the beach.

To others, friends, acquaintances and possible business partners Jamal is kind and helpful. He has an energetic character, and approaches everyone with an open mind and smile. One day when I had to go north my car broke down, he tried to arrange another car for me, but then, when that did not work out, he drove me himself. He said he felt it was urgent, and in this way he had an opportunity to meet some of his friends at the same time. Not only does Jamal seem to understand the rules of engagement when it comes to love, lovers and social circles, he has a clever look at the work sphere as well:

> 'I know this is the moment for me to make something out of life. Now I am young, strong, and full of energy. If I work hard right now, later I am able to sit back and relax, to enjoy what I have worked so hard for, and what I deserve. I also like the work very much, I learn a lot from my business partner Richard. To be busy both with the bar and the work I do for him is a bit much, but now is the time, and it is just great' (Jamal).

Jamal is not only to be found at the beach, he socializes with other people from his village Paje as well. He plays in their football team, and often visits local bars to catch up with other men. He arranges jobs for his friends, as for example Ali, who, with Jamal's help, now works in a popular hostel. Also his mother now works for his expatriate business partner. As such, this man seems to be highly popular and successful both businesswise as well as socially. Even though he does not go for prayer, does not fast during Ramadan, drinks and parties a lot, his behavior seems to be accepted, and compensated by his successful businesses.

Kamil, on the other hand, is a man in his early thirties who does not seem to know exactly how to play the game at the beach. Even though it appears he is fine with his life, which entails much drinking, partying and meeting up with girls and tourists, others often expressed their concerns about him. Some people call him rent-a-friend, as he literally is able to entertain and become 'friends' with every tourist that comes to the coast. Although this surely is a good quality and assures him of making ends meet, he does not seem to build anything up for himself. He does have a house, but no steady job and neither does he own or run anything. It might be the case that all his girlfriends, fiancées and wives abroad send him money, clothes and other gifts. It might also be the case that those women (or new women) think of him as a great and successful guy, but among beach residents he is considered lousy and a drunkard. Some people told me how they could see him fall down, from being one of the most successful and smart beach boys around, with a lot of potential to become successful and big, to what he now is: a man that does not know what he is doing and who is not reliable.

It seems that the beach life was too much for him, or at least, not what he needed. As if he could not handle the many Western and interested women around him (as he is married way too many times), the alcohol (drinking without boundaries, until he passes out somewhere) and has forgotten what it is like to actually work (he just sits with people). I got the feeling he was not happy, when I saw him around, that he was not feeling well in this life, but without knowing what to do about it. As if he was depressed, not knowing or liking anything he was doing, and thus drinking even more.

Murad is another example of how things can go wrong with men at the beach. One woman that worked with him approximately six years ago, told me that in the beginning, he was a very enthusiastic and kind man, always happy and willing to help. At one point, however, all that changed and he became an angry and sarcastic man. She recounts how he always made nasty comments, and

also his ex-girlfriend remembers him as a very mean man. What exactly happened in his life is unknown to me, but is seems that the beach and its alternative ordering and unknown freedoms certainly can confuse men severely.

There seem to be three factors that indicate how Zanzibari men at the beach remain in control over their own life and world. The first one is a certain pride that Zanzibari seem to have, which makes them, to an extent, untouchable. Even though there are people who told me that Zanzibari men would do anything for money, sex, status and success, there are limits as well. Zanzibari men experience a certain power stemming from the fact that they come from the island, which brings about privileges and independencies as will be described in the following chapter. It seems that they are aware of this step ahead, and thus are not always willing to be too flexible or to bend their rules for the needs of outsiders.

Furthermore, as described in the above, the performances of Zanzibari men at the beach are related to their performances in wider Zanzibar, as both worlds indeed exist at the same time and are in a way intertwined. Seen from a ludic perspective, men's performances, their playfulness, indeed is a capacity to make sense of multiple realities. Play at the beach makes those men more successful, with a higher status in wider Zanzibar. As such, one can argue that men are active at the beach to make something out of their life in Zanzibar, possibly even for the wider community they come from. It might not be the attraction of the beach per definition, even more so the lack of other strategies to grow on the social ladder that make men come to stay at the beach. As such, men do have a goal and thus do not wander around hopelessly. However, when that goal disappears or turns out to be impossible to reach to, disappointments loom and freedoms can confuse Zanzibari men as well.

Thirdly, ties with the wider Zanzibari community seem to be impossible to cut loose from entirely. While men do create a distance between them and wider Zanzibar, at least for the period they live at the beach as to optimize their performances, their goals indeed have to do with wider Zanzibar, and ties thus will remain. Even though such ties can be released as much as possible, in the end it seems they are being tightened again. While men live at the beach, contact remains with wider Zanzibar. With the family, friends and acquaintances within the village or within the wider island, for some even on a daily basis. While the lives of these men seem to look very different from those of other villagers, in the end this does not seem to matter that much. Certainly as there is a wide recognition that indeed those Zanzibari men that live at the beach are active in establishing a better future for themselves, and thus in a sense, to the whole of Zanzibar.

That Zanzibari men loosen their ties with a wider society of Zanzibar while at the beach may also have to do with them trying to keep the beach out of wider Zanzibar. Although some men take their lovers to their families, and on trips into the Zanzibar aside from the beach, to many outsiders, both tourists and expatriates, Zanzibar remains an unknown place. Be it consciously or unconsciously, what the place those Zanzibari men come from looks like remains secret to many, a neighborhood very difficult to get to know to outsiders. Moreover, it seems that Zanzibari men at the beach make no attempts to integrate the two places. This might have to do with feelings of shame, as they may consider their villages as backward compared to the beach and backgrounds of outsiders. Yet, at the same time, it might be a careful action, this keeping apart the two worlds, as feelings of pride and protection make them want to hinder deep penetration and influencing of the beach into Zanzibar. As if the different worlds men are engaged in should not meet, should indeed be kept apart.

Thus, some Zanzibari men experience the beach as a place where they can move freely and control their opportunities and experiences in a way that makes them view the beach as a positive place. They know how to play and enjoy the game played out at the beach. Other Zanzibari men, however, have difficulties making the beach a place to feel at home, do not seem to understand the rules of the game, and seem to get lost because of all the freedoms and possibilities that are available all of a sudden. Reassuring is a certain Zanzibari pride, that can be seen as a handle that leads Zanzibari men through this place, as it is part of an identity that gives feelings of power and control. Moreover, that ties with the wider community are never being cut off might add to feelings of certainty and belonging and gives reason to play, and might be necessary to be able to enjoy a life at the beach. Those ties are what Zanzibari men can hold on to, and underline reasons why men might be at the beach in the first place. Wider Zanzibar and the beach for men are thus connected closely, as they move in and out both places regularly. However, to outsiders, wider Zanzibar remains unknown, which might (partly) be a result of attempts of Zanzibari men to keep the worlds separate.

Conclusion

In this chapter I dealt with ways in which the beach and wider Zanzibar are connected, or in fact two different worlds that both are part of the wider perspective that Zanzibari men simultaneously deal with through play. I also discussed how ordering and freedom in wider Zanzibar influences ordering and freedom at the beach, and vice versa. Whether or not the beach and wider Zanzibar can be considered to be two separate neighborhoods depends on the point of view one takes as a starting point. For outsiders that live at the beach, wider Zanzibar seems to be a world separate from their beach neighborhood, and quite unknown. From the point of view of Zanzibari men, however, this division is more ambiguous.

The beach and wider Zanzibar can be considered one same locality of which the beach could be seen as a frontier zone, where in specific ways things are created and taken, in order to make life in this neighborhood more attractive, and a man's status increasing. As there are no clear boundaries visible, as the beach happens in a way 'in between' and among wider Zanzibar, this way of looking at the space makes sense. Moreover, because Zanzibari men never (are able to) cut off ties with the wider Zanzibari community completely, there is something to be said for it, to consider the place as one whole. Furthermore, that Zanzibari men come to this frontier zone is due to the fact that here betterment of a life in Zanzibar can be realized. Thus, with Zanzibar as location kept in mind, men become active at the beach.

On the other hand, men might come to the beach in order to escape wider Zanzibar, and thus consider the beach as a separate place from wider Zanzibar. As there are little opportunities available for young men on the island, the beach and its tourist industry offer solutions. This is the place to make money, become successful. By getting involved in a romantic relationship with a Western woman, one is able to travel the world, set up a business, build a house and buy a car and other commodities. As such, the beach is a place where life can become comfortable and good. The beach can be seen as a place for both work and play, where work is in fact play. With its excessive freedoms and opportunities (even though in reality this might be more sparse than believed), it is known as a place where one can become someone.

While the beach is the place of focus for this thesis, with this chapter it becomes clear that even though men play, and are mostly visible at the beach, this is in fact one reality men take part of. Viewed from the ludic approach, the activities of Zanzibari men at the beach indeed are capacities, 'playfulness', that make them able to deal with a wider perspective in a creative way. Thus, Zanzibari men play at the beach, which is all part of a wider play, or a play within a wider play. When the playfulness at the beach comes to an end, there is the play of wider Zanzibar that is still existing and available.

While being part of the wider community gives Zanzibari men at the beach (the ability to create more) power, especially when dealing with outsiders, this also works the other way around, as men active at the beach, by those performances, gain more power within wider Zanzibar. As they find ways to become rich, the beach thus gives them the opportunity to grow on the social ladder of Zanzibar, and in this way become more influential, having more status and power. Therefore, the beach is the space where Zanzibari men can grow from having nothing to becoming a big man. However, not always is this living at the beach appreciated or accepted by wider Zanzibar, especially certain practices seem to be problematic through the eyes of those Zanzibari men, when it comes to their relationship to wider Zanzibar. But while indeed their lifestyle may be disapproved of, the outcome seems to justify their performances.

Moreover, Zanzibari men are never able to be completely out of the Zanzibari society, as they themselves, as well as the wider community seem to have interests by maintaining such ties, no matter how weak and elongated they might be at times. For the wider community, those men can provide them with jobs and opportunities, as well as more material and financial matters. Zanzibari men at the beach derive their identity from being part of the Zanzibari community. It is their tool for business with outsiders, and their 'pride' makes it not always easy for outsiders to work with them. This again shows the overlap of the two worlds, or, in fact, how for Zanzibari men the beach and wider Zanzibar can be one and the same. Only the ways in which men seemingly keep the two worlds separate for outsiders again raises the question of how overlapping or apart these worlds actually are.

As such, it becomes clear how play deals simultaneously with various different orders and worlds, as it is impossible to completely separate the beach from wider Zanzibar. Zanzibari men play in a certain way that makes them create feelings of belonging and sense of the world(s) they move in. Men use both realities simultaneously, as they pick and choose specific means and structures of both wider Zanzibar as well as the beach in order to make (an optimized) sense of their worlds. While the beach is separable from wider Zanzibar as it knows its specific play, playground and rules of play, Zanzibari men that are players have a wider perspective, namely wider Zanzibar, that influences their ways of play and the intensity with which they play. Hence, the beach can be seen as a play within a play.

3. Mind your own business: relations of mutual dependency at the beach

> 'Ten years ago, the southeast was a quiet place, with only a few hotels around and lots of open space between them, where trees and plants were in abundance and villagers could walk freely to the beach. Nowadays, the whole coastline is filled with tourist establishments and private houses. Trees and bushes are cut, natural surroundings destroyed. Villagers have, at some places, difficulties seeking an entrance to the beach, in between all the buildings. It does not look the same and it does not feel the same, with all those expatriates, who create a whole new landscape, around. They bring all their Western behaviors with them and change not only the appearance of the site, but also damage culture and influence young people's minds' (Paula, Western woman).

Introduction

Whereas the previous chapter dealt with locality and the ways in which Zanzibari men at the beach make sense of, and combine, both wider Zanzibar and the beach, this chapter focuses on their lives at the beach, especially their relationships with outsiders at the beach. The context of the beach does not only provide space for romantic relationships between Zanzibari men and outsiders, but in fact, business relationships between the two groups make up an important part of the scenery as well. Even more so, to describe the beach lifestyle is to describe business relationships between Zanzibari men and outsiders, and this context is essential for understanding patterns of dependencies, conflicting realities and stereotyping that are often prevalent (just as they are within romantic intercultural relationships). Thus, before I describe such romantic interpersonal relationships in the following chapters, here I focus on general relationships, by focusing on business at the beach. The main question is *how do (business) relations between (groups of) people at the beach create and increase dependencies and thus imply a certain ordering that at the same time give way to specific freedoms, and how is stereotyping intertwined in such relationships?*

First I draw an image of the beach, its community and its lifestyle. Not only do I focus on Zanzibari men here, I also describe outsiders and their (perceptions on their) lives at the beach. In this way, the context for intercultural (business) relationships becomes clear, and indeed those I describe next. As it turns out, such business relationships create a specific ordering, dependencies and power relations between Zanzibari men and expatriates. I describe how the two groups are dependent on each other, and on what bases. Furthermore, a last focus is on how Zanzibari men and outsiders have and use power and aim to define and control the Other group, by illustrating practices of stereotyping visible at the beach. Both groups of people reside at a place that is somehow new and different for them, exactly because of the fact that they have to deal with Others who have a cultural background not necessarily similar to theirs. As such, it is not so much the geographical location of the beach that resonates in doubts and difficulties, it shows to be the Other that needs to be dealt with, controlled and integrated with, in order to make a world meaningful. Allochtony and autochtony, occidentalism

and orientalism[29] are concepts that underlie and underline such images and ways of dealing with Others. This chapter thus elaborates on the ways in which people make sense of the various (conflicting) realities that come to the foreground because of intercultural (business) relationships.

It has become clear that I make a distinction between the groups of outsiders and Zanzibari men. Since this division is ethnic in origin, as it deals with Zanzibari ethnicity versus a Western one, let me elaborate shortly on this concept. Within anthropology, the term ethnicity 'refers to aspects of relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive' (Eriksen 2002: 4). As ethnicity is not so much property of a group as it is about the relationships between groups, I would argue that the most clear ethnic groups, even though people with many different nationalities reside at the beach, are those of Zanzibari and outsiders. Indeed, people within the latter group identify themselves as Western. Both groups seem to consider themselves as culturally distinctive from members of the other group, as continuously the cultural differences are stretched and underlined between both Zanzibari and outsiders by both groups. As such, while background certainly matters, to speak of ethnicity would imply too much of a variation, while in fact the dichotomy of allochtony versus autochtomy is suitable to define the population at the beach. Therefore, ethnicity at the beach can be better considered as insiders versus outsiders; one group being Zanzibari, while the others are seen, and see themselves as Westerners.[30]

In her book *Race, Ethnicity, and Sexuality*, Nagel (2003) intertwines, naturally, the concepts of race, ethnicity and sexuality. She refers to ethnicity as 'the differences between individuals and groups in skin color, language, religion, culture, national origin/nationality, or sometimes geographic region' (2003: 6). This definition works in the context of the beach, as the differences between the two groups generally are based on skin color (black vs. white); culture (Swahili vs. 'Western' and includes religion and language); and the geographic region of origin (as white people come from 'the West'). However, as stated above, details and nuances seem to be overlooked at the beach, as people identify themselves as either Western or Zanzibari. Therefore, race could be seen as an important aspect of ethnicity and group divisions. Indeed, skin color reveals much: background, economic status, religion, worldview. In short thus, it can be used to identify a person as an insider or outsider.

Business in the context of the beach can be understood as the active involvement of expatriates and Zanzibari men in the tourist industry at the southeast coast of Zanzibar. Especially to open up, to own or manage a business (a tourist establishment) is what is done by many of the participants of this research, and what will be described here. To be involved in a business at the beach is a good strategy to (economically) live comfortably at the beach. While there are many people working in such tourist establishments, most of the informants that are part of this research have the highest positions within such businesses. This creates a freer space of movement for them, as they have an income and status that permits this, but at the same time, they meet more responsibilities and dependencies. Business *an sich* is a way of giving meaning to one's life, but also within business people constantly need to be active making sense of structures and ways, especially so since business

[29] Orientalism, as has been described by Said (1978) reflects the idealized images of the non-West, that also entail notions such as gender and sexuality. Occidentalism is the idealized images about the West, and is elaborated upon by Buruma (2004). I use these two notions as to collect 'general stereotypes' the two groups at the beach have about each other, as I noted during my fieldwork. I am aware of personal exceptions and only use those I found to be common at the beach.

[30] Immigrants from other African countries are not included in this discussion, as I focus on relationships between Zanzibari and expatriates.

relations here are intercultural. Zanzibari men and expatriates need to work closely together and depend on each other, which is not always wished for, as will become clear from the below. Financially and economically, outsiders and Zanzibari men are connected through business, but also culturally, socially and politically, business makes the groups of people dependent on the other.

It becomes clear that business at the beach creates freedoms as well as alternative orderings and highlights conflicting realities. It is also within business that people aim to make sense of such various and (sometimes) troublesome ways and worlds. By using the ludic approach, business – and the intercultural business relationships – can be analyzed as play, as business is a strategy and way to create meaning. Especially since a character of business is the dealing with Others, conflicting realities are ever present, certainly in a context such as the beach, where people from different backgrounds (in this case thus Zanzibari men and outsiders) take part. Such intercultural business relationships bring about issues and conflicting realities that may seem incompatible. Exactly the creative ways, of people of both groups, with which they make sense of such conflicts mark the play within business. I argue that business is a play itself, part of a larger play, as well as a playground in which (smaller) plays are being played. First of all, business is a play itself, as it can be seen as a specific space to play in, to gain freedom and control by performing in certain ways. Simultaneously it is part of a larger play, as business is one out of more strategies that are used to make life meaningful. Finally, business is a playground for smaller plays, as it brings to the foreground specific uncertainties and conflicts (of dealing with Others), and the seemingly incompatible realities that become clear by dealing with Others on such an intense way.

People that live at the beach perceive this place as a paradise in which they can move freely and let go, as a place where everything is possible, and come to the beach to seek freedom. However, as this chapter will show, even though such liberations are met on various levels, competition, dependencies and power relations create a specific order that decreases this perceived freedom, even makes it questionable as it must be defended constantly. As such, while people who live at the beach perceive this place as one of total freedom, in fact the beach is not merely free, but ordered differently. While people might handle and act in ways not according to a social ordering known from their cultural background, and thus in a sense are free and liberated, in fact this alternative ordering at the beach brings about rules and regulations as well. For now, let me turn to a description of how the beach has come to being, in order to portray how the beach has come to be imagined as freedom.

The pleasure beach – the horror beach

> ‘Everybody over there [in the southeast] seems to have lost their mind. Party like a rock star, alcohol, drugs, women, it does not matter if they are Zanzibari or Western, too much is going on I simply cannot keep track. What happens there in a weekend would normally happen in a month! All that drama, really, at other places on the island the southeast is known for its wildness’ (Elsa, Western woman, not living at the beach).

Idyllic, tranquil, with a powdery sandy beach and swaying palm trees, is how the beach regularly is described by the numerous tourist guides.[31] They promise a serene beach, shared only with a few other tourists, and mention the pleasant presence of a small number of villagers. Indeed, Bwejuu, Paje and Jambiani, the villages located on the southeast coast of Zanzibar are among the quietest and located right at the most beautiful beaches of the island. Behind the beaches come the palm trees, hotels and hostels, where after the small villages occur. While such books do not exaggerate on the clearness of the water, or the whiteness of the sand, they do seem to forget one thing: the presence of the upcoming tourist industry, the many (business) people, both Zanzibari and foreigners, that work in tourism. This long stretch of paradise beach indeed is the perfect place to have a business in the tourist industry.

Ever since the liberation of the economy in Zanzibar in the 1990's, tourism in Zanzibar is growing and as a result, at the southeast coast, a vast number of people settled and is involved in the tourist business. As described in the introduction, people come to the beach from different places and for different reasons. While immigrants come from neighboring countries to look for a job and an income, expatriates come from Western countries in search for a better life. Many holiday goers see that the opportunities to live in this paradise are plenty, and for the many expatriates that emigrated to Zanzibar, once a holiday made them realize the potential of the island for living and business. Nowadays, around ninety percent of the establishments, such as bars, restaurants, hotels, guest houses and private houses along the coast of Bwejuu, Paje and Jambiani are built with a fair amount of Western or Arab investments.[32] Zanzibari men, even though they do not need to cross borders of nation states, do cross an imaginary boundary as they consciously move away from their 'habitat' to a new lifestyle, in a search for a betterment of life.[33] While new opportunities are the main reason to come to the beach, those could concern jobs and finances, as well as lifestyle. What is searched for is a better way of living, be it necessary, or based on free choice and adventure.

As a result thus, in the last ten years a true expatriate community arose, of which Zanzibari men make part too.[34] While I divide the beach community by grouping Zanzibari men apart from outsiders, I need to underline the flexibility of both groups: some individuals might leave at one point, and others will take their place. While both groups share characteristics, differences can be found as well, as for example in the ways in which they have contact with wider Zanzibar, the places they go, the people they hang out with. But for now, let me focus on the similarities between the two groups, and actually view the beach community as a whole, with only every now and then an insight in differences, in order to describe the beach at the southeast coast.

While tourism actually is the reason so many different ethnicities find each other at the beach, tourists do not play an active role within the community located at the beach, they are not more than visitors. Other visitors at the beach are fishermen, women collecting seaweed from their

[31] Such as Bradt Zanzibar (2006) and The Rough Guide Tanzania (2006).
[32] This percentage is based on information gathered among inhabitants of the beach during the period of fieldwork
[33] The context of wider Zanzibar is described in the previous chapter, just as the possibilities that the beach offers Zanzibari men. Such betterments can be realized in different ways, both short term and long term. This will become clear throughout the thesis.
[34] Unfortunately, there are no statistics on the number of expatriates living in Zanzibar, as I pointed out already in the first chapter. However, as Gössling & Schulz (2005) indicate, tourism brings about a rise in migration to the hotspot, as is also the case in at the southeast coast.

plantations, children playing and selling cookies, following tourists asking them for a *penni-school*, a pen they need for school. Also, Masaï warriors walk by, every now and then, as guards of hotels.[35] Other mainlanders can be found at the beach as well, but, most of them form no part of the community, as they (just as Zanzibari women) just work in tourist establishments and are not engaged in the beach life as such.

Even though visitors and residents of the beach share the same space to a certain extent, they hardly ever meet. Naturally, Zanzibari men might know the visiting Zanzibari, but their lives at the beach seem to be very separated. Concerning tourists, even though they stay at hotels and hostels, and go out to bars and restaurants run by members of the beach community, small talk and every now and then a one night stand is as much contact as there is between them and residents of the beach. As such, this community seems to be quite a bounded one, as there is hardly any mingling between them and Zanzibari in general and tourists.[36] Residents seem to exclude themselves from wider Zanzibar, with outsiders almost never entering 'the other world', and Zanzibari men keeping their beach life strictly separated from their life in wider Zanzibar.

On the other hand, this exclusivity does not prohibit newcomers from entering, which indicates to the flexible boundaries of the beach community. Indeed, newcomers are very welcome, and immediately immersed in the intense beach life. As the community is quite small and thus the number of people available for close contact limited, newcomers are gazed at with curiosity. All people at the beach seem to know when a 'new one' is coming, and people go out to that particular place to meet this person.

For instance, many people talked about the new coming manager of a popular hostel in Paje. However, people did not need to come to her, as they could find her already on a dance floor. She integrated well, always in for a party, another drink, little less sleep and more adventure. While most of the times such an immersion is successful – as many people that come to live here seem to be searching for an unlimited and free life in similar ways – there are also people who do not seem to fit in completely. When one hotel got a new manager, many people came by at the first party after his arrival to meet him. It turned out to be a happy-go-lucky guy, just turned thirty and very enthusiastic. Unfortunately, his lifestyle did not match with that of the community he was surrounded with, as he enjoyed a more quiet and cozy night, instead of using alcohol and drugs until one wakes up in a strange place. Also, he spoke too loud and too much, which is not the way it should be done. Still, it seems that with a lack of better company, people continued to hang out with him. But in the end, he did not fit in, nor adapted the other lifestyle, and left for, according to him, more important things.

All beach residents are curious about newcomers, be they from Zanzibar or other parts of the world, yet cultural background does seem to matter. Stereotyping is a common practice when one enters.

[35] Many hoteliers nowadays hire Masaï from the mainland as guards, for various reasons. Tourists like their appearance, they are known to be great and fearless protectors, and, very important, they do not make part of the villages which would make them trustworthy. It is widely known and experienced – among hoteliers at the east coast – that to hire Zanzibari from the nearest village is asking for trouble. As those Zanzibari have many family members, friends and acquaintances living in the village, they experience high pressures and frequent requests for stealing from the hotel. Moreover, according to outsiders, Zanzibari are not to be trusted in a wider sense: no-shows and sudden disappearance are regular occurrences. More on this below in this chapter.

[36] For Zanzibari men at the beach this is slightly different, as their families and wider circle of friends live at the island as well, with whom they are in contact. However, this contact exists outside the beach, and seems not to be prioritized. I will elaborate on this 'double' life in chapter five, but for now I focus on purely the beach life.

For instance, it is often the case that Zanzibari men tend to accept other Zanzibari quicker than they would accept outsiders, as with the latter group it depends on background, and therefore automatically behavior and gender whether they are liked or not. Outsiders from South Africa, for example, are not easily being trusted as they are perceived as racists.[37] Moreover, outside women are perceived as possible future romantic partners and therefore get more attention, while the likeability of outside men depends on their friendliness, helpfulness, overall behavior and attitude. Outsiders seem to perceive 'new' Zanzibari men with a same curiosity as they have with Western newcomers, although those Zanzibari men are not to be befriended easily. Zanzibari men are often perceived as free floaters that completely rely on outside women for their position in the community. As such, outsiders seem to have a distrust when it comes to Zanzibari men. For them, borders are more open to outsiders than for Zanzibari.

A newly painted advertisement for Jambo bar at a wall in Paje. This bar is at the time of research one of the most popular places to relax and party. Both Zanzibari and other inhabitants of the beach come here, and also many tourists. Here many romances get started.

With the exception of beach boys, inhabitants of the beach that are part of this research manage, run or own the tourist establishments. They are the ones who are ultimately responsible for the success of the tourist industry at the beach. Even though this means hard work, one factor makes it more attractive: their office is the beach. One man once described to me his job. He told me:

> 'I just sit here on this couch at the terrace bar of this hotel working on my advertisements, with the pool, beach and ocean at the background. Every now and then friends walk by and we have a little chat. They also come to work here because of the internet connection. When the sun rises I wake up and start working. Around one in the afternoon I complete the work and go kite surfing. Later me and my friends have a beer or two and might even have a barbecue or some sort of party somewhere. There is always something fun to do in the

[37] South Africans in Zanzibar are all whites and are associated with Apartheid by Zanzibari. I tend to agree with Zanzibari here, as many of the South Africans do treat Zanzibari as inferior. However, some other outsiders do this as well, and some Zanzibari do the same with outsiders. Moreover, there are South Africans that do not differentiate themselves from Zanzibari, but still experience stereotyping by Zanzibar men.

nights. That is why I love Zanzibar so much. Here, a perfect combination of work and leisure is possible' (Peter, Western man).

Peter is one of the many with such a schedule. Most of the beach residents have an outside office themselves or otherwise go to establishments where they can have a drink, use the internet connection and socialize or – for expatriates – swim a bit in between. Two hotels are extremely popular to work and hang around among outsiders: Coral Rock Hotel and Paje by Night. Both have a swimming pool, good menu and speedy free internet available. Also, this is where people can meet up with other outsiders, catch up on the latest news, socialize a bit, show their faces and eventually, get drunk and create a party with the others hanging around. While both Zanzibari men and outsiders have a same daily schedule, they go to different places. Outsiders go to places as mentioned above, while Zanzibari men go to tourist establishments run by Zanzibari, to catch up with their peers. Thus although their performance is similar, they act in different places.

The relative small scale of the tourist industry and the fact that everyone knows each other and all of the establishments, makes that residents in various ways work together and are dependent on each other. Even though inhabitants could be each other's competition, they very much seem to support others and other businesses. When one hostel is full, new guests are being brought to the hostel close by, because the managers and owners are befriended. Those two hostels bring, every Friday night, their guests to Jambo bar for the party, in order to support this bar. The owner of Coral Rock who is also a DJ, plays music at the competing place Paje by Night. The latter, however, will not have a party when Coral Rock has something going on. Such agreements, be they informal and verbal, are always accepted and followed. While this might feel very friendly, it is also necessary, because if there would be many different activities planned on one day, all places would be empty as people are scattered around. Logistic planning thus is both to keep good spirits, as well as to make the beach worthwhile.

An intense nightlife is what characterizes the beach the most. Living in an average temperature of thirty degrees Celsius all year round, in a tourist destination where holiday is the general vibe seems to bring about wild attitudes. Get-togethers and parties are held almost every night. While parties are not always that crowded, sometimes even experienced as rather boring, one night depicts a party as perfect and satisfying as can be. It is the rock 'n roll party in Coral Rock with prior barbecue. Very many residents of the beach are present, and already early to enjoy the classical *braai* including two beers for the price of one. The owner makes everybody free shots, the bar staff makes cocktails consisting of more alcohol than soda or juice. Coke dealers drive back and forth with more stuff. There is a line to get a line. People are dancing wild, head banging on the classics. While a drunk outside man throws his bottle of whiskey to his friend, a Rasta under the influence of marijuana just throws his beer bottle on the middle of the dance floor. Then comes the outside man again, this time he is the one that is not caught after a stage dive, and falls on the concrete floor. Luckily he does not feel a thing as intoxicated as he is. And when at three AM I leave for home, I see a guy and a girl coming out of the pool, naked.

This hotel, as well as the comparable Paje by Night throw such parties weekly. Both are not only popular among outsiders, but among tourists as well. They both do good advertising and have a reputation as ultimate places to spend a holiday. This is indeed where the parties are, where the most popular people go. Party like a rock star, is the credo of many regular visitors of those places.

With most of them being under thirty-five years old, the night life and popularity contest are continuous factors in these places, although it seems that every individual just wants to make the best out of his or her life. Hedonism, to enjoy to the fullest, to take everything available in order to make life even more exciting and beautiful, seems to be the way to live this beach life. Another example is Jambo, a bar in Paje run by Zanzibari, where an average Friday night includes much drama. While I meet a Zanzibari man married to a Western woman at the bar with his arms around his girlfriend, I see another Zanzibari man who is also married to a Western woman flirting and later leaving with a tourist girl. Then on my way to the bathroom there comes an outsider who is married with children out of the bushes with a mainlander girl. Later that night, around ten Zanzibari start a fight and even the owner of the bar needs to come in between to stop the fighting.

It seems that such wildness and socializing with others, although fun and liked by many, is the routine not always chosen, but precisely the only thing that can be done. Boredom seems to loom at the beach. Especially with the daily power cuts in the evening lasting for about two hours, people rather go out with others than stay at home. Moreover, as there are no cinemas, theaters, newspapers, shopping malls, gym, anything to fill free time with otherwise, socializing and going out seems to be all there is. What remains after talking about the latest, the gossip, the newest and hottest tourists only seems to be even more drinking and drugs to create a whole new adventure. Heroin, available as it is traded via Zanzibar, is used but only to a low extent. More popular, especially among outsiders, is cocaine, which can be bought relatively cheap. Certainly not all residents of the beach use this drugs, the in-crowd, however, are big fans. Many told me that while it started harmless and as an exciting project, people now use it on a regular basis, weekly, or even daily.

Furthermore, the beach life includes a high level of sexual activity.[38] Because of the beach location and the warm temperatures, at the beach, in the water, even in the middle of the night people wear little clothes. Men wear little more than just shorts, women bikinis, dresses or miniskirts. The esthetic body is a very visible factor in this community, and seems to influence sexual behavior. Both outsider men as well as Zanzibari men explained to me about their attraction to good looks and freedom to act, when I asked about their high level of sexual activity. Jason for example, a Western young and attractive man told me:

> 'I am young and single and enjoying to the fullest. It is warm here and thus I see beautiful and half naked women walking everywhere! I do not want a relationship, I just want to have fun. And to me it seems that everyone who comes to Zanzibar cannot expect something serious, as in the end, everybody is leaving sooner or later anyway. I am free and I want this girl. I do not care about her being single or not, I just want to have sex. Nothing more, nothing less'.

Many male residents agree with Jason in that they want to enjoy life to the fullest, and one way to achieve this is having as many sexual relationships as possible. Girls coming for their holidays are (voluntary) victims of both Zanzibari and outside men, as they seemingly want to relish to the maximum. But also female outsiders get together with the men, be they single or not. Indeed, being

[38] In the next chapter I will contextualize and theorize sexuality and gender. In this chapter, I merely name gender and sexuality in order to illustrate the beach lifestyle, and to provide examples of stereotyping and productions of, and perceptions on Otherness.

in a relationship does not seem to keep people, both men and women, from having sexual encounters with others.

Sexual relationships certainly are a large part of everyday life in this scene. From the ten singles part of this research, eight are sexually very active, as compared to Jason above. Out of the thirty-three couples (of which I followed either both partners or one of the partners), seventeen couples had one or even both cheating partners.[39] Furthermore, from four other couples I expect at least one partner to be unfaithful. This is the case for Zanzibari men – Western women relationships, as well as for outsider – outsider relationships, and Zanzibari men – Zanzibari women relationships. Although people are not so talkative about such behavior, especially those within a steady relationship, secretive is not really a way to describe people as at parties I often saw people in a steady relationship entangled with someone else.

Furthermore, some people told me about their escapades themselves. As Ibrahim, a Zanzibari man, explained to me: 'It is true that every now and then I am involved in sexual relationships with others than my girl. This is because I am a man, and men do such things. Sometimes I just have those needs'. To draw the lines of who has been involved with whom seems to be too big of a task. Ultimate freedom, in the sense of no limitations to abundant sexual behavior seems to be the highest good. Both Zanzibari and outsider men share this sexually active performance, and having sex seems like a competition: who can score the highest, who is therefore as masculine as can be. Thus, for men living at the beach, being sexually active in a sense equals success, and increases one's status.

But while some outside women are quite sexually active as well, this is not to be compared with men, both Zanzibari and outsiders. As compared to fifteen men I know that they are sexually active outside their relationship, I only know this about five women. It seems that male sexuality is about being sexually very active, while for women, to be ultimate feminine is not to have multiple affairs or one night stands. This becomes especially clear from the opinions about women who perform alike: they are being frowned upon and talked about, either with pity or on an angry tone. Instead, women are expected to be flexible and understandable with their partners when it comes to such escapades. They should not become too angry and rather see, as Abdul, a Zanzibari man argues, that 'it is only about having fun and releasing some pressure'. As such, it seems that stereotyping does not only concern background, but gender as well.

What becomes clear from the above is that the beach is depicted as the ultimate location in which freedom should be obtained, and indeed many inhabitants seem to be able to realize such a freedom. This beach life thus seems to resemble freedom. Even when inhabitants describe the beach as insane and occasionally suffer from specific 'freedoms' (as the Other's freedom can be harmful or offensive), they simultaneously agree with such performances. This is just the way it is over here, what makes the place charming, is what is suggested. Secretly, it seems to be liked, as it underlines

[39] Cheating refers to having sexual relationships next to a long-term relationship. It does not need to be perceived as cheating, however, as some see it as not bad, rather as accepted behavior. However, as partners must not find out and people thus act secretly, it seems that everyone is aware of the negative tone, or, at least negative consequences. In the following chapters I deal in a more detailed way with the romantic relationships between Zanzibari men and outside women, thus with 'extramarital' relations as well.

the attractiveness of the beach.[40] Freedom in this way becomes the rule, the ordering existent at the beach. However, that various freedoms not always resemble independency and stand in each other's way becomes, amongst others, clear from the mutual dependencies among the two groups of outsiders and Zanzibari men when it comes to business. In fact, reliance on the Other is indeed very much part of the intercultural business relations at the beach. Thus while both Zanzibari men as well as outsiders aim at complete freedom and independence, they do rely on each other which adds certain rules and regulations, an alternative ordering to the beach. In the below I will turn to such dependencies, how Zanzibari men rely on outsiders, but also the ways in which outsiders on their turn rely on Zanzibari men.

Why we need Zanzibari men

> 'What I do is helping *Wazungu* with finding a fine piece of land at a good location. I bring them to the plots, show them around, and if they like it I help them with the legal matters. I go over the contract with them, mediate between them and the owners of the land, those kinds of things. But what really annoys me is that they think they always know better and are so cheap. *Wazungu* always find things too expensive and distrust Zanzibari. As if we always want to cheat them! They should be lucky that I am willing to help them buying a piece of this paradise for a fair price. Some of them try to manage without the help of Zanzibari, even after I have warned them. They always come back to me for help, because it just does not work that way!' (Ibrahim, Zanzibari man).
>
> 'Most of the *wazungu* that come here think they can manage on their own, but they are wrong. You always need a Zanzibari here to build up a business, to do business. They know how to fix things. They know the law, they know the people' (Dawid, Zanzibari man).

As already is mentioned above, both Zanzibari men and outsiders depend on each other. To analyze such dependencies and the according power relations from a ludic point of view reveals how both groups aim to make sense of various realities that seem to conflict with each other. It is the options, ideas, rules and regulations of one group that conflict with those of the other, and that, for both, need to be ordered and used in a certain way to create a reality that makes sense. The playground of business at the beach is influenced by both groups, as the space for playfulness of outsiders becomes restricted by rules imposed by Zanzibari men, and vice versa. Instead of moving around freely, outsiders and Zanzibari men limit each other's free space, and indeed both impose a certain order. This ordering of power relations and dependencies, in short, this play, as I call it, is elaborated upon below. As the title of the paragraph already reveals, I now turn to the ways in which outsiders depend on Zanzibari men, and how Zanzibari are able to create a status of being essential at the beach, thus having a certain power.

[40] While many inhabitants of the beach share this lifestyle, there are some residents that live a relative quieter life: most Western women married to Zanzibari men, for example, but also some older outsiders that gave up partying a while ago, or those that simply cannot afford it. Be that as it may, the common denominator of tourism, in which in the end everybody is enrolled, and of which the nightlife is such an important aspect, influences everybody.

The first and most important way in which outsiders are dependent on Zanzibari men has to do with land issues. All the land at the coastline is owned by Zanzibari, mainly those living in the villages.[41] When an outsider wants to purchase a plot, he or she first needs to contact the owner of the particular plot. According to Zanzibari law, only Zanzibari men are allowed to buy and own land in Zanzibar.[42] At least, when it comes to small pieces of land on which, for example, a private house or a small hotel can be built.[43] Therefore, the outsiders that bought or are interested in buying land, all rely on Zanzibari men, and complex deals and contracts are needed. What happens is that on paper the Zanzibari is the official owner of the land, but agreed upon is that he will not interfere with what is actually happening with what is done on the land. This particular Zanzibari is often not very interested in what the outsider is doing with the plot, and indeed does not bother or halter the outsider. In practice thus, the outsider owns the land as he (often, but sometimes she) decides what to do with it and how. Generally the Zanzibari partner receives a monthly or annual payment, settled in advance as a fixed amount or a percentage of the profit.

While a contract seems to create a trustworthy situation, in reality, there are many possible turns where things can go wrong between the business partners. Every now and then, one of them steps up, decides that things are not fair. Details about whether this is true or false differ per situation and depend on the ways one looks at it. Local partners have much influence and thus are able to make changes any time. He can higher the price of the rent, or double it. Even if this is not in the contract, corruption does make such practices possible. Also, he can make a better deal with someone else, or make it a competition as in the outsider who pays the most will get a contract. Like this, many places changed management teams. One case was that of a hotel, where outside business partners found out, after a couple of years in which they built this hotel, that the local partner actually had, for already the same amount of time, another outside partner. For all those years the local partner got money from both outsiders, without them knowing about the others' existence.

In other cases local partners want outside partners to leave, in order for them to take care of the place themselves, without any outside help. Some of the outside partners built a place from scratch, and while in the beginning expectations might have been low, after only a couple of years the establishment turned out to be very successful. Local partners see this happening and feel they get too little money compared to the big business the outsider makes. They seem to figure, since the place is so popular, it must make a lot of money that all goes straight in the pocket of the outsider, sometimes not realizing money is again invested in the business directly as it comes in, in order to improve the place even more. Then, local partners can decide they can do it themselves, without the help of the outside partner and throw him out. Almost never a court case helps. The system takes too long to make decisions, or concludes it is the right of the local partner, due to 'mistakes' made by the outside partner. Unfortunately after such a thing happens, business goes down the drain as local partners often do not understand the mathematics behind running a business in tourism.

[41] These Zanzibari are often not residents of the beach but outsiders indeed are dependent on them. To get connected to those land owners, and to keep good contact, outsiders need a Zanzibari man that is living at the beach as a mediator. I will describe this below.

[42] According to my informants, at least. Furthermore, they state that Zanzibari women cannot buy land but do inherit land. However, this is questionable as Jones (1996) in his article on land laws in Zanzibar describes how *all* Zanzibari are able to own land. Moreover, Boswell (2008) states that women can only acquire land through marriage, which she can lose again when alienating her husband.

[43] There are different laws for acquiring big plots, but in the southeast, only small plots are being used.

A second way in which outsiders depend on Zanzibari men is their control over residency. Both the resident permit and housing are elements Zanzibari men seemingly have under their control.[44] Outsiders can all stay in Zanzibar, just as long as they pay. To get the correct permit or visa takes much time and effort because of the corrupted system. Bigger hotels do request permits for their employees in the official way, but many of the smaller places prefer to do it informally. It is just much easier and quicker to ask a Zanzibari 'specialized' in such business. For example Ibrahim, a Zanzibari man in his early thirties is more busy now with his informal job as mediator between outsiders and Zanzibari people and policies, than he is as a formal hotelier. He is involved in practices of selling and buying land, connecting potential buyers with potential sellers, acting as business partner and working with outside investors and business relations. Furthermore, Ibrahim is the one arranging many of the permits for outside employees on the southeast coast. For whatever problem that has to do with police officers, officials, laws, rules, regulations, contracts or other 'official' issues, Ibrahim can and will help, not even for ridiculous high prices, but for free or for a honest sum. He gains much in other ways, as now he knows more and more officers and officials of any kind, more outsiders and details about outsiders, businesswise, but also private matters.

As for the housing, landlords are often Zanzibari. Some of the outside employees reside in hotels they work at, others rent a house or apartment of their own. In the latter case, a monthly of annual rent has to be paid to the Zanzibari landlord, who therefore has reasonable power over outsiders. For instance, he might decide that it is about time to raise the rent when high season comes, or to accept a higher offer from other outsiders. Once I overheard one outsider man, Peter, talking to his landlord about the increased price of rent. While Peter's attitude and tone of voice seemed to indicate his control over the situation, the landlord was just sitting laid back, drinking a beer Peter paid for. He did not say much and he did not give in. This nonchalant body language and drinking on Peter's costs revealed his control and not caring about this particular outsider. This story is a good illustration of the way in which Zanzibari do business (indeed in fact play) with outsiders if they do not come from equal grounds. In this case, the Zanzibari does not rely on this particular outsider and knows he has other options. The Zanzibari knows he has the power in hands and will live up to this.

A third way in which outsiders rely on Zanzibari men is the issue of technicians. All technicians in the surroundings of the beach come from the island, and for all that needs to be done, those men are indispensable. Many outsiders embrace a Zanzibari man that can connect them with technicians, as this man knows the good ones, or pretends he knows the good ones. The quality of the building and work, and the speed with which it will be done depends on the *fundi. Fundis* (in proper Kiswahili *mafundi*, but at the beach the plural is *fundis*) are the technicians, as electricians, plumbers, painters, tailors, etcetera. Everybody can become a *fundi* by just calling oneself a *fundi*, so it is essential to know the rare good ones. *Fundis* are annoying in the eyes of many outsiders, and are the people most complained about. As they are always late, most of the time deliver half of the work they promised to do for the full price and which will break down soon anyway, one can imagine irritations rising up by outsiders. On the other hand, there are definitely some good *fundis* around, men that studied to be a carpenter or plumber, for example. Those few are rare and badly wanted. In this case,

[44] This is not to say that Zanzibari women cannot arrange this, but merely the fact that it is only Zanzibari men that have contact with outsiders. It is the lack of women at the beach that makes outsiders depend on Zanzibari men.

it surely takes a good relationship with a Zanzibari business partner to get one of them working for you.

Outsiders engaged in business at the beach rely on Zanzibari men for the success of their project, and to a certain extend also on the failure of it. As long as outsiders keep themselves to the rules of the Zanzibari men they should be under no threat. Once they, whether intended to or not, mess around with Zanzibari, by trying to get rid of him, by proposing a less fruitful deal or by making more money than expected by the Zanzibari while he is getting a fixed amount of money, trouble might arise. Grounds are shaky, as what is 'fair' is often not clear. Why should a man, be it a land owner or a *fundi*, that does not work still get money, why can he decide how much that should be and change that amount as he likes? On the other hand, without that Zanzibari, business would have never taken place and when trouble arrives, the expatriate needs his expertise, as often Zanzibari know how to deal with problems in ways outsiders never could. In this way, it becomes very clear how Zanzibari men make the rules of the game, how outsiders indeed are forced to play along the rules made by Zanzibari men.

Often I heard stories about natural distrust that outsiders have when it comes to Zanzibari men. They are afraid that they are being cheated by Zanzibari men simply because of their status as outsiders. It seems to be one of the lesser aspects of living in Zanzibar: the contact with Zanzibari, as it is often not as smooth as hoped for. Furthermore, outsiders do not seem to like the idea of depending on someone else. It seems as if outsiders are aware of the necessity of them playing according to Zanzibari rules, and do not like that in this way their own space to play (to be free and have influence and power) decreases.

Expectations of outsiders rarely seem to fit with expectations of Zanzibari on how something should be like. And for outsiders to ignore expectations and visions of Zanzibari and remain stubborn creates even more difficulties. I experienced that feelings of equality are very important in order to create a win-win situation. To respect each other's worlds, freedoms and practices seems to be important. Outsiders that give trust, loyalty, a proper salary and decent work times to their staff, *fundis* and business partner are being highly respected. In general, there is a difference being made between 'good' and 'bad' non-African outsiders. The category of 'bad' ones is the largest, entailing almost all outsiders, who are then called *mbuzis*.[45] A few expectations are there, namely the small number of outsiders that do not get involved and do not have an opinion about 'Zanzibari ways', and treat them as equals. However, it is not difficult to get in the *mbuzi* category, as often it only takes one misstep.

Lastly, outsiders depend on Zanzibari because of their lack of knowledge of Kiswahili. It is very rare among outsiders to speak the language fluently, often they speak English with every now and then Kiswahili words in between. Such sentences are often incorrect, but as much Kiswahili in a sentence as possible seems, according to outsiders, to make it more understandable for Zanzibari. For example, 'you do your *kazi* now. No *pesa* until *tayari*. *Sawa*?', would mean 'first do your work, only when it is finished I will pay you', or, 'what we need for the kitchen is *nyanya*, *embe* and *kuku*, can you buy that when you go *mjini*?' which would mean 'what we need for the kitchen are tomatoes, mangos and chicken, can you buy that when you go to Stone Town?'. Some outsiders can even produce whole sentences, but always business related. Only few are able to fully communicate in Kiswahili with Zanzibari.

[45] *Mbuzi* is Kiswahili for goat. While in Kiswahili the plural is *Wabuzi*, at the beach it is *mbuzis*.

This language barrier creates unequal power relations between Zanzibari and outsiders in several ways. In order to do business with outsiders, Zanzibari are forced to learn and speak English, since outsiders do not learn proper Kiswahili. On the other hand, outsiders do rely on Zanzibari (that are residents of the beach) to translate for them or to arrange deals and other things with Zanzibari that are not able to communicate in other languages than Kiswahili (other Zanzibari that do not live at the beach). Under these circumstances, those Zanzibari men can decide what they understand and what not. Many considerations have to be taken before a message gets through, or not. Furthermore, Zanzibari have the opportunity to gossip or make jokes about outsiders in their faces, without them realizing. This disrespectful behavior can lower the status of the outsider among a wider group of Zanzibari.

But when an outsider does try to speak proper Kiswahili, it is easy to make mistakes, be accidentally rude or misinterpret proverbs and sayings. Often, outsiders speak in a commanding tone, which might be the easiest but not always the best or most strategic option. Outsiders can seem to be bossy and elitist, even while they did not mean it like that. Therefore, to speak Kiswahili does not always better business relations, as it can come off (unwillingly) disrespectful.

To sum up, Zanzibari men have control of power when it comes to having access to land, setting up a business, as technicians and staff, to help outsiders as mediators for government related issues, with rules and regulations, permits and housing, and as translators. As such, outsiders rely on Zanzibari in various ways, and thus need to adjust their ways and practices according to those of Zanzibari men. There turns out to be a wide gap between wider Zanzibar and outsiders, with Zanzibari men, residents of the beach, as mediators between the two. Indeed, it is the Zanzibari men that live at the beach, that keep ties with wider Zanzibar and that, at the same time, seem to make sure outsiders do not (need to) mingle with Zanzibari in general. Those Zanzibari men know the rules, norms and values, and how to bend them for the sake of outsiders. Furthermore, it is them who know the right people in the right place when necessary. Therefore, outsiders only seem to be able to live and do business in Zanzibar because of exactly those Zanzibari men. However, if it was not for the presence of outsiders, the tourist industry would not be as booming as it is now. Let us now turn to the ways in which Zanzibari men rely on outsiders, to make the picture complete and in order to show how the beach as a playground is flexible and imbued by more realities, as Zanzibari indeed need to adapt the rules of the game of outsiders as well.

In goat we trust: the necessity of outsiders

> ‘Before, young people went to Stone Town or even moved off the island in their search for a job, as there was nothing here in *shamba*[46] for them. Land was cheap as the soil is bad for farming, and the lack of rain makes it too hot and dry anyway. But nowadays, Tourism has made this *shamba* a popular place. It is almost impossible to buy a piece of land at the sea side. Prices are ten or even a hundred times higher than ten years ago. Now, people from Stone Town and even from mainland Tanzania come here to work in tourism’ (Ibrahim, Zanzibari man).

[46] *Shamba* is Kiswahili for farm, field, a plot of land, and, in this example, the countryside.

Although there is little for which Zanzibari rely on outsiders compared to how outsiders rely on Zanzibari, as shall become clear from the below, their dependency is nevertheless for important factors. As such, not only do Zanzibari men invent and control rules of the playground, outsiders as well make rules Zanzibari have to live up to. Play at the beach therefore is designed by both groups, both influencing the playground, its order and freedoms.

The growing tourist industry at the beach has enormous effects on the lives of Zanzibari at the southeast coast. The fact that tourism changed much at this side of the island becomes visible, amongst others, by looking at the tremendous rise in prices that occurred in the last couple of years. If it was not for the high amounts of money that outsiders offer for land on the coastline, with the beautiful sea view and comfortable wind that keeps mosquitoes away, the same land would be affordable, even cheap. Moreover, according to villagers, prices of food and goods have increased considerably because of the presence of tourists and the tourist industry. Furthermore, the landscape, the color of residents, the main industry, and maybe most important, not so much just prices, but the fact that money is around in high amounts is what influences the beach the most.

Expatriates, thus white people, seem all to be very rich, 'loaded', through the eyes of many Zanzibari. Business people, investors, people that come and build a house or tourist establishment as a new chosen path of life or those who migrate after their retirement, but naturally also tourists: all are able to do incredible things because of their great amounts of money. This differentiates them from, and makes them more powerful than Zanzibari, as they often could never do similar things, not even after a lifetime of hard work. This difference between Zanzibari and outsiders results in a dependency of Zanzibari on outsiders, as the first group only seems to be able to become part of this relatively influential and affluent group by working with (and to an extend for) outsiders.

Therefore, the first way in which Zanzibari men are dependent on outsiders is the investment money with which outsiders come to the beach. While there are Zanzibari that are able to invest similar amounts of money in businesses, this remains a rare practice.[47] For a Zanzibari man to be able to obtain a share of that money, it is necessary to either engage in business with outsiders, or to work for them. Moreover, since there are not many job or future related opportunities for youth at the southeast coast, the main business and job supplier in the area, and actually in the whole of Zanzibar, is tourism. Outsiders thus open doors and create opportunities for earning money. Hence, Zanzibari depend on outsiders to earn a salary.

Secondly, the lack of knowledge of doing business in the tourist industry, and especially dealing with tourism directed to Westerners, is what makes Zanzibari men rely on outsiders. While nowadays there are schools for tourism, the number of Zanzibari with proper knowledge of the sector remains limited. This might be a result of the absence of classes in business- and finance related aspects at tourism schools, or simply because of not knowing as good as outsiders what outsiders need, want and expect. As such, that Zanzibari lack such skills makes them unable to run a tourist establishment successfully on their own, and therefore, an outsider in the management team is much needed.

[47] Such investment money is rarely all one person's, often a group of shareholders and investors put money in one establishment, or individuals borrow money from the bank. However, as often one or two outsiders come to the beach with this money, Zanzibari believe that all outsiders are very rich, just as the tourists that come to the beach. Everybody who is able to travel this freely must be very rich.

The economical and political aspects of running a business are often handled by the outsiders. While certainly the lack of knowledge explains this, more important and interesting are the social structures that underlie this fact. Namely, that outsiders, in contrast to Zanzibari men at the beach, do not need to respond to requests from family members or villages is a reason to put outsiders in high positions. Zanzibari men that live at the beach still are, in a way, part of the Zanzibari community and thus have related concerns. For them it is necessary to think about issues as hiring family members or not, or give proper salaries in order to secure ones status. Outsiders, on the other hand, think about the most lucrative business with minimal external concerns, such as about the village. Paula and Abdul, who form an intercultural couple, for example, have an interesting way of solving such issues. As a Zanzibari man, Abdul hires relatives as staff and makes sure he distributes his wealth, but only to a certain degree, as Paula, as an outsider, makes sure there is still a reasonable balance between what they give away and keep to themselves. If it was not for her, their business would not be there any more, as all profits would be sucked up by relatives and villagers. This example shows how the beach can be influenced by both worlds of Zanzibari and outsiders, and that in fact, while many of the ideas and ideals of the ultimate free place conflict, they can also overlap or be integrated together.

As already mentioned above, outsiders seem to know better what tourists want. Most of the tourists that visit the beach come from European countries, the United States and South Africa. The standards they expect from tourist establishments seem to be better understood by outsiders, as they come from these same areas in the world tourists come from. The need for running water around the clock, proper cleaning and hygiene standards, a cleaned beach and ready-to-lay-on sun beds, even the fresh flower on the dinner table, are all issues the outsider's eye catches while Zanzibari do not seem to notice. At least, this is a generality I noticed when visiting hotels, bars and restaurants. The small things that make or break a business, as it turned out while speaking with hoteliers and other people working in hospitality. Tourists do find this important as I often heard them compare a variety of establishments on tidiness, the quality of the food, beach bathing and swim qualities, and put comments about such aspects on websites such as *tripadvisor*.[48]

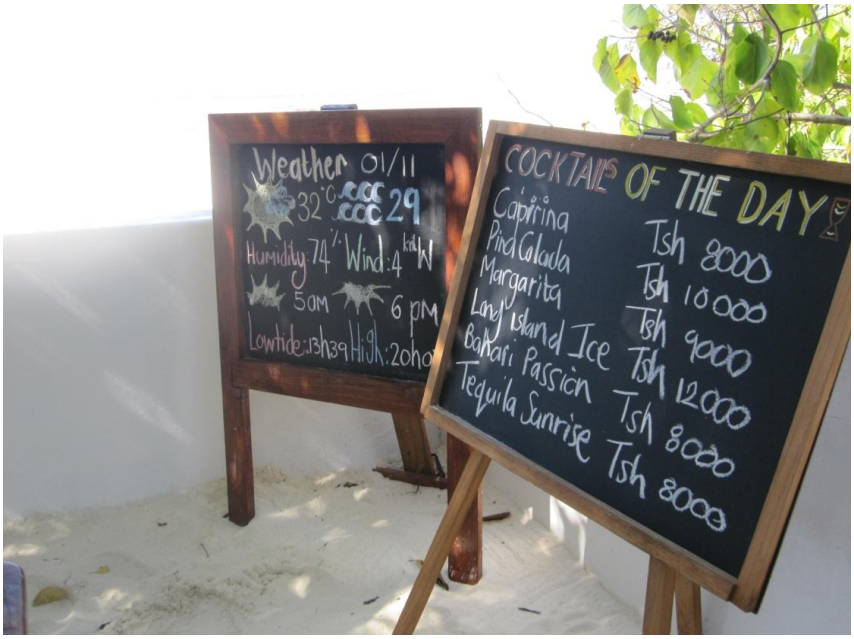
Furthermore, many of the outsiders that work in tourism complain about the work ethos of Zanzibari, as I argued before. They would be slow, lazy, not willing to work and just never seem to understand the most simple procedures and series of operations. For instance, they forget about the stocking system, so that all of a sudden essential goods appear to be finished. They do not tell about their family visit in Dar es Salaam and thus unannounced do not show up at work. Or they take an order and give it to the kitchen, that only after twenty minutes realizes some products needed are not in store. Those complains are grounded as the above problems are happening daily in many businesses. More important, tourists seem to mind and this is exactly why I would state that Zanzibari need outsiders. To make a success out of the tourist industry, to keep the quality of service and surroundings on the level guests expect it to be.

That outsiders seem to be aware of their indispensable position becomes clear from a joking T-shirt with the text: "In Goat we trust", that serves as an advertisement for a hotel in Jambiani. With a flashy design and worn by the managers and the staff of the hotel, it just seems like a funny and incomprehensible 'uniform'. However, as *mbuzi* means goat in Kiswahili, and a 'bad' *mzungu* is being called *mbuzi*, this shirt actually is a sarcastic way of saying: the white man is always right. This text

[48] http://www.tripadvisor.com/ (01-06-2012).

covers it all: although we do not really like those white people here, surely we need them, they know how it works.

Food is another issue on which Zanzibari rely on outsiders in the tourist business. Although Zanzibari are very experienced preparing the 'traditional' kitchen, such as curries, octopus and lobster, 'Western food', such as pizzas, hamburgers and steaks is something different, and still quite new. The more fancy hotels and restaurants have an outside food and beverage manager, or even an outside chef, that teaches Zanzibari cooks how to prepare what tourists wish for. Furthermore, more and more foreign products are imported to Zanzibar. For instance French cheese, Kenyan steak, Spanish wine and delicatessen are being imported from the outside, by outsiders, in order to please outsiders. When it comes to taste, outsiders know what outsiders want, and this is why they are crucial for the success of tourist businesses in the southeast.



Typical daily circumstances at the beach: hot weather and cocktails are not only enjoyed by tourists, but by many of the inhabitants of the beach as well.

While Zanzibari are indispensable when it comes to connections on the ground, such as with the *fundis*, the delivery people, other men involved in the tourist business, the connection to the virtual world is maintained by outsiders. Indeed, it is them who are managing the online advertisements and bookings. When intercultural couples run a business together, this division of 'worlds' and labor is even more clear. Then, the Zanzibari partner is occupied with keeping good contacts with other Zanzibari, as those that might be useful in the future, and making sure the *fundi* is doing what they expected from him, etcetera. The Western woman is occupied with the computer, checking the bookings, putting new pictures on the website, corresponding with potential clients and the like. While Zanzibari men are active online, for instance by listening to music or by connecting to friends through facebook, online business they do not seem to be interested in. This might stem from their lack of skills when it comes to English writing and usage of computers, and a certain fear of messing things up. It seems that many Zanzibari men do not 'dare' to get involved in such relative important matters, especially when outsiders are there to do it properly.

Finally, outsiders are indispensable as it seems that many tourists wish to see a Western person in the tourist establishment. Outsiders as well as Zanzibari men stated that tourists would feel more safe and at home when a familiar face runs their hotel. They might feel better understood, taken more serious and eventually even feel that if something bad happens, the Western manager knows what to do, knows how to handle circumstances. Furthermore, as Western seems to mean coming from a same culture when in Africa and thus being surrounded by Africans, this Western manager can advise them better on excursions, the best shopping street in Stone Town or the best restaurant to try. A Western manager one can ask where they make the best coffee, without feeling encumbered. Interestingly, while one could view this as the purest racism and the largest prejudices, it seems that everyone has accepted this. Zanzibari state that they are fine with this: they are bored with small talks with tourists and outsiders get paid for the job.

I experienced this myself when an outsider asked me if I could take care of his hotel for a week, as he had to go abroad for business. When I asked him what he wanted me to do, as I admitted I do not know anything about tourism, he told me that the most important thing is to be there and chat, and most of all be white, since tourists are mainly white and they like white faces. While his staff knew everything in details, I was doing what he asked me to: chatting, being white, trying to give tourists a good feeling. Indignantly, I told Ibrahim, a Zanzibari man, about my experience with tourists. I wondered and could not understand why tourists seem to trust a white person and not an African. I could not believe it, but what Ibrahim, a Zanzibari man, then said made sense immediately.

> 'You see', he said, 'white people just like to talk to people from where they come from, they can recognize them. It is something from home while they are abroad. They do not believe us Africans. If I tell them a taxi to Stone Town is fifty dollar, they think I am a cheater. But when you tell them later it is sixty dollar, they believe you! Incredible. But you know the good part? We Zanzibari do not even like to have those endless chats with tourists. It is boring and always the same. And therefore I like to have a white manager, so I do not need to do that stupid talking all the time'.

Thus, the above makes clear that not only do outsiders depend on Zanzibari men, also the other way around, it becomes visible that Zanzibari men rely on outsiders. For money, their investments and visions on tourism designed for Western visitors, for their white faces, outsiders are indispensable at the beach. Ethnicity, which in this case deals with race and being either an outsider or a Zanzibari, in this way is thus an important marker of differences between residents of the beach. Zanzibari men have human, cultural and geographical capital, while outsiders have economic and financial capital. Such dependencies create limitations to freedom and order for each group, yet at the same time from a larger perspective, collaboration provides opportunities for the experience of freedom (and at the same time alternative ordering) as well. Therefore, by focusing on (inter)dependencies, it becomes clear how inhabitants of the beach aim to organize an optimal space in which they are able to move as free as possible, while simultaneously, they create an alternative ordering of mutual reliance.

From the ludic perspective, both outsiders and Zanzibari men play, as both groups are actively making sense of this space in which various realities that actually seem to conflict, all need to be combined. Zanzibari ways and benefits need to be intertwined with those of outsiders, and the wider worlds of Western tourists and Zanzibar in general need to be taken in as well. As has become clear,

both groups urge for a certain independency, yet at the same time, both groups are dependent on each other, which makes the combining of various realities a necessity. Both Zanzibari men and outsiders need to perform creatively in order to make such a playground reality. Business as such can be seen as a playground in which the various plays of Zanzibari men and outsiders become visible.

Ethnicity, or race, seems to be the largest sign of difference, and, as already mentioned above, occidentalism and orientalism, the ways in which the 'exotic' Other is stereotyped, are means of positioning the groups. Stereotypes are created and used in order to define the Other, and simultaneously, stereotypes (about the Other or the self) are used to verify certain behaviors. Such different visions and characteristics bring about conflict and differentiation, but can also be borrowed and bend to meet particular ends, and in this way can be recognized as an illustration of a playful disposition of the beach. For instance, specific characteristics of orientalism can be used by Zanzibari men to create a fruitful situation, be those characteristics 'authentic' or made-up. As such, to combine various realities that seem to conflict certainly can bring about an optimal situation. It is exactly this usage of occidentalism and orientalism at the beach that will be illustrated in the next paragraph.

Mutual dependence, mutual strive

The mutual dependency between Zanzibari men and outsiders is a result of the autochtony-allochtony dichotomy, and is intertwined with ethnic stereotyping. While the dependency of the two groups on each other is at some points as great as the gap between them, a closer look reveals different approaches of Zanzibari men to outside women than to outside men. The same holds the other way around: outside women often have a different approach toward Zanzibari men than have outside men. In fact, as it turns out, the spheres in which practices of orientalism and occidentalism mostly occur, are those of sexuality and gender. While ethnicity is a field in which power relations and (in)depencencies are situated, it is right in the fields of gender and sexuality (as part of the stereotype images) where power relations between the two groups are contested most. In this section I illustrate the ways in which stereotyping occurs, by focusing on notions on gender and sexuality as part of practices of stereotyping.

Although most outsiders, both male and female, tend to associate much more with other outsiders than with Zanzibari, the distance between Zanzibari men and outsider men seems to be wider than that between Zanzibari men and female outsiders. There are two reasons for this, and indeed deal with ethnic stereotypes and (perceived) power relations between (Other) men and women. First of all, there are many outside women married or in a steady relationship with Zanzibari men, who, as a couple, have a business together. To marry a Zanzibari automatically implies to be more involved with Zanzibari in general: parents, friends, and other Zanzibari respect this woman more, as she does not seem to care about race, color or money.[49] While outside men can be dealt with amicably or at a professional level, outside women thus can be approached on a romantic level as well. As such, outside women and Zanzibari men have more reasons (and benefits) to approach one another. Furthermore, Zanzibari men do not need certain skills, status and capital to get involved with outside

[49] There are more factors that play a role when it comes to the liking of Western women, which will be described in the following chapters on romantic relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women.

women, as for them it is not necessarily about business, which indeed would be the case when encountering and getting involved with outside men.

Secondly, a smaller distance between Zanzibari men and outside women is caused by opposite genders. There does not need to be competition on the basis of sex, which creates distance between the groups of men. Furthermore, Zanzibari men state how Zanzibari women are different from Western women, as they have another religious and cultural background. Moreover, according to them, Western women would be more independent, even self-sufficient. At the same time, however, it seems that a woman remains a woman for Zanzibari men, as many describe them as emotional less stable than men, caring, and mild. When intercultural couples fight, men often blame the women for their feminine hysteria and madness, shaking their heads about the scene their partner caused. But, Western women are closer to Zanzibari men because they are seen as potential sexual partners. There is always the option of sex and an eventual romantic relationship, just because she is female. Thus, through the eyes of many Zanzibari men, it seems, women are women, women are white, women bring pleasure.

As Zanzibari men come from a background in which men have more power than women in the public domain and thus in business and economic affairs, and where women are barely seen in nightlife activities, Western women in business and on the dance floor must be a strange sight. As such, it seems that Western women are a strange breed, incomprehensible and thus not even recognized as true opponents. Western men on the other hand, are more recognizable as they share the same sex, and for the normality of doing business with men.

At first sight, the only thing that is different between Zanzibari men and outside men is skin color (ethnicity, race, including culture), but touches upon big issues. Relationships between Zanzibari men and outside men are mainly business related, and competition thus is about economic and political matters. However, this invisible but palpable conflict between white and black – to put it bluntly – can be noticed in several areas, and is a constant struggle for men to prove themselves. It seems that men living at the beach somehow and sometimes need to show their strength in order to maintain power and be on top of the game. However, their definitions of what it means to be 'on top' may differ from each other, what makes this struggle relatively easy to win for all of them. The tension between Zanzibari men and outside men seems to be a constant and is needed in order to keep all of them alert and active.

> 'There was this man who called me to make an appointment to talk about his plans of buying land on the southeast coast. As he was about to leave the island for home in South Africa, he asked if I could meet him on the airport. Since I was very busy, I told him that this was not possible. And I thought to myself "if he wants to talk to me, he should come to me!". Then, he asked if we could meet in two months, as he was planning on coming back. I told him that I would be in Europe by then, and so we have no appointment planned. This man thinks we all [Zanzibari] will do everything as he says. As if we do not have anything better to do! It does not work like that. He needs me so he has to try his best to get to me' (Ibrahim, Zanzibari man).

The above quote is more than a 'colorless' power struggle about who should make an effort. As Zanzibari men constantly discussed such things with me, I realized it was not about the business as such. Important to them was to underline their power, their ability to decide what is happening to

and with this part of the island. It is theirs, they have the control over it, not the Westerners that come with their suitcases full of money. Geo-political power is what they have, which, in their eyes, is worth more than the economic power outsiders brings. Thus while outsiders seem to be in charge as they bring in the money, in fact Zanzibari men believe to be in charge as they have the last word when it comes to land. When they decide it is time for the outsider to leave, probably no other options are available. However, when the outsider does leave, he often takes with him the business, which makes the Zanzibari lose.

Moreover, outside and Zanzibari men seem to compete over women. Who has the sexual power, is a popular question, a game played on a daily basis. As Zanzibari men in the beach community are active seekers of sexual relationships, outside men think of Zanzibari men as extremely sexual, polygamous and unfaithful. While they seem to have a point, this is not to say that these outsiders behave any differently themselves. Most of the outside men are highly sexual themselves and, if not single, regularly commit adultery.[50] The game is about outside women, both tourists and expats, although tourists are preferred as they leave again soon.

This competition divides the group of outside women (now both tourist and expat women) in two: women that end up with a Zanzibari, and, women that get involved with outside men.[51] And the triumph is great, especially among Zanzibari men, if they 'scored' yet another woman. It is even more exultant when an outside woman, in a relationship with an outside man, gets sexually involved with a Zanzibari. Then, Zanzibari are definitely on top, as apparently even this woman cannot live without a Zanzibari man and Zanzibari sexuality. Since the gossip scene among Zanzibari men is enormous, it is not surprising that all of them at the beach know about such scenarios. But none of them will tell the woman's partner, which shows a disrespectful approach. In this way, Zanzibari men have 'beaten' the Western men on the highest level.

But also outside men find it pleasurable to see how they beat Zanzibari in their own game, as they describe it. When they, instead of a Zanzibari manage to get the girl, this would obviously proof their natural high status, as they, of course, would be way better than Zanzibari men. Because, 'who wants a Rasta? As they are smelly and drunk, and one cannot even have a conversation with them!' is what I often heard when hanging out with the (self-named) 'rock stars' of the southeast. Interestingly, the group of Western party goers is quite wild themselves. Almost daily under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, they are indeed often busy chasing girls. Whereas others would see both groups as one, just all men living a free sexual life, full of partying, flirting and going home with yet another girl as often as possible, they themselves make a clear distinction between them and the Others. Color and background, apparently, do matter.

This short section shows how practices of orientalism and occidentalism are an intrinsic part of the beach life. Background and ethnicity, and to an extend race matter, and Others are often defined and

[50] Their partners consider it to be adultery, but men themselves, however, do not need to view their behavior as such. They might as well see it as having fun, instead of 'cheating'. But, all men seem to be aware of the fact that their partners do consider their behavior as adultery, and as a result, might describe their behavior like this themselves.

[51] There are also women that do not end up having a (short-term) relationship with a man in Zanzibar, definitely not all tourist women do. Women that come to live at the beach almost all are involved in a relationship. Those women that do not get involved with any man are quickly forgotten about. Also for my point of focus now, they do not need to be mentioned.

approached according to their gender and sexuality as part of their Otherness. For Zanzibari men, it is more fruitful to get off well with outside women than with outside men, as they can yield more from such relationships. Not all outside women have (casual) relationships or daily contact with Zanzibari men. For Western women in general, it does not seem to matter that much whether they deal with Zanzibari or outside men.[52] While outside men do compete with their Zanzibari counterparts, it seems that for them it is more about making sure business is running smooth and to an extent proving their masculinity and sexuality. Zanzibari, on the other hand, seem to be in need of proving more by competing with outside men: their whole identity of worthwhile men, and keeping in control of their space, their island is at stake.

To view the beach as a playground by making use of ludism, clarifies that in order to make sense of this place, which is composed out of so many various realities, stereotyping seems to be essential, as in this way, ordering can take place. Realities are not only taken as a given, they are created and composed as well, amongst others, by defining Others as exotic, sexually very active, stupid, etcetera. Stereotyping thus can be seen as a way to make sense, to give meaning to a hectic and ambivalent world and is a practice, to a greater or lesser extent, of all inhabitants of the beach.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I dealt with freedoms, as well as rules and regulations apparent at the beach, in particular by focusing on business relationships between Zanzibari men and outsiders. I described the beach (by looking at it) as a playground, its players (the residents) and their lifestyle, by especially focusing on existing power relations, (in)dependencies and interdependencies between outsiders and Zanzibari men residing at the beach, and the according stereotypes. It shows that while the beach, by its inhabitants, is perceived to be a free zone in which they can do what they want and as they please, their performances are ambiguous. Indeed, in a sense, the beach keeps its promise of complete freedom, but on the other hand, there are many rules and regulations, established and enforced by inhabitants themselves, that create an interdependency that thus limits the perceived freedom.

When considering the beach a playground, it becomes clear that this is one reality, existing simultaneously with different orders, as that of wider Zanzibar, or Western home countries of outsiders. Within this playground all actors creatively have to set specific rules, follow specific rules, and have to defend their space to play, in order to realize their own meaningful life. It seems that in order to have the ultimate freedom, competition is existing, and a constant battle has to be fought. Even to live in a paradise that should be free and open is coupled with some ordering. And while this ordering is an alternative one, it is being established by residents of the beach themselves. Hence, even though people come to seek and find freedom in a certain way, and also come to meet liberations on various scales and in various spheres, still, dependencies and power relations make a specific order that make such a freedom a questionable thing.

I argue that the players at the beach have a specific lifestyle different from the occasional sojourners. However, within this community a clear distance or line can be drawn between Zanzibari men and

[52] Although for some ethnicity, exoticism, thus orientalism matters when it comes to intercultural relationships. Some Western women indeed are attracted to black men for their Otherness, which is also described below.

outsiders, as if both groups have their own (limited) space to play in, and underline the importance of their own rules. Even though both share the same place for similar reasons, many differences can be found that result in contradictions, competitions, and specific power relations. Such power relations indeed have become very clear throughout this chapter. Zanzibari men, while having human, cultural and geographical capital still depend on outsiders for economic capital and knowledge of doing business in the tourist industry. The same holds true the other way around, for outsiders and their reliance on Zanzibari men.

Such power relations and conflicting realities turn out to build upon and underscore notions of Otherness, thus on occidentalism and orientalism. It has become clear that stereotyping is often based on notions of the Other's ethnicity (and race), gender (roles) and sexuality. It is in those fields that competition between the two groups takes place, as those matters apparently can increase one group's status, and lower that of the Other group.[53] However, regardless of outcomes, it seems that this competition over power is more important to Zanzibari men than it is for outsiders, as the latter group often has the means to move out. Even though it is a two-sided game, the price is higher for Zanzibari men, as outsiders are more flexible, better secured and prepared for a life outside Zanzibar. But Zanzibari men have another tool of securing a prosperous life, a new lifestyle, with, most importantly, strong power in hands: steady relationships with outside women. The next two chapters deal with such intercultural relationships.

[53] Although in this sense strive is more between Zanzibari men and outside men, over outside women. However, it still remains a presentation of the two groups competing over power.

4. What's love got to do with it? Why Zanzibari men marry Western women

'No man would ever admit they do it [marry a Western woman] for the money, that would just be stupid. But there definitely are men that are like that and they are recognizable. They build a house, spend the money. And when the money has gone, the fighting starts and they separate. In any case, just as the goal is achieved, they break up, simple as that' (Ibrahim, Zanzibari man).

'She is a very special woman. I met her when I still was very young. She liked me and I liked her, we fell in love. She kept on coming back to the island so for years we saw each other time and time again. I had a very difficult life but she made it much better, she helped me in so many ways! When she came permanently we got married and opened a business together. But now, I realize I skipped my youth. Now I just want to enjoy my life, be free and have fun. She does not like this. I was too young to realize what being married entailed' (Abdul, Zanzibari man).

The story of Zanzibari Abdul and Western woman Paula is a tragic one. Over ten years ago the two of them met when Paula came travelling in Zanzibar. As they had such a good time, talking and getting to know each other, Paula came around more often, even annually to visit Abdul and her beloved Zanzibar. When she was back home in Europe they wrote letters to each other and Paula sent clothes and cash so that Abdul could build a house for them together. After a couple of years, they wanted Paula to stay permanently so they opened a business and got married. But when he should have picked her up at the airport, he overslept. And that was the beginning of the end. As it turned out, while she was working back home and spending her salary on him, he met another Western woman, with whom he got a daughter, and even visited the two of them in Europe. Although that relationship finished, he now has a relationship with a Zanzibari woman who he is about to marry. When Paula found out she broke up with him, being heartbroken by all the lies. Even though Abdul feels for her, he did make use of the opportunity of a Western woman coming around. He took the opportunity. He now has a very successful business, a couple of pieces of land, a house and a steady income.

Introduction

The story above is one among the many along the shore. Apart from intercultural business relations, the beach in Zanzibar is a perfect setting for romantic relationships between Western women and Zanzibari men. Indeed, intercultural couples make up a vast part of the scenery, and quite a lot of tourist establishments and private houses are built and run by such couples. Married or in a steady and long-term relationship[54], young couples or older, with a small or larger age gap, with or without children, together or already separated, in all shapes and sizes such relationships can be found. This

[54] By long-term I mean over a year with daily contact, even if the particular woman is, at the time of fieldwork, located in Europe.

chapter deals with the question *how do Zanzibari men, by having romantic relationships with Western women, create and increase freedom and order, how do they perceive and perform within such relationships, and what does that evoke for them within the community at the beach?*

The focus is thus on romantic intercultural relationships at the beach, from the point of view of Zanzibari men. The first empirical paragraph elaborates on the first encounter, the way couples meet and how they come to settle on the beach. Often, luck and opportunism from the side of the men and deep feelings of love from the side of the women seem to be the ingredients for a marriage or steady relationship. That a relationship with a Western woman is a popular wish among young Zanzibari at the beach, and how such a relationship has a deep influence on one's lifestyle will be described in the next paragraph. Then, I will elaborate on relationships at the long term, to illustrate how and why men settle with their partner in Zanzibar. To settle here, in Zanzibar, with a Western woman, creates a space in which the best of both worlds is being combined: the familiar surrounding as well as the chosen benefits and standards from the West. Men make up a lifestyle rather unique and beneficent to them, but not always favorable to their partners. I argue that Zanzibari men rely on Western women, but cover this dependency with an independent lifestyle, which eventually might lead to a separation. Such endings and possible new beginnings is what I describe in the last empirical paragraph. An overkill of independence from the man's side leaves no space for confirmations and indeed might not be necessary, as the relationship to him is already satisfying as it is. While for women it might be experienced as a complete loss, men seem to have gained many things, and thus come out of a relationship satisfied and more than ready for new romances.

I take romantic relationships as a point of departure, in order to show how 'love' can be seen as a concept that generates specific freedoms, as it gives way to opportunities and wealth to Zanzibari men. To analyze such relationships from a ludic perspective creates the opportunity to view romantic relations as a strategy within play, and Zanzibari men as ludic in the sense that they, by having romantic relationships with Western women and are combining various notions of love, reach for meaning and certain ends.[55] That men are aware of the freedom that can be gained from a relationship with a Western woman becomes clear from the fact that such partnerships are often planned beforehand. Men perform on the basis of a stipulated plan and adapt and change gender roles. Masculinity – in this context seen as the perceptions and experiences of men with regard to sexuality and (gender) relationships, but also relative to their social, political and economical status within society[56] – is used in a flexible way, as men creatively adapt and bend gender roles and sexualities. Zanzibari men play with gender roles and sexuality, and evoke a certain emasculation yet at the same time increase masculinity, as they gain a higher standard of living (compared to other Zanzibari both at the beach as well as in wider Zanzibar).

Within such romantic relationships, power relations become visible in many different ways, also varying in the different stages of a relationship. Especially notions on gender and sexuality give way to certain (in)dependencies, as will be described in the following. Such power relations between

[55] I want to underline that the concept of play is *etic*, thus that Zanzibari men do not consider themselves to be at play as such. Romantic relationships are serious affairs that are not seen as merely a game by such couples. Rather, my approach to those relationships is ludic, as I describe romantic relationships as part of a play, a playground as in this way, the various strategies of picking and choosing from notions of love, sexuality and the like become apparent.

[56] My definition of masculinity is based on Spronk's study on men and masculinity in Nairobi (2005:44).

Zanzibari men and Western women can be seen as tools that are used and played with by Zanzibari men, in order to create a playground beneficial to them. It becomes clear throughout the chapter that men within such relationships use different rules and regulations, and are more flexible in the picking and choosing of notions and concepts that imply rules to play with than their partners. Moreover, men define freedom in a different way than their Western partners. As such, realities between partners seem to differ, and men have more grounds to play on than their Western partners.

I chose to separate men's perceptions on, and performances within romantic intercultural relationships from those of women, since while they together make up the couples, their intentions and actions vary greatly. As such, this chapter focuses purely on Zanzibari men, the next exclusively on Western women. The methods I used for collecting data on romantic relationships differ, as men did not feel like talking as much as Western women did. While women identified with me, as a Western women myself, Zanzibari men mainly saw me as another possible option for romance, love or sex. As such, I did have conversations with men, but not as deep, often and long as with Western women. Participant observation during sessions of hanging out and while going out during night time is how I gained most of my information on the ways of men, combined with the vast amount of gossip and what their partners told me about them. It is unfortunate that men were not as open as Western women were, but this also indicates the delicacy of the research topic. It shows the importance of, and the pressure there is on having a relationship with a Western woman. Being open about it, in particular to a Western women, might threaten opportunities much wished for.

Gender and sexuality at the beach

To get a better understanding of romantic relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women, it is useful to first contextualize and theorize notions of sexuality, gender and romantic relationships. The presence of people with many different backgrounds brings about a multicultural population, and various gender roles and sexualities, as well as different visions and ideas about those concepts. Both individuals and groups of people have notions of what sexuality should (not) be, how gender roles should (not) be, how men and women should (not) behave. While hegemonic notions already create tensions and Others within groups, much more confusion and conflict is about to arise when a population is made up out of people with various backgrounds, as is the case at the beach in Zanzibar.

The hybrid collection of notions on sexuality and gender present at the beach make this place an intersection, a meeting point of all such constructs. Much literature has focused either purely on African sexuality and gender (see for example Cole 2010; Cole & Thomas 2009; Ouzgane & Morrel 2005; Spronk 2005; Tamale 2011), or on such constructs in general (see for example: Foucault 1978; Giddens 1992; Lancaster & di Leonardo 1997). For a long time, Western sexuality and gender were seen as hegemonic, while African sexuality was viewed as primitive, oversexed, named in one sentence with reproduction and disease. Where Western would mean 'normal' and thus heterosexual, monogamous, in the context of marriage, African sexuality would be hypersexual, polygamous and dominated by men (Tamale 2011).

Whereas sexuality can be defined in many ways, relate to many spaces and can be studied in various ways and on various scales, I use the anthropological constructionist approach. According to this approach, sexuality is seen as a cultural construct, and it focuses on the ways in which social contexts structure sexual desire (Spronk 2006). According to Hirsch (2003: 4) 'sexuality is conceptualized (…) as the culturally variable meanings, ideas, and practices attached to physical relationships between people'. As such, different cultures may define, view, practice and use sexuality in various ways. Sexual stereotypes of Others influence ethnic (and thus racial) divisions. As Nagel (2003: 9) states, 'the sexual ideologies of many groups define members of other classes or ethnicities as sexually different from, usually inferior to their own *normal* and proper ways of being sexual. These class or ethnic "Others" might be seen to be oversexed, undersexed, perverted, or dangerous'. It is not necessarily a 'true' sexuality of a group, but the way Others use it to create an image of that certain group. Moreover, individuals can hide behind the perceived sexuality of their group, in order to be excused for certain behavior.

Gender can be seen as an analytical category that 'operates as a form of social stratification and as a source of identity. Gender in this sense is both individual property (for example, people act out of gender identities) and a characteristic of social organizations' (Hirsch 2003: 3). Ideas about gender roles exist within and about every ethnic group. Moreover, as Nagel (2003: 51) states: '[t]he gendered and sexualized body is a major location for the social construction of men and women, masculinity and femininity, and male and female sexuality'. Individuals use their body, gender and sexuality to present themselves (performance) and at the same time as a site of performativity, as 'to affirm and reaffirm, construct and reconstruct hegemonic social roles and definitions' (Nagel 2003: 52).

In order to get a better understanding of the ways in which Zanzibari men perform within their romantic relationships with Western women, I shortly turn to gender and sexuality in Zanzibar. Even though I argue that men live at the beach instead of in wider Zanzibar, they indeed rely and use Zanzibari notions on such concepts, as they were born and raised here, and in fact, still form part of wider Zanzibar (see chapter two). Literature on marriage and sexuality in Zanzibar mainly focuses on women (Boswell 2008; Stiles 2005), but nevertheless gives a clear view on gender roles and men as well. Beckmann (2010) describes how since Zanzibar is a predominantly Muslim society, Islam (amongst others) influences notions on sexuality.[57] Therefore, she argues, sexuality in Zanzibar intersects with notions of being a morally good person, a good Muslim. Being balanced is what a person should be, which deals with more than sex, but indicates how men and women ought to behave, thus as well, sexually. Notions on moral behavior would be, according to Beckmann:

> 'premarital and extramarital abstinence, piety and decency in dress and behavior, but encompass much more: being a good person is connected to a range of behaviors, including friendliness and helpfulness, modesty, humbleness and self-restraint in every sense – sexually, but also emotionally, by not submitting to anger, jealousy or even overly exited expressions of joy' (2010: 620).

[57] Not only does Islam influence sexuality in Zanzibar, but other factors such as media and socialism as well. See for example Boswell (2008). Moreover, as Beckmann rightly states, essentialist thinking on Muslim sexualities make this term too simplistic and ignoring local interpretations of Islam (Beckmann 2010: 619).

Furthermore, Beckmann (2010) describes how in Zanzibar promiscuity, extramarital sex, indecency, prostitution and non-marital sex are seen as immoral and the opposite of what a good person should act like. Moreover, sexuality would be ambiguous as it is both enjoyable and creative, while at the same time it is seen as dangerous. Sex within marriage is enjoyable and positive, all other sex is destructive, and is described as unfulfilling and quick, something that can bring about shame, not only to the couple, but to the whole family. 'Any sexual relation outside of marriage is considered *zinaa* or sin and is socially and legally condemned and considered destructive and polluting, bringing misfortune, disease and death' (Beckmann 2010: 621). As a consequence, extramarital sex can destroy respect and a reputation is spoiled. However, this is more so for women. For men such behavior is condemned as well, but at the same time, generally assumed. His reputation suffers just as that of a woman, although in a far lesser extent. Since extramarital sex is difficult to hide within the relatively small community, secrecy and concealing are very important, in order to avoid shame. Using tricks as lying or bending truths should be used in order to protect the feelings of other people, who might be affected by the affair (Beckmann 2010).

Not only does Islam express and influence sexuality in Zanzibar, other factors such as socialism, mainland Tanzania, a desire for modernity, Westernization and the coming of tourists also influence notions on sexuality of a younger generation. It is said that such factors increase the risk on HIV and make numbers of divorces and extramarital affairs rise (Boswell 2008). As Beckmann states, in Zanzibar, a feeling of a moral decline is present, in which:

> 'the sphere of sexual mores takes centre stage: scantily clad tourists and mainland migrant workers come with money and far more liberal attitudes to non-marital sex, sexually provocative music clips are screened on TV, pornographic material is freely available on the Internet, numbers of bars and guesthouses are increasing (…) [This all] threatens to break down the distinction between 'good' marital sex and bad, 'ignorant' sex outside of wedlock' (2010: 629).

While at first sight the below shows how Zanzibari men at the beach are a profound representation of such 'moral decline', in fact those men, to a certain extent, do hold on to, and use notions of sexuality as described above. Secrecy about non-marital sexual practices, for example, as well as being a good person in general is what can be recognized as signs of Zanzibari sexuality. However, it definitely becomes clear that other influences have crept in their practices. This comes as no surprise, I feel, as those Zanzibari men are surrounded by migrants, expatriates and tourists. As a result, men seem to have incorporated other sexual practices, that might be seen as more free in comparison to notions of sexuality in Zanzibar.

One example worth mentioning is the 'double patriarchy' as described by Thielmann (2004), and seems to be widely used among Zanzibari men. By taking notions (or ideas) about Zanzibari as well as Western (or other) masculinities and sexualities, Zanzibari men are able to verify certain practices. For example, a man can expect his Western partner to take care of herself, as she would be 'modern' and 'liberal' and at the same time is allowed by his wife to commit adultery, while his wife will conform to traditional roles. The best of both worlds, so to say. Such verifications of practices by pointing to specific cultural notions of sexuality or gender roles indeed is widely done by Zanzibari men, even though actions do not match with a Zanzibari view on sexuality. This specific use of Zanzibari sexuality, and combining it with other sexualities may be considered a strategy within play, as it is a way of reaching to something more meaningful, to a specific success.

Since Zanzibari men part of this research have relationships with Western women, it is important to underline that 'Zanzibari sexuality' is not the only notion of sexuality at the beach. The (Western) notion of love, and marriage as well, needs to be elaborated on here, as those specific concepts are (tried to be) combined, even intertwined, with other notions at the beach. Indeed, at this location it is the coming of expatriates, and with them their visions and practices of love, sex and marriage, that influenced experiences and behaviors. Especially within intercultural relationships, such various notions come to the foreground, and both men and women need to adapt and change behaviors in order to remain in such a relationship. I will now direct attention to (Western) notions of love in relation to marriage, in particular the notion of the companionate marriage.

To start with, marriage itself is an ambiguous concept. Within anthropology, marriage is seen as a key stage on the life-course and an important marker of transition from youth to adulthood (Williams 2010: 54). However, notions of marriage differ between cultures, communities, which influences shapes of cross-border marriages. The various constructs of marriage in different societies influence ideas on obligations and practices within marriage, and may conflict (but as well overlap) with each other. Marriage has been influenced by issues of property, influence, class and family, which is to say that not only love, however important, is the basis for marriage (Williams 2010).

The term companionate marriage, that has its origins in descriptions of social changes in early twentieth century Western Europe and the United States (see Hirsch & Wardlow 2006), underlines affective aspects of a relationship. Companionship, intimacy and sexual pleasure between husband and wife in egalitarian terms are of particular importance for a companionate marriage. Giddens (1992) argues that people form a relationship based on choice and pleasure, instead of obligation and commitment. He sees these relationships as new and modern forms of kinship connection that are not based on blood but on affect. Hirsch (2003) argues that Giddens' work suggests that the idea of relationships based on emotional intimacy and sexual pleasure has become widespread, and that this indeed is somehow true. While social and historical contexts may differ, studies suggest that throughout the world, couples talk and negotiate about emotional intimacy and sexual pleasure as important factors of a marriage. Both the local and the global have an influence on notions of marriage.

While Hirsch (2003) may be right as she argues that people talk about emotional intimacy and sexual pleasure, praxis at the beach in Zanzibar is not the same as the talking. It turns out, that, even though marriages and long-term relationships are depicted as based on companionship, intimacy and affection, Zanzibari men experience such words different than their Western partners. Indeed those are words, defined and acted-out differently by both partners. While for a Zanzibari man the highest level of intimacy could be the raising of their children together, for a Western woman this might not mean a thing as long as her husband continuously has sexual encounters with other women.[58] But next to culturally different definitions of what love and the like actually mean to people, a companionate marriage (or long-term relationship) can be strategically used by Zanzibari as a way to marry-up (as described in chapter two). It seems that while Western women view a companionate relationship as natural, for Zanzibari men this shape of relationship is indeed a form of social mobility, which could have effect on their ideas behind engaging in such a relationship. Moreover, as already has become clear from the above, love, affection and sexual pleasure are not the only factors

[58] This builds on literature about love in Africa, which seems to be different from Western love. See for example Cole and Thomas (2009).

underlying relationships, and that other aspects, finance for example, might influence one's love for the other. Therefore, not only a companionate ideal could illustrate such relationships, transactional love as well, as Zanzibari men, as will become clear from the below, to an extent exchange love and affection for material profit.

As such marriages and long-term relationships are located at the beach in Zanzibar, the migration of these Western women needs to be taken in mind. Not all, but many among these women make the decision to migrate based on love and pleasure. While placing love and sex at the heart of migration decision making and behavior is not new, it is still rare (Mai & King 2009; Williams 2010).[59] However, integral to many transnational communities is marriage migration, from which transnational marriages stem; in already established communities, or as a first step creating potential links between countries. Practically, a cross-border marriage is a contractual relationship between people with different nationalities or residential statuses (Williams 2010). Just as transnational migration creates creolization, bricolage and hybridity in a society, I argue that such transcultural practices exist within cross-border marriages as well. Since concepts as marriage, gender and sexuality are cultural constructs, different notions exist within different societies. When people with different nationalities marry, they will bring their own notions of such constructs into the marriage. This creates tensions and negotiations must take place in order to create some sort of equilibrium.

A transactional perspective[60] could be useful for such negotiations within intercultural relationships, although such a grounding sheds more light on outcomes than on worlds people move in. By using the perspective of play, one is more able to gain a better understanding of how people reach for meaning by experimental strategizing. Play thus pays attention to changes and innovations people deal with right now, it focuses on how people move within this playground, as well as what can be obtained from such playfulness. Meaning and belonging differ for both groups, as the multiple worlds they move in are not the same. These conflicting realities is what I want to shed light on, together with their results. Play is therefore a very useful manner to look at the context, as it not only deals with outcomes and strategies, but also with the uncertainties and multiple realities and thus is more encompassing.

From the above it has become clear that various notions of relationships, love, sexuality and gender are visible at the beach. Let me now turn to the empirical part of this chapter in order to illustrate this. I start with a depiction of how Zanzibari men strategize and mix certain notions and ideas in order to get a relationship with a Western woman.

[59] Furthermore, not much has been written on romantic transnational relationships between people with different nationalities, especially between African men and Western women. Searching on Google Scholar with the term 'interracial love' results in words as 'taboos' and 'hidden'. To search for '(African) transcultural marriage' delivers literature not very useful. There has been written about romance and sex tourism and thus short-term 'unreal' relationships between black men and Western women (see for example Brennan 2004; Herold & Garcia 2001; Pruitt & LaFont; McEwen 2009), but mainly in the Caribbean.

[60] The bargaining theory, as described by Roemer (1986) and used by Hirsch (2003) can be useful for analyzing intercultural relationships, and sheds light on the way in which couples negotiate about for example transactions, gender roles and sexualities, in order to reach a certain equilibrium.

How it all begins

> 'I met my wife when she came to Zanzibar to do a research for her studies. Every now and then we met accidentally while going out in Paje. On those nights we talked and got to know each other better. She then became my girlfriend and in her spare time we hung out together. This is now about three years ago. After a couple of months she went back to Europe, but we stayed in touch. She came back for holidays and I went to Europe to visit her. During one of those visits we got engaged and now she is looking for a job here so she can come and live with me' (Ibrahim, Zanzibari man).

The story of Ibrahim and his Western partner Anabel reflects the way in which many Zanzibari men meet their Western partner. Women come to Zanzibar for either holiday, studies, or for work and there, at the beach, get into contact with, amongst others, Zanzibari men. For every new female arriving, there always seems to be a Zanzibari man trying to get involved with her. While such attempts made by Zanzibari men not always succeed, as not all women are interested, they keep trying to get in touch with Western women. Sometimes, such flirtations turn into a relationship, be it a temporary holiday fling, or with the potential of something long-term and steady. For now, I focus on long-term relationships, but often they grow out of what once was a short-term holiday affair, or a flirt with an expatriate woman. Such successes seem to depend on intentions of the Western women involved, as men seem to try almost every woman until one will stick around. At least, this is the trend, and naturally, there are couples that started off differently, such as Sarah and Dawid who worked together for years before romance got involved.

Many men recited how getting in contact with a Western woman was a struggle for them. As Abdul described the first time he saw Paula: 'I saw her walking on the beach and thought "I have to have her" so I asked my friends if they knew where she stayed. Later, with all my courage, I went there and so our first conversation took place. On the beach'. And Danish, a thirty-eight year-old man described how he saw his future wife for the first time as a time to be patient: 'she came to visit her son who was in Zanzibar for his studies. I knew she was married but I also knew I wanted her. So I had to be patient. We talked, but I never made a move. I waited. Only when she separated, I declared my love to her'. While such expressions of eagerness and intense longing for this particular woman sound romantic and honest, they are ambiguous as well, as men that talk emotionally and loving about their girlfriends, at the same time might be involved with other women. While it might be their true feelings about their partner, practices in general make such sentences doubtful and, in some cases, even untrue. Zanzibari men thus might say such words but do not mean them in the way Western women understand them.

Whether or not those words are truthful, at that point, Western women experience those expressions of love to be sincere.[61] This might imply a certain naivety of the women, but mainly underlines the skills of the men when it comes to convincing women.[62] Men indeed use certain

[61] In my conversations with those Western women, they often expressed how they (at that point) believed what those men were saying. Some of them immediately, others did need some time to trust this particular man. All who got together with a Zanzibari man eventually, at that time never seemed to doubt the words of their lovers. It turns out that many of these women did not consider lying as an actual option within their relationship.

[62] In the next chapter on romantic relationships from the point of view of Western women, I will discuss in more detail the play by focusing on women's playground, rules and thus naivety as well.

strategies to sweep women off their feet. They make the women feel like living a dream. Taking her out for trips on the ocean or around the island, dancing, introducing her to family members, or by preparing a traditional Swahili dish. He makes them conquer the island together, barefoot in the sand, underneath the stars. He is the sweetest and most romantic person, treating her like a queen. His appearance is considered as very masculine by Western women, with dreadlocks and a fit body, and this adds even more to his perfection. When her holidays are over, strategies on a rendezvous cross the minds of both man and woman. The man will make sure she receives his message as soon as she lands on European grounds. The woman will do what it takes to come back as soon as possible.[63] If the particular woman is not a tourist but (already) an expatriate, things can get serious right on. Whenever the woman is ready for an official relationship, the Zanzibari man is ready too.

What can be considered a next stage in this particular romance is the remaining contact when the woman is in Europe while the man is still in Zanzibar. Staying connected is done by phone or through internet, and women travel back and forth to Zanzibar, and might even arrange for the men to come and visit them in Europe. While such beginnings of relationships may seem to be taken serious and based on mutual affection and love by both partners, this does remain questionable, as the promises a Zanzibari man makes to his beloved, are frequently not lived up to. While men underline their going steady to their partners, many keep this quiet to other women, and are not giving up their affairs with other women. Especially, because among those other women might also be one girl who could be interesting, even as a potential girlfriend or wife. There are men who have a number of partners in Europe with whom they talk on the phone regularly, send text messages to and are in contact with through Facebook. It seems to be a full-time job to maintain contact with these women, but nevertheless it pays off, as women send clothes according to the latest fashion, money and gifts. Furthermore, it seems that the more women one man can have, the higher his status among his peers.

A problem arises when women find out about each other. One man got in trouble after his girlfriend found out about him being married to another Western woman, and engaged to yet another Western woman. Although he suffered from this situation, as the girlfriend broke up with him and he had fights with the other two as well, his romances on the island just kept on going. Another man, Rahim, had a girlfriend who showed interest in having children with him and moving to Zanzibar, or letting him move to Europe. He applied for a visa to visit her, which would be his first time to travel to Europe. He was very excited about his soon to come trip: not only would he be visiting his girl and her parents, also his other European and Zanzibari friends that lived close by. Unfortunately, a sad accident took place, as she found out that Rahim had another girlfriend in Europe. She was so upset she never wanted to see him again. This was three weeks before his travel, and he was not welcome anymore. According to him and his friends, it is not his fault it worked out this way. He did not mess up by having more girlfriends in order to realize a bigger plan. Instead, the girl messed it up for him, as she ruined his Europe-adventure.

Many among the Zanzibari men at the beach have several relationships at the same time, although in various shapes. For some, it seems that to have as many options as possible creates the biggest chance of eventually getting married to one Western woman. Definitely when an 'official' girlfriend is in Europe for a longer period, for men it seems logic to start relationships with other women,

[63] More on strategies of men to get involved with white women can be found in my BA thesis 'Trouble in paradise' (2010).

either Western or Zanzibari. As Zanzibari Abdul once argued: ‘believe me, for all Zanzibari men in a relationship with a Western woman counts that if the she is away, they all have relationships with other women. Be they sexual relationships only, or romantic. Even if the men tell you they do not have other women during those periods, they do, they just lie about it’. Other men told me the similar stories, that it is just simply impossible to remain without sex for such a long time. Men would have needs and these needs need to be fulfilled.

Ideal partners for Zanzibari men are Western women around the age of thirty that already have a steady job and a wish for children, as they are ready for, and can offer, stability. Younger girls, while being together with them can certainly enhance a status as they would be harder to get and more beautiful, are often still in school which indicates a lack of financial means. Moreover, they are still adventurous and eager to travel, which does not create a stabile basis. Other men just like a specific woman more than they like other women. Those men want to be with her because of the special feelings towards her. However, all Zanzibari men I spoke to seemed to be aware of the advantages and profits of marrying a Western woman. Therefore, relationships can be seen as based on transactional love, as part of the benefits are businesswise and financially. But, feelings of love and affection should not be ignored, as the various notions of love do not exclude one another, but in fact can be intertwined.

Jambo bar in the morning. Only the bar has a roof, so people can dance here underneath the stars, in the sand, right in front of the ocean. This place is an ultimate playground where at night many sexual activities occur.

Summarizing, while men point out how they saw their future partner and decided to do all it would take to ‘get’ her, it might be the case that they thought like this about many other women as well, but just happened to have ‘access’ to this particular one. Or, they never thought like this, but tell

such a story to please their partner and keep up appearances. Men seem to have experience with the Western notion of love, as they use romantic aspects in order to let women fall in love with them. But as much as they are in love – may it be true or false – with this particular woman, not sleeping with other women is problematic, already from the beginning. In order to keep all the options open, but also because they can, and do not see it as problematic themselves. This clarifies how various notions of love and sexuality are being used, that in fact do not match very well, as not everyone experiences such practices as pleasurable or acceptable. Furthermore, men seem to perform with a certain masculinity, as strong Rastas that live a free and independent life, as they know Western women appeal to such an identity. They combine their manhood with this image and in this way, to a certain extent influence feelings of Western women, as they know how to act in order to get her.

By experiencing such relationships themselves, and by looking at others, it seems that Zanzibari men know the strategies of how to get a relationship with a Western woman. To follow those certain rules as elaborated upon above, creates a life in which more freedom can be obtained. Getting involved with a Western woman is a strategy to open up many possibilities, financially, socially and businesswise. However, love should not be excluded completely. Men do love, like or respect their newly found partners in some ways, prefer her over others. It seems that love is attached to other (mainly economic) dimensions of life while for those Western women love is a separate entity in life. Be it love or not, the lifestyle that comes with having a relationship with a Western woman is what many Zanzibari men wish for. From the ludic perspective, it is this intertwining of various notions of love that can be seen as play, as this picking and choosing creates a situation by which one is able to get involved in a relationship with a Western woman, and thus obtain a better, more affluent life and lifestyle. Let me now describe why so many men wish to be in a relationship with a Western woman, while relatively few Zanzibari men accomplish this goal.

Who are these Zanzibari men?

Even though many Zanzibari men at the beach are in search for a relationship with a Western woman, only a few among them are successful in establishing a long-term relationship. From the twenty-one Zanzibari men that are part of this research, eighteen were or had been involved with Western women. Twelve of them were in a long-term relationship with a Western woman right now, although from those twelve, one couple just got separated right before my stay at the beach, two couples got separated, and one couple got into a relationship crisis during my stay at the beach. From the other nine that were not in a relationship with a Western woman visible at the beach, three were active and successful in chasing Western girls for fun and eventually marriage. Three other men had been married to Western women but divorced, now are slightly older and have a Zanzibari partner.[64]

As such, it seems that it is the norm for Zanzibari men at the beach to get involved with Western women. However, there are many more men around in search of a Western woman, than those who actually found one. As this research is concerned with intercultural relationships, the focus is not so much on Zanzibari men and beach boys in search of a Western women, as it is about already

[64] Such numbers seem to differ from those in the table in the first chapter, as I here differentiate between men that have relationships with Western women and men that have other partners, instead of making a general point as I do in the table.

established relationships. It is important to note, however, that many more men are searching than the ones already settled with a Western woman.[65] When going out to a party at the beach, female tourists as well as the rare single expatriate women often find themselves circled by young Zanzibari men trying to arrange quality time. And while during such a party the beach is often occupied by a number of couples making love, chances for a Zanzibari man to establish a long-term relationship with a girl are quite small. Mostly, after their time in Zanzibar is over, women return to their home country and break up with, or forget about their Zanzibari lover.

Umar, a Zanzibari man working in a hostel whom I often gave rides explained me why Zanzibari men where on such a desperate search, as he called it, for outside women:

> 'Actually, it is something very simple to explain, you only have to know what I earn and you will understand. My salary is forty-five dollar per month, and just be honest: what can I do with that? It is nothing, considering the fact that the island is so expensive right now. Most Zanzibari men that work in tourism earn something like me, and since this is the best paid job, there is nothing much, as you can see. Also, we cannot climb higher, as we have no diplomas or anything. The best jobs go to outsiders who have diplomas and knowledge, and we are stuck. The only option left is to find a Western woman, one that can help you out. It is like a white girl is the only way out.'

As described in the second chapter, a life at the beach, and especially a relationship with a Western woman are ways of climbing the social ladder in wider Zanzibar. Indeed, most men that are part of this research that have (had) such a relationship could rise to higher standards of living, as argued by Umar, because of a Western woman.

What sets those men in relationships with Western women apart from others, both in wider Zanzibar and at the beach in general, is their combining and intertwining of sexualities that results in a rather unique and new sexuality (which again differs per individual). Their usage and adaption of Western notions of love and sexuality is a strategy in order to be able to have an intercultural relationship, yet at the same time it is necessary, as their partners expect, to a certain extent, to have a shared notion of love and what a relationship should be about. While Zanzibari men at the beach nowadays are surrounded by many Westerners and thus might be used to Other ways, tourism remains a relatively new industry, and those Zanzibari men form the first generation actively coping with such an amount of outsiders around. Especially on an intimate level, such as within a romantic relationship, confusion and personal conflicts seem to abound. As has become clear from the above, sexuality in Zanzibar differs greatly from the notion of companionship that is common among partners of Zanzibari men. For instance, while polygamy (under specific circumstances) is customary in Zanzibar, Western women very often do not accept these practices. As such, there is many to adjust to for Zanzibari men, in order to realize a relationship with a Western woman.

That such adjustments are not always easy or especially wished for, becomes clear from the fact that many men do not completely integrate various notions on love and sexuality, but pick and choose, and move from one to the other. Zanzibari men talk to their partners in terms of companionate love,

[65] There is an amount of Zanzibari men that met a Western woman at the beach and moved to Western countries. All Zanzibari men I spoke to knew a couple of peers that have migrated due to a Western woman. The fact that so many Zanzibari men migrate seems to indicate, for those Zanzibari that are looking for migration to Western countries, that possibilities are there, and are quite big.

while with their friends they turn to 'Zanzibari sexuality', for example. Or, at the beach men pretend to be monogamous with their Western partners while in fact they perform polygamy, as they have a Zanzibari family as well. While for them those various sexualities and loves might be confusing, most Zanzibari men nevertheless seem to be able to combine such notions.[66] But, while they themselves might be comfortable with it, as it brings about many benefits, to others, like their Western partners or other Zanzibari not living at the beach, this behavior might be considered wrong or painful. By describing the paths of intercultural relationships in the below, such combining and intertwining of notions of love and sexuality and its results will become more clear. Let me now turn to the moment relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women become official, and a description of what such a long-term relationship looks like.

To make things official?

> 'In Europe I could never be as successful as I am here in Paje. This is the place where I can make money, where I can grow. I have land, money, connections, I do not need a diploma to be somebody. In Europe I could never find a job without a diploma. Therefore, I hope my girl moves here, as I would not know how to make a living in Europe (Ibrahim, Zanzibari man).

After times of romance at the beach, and traveling back and forth between Zanzibar and Europe, couples make the decision to live together, and thus for one of them to migrate (if women did not already live in Zanzibar). While Zanzibari men often migrate to Europe, this research shows that many Western women indeed decide to settle in Zanzibar. Zanzibari men have various ideas about why they want to live in Zanzibar instead of Europe. Most of them named a hard life in cold environments, stress and too many rules when discussing why they wanted to stay in Zanzibar. Some of them already lived there for a while, or paid a visit or two, while being together with their current partner or before (often with a former partner).[67] According to many, Europe was fine for visiting, not for living. Underlying such statements, however, seem to be unpleasant experiences men have had in Europe. They could not settle, as they had difficulties finding jobs, friends and acquaintances, some of them noticed how they even got depressed. Especially their lack of diplomas and experience with the specific language seemed to have made them longing back to Zanzibar. So while some of those men broke up with their partners over such reasons (possibly amongst others) and moved back to their island alone, other men moved back to Zanzibar taking their partners with them. Other couples never lived in Europe, never even considered it. But not only do men seem to prefer to live at the beach, many women as well have a preference to live in Zanzibar.

When couples get married, only some marry in European countries. Ibrahim for example married his Anabel in Europe on a Tuesday morning in the town hall, and also Malik and Emma married while he was visiting her in Europe. But most couples marry in Zanzibar. The island in general is a popular place to marry: couples from around the world travel to Zanzibar to get married. On the beach and in

[66] While this in fact may be hard to some Zanzibari men. In the second chapter I set out how there too are men that are not as flexible, or able, to live a life at the beach.

[67] Only three men have never been to Europe. Two of them have a relationship with women who cannot (yet) afford such a trip, the other one had no steady relationship and seemingly no reason or option to visit Europe. One man had the opportunity of going to Europe for the very first time during my fieldwork.

the sun, instead of in cold and rainy Europe.[68] Couples that are part of this research married at the beach, privately on a sandbank, or in a practical way at the office in Stone Town. One couple however, celebrated their big day more traditionally.

Astrid and Danish, an older couple as he is thirty-eight years old and she is in her fifties, got married two years ago, and their wedding was according to Swahili culture. Proud as can be, they showed me the DVD of their wedding day. While women from his family and the village prepared the food, men were standing outside their house singing and waiting for the wedding to begin. Upstairs in the house, Astrid got ready. One friend from back home in Europe came over to be there at this special day and helped her with hair and makeup. Female family of Danish then came up to give her a gown and veil. Later, the official came up to let her and Danish sign the papers separately. When they came downstairs after the official part, the party could start. Walking and dancing in line at the beach with Astrid and Danish in front, everybody went to a restaurant close by, owned by a family member of Danish. There, the party went on for hours. All of this Danish organized for Astrid.

Some men, like Danish, but also Dawid, who wanted to do it 'the right way' according to their partners' Western notions, proposed with a ring. While this might show they take their 'companionship' seriously (or that they just learned in what ways it should be done according to Western views), their seriousness also becomes clear from the way they talk about their marriage and wives, that they talk about them at all. Actually, all other men did not wish to discuss their marriage or wedding day. While some did talk about their wedding when I asked about it, it seemed to be a topic needed to be cleared away as quick as possible, thus giving short answers on my questions or only short descriptions. For some, it seems that marriage is just a formality that brings about a status quite important to Zanzibari men, and useful for Western women as it makes it more easy to stay in Zanzibar.[69] This might also explain why some weddings are more practical and less festive, with just a drive to Stone Town 'to get things fixed' and a simple dinner for friends.

Whereas women mention their partners in conversations with others, many of the men never talk about their partners or their married status, and some of them deny they are married. Ibrahim I asked several times whether he already was married or not. Time and time again he denied, telling me about an engagement only, and that he had his doubts about marrying this woman. But when she came over for a visit, as she still lives in Europe, she told me all about them being married and their future plans together. Men do not mention their wife when talking to other Western women, as they might want to get something out of that contact.

Men's perceptions and elaborations on marriages can give insights in their perceptions on and experiences of their romantic relationships. Many men state they are not the romantic type, not interested in romantic weddings, or just marry out of practical considerations as visa and tax matters. For some, however, such arguments of keeping things simple seem to hide other important reasons to keep a marriage quiet. One man already married another woman but did not want his new wife to find out. He got married in Europe as there no one knows about this issue, and now does not tell

[68] In Zanzibar a couple can chose between a religious marriage or marriage for the state. The first option is a wedding for Sharia law, which entails the fact that the woman needs to convert to Islam. Although some women that marry Zanzibari men convert, none of them 'practice' comparable to Zanzibari women. Moreover, I never heard of couples marrying for Sharia law.

[69] In the next chapter I will elaborate how marrying a Zanzibari man makes a stay in Zanzibar more easy for Western women, and also turn to the associated power relations.

people he is actually married to this European woman. About one other man, the story goes that he is married so often and to so many women, that the Zanzibar government advised him to go to mainland Tanzania for future weddings, as they got tired of him. In some cases thus, it is not wise to be in the center of attention as this might risk specific outcomes, and men realize this. Therefore, in order for men to protect their plans and to get married, they have to be secretive about certain aspects of their lives.

Remarkable is that only two of the couples I worked with in the southeast have children. Moreover, one of the couples recently broke up and the woman involved (temporarily) moved back to her home country, with the child. While many people underline how important children are to Zanzibari, including the men, most of the couples, thus, do not have a family of their own. Several reasons explain this trend. First, many of the couples that do have children live in Europe. While I have not spoken directly to them, I often heard about the quality of schooling and safety as reasons for letting children grow up outside Zanzibar. Second, among the couples in the southeast are older couples and couples consisting of older women and younger men. Those older women are not able to have children anymore and thus couples remain childless. In general, at the beach, there are many Zanzibari men involved in a relationship with a Western woman who herself lives in Europe with their children. Some of those couples are already separated, while others have a long distance relationship for the sake of the schooling of the children. It seems that Zanzibari men prefer to live and work in Zanzibar, while Western women find it most important for the children to grow up and go to school in Western cultures and countries. Yet, there are other relationships still young and fresh enough to see the making of a family as a future plan.

Zanzibari men seem to prefer to live at the beach because of their familiarity with the surroundings. Especially in the neighborhood, in the villages Bwejuu, Paje and Jambiani they know exactly their ways around. It is home to them, they know every street and alley, all the shops including the hidden, what they do and how they behave is not very different from others, they mingle. Moreover, here Zanzibari men know how to make money, here they can be in control, and have human and cultural capital. Together with their Western partners that bring financial capital, expectancies of life are great, as they can open a tourist business, make more money, build a house, live the good life.[70]

Indeed, opportunities and living conditions rise extremely when having a Western partner in Zanzibar. All couples live in luxurious houses compared to conditions before, or to those of other Zanzibari, and nearby or at the beach. As women find a certain standard of living very important, men move up to standards they were not used to before. As for example Abdul who used to stay with friends or with family, never something permanent, or Ibrahim who grew up without electricity and water. Nowadays, both of them, and most of the men in a relationship with Western women, have a big house, electricity and running water, maybe even a generator for during power cuts. They enjoy this 'modern' lifestyle very much and can complain about the 'backwardness' of general Zanzibar, as they call it themselves. Some of the couples are richer than others and this is shown by

[70] But is seems not only because of the geographical location or the opportunities to gain here. Also, it seems that Zanzibari men feel at home here, especially because of the to them known and common cultural notions. Even though they themselves let go much already, to be in Zanzibari is to be in control, while to go to Europe means a great possibility of becoming lost, as indeed turned out by Zanzibari that got depressed. It seems to be more attractive to be in a surrounding that is quite common, than there where all notions are Other.

the houses and luxury they live in. However, compared to other villagers, men having relationships with Western women definitely have a higher standard of living.

Such an increase in living standards is at first the direct result of expectations the men have of Western women and their bigger budget, but can be maintained because of a shared business couples set up. Some couples run a hotel together, as for example Paula and Abdul do. He mainly takes care of local rules and restrictions, while Paula takes care of guests and bookings. Other couples do not necessarily run a business together, but help each other out regularly. Sophia, for example, who invested in the bungalows for renting of her boyfriend Farid, or Alicia, who takes care of the bookings of the hotel her husband is running. As such, men do rely on their Western partners for specific knowledge and a bigger budget. While by far not all couples live a wealthy life – Malik and Emma do not even have a house (yet are building one, but had to pause as money ran out), or Christina and Danish, who have to live from thirty dollars a week – men certainly have progressed materially, because of their Western partners.

Hence, at the beach, men to an extent depend on their Western partners for upwards mobility. Moreover, while in Zanzibar it is expected that men provide for their families, those men cannot take up this role, as Western women make money as well and also have savings. In comparison to what Zanzibari men may be used to, power relations seem to be distributed not as they should, with more power in hands of women, and this brings about a certain emasculation. However, men do not necessarily perceive it this way. They themselves created this situation consciously, having specific outcomes in mind. Right because of those eventual outcomes (a greater freedom and higher status) did men give up certain notions on sexuality and gender.

Furthermore, such left behind aspects of sexuality and gender can be covered and compensated in specific ways by other aspects of the same construct. Indeed, it seems that Zanzibari men use other ways to underline their independency from Western partners and to show their masculinity. This becomes clear by the much heard complaint by women, namely, the lack of consultation. Zanzibari men seemingly make decisions on their own, without discussing matters with their partner. While some men do talk with their partners, this does not mean she has a particular influence. As a result, a man's decisions and actions are often a mystery to his partner. In this way, a certain feeling of independency of Zanzibari men seems to hinder a companionate relationship – as Zanzibari name it, and Western women wish for it to be – in many ways. Daily patterns, work and leisure time are not necessarily negotiated and often not understood by Western women, as becomes clear from the following quote.

> 'We [Zanzibari men] do business by socializing and hanging in bars. There, us men we meet each other and talk about business, problems and opportunities, there we make the deals. I know my wife does not like me to go to bars and drink daily. She does not understand why I do not have a decent job. But this is my job, this is the way I make money' (Dawid, Zanzibari man).

Daily routines are, for all Zanzibari men part of this research, a fine combination of business and pleasure. While running errands, checking up on *fundis*, and making orders and payments, men usually meet friends, relatives or acquaintances in bars. Together they hang around, drink, smoke marihuana, and discuss the latest gossip and news. This 'hanging out' can be seen as a way of doing business, as social contacts and thus networking are of extreme value at the beach. Zanzibari men

depend on each other for business, collaborating or helping each other when needed.[71] Preferably, they drive when they need to go to places, as this is faster, creates more flexibility and underlines their status.[72] It seems that for the largest part of the day, men are apart from, and not involved with their nuclear family. Indeed, this is the space of Zanzibari men and is not particular open to any outsiders.

Although men never mentioned it, it seems that this business of hanging around is only available to men with a certain status. As I visited such bars while the men were hanging around, the ones that have (had) relationships with Western women seemed to be able to spend most time there, and could also afford it, in comparison to other men that had to go to work at one point. As such, a relationship becomes visible between being in a relationship with a Western woman and the way of making money. Managing, making deals and delegations, being an employer instead of an employee, is what those Zanzibari men do, as they gained this higher status and independence by a relationship and an eventual business with a Western woman. However, there are men that still perform manual work in their own business, as Danish who cooks for guests if it is busy, or Abdul who runs the café in his and his partner's guesthouse.

In their spare time as well, many men hang around with friends, instead of spending time together with their partners, which is complained about by women. Moreover, when they do go out together, for example to the weekly Sunday brunch, men hang at the bar with other Zanzibari men while women sit together and chat. Weekend trips or other special occasions almost never take place, as there seems to be no money or time to get off together. Furthermore, Zanzibari men and their partners seem to have different interests that are difficult to combine. For instance, whereas Abdul loves to play football, Paula finds this horribly boring. And as for Abdul, to go to deserted beaches and swim in the ocean for hours will not make him happy. Indeed, common interests are hard to find, once a relationship becomes official.

Hence, it becomes clear that intercultural relationships for Zanzibari men are a way to reach for certain ends and to make their lives more comfortable, which does not necessarily exclude their interest in companionate love. In order to be together romantically with a Western woman, Zanzibari men need to puzzle with various notions on gender, sexuality and masculinity, by means of adapting, mixing, covering and compensating. From a ludic perspective, to have a long-term relationship with a Western woman is (part of) a play that makes Zanzibari men gain material and immaterial means. The practices of puzzling, intertwining and in fact, dealing with the various concepts in this way can be seen as the practices of play. While it might be argued that men become emasculated by a certain control Western Women have because of their financial capital and their knowledge of business, to view such practices in the context of play reveals the ways in which men are independent and strategic actors in search of meaning. Picking and choosing thus can be seen as making sacrifices, to strategize in order to reach for a better life.

[71] This is not to say that only good relationships exist among Zanzibari men. There exists a vacuum of power relations amongst men as well, thus competition, jealousy and spiteful behavior are the other side of the coin.
[72] To have or not to have a car seems to be a big difference between man that married a Western woman and men that did not. While not all Zanzibari men in a relationship with a Western woman have a car, it is very much the trend. This increased standard of living is found necessary (and not really an increase) by the Western wives: they need transport and are often used to being mobile. For men it definitely is an increase. With their car, they can show the community their higher status, how they have grown into powerful men.

However, men pick and choose as is good for them, which is not necessarily wished for, or accepted by their partners. This is especially so since this often results in a random (but often meaningful to men) composition of notions of sexuality and gender that might work only for men themselves. As such, men create their own space in which they play, and do not conform to their partner's ideals of consultation, negotiating and sharing. Men present themselves as if they do not rely on Western women, how they are in charge, in any case, of their own lives. They do not seem to bend for the sake of their relationship, as it is just those practices that make them have certain control and independency. Man can do whatever they want, seems to be the message. Such behavior is very much questioned by women and quarreled about, and can eventually ruin the relationship, as I describe below.

When it all falls down

> 'What I like, Paula does not like, and the other way around. She does not like it when I meet my friends, when I play football, when I take an afternoon nap, when I talk on the phone because I speak too loud. Basically everything I like and find normal, she thinks is stupid and annoying. I work very hard but my ways are just different. Paula does not like my Zanzibari way. But that white way is too different for me, I do not like it' (Abdul).

As already becomes clear from the above, there are not that many commonalities between Zanzibari men and their Western partners. Those differences may lead to fights and eventual break-ups, but there are more factors that can bring about separation. In this paragraph, I describe how relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women evolve and, in some cases, end.[73] As it turns out, men's practices and realities differ and often conflict with those of Western women. What Western women feel a relationship should entail, seems not to be compatible with what Zanzibari men feel a relationship should be like.

First of all, quality time together is a factor by which the conflicting realities of men and women become visible. It indeed is an issue that brings about tensions, as interests and preferences of where to go and what to do of Western women often differ from those of Zanzibari men. While the latter are fine with visiting friends and family, Western women prefer to go on excursions to other parts of the island, for instance to go to the beach in the north, or to go to Stone Town and eat at a fancy restaurant. Rarely I saw couples taking time off together, not even during special festivities. They either came together but each spent more time with others, the women came alone or with friends, or the man did. Other couples that do not go out but instead stay at home do not necessarily spend time together. While Astrid is reading a book, is talking to her husband's family or guests, Danish is hanging in the restaurant of their hotel, chatting and having a beer with friends. Western women care about this lack of quality time, while men, it seems, prefer to hang out with others instead.

[73] While most of the couples that participated in this research are (still) together, there are many Zanzibari men around at the beach that used to be together with a Western woman. Furthermore, some of those Western women that used to be together with Zanzibari men still live at, or visit the beach. As such, this paragraph is not only based on information given by couples, but also by both men and women that used to be in an intercultural relationship.

To share stories, talk things through, to have verbal contact, is another issue on which Zanzibari men and Western women have differing notions. Women seem to find talking more important than their men, as they want to be able to express their feelings, explain themselves and have arguments when necessary. Men, on the other hand, do not seem to find talking useful. Especially when it can lead to fights, it is better to avoid it. Danish, Astrid's husband, walks away from her when she wants to discuss something, as he cannot deal with her possible anger. Abdul might not always understand what Paula means when they talk, as she can use too many difficult words. The level of English can be too difficult, or what she means and how she says things might be impossible to grasp. It counts for all Western women, that they talk in words and worlds Zanzibari men have difficulties with to understand, or are not willing to understand. However, some men do underline the importance of talking, as Ibrahim for example:

> 'When we talk on the phone and start having an argument, I always stay calm and try to talk about it. Often the problem is that we do not understand each other in what we mean. So I try to figure that out by asking questions and by never raising my voice or getting angry. But when I do get angry, or she is, I hang up the phone and call back later. I do not want to fight, we just have to understand each other by talking'.

While it is true that I never witnessed a fight between Ibrahim and his wife, and even though she underlined how great he is with talking, the relationship does not seem to be as companionate as his wife would like it to be. Indeed, Ibrahim never talks about issues that will certainly lead to arguments, as for instance his children or his Zanzibari wife. Many Zanzibari men at the beach have comparable aspects of life, that they hide from their wives. But when those Western women do find out, conflicts arise that often lead to the break-up of a relationship. It might be the case that Zanzibari men do not find such information important, or do not feel the need to share it with their Western partners, since openness could mean less options available. For Western women on the other hand, talking seems to mean sharing everything. As a result, it seems that Zanzibari talk *along* with their wives and girlfriends instead of talking *with* them. They make sure there is no conflict or problem between them and their partner, or that they themselves are fine with the specific situation.

Many women complain about their Zanzibari partner not keeping promises, not being capable of understanding, not willing to understand. Women that are together with a Zanzibari man expect him to talk the way they are used to talking, as a couple would do in a companionate marriage, and become angry when men cannot live up to their expectations. Only when already separated, women remark how impossible it all was, as women come from backgrounds where talking about feelings and behaviors seems to be more natural than for the men whose Zanzibari culture does not necessarily underlines talking. And while these women have a point, cultural backgrounds play a role in defining a relationship and performance within, it is questionable whether those men still copy a 'classical' Zanzibari construction of marriage. Just because they married out of society, and (also because of this) deal simultaneously with multiple realities, they are able to define a marriage or partnership in different ways.

One example illustrates well the misconceptions between Zanzibari men and Western women. When talking with some women about how Monica's husband left the island, it became clear how he did

this without discussing it with her. He did everything that he wanted without listening to her opinion about it. One woman named Sophia argued that this would be a typical behavior for Zanzibari men:

> 'Men here do just whatever they want to do, without consulting their partners. They are used to the fact that they, as men, have the last word. Or at least, that is how they behave. My Farid is not like that, since he has much contact with Westerners for already many years. He knows the value of discussing issues and talking through and dealing with problems. However, not many men are like him and he still is not completely Western, so to say. He is quiet, it is difficult for him to share his life with me'.

While Sophia feels her boyfriend is better in talking about feelings and sharing life stories than other Zanzibari men at the southeast coast, in reality, Farid talks about a minimum of issues, only those that happen to be fit for Sophia's ears, and uses his 'culture' as an excuse for his quietness. He talks with her as much as is needed, thus as little as possible. While she is satisfied and believes her boyfriend is a better catch than others, more polished according to 'Western' norms and values, he proved to be trustworthy. In the meantime, he hangs out with friends, goes to parties and has sexual affairs, without Sophia knowing or worrying.

The relative power men have over the matter of conversations might stem from not wanting to be controlled by women, but also, not wanting to be humiliated by a woman because of an argument. While I could not tell what couples' experiences are when they are in private, when in public spheres, men generally do not consult their partners. Thus while this could be to keep up appearances, it might be deeply embedded in the man's behavior and opinion, that a man should not lean on a woman for advice. This creates an example of how realities differ, for women expect another way of dealing with issues, while men do not see conversing with their partners as a solution.

Another threat to relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women is the bending of truths. As mentioned already shortly above, Zanzibari men tend to tell their partners things they want to hear, instead of what actually happens. Especially when it comes to night life and meeting up with other women, Zanzibari men tell stories different from practical realities. Dishonesty, lying, only telling specific events while remaining quiet over others, maybe the things that happened did not mean much and are therefore not worth telling. Whereas Western women describe this as lying, Zanzibari men would point to the other side of the continuum and call it not worth mentioning, which thus again exemplifies conflicting realities. Be it about why he did not buy a tray of sodas today, drinking beers and smoking marihuana, or about sleeping with other women, opinions on what is harmful and what is not, seem to differ for Zanzibari men and Western women. Such bending of truths is a daily practice.

For Zanzibari men this keeping of truths from their partners seems to be a practical matter, as honesty does not always work that well when wanting to remain a couple. To tell about sexual practices with other women surely leads to undesired conflicts. Many of the men have sexual relationships with others than their partner. While some men have sex with other women than their partner only twice a year, others engage in this behavior weekly, even daily. Picking up a tourist girl every now and then is a popular and easy way of practicing this behavior. Mustapha, for example, a man from a bit more south, sits in bars with his other Rasta friends, having a drink and a laugh, but especially, as an exotic target for tourist women. While his wife is at home with their small baby, he

is enjoying his time with girls that are sometimes ten years younger than he is. To the women, he is father nor husband, but just a cute and sexy African Rasta.

Other men do not leave it to short-term affairs with tourists every now and then, but have long-term relationships with other women that live on the island. They might have such other women as girlfriends or even official wives for years already, sometimes even longer than their relationship with their particular Western partner.[74] Men keep this a secret without many difficulties. To go and get some petrol and meet a friend on the road could mean dropping by at the other woman's house. Western women sometimes have doubts and suspect something, but it is difficult to find such things out as the worlds their partners move in are not easy to trace and comprehend. Kiswahili they rarely speak and the other women are difficult to find and not willing to tell the truth. Actually, hardly no one is willing to tell the truth, or to admit what they saw. That woman he is seen with so often shall probably be his sister, people agree on.

Not only have men other relationships with Zanzibari or Tanzanian women, some have long-term relationships with other Western women as well. While having a steady relationship with their partner on the island, a man can, at the same time, invest money and time in a relationship with a woman in Europe whom he met before (or in-between) in Zanzibar. Moreover, some of the men are still officially married to another woman who already moved back to Europe. Sometimes women at the beach are aware of this and accept it because they believe their man when he tells it is all over, except the legal part. This might be true in some cases, while in others, however, men are not planning on closing that door. In other occasions, women do not know about such 'extramarital' relationships her partner is involved in.[75] One man that was together with his European wife for approximately ten years had such an extramarital relationship his wife did not know about. He met this other woman in Zanzibar where she was on holiday. After staying in contact for some time while she was in Europe, she is now back at the island and lives permanently in the southeast. While this man was still together with his wife, he was seeing this other woman at the same time. And now that his marriage is over, this other woman seems to be his girlfriend.

The meaning of acceptable behavior and commitment seems to differ for Zanzibari men and Western women, which illustrates the conflicting realities and notions men and women have when it comes to defining a relationship. Whereas men find it reasonable to have sex with other women while having a long-term relationship or while being married, their partners think differently. Men might not consider those actions harmful, as they just have sex with others, but share their love and life with their particular partner. The partner is the mother of his children, the one he wants to grow old with, or someone to count on and fall back to, someone that gives him status and certainties. The other women are often described as 'fun', helpful to release needs and higher one's status among peers. However, the fact that men keep such actions a secret for their partners, indicates that they are aware of their – through the eyes of women – wrong and risky behavior.

[74] As such, one wonders who the official partner of the Zanzibari man actually is. The woman he is having an extramarital relationship with might as well be the official partner. However, as Zanzibari men are Muslim, they might see monogamy differently, yet at the same time they all underline the importance of the practice of monogamy.

[75] Whereas women do call sleeping with others cheating, men think differently about this. To have a sexual relationship with another woman does not necessarily equals cheating, as feelings for the partner do not need to be influenced or changed. While men thus do not consider themselves cheating, when their partners would do such a thing it would definitely be wrong, a betrayal.

When looking at such sexual practices from the ludic perspective, it becomes clear how the worlds and realities of Zanzibari men and their Western partners differ. For Western women, having multiple relationships at the same time is unacceptable, not according to the 'rules' of a proper and monogamous companionate relationship. Zanzibari men, on the other hand, seem to play with multiple realities, as they simultaneously have a companionate relationship with their Western partner, and are polygamous. To have different sex partners seems to be not only somehow expected from them by their peers (and thus brings about a higher status), but is also a way of strategizing more wealth and enjoyment. Their secrecy when it comes to those multiple sexual relationships shows how different worlds in fact are very difficult to combine.

The above makes clear that intercultural relationships are difficult to maintain, and indeed, occasionally such couples break up. Let me now consider what happens with Zanzibari men after such breakups.

> 'Me and my ex-wife we broke up because she did not want to live in Zanzibar anymore. She wanted to move back to Europe with me but I did not want that. I do not want to live there, life in Europe is too hard. She told me she could not stand the way people live here. She was tired of it, could not accept the ways here' (Mikail).

The vague quotation above illustrates the superficial answers I got from Zanzibari men when asking about their break-ups. Since most of their ex-partners moved back to Europe, I was not able to discuss causes for separations with them, and could only turn to Zanzibari men for such information. When talking with them, I could rarely grasp the reasons causing the break-ups, and the stories men gave me never matched experiences of couples during my time in the field. The break-ups I experienced and heard about from women and outsiders were based upon cheating, lying and fighting, on mismatched ideas about what the ideal husband or wife should be like. Realities it seems, had become too different, too conflicting.

For instance Najib, a Zanzibari man in his late thirties, describes his break-up as unfortunate but healthy, as he and his wife both wanted something new out of life, without each other. They are still good friends, he recounts. However, his vision falters as in the wider area Najib is known as a big liar, someone never to be taken seriously. I indeed heard stories of his ex-wife traveling to Zanzibar in order to make arrangements with the businesses and house they together built in Zanzibar. Moreover, while he was still together with his European wife, I met him a couple of times together with a Tanzanian woman, his body entangled with that of hers.

The story of Saji is another example of how relationships expire. Saji, a Zanzibari in his mid thirties has been married to a twenty-five year older European woman. They built a house together in Zanzibar and Saji moved to Europe to live with her for a while. However, he did not manage and got depressed. He moved back to the southeast coast, was living in their house, and met another European woman. Because he wants to marry this new partner and move with her to Europe, he just divorced his first European wife, the one that provided him with this abundant lifestyle. Finally there is the story of Mikail, who is in his late thirties and owns a hotel at the beach. Once, he met a Western woman with whom he started a relationship. While she was on her honeymoon in Zanzibar, she fell in love with Mikail and stayed with him. At the beach they managed a Rasta bar together, and later moved to her homeland. At least, she moved there and he came to visit her, as the visa requirements only permitted him three months in Europe each time. She was pregnant, but when

the baby came he never went there anymore and so far he never met his daughter. Now he has a relationship with a Zanzibari and claims to have little contact with her.

The stories above show that while being with a Western woman can be (and actually often seems to be) something temporary, it certainly has benefits. Although the break-ups might have caused hardship and suffering, men seem to be off well, both socially and financially. Most of the men built a house and/or started a business with their ex-wife. Now the marriages are over, men benefit from the material and money invested by those women. Often, the Western women go back to Europe and men take care of businesses on the island. Like Saji, who takes care of the house he and Lauren built together. He can sleep there or make money by renting it out. Men that have been together with a Western woman indeed seem to be better off compared to men who have not, as already described in the above.

Couples that broke up during my fieldwork period did not know what the future would bring them. Women were not sure whether they would stay on the island and how their relationship with their Zanzibari men would evolve. Paula and Abdul still continue to run their business even though they are not together anymore. From being a romantic couple doing business together, they now turned into purely business partners. Abdul does not need to hide his Zanzibari girlfriend anymore, whom he is planning to marry. Strategically he did a good job: he now has a house, a business, money and a girlfriend he likes a lot. Alicia and Nasir broke up as well during my stay at the east coast. While she went back to Europe in order to figure things out, he stayed in Zanzibar, enjoying his 'freedom', as he recounted, and indeed seemed to be happy with his other girlfriends and the businesses he runs. His life did not become worse by breaking up, but seemingly only got better. As he tells his friends, finally he is free to do whatever he wants.

One woman, Rose, seems to have found a way of making a marriage with a Zanzibari man long-lasting. She accepts her husband's other girlfriends and even raises his children he has with other women. Out of love for her Zanzibari husband she tolerates his ways, as she seems to realize this is the only way to stay together. Many Western women I spoke with found this remarkable, and describe her as a strange or even a crazy person. However, this marriage indeed is one of the rare relationships between a Western woman and a Zanzibari man to last for a very long time. By believing that the practices of her husband will not change and in fact do not need to change his feelings for her, she manages to stay together, with him.

Men that separated from Western women do not seem to suffer that much from the circumstances. Although they might feel hurt or alone after a break-up, this is never shown. Some of the men expressed how they found it unfortunate that they split up with their wives or girlfriends, but I had the feeling this was more something 'accepted' to say, as if they gave me, a Western woman, a politically correct answer, 'yes, I feel bad about breaking up. It is very sad, but that is just the way it goes. Everything will be okay, life goes on'. Some men did express their dislike of their ex's suffering, as they realized their ex was hurt badly by the separation and were sad about this, but again, this could be a correct expression as well. In general, men do not seem to bother that much, which is in accordance with the fact that even though they lost their partner, they gained many other things. Although their (possible) love has gone, there still remains a house, a business, practice with English language, they have their higher status, money, and often continue their previously hidden relationships, or find a new (Western) partner. Exactly because of all they have gained, they manage

not to be alone that long, or at all. They continue their relationship with 'the other woman', or meet a new love soon again.

Conclusion

In this chapter I focused on intercultural relationships between Western women and Zanzibari men, from the perspective of Zanzibari men. I elaborated on their performances within and perceptions on their intercultural relationships. Moreover, I described how their realities and notions of what a relationship should (not) be like, as well as their practices considering sexuality and gender. An important reason for Zanzibari men to be in intercultural relationships seems to be the opportunities it gives them. Such relationships make Zanzibari men climb the social ladder, make them acquire more wealth, power and independence. However, this is not to say that feelings are not involved as well. In fact, I argue that such relationships cannot be defined in any particular way. They entail companionate characteristics, but transactional love too, could characterize such relationships to an extent, as loving and caring seem exchangeable for material gains, and are not mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, the involved emotions differ per couple, and feelings of Zanzibari men towards their partners were difficult to touch upon.

As has become clear, men have very different realities from their Western partners. Zanzibari men use various notions on concepts of love, sexuality and gender, both from a Zanzibari and Western perspective, and use them simultaneously, whenever useful. Thus, while men attempt to be in a companionate relationship with their Western partner, many among them seem to have 'another reality' in which they practice notions that are not in accordance with those of which the companionate relationship consists. Polygamy, adultery, lacking consultations of romantic partners, and the setting of different priorities seem to be the main issues that create conflict within intercultural relationships, and ultimately might cause break-ups.

The practice of having a relationship with a Western woman is an ambiguous one. Zanzibari men perceive relationships with Western women as a way forward and upward, and, to use the ludic approach, play – as in playing with practices of emasculation, increasing of masculinity, using certain notions on sexuality and various other strategies – in order to create a space to manoeuver more freely, to reach to a more meaningful life. Indeed, by using the ludic perspective it becomes clear how men aim to make sense of various conflicting realities, and are in fact quite good at it. This playing with various realities creates the opportunity to get involved with Western women, which, on its turn, seems to be a – in fact the only – way of creating a meaningful life. The seriousness of their practices becomes clear when keeping in mind that they themselves consider this romantic contact the best, or in fact the only strategy of getting somewhere, to obtain a meaningful life. As such, it is very important that they 'play' at their very best, as there is so much to gain and lose.

That such romantic intercultural relationships are being shaped and take place at the beach shows how this location creates opportunities for Zanzibari men. The beach therefore can be seen as a playground, one reality out of more, where a (temporary) settlement is a strategy to find betterment and meaning. Romantic relationships and love are a way out, a way up, to an alternative ordering, with freedom as an important incentive. At least, this is the case for Zanzibari men involved in such relationships. Western women, on the other hand, seem to experience the relationships differently. In the coming chapter these women are the centre of attention.

5. Love me, just say that you love me:
Western women in intercultural relationships

> 'It was almost immediately after we got married that he moved abroad. He does not seem to care that I am here now, all alone. I do not know what to do now, because while I think our relationship is a big failure and do not like the way it goes, I could not think of a divorce, I just love him too much. I hate it to be without him, and do not feel good at all' (Monica, Western woman).

Introduction

Moving on from Zanzibari men within romantic intercultural relationships in the previous chapter, let us now turn to their partners. This chapter is about those Western women that have romantic relationships with Zanzibari men at the beach, with the main question being *how do Western women, by having romantic relationships with Zanzibari men and by settling at the beach, create, increase and decrease their freedom and how are they part of a particular order?* I elaborate on Western women, and their perceptions on and performances within such romantic relationships. Moreover, I approach Western women from a ludic perspective, thus focusing on the ways in which they deal with multiple realities that become visible in their lives at the beach.

The aim of this chapter is to show how the position of these Western women at the beach is ambiguous. While they seem to have moved to a freer place, it turns out to be more ordered, in ways not fruitful for them. Such women once came to the beach to find freedom, to live in a beach paradise where romantic love could be obtained. However, after living at the beach for longer times, it seems that women perceive themselves to live in a place where they are captive and powerless, caught by a specific ordering that does not benefit their independency.

Cultural constructions of gender, sexuality, and the ideal of the companionate marriage as described in the previous chapter are contexts that help to illustrate the women's perspective too. While Zanzibari men seem to be able to pick and choose certain of such notions in a way that increases their playground and freedom, Western women face few such freedoms, yet more restrictions. Women, it seems, hold on to certain notions as monogamy and the companionate relationship that make them perceive themselves to be weak, having less power than they thought or were used to, as if they are victims of ordering as they themselves do not perceive to have any influence. Western women seem to be fooled by promised freedom by their Zanzibari men. Therefore, I argue that while men create a larger playground for themselves by settling at the beach, for Western women their playground only seems to become smaller.

I start this chapter with a description of the first encounter between Western women and Zanzibari men, from the perspective of these women. While I depicted this momentum already in the previous chapter, it turns out that the story has such different sides, that it is important to highlight the women's perspective as well. While for men such an encounter seems to be strategic and planned, for women it turns out to be a very romantic and unique experience. In the following paragraph, I look more closely at who these Western women exactly are. Demographic factors as age and

backgrounds, but also the period of time they stay at the beach, and the way in which this might have changed them, are described. Furthermore I focus on naivety, as it can be argued that many women part of this research share this characteristic.

I then turn to the ways in which their stay at the beach becomes reality; both in settlement and in the sense that Western women realize how even the beach is not a utopia or paradise. The image their Zanzibari partners let them believe in turns out not to mirror reality. When freedom is over, thus the ways in which women seem to be isolated and lonely at the beach is what comes next. A lack of social connections and dependency on their Zanzibari partner in several ways makes their position troublesome. This paragraph is also about dependencies of women on their Zanzibari partner, and feelings of powerlessness at the moment relationships are ending. Women invested much in their life at the beach, emotionally, socially and financially, and seemingly lose much as they break up, which makes such actions even harder. It turns out that the various realities present at the beach are very different from each other, and that women are not able to combine them in ways meaningful to them.

Being swept away

> 'Like it was yesterday, I remember the first time I met my husband. It is now five years ago, when I was working in a hotel and suddenly he came walking in. He was the new intern, I had to train him. He was very handsome and since we had to work together, we got to know each other better. Even though he was very young and things did not make any sense, when my contract ended and I was supposed to go back to Europe, I asked my boss if I could come back. So after a couple of months I did come back, actually for this man. It was only then that we started dating, and eventually got married' (Monica, Western woman).

This paragraph focuses on the first encounter between Western women and Zanzibari men, from the point of view of Western women. I use stories of the couples themselves, but also observations of how younger Zanzibari men at the beach encounter Western women, and in turn, women's reactions and perceptions on such first meetings. Thus not only the ways in which men talk and behave, in short, conquer the hearts of Western women will be discussed, the practices of Western women when first meeting a Zanzibari man as well.

Western women meet their future partners in Zanzibar while they, just like Monica above, are working on the island, or when on holiday to Zanzibar. It is here at the beach, on a shared work floor in hotels, or, during nightlife in bars and cafes that the first encounter takes place. Often, it is the men that make the first move, actually chase and hunt after the women. These Western women in turn appear not to be used to such active conquest, and are flattered and impressed by this clear interest men show. Women feel special because of this persistent behavior of men, which is, according to many, something men back home would never do. They are being taken on trips, they talk with their future partner for hours, dance, or they just relax at the beach. Many women recounted how this 'extraordinary' way Zanzibari men treated them made them feel more secure about themselves, more happy and even special.

Western women seem to feel very feminine in the presence of Zanzibari men, for a variety of reasons. The great amount of compliments they receive is one of them. It does not seem to matter what the woman actually looks like, or how old she is. One woman revealed how she now finally felt good about herself and self-secure, as the amount of compliments she gets from her boyfriend in a month equals her twenty years of dating experience in Europe. He compliments her on a daily basis about the way she looks and how kind she is to him. For her, this is exactly what she needs, as she argues that without the compliments, she would not be as happy and comfortable with herself and within their relationship. Furthermore, women told me how flattered they feel when men announce how they want to spend the rest of their lives with them, how men declare their love and openly make plans for their future together.

Another way in which Zanzibari men try to let Western women fall in love with them is by showing the non-touristy Zanzibar, as also is described in the previous chapter. The man shows her places she has never been before and makes her familiar with the 'real' Zanzibar, as those men often name it. While she at first was just a stranger, a tourist or an expatriate, now this whole new world is opened up to her. Because of the Zanzibari man a Western woman has this opportunity, and she needs to rely on him and trust him that everything will be nice and safe. Men then prove to be trustworthy, as they let women enjoy it as much as possible, while they take the lead. As such, women come to depend on men, but in a way Western women seemingly appreciate and enjoy. As Astrid one time described to me, this was not at all how she experienced a relationship back home in Europe. There, she told me, she had to do everything herself, being independent as nowadays is expected from Western women. Back home, men treat women as equals, and do not lead women, like her Danish did in the beginning. Danish placed her on a pedestal, treated her like a queen, made her feel like a woman by his masculine, caring and leading behavior.

Such practices of Zanzibari men create a feeling of belonging for Western women, and accordingly, women react in a positive way. Women therefore are not solely 'victims' of the behaviors of men, but indeed actively participate themselves, as for them this future love relationship with a Zanzibari man seems to be meaningful as well. Western women do rely on Zanzibari men to a certain extent, and feel good about that. But this dependency also results from the fact that women are not from Zanzibar and are thus in a strange place. It is the men that can lead them through the strangeness, teach them about Zanzibari life. Many women remarked how life in Zanzibar is different from what they were used to before. Especially the first times women travelled to Zanzibar they were pleasantly surprised by the friendliness and helpfulness of Zanzibari, and many 'newcomers' recalled that seemingly it is not what you have that is important, but who you know. While there is a certain truth in it, what is more interesting is that such a conclusion leads women to be deeply impressed by the skills and power of the men they meet. These men show women a world in which the ways of getting by differ from those women are used to. While of course their money is very useful, as to put gas in the tank for a trip, or to have a drink in a beach bar, essential to women's excitement seems to be the Otherness of the whole situation, in which men know exactly what to do.

Part of the romantic experience seems to be voluntarily giving up on certain standards of living. In fact, this Zanzibari man and additional circumstances seem to be part of an exotic experience tourist women have in Zanzibar. Western women now sleep outdoors, underneath the stars, or in his house and do not mind the lack of proper facilities. That there is no water to shower or flush the toilet does not seem to matter, or is even thought of as the 'real' life. That there is no fridge with provision is not

annoying, it is just that the man does not seem to care about luxuries or material, which makes him even more exotic and attractive. While women that already work and live in Zanzibar have their own place, are in a way already familiar with a Zanzibari life, and not necessarily need to rely on a Zanzibari man, they as well seem to enjoy the exotic or Other lifestyle of their new boyfriend. As he is a local, he can always help with specific issues and knows how to fix things, whether it is about taxes, how to get a new car or just the good parties.

For all women it seems that the most attractive part of their Zanzibari men, is their appearances, which resemble their lifestyle. Cool, smart looking Rastas or tough and fashionable men. Their bodies are fit and their skin color contrasts with that of Western women perfectly. Furthermore, their carpe diem attitude makes them even more attractive and interesting. Zanzibari men would live a life free from worrying, right there at the beach. They do not need much money, work a bit, and have their friends to support them when needed. Meanwhile, they share time with the particular women, make her feel happy and at home. Women have fallen in love and as a result, travel back and forth between Europe and Zanzibar because of this Zanzibari man. Otherwise, women that already live at the beach spend more and more time with the particular man. They become closer and closer and eventually, things become official.

Indeed, women want to be part of this world, as it looks just perfect and pleasurable. Even though Western women that did not yet live at the beach trusted their Zanzibari partners and wanted to be part of this life, some women expressed they had doubts too, at the time they thought of moving to the island. Especially since migration meant giving up on many securities and letting go of close contacts back home. Often, women seemed to compare the negative sides of living in Europe, as their routine and the weather, to what they knew about Zanzibar: the sunshine, the ocean and their lover. As such, while a decision does not need to be regrettable, grounds for their reasoning seem to be ambiguous.

Thus, while men are very active trying to make Western women fall in love with them and starting a serious long-term relationship, Western women have active attitudes too. It is them who agree upon spending time together when in Zanzibar, and staying in contact when separated. They want to be with this Zanzibari man and try to create such circumstances as well. Therefore, and from a ludic perspective, it can be said that women play, by starting relationships with Zanzibari men, as this would make their life more meaningful, by now picking and choosing not only from their reality back home, but also here at the beach. Indeed, the reality of the beach apparently makes more sense, seems to be more comfortable than back home, especially because of this love they found here. While they are part of the play of men and become part of their reality, they create an own playground as well, as they voluntarily, and by searching for meaning themselves, start a relationship with Zanzibari men.

Who are these women?

Many people I met at the beach who asked me what I was doing, wanted to talk more about the topic, and all had a very pointy opinion about relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women. Both Zanzibari (that were not living at the beach) and expatriates, but also tourists, all did not seem to be very impressed by such relationships. While Zanzibari often were skeptical about the

seriousness with which Zanzibari men stepped in such a relationship, expatriates and tourists simply could not imagine that true feelings would be involved. According to them, those women who have relationships with Zanzibari men are silly and stupid that they do not see it is all about money. They would all be ugly and old, not successful in love back home, not able to find a suitable man.[76] In reality however, it turns out there are many differences between women that have relationships with Zanzibari men. Not only in age, but in education and background as well. This paragraph provides more information on who these women exactly are.

Older, younger, skinny, voluptuous, when it comes to women in intercultural couples, there is not one particular appearance women share. The only characteristic they have in common is their light skin. From the forty expatriates that are part of this research, twelve are women that are, or until recently have been in a relationship with a Zanzibari man.[77] Two women were officially living back home in Europe, but were visiting their partners regularly, which is why I included them in the research. As already described above, two couples broke up and one other couple came into crisis during my stay at the beach, yet another couple broke up right before my stay. Already it becomes clear that women in relationships with Zanzibari men are all in various stages within their relationships. Furthermore, these women differ in age, ranging from twenty-four to sixty-three years old. However, their age does not reveal much about the months or years they have been together with their Zanzibari partner. None of the women have been together with their Zanzibari partner for longer than seven years, with the exception of two women, who were together with their husbands for over ten years.

While some of the women have a relationship with men their age, others differ in age as they have a relationship with men much younger than themselves. The greatest difference in age is twenty-one years, and even though there are couples with such drastic age differences, more couples are around the same age. Furthermore, age matters as relationships with Zanzibari men are for the younger women their first serious commitment, while older women often already have had a marriage or long-term relationship. As Astrid, who has been married for more than twenty years before, and now is together with her Danish for about three years already. Helen, on the other hand, is a young woman and considers Ali her first and true love. She envisions them to stay together for the rest of their life, thus anticipating a life in Zanzibar (now, while back home in Europe, she is making arrangements to move permanently to Zanzibar). While younger women in their twenties seem to be more energetic and enthusiastic about creating a new life together, bringing their Zanzibari partners back home for a while, having a family and settle in Zanzibar, older women that already have been married or in a long relationship before seem to envision a life in Zanzibar as more quiet, getting a second chance to create a more calm life.

As women differ in age, their backgrounds vary accordingly. Older women have worked for years, possibly raised children, and now come to relax at the beach. Younger women just finished education and come to find a job and a future in Zanzibar with their Zanzibari partner. To them, this is only the beginning of an exciting life. But apart from previous experiences that are intertwined with age,

[76] Exceptions are girls and women that romantically get together with Zanzibari men. They see the possibilities of intercultural relationships, as there are many of such couples around.
[77] There are more women involved in relationships with Zanzibari men at the southeast coast but not all were willing to participate in the research. Yet others were living a more secluded life, or, considering time issues, could not be included in this research.

Western women also differ as they come from various countries, cultural backgrounds, and have different levels of education. All women that are part of this research and have romantic relationships with Zanzibari men come from a variety of European countries.[78] The United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, and Scandinavian countries seem to dominate. However, to women, cultural background specified to country of origin does not seem to matter much.[79] They seldom refer to where they exactly came from, rather seem to think in terms of Western or European.

Whereas some of the women finished university and even have had an impressive career, others just finished university, worked as artists, worked in the public health sector, or traveled extendedly. What they did before coming to Zanzibar thus varies greatly, and indicates there is no specific shared background among the women. As such, income or class does not seem to matter in defining who these women are. Yet with all those differences between women, what is resembling is that they all have taken the step, the risk, to commit to a Zanzibari man. While family and friends back home might have expressed their doubts, and even though they have had to quit their jobs and end careers, they all had the courage to come to Zanzibar and to trust in a man. While their motivations and stories are not necessarily very alike, for all their partner plays a great role in their traveling and settling in Zanzibar. As Helen explains: 'it is natural to move or settle in a certain way because of a relationship. The only difference is that I crossed a great distance for my partner, just as all the other women did, and this is what makes people doubt our decisions'.

Thus, while there are so many different women at the beach that are involved in a relationship with a Zanzibari man, they all perform in a way somehow similar. As such, it is not so much their characteristics, as what country they come from, their age, the age difference between them and their partners, or their level of education that can reveal a particular 'kind of woman' that falls in love with a Zanzibari man. The level of self-confidence could matter, people argue (as described above, the Others that gave an opinion about these women), or other psychological features. However, while spending time and talking with these women, I did not find out any particular resemblance, in that I could not reveal any general 'complex' that might underlie their decision to get involved with a Zanzibari man at the beach. It seems that their only resemblance is them being Western and light-skinned, and in a relationship with a Zanzibari man.

However, a certain naivety does seem to be a common denominator among these Western women. That all of the women part of this research believe and trust the words and worlds of their Zanzibari partners, and took the risk of migrating to the beach often because of this man, can come across as ignorant, indeed naïve. Especially since, as is described in the previous chapter, this trust in the sincerity of men is not necessarily fairly grounded. Interesting is that Western women seem to believe in much of what the men tell them. This, however, could stem from their familiarity with companionate relationships, and they do not realize that this notion of what a relationship should be like (and the reasons why people are together) is not universal. Since Zanzibari men combine various of such notions, and use this companionship when engaging with Western women, it seems logical

[78] There are also women coming from the US or Australia that have a relationship with Zanzibari men, but happen to live in town or, together with their partner, in their home country. It is accidentally, thus, that women in this research all are European.

[79] For Zanzibari men, however, the nationality of women does seem to matter, as some countries have a better status for living qualities. Norway is a particular popular country, as many Zanzibari men nowadays reside in or nearby the capital Oslo. Many of them migrated by having a Norwegian partner, and now as a group form a safe haven for newcomers. As such, to find a Norwegian partner is a safe and strategic choice.

that these women believe Zanzibari men have similar ways of being in the relationship. On the other hand, however, it seems peculiar that many among these women do not seem to realize they are in fact dealing with Muslim men, and thus, automatically, with different notions on gender and sexuality, especially within romantic relationships. Western women thus seem to hold on to Western notions of such concepts and tend to forget about other ways and other worlds visible at the beach.

Expectations of Western women when moving to the beach are intertwined with a certain naivety as well. Zanzibari men are a large part of the reason why women decide to migrate, but there is more to it. Many women do not only migrate because of what can be found at the new place, but as well consider the 'old' place as an incentive to move. Most women seemed to be, for various reasons, fed up with their homeland, which made the decision to migrate more easy. Many indeed were looking for some place better, and the beach, with its paradise appeal (and this particular man waiting), would be the perfect place to settle. As a result, the expectations that Western women coupled to the beach and their partnership with a Zanzibari man seem to be very high, as this new life should be better, more prosperous, more perfect than it was before. Such expectations are in line with what Zanzibari men promised them, which feeds the hopes of women even more. However, it turns out many Western women created a false picture instead of participating on the realities of the beach. But, it might only be by living at the beach that women are able to find out that this place is not only about freedom, that there are orderings too, that do not stroke with their (idea and ideal of) reality.

Women that just migrated to the beach, or the ones that were still thinking about or arranging a move, indeed seem to differ from the ones that already live there for some years. Or, in fact, women seem to change as they live longer at the beach. Whereas the newly arrived are energetic and enthusiastic about their new life, full of expectations and optimistic views of their new gained free yet settled life, women that stayed already longer seem to be skeptical, if not negative or even down. It seems that the longer one stays at the beach, the less naïve and the more realistic ones approach and perceptions become. While it is impossible to predict how still young relationships between Western women and Zanzibari men will turn out in a couple of years, relationships do seem to become less exciting and more worrisome for women as time goes by, as different realities become clear to them. While this may come natural for all sorts of relations, the ways in which Western women view, and are viewed and treated by their partners changes vastly. It seems that after a while, women realize how their lifestyle and necessities differ from those of their partners, and that the beach is more than a paradise. Let me now, in the next section, turn to such a life at the beach for Western women.

Moving from a dream world to a real world

After a first encounter between Zanzibari men and Western women, much traveling back and forth is about. Women that do not yet live in Zanzibar often invite their Zanzibari partner to their home country for a holiday, to show them where they come from. While many men in this way come to pay a visit to Europe, some women do not have the money to make this happen. Astrid, for example, dreams about taking her Danish to Europe for a holiday, to show him around in her home country. Ali has just been to Europe, for the very first time, a trip arranged by his Helen. She wanted him to meet her parents, and to show him what her life back home looks like. While he does have a job, his salary

could never afford him a ticket to Europe, which made Helen pay for this much desired visit of her boyfriend.

But while many men in the beginning of relationships pay a visit to the home country of their Western partners, women much more often travel to Zanzibar. Especially younger girls travel back and forth often, as it seems they are flexible with their time, just take up a job to get money, and as soon as they have earned enough, leave for the beach again. As such, many women thus spend longer and shorter periods on the island, while in between living and working back home in Europe, before they settle in Zanzibar permanently. Anabel, for example, who is married to Ibrahim but still lives in Europe, first wanted to finish her studies before making a possible move. Now, she is looking for jobs on the island to be together with her husband. Also Helen is traveling back and forth, now thinking of writing her MA thesis in Zanzibar after which she is able to stay permanently with Ali. Such recent stories match how Paula and Abdul started off, now over ten years ago. After they met for the first time, Paula time and time again traveled to Zanzibar, before she decided to move permanently.

At work with Western women often meant sunbathing, going for coffee or shopping. While this woman is not one of my informants, as I want to respect their privacy by not showing their pictures, this photo does show the way in which much of the data collection was done.

The fact that these couples settle at the beach in Zanzibar is both a result of the preferences of men to live in Zanzibar, as of those of the Western women that find the beach an attractive place to live. As described previously, Zanzibari men part of this research prefer living in Zanzibar over European countries, and women seem to either agree with them, or be fine with it. Paula, for instance, never wanted to live in Europe, and thus did not mind at all to move to the beach for Abdul. For Astrid and Karin, to live in Zanzibar was not even worth a discussion, as from the beginning it was clear they would stay with their partners at the beach. Women that were already living in Zanzibar decided to move to the island for other reasons than love, and found their partner at this new location. Sophia,

for example, met her Farid after living on the island already for a couple of years. To her, there was no such question of staying longer or taking him home with her, as her home already was Zanzibar.

In the beginning the beach is considered to be an attractive place, a little utopia, where temperatures are always pleasant, the sun is shining, and life is tranquil. Women come here as visitors and new residents, happy to take a new route in life. The more recently Western women moved to the beach, the more positive they spoke about the place.[80] They like to settle down in paradise surroundings, in the Zanzibar that their lovers showed them. That such an image is in fact only part of reality seems to be caused by how men presented themselves and the beach, as well as by the false image women created themselves, based (amongst others, see the above section on naivety) on their holidays on the island. Such romantic views are indeed different from the reality of building a life here. This especially becomes clear from the experiences Astrid had, and shared with me.

As we lived pretty close to each other, Astrid and I often met for coffee and she extensively shared her life stories with me. Astrid, who is now married to Danish, had been married for over twenty years to her ex-husband with whom she has two grown up children. When she came to the beach a couple of years ago, she felt she was in paradise, and concluded that her life as it was at that time was not how she wanted it to be. She worked, cooked, cleaned, every day, a routine too tight and boring. Things had to go different, she felt. Her husband did not like the idea of moving to Zanzibar, and for this and other reasons, they split up. Then, during another holiday at the southeast coast, she met Danish and fell in love. She decided a life in Zanzibar would be perfect if she could spend it with him, and so she did. The first days and weeks were magic, as they went on trips, walking, swimming, discovering the island. But after a while, those 'dreamy honeymoon days', as she called them, were over. They were building a business, a hotel, and had more expenses than incomes. They spend all her savings but the business has not (yet) become successful, which makes them live with a minimum amount of money to spend weekly. She lost a lot of weight and is worried about the future, even more so because Danish does not seem to mind. It is difficult for her to talk to him about her worries, or actually anything. Once in a while, she says, she wonders if this is really what she signed up for. This is not what she had in mind.

As the story of Astrid shows, it is only after a while that women come to experience that the beach entails more than paradise. Gradually, women find out more about the place, as they meet more inhabitants, discover the work ethos, the presence of conflicts and gossip. They get to know the beach and its ways, and become involved in this beach life, by having a Zanzibari partner, a business and by getting to know people. Moreover, over time their Zanzibari partners become less and less available to them, be it because of other obligations, or because of a lack of interest, as described in the previous chapter. Indeed, life at the beach turns out not to be merely in a state of holiday. While women might have considered the beach as a place of eternal freedom, in fact, now they come to realize there are rules and regulations, and limits to their freedom as well.

[80] But also women that live for a longer period of time at the beach underline the beauty of the place. The outside life, to be able to walk barefoot, as an opposite to hasty Europe is what they consider pleasant. However, often is was mainly the nature they appreciated, as culture of both the beach as well as wider Zanzibar was considered to be disappointing. This will become more clear from the below.

Not only women that are newly settled, but also those that are already living at the beach, are at first convinced by Zanzibari men how they would be living in paradise together. And it counts for all women too, that after a while their Zanzibari partners distance themselves more and more from them, which makes women feel lonely and forgotten about. However, while men certainly pay a disproportionate amount of attention to their partners over time, it is an interplay between expectations of Western women and behaviors of Zanzibari men that make such romantic relationships waver. As described in the previous chapter, men do neglect their partners to a certain extent, as they plan their daily schedule themselves and rarely spend time with their wives and girlfriends. This is not what most women expected and wished for, as they believed they would be together, having in mind a romantic picture of the two of them as a strong team, as a companionate relationship befits. The various realities in Zanzibar, that their partner actually has his own life, friends and family to worry about does not always seem to cross women's minds. In fact, while the Western women did migrate and left their families and friends back home, men are not so distanced from such contacts and did not cut such ties.

Indeed, that Zanzibari men might have other notions of what a relationship entails, what love or romance actually is, and how to define (and act within) a marriage, seems not always realized by Western women. In fact, many among them consider a Western accepted relationship, namely companionate and monogamous, with a focus on the nuclear family, as the relationship they want to be in, the correct form of a contract. While it might seem to be naïve of those women that they truly believe in this shape of marriage or romantic relationship, it becomes more logical when one keeps in mind the way in which Zanzibari men have expressed how they feel like this woman is their only true love with whom they want to grow old. Zanzibari men used the companionate marriage as a strategy to get involved with Western woman, which, in the long run causes problems as women do believe in this shape of marriage, while men do not live up to those expectations coupled to this concept. In this way it becomes clear how the realities of Zanzibari men and Western women differ, and how they in fact conflict.

Since men are not as present and reliable as Western women expected them to be, women have to create a life of their own at the beach. While many women do have the wish to spend more time together with their partner, not all are passively waiting for their husband to come home or take them somewhere. Most of them successfully created their own (rather busy) schedules, existing out of their businesses or other tourist-related jobs, sports such as running or swimming, and other hobbies. Sophia, for example, runs her own hotel with which she is mainly occupied. Whenever she has time off, she visits friends and acquaintances. While she acknowledges she wishes to spend more time together with her partner, she emphasizes she does not patiently wait for him to come around.

Many other women involved in relationships with Zanzibari men do run a business together with their partners. As has already been mentioned above, the division of tasks is often clearly set, with women spending most of their time on bookings and online advertising. Moreover, Western women make sure guests are welcomed, satisfied and entertained, and that the place looks proper. Such tasks often do not involve their partners, meaning a shared work floor is not similar to spending time together. And in free time as well, these women often meet others, or participate in other activities than their Zanzibari partners.

Thus while most women at the beach seem to have their own matters at hand, and many are not just waiting for their partners to be available, lives seem to be more separate than women wished for. An informal talk with Sophia revealed how difficult it sometimes is for her that her Farid is not available for most of the time. While having dinner with a group of women, Sarah mentioned they had to organize a nice day out with the four of them: Sophia, Sarah, and their Zanzibari partners. While Sophia liked the idea very much, she did not think it was possible to organize, since her Farid is not 'the kind of guy with whom one can make appointments'. It is not really his 'thing', she mentioned, to plan activities beforehand. Furthermore, she reckons how he is a typical Zanzibari man, as he makes decisions without consulting her, and puts his job first, which results in her not knowing what he is doing. While this might be true to a certain extent, she seems to be suffering from the fact that she cannot rely on him, and has to wait and see whenever he feels like spending time with her.

While it might appear that Karin and Astrid are often close to their husbands as they work and live together, both of them very often have no clue what their partners are doing. Both women often expressed their frustrations with their partners, especially when they did not keep their promises of managing and handling certain things, but instead went smoking or drinking with their friends, which happened regularly. As a result, when something needed to be done, they would push their partners every five minutes to handle the matters, blaming him for being lazy and not paying attention to what is really important. Furthermore, they expressed anger as their partners would state to be back in five minutes, then staying away for hours.

Especially Astrid becomes infuriated, she often told me, when Danish does not keep his promises. It seems that she does not want to, or in fact cannot, accept the fact that Danish will do whatever he wants anyway. It makes her feel lonely and in doubt about her decision to move to the beach. In Astrid's case, but also in general, such feelings of doubt and disappointment are hardly shared with other Western women in romantic relationships with Zanzibari men, or other outsiders living at the beach. To the outside world, all seems to be alright, western women seemingly put on a mask to cover such feelings of uncertainty, pretending their relationships are working well and are indeed not failing as so many other are.

To be together with and equal to their Zanzibari partner, to get through to him, to level and know what is going on inside him is what many women seemingly want to grasp, but what they almost never are able to. For many of the women, it is a mystery what their partners do and how they feel. To share both time and feelings is what women find important and wish for, and what disappoints them as they cannot get this contact. From a ludic perspective, Western women seem to be not as able as Zanzibari men are, to combine various realities, various cultural notions on what a relationship should be about, or on sexuality and gender. They hold on to the model of the companionate marriage, and by doing this fail to play as flexible as men do. This could be explained by the fact that these Western women deliberately chose to be with a Zanzibari man, over a partner with the same background. Their decision is based on companionate love, while for Zanzibari men more often their decision to be with a Western woman is based on a variety of reasons, that not necessarily deal with romantic love, but more so with (economic) opportunities for a betterment of life, as described in the previous chapters. Western women reason from a different standpoint, and as such are not required to creatively deal with various notions and ideas, various realities. Consequently, they are less experienced and less prepared for this specific play. Moreover, for them

to play does not seem to be as necessary as it is for Zanzibari men, as these women come from relatively prosperous parts of the world and may be able to relay on certain securities back home.[81]

Thus, for Western women in a relationship with a Zanzibari man at the beach it is not possible to realize their ideal companionate relationship, and they are unable to adapt to other realities. As a result, these women seem to be stuck in between two conflicting worlds that they are not able to combine or use in fruitful ways. In the next section, I will elaborate on what exactly being stuck entails on a daily basis.

When freedom is over

> Paula is one among the Western women in a relationship with Zanzibari men, and often talked with me about her feelings of loneliness. She recently found out that her husband cheated on her and lied about his love for her in order to get a business off the ground. More than a decennium of her life is wasted, she feels. Now, she does not go out that much anymore. Parties she does not really like as she has to go alone: without her husband means too much attention and hassle from other men; without friends as she does not really know fun people to hang out with. She runs a little establishment so contact with tourists she does have. But they often come for romantic one-on-one time and since tourists always leave, no deep contact is possible. Daytrips she makes every now and then, but that also gets annoying as tourists somehow are all quite similar and all ask the same questions. Other expats on the island she finds difficult to be friends with. They are drunkards, lazy, crazy, completely into the party scene or just too poor to even buy a drink. And as for the Zanzibari, they just cheat and lie and have a lifestyle, norms and values just way too strange and not normal for what she knows. Her social circle is existing, although very small.

Like Paula, many Western women live a solitary life, do not interact with each other nor form a group, talk about their private lives, drink coffee, do something fun and social together. Let me now turn to circumstances under which such a lonely life comes into being. Various aspects come to the foreground that count for almost all women that are part of this research, although some are not 'cheated' upon (yet), and are (still) happily together with their beloved one. Moreover, I am aware of the fact that for each of the women, personal accounts make specific circumstances differ from each other. Yet, a red thread is certainly present and will become clear from the below.

A first reason for the lack of a social circle is the at first so intense relationship Western women have with their Zanzibari partner, and their reliance on him. Women often do not come to Zanzibar necessarily for themselves, but for their beloved one. Or, when they do come for other reasons in the first place, they decide to stay longer, forever, because they fell in love. From stake they were not interested in relationships and friendships with others it seems, as they invest all their time in their love life. It seems many women have a romantic view: just the two of us, together alone in paradise, and they do not need other people to survive.

[81] I want to underline that not all women have secure options back home, or even the means to return home. However, compared to the unstable backgrounds of Zanzibari men, as is described in chapter two, women do come from countries where governments seem to take better care of their citizens.

But even if social contacts are wished for, those are hard to find. Zanzibari women are not easy to connect with, as they speak another language and are seen as completely different because of their religion and culture. There is hardly any overlap between the worlds of expatriate women and Zanzibari women, according to the first group. One woman explained to me how everything is just different: from child raising to cooking, from handling cheating husbands to leisure activities. Moreover, even though there are other expatriate women around, their number is limited as compared to 'back home'. There is not that much choice of whom to hang out with and with most is something wrong, as many women state it, as they would be drunkards, lazy, poor, or cheated upon by their husbands.

Furthermore, everyday life in Zanzibar can be quite complicated for non-Zanzibari. For instance, an easy task such as grocery shopping in the village can fill a whole day, as products are not always easy to find, and one has to be able to speak Kiswahili, know the right shops, right prices and ways of getting there. As a result, Western women rely on their Zanzibari partner as he knows about prices, good shops and the like. Thus next to him being the best romantic partner and social option, he is also the one on whom to rely when it comes to practical things. In this way, the women who have a romantic relationship with a Zanzibari become very dependent on their beloved one.

Another reason for a solitary life is their work or business, as it keeps Western women from having social interactions. Many are involved in tourism together with their husband, often managing or running a hotel or restaurant. The general division of labor as described above is a lucrative division, as everybody does what he or she is best in, but it also creates a certain dependency. Now not only romantically, also businesswise partners depend on each other. Moreover, couples deal with each other on a larger basis, since, while men are not necessarily around, there needs to be contact in order to let the business run smooth. Women therefore devote more of their time to their partner than to friends or acquaintances. While men go out and meet their friends daily, which is also part of their job, for the women it is lonelier: in front of their computer or with the sojourning tourists. The life of women thus mainly takes place at home.

Moreover, the tourist industry is a busy one and knows flexible working hours. Times that one might spend with friends and relatives, namely the weekend and evening hours are now regularly working hours. Since it is difficult to plan a get together with friends as tourists can come walking in just as one was about to leave, social contacts are hard to maintain. In general most expatriates work in tourism, which makes it even more difficult for Western women to meet up with others. In this way, time is one factor that hinders women from meeting each other. But also space makes it hard to socialize. As people live along the stretch of the coastline, distances can be too far, especially when the high tide makes walking at the beach impossible, a car is not available, or during nighttime when it is too dark and thus quite dangerous to get on a bike.

Now having discussed the practical reasons why women are quite lonely, do not meet up with other women, and eventually share their pains together, let me now turn to a next, and somewhat impetuous reason for not only being without female friends, but even avoid other women. Namely, Zanzibari men talk negative and eventually make up stories about other expatriate women around, in order to keep their Western partners away from those other expatriate women. The main reason for this is that the other woman might tell about his behavior, or even experienced his behavior herself as the man tried to arrange a kiss or a sexual get together, be it successful or not. One man who is

married to a Western woman and who was not sure if I could be trusted with the stories he told me, decided not to take any chances and told the girl he wanted to conquer that I was the best friend of his wife, in order for her not to talk to me. To me he told that this girl was madly in love with him but that he found her annoying and sad, so that I would not think anything about them leaving together.

But it goes further than that. Friendships have been destroyed by terrible gossip about the best friend. It appears to happen regularly that the best friend knows something which a Zanzibari man does not want his Western partner to find out about. He then will proclaim to his partner how this stupid friend of hers tries to tear them apart, how she must be a jealous creature who wants everything they share for herself, who cannot stand her friend having it all and therefore tries to destroy everything. In (another) reality, however, this friend is warning the Western woman for the behavior of her Zanzibari partner. But often Western women believe their partner when he makes excuses and denies that he has committed adultery. As such, men benefit from their partners having a small social circle, as in this way stories will be avoided more probably. Therefore, it seems to be a strategy of Zanzibari men to keep their partners' world limited.

Although it might be easier to decide to believe the man – as it is easier to break up with a friend than to give up your relationship in Zanzibar which means problems with housing, government, possible children, etc. – instead of the friend, Zanzibari men seem to be quite good in letting women believe them. Already early in the relationship they start with little hints of negativity about woman's friends or other female expatriates. Every now and then mentioning something bad might end up in the woman slowly believing her friend is no good. So when the friend brings the bad news, this is just the ultimate proof that she is mean and jealous, while the man knew this all the time, trying to protect his partner from evil others. As such, women become isolated from others in their close surroundings.

Yet another reason for loneliness is the relative small size of the beach community, which makes the perfect surroundings for gossip. While the main attitude is to mind one's own business, talking and gossiping happens on a daily basis. In practice, this means that everybody knows, but nobody interferes. It seems that it is not the act (of for example extramarital sex) that is wrong and does harm, it is the one person that spills the secret who is the bad person, the one who destroys relationships. Not only Zanzibari men talk and gossip and know almost every single thing about others, also expatriates know much about what is going on in other people's lives and relationships. These two groups are bounded and as far as I am concerned, Zanzibari men know much more about what is going on, while their credo of 'mind your own business' weighs heavier than that of expatriates. In any case, the result is that everyone knows, nobody tells. With the exception of some 'friends', as described above, no one will tell a woman her husband is cheating on her.

Such practices have consequences for the social status and relationships of a woman involved in a relationship with a Zanzibari. When other people know her man is committing adultery but are not 'allowed' to tell her, a distance between this woman and the community is being created by the rules of this particular community. Indeed, I often heard other women keeping their distance from a woman who is cheated upon, in order not to be seduced to tell her the truth. 'How can you be friends with someone if you cannot be honest with them?' is what many women told me. It seems to be difficult for women to form a group of friends, as honesty and trust are such important factors that could only be undermined. The result is that women in relationships with Zanzibari men are

isolated from the group. Some women even avoid public gatherings so they do not need to socialize with women that are being cheated upon, which creates even more isolation, as they might even be cheated upon themselves.

One woman that found out about their husband's adultery told me how she now recognized the small signs other women were giving her before. 'Is THAT your husband, hmm…'. Even though everyone knows, nobody tells, just to save their own reputation as a spiller, which makes finding out about such practices even harder. But when a woman finds out, the distance between her and the group might become even wider. She might blame the group for keeping this from her, or is too humiliated to face those who already knew for a long time.

And finally, what seems to increase feelings of loneliness are the strategies of coping that Western women have when they found out about their partner's adultery. As it turns out, many women do not admit they fell into the trap so many other women did before them. While some women break up and return to their homeland, some break up but stay in Zanzibar and others just forgive and forget, remaining together with their Zanzibari partner. Alicia is one woman that found out about her husband's extramarital affairs, and handled the situation in a way that often led to disbelief from others at the beach. It was widely known, not only among Zanzibari men, but among some expatriates as well, that her husband had had another (Tanzanian) partner for already some years. And since one year, he was seeing another (European) woman as well. While I knew about this situation, Alicia never discussed it with me, as if nothing was happening and the rumors untrue. Even when we sat down and she was telling me about the break-up and her moving back home for a while, she did not mention his adultery as a reason for their separating. I figured perhaps she did not know, as she did underline her annoyance of rumors about such things, and the lies that were spread. This was how she handled the situation in general: by denying and continuing. Only after a long time she decided to go back home. And as it turned out, she knew about everything and had an affair herself.

Western women have different strategies to cope with cheating, but almost all will never admit or believe their Zanzibari partner behaved in ways similar to other Zanzibari men in relationships with Western women. Classic adultery, just as it happens all over the world, is what some call it, while others do not mention it at all, as Alicia. It just happened to be that another woman, or other women, tricked him into adultery, he made a mistake and regrets that, is what seems to be thought. Furthermore, it might be difficult for the women to realize what actually might have been happening the whole time, their whole relationship through, even though they all have been warned and have seen it happening to other women.

While some women now search for other women to share their stories, they do not want everybody to know, and often pretend nothing has happened. The reasons for women to leave the island are hidden, although everybody seems to know already. Or, that women now do not go out with their husbands anymore, that is just because of practical reasons, and nobody asks what everybody knows. The humiliation and feelings of shame seem to be too great to show one's vulnerability, and admitting failure too big of a task. With all the warnings they already got, that mostly come from family and friends back home, going back, breaking up or showing emotions would be admitting what an idiot they were, is what seems to be thought by these women. While first being alone together with a boyfriend or husband, now the woman is completely alone.

And at the same time, new Western women come to the beach, and might start relationships with those (and other) Zanzibari men. While to them the same might happen as to the women described in the above, the issue of secrecy and 'mind your own business' will keep inhabitants of the beach from warning them. For Western women that have experienced such relationships and failures already, it seems to be even more frustrating how visible it becomes that they are apparently exchangeable. Women expressed their disappointment and pain as they now believed they were just a check, a whole lot of money, through the eyes of Zanzibari men.

The decisions Western women make, and their strategies of coping when their relationship with a Zanzibari man is over are not considered to be easy. While it seems they could just go back to Europe, women hesitate, as they left much in order to start a new life at the beach. Not only could their social relations back home have become ambiguous by their move, it could be impossible financially, and, moreover, what they built up in Zanzibar, socially, romantically and businesswise, is not easy to leave behind. This indicates how Western women did make the beach their home, part of their realities. Moreover, notions of the self interfere with women's decisions to stay at the beach. All women consider themselves to be independent, and that their relationship ended seems to feel as a personal failure or a mistake that is not easy to admit. Let me now elaborate on each of these points separately.

First of all, the decision to move to Zanzibar has not been an easy one for many women. Not only might women have given up their jobs and careers, also their friends and families they left behind, often, in disbelief about this 'insane' idea of being in love with an African. Women told me about how friends disapproved and expressed their worries about this rather spontaneous plan, and therefore have lost friendships. Other women, however, did mention how their friends and family were supportive of their move to the beach. Be that as it may, the large distance and high expenses of traveling makes relationships back home difficult to maintain. While Astrid recalls how her friends supported her, even were jealous of her courage to take such a step, to follow her heart, a mutual disability to travel makes contact minimal. She uses Skype and email to stay in touch with her daughter and one friend, but limited means (as she does not always have money to buy credit for internet) make contact with more people impossible. Also, while her daughter supports her in her decisions, her son does not, even refuses to have contact with her, because of her marriage to Danish.

Monica lost the trust of her family by marrying a twenty years younger Zanzibari man. She told me how they do not support her decision, and how they as a couple are not welcome back home. She herself is welcome though, as long as she does not bring her husband. This unsupportive attitude makes her not wanting to go back, as she feels judged and let down by her own parents and siblings. Furthermore, as she is in the end of her forties, she feels that if she would go back home, there would be no opportunities for getting a job, especially now with a great unemployment ratio in her home country. Her circumstances are peculiar, as she experiences there is no reason to return home, while at the same time there is nothing to stay for in Zanzibar. Her husband lives abroad ever since they were married for six months, and is not planning on coming back to Zanzibar. While she is aware of this and does not want to move there herself, she somehow is still hoping for him to come back to Zanzibar. She recalls how she has no place to go because of this, and feels old and lonely.

But aside from the unattractive future prospects when moving home, for some women it is financially not possible to move back home when their relationship ends. Some women do not have any savings to purchase a flight ticket, let alone have money to spend when arriving in Europe. Many invested all their money in a business or house in Zanzibar, not realizing the expenses in Zanzibar, nor thinking it would take that long to build something or to gain profit. One woman remarks how opening a business in Zanzibar actually was the best thing she could do in order to make money. Here, she could open her own place, without getting loans from the bank, while back home the only possibility was to work for others. Unfortunately, now, after she found out about her husband's infidelity, she has no money to leave Zanzibar, not for a holiday, neither to migrate back to Europe.

Intertwined with a lack of personal savings is the Western women's dependency on Zanzibari partners when it comes to business on the island. While the investments women made in the businesses seem to be (almost) the only way for Zanzibari men to open up a business, this does not create a position of relative power for women. In fact, men remain powerful because of their status as Zanzibari, and women remain dependent on their partners. Often, Western women purchase a plot that in fact on paper is owned by Zanzibari men. Because it is their romantic partner, and because they will run the business together, women feel things should be safe. But when conflicting realities come to the fore and women realize their relationship is not what they wished for, they also realize their practices of gambling when it comes to land and businesses. There are cases in which women by breaking-up their romantic relationships, indeed lost their houses or businesses in Zanzibar as well. For example Karin, who now realizes that the house she built in Zanzibar will not be available to her anymore, as it officially is property of her now ex-husband. While she invested money, he will gain the profits from it, by renting it out to tourists.

Many of the women that found out about the extramarital practices of their partner realized that the only one they thought to know really well at the beach, turned out to be somebody not to be trusted. Such findings make women not only feel betrayed and angry, they also come to realize their dependency on Zanzibari men. Because their partner is the only one they (thought to) know, because all their money turns out to be in the hands of their Zanzibari partner, because the house or business is on his plot, and even more, because if they want to stay in Zanzibar, they should remain married in order to receive a proper and affordable permit. As such, leaving an unfaithful husband is practically not that easy.

Finally, even though women might be aware of, or suspecting their husband is having an affair, they prefer to look the other way as they simply love him so much they could not stand to be without him. The women in this study that had to deal with infidelity either pretend they did not know, or decided not to tolerate it and were (making plans of) leaving him. However, many among them, for extended periods, ignored hints and wanted to believe in the success of their relationship. Being emotionally attached to someone does not make one see clear, many of them argued. Women recounted how it took them a long time to realize what actually was happening to them, to realize what kind of mess they were in.

Conclusion

This chapter concerned the places, performances and perceptions of Western women in romantic relationships with Zanzibari men. It becomes clear that various notions of what a relationship should be about, and constructions of masculinity, femininity and sexuality differ and cannot be matched and combined easily. At the same time, however, it shows how such constructions influence one another, and are entangled, may this be a conscious or unconscious practice, in order to create a certain desired reality, whether workable or not.

I elaborated on how these women at first perceive the beach in Zanzibar to be a place of freedom, where the idea(l) of romantic love can be obtained. Indeed, at first Western women experience a certain feeling of femininity that is wished for and that is realized by practices of Zanzibari men. These men use various cultural notions of femininity as well as masculinity by which Western women feel as if they have 'arrived' at the ideal of true love. It is women's cultural background (thus notions of how it should be, but also what the Other should be like) that makes them experience this love at the beach as true and ideal, as their constructions of romantic and companionate love seemingly can become reality here. Simultaneously, women perceive Zanzibari men to possess a certain masculinity that is viewed as attractive. This perception becomes reality not only by what Western women want to be real, but also by Zanzibari men themselves, who respond and react to such ideals.

But not only in the beginning of relationships are notions on femininity and masculinity, sexuality and relationships flexible and ambiguous. It turns out in fact that romantic relationships are built on perceptions, expectations and idealizations of such constructs. Western women expect Zanzibari men to perform in certain ways, however, such ideals do not become reality. Different constructions of relationality, of how relationships should be like, make that such intercultural relationships at the beach turn out to be a disappointment for many of the Western women. While the companionate relationship is what women wished for, Zanzibari men cannot live up to this construction, and indeed practice from various relationalities (see chapter four). For women, living at the beach turns out to be a romantic struggle, (from perception of women having a happy relationship with men) or a failure (from the perception of women that are separated). As a result, feelings of loneliness, of being stuck and having failed are common, and on a daily basis women face their ideals and realities conflicting with those of their partners and the beach in general.

The ludic perspective proves to be helpful in illustrating the difficulties and hardship women experience at the beach. As has become clear, the reality of the companionate relationship conflicts with other notions on relationships, which results in conflicting realities of people that are involved in such relationships. While Zanzibari men seem to be experienced players as they are more skilled when it comes to combining realities and managing existing tensions between realities, this does not hold for Western women, and for a couple of reasons. First, western women hold on tight to the notion of the companionate marriage, and do not feel the need to use other 'realities', as they seemingly envision this one as the best and most logical, stemming from their cultural background. Second, it never seemed necessary for them to be flexible and adopt other realities, since their Zanzibari partners (to them) seemed to share their notions on what a relationship should entail. Third, for those women this companionate notion is deeply embedded in ways of thinking and experiencing life, as exactly this notion is why they came to, or stayed at the beach; Western women (imagined to have) found romantic love here. This differs from Zanzibari men, since they came to the

beach and became involved with Western women not only for 'romantic' love, but for other factors as well. This results in a last reason, namely, Western women do not need to make sense of various realities of relationships, as they do not need a similar betterment in their lives as Zanzibari man feel they need to. Thus, the reasons for being together differ for Zanzibari men and Western women, and influences the successfulness of play, the capability and flexibility with which one is able to make sense of various (conflicting) realities.

Instead of the freedom Western women imagined to find at the beach, the existence of a particular order becomes visible, the longer women stay. The rules of the game turn out to have a negative effect on Western women, as they themselves are not able (do not want, or do not need) to play the ways Zanzibari men do. Such practices and ways of strategizing of Zanzibari men make Western women relatively powerless and dependent, thus their playground smaller. In fact, women do not seem to be able to play at all, as their performances and practices all stem from their reliance on romantic love, and not in any way integrate or make use of other realities. A lack of influence is what women experience at the beach, at this playground that is dominated by Zanzibari men, while initially signing up for freedom, romance, and endless possibilities.

6. Conclusion: freedom and ordering by means of play

> 'No matter how much we wish to be free, we will always create conditions of ordering if not order in itself' (Hetherington 1997: 52-53).

The movie *The Beach* (2000) could be a filming of the beach in Zanzibar, rather than of the book by Alex Garland (1997). In this film, the main character Richard is in search of a paradise beach in Thailand that is not yet spoilt by tourism. He finds the place and settles down there in the small community that has been set up by other outsiders that wanted a different and more free life. While at first it seems that an ultimate freedom and idyll can be experienced at this beach, he then finds out there are dark sides too. Rules, regulations and prohibitions are present and in the end almost drive Richard mad. He turns back to 'civilization' right in time, and will always take with him this intense memory of his life at the beach.

The film *The Beach* (2000) displays a similar scenario as to that of the beach in Zanzibar. Inhabitants of the beach in Zanzibar too, come to the beach in order to find something better and more attractive. To move to the beach seems to indicate a move forward and a choice to upgrade a life in various ways. But as it turns out, the beach does not have all the ingredients, or, not only has ingredients for a life of freedom. Indeed, those are carefully mixed with those for social order. The numerous opportunities and possibilities are what make the beach an attractive, yet at the same time an ambiguous place to live.

In this thesis, I described how the beach resembles and holds the promise of freedom and paradise, but in reality, brings about ordering and system too. My aim was to set out how in a place where everything seems to be possible, where the ultimate freedom prevails, where there are no restrictions, where freedom has total social control, a social control exists and rules. The starting point of this thesis were theories and ideas about the beach as a place to play, the beach as a place of ultimate freedom and alternative ordering. Frequently, the beach is envisioned as an attractive and magical place, exotic, hedonistic and pleasurable, and as an ultimate holiday destination, where rules of society do not seem to count (Lenek and Bosker 1998; Taussig 2000). This shines through, and at the same time is created by inhabitants of the beach in Zanzibar. Expatriates and Zanzibari men alike settle at the beach in order to find particular freedoms and meet in a world in which codes of behavior are different from where they came from. Especially since the beach is a combination of a holiday destination, a subterfuge, a place holding endless possibilities and ultimate romance, the beach can be seen as the ultimate 'place to play' to many.

The paradox of freedom and alternative ordering present at the beach is very similar to the concept of heterotopia by Foucault (1983). An Other world in which freedom is allowed total control, while simultaneously total control has the complete freedom (see Hetherington 1997), is indeed a neat description of the beach in Zanzibar. Both the pleasure and the danger, the opportunities and risks of the beach I described in the four empirical chapters. The southeast coast of Zanzibar, the beach in front of the villages of Paje, Bwejuu and Jambiani are location for this thesis. It is here that I searched for freedom and ordering by looking at relationships between (groups of) people. Because, how would people actually move and feel within such a heterotopia? Actually, who are these people? What would they do? How would they feel? How do they experience the beach?

It is the concept of *ludism* (Boelstorff 2006; Droogers 2006; Malaby 2009) that forms the analytical framework for this thesis, by which I shed light on ways in which people move, practice and feel at the beach, and the underlying reasons for this. Also, this approach has proved useful as it simultaneously creates the possibility to incorporate other worlds, other realities inhabitants of the beach make use of. According to the ludic approach, people make sense, aim to combine and intertwine various realities as to make sense of their (often rapidly changing) worlds. People play, therefore, with such different realities, by picking and choosing from them what is in their eyes useful in order to create meaning. Especially since the beach in Zanzibar is a place where many realities abound, as people from various background meet, such playfulness becomes an inevitable option. It is necessary to (again) underline how this ludic approach is *etic*, as inhabitants of the beach themselves do not consider themselves to be at play, but in fact are active, in a variety of serious ways, to create a meaningful life.

The beach as an oasis, thus, I argue, is the ultimate location for the *homo ludens*, as described by Huizinga (1938). Indeed, the playful man is at his best at the beach in Zanzibar, as here he can be free in a world other than what is perceived as normal, and creates an order different from normal. A playful context thus, in which new freedoms are to be found, yet at the same time new oppressions present themselves. If freedom and new ways of ordering are looked upon from a playful point of view, uncertainties, challenges and competitions in an ever changing world seem to be causes for such creations. This certainly makes sense, as the location of the beach to many is a place to settle in order to find a certain betterment (albeit in various ways). Moreover, as play is a way for people to make sense and give meaning simultaneously and subjunctively to multiple realities, the beach is a playground which is influenced by various realities, through play of its inhabitants. Such multiple realities imply reasons for people to come to the beach, and to play according to certain rules and to realize certain outcomes.

What creates the presence of various realities at the beach is that, as has become clear throughout this thesis, the beach community is quite a diverse one. Especially two groups became apparent within this community: on the one hand the Zanzibari men, at the other hand the outsiders (that are in this thesis Western expatriates). As a result, cultural constructs such as ethnicity, gender, sexuality and marriage needed to be examined, as they are flexible and vary per culture. But not only must the focus be on those constructs as merely cultural, one also has to be aware of the ways in which such constructs and notions can influence one another, and be used and bended for the sake of stereotyping, or dealing with the Other in general. Thus, notions of such constructs are composed, combined, intertwined, in short, played with, in order to make sense of realities. Zanzibari men and expatriates both have different visions on those concepts and use them in different ways, which creates tensions and frictions. Such concepts both establish and underline power relations and (in)dependencies between people and groups of people, and are scrutinized in each empirical chapter.

In order to get a clear view on how people play – thus, how people create freedoms, but also how they create order to make sense of a free place, how they experience the beach, how they are restricted in their freedom – I divided points of focus and elaborated on each of them in separate chapters. First I dealt with the beach in relationship to wider Zanzibar, in order to elaborate on locality as a subject of play. Then, I focused on business relationships between Zanzibari men and outsiders at the beach, as to illustrate how notions of the Other and stereotyping can be analyzed

from a ludic perspective. Thereafter, I elaborated on romantic relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women, first from the point of view of men, and in the final chapter from the women's perspective. In those chapters, it becomes clear how love as well can provide various realities and thus becomes an element of play. Concepts that are especially striking are power relations between people and groups of people, (in)dependencies and interdependencies between people and groups of people. Such concepts intersect with various cultural notions on gender and sexuality (including masculinity and femininity), and the ideas of love and relationality, and are therefore very present as points of discussion in this thesis.

The first chapter thus focused on the beach in relation to wider Zanzibar, and how Zanzibari men that are present at the beach and have a relationship with Western women make sense of both realities. While throughout this thesis I described the beach as a locality separate from wider Zanzibar, it can be argued that the beach in fact is part of Zanzibar, as Zanzibari men move back and forth between the two, and although living at the beach, never cut their ties with Zanzibari society. Rather, it seems that those men have elastic ties with which they ever continue to be attached to Zanzibar.

The beach can be seen as a place where Zanzibari men are free to play in specific ways in order to become successful within wider Zanzibar. While there are few opportunities for young men in Zanzibar to rise on the social ladder, the beach is, as a result from rising levels of tourism, an inspirational place. At the beach, one can come from nothing and turn into somebody successful and influential. Things that are not easy accessible to men in wider Zanzibar are to be found at the beach indeed. However, not all men become successful at the beach, actually many more do not, which shows the complexity of this play and the seriousness with which one should play. Many of the Zanzibari men that are part of this research are the more successful ones, that have established already evident successes. Indeed, especially getting involved with a Western woman creates opportunities to become somebody quickly, to gain as much freedom as possible.

Life at the beach resembles freedom, as there are no such orderings present as there are in wider Zanzibar. However, since the beach is part of, or located next to, wider Zanzibar, men risk quite a chance of villagers and family members to find out about immoral ways and thus be frowned upon, as their new lifestyle full of drinking and partying is not always accepted by other Zanzibari. But even though certain behaviors are detested, when a man successfully establishes himself, it seems that the means of getting there are weighed out. At the same time, wider Zanzibar gives men the opportunity to increase their status and influence at the beach, as their Zanzibari identity gives them connections and political benefits to increase their power over outsiders.

Moreover, elasticity and place indicate the importance of wider Zanzibar to those Zanzibari men living at the beach. While it seems that they are only involved at the beach, it turns out their stay at the beach might be a strategy to become successful in wider Zanzibar, which indicates the importance of Zanzibar to those men. This has also become clear in the other empirical chapters: how men wish to build a house at the beach, even if they migrated to Europe. Or how men that are part of this research preferred to live in Zanzibar as here they felt better and have more opportunities. And how some men in the end marry a Zanzibari woman. As such, it seems that Zanzibari men indeed play at the beach in order to, in a creative manner, make sense and give meaning to their multiple realities, of which Zanzibar appears to be very important, even while the beach is the location of this play.

The third chapter dealt with the way in which business produces both freedom and order at the beach, and how notions of allochtony and autochtony, and stereotypes of the Other influence power relations and dependencies. From a ludic perspective, by being engaged in intercultural business, inhabitants of the beach play with notions of Otherness and the insider – outsider dichotomy in order to make their stay as attractive as can be, in order to make sense of, and give meaning to this world of which various realities make part. In this chapter, it becomes clear how business is part of play at the beach, and creates a specific freedom and ordering, especially by the use of the construction of Otherness. While people come to find liberties and opportunities to live a freer life, what they find is constructions of power, conflicts and dependencies that make this perceived freedom questionable.

The increasing popularity of the beach for tourists makes this place an ultimate place to play, as the tourist industry offers numerous opportunities for a meaningful life. The beach attracts inhabitants from various backgrounds, by which it has become a multicultural location, including various realities. While I make the distinction between Zanzibari men and outsiders, both groups actually share a same lifestyle of being involved in the tourist business and living within a place dedicated to tourism, of drinking and partying, where sexually people are very active. However, the two groups are distanced from each other as well, and oppose each other in ways that bring about conflicts and tensions. Power relations and dependencies as such become strikingly visible.

Both groups are active giving meaning to this place, seemingly hoping to establish 'a world of their own'. However, tensions between Zanzibari and Western economical structures and mutual dependencies create power relations and conflicts, and people are forced to combine rules and regulations stemming from different worlds. In order to create such a meaningful world, one has to play, by making sense of, and combining those various realities. To establish a latitude in which the conflicting realities can be integrated as much as is needed would bring about a meaningful world. However, as this chapter showed, both groups of inhabitants of the beach are not necessarily ready, even reluctant, to integrate Otherness into their lives. Rather, it seems, they keep their own realities and (forcedly) pick as little as possible from the Other.

But while both Zanzibari men and outsiders are not looking for much contact with the other, this seems to be impossible as they rely on each other for various reasons. While Zanzibari men have social, cultural and geographical capital, outsiders have financial means and the knowledge of doing business in a successful way. In order to reach a certain level of freedom to do whatever one wants, one thus has to follow a certain ordering. Or, the freedom to live as one pleases is being challenged by orderings that inform and channel the multiple freedoms existing at the beach. Therefore, inhabitants of the beach face certain dependencies that influence their playfulness.

The following two chapters focused on the playful disposition of romantic intercultural relationships between Zanzibari men and Western women, as such relations are seen as a way to establish a meaningful life. Chapter four discussed such romantic relationships from the point of view of Zanzibari men. I especially dealt with the way in which Zanzibari men, by having romantic relationships with Western women, create, increase and decrease freedom and order. Furthermore, their perceptions on, and performances within such relationships were topic of this chapter, as well as what such relationships evoke for them within the wider society at the beach. I analyzed such practices as if Zanzibari men are players of a particular game, and have their own rules, playground

and realities. As it turns out, Zanzibari men define and act within such relationships different from their Western partners.

It has become clear that Zanzibari men play, as they use, mix, combine and intertwine various notions of love, romance, sexuality, masculinity, femininity and gender in order to establish a relationship with a Western woman. This play is important to them, as such a romantic relationship seems to be the ultimate way to move forward and upward as an individual within Zanzibar society. To establish a romantic relationship with a Western woman is to limit one's freedom (as one is bounded to another person), in order to enlarge freedom. Hence, a specific order is created voluntarily that enables Zanzibari men to move more freely on a larger scale. Both at the beach as well as wider Zanzibar, men now have a higher status, as they enjoy specific luxuries.

While a commitment thus brings about benefits, it simultaneously implies 'losing' a specific identity, as men come to depend on Western women. Moreover, the way in which Zanzibari men practice and perceive sexuality and masculinity is ambiguous, as it both follows and undermines a certain order in Zanzibar. However, it seems that men experience such sacrifices to be inevitable and strategic, and in fact those are not very visible in their practices. Indeed, men cover up dependencies and limitations of masculinity and sexuality, and in this way regain specific power and control. Thus, even though Zanzibari men confirm to be in a companionate relationship with a Western woman, they do not seem to perform in this way and indeed do not let go of other notions of sexuality and gender. It becomes clear then, that the realities of Zanzibari men differ from their Western partners as men did not abandon certain realities but simply combined them.

Zanzibari men that are part of this research are very experienced in this specific play, it turns out. Many of them are incredibly good in combining notions of sexuality and on what a relationship should be about, from both a Zanzibari point of view as well as a Western vision. Even though such notions seem to be incompatible, and to let go of familiar notions and give way to unfamiliarity may be frightening, Zanzibari men know how to pick and choose from them in order to make their lives meaningful. While these practices may be experienced as wrong and perverse, as they indeed are harmful to others, through a perspective of play it shows how skillful the men are, and how motivated to reach to meaning. Thus, to view Zanzibari men at the beach as *homo ludens* is to underline their skills, instead of viewing them only negatively and disempowered, as they are unemployed, uneducated, and acting as merely bad guys.

The fact that Western women in romantic relationships with Zanzibari men experience such a relationship differently has become clear from chapter five. Here I focused on how Western women, by having a relationship with Zanzibari men and by settling at the beach create, and both increase as well as decrease their freedom. As it turns out, while they themselves envisioned to move to a freer place than where they came from, it in fact turned out to be a more ordered one in ways incomprehensible and not fruitful to them.

Indeed, Western women envisioned such a relationship to be companionate and romantic, and therefore experienced their move to the beach and engagement with a Zanzibari man as liberating, as here they expected to find true love. Since Zanzibari men play with a variety of notions and thus not completely live up to notions of companionate love, for Western women such relationships often turn out to be disappointing. Their reality simply does not suit that of the realities they found at the beach. Furthermore, it has become apparent that Western women are not able to or willing to

attune their notions of what a relationship should be like to those other realities present at the beach. For them the companionate relationship seems to be the only way of relationality.

Western women do use various notions of masculinity and femininity when they first get into contact with their partner. Women have an ideal picture of their partner, based on stereotypes and notions of Otherness, which is fed by practices of Zanzibari men, that is considered attractive and exotic. On a long run, however, this image does not seem to hold, and next to such resulting disappointments, also dependencies become reality. For a variety of reasons, women politically, but also culturally and socially rely on their partners, which limits their space that at first resembled freedom. As a result, a general feeling of dependency and powerlessness prevails among women considering their relationships with Zanzibari men.

Since Western women are not able to incorporate various notions of love and in fact hold on to their own companionate notion of what a relationship should entail, they are put offside. Indeed, analyzed ludically, the inability of women to make use of various realities makes that they cannot be considered at play when it comes to their romantic relationships. As a result, then, while I consider the beach as a playground, this is in fact not the case for everyone that makes part of this beach community. Play, therefore, is not for everybody and at every level. While Zanzibari men play successfully, women seem to only be part of the play as men's strategies and tools in order to become successful.

In fact, not only Western women, but expatriates in general are part of the play of Zanzibari men. However, at the beach as a playground, not only Zanzibari men but also outsiders play, be it on a variety of levels. Both groups are, to a certain extent, able to create specific freedoms and orderings, as all get, in various ways, involved in the game that is played at the beach. Whether considering locality, business or romantic relationships, all inhabitants of the beach are able to (try to) make their lives meaningful, by making sense of various realities. Throughout this thesis I made clear how the beach can be seen as a place to play, in which the inhabitants can be considered *homo ludens*, (wo)men at play. Outsiders, both male and female, and Zanzibari men were all part of the play I elaborated upon. It is the ludic approach that makes it possible to illustrate the presence of various realities within one location. At the beach, it became clear, there are indeed multiple realities, ranging from different localities, economical and business structures, stereotypes, and visions of love, gender and sexuality. While such multiple realities create tensions and conflicts, they also empower people in order to create meaning, and to reach to betterment.

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List of informants (fictional names)

Abdul is a Zanzibari man in his mid-thirties. Officially he is married to a Western woman with whom he owns a hotel at the beach. However, the two of them split up just before my fieldwork, and now he is planning on marrying a Zanzibari woman.

Ali is a Zanzibari man in his late twenties and works in a hotel as bartender. He has a relationship with a European woman for two years now. It was during my fieldwork that he traveled to Europe to visit her for the first time. He is a rare exemplar as he is faithful in the sense of not having sexual encounters with others.

Alicia is a European woman in her thirties and just separated from her Zanzibari husband. She moved back to her home country during my fieldwork, but is uncertain if she will return to Zanzibar again.

Anabel is from Europe, in the end of her twenties and recently got married to a Zanzibari man. While she still lives in Europe, she and her husband are planning on either living in Zanzibar together, or in Europe.

Astrid is a European woman in her fifties who is married to a Zanzibari man. She moved to the beach three years ago and now runs a hotel together with her husband.

Danish is a Zanzibari man in the end of his thirties, and is together with a Western woman that he married three years ago. Together they live at the beach on the same plot as their business, that he runs, and she invested in. As his wife is too old to have children, he too is childless.

Dawid is a Zanzibari man in his mid thirties and is married to a Western woman with whom he has children. While he lived in Europe for a while, he prefers to reside in Zanzibar. Together with his wife he owns a hotel at the beach.

Elsa is in her late forties and works in an hotel at the other side of the island. I met her regularly at the beach and we often talked about my research.

Emma is a European woman and in the end of her forties. She is married to a Zanzibari man with whom she is building a house. It is only recently that she moved permanently to the beach, but she travels back and forth already for some years now.

Farid is a Zanzibari man in a long-term relationship with a Western woman. He is in his mid-thirties and owns a beach bar and bungalows at the beach. While he runs this place alone, his girlfriend did invest in the business.

Hadi is a Zanzibari man in his thirties who is married to a European woman and lived with her in Europe for already a long time now. Together they have a small daughter. Twice a year he comes back to Zanzibar to meet up with friends and family and to check up on his construction work: he is building a house at the beach.

Helen is a European and twenty-five year old. For two years now she has a relationship with a Zanzibari man. While she is living in Europe, she travels back and forth a couple of times a year, and

lets her boyfriend come and visit her in Europe. She is planning on moving to Zanzibar for a longer period next year.

Ibrahim is a Zanzibari man in his early thirties. He owns a hotel and works as a mediator between Zanzibari and outsiders. Although he is married to a European woman who lives in Europe, he has never told me this. Moreover, while he states how he wants to stay in Zanzibar, he tells his wife he wants to move to her in Europe. So, it is unsure what his actual plans for the future hold.

Jamal is a young Zanzibari in his mid-twenties, and a favorite to many. He is very successful with the ladies, having a lot of girlfriends and lovers. However, he himself states nothing is official, thus being single. He runs a popular beach bar and furthermore is a local partner to a successful businessman from outside.

Jason is a Western man in his mid-twenties and known to be a player. He is very popular among women and sexually very active. He works in a hotel at the beach where he lives now for around three years.

Kamil is a Zanzibari man in his early thirties who declared himself to be single. Other people however declare him to have many wives, fiancées and girlfriends. He has no steady position, mostly hangs out with and entertains tourists. Officially he is shareholder in a business at the beach, but never acted like it.

Karin is a European woman in her mid-sixties who has a long-term relationship with a Zanzibari man. While she moved to Zanzibar with her European husband, they got separated and both found another love. Together with her boyfriend she makes souvenirs she sells to tourists in a little shop.

Lauren is in her sixties and from Europe. She just got divorced from her much younger Zanzibari husband, as he wanted to marry another woman from Europe. Together with him, she built a house at the beach, where she in the future might spend her holiday, as she officially lives in Europe.

Malik is a Zanzibari man in his early thirties, and is married in Europe to a European woman with whom he now lives at the beach. They are busy building a house, but as money ran out, take a break from it now. It is unknown to me what their plans for the future are, but they do plan to have their own farm. Malik is a DJ as well, and this is how he gets a little bit of income.

Mikail is a Zanzibari man in his late thirties, and owns a hotel at the beach. He has been in a relationship with a Western woman but split up with her as she wanted to live in Europe, while he preferred Zanzibar. Together they have a daughter although he never saw her.

Monica is a European woman in the end of her forties. She is married to a Zanzibari man that does not live at the island. While she moved to the island for her man, it is uncertain if she stays since he is not around and not planning on coming back. Nowadays she manages a hotel at the beach.

Murad is a Zanzibari in the end of his thirties and has been in relationships with various Western women. Now, however, he is married to a Zanzibari woman. He is still involved in tourism, as he manages a bar.

Mustapha is a Zanzibari in his early forties and in a relationship with a Western woman. They have a little girl and live in Zanzibar together. He has been in a relationship with another European woman

before and with her, he lived in Europe for a while. It was also with her that he built his hotel he now runs alone.

Najib is a Zanzibari man around forty years old, and runs a shop at the beach. He has been married to a Western woman but got separated recently. With this woman he has three children that come to visit him in Zanzibar twice a year. He has been living in Europe for some years, together with his ex-wife. It was also with her he build a house at the beach.

Nasir is a Zanzibari man in his mid-thirties and married to a Western woman, but recently got separated. He has other girlfriends as well, and just moved on with one of them. He lived in Europe for a while but preferred the beach. Now, he lives there in a big house and runs two businesses.

Paula is a European woman in her fifties. She is officially married to a Zanzibari man but lives separately from him. She does run a business with him.

Peter is a Western man in his early twenties and is active as photographer at the beach. He is a single man and enjoying the freedom of the beach, especially sexually, as he is fond of getting involved with tourist women. He lives at the beach now for around two years.

Rahim is a Zanzibari man in his mid-twenties. He works in tourism, although he switched work places during my fieldwork. His steady relationship with a European girl ended after she found out about him seeing other girls as well. He has a couple of other girls he dates, and is active in declaring his love to them.

Rose is an older European woman married to a Zanzibari man. They together live and work, and she is not seen around that much. She secluded herself from the social scene to live quietly with her husband at the beach.

Saji is a Zanzibari man in his early thirties who has been married to a much older European woman. Now that this marriage is over, he is planning on marrying another European woman with whom he will settle in Europe. Together with his former wife he built a house at the beach where he now lives, and he lived with her in Europe for a while.

Sarah is a European woman in her thirties and married to a Zanzibari man. Together they run a business.

Sophia is a European women in her forties running her own hotel at the beach. She is now for already a couple of years in a relationship with a Zanzibari man.

Umar is a bartender at a hostel at the beach. He is in his twenties and is not involved in a relationship with a Western woman.