

**CURRENT EFFORTS TOWARDS THE PRESERVATION OF THE GARIFUNA
LANGUAGE IN BELIZE AND BEYOND**

Fernando Y. Alvarado Benítez

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**Department of English
College of Humanities
University of Puerto Rico**

Approved by:

Dr. Cristal Heffelfinger Nieves
Reader

Dr. Robert Dupey
Reader

Dr. Nicholas Faraclas
Dissertation Director

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ABBREVIATIONS

ELA- Endangered Language Alliance

GAHFU- Garifuna American Heritage Foundation

IGLI- International Garifuna Language Institute

MCwB- Marine Conservation without Borders

NBS- Northern Belizean Spanish

NGC- National Garifuna Council

ODECO- Organization for Ethnic Communitarian Development

OFRANEH- Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras

SATIM- Sarstoon Temash Institute for Indigenous Management

SCEC- Stann Creek Ecumenical College

STNP- Sarstoon Temash National Park

SVG- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

TEK- Traditional Ecological Knowledge

UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund

DEDICATION

To the Garifuna people. For those who share the same interest in preserving the language and culture. To the Garifuna ancestors of the past, the Garifuna activists of the present, and the Garifuna generation of the future.

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ABSTRACT

Even though it is an endangered language, Garifuna still stands as a strong marker of identity. This applies not only to the Central American countries where Garinagu live, but also to the diaspora that migrated to the United States. Nevertheless, there is a concern from the older generations regarding the current status of the language. Though Garifuna culture has been revitalized by popularizing its music, and other traditions and technology have helped its linguistic preservation and fostering, the Garinagu still fear that the death of the language leads to a cultural death as well. Hence, language plays a key role in the preservation of this transnational culture.

It is worth noticing the interest that has been aroused towards the Garifuna culture, specifically regarding its language, "Today's unique people, the Garinagu in Belize, have gained respect for having a very diverse culture. The Garifuna language is of alarming interest to others, both locally and internationally" (The Garifuna history, language, and culture, 1990).

Several researchers have confirmed the endangered status of the Garifuna language. The Garinagu as a people have been a resilient population that has managed to survive and thrive despite various forced displacements. Though endangered in some ways, their language has shown resiliency as well. In the process of ensuring that Garifuna language does not disappear, key factors such as the links between language preservation efforts and identity, culture, and technology need to be addressed. Living in an era of increased globalization and homogenization, several groups of Garinagu are taking steps to reinforce their multiplex identities. The pluri-linguistic and pluri-cultural traditions of the Garinagu must play a key role in this process of identificational reaffirmation. Language preservation will ultimately depend on the younger generations of Garinagu. For this reason and others, their linguistic, cultural,

identificational, and technological practices must be integrated into any efforts at Garifuna language preservation. On the basis of the discussion above, I delved into the linguistic, cultural, identificational, and technological factors that foster this linguistic preservation.

This study aims to present the efforts to preserve Garifuna language instead of overlooking them and dooming the language to a termination. This research is mainly bibliographic, together with information from other sources such as interviews carried out to Garifuna activists available on the internet as well as in DVDs. In addition, the input of some Garifuna activists on a trip to Belize in 2019 fostered the search for information and added new perspectives to be considered. After a historical revision of Garifuna descriptions and the relative current context in which the language exists, this dissertation presents the efforts of activists to foster language preservation in Belize, in other Garifuna communities in Central America, and in the diaspora in the United States. Finally, it discusses the implications for the future and some contributions to other academic fields.

Keywords: Garifuna, linguistic revitalization, linguistic preservation, language, Belize, indigenous

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Fernando Y. Alvarado Benítez was born in 1986. He graduated from a Bachelor's Degree in Teaching English to Spanish Speakers, and a Master's Degree in English Linguistics at University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus. At the moment of writing this dissertation, Fernando Y. Alvarado Benítez has been an English teacher for 13 years. He has also been interested in minority languages, linguistic revitalization and linguistic preservation efforts. After learning about the history of the Garinagu, he became absorbed in the linguistic and cultural context of this community. His research aims at fostering awareness of Garifuna language and culture.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The structure of this dissertation

This dissertation consists of four chapters. This first chapter introduces the research questions that lay its framework and methodology used to answer them, as well as key issues related to the definitions of key terms such as ‘Garifuna’ itself, and terms such as ‘language’, ‘culture’, and ‘identity’ in the Garifuna context. At the end of the chapter, overall contextual information is provided concerning the Garinagu in Belize. In chapter 2, an extensive literature review is undertaken in order to gain an understanding of what has been said in the past concerning the Garifuna and their linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires, as well as what has been said concerning efforts to preserve them, with particular focus on technologies used to do so. In chapter 3, I attempt to synthesize this information within the framework of the literature on preservation efforts by Garifuna communities themselves, as well as in the light of what I have been able to learn through observation during my visits to Garifuna communities in Belize. In chapter 4, I present the results and implications of the study, with a view toward the future of Garifuna linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires.

Research questions and methodology

Several researchers have documented the endangered status of the Garifuna language. The Garinagu as a people have been a resilient population that has managed to survive and thrive despite various forced displacements. Though endangered in some ways, their language has shown resiliency as well. In the process of ensuring that the Garifuna language does not disappear, key factors such as the links between language preservation efforts and identity, culture, and technology need to be addressed. Living in an era of increased globalization and homogenization, several groups of Garinagu are taking steps to reinforce their multiplex

identities. The pluri-linguistic and pluri-cultural traditions of the Garinagu must play a key role in this process of identificational reaffirmation. Language preservation will ultimately depend on the younger generations of Garinagu. For this reason and others, their linguistic, cultural, identificational, and technological practices must be integrated into any efforts at Garifuna language preservation. Based on the discussion above, I propose the following research questions:

Q₁ – How do linguistic factors, especially the pluri-linguistic heritage of the Garinagu, play a role in Garifuna language preservation?

Q₂ – How do cultural factors, especially the pluri-cultural heritage of the Garinagu, play a role in Garifuna language preservation?

Q₃ – How do identificational factors, especially the pluri-identified heritage of the Garinagu, play a role in Garifuna language preservation?

Q₄ – How do current technological advances play a role in Garifuna language preservation?

The research upon which this dissertation is based was carried out primarily as a qualitative exploration of a wide range of written materials, as well as my own experiences during a field visit to Belize in the summer of 2019, during which I made informal contacts with various community activists while touring a number of sites of importance to the preservation of Garifuna linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires.

For example, on a visit to the Gulisi Community Primary School in Dangriga, I discovered that the school started with four classes in 2007 as a grant-aided school where

students are not only taught the official Curriculum of Belize, which prepares children for national exams, but also subject matter aimed at competency in Garifuna language, history, culture, and values. Children at the school are taught to read and write in English, Garifuna, and Spanish. Even in the upper grades at the school, students continue learning about Garifuna lifeways, while being taught practical courses in agriculture and other skills necessary for successful community life (Gulisi Community Primary School, 2019).

I learned first-hand how Garifuna culture is still experienced in Dangriga. Once you arrive in Dangriga, you start to see the Garifuna colors (black, white, and yellow) painted on surfaces ranging from plant pots to the walls of buildings related to Garifuna culture such as Tuani Restaurant, the offices of the National Garifuna Council, the Gulisi Garifuna Museum, and Gulisi Elementary School. Close to the entrance of the town is Sabal's Cassava Food Products, where they showcase the traditional and current processes of making *ereba* (cassava bread). The Catholic church of Dangriga offers a mass in Garifuna. Even during the English mass, they sing the Our Father prayer in Garifuna. At Tuani Restaurant, there are images related to Garifuna culture such as Garifuna dances, cuisine, and traditional religious ceremonies, and there is also a shop where one can buy traditional Garifuna clothes such as the *dashiki*. In both the National Garifuna Council headquarters and the Gulisi Garifuna Museum, there is signage written in Garifuna. At the Gulisi Garifuna Museum, I attended a workshop given to children on the first steps in sewing a fishing net, presented by a man who communicated mainly in Garifuna with the person in charge of the museum. Back in Belize City, every Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday there is traditional Garifuna music and dancing at Lerisi Restaurant. I went twice, and the place was full, and many people danced. There are also TV channels which devote specific airtime to Garifuna music.

Definition of the term *Garifuna*: Colonization and categorization

Before we can meaningfully address the research questions that frame this dissertation, it is necessary to attend to a number of issues related to the definitions of such terms as ‘language’, ‘culture’, ‘identity’, and even the term ‘Garifuna’ itself. When academics speak of ethnic categories and use labels such as ‘Carib’, ‘Arawak/ Taíno’, and ‘Garifuna’ (singular)/ ‘Garinagu’ (plural), it is not normally felt necessary to enter into lengthy discussions on how the cultural, linguistic, and other components that define such terms have been epistemically constructed and assembled. Thus, the extremely problematic character of ethnic categories is usually rendered invisible and glossed over, even in major pieces of research, such as doctoral dissertations. Postcolonial theorists have convincingly demonstrated how the very nature of most present day ethnic, linguistic, and cultural groupings depend more on the politics of a colonizing agenda than on how ethnicity, language, and culture are actually woven together, understood, and lived by real human beings. That said, these same theorists also show how this analysis applies equally to categories assigned to the colonizer, such as ‘Spanish’, ‘British’, and ‘American’, as it does to categories assigned to the colonized, such as ‘Arawak’, ‘Carib’, and ‘Garifuna’ (Makoni, 2013).

Even in the most detailed academic studies of the ethnicities, languages, and cultures of colonized peoples, however, there is usually little, if any, discussion concerning how those ethnicities, languages, and cultures have been historically constructed and deployed. This failure to problematize ethnic, linguistic, and cultural categories is not accidental. It is one of the ways in which academic disciplinary constraints ensure that, no matter how thorough, penetrating, or even critically incisive any given piece of research is, in the end it will propagate these same categories, thereby implementing the colonial/ neocolonial agendas of the ruling classes in whose image and interests those categories were created (Foucault, 1972).

One of the regions of the colonized world where it is most difficult to force the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural facts on the ground into the artificially neat, well-defined, mutually exclusive, and conjunctively exhaustive categories of the dominant colonial/ neocolonial episteme is the Caribbean, and among all of the peoples of the Caribbean, the Garinagu; their languages and their cultures are among the least amenable to this type of domestication by the colonial/ neocolonial gaze. I therefore feel that it is necessary to begin this dissertation with an extensive archaeology of the emergence and use of the categorical term 'Garifuna' as an ethnic, linguistic, and cultural label.

I do not intend, however, to carry out this archaeology as a purely academic exercise of definition at the beginning of this dissertation and then leave it behind as I move to the following chapters, like some interesting artefact in a museum. Instead, I will use the threads exposed by the critical analysis of the colonial/ neocolonial construction of Garifuna ethnicity, language, and culture in this chapter to weave together the vast amounts of archival and other data that constitute the chapters that follow.

The Garinagu at the nexus of the mythical division between 'Arawak' and 'Carib'

The Garifuna, their languages, and their cultures are a paradigmatic example of the extensive and intimate ethnic, linguistic, and cultural contact that typifies the Caribbean and its peoples. Because of the Eurocentric bias of historians, linguists, and others who study the Caribbean, the pluri-linguality, pluri-culturality, and pluri-identification of its peoples has more often than not been either ignored or completely erased (Faraclas, 2012). This erasure, combined with a tendency in Eurocentric science to search for simplistic monocausal sources for the emergence of complex phenomena, has given rise to a number of pernicious myths about the

peoples of the Caribbean that have had a particularly negative impact on our understanding of language, culture, and identification among the Garinagu.

The primordial Eurocentric myth regarding the Indigenous peoples of the Caribbean is that which artificially divided them into two mutually exclusive and conjunctively exhaustive poles of a binary opposition between the ‘good’ but conquered ‘Arawaks/ Taínos’ versus the ‘evil’ and conquering ‘Caribs’. This myth, originally formulated to justify the Spanish conquest, expropriation, enslavement, and plunder of the indigenous peoples of the region by equating ‘Carib’ to ‘cannibal’, saturates the framework of assumptions that still underpin much of the academic study of the people of the Caribbean. This myth plays a pivotal role in the way academics and others have defined the Garinagu as a people, because the Garinagu themselves rightly trace much of their ethnicity, culture, and ancestral language to the Island ‘Carib’/ Kalipuna/ Kalinago speaking peoples, who inhabited much of the southeastern Caribbean when the Europeans arrived at the end of the 15th century. This historically documented continuity from Island Carib/ Kalipuna / Kalinago is evident in the words that the Garifuna themselves use to refer to their language ‘Garifuna’ (< Kalipuna) and to themselves, in the singular ‘Garifuna’ (< Kalipuna), and in the plural ‘Garinagu’ (< Kalinago), all of which are sometimes said to be derived from a term meaning “cassava eater(s)” (Taylor, 1977).

Many academics and others who write about the Garinagu, most of whom have not bothered to critically examine the facts, unquestioningly accept all or much of the following mythical account of the emergence of the Island Carib/ Kalipuna/ Kalinago language and people. On the basis of little in the way of archaeological or historically documented evidence, we are told that the Island Carib people, their languages, and their cultures were the product of the conquest of a presumed ethnolinguistic group that has been labeled ‘Igneri’, who spoke a

language of the Arawakan (Arawak) family, by the Kalinya, a historically well documented ethnolinguistic group who still inhabit the region and who speak a language of the Caliban ('Carib') family. In the process, the 'Carib/ Kalinya' men killed the 'Arawak/ Igneri' men and forced the 'Arawak/ Igneri' women to cohabit with them. This is supposedly how the more Kalinya ('Carib') influenced variety of Island Carib/ Kalipuna/ Kalinago came to be spoken by the men and a less Kalinya ('Carib') influenced variety of Island Carib/ Kalipuna/ Kalinago came to be spoken by the women. Relics of such gendered registers are to be found today in the Garifuna language.

The Garinagu, African-Indigenous cohabitation, and resistance to European invasion

At this point, the history of the Island Carib/ Kalipuna/ Kalinago people moves from mythology to documented history, although much of this documentation has been ignored in the elaboration of additional myths concerning the Garinagu and their language, which will be treated below. The indigenous peoples of St. Vincent, along with those living in some of the neighboring islands and parts of the nearby 'Wild Coast' of South America (where the Guianas are located today), were remarkably successful in resisting Spanish and Portuguese invasion and colonization during the 16th century and beyond. While the Dutch, the English, and the French gradually conquered most of these resistant areas of the southeastern Caribbean over the course of the 17th century, the indigenous and afro-indigenous peoples of St. Vincent were able to hold off European conquest until the latter part of the 18th century.

During those centuries of successful resistance, numerous enslaved African descended runaways, as well as a number of enslaved African descended shipwreck survivors reached St. Vincent and were welcomed by some of the Island Carib Kalipuna/ Kalinago peoples who lived

on the island at the time, with whom they cohabited. In the process, these African descended runaways and shipwreck survivors came into contact with the Island Carib/ Kalipuna/ Kalinago language, which is sometimes confusingly also called 'Igneri' yet, in any case, is classified by linguists as being part of the Arawakan language family but with significant lexical input from Kalinya.

These newcomers adopted an Africanized version of Island Carib/ Kalipuna/ Kalinago initially as a second language, while their descendants later made it one of their first languages (Forbes, 2011, pp. 126-127). This cohabitation eventually resulted in the existence of two groups of Island Carib/ Kalipuna/ Kalinago peoples on St. Vincent: 1) those whose forbears were not extensively involved in such forms of cohabitation and who remained phenotypically Indigenous, and who are often referred to as the 'Yellow Caribs' or 'Red Caribs'; and 2) those whose forbearers were extensively involved in such forms of cohabitation, and who became phenotypically African while retaining much of their Indigenous language and culture, who are often referred to as the 'Black Caribs' or Garifuna/ Garinagu. Of all the peoples in the Caribbean who fought against colonization, the Garinagu/ 'Black Caribs' were among the most wellknown and most feared for their fierce and effective defiance of European invasion.

This effective Afro-indigenous resistance on St. Vincent lasted up until the British finally prevailed in 1796/1797, only a few years before they were compelled by similar resistance on the part of maroons and the enslaved in all of their Caribbean holdings to finally abolish slavery in the West Indies in 1834. The British were so fearful of the capacity of the Garinagu/ 'Black Caribs' to challenge their colonial authority that they immediately deported all but a handful of them, some 5,000 to 6,000 in all, to the small and barren neighboring island of Baliceaux, which proved woefully inadequate to sustain them. After more than half of the expelled Garinagu

perished on Baliceaux, the 2,000 or so survivors were deported in the following year to the island of Roatán off the coast of Honduras in 1797 (Sweeney, 2007, pp. 13-14). From Roatán, most of the Garinagu eventually migrated to the mainland, settling along the Caribbean coast of Central America, principally in what is now Honduras and Belize, as well as in Nicaragua and Guatemala. Today, the estimated worldwide population of the Garinagu is some 600,000. Sweeney (2007) notes that:

Not all the Black Caribs died or were exiled in 1797. A small number moved to the most remote and rugged part of [St. Vincent] ... and their descents still live there today.

Greiggs was their most important settlement. Today they have largely forgotten their Carib culture and language, and have assimilated into the mostly African Vincentian society. (p. 30)

Problematizing and upending mythologies concerning the Garinagu

As mentioned above, despite copious evidence amassed over the past century that challenges most aspects of the linguistic, cultural, and ethnic classifications of the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean into two broad categories, 'Arawak/ Taíno' and 'Carib', most academics up until the present continue to implicitly or explicitly accept and propagate these classifications in their work. Some scholars now recognize the need to question these linguistic, cultural, and ethnic divisions, which were first established by the Spanish at the turn of the 16th century but later elaborated upon by all of the other colonial powers for the following 400 years. That said, only a handful of specialists realize how thoroughgoing this problematization must be and how radically different our vision of the Caribbean will be after the reanalysis that it entails takes place.

Of course, we cannot begin to question the current dominant discourses concerning language, culture, and ethnicity in the Caribbean without doing an archaeology that reveals the agendas that these discourses were established to advance. Whitehead (2002) does an effective job in this respect and concludes that: “It should thus be very evident that it was the politics of colonialism that determined the ethnological agenda, and so, in turn, the creation of the ethnographic observations and linguistic descriptions that were thought to verify it” (p. 10).

Unfortunately, but predictably, most of the scholarly work carried out on the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean before the era of anti-colonial Independence, the mid-20th century, served to justify and advance the agenda of colonialism, and most of the scholarly work carried out since the mid-20th century up until the present has served to justify and advance the agenda of neo-colonialism. The devastating impact of these agendas on the indigenous peoples of the region has been nothing short of apocalyptic, from colonial expropriation and enslavement in 1520, to neo-colonial land-invasions, sweatshop labor, and ethnocide in 2020. But the mere fact that the Garinagu have survived, maintained, and even expanded their creolized trans- and pluri-linguistic repertoires and thrived through one apocalypse after another, attests to their capacity for creative and subversive resistance.

For better or worse, the Garinagu find themselves at the nexus of the mutually exclusive and conjunctively exhaustive binary opposition which counterposes ‘Arawak/ Taíno’ to ‘Carib’. There are many reasons for this, including the following:

- 1) The Garinagu are the only indigenous group who still speak their ancestral language whose association with the insular Caribbean can be proven beyond a doubt using the only types of evidence that are generally acceptable to Eurocentric scholarship (i.e., historical records written by Europeans, archaeological evidence, etc.). While there

are other much smaller groups of indigenous peoples who are closely related linguistically, culturally, and ethnically to the Garinagu who still inhabit islands such as Dominica and St. Vincent, none of them have retained their language (Devonish, 2010, p. 12).

- 2) Of all of the indigenous groups who are known to have inhabited the region, the Garinagu are among those whose language, culture, and ethnic identification most explicitly invoke both 'Arawak' and 'Carib' elements, making them, their history, their mythology, their linguistic codes and practices, etc. the subject of intense scholarly study throughout the colonial era, which was designed to validate, propagate, and re-impose the binary dynamic that has served to domesticate the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean.
- 3) Because the Garinagu simultaneously manifest genetic, phenotypical, cultural, linguistic, and other features that are normally associated exclusively either with the category 'Arawak' or the category 'Carib' on the one hand, and either with the category 'Indigenous' or the category 'non-Indigenous' (especially 'African' but also 'European') on the other, they represent a potential threat to the maintenance of the binaries upon which colonial and neo-colonial hegemony in the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas has been constructed. As such, an appreciable amount of scholarly work has been invested in erasing, obfuscating, neutralizing, and otherwise domesticating any evidence of how the Garinagu may have transgressed the impermeable boundaries of the neat categories that define the dominant paradigms for the study of the indigenous Caribbean.

It can therefore be argued that, among all of the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean, none has been the object of as much myth-making as the Garinagu. The extensive systemic web of myths surrounding the Garinagu has become one of the cornerstones of the theory and practice of the work of social scientists, historians, and linguists related to the indigenous peoples of the region.

In the following sections, a number of these myths will be examined and problematized, not only with the goal of doing 'scientific justice' and re-establishing some degree of accountability to the Garifuna 'facts' which have been contorted beyond recognition by Eurocentric commentary and scholarship, but also with the goal of doing 'social justice' and re-establishing accountability to the Garifuna people themselves, who have struggled for half a millennium under the tremendous weight of these same myths. A case in point: during one of my research journeys to Belize, I was picked up by a cab driver of South Asian descent. When I explained to him that I was in the country to do research about the Garinagu, he immediately began to tell me the story of his nephew whose mother is Garifuna. He complained that his nephew was being bullied by his friends who were taunting him for being a 'cannibal'.

It could be said that the central myth which has been thrust upon the Garinagu is the one that almost everyone who knows of their existence has learned by heart. As soon as one is taught that there is an ethnic group called 'Garifuna', it is almost inevitable that one will also be taught the following story, whose fabric is woven almost completely out of colonial myths:

The mythical colonial construction of the Garinagu:

The Garifuna are the descendants of a peaceful non-cannibalistic Arawak people who once lived on the islands of the southeastern Caribbean, but who were invaded not too long before Columbus' first voyages by warlike cannibalistic Carib people from the Orinoco region in South America. These Carib men slaughtered and ate the Arawak men

and took their women as their wives. As a result, the Arawakan language Igneri which was originally spoken on the islands, became mixed with the Cariban language Kalinya of their conquerors, yielding the pidginized/ creolized Cariban-Arawakan language particular to the islands of the southeastern Caribbean, known as Island Carib. So, two varieties of Island Carib emerged, one being a men's language with more Cariban/ Kalinya influence and the other being a women's language with less Cariban/ Kalinya influence. Because they are the descendants of these male Carib conquerors, the indigenous peoples of these islands came to identify themselves as 'Caribs'. After the arrival of the Europeans in the Caribbean, one or more ships carrying enslaved Africans wrecked on the shores of St. Vincent. These enslaved people escaped the shipwreck and were welcomed by some of the indigenous Caribs, with whom they cohabited and eventually their descendants became phenotypically African while speaking a variety of Island Carib called Garifuna.

Neil L. Whitehead criticizes this type of myth-making that still predominates, even in the writing of specialists in the study of the languages and cultures of the Caribbean. One of the very questionable sources that is constantly cited in the literature as gospel truth is the problematic work of Irving Rouse. For example, Whitehead (2002) states that:

The analysis resulting from this set of [problematic] assumptions was given its classic statement by Irving Rouse (1948a, 1948b) in his essays on "Arawak" and "Carib" for the *Handbook of South American Indians*, and even in more recent publications (Rouse 1986, 1992) it is still maintained that "Island Carib" [Garifuna] origins are linguistically and historically extraneous to the islands themselves. Thus the character of their society, as well as its political and military conflicts with other peoples in the Caribbean, is held to

have resulted from a pre-Columbian military invasion and occupation of the Lesser Antilles by the "mainland Carib" (i.e. Kariña [Kalinya]), as a result of which the Arawakan (i.e. Igñeri, guatiao) men of these islands were killed and cannibalized, while the women of these vanquished men were taken as concubines by the Kariña war-parties.

(p. 4)

The story recounted above does not consist of just one myth. Instead, it represents a complex mythical construction, whereby a series of myths are fused, intertwined, linked, and layered to create a seamless composite whole that can only begin to be debunked by carefully disentangling and separating each mythical thread and subjecting it to critical analysis. Some of these mythical threads, which are listed in Table 1 below, are critically examined and debunked in the sections that follow.

Table 1

Some of the main colonial myths constructed around the terms "Carib", "Arawak/ Taíno", and "Garifuna."

Myths	Facts
A: Island Carib/ Karipuna/ Kalinago was spoken only on the islands of the southeastern Caribbean.	Island Carib/ Karipuna/ Kalinago was widely spoken throughout the region, on the islands and along an extensive portion of the adjacent coast of South America.
B: Contact languages were rare or non-existent in the pre-Invasion indigenous Caribbean.	Contact languages, including restructured 'pidginized' and 'creolized' varieties such as Island Carib were probably the norm rather

	than the exception in the pre-Invasion indigenous Caribbean.
C: The existence of gendered varieties in Island Carib differentiates it from the other indigenous languages spoken in the Caribbean region.	Many, if not most of the Cariban, Arawakan, and Tupian languages spoken throughout the Caribbean region, both on the islands as well as along the Caribbean coast of South America, had gendered varieties.
D: Speakers of languages of the Cariban, Arawakan, and other language families in the Caribbean region shared few of their myths and cultural practices, with Cariban language speaking men 'raiding' women and practicing 'cannibalism' and Arawakan language speaking men shunning these practices.	Cariban and Arawakan speakers shared many of their most important myths, and while the actual nature of the ritualized practices that the Europeans interpreted as the 'raiding' of women and 'cannibalism' is in desperate need of re-analysis, it appears that these ritualized practices were just as common on the part of Arawakan speaking men as they were on the part of Cariban speaking men.
E: There is a neat cultural, linguistic, even identificational divide between "Arawaks/ Taínos" on the one hand, and "Caribs" on the other, and these two mutually exclusive and conjunctively exhaustive groups were the only groups inhabiting the insular Caribbean	The terms "Arawak/ Taíno" and "Carib" need to be abandoned as macro-ethnic, linguistic, and cultural classifiers and the simplistic binary "Arawak/ Taíno" versus "Carib" renders invisible the fact that the pre-Invasion Caribbean was an ethnically, linguistically, and

when Columbus arrived.	culturally complex region, with groups such as the Garinagu transgressing the exclusions and boundaries implicit in that binary.
F: The “Arawaks/ Taínos” were perpetually at war with the “Caribs”, and the Garifuna language is a product of the Carib conquest of the Arawak/ Igneri” people who originally inhabited St. Vincent.	The linguistic and archeological evidence has compelled researchers to reject scenarios of “Carib” invasion and conquest of the “Arawak/ Taíno/ Igneri” as a projection of European hegemonic norms onto the peoples of the Caribbean.
G: All of the African descended ancestors of the present day Garinagu came to St. Vincent by shipwreck, not <i>marronage</i> .	A considerable proportion of the African descended ancestors of the present day Garinagu came to St. Vincent by <i>marronage</i> .

Myth A: Island Carib/ Karipuna/ Kalinago was spoken only on the islands of the southeastern Caribbean

One of the most deeply ingrained myths concerning indigenous peoples in general and those of the insular Caribbean in particular, is that they had no substantial contact with other indigenous peoples until the arrival of the Europeans. When pre-Invasion connections are mentioned at all between the island Caribbean on the one hand and the indigenous peoples of South, Central, and North America on the other, the only contact regularly acknowledged by all but a handful of scholars who have systematically studied Caribbean prehistory is monodirectional and driven by the supposed conquest of the islands by mainland peoples. While inter-island contact is a bit more commonly mentioned, it is minimalized to the point that it is

routinely assumed that a neat boundary can be drawn between the languages of the Arawakan family spoken on different islands, (e.g., *Taino* versus *Igneri*, etc.).

This is an iteration of the obviously ridiculous but surprisingly widespread assumption, even among academics who should know better, that before the arrival of the Europeans, the indigenous peoples of the world lived in closed, isolated monolingual, monocultural societies. So, for most linguists and others who study the indigenous Caribbean, substantial evidence suggesting that varieties very similar to or identical to Island Carib/ Karipuna/ Kalinago were not only spoken on the islands of the southeastern Caribbean, but also over wide areas of the Orinoco and Amazon basins on mainland South America, often alongside other languages, is routinely ignored. As Whitehead (2002) explains:

Most obvious amongst these confusions is the question as to the ethnic and cultural nature of so-called “Island Carib” society, since it would appear that these people were neither Cariban (linguistically) - their natal language being Arawakan, nor islanders (exclusively) - as there is evidence that they were also settled extensively on the mainland, in the coastal area between the Orinoco and Amazon rivers (Whitehead 1995a). This paradoxical situation directly results from the initial ethnographic judgement made by Columbus and confirmed by other contemporaries, that there were two principal [ethnic and linguistic] groupings of native peoples, one “tractable” (guatiao, aruaca) and the other “savage” (caribe, caniba). (p. 3)

According to Taylor and Hoff (1980, p. 309, cited in Davis & Goodwin 1990, p. 44) a partially restructured variety of an Arawakan language with heavy input from Kalinya which was very similar to the men’s variety of Island Carib/ Karipuna/ Kalinago, was recorded by Paul Boyer

(1654) and Father Antoine Biet (1664) as far south and east as on Cayenne Island, where the capital of French Guiana is situated today. Whitehead, (2002) also notes that:

Further evidence of these close social and political relationships [among speakers of languages belonging to both the Arawakan and Cariban language families] was the use of a Kariña pidgin, or even Kariña itself, by other Amerindian groups as a *lingua geral* [lingua franca] in the Antillean -Amazonian corridor (Barrère 1743, Biet 1664, Boyer 1654, Pelleprat 1655). (p. 5)

These facts support the re-conceptualization of the pre-Columbian indigenous Caribbean as a ‘macro-ethnic contact zone’, rather than as a zone of colonization by conquering ‘Caribs’ and conquered Arawakan-speaking populations.

Taylor and Hoff (1980, p. 309-311, cited in Davis & Goodwin 1990) suggest that Island Carib-speaking communities on the islands could have emerged together with what they call the “mainland pidgin” speaking communities on *terra firme* in South America:

The close similarity between [the Island Carib men's language] and mainland pidgin ... is less surprising if we realize that the Island-Carib men and their Karina allies were dependent on pidgin for their communication However, the data do not permit us to conclude whether ICM [Island Carib men's language] and Karina pidgin evolved together through regular contacts between the islands and the mainland ... (p. 44)

As noted by Davis & Goodwin (1990, p. 44) Taylor and Hoff's 1980 analysis represents their increasing skepticism regarding the traditional accounts of relatively recent Kalinya migration to and/or conquest of the insular Caribbean as well as their increasing awareness of the lack of archaeological and linguistic evidence for such migration/ conquest:

This [Taylor and Hoff 1980] is an apparent departure from Taylor's earlier views (Taylor 1954), as neither of the processes of linguistic change suggested by Taylor and Hoff (1980) entails a "degeneration" in the islands of Kalina proper. And, excluding the assumption that the men's language implies a Kalina migration, there is no linguistic evidence favoring the migration theory. In fairness to Taylor, it must be said that, although he always accepted the notion of a late prehistoric Kalina migration into the Lesser Antilles, he never argued that a migration was implied by the linguistic evidence.

Thus, Taylor and Hoff themselves begin to question their previous automatic assumption that there ever was a "Karina invasion" of the islands of the southeastern Caribbean and begin to consider the possibility that this widespread use of a variety similar to Island Carib throughout the entire region could be attributed instead to peaceful cohabitation among speakers of languages belonging to the Arawakan family and speakers of languages belonging to the Cariban family.

Gradually, those most familiar with the archaeological, linguistic, and historical evidence are abandoning notions of recent invasion or migration of the islands of the southeastern Caribbean by peoples from the mainland of South America, in favor of scenarios whereby patterns of cohabitation among speakers of different pre-Invasion indigenous languages that typified both the islands and the mainland gave rise to regional use of Island Carib and other contact languages. In general, there seems to be more evidence for cohabitation than conquest. Such cultural openness to similar forms of cohabitation on the part of the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean in general, and on the part of the Garinagu in particular, is historically documented, for example, in the cohabitation between the Island Carib and peoples of African descent on St. Vincent.

Prescod and Fraser (2008) re-iterate and elaborate upon Davis and Goodwin's critique of both the myth that Island Carib was spoken only in the insular Caribbean as well as the myth that it arrived on the islands through invasion:

There is enough evidence to show that the Caribs on the islands understood the Galibis [Island Carib] language of the mainland (cf. La Borde's [1674] quote in Hulme and Whitehead [1992:139] ...). Pelleprat (1655a:89) observed that the language of the Galibis was as universal on the mainland as Latin was in Europe. In fact, Pelleprat took advantage of the status of Galibis to evangelise among the different mainland nations in order to touch a maximum number of souls, noting that despite the diversity of nations only the Comangotes did not understand but that all others, including the Caribs who came from the islands to visit their friends, understood his messages [articulated in Island Carib]. This would suggest that the language was widely understood, having the status of a lingua franca in the classic sense of the term (Schuchardt, 1979, p. 29); no doubt, competence in this language would have promoted trade and commerce in the area. Fabel (2000, p.136) suggests that one might consider the concepts of migration and amalgamation as more possible reasons rather than the matter of invasion and displacement to explain the presence of so many Arawakan words in the language of the Caribs. This leads us to explore the idea that there may have been more gradual circumstances that favoured the transmission [than invasion]. (p. 104)

Myth B: Contact languages were rare or non-existent in the pre-Invasion indigenous Caribbean

The existence of a variety of Island Carib that can be said to be a relatively unrestructured Arawakan language with 22% lexical input from Kalinya (spoken by women and children) alongside a partially restructured variety of the same Arawakan language with greater Kalinya lexical input (spoken by adult men) demonstrates how, before Europeans or Africans arrived in the Caribbean during the colonial era, the linguistic repertoires of its indigenous peoples included multiple contact varieties. Such rich contact-induced repertoires also typify much of the Caribbean today, where any given individual may speak a range of varieties that have undergone varying degrees of relexification and restructuring under contact among speakers of European, African, and indigenous Caribbean languages.

The first Europeans to arrive in the Caribbean region observed that indigenous peoples of many different ethnicities and who spoke many different languages were living on the same island or in the same territory in close contact with one another. Citing both Bartolomé de las Casas and Ferdinand Columbus (the son of Christopher Columbus), Whitehead (2002) mentions that when the Europeans first reached Hispaniola, they found a pluri-lingual situation: “Las Casas (*Historia Apologetica*, chap.197) ...also tells us that there were three languages spoken on Bohío [Hispaniola] which were not mutually intelligible, thus further emphasizing how deceptive an appearance of linguistic homogeneity may have been” (p. 9). Keegan and Hofman (2017, p. 13 citing Granberry and Vescelius, 2004) mention that one of these languages was used as a lingua franca among the different linguistic communities on Hispaniola, which suggests that contact varieties were also utilized in areas of the Caribbean which are usually assumed to be monolingually “Taíno” such as Hispaniola. Whitehead (2002) also contends that people who identified ethnolinguistically as ‘Carib’ were to be found even on islands such as Hispaniola, which are normally represented as zones inhabited exclusively by speakers of Arawakan

languages: "... Hernando Colon [Ferdinand Columbus] (1947) stated that Caonabo, one of the principal chiefs of Bohío [Hispaniola], was himself a caribe and a stranger" (p. 11).

These and other European observers go on to state that, despite these ethnolinguistic differences, the peoples of the region had no problems communicating with one another. This means that in the pre-Invasion indigenous Caribbean, as in the present-day Caribbean, peoples of many different ethno-linguistic backgrounds were living together and learning one another's languages, a situation which gave rise to the emergence of creolized/ pidginized contact varieties, such as Island Carib. Both Taylor and Hoff (1980, p. 312) and Prescod and Fraser (2008) use archival material to demonstrate that Island Carib was not only spoken on the islands of the southeastern Caribbean, but was also commonly spoken, often as a contact language, along at least a 1500-kilometer-long stretch of the adjacent South American coast from the mouth of the Orinoco River in the west to Cayenne Island in the East, as well as inland into the Orinoco Basin. Because this region is inhabited by a diverse array of ethnolinguistic groups living in very close proximity to one another, Island Carib was widely used as a *lingua franca* there.

Early commentators mention remarkably high levels of openness and skill on the part of the indigenous peoples of the early colonial Caribbean when it came to learning second languages. For example, Hulme and Whitehead (1992) quote Charles de Rochefort (1658), a pastor who traveled in the Caribbean in the first half of the 1600s, who observed that:

What advantage so ever the Europeans may imagine they have over the Caribbians, either as to the natural faculties of the mind, or the easiness of the pronunciation of their own

language, in order to the more easie attainment of theirs, yet hath it been found by experience, that the Caribbians do sooner learn ours than we do theirs. (p. 119)

Rocheftort also mentions that, from the moment the Europeans first arrived, the indigenous peoples of the early colonial Caribbean had no problem creating a contact language which could be used with them: "...they have fram'd another bastard-speech, which is intermixt with several words taken out of foreign languages by the commerce they have had with the Europeans... among themselves they always make use of their ancient and natural language ...” (Hulme and Whitehead 1992, p.118). Peter Roberts (2008) suggests that Island Carib and other pre-Invasion indigenous contact languages (which he calls '*baraguoins*') may have played a role in the emergence of the English and French lexifier Creoles that are still spoken in the region today.

Myth C: The existence of gendered varieties in Island Carib differentiates it from the other indigenous languages spoken in the Caribbean region

One of the props that supports the myth of 'Carib/ Kalinya' conquest of the 'Arawak/ Igneri' inhabitants of the islands of the southeastern Caribbean is the fact that in Island Carib/ Garifuna, there are gendered registers. Using the traditional tools of historical linguistics such as the comparative method, all of the Island Carib/ Garifuna varieties, including those usually spoken only by the men, are classified as belonging to a language sometimes referred to as 'Igneri', which is closely related to other languages of the Arawakan family in the region, such as Taíno. Despite their being classified by linguists as Arawakan, all of the Island Carib/ Garifuna varieties, including those not spoken exclusively by men, have significant lexical and some structural elements that they share with Kalinya, a language belonging to the Cariban

family, with the varieties used exclusively by the men sharing more vocabulary and structure with Kalinya than the varieties not spoken exclusively by the men. This was originally taken as ‘proof’ of the fairly recent conquest of some purported original Arawakan speaking inhabitants of the islands of the southeastern Caribbean by some purported Cariban speaking invaders, as a result of which the Cariban speaking warriors appropriated the wives of their vanquished Arawakan counterparts sometime shortly before the arrival of the Europeans. This interpretation has been supported by reports by some early commentators (Labat, 1722) of the existence of yet another special variety used for military purposes, but we lack any record of the words or structures of this variety.

Taylor (1977, p. 38 in Davis & Goodwin, 1990, p. 43) found a considerable portion of the lexicon of the men’s register of Island Carib to be cognate with Kalinya, while the register spoken by others had a lower but still significant number of Kalinya cognates (some 22%) and exhibited less grammatical restructuring than that of the men. Although only remnants of the men’s variety are commonly used in Garifuna today, its existence on the islands of the southeastern Caribbean is well documented. Both an anonymous pirate called ‘l’anonyme de Carpentras’ (cited by Moreau 1990, p.17 in Prescod and Frasser, 2008, p. 102) who visited the region in 1619-1620, as well as Father Breton (1665, 1666, 1667 cited in Devonish, 2010, p. 16), who worked in the region in the 1630s and 1640s, observed that on the islands of the southeastern Caribbean, the Island Carib language varieties typically used by men had a higher level of lexical and sometimes structural influence from the Kalinya language spoken by their trading partners along the coast of South America, than the other varieties of Island Carib. Prescod and Fraser (2008) sum up early observations of use of gendered varieties in Island Carib as follows:

Father Labat, who arrived in 1693, also reported the same linguistic state of affairs but went further to state that there were three sorts of languages, the first being one that everyone spoke, but which was typical of the men's speech. The second, specific to the women, was understood by the men but not used by them, and neither dared the women to address the men in this language. The women used this language only among themselves. The older men of the community used what appeared to have been a war jargon when they met during the war councils and which neither the women nor the young Carib men understood. (Labat 1722/III: 241 f., p. 102)

The use of gendered varieties as evidence of a 'Carib'/ Kalinya invasion of the insular Caribbean from the areas on the mainland where Kalinya is spoken today depends crucially on the erroneous presupposition that the use of gendered varieties distinguish Island Carib from the other languages of the region where such conquest did not take place, or at least, that the use of gendered varieties distinguishes the languages in the region that have been assigned to the Caliban family from those which have been assigned to the Arawakan family, neither of which is true.

In fact, the use of gendered varieties can be considered a typological feature of the entire Caribbean region. Therefore, gender specific varieties are to be found in many, if not most of both the Cariban and Arawakan languages spoken throughout the island Caribbean and all along the adjacent coastal areas of South America, as explained by Whitehead (2002):

the use of ... gender polarity in speech, as well as the use of special male jargons, is noted both from Kariña itself (Chrétien 1725) and from Arawakan languages, like Palikur (Grenand 1987) and Lokono (Stæhelin 1913 II-2:170), as well as from the Tupian

(Magalhães 1527:33), whose speakers had further notable cultural homologies with the native peoples of the islands. Given this complexity and variety in indigenous linguistic practice the burden of explanation seems rather to fall on those who insist that there was a ‘conquest’ by Kariña-speakers, since, if this was indeed the case, why didn’t the natal Karipuna (or Igñeri) language die out, given the facility with which contacts with Kariña-speakers could be maintained? (p. 5)

It is interesting that in the above quote, Whitehead does not only mention the similarities between the use of gendered varieties in Island Carib with the use of gendered varieties in Arawakan and Caliban languages spoken in the region, but he also mentions the similarities between the use of gendered varieties in Island Carib with the use of gendered varieties in the languages of the Tupian family. This lends more credence to the rejection of the myths of ‘Carib invasion’, or even ‘Carib migration’ in favor of the re-conceptualization of the pre-Invasion indigenous Caribbean as a ‘macro-ethnic contact zone’, where speakers of many different languages belonging to the Arawakan, Cariban, and other families of indigenous languages had been intermarrying, trading, and living in close social, cultural, and linguistic contact for millennia before the arrival of the Europeans.

So, there is nothing noteworthy about the existence of gendered varieties in Island Carib/Garifuna, and they can just as easily, and probably more reasonably, be attributed to genetic and areal influences than to invasion, as asserted by Whitehead (2002) who cites de Rochefort (1658):

Rochefort actually offers a quite detailed account of the Karipuna language and consonant with the idea that attitudes to language are part of a wider cultural

interpretation, also challenges the established theory, so often advanced to explain gender differences in speech, of a Carib invasion from the mainland. (pp. 17-18)

It was mentioned above that Labat observed three fairly distinct varieties to have been in use among the Garinagu in 1693, rather than the two varieties normally mentioned by linguists. These three varieties included one that he reported was exclusive to the women (understood by the men, but never used by or with them), another exclusive to the older men (which nobody else understood or used) and a third used in general day to day contact involving both men and women, which was presumably an Arawakan-Cariban contact language, such as Island Carib. With the arrival of shipwrecked and runaway Africans who spoke neither Arawakan nor Caliban languages in St. Vincent from 1650 onward, this would have enhanced the importance of Island Carib, which was not exclusive to either men or women, as the general language used in the community. As an inclusive rather than exclusive language, Island Carib would have been learned first by these African descended immigrants.

Labat's account of the linguistic situation on St. Vincent has been challenged for two major reasons. Aside from the chronicles that were plagiarized by others from Labat's original, there is little documentary evidence for the existence of more than two gendered varieties being spoken on the island, and there is little documentary evidence for the existence of a variety that was specific to women. Most evidence points to the existence of two rather than three gendered varieties, one spoken exclusively by men and the other used by both men and women.

Myth D: Speakers of languages of the Cariban, Arawakan, and other language families in the Caribbean region shared few of their myths and cultural practices, with Cariban language speaking men 'raiding' women and practicing 'cannibalism' and Arawakan language speaking men shunning these practices

Besides sharing a great many of their linguistic practices such as pluri-lingualism, and widespread use of both gendered varieties and contact varieties, speakers of languages of both the Arawakan and Cariban languages in the Caribbean region shared much of their mythologies and many of their cultural practices. Whitehead (2002) points out that some of the largest groups of both Cariban language speakers (such as the Karipuna/ Kalinya) and some of the largest groups of Arawakan language speakers (such as the Lokono/ Arawaks), all traced themselves back to the exact same mythical ancestor Loquo.

One of the many cultural practices shared by both the Caliban speaking Karipuna and the Arawakan speaking Lokono was the ritual exchange of gold and women for marriage. Whitehead (2002) reports that this tradition of exchange was also traced by both Cariban and Arawakan speakers to the exact same mythical ancestor Guahayona: “Loquo was the first man in both Karipuna as well as Lokono myths of origin, and the sources of the magic metal *guanin* [gold] lay in an exchange of women for this substance with the mythical ancestor Guahayona” (p. 22). These exchanges at times involved what the Europeans saw as the ritualized ‘raiding’ of women. Under the Eurocentric gaze of the early European *conquistadores*, priests, naturalists, and other commentators, these ritualized practices were misinterpreted as the type of European-style raiding which had for several thousand years become a defining characteristic of the virulently patriarchal, ethnocentric, and monopolistic plundering ethos of European society, whereas they probably had a completely different significance to the pre-Invasion peoples of the Caribbean region. In any case, Arawakan language-speaking men appear to have been just as likely to ritually ‘raid’ Cariban language-speaking women as Caliban speaking men were to ritually ‘raid’ Arawakan speaking women.

The same could be said for the ritualized practices that were interpreted by early Eurocentric observers as ‘cannibalism’. It is well known that, in their efforts to justify the expropriation, enslavement, and massacre of the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean region to the Spanish Crown, the Spanish in the Caribbean routinely branded any indigenous peoples who resisted them as ‘Caribs’/ ‘cannibals’. Positioning him as the first ‘scientific’ authority on the region, the propertied colonial classes weaponized the writing of naturalist Dr. Diego Alvarez Chanca, the physician who accompanied Columbus on his second voyage to the Caribbean in 1493. They quoted Chanca in order to establish and propagate the ‘cannibal’ trope that would make the binary opposition between the ‘good’ Arawaks/ Tainos and the ‘evil’ Caribs/ cannibals the cornerstone of ‘expert’ knowledge on the Caribbean and its indigenous peoples in general, and of ‘expert’ knowledge on the Garinagu in particular.

Whitehead (2002) observes that while Chanca interpreted the presence of human bones in the communities of Cariban speakers or others who might have displayed more open resistance to Spanish conquest as evidence for cannibalism, he interpreted the presence of human bones in the communities of Arawakan speakers or others who might have displayed less open resistance to as evidence of non-cannibalistic funerary practices:

Thus, for Chanca, the recovery of human long-bones on [islands associated with ‘Caribs’, such as] Turuqueira (Guadeloupe) is linked to cannibalism (Hulme & Whitehead 1992:32), but on [islands associated with ‘Tainos/ Arawaks’, such as] Bohío [Hispaniola] the recovery of human heads is linked to funerary rites. (Gil & Varela 1984:168-9) REFS (p. 9)

Sweeney (2007) notes that:

There is little evidence for Carib cannibalism. In response to the allegation that Caribs were cannibals in earlier days the French priest, Pere Labat, who lived with the Caribs... [in the 1690s], and knew them well, wrote “‘If they [Caribs] were cannibals in those days, why are then not cannibals now? I have certainly not heard of them eating people, whether Englishmen with whom the Carib are nearly always fighting, or Allouages [Lokono] Indians of the mainland near the Orinoco with, whom they are continually at war’” (Johnson 2003: 3). (p. 7)

Whether cannibalism is an accurate term or not to describe the ritualistic practices that might have been interpreted by Eurocentric observers as the routine and wanton consumption of human flesh is a question that is just as crucial and unresolved as is the question of whether ‘raiding’ is an accurate term or not to describe aspects of ritualistic exchange practices that might have been interpreted by Eurocentric observers as the abduction of women.

What is less difficult to determine, however, is the fact that these ritualized practices that Chanca interpreted as cannibalistic were just as likely to be performed by ‘Tainos/ Arawaks’ as they were to be performed by ‘Caribs’. Hulme and Whitehead (1992) find evidence of this in some of the sections of the writings of Chanca himself which have been deliberately ignored or at least downplayed in the dominant discourses on the indigenous Caribbean:

More generally the caribe's cannibalism of the [‘Taino/ Arawak’] natives of Burequen (Puerto Rico) and the other islands is given continual emphasis, although it is also briefly noted that: “... if by chance they [the ‘Taino/ Arawak’ of Puerto Rico Burequen] are able to capture those who come to raid them they also eat them, just as those of Caribe do to them.” (Hulme & Whitehead 1992, p. 36)

Sweeney (2007) concludes that:

There is no archaeological evidence for large-scale cannibalism in the Caribbean. The best conclusion is that, with the exception of possible isolated circumstances ... the Caribs were no more cannibals than their European and Indian enemies. The myth was perpetuated for the purpose of those who benefited from promoting it and by the lack of knowledge of the reality of Carib life by everyone else. (p. 9)

The propertied classes in the Spanish Caribbean succeeded in using Chanca's and others' observations to persuade the Spanish Crown that cannibalism was being practiced by some of the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean and that those who did so should not be protected in any way from being deprived of their land, their liberty, or their lives. Sweeney (2007, p. 6) notes that in the process, they also succeeded in depicting the naked plunder of the *conquistadores* as a 'humanitarian' mission, whereby the Spanish were protecting the 'civilized Arawak/ Taino' from the 'anthropophagic Caribe'. Whitehead (2002) contends that, once this was accomplished, the next step would be to extend the designation of 'Caribe/ cannibal' to any indigenous people who resisted Spanish conquest:

The political factors that had informed Chanca's anthropology changed over the next 20 years or so, not least due to the extinction of the native elites of Bohío [Hispaniola] and Burequen [Puerto Rico]. As a result, and since Chanca's anthropology had been given legal force through Queen Isabella's proclamation of 1503 which rendered all cannibals who resisted the Spanish liable to enslavement, it was necessary to conduct a second ethnographic exercise -in one sense, precisely because of the ambiguity between the status of cannibal (i.e., eater of human flesh), and that of caribe (i.e., native resistant to

the Spanish) that the proclamation itself implied. [so that] mere opposition or intractability towards the Spanish, rather than anthropophagic customs, was deemed sufficient to consider a given population as caribe. (p. 10)

Myth E: There is a neat cultural, linguistic, even identificational divide between ‘Arawaks/Táinos’ on the one hand, and ‘Caribs’ on the other, and these two mutually exclusive and conjunctively exhaustive groups were the only groups inhabiting the insular Caribbean when Columbus arrived

Although those who specialize in the study of the indigenous Caribbean disagree on many issues, there is a growing consensus among them concerning the need to completely rethink and revamp the homogenizing linguistic, cultural, and ethnic labels assigned to indigenous peoples of the region. One point of nearly unanimous agreement is that the labels that have been used in the past have been much too simplistic, and that it is likely the case that linguistic, cultural, and ethnic boundaries and identifications have been extremely nuanced, multilayered, pourous and fluid in the Caribbean for thousands of years. The new understandings emerging among historians, anthropologists, and linguists suggest that the prevailing norm in the region long before the arrival of the Europeans was a situation where many different ethno-linguistic groups inhabited the same island or territory, where many hybridized linguistic varieties, cultural complexes and ethnic identities were being used, and where many of the region’s inhabitants were pluri-lingual, pluri-cultural, and pluri-identified (see, for example, Keegan and Hofman, 2017).

Keegan and Hofman (2017) liken this tendency toward the simplification and homogenization of indigenous Caribbean languages, cultures, and ethnicities among European

and US academics to similar tendencies toward the simplification, homogenization, and commodification of the Caribbean and its peoples in the European and US dominated tourism industry today:

Today, the Caribbean Islands are being homogenized. The goal is to attract tourists who expect a standardized product—call it the “Sandals resort experience.” The mantra is “homogenize, sanitize, and commoditize.” There is a similar attempt to homogenize the Caribbean past. The initial frame of reference viewed every new wave of immigrants as displacing those who arrived before. We now know that far more complicated processes of migration, transculturation, and accommodation were going on. Moreover, in the professional community, the entire region had come to be viewed in relation to the “Classic Taíno Culture” of Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, and eastern Cuba (Keegan, 2013; Rouse, 1992). Any indigenous community that was not classified as “Classic Taíno” was defined by what they lacked, rather than what they had. The popular press has followed this dichotomy. The distinction between “good Indian” and “bad Indian” is still emphasized. For example, distinguishing between the “peaceful Arawak” and “cannibal Carib” forms the structure for James Michener’s historical novel *Caribbean* (Michener 1988), with the notion of good versus bad reifying this simplistic view that dominates popular notions of precolonial Caribbean societies (Hofman, 2008). Yet simplistic categories and stereotypes mask enormous variability. Archaeologists have used a bewildering assortment of names: Saladoid, Ostionoid, Troumassoid, ... Island Carib, Island Arawak, Taíno, ... and so on. The challenge is to make sense of these various names, some of which even we are not sure what they really mean. (pp. xv-xvi)

These similarities that Keegan and Hofman observe between Western academics and Western tourism industry operatives may be much less superficial, coincidental, and unsystematic than one might first imagine. Fundamentally, both usually adopt a colonizing gaze, which domesticates the objects in its view in such a way as to simplify and homogenize them so that they can be categorized, defined, delimited, bounded, and structured according the binary norms of Western thinking, with the goal of rendering them predictable, controllable, and marketable, i.e., with the goal of transforming them into commodities for passive and unproblematic consumption by Western consumers of both ideas and of cruise ship packages in Europe and the US.

Students, researchers, and other consumers of the simplistic, homogenous, and commodified linguistic, cultural, and ethnic labels constructed by 'experts' on the Caribbean are thus assured that their exposure to and experience of the lifeways of the peoples of the region has been sufficiently forced to comply with the 'onerous regimes of truth' of our academic disciplines (Foucault, 1972). The result is that there is little left to unsettle, upend and problematize the Eurocentric paradigms that constitute our academic 'comfort zones'. How different is this from the marketing of cruise ship excursions into the Caribbean, where the prospective customers in Europe or the US are assured that their island experience will be seamlessly safe, predictable, sanitized, and will include 'all of the comforts of home'?

One way of interpreting the words of Keegan and Hofman (2017) and a growing number of others who study the Caribbean is that it is high time for academics to stop being tourists and begin to see the region's peoples and their ways of acting, speaking, and thinking as something that may not necessarily conform to our preconceived and Eurocentric assumptions and norms about how all human beings and all human societies supposedly universally act, speak, and

think. In other words, perhaps the Garinagu and the other peoples of the Caribbean have something to contribute to the ways by which we structure our knowledge and how we look at the world, rather than just contributing new bits of domesticated information and decontextualized artefacts to be filed away in our libraries and museums.

As mentioned elsewhere in the present work, one of the key axes around which such simplistic understandings of the indigenous Caribbean have been constructed by academics is that of the original binary constructed by the *conquistadores* who placed ‘Arawak/ Taino’ at one pole and ‘Carib’ at the other, with these two mutually exclusive and conjunctively exhaustive groups perpetually at war with each other. Kegan and Hofman (2017) make it clear that the time has finally come for those who study the indigenous Caribbean to put an end to their centuries-long futile attempts to make the autochthonous peoples of the region fit into Columbus’ two exclusive and opposed boxes:

Beginning with Columbus’s *diario*, a few Spaniards wrote reports that described interactions with indigenous individuals and communities. All of these reports offered their interpretations of indigenous practices, and provide accounts of colonial policies dictated by the Spanish Crown. The tendency has been to accept these descriptions as ethnography (Bourne 1906) or ethnohistory (Charlevoix and deFrancisco 1977; Cook and Borah 1971; Sauer 1966). Yet the chroniclers had no training in anthropology or history. They wrote to support political and religious goals, and their interpretations were based solely on their knowledge of medieval European culture. Whatever their motives, the chroniclers distilled indigenous practices into two distinct societies. This dichotomy was based on the relatively amicable interactions with *Indios* in the Greater Antilles and Bahamas [“Arawaks/ Tainos”], and hostile relations with the fierce *Indios* of the Lesser

Antilles [“Caribs”]. Archaeologists have spent years trying to make this dichotomy work, but with little success. (pp. 243-244)

As more and more empirical evidence accumulates concerning the linguistic, cultural, and ethnic situation in the pre-Invasion indigenous Caribbean, it has become more and more urgent that the use of the terms ‘Arawak/ Taíno’ and ‘Carib’ as categories for macro-level classification in the region be completely abandoned, as suggested by Keegan and Hofman (2017):

The final image of Caribbean archaeology typically is called Taíno and Carib and still taught in schools across the islands. Although these often are portrayed as fossilized images, they are in fact reflections of continuously moving parts. The perspective one obtains is based on the parameters used to define our perceptions. Starting with European descriptions, we create imaginations that appear in ways that often are different from those created when starting from archaeology (Curet 2014; Wilson 2007). The conclusions of different historians and different archaeologists often vary in significant ways. The challenge is to assemble diverse data and perspectives in logical frameworks that contribute to our understanding of Caribbean life. (pp. 258-259)

This means that it might be best for the label ‘Arawak’ to be restricted in reference, in most cases, to the Lokono/ Arawak language which has been spoken as an ancestral language mainly by only one or a few of the many linguistic groups living on the Caribbean coast of South America; that it might be best for the label ‘Carib’ to be restricted in reference, in most cases, to the Kalinya language which has been spoken as an ancestral language mainly by only one or a few of the many linguistic groups living on the Caribbean coast of South America; and that it

might be best for the label ‘Taíno’ to be restricted in reference, in most cases, to the Taíno language which was spoken as an ancestral language mainly by only one or a few of the many linguistic groups living on Hispaniola and the other Greater Antilles.

This process of scaling back the use of the terms ‘Arawak/ Taíno’ and ‘Carib’ from macro- to micro-classifiers, must be accompanied by an analogous process of scaling back the use of these terms from unwieldy and inconsistent cover terms that imply an automatic equivalence among linguistic, cultural, and ethno/identificational practices. In other words, these terms might best be seen as referring primarily to linguistic practices, rather than being extended automatically to cultural and ethno/identificational practices. Whitehead (2002) sees this tendency to mechanically extend linguistic categories to subsume cultural and ethnic categories as typical of the Western episteme:

As a matter of intellectual history it needs to be noted that the concept of “language” precedes that of “culture” and that to a large degree the pre-nineteenth century notion of a “language” was equivalent to the modern notion of “culture”. Given this it should come as no surprise to find that the “identification” of indigenous languages in South America and the Caribbean was a highly political process. (p. 2)

The deeply problematic nature of the label “Taíno” is discussed at length in Keegan and Hofman (2017), who trace its association to the term ‘Arawak’ in this way:

There is no specific mention of the names that were used by the indigenous local, social, political, or ceremonial communities in the early European chronicles. Daniel Brinton (1871) introduced the name Arawak [when he] recognized that the words recorded in the Greater Antilles could be classified as part of the Arawak language family. He

suggested that Caribbean islanders should be called “Island Arawaks” to distinguish them from the diverse Arawak communities of South America (Noble 1965). A significant complication occurred when the “Island” prenom was dropped ... [and when] the name “Taíno” was promoted, following the practice of Hispanic colleagues who had been using this name for years (Rouse 1986, 1992). The name Taíno comes from Columbus’s second voyage when he was greeted by the words “Taíno, taíno,” which has been translated as meaning *noble* or *good*. The first use of this name as a cultural designation is attributed to Constantine Samuel Rafinesque whose 1836 essay used linguistic criteria to classify the indigenous population of the Greater Antilles. This time the Taíno language was the basis for classification. The name game has not stopped here. When one name is applied to the inhabitants of a large territory, the assumption is that everyone spoke the same language and shared a common culture. This assumption was reified by the Spanish chroniclers’ assertion that these were all one culture (de Las Casas 1951). (pp. 14-15)

Keegan and Hofman (2017) demonstrate how the term “Taíno” which has been used not only as a foundational point of reference, but also as the yardstick with which to measure language, culture, and identity in the indigenous Caribbean, has become more of a hindrance than a help to understanding the pre-Invasion peoples of the region and how they lived:

Our point is that Taíno and Carib cannot be viewed as singular expressions. Caribbean social formations were assembled through the integration of ... interacting, communities. [N]ew economies and social formations spread rapidly across the islands, [for example, in] the eastern Dominican Republic [which] was the interface between Hispaniola Meillacoid and Puerto Rican Ostionoid [has been taken to] comprise ... a pan-Arawak ethos [that has been] applied more generally to the Caribbean [due to the

fact that the] particular practices described by the Spanish [when they established their first colony there] can be taken as representative of a singular Antillean culture Puerto Rican societies maintained their unique characteristics based on Saladoid and Archaic Age foundations, while in Hispaniola and Cuba, they expressed their Meillacoid and Archaic Age roots. In conclusion, there was no “Taíno.” Different communities and societies [which have been categorized as Taíno] had different historical trajectories and distinct material expressions. In addition, they were in contact with the surrounding mainland and other islands, with which they exchanged materials, people, and ideas. This perspective involves embracing diversity and emphasizing the processes responsible for a multivalent Caribbean. An important component of which is the heightened participation of professionals and students from the islands. (pp. 13-14)

If there is any term which has proved to be even more problematic and even less helpful than ‘Taíno’ in our understanding of language, culture, and identification among the pre-Invasion indigenous peoples of the Caribbean, it is the term ‘Carib’ itself. The discursive archaeology of the use of this label among Europeans reveals one Eurocentric misinterpretation after another, starting with Columbus’ mistaken belief that the Americas were the easternmost parts of Asia. When Columbus heard the indigenous peoples of the Bahamas and elsewhere in the Caribbean recounting stories about marauding mythical beings that they called “Caribes,” he thought that they were talking about the actual people whose leader was the ‘Khan’, i.e., the Mongols. In Columbus’ mind, since the Mongols, under the leadership of their rulers (referred to as Khagan/ Qaghan/ Khan), had established an empire that had threatened Europe itself from Central Asia to the East at the end of the 13th century, these same invaders must have been threatening the

peoples of the Caribbean Bahamas from more central parts of Asia to the West at the end of the 15th century.

For Europeans, especially an Italian like Columbus, the association between ‘Khan’ and Asians in general could in part be attributed to the voyages of fellow Italian Marco Polo to the court of Kublai Khan in the 13th century, which played a key role in defining the European gaze on Asia for centuries thereafter. By the 15th century, the Mongols themselves had become mythologized as demonic beings in the European imaginary, as hordes of plundering invaders capable of committing the most heinous atrocities against the populations that they conquered, even though their methods were probably no less brutal than those of their European counterparts. So, in Columbus’ mind, the identification of ‘Caribe’ first with ‘Khan/ Khanibe’ and then with ‘Caniba/Cannibal’ was automatic and logical, as explained by Keegan and Hofman (2017):

The first mention of “Carib” comes from the *diario* of Columbus’s first voyage [when] Columbus was looking for an audience with the Grand Khan, who he thought was the ruler of this region“And thus I [Columbus] say again how other times I said, he says, that Caniba is nothing else but the people of the Grand Khan ...” (Dunn and Kelley 1989:217). Further, “[there] was some talk about the men of Caniba, whom they call Caribes, who come to capture them ...” (Dunn and Kelley 1989:285). It is apparent that the inhabitants of the Bahamas and Columbus had similar names for different beings (Keegan 2015). It was Columbus’s repeated reports of a race that consumed human flesh that were used to create a “Culture of Cannibals” (Davis 1992). (p. 15)

Roberts (2008) discusses how the demonization of non-European descended peoples in the Caribbean resulted from the projection and extension of previous demonizations of non-European descended peoples who had been perceived as a threat to Christian Europe during the centuries preceding Columbus' invasion of the Americas. This branding of non-Europeans as subhuman fiends can be traced back to the Greeks, who labeled all non-Greeks as 'barbarians'. Roberts specifically mentions how the languages and cultures of non-European Caribbean peoples were delegitimized by comparing them to those of the North Africa-based 'Barbary Pirates' who plundered shipping and coastal settlements throughout Europe from the 8th to the 19th centuries, often with official sponsorship by the Islamic powers, in particular the Central Asian descended leaders of the Ottoman Empire from the 16th century onward. During Columbus' lifetime, the Ottomans, some of whose leaders also called themselves 'Khan' had been threatening to conquer Europe from their strongholds in Asia, just as the Mongol Khans had done in the 13th century.

Therefore, when Columbus made 'Caribes' synonymous with 'Cannibal', he was invoking centuries of mythological othering of Asian, African, and Islamic (read non-Christian) peoples. This coincided neatly with his agenda of personal gain through the expropriation and enslavement of indigenous peoples in the Caribbean because it would allow him to use mental models and social representations of terror and murderous 'barbarity' already deeply rooted in the minds of the people of Western Europe to convince the authorities in Spain that there were indigenous people in the Caribbean whose bestiality and depravity was so profound that they could never be considered for inclusion under the category 'human', to say nothing of the category 'Christian'.

In this way, Columbus' conflation of some of the most poisonously demonizing and othering tropes in the European imaginary under the name 'Carib' was used to prepare European public opinion for the implementation of unprecedentedly inhuman levels of subjugation and exploitation of the indigenous people of the Caribbean from 1492 onward. Of course, it would be difficult to find anything as deeply bestial, depraved, and 'cannibalistic' in the history of the Mongols, the Ottomans, or the Barbary Pirates as was the apocalyptic catastrophe that would be visited upon the tens of millions of indigenous peoples of the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas at the hands of Columbus and the other 'Christian' Europeans who came after him.

Keegan and Hofman (2017) show how the term 'Carib' played a central role in making all of this possible:

The present understanding of "Carib" is an amalgam of four distinct concepts:

1. "Caribes," which Columbus thought were real, when in fact they were creatures that existed only in the indigenous mythology;
2. "Caniba," by which Columbus meant "the people of the Grand Khan";
3. "Cannibales," meaning indigenous communities characterized as idolaters and consumers of human flesh who could not be converted to Christianity and were therefore suitable for enslaving; and
4. "Carib," which is a modern anthropological construct used as the name for indigenous communities in lowland South America and the Windward islands of the Caribbean [such as the Kalinago/ Garinagu of St. Vincent] (Keegan 1996a).

(p. 15)

The Garinagu, however, add yet another dimension of complexity to this already complicated and sometimes contradictory set of usages and understandings of the term 'Carib'. Whitehead, (2002) demonstrates how the use in French of separate terms for 'island Caribs' (*Galibi*) versus 'mainland Caribs' (*Caraïbe*) helps to avoid both the erroneous conflation of these two groups in Spanish (where both are referred to as *Caribes*) and English (where both are referred to as Caribs), as well as the erroneous assumption that the Garifuna people and their language are the result of a supposed 'Carib' conquest of St. Vincent:

Most probably, as the historian Sued-Badillo (1978) has also suggested, a political and economic adaptation and alliance to the emergent Kariña polity of the sixteenth century (Whitehead 1990a) resulted in the name 'Carib' often being applied, by indigene and colonial alike, without regard to strictly linguistic or cultural considerations; just as the Spanish used the term *caribe* to designate any and all wild or fierce Amerindians (see Whitehead 1988). French usage of the terms *Galibi* and *Caraïbe* to designate the difference between island and mainland ethnic groups was therefore more precise than the English *Carib* or Spanish *caribe* and it is significant to note that the Jesuit linguist Raymond Breton (1665:105) also refers to *Caraïbes insulaires*, implying that they were present on the continent as well, since he does not confuse them with the *Galibi*. (pp. 4-5)

No area of the Caribbean can be considered purely "Arawak/ Taíno" or purely "Carib." While Boomert (2011, p. 292) finds evidence of pottery associated with the 'Caribs' as far north as St. Kitts and Nevis and Antigua and Barbuda, Whitehead (2002, pp. 9-11) and Keegan and Hofman (2017, pp. 14-15) note that the earliest Spanish chroniclers reported a significant 'Carib' presence in the 'Taíno heartland' of Hispaniola. On the other hand, Sued Badillo (2007) makes a

convincing case for a significant Taíno presence in the 'Carib heartland' of the southeastern Caribbean:

Quiérese decir que detrás de la imagería política de los relatos surgen unas comunidades reales [del sureste del Caribe] que bien pudieron estar localizadas en ... Boriquén o ...del Haití. La supuesta frontera entre caribes y taínos que por siglos pretendía separar la civilización de la barbarie no tiene apoyo documental. Las similitudes entre las islas eran demasiadas como para solamente postular distancias sociales y conflictos insalvables Alphonse Pinart (1852-1911), el explorador y etnólogo francés que visita al Caribe durante las últimas décadas del siglo XIX, ... dejó una interesante observación que iba en contra de la ya tradicional dicotomía de caribes y taínos que destilaban las crónicas tempranas [Pinart observa] que se han encontrado en la Martinica, en la Guadalupe, en San Cristóbal, en San Vicente, en la Granada, etc. inscripciones y objetos similares a los encontrados en Puerto Rico y Santo Domingo

[This would mean that behind the political imaginary of the chronicles, there emerge some real communities (of the southeastern Caribbean) which could have easily been found in ... Puerto Rico or ... Haiti. The supposed boundary between Caribs and Taínos that has for centuries been thought to separate civilization from barbarity has no documentary evidence to back it up. The similarities between the islands are too extensive to allow for simplistic theories of social isolation and irresolvable conflict (between Caribs and Taínos) Alphonse Pinart (1852-1911) the French explorer and ethnologist who visited the Caribbean during the final decades of the 19th century, ... made an interesting observation that went against the traditional dichotomy between Caribs and Taínos suggested by the early chronicles, (Pinart observes) that in

Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Kitts, St. Vincent, Granada, etc. one can find inscriptions and objects similar to those found in Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo] (pp. 67-68)

Sued Badillo (2007) thus challenges us to reject the classical image of Taínos and Caribs as two internally homogenous and mutually exclusive peoples whose contact with each other was limited to eternal warfare. Instead, he suggests that the boundaries between the two, if they ever existed at all, were at most indeterminate and constantly shifting, and that wherever one encounters artefacts associated with the category 'Arawak/ Taíno' in the region, one also finds artefacts associated with the category 'Carib' nearby.

Sued Badillo (2007) repeatedly demonstrates the striking similarities between the pre-Invasion indigenous lifeways of the southeastern Caribbean and those of Puerto Rico: "*En ... las Antillas Menores se han identificado plazas, petroglifos sugestivos, y objetos suntuarios de la época cacical borincana*" [In ... the Lesser Antilles settlement patterns, suggestive petroglyphs and luxury objects associated with the cacique era in Puerto Rico have been identified.] (p. 68). He then asks the following question and argues that our traditional understandings of 'Taíno' and 'Carib' and the relations between them are insufficient to answer it:

Si [como indica la evidencia] hubo borincanos en Guadalupe, ¿qué hacían allí? Las relaciones de parentesco, los matrimonios exógamos, el rapto de mujeres, y aun los conflictos entre caciques, podrían explicarlo. Nunca sabremos con certeza. Lo que sí es cierto, no obstante, es que todas estas opciones fueron prácticas comunes y frecuentes que no deben descartarse. A finales del siglo XV Guadalupe y Santa Cruz eran las islas de Barlovento más pobladas, y su proximidad social a la isla cacical de Boriquén debió generar encuentros y relaciones de muy variadas naturalezas. En uno de nuestros trabajos

anteriores presentamos la evidencia de numerosos borincanos, particularmente mujeres y niños, refugiados en Guadalupe en 1515, como consecuencia de la guerra que se sufría contra los españoles en Puerto Rico. Este movimiento inevitable de refugiados nativos desde las islas ocupadas por los conquistadores es magnífico ejemplo de relaciones sociales entre ambas islas mucho más aceptable que la supuesta enemistad perenne que se ha postulado por siglos.

[If (as the evidence indicates) there were indigenous people from Puerto Rico in Guadeloupe, what were they doing there? Family relations, exogamous marriages, the raiding of women, and even warfare between chiefs, might explain it. We will never know for sure. What we do know, however, is that all of these options were common and frequent practices, and none should be omitted from consideration. At the end of the 15th century, Guadeloupe and St. Croix were the most populous of the Lesser Antilles, and their social proximity to the island of the [both male and female] *caciques* in Puerto Rico must have given rise to a broad spectrum of encounters and relations. In one of our previous works, we presented evidence of numerous indigenous people from Puerto Rico, especially women and children, who had taken refuge in Guadeloupe in 1515, as a consequence of the war raging against the Spanish in Puerto Rico. This inevitable movement of indigenous refugees from the island occupied by the *conquistadores* is a magnificent of example of (close) social relations between the two islands which is much more of an acceptable explanation than the supposed eternal enmity between them that has been asserted for centuries.] (p. 41)

All of these problems with the terms ‘Arawak/ Taíno’ and ‘Carib’ collide head-on in the case of the Garinagu, where, in the final analysis, any attempt to determine where one category begins and the other ends appears futile, as Whitehead (2002) observes:

This history of the Karipuna [Garifuna/ Garinagu] and the way it is reflected in linguistic usage through time makes the search for an Arawakan cultural-linguistic substrate that might function to identify “Arawakan” peoples in the historical past appear quite pointless. The Arawakan Karipuna have been “Caribe” for so long that even today ethnologists are unable to quite let go of the idea that they are Caribs in some sense - for indeed that is the opinion of their modern descendants, the Garifuna, themselves. The story of the Garifuna of Belize is therefore instructive as to the meaning and colonial origins of the categories of “Arawak” and “Carib”, the creolization of an Arawakan language, and the confusion this causes to an anthropology still dependent on the dualism of the colonial past and wedded to the idea of language as a cultural substrate that produces social continuity through time. (pp. 20-21)

The Europeans first created the artificial categories ‘Arawak/ Taíno’ and ‘Carib’ and the artificial binary ‘Arawak/ Taíno versus Carib’ to justify the enslavement and expropriation of the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean at the dawn of the 16th century. As the pace of European invasion of the region accelerated, the epistemic and discursive violence inflicted by these oppositional categories on its autochthonous peoples also increased. As time went on, the labels assigned by the Europeans were used to insert indigenous peoples into ethnically defined military and occupational roles and hierarchies at the service of the European colonial enterprise in the Americas. Whitehead (2002) discusses an example of how this was operationalized by the Spanish, Dutch, French, and British in the Guianas:

The Lokono quickly allied with the Spanish who were attempting to settle the Orinoco and Guyana coast in the sixteenth century ... Here the Lokono drove out the existing population comprised of Kariña, Warao, Yao, Nepoyo and Suppoyo. The Lokono were also given black slaves by the Spanish to work the tobacco plantations These events were the origin of a lasting military exchange [conflict] between the Lokono and the Kariña, “Carib” groups were treated [by the Dutch, French and English] as wild but fierce mercenaries and were used to hunt down escaped black slaves and to provide a buffer against Spanish expansion beyond the Orinoco basin. “Arawaks” were used to guard the immediate plantation and to provide servants in the planter’s household. They were also courted and co-opted by the missionaries as evangelical agents among the hinterland peoples, just as they had acted as military intelligence for the Spanish of the sixteenth century. (pp. 22-23)

This assignment of artificial labels to divide the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean and enlist them in furthering the political and economic agendas of the Western European powers during the 16th and 17th centuries would be continuously refined until it became an essential element in their toolbox for their eventual colonization of the rest of the world in the 19th century.

Whitehead (2002) notes that this process would eventually result in the phenomenon of ‘ethnic soldiering’, pitting one group of indigenous soldiers, such as the ‘Yellow Caribs’ who supported the British in St. Vincent, against another group of indigenous people, such as the ‘Black Caribs’ (Garinagu) who supported the French in St. Vincent:

Well-defined ethno-linguistic groups - something that was no less the object of “nationalist” policies in Europe of the nineteenth century - enabled better administrative

control of the native population (Whitehead 1990). As a result, by the end of the nineteenth century, European national political loyalties also spread amongst the Amerindians producing indigenous groups calling themselves “Spanish Arawaks” and “British Arawaks” [...] (p. 23)

The British eventually also deployed their construction of a ‘good Yellow Carib’ versus ‘bad Black Carib’ binary to expel the latter from St. Vincent. The cowardly and genocidal banishment of the Garinagu/ Black Caribs to Baliceaux Island in 1797 was portrayed as a heroic act carried out to ‘protect’ the ‘Yellow Caribs’ from the ‘Black Caribs’, as Sweeney (2007) observes:

Much was made by the British of the domination of the Yellow Caribs by the Black Caribs, and their apparent take over of Yellow Carib lands. This was done partly to justify the British taking the Black Carib lands It is likely that the political and national differences between the French and British have distorted the historic accounts of the times for their own purposes. It may well be that the line between Black Carib and Yellow Carib was not as clear in the minds of the Caribs as it might have been in the minds of their British conquerors. (p. 33)

Myth F: The ‘Arawaks/Táinos’ were perpetually at war with the ‘Caribs’, and the Garifuna language is a product of the Carib conquest of the ‘Arawak/ Igneri’ people who originally inhabited St. Vincent

Just as is the case with ‘Taíno’ and ‘Carib’, the term ‘Igneri’ has become one of the central elements in the process of the construction of the linguistic mythology imposed on the Garinagu by the colonial gaze. The duplicitous deployment of this term in myth-making is perhaps part of the reason why its use has become so inconsistent and problematic. ‘Igneri’ is at

times used to refer to the Island Carib language, of which Garifuna is a variety. At other times, 'Igneri' is used to refer to a hypothetically 'pure' Arawakan/ Taíno language that was supposedly once spoken by all of the inhabitants of St. Vincent before the island was 'conquered' by the 'Caribs'. Leaving the question of what constitutes linguistic 'purity' aside for the moment, there is no evidence whatsoever that such a 'pure' Arawakan language was ever spoken by everyone on St. Vincent or elsewhere on the islands of the southeastern Caribbean. Keegan and Hofmann (2017) note that:

The name "Igneri" has been used to distinguish the indigenous inhabitants of the southern Lesser Antilles. Rouse described Igneri as an Arawak language that was different from, yet related to, Taíno (Rouse 1992). In fact, it is a nonethnic name (meaning "people"), given to the indigenous peoples the Island Carib believed they had defeated in their mythical account of the conquest of the Windward Islands. (p. 14)

There is substantial evidence, however, for centuries-long cohabitation on these islands involving speakers of a number of languages belonging to both the Arawakan and Cariban language families.

Davis and Goodwin (1990) challenge traditional assumptions of invasion by signaling that there is no clear evidence to support it. In addition, they point to other sources which interpret these interactions as contact rather than conquest:

If the Island Caribs were, at least linguistically, Arawaks who had accommodated to, or who had been influenced by, mainland Cariban speakers, what was the nature of their interaction with the Kalina and other mainland groups? Historical-period documents

provide little reason to believe that Island Caribs regularly were in conflict with anyone on the mainland. (p. 44)

Whitehead (2002) states that:

In short, the social interdependency and cultural similarity of caribe and aruaca is a possibility that was still ignored within earlier anthropological schema which all relied on the assumption that the caribe were invasive or external to a primordial "Arawakan" or "Taíno" cultural context. Yet evidence of social continuity underlying an ethnic and cultural interchange between caribe and aruaca is present. (p. 10)

Such relatively peaceful cohabitation was difficult and even dangerous for the European colonizers to imagine. Instead, any evidence of the linguistic and cultural hybridity that is so amply attested in the case of the Garinagu, as well as in the case of so many peoples of the Caribbean today, could only be interpreted under the colonial gaze as the result of violent conquest and a zero-sum game where one culture or language completely obliterates the other. Whitehead (2002) suggests that: "the fact that the idea of a group of men advancing through the islands eating enemy men and copulating with their women is so powerfully resonant for our own culture may be the most relevant consideration here, rather than native Caribbean behavior in 1492" (p. 7).

In the centuries immediately preceding Invasion, the peoples of western Europe had witnessed historically unprecedented levels of murderous ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious 'cleansing' exemplified by the Albigensian Crusades waged by the Kings of northern France against the Occitan-speaking Cathars in what is now the south of France, as well as by the Reconquista/ Inquisition waged by the Catholics Kings of northern Spain against the Moors and

Jews in what is now the south of Spain (see chapter XX). These hegemonic projects involved the imposition of the mono-lingualism, mono-culturalism, and mono-identification upon which the modern nation-state depends. Although this process, which had begun a few centuries before Columbus sailed, would not come to full fruition until the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars a few centuries after his death, the *conquistadores* and the priests who accompanied them to the Americas were in many ways a central contingent of its 16th century vanguard and shock troops. Whitehead (2002) has this to say about how the *conquistadores* in some ways admired and identified with the mythical figure of the conquering Carib:

Firstly, the identification of the Spanish, as rapacious conquerors, with the canibales, is most striking, and often commented upon, as is the empathetic treatment of the political consumption [i.e., figurative cannibalism] of those captured (see also Whitehead 1990b). Secondly, the link between military capability and being *gente de razon* is an explicit anthropological principle to be found throughout the Columbian texts. Its significance is illuminated by this identity of Carib and Spaniard; the Spanish of course having just completed their own Reconquista. (p. 8)

The violent imposition of the religion, language, and culture of the conquerors on the conquered had become the norm in Western Europe by the time Columbus undertook his voyages to the Americas, and the Spanish colonial project can thus be seen as an extension of the Reconquista/ Inquisition. Whitehead (2002) states that, as soon as they could, Spanish missionaries replicated this mono-lingualism and mono-culturalism on their indigenous converts: "... [The missionaries] pursued policies of settling evangelized populations in villages that were mono-lingual, thus directly acting to produce that "fit" of culture, society and language that was a theoretical desiderata of linguistic theories of the time" (p. 23). Ethnocide, linguicide, and

genocide therefore were the only lenses through which the Spanish chroniclers allowed themselves to consider the language and culture of the Garinagu. This hegemonic and colonial bias has been adopted wholeheartedly by academics.

It is only in the past few decades that a few scholars have come to seriously question the assumptions that underpin this conquest scenario. Whitehead (2002), discusses how the influential work of Douglas Taylor evolved over the years, as he began to doubt the notion that the Cariban influences in Island Carib were the result of conquest:

The ceramic evidence showed that there had indeed been a movement from the mainland to the islands in late pre-history which he [Taylor] assigned to the “Carib conquest”.

However, Taylor had already recognized the inconsistencies in this position, especially the identification of “Taíno” with “Igñeri”. This seems to imply that the Antilles were peopled by two distinct migrations of different Arawakan tribes In this case, it seems unnecessary to assume that any “conquest” or fighting took place.” (1955:108-9). (p. 25)

Boomert (1995) identifies a similar tendency over time in the equally influential work of Irving Rouse to question the scenario of conquest that scholars have traditionally taken for granted:

Rouse (1985, 1986) also now accepts that “immigration” into the islands best explains the nature of the ceramic evidence, but the idea of a conquest to explain gendered speech modes remains despite the many cogent archaeological reasons for rejecting it. (pp. 25-26)

There is a growing openness among linguists and anthropologists to consider other factors than conquest for the emergence the Island Carib/ Garifuna language. Whitehead (2002) sees cohabitation and contact, rather than invasion, as being decisive here:

... [G]iven both the frequent communication between the islands and mainland, ... as well as the fact that Kariña lived alongside Karipuna on the islands as well as the mainland, the pidgin-Kariña used by the Karipuna men could have easily had other origins [than conquest] (Whitehead 1988) ... (pp. 4-5)

While it is true that in some of mythological traditions of the Garinagu, the scenario for their arrival in St. Vincent is depicted as one of conquest, there are other Garifuna mythical traditions that depict their arrival as peaceful. Boomert (2011) observes that:

As is well known, part of the Island Carib myths ascribe this linguistic situation by postulating that the men in their society are descended from Cariban-speaking warriors who once immigrated into the Windward Islands from the area of the ... Kalina, of the Guianas They would have extinguished the men and married the women of the original inhabitants who inhabited these islands who spoke a Maipuran Arawakan language ... closely related to Lokono It is well to realize that contrary to the commonly held view, the Island Carib narratives on their origin are certainly not unanimous in claiming exactly this [conquest] scenario. To the contrary, one of the versions recorded holds that in fact the Windwards were uninhabited at the time of the Island Carib immigration from the Guiana coastal zone (Gullick 1980). (pp. 294-295)

The Platonic episteme and the colonial gaze that underpin disciplines such as linguistics, anthropology, and the rest of Western science have also played a role in reinforcing the zero-sum view of language, culture, and identity which assumes that conquest has historically been the principal driver of language change. Much of what passes for linguistic 'science' today is a worldview that seeks to justify and naturalize violence, invasion, and conquest. For most of its

early history as a discipline, linguistics was synonymous with ‘philology’, that is, the study that concerns itself with tracing how words and varieties change through time. Many of the methods developed by philologists are still utilized in modern linguistics, especially, but by no means exclusively, among historical linguists. Centuries after they were invented by philologists, the comparative method, which is used to measure the extent of ‘genetic’ relationship among languages, and the family tree model which is used to depict such ‘genetic’ relationships still constitute the basis upon which most historical linguists and most other linguists unquestioningly classify languages into groups and families, such as the ‘Arawakan family’ and the ‘Cariban Family’. These methods and tools developed to describe the relationships among languages that shared common features by Europeans in the 18th and 19th centuries, precisely the time when these same Europeans were invading and conquering the world and establishing vast colonial empires. It is therefore no accident that these methods and tools were crafted with the implicit understanding that ‘natural’ relationships among languages emerge principally as the result of invasion and conquest, with the language of the conqueror being identified as the language from which the languages spoken by the conquered are descended.

For example, the so-called ‘Romance Branch’ of languages within the ‘Indo-European Family’, which includes varieties such as French, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, and Italian, played a key role shaping the comparative method and the family tree model, because early European philologists had access to substantial archival evidence of invasion and conquest by the Romans of the territories where these languages are spoken today, as well as access to substantial written evidence of the earlier stages of each of these languages. By comparing their shared vocabulary, philologists established that these languages, which are spoken by the descendants of peoples conquered by the Romans, were all ‘naturally’ or ‘genetically’ descended

from Latin, the language of the conquering Roman soldiers. The result is that the only language that is generally acknowledged as the 'legitimate and natural source' of the 'offspring languages' French, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, and Italian is the 'parent language' Latin. Any other languages that might have played a significant role in shaping French, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, and Italian, such as the languages spoken in what is now France, Spain, Portugal, Romania, and Italy before they were conquered by the Romans, or those spoken by the women of these territories who were taken as sexual partners by the Latin-speaking Roman soldiers, are thus systematically erased and/or delegitimized as subjects for the scientific study of relationships among the 'Romance' languages.

The family tree model also renders invisible processes of language change and processes of emergence of relationships among languages that result from cohabitation, exchange, and other forms of non-violent contact, rather than from invasion and conquest. These deficiencies in our ability to understand how languages change and relate to one another engendered by the deficiencies in the linguistic methods and tools that we have inherited from the colonial linguistics of the 19th century have made it virtually impossible for us to account for the linguistic practices of real human beings with any degree of observational, descriptive, or explanatory adequacy. This is especially true when it comes to the study of languages that emerged at times and in areas of the world where the violent imposition of mono-lingualism that has typified Western society for the past few centuries was not the norm. This means that we are woefully inequipped to study the history of and relationships among the vast majority of the world's languages, especially those spoken by indigenous peoples such as the Garinagu.

The colonial 'winner-take-all' zero-sum approach to how languages change over time, as well as the equally colonial notion of the monolithic and monolingual imposition of the language

of the conqueror on the conquered, have persisted as key elements in the dominant paradigm in linguistics. Just as this approach has proved to be an optimal one for justifying and naturalizing the imposition of European languages and cultures on the rest of the world, it also proved to be an optimal one for domesticating and commodifying the linguistic history of Island Carib/Garifuna. This domestication and commodification was not only carried out by Columbus and his associates for the consumption of the Spanish elites in the 16th century to help gain their consent to expropriate and enslave the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean. It has also been carried out by scholars for the intellectual consumption of colonial and neo-colonial academics up until the present day. Whitehead (2002) effectively acknowledges the deep connections among these colonial agendas when he states:

The urge to group ... [linguistic and] cultural complexity and variety into finite categories has its intellectual roots in the western scientific project as a whole, but the immediate historical impulse to such an approach to cultural and linguistic typology was the colonial conquest itself. This model then attracted further confirmation as a specifically linguistic style of comparison [M]issionary evangelists encrusted this distinction with further evidence - notwithstanding the gross anomalies this created in describing and interpreting perhaps the best documented and most studied Arawakan population in the whole of the Americas - the Island Caribs. It thus transpires that the category "Arawak" is no less historically and culturally complex than its twin "Carib" and the Karipuna utterly transgress such ethnic, cultural and linguistic boundaries. (p. 22)

The denial, the artificial simplification, and the domestication of the linguistic and ethnic complexity exhibited by the Garifuna have been necessary because they represent an epistemic threat to the foundations of Eurocentric linguistics and anthropology, which take conquest and

monolingualism to be the norm, rather than cohabitation and pluri-lingualism. The validity of many of the assumptions, methods, and tools which are routinely and largely unconsciously adopted and deployed by linguists and anthropologists, such as the comparative method and the family tree model, are challenged by the linguistic and cultural practices of the Garifuna and countless other indigenous groups, whose pluri-lingual, pluri-cultural, and pluri-identified lifeways are the result of cohabitation and exchange, rather than conquest and imposition. On the basis of his extensive work with indigenous peoples, Whitehead (2002) comes to the following conclusion as to the inadequacy of the tools of Western linguistic and anthropological science to account for the Garifuna facts:

In short the Karipuna have continued to challenge conventional forms of linguistic and cultural classification and this suggests that our categories of classification are simply inadequate to the complexity and dynamism of indigenous linguistic practices - just as the linguistic exogamy of Tukanoan groups in the western Amazon confounded historical linguists into suggesting a compression of previously dispersed populations, instead of appreciating the way in which language was manipulated as a cultural and ethnic marker by native people, themselves (p. 26)

Myth G: All of the African descended ancestors of the present day Garinagu came to St. Vincent by shipwreck, not *marronage*

In the official representations of the colonial Caribbean, the historical agency of propertied men of European descent is routinely exaggerated at the expense of women, non-European descended people, and people without property (Faraclas, 2012). For example, the abolition of enslavement in the colonial Atlantic is usually attributed to the efforts of European-

descended abolitionists and ‘enlightened’ European descended politicians, with little to no mention made of centuries of sustained and effective resistance to chattel enslavement throughout the Atlantic on the part of the enslaved, on the one hand, and the maroons, that is, the formerly enslaved who had managed to escape the plantation, on the other.

By the mid-18th century, the economic and social agency of enslaved women in the Caribbean had provided the networks and venues necessary for the emergence of powerful alliances between the enslaved and the maroons that disrupted social and economic activity in the region to such an extent that it became impossible for the system of chattel enslavement to continue (Faraclas, 2012). The major centers for sugar production in the Caribbean, Dutch Suriname, British Jamaica, and French St. Domingue, had all become war zones where maroons and the enslaved worked together to make life impossible for the plantation owners. The decisive role played by these African descended enslaved people and African descended maroons in compelling the colonial plantation and merchant classes to abandon chattel slavery and replace it with wage slavery is usually downplayed or often not mentioned at all.

Because they managed not only to successfully escape European colonial authority to create their own autonomous communities, but also to successfully challenge European colonial rule, maroons have been singled out for erasure by the ruling classes of the colonial and neo-colonial powers, as well as by the academics and other symbolic elites who do their bidding. Just as most historians, in their grand narratives of the Caribbean, treat maroons as a footnote, if at all, creolists have obsessively focused their attention on the European-controlled plantation as the only significant venue for the emergence of creole languages in the Caribbean, with non-European controlled maroon communities and other venues of cohabitation among non-

European, non-proprietary people, largely ignored and rendered invisible. Thus, maroon agency in the Caribbean has been systematically devalued and dismissed.

This devaluation and dismissal of maroon agency has also had an impact on the complex of myths surrounding the Garinagu, whose African ancestors are usually traced solely to one or more ships that wrecked off the coasts of St. Vincent, allowing their cargo of enslaved people to escape and come ashore and eventually cohabit with the non-African descended ancestors of the Garinagu. This scenario completely ignores the fact that the first global center for sugar production in the Caribbean was established in the mid-17th century on the neighboring island of Barbados, where a number of those who managed to escape enslavement eventually found refuge as maroons in St. Vincent. During the 16th and early 17th centuries, African descended maroons had successfully defeated former European colonial attempts at capitalist sugar production elsewhere in the Atlantic in places such as São Tomé, Anno Bom, and Brazil. To make such *marronage* maximally difficult for the enslaved, Barbados was selected by the Europeans because of its small size, lack of high mountains and lack of impenetrable forest.

But, in Barbados, as in every other territory of the Caribbean, significant numbers of the enslaved managed to escape. Finding themselves on a relatively small, flat, and deforested island, some of the enslaved in Barbados stole boats, built rafts, and put themselves at the mercy of the sea currents and winds to carry them to freedom. The prevailing currents and winds run from Barbados directly to St. Vincent, some 100 miles away: "By 1672 it was estimated that six hundred runaway slaves were living with the Caribs on St. Vincent and Dominica. The Windward side of St. Vincent attracted escapees from Barbados, who could steal a boat or make a raft, and ride the currents for a couple of days and wind up free on the eastern shore of St. Vincent" (Muilenburg 2, in Sweeney, 2007, p. 14). Hulme and Whitehead (1992, pp. 38-44 in

Whitehead, 2002) are very clear in their insistence that marooned escapees from Barbados were just as numerous as enslaved shipwreck survivors among the African descended ancestors of the Garinagu/ 'Black Caribs': "The Garifuna are the descendants of African slaves who fled to St. Vincent from the sugar plantations of Barbados. The wreck of a slave ship off St Vincent in 1635 greatly augmented the black population who were integrated into Karipuna society ..." (21)

In sum, the African ancestors of the present day Garinagu must be traced not only to shipwreck survivors, but also to maroons. Sweeney (2007) provides the following evidence for ships carrying the enslaved that were wrecked off the coast of St. Vincent and the nearby Grenadines:

[In] 1635 ... two Spanish ships carrying slaves were lost in the area (Adams 2002, p. 5). Father Vasquez Espinosa wrote in the 1620's of five hundred shipwrecked Africans stranded in the Grenadines when a Portuguese slaver ran into the islands. The Africans dispatched the Portuguese. Their fate is unknown, but they may have joined the Caribs on St. Vincent. In 1675 the Dutch [slave] ship, Palmira, was wrecked by a hurricane on Bequia in the Grenadines (Adams 2002, p. 6). (pp. 13-14)

The Garinagu, indigeneity and sovereignty

Another concept that must be problematized in any account of the linguistic, cultural, and identificational practices of the Garinagu is the category 'indigenous'. The definition of 'indigenous' that has become predominant in recent decades was drawn up by Jose R. Martínez-Cobo between 1972 and 1986, in his capacity as Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (1982/3). Martínez-Cobo's definition reads as follows:

Indigenous communities, peoples, and nations are those that, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems. (p. 29)

Although this definition seems, on the surface at least, to apply in a fairly straightforward way to the Garinagu in St. Vincent today, most of whom neither phenotypically exhibit, nor historically claim, any element of African ancestry, its inadequacies become more and more apparent when one attempts to apply it to the Garinagu in Belize and the rest of Central America, not to mention how it might apply to the Garifuna diaspora in the U.S.

One deficiency in Martínez-Cobo's understanding of indigeneity has to do with the use of the term 'territory'. Because the Garinagu of Central America were expelled by the British colonial authorities from their ancestral territories in St. Vincent and transported to Central America in the late 1700s, there has been a transformation in the nature of their "historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories" (Martínez-Cobo, 1983, para. 379) in St. Vincent. While they claim spiritual indigenous sovereignty in relation to their ancestral territories in Yurumei (St. Vincent), the Garinagu in Central America claim both spiritual and material indigenous sovereignty in relation to the lands where they currently reside in places like Belize and Honduras, often in the face of land invasions by international corporations, profiteers, and other agents of neo-colonialism. The displacement of the Garifuna from St. Vincent to places like Belize is in many ways similar to

that of other peoples whose status as ‘indigenous’ is perhaps less contested, such as the numerous indigenous peoples of what is now the southeastern United States who experienced successive invasions and displacements before they ended up in the territories where they now claim and exercise some degree of legal sovereignty (United Houma Nation, 2012).

While the phenomenon of the expulsion of the Garifuna from their ancestral territories in St. Vincent to Belize might be accommodated to a certain extent under a slightly nuanced interpretation of Martínez-Cobo’s (1983) definition, the earlier expulsion and enslavement of their equally indigenous African ancestors from West Africa is much more difficult to accommodate within Martínez-Cobo’s framework, and this has led many indigenous peoples to question it. Faraclas (1998) argues that Martínez-Cobo’s definition:

was articulated within the legalistic episteme of domination and exclusion that prevails among academics and in international institutions such as the UN, and as such it has been questioned by many indigenous peoples Because it stipulates that indigenous peoples must “consider themselves distinct from other sectors of [society],” and must “form ... non-dominant sectors of society” this definition has often been used to exclude most of the hundreds of millions of autochthonous peoples of Melanesia and West Africa who constitute thousands of indigenous ethnic groups, but who do not “consider themselves distinct from other sectors of [society]” and/or do not “form at present non-dominant sectors of society Since among all indigenous peoples, it is those of West Africa and Melanesia who have most effectively retained their traditional sovereignty, their exclusion has crippled the movements of indigenous peoples worldwide, especially around questions of land, place and sovereignty. (p. XX)

This understanding recasts the Garinagu claim to indigeneity as a phenomenon that corresponds in its multiplex trans-articulations to Garifuna pluri-lingualism, pluri-culturality, and pluri-identification. So, when the African descended maroon and shipwrecked ancestors of the Garinagu of Central America arrived in St. Vincent, they arrived with the living consciousness of the indigenous sovereignties that they had brought with them from various indigenous communities in West Africa. And when these African descended peoples were incorporated into the indigenous communities of the Garinagu on St. Vincent, what resulted was not the zero-sum replacement of African indigeneities by Caribbean indigeneities, but instead a new wave of transgressive complexification and expansion of these communities' repertoire of indigeneities to include both African and Caribbean linguistic, cultural, and identificational practices. This new wave of complexification and expansion was just the latest in a rich history of similar waves that had broken over the shores of St. Vincent, such as those which gave rise to the rich amalgam of linguistic, cultural, and identificational practices that had resulted from centuries of contact among speakers of 'Arawakan' and 'Cariban' languages that these marooned and shipwrecked Africans encountered when they first set foot on the island.

The manner in which these trans- and pluri-understandings of indigeneity that the Garifuna facts compel us to consider upend and unsettle dominant discourses on sovereignty and indigeneity, is very similar to the manner in which the trans- and pluri-understandings of language, culture, and identity that the Garifuna facts compel us to consider upend and unsettle dominant discourses of linguistics, anthropology, and sociology.

Here we encounter one of the many instances where allowing the Garinagu 'facts' and 'data' to speak to us, rather than forcing them into our prefabricated, domesticating, and commodifying theoretical and conceptual boxes, can help us, as 'social scientists', to get out of

our ‘comfort zones’ and actually learn something that upends and unsettles our status as ‘citizens’ of nation-states, as well as upending and unsettling our assigned roles as academic symbolic elites. Once the term ‘indigenous’ is problematized in light of the Garifuna facts, it becomes possible to radically re-interpret indigeneity and sovereignty as powerful ways of thinking, speaking, and living shared by all of our ancestors, even those of the European invaders of the Americas during the colonial era. In this connection, Faraclas (2020) contends that:

In their struggles to maintain their ancestral sovereignty, Indigenous peoples remind all of us that, for most of our histories as human beings on the earth, we have exercised and cultivated our individual and collective powers to set in motion dynamic relationships of well-being and mutual benefit: 1) with the land and the rest of our physical environment, in order to create life-seeking *places* of subsistence and abundance; 2) with our relatives, partners, friends, and the rest of our social environment, to create life-seeking, hospitable, and secure *communities*; and 3) with thought, speech, and the rest of our symbolic environment, to create life-seeking *languages* that help us understand our worlds and permit us to recreate new worlds in our own images and interests. Indigenous peoples also remind us that it has only been in the last few millennia and in a few aberrant cultures that systems of domination such as patriarchy, ethnocentrism, and accumulation of wealth have sought to assure that our deployment of what Foucault (1972: 7) refers to as the ‘awesome materiality’ of these powers no longer serves the life-seeking interests of ourselves, our communities, and humanity, but instead serves the death-seeking interests of processes of domination, such as colonization. The more we succeed in remembering the powers which were once shared by all of our ancestors, the more we realize that domination is a harmful but contradiction-ridden project, and that, in order to survive and

thrive in a death-seeking system, we are all obliged to commit countless powerful and resistant acts every day to re-create and reclaim our subsistence, community, and epistemic sovereignty (Mies and Bennholdt-Thomsen 2001). (p. 77)

The colonial gaze on indigenous peoples assumes that cosmopolitanism, if this term is understood to mean openness to cohabitation among many languages and many cultures (Appiah, 2006), is a relatively recent phenomenon, emerging only in the past few hundred years, primarily among upper class males in European urban centers. While some recognize that there is overwhelming evidence for the existence of this type of cosmopolitanism thousands of years ago and in a number of European and non-European societies, such as the Greek and Roman Empires, the Ottoman Empire, pre-colonial India, and the rest of South Asia, etc., the association of the term with imperialism, urbanization, patriarchy, and accumulation of wealth remains. Few have associated the term ‘cosmopolitan’ with indigenous peoples, but the copious evidence for trans- and pluri-lingualism, trans- and pluri-culturalism, and trans- and pluri-identification among the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean which was presented earlier in this chapter, is also to be found among indigenous peoples elsewhere on the planet, such as West Africa and Melanesia (Faraclas, 2012).

Therefore, when people, academics, governments, and organizations who identify as non-indigenous encounter someone who identifies as indigenous, they often assume that the person is linguistically, culturally, and ethnically ‘simple’ and has a single ‘authentic’ language, a single ‘authentic’ culture, and a single ‘authentic’ identity. Much of the work of linguists and anthropologists, for example, seems driven by the search for some monolithic ‘essential’ set of linguistic or cultural practices by which they can neatly and simplistically distinguish one ethnolinguistic group from another. This linguistic and cultural simplicity then becomes part of

how indigeneity itself is defined not only by non-indigenous people, but also by some indigenous peoples who have encountered the colonial gaze and internalized it to one degree or another. Thus, it not uncommon for non-indigenous peoples to deny the indigeneity of any indigenous people whose linguistic and cultural repertoires are not limited to the narrow spectrum that has been assigned to their specific ethnolinguistic group by non-indigenous academic ‘specialists’ or ‘experts’ (Faraclas, 2012). Even more tragically, it is not uncommon to find indigenous people who question their own indigeneity or the indigeneity of others because they do not conform to these same artificial, ‘authentic’, and monolithic norms.

Because of the trans- and pluri-linguistic, cultural, and ethnic nature of their history and society, the Garinagu, perhaps more than other indigenous peoples, have had to constantly deal with attitudes based on these notions of authenticity and simplicity. If anything can define Garifuna language and culture, it is its openness to many languages and cultures. In this way we can problematize the colonial tropes of indigenous authenticity and homogenized simplicity, and to some extent turn them back on themselves.

The Garinagu of Belize

As demonstrated earlier in this chapter, the Garinagu have a complex history. Scattered across the Central American Caribbean coast, they have become a significant ethnic group in Belize, numbering some 25,000 out of a national population of some 400,000 (Ávila, 2009, pp. 19-31; Worldometers, 2020). Surrounded by Spanish speaking nations, Belize is the only country in Central America whose official language is English, and the only country in Central America not to have been colonized by the Spanish. Belize hosts a diverse population that includes autochthonous Indigenous peoples, Afro-Indigenous peoples such as the Garinagu, African descended peoples, European immigrants, and descendants of South Asian indentured laborers

(Premdas, 2002). Over the centuries, these boundaries between these groups have been blurred by intermarriage and linguistic and cultural exchange. Nonetheless, the Garinagu in Belize maintain strong linguistic and cultural connections with the Garinagu in the rest of Central America, as Langworthy (2002) observes:

There are slight cultural and sociolinguistic differences within the Garifuna Nation, but Garifuna communities still share a common culture and ancestral language in spite of geographic dispersion. Phonological differences exist, of course; for example, there are some dialects that delete intervocalic *r*. Lexical differences are found based on geography as well. For instance, the important *düggii* ceremony is referred to as *walagayo* in Nicaragua. Nonetheless, Garinagu share the same ethnolinguistic norms as part of their culture, regardless of their location. Family ties are not restricted by national boundaries either. People tend to have family in both the United States and Central America, and they may have family in more than one Central American country as well. Garifuna people are known for multilingualism, which is often necessary just for communication with relatives. (p. 42)

With some 400,000 inhabitants (Worldometer, 2020), Belize is often cited as a multilingual nation, with several ethnolinguistic groups sharing a relatively small geographic space. Some 50% of the population is of mixed Indigenous and European descent and are commonly referred to as ‘Mestizo’ and/or ‘Spanish’; about 25% are African descended and are commonly referred to as ‘Creoles’; some 11% are Indigenous and are commonly referred to as Maya (with some making the distinction among Yucatec Maya, Motan Maya, and Q’echi’ Maya); about 6.5% are Afro-Indigenous Garinagu and are commonly referred to as ‘Garifuna’; some 4% are of South Asian descent and are commonly referred to as ‘East Indians’; and the

remaining few percent are distributed among a number of smaller groups. Even though the Creoles were once the largest ethnic group in Belize, their numbers have been surpassed by those of the Mestizos. Most of these major ethnolinguistic groups are concentrated in particular parts of the territory and enjoy a fairly high degree of autonomy, when compared to the situation of non-dominant ethnolinguistic groups in other countries of the region. Even though English is the official language of Belize, the language that is most rapidly gaining in terms of both speakers and prestige is Belizean Afro-Atlantic English lexifier Creole or Belizean Creole.

It is often argued that the imposition of a single standardized national language that took place in the formation of the nation states in Western Europe during the colonial era is the only viable model for formerly colonized countries, given their need for national cohesion. Although most of the nations that were granted their independence from colonial rule in the 20th century have attempted to replicate this model, it has often proved to be counter-productive and a source of conflict among competing ethnolinguistic groups (Malone, 2004). Many newly independent states, such as Belize, opted to impose the language of their former colonizer as a 'neutral' national language, thus avoiding favoring one local ethnic group over another.

During the 21st century, however, the Eurocentric assumption that monolingualism, monoculturalism, and mono-identification are goals that every nation state should aim to achieve have been increasingly questioned and challenged (Makoni & Pennycook, 2006). Among the reasons for this are the widespread phenomena of language shift, language endangerment, and language death, whereby languages which have not been selected as the official national language in a given country begin to lose speakers, with some eventually ceasing to be spoken at all. These trends have become alarmingly strong and widespread due to the forces of corporate globalization, which favors the use of one language (at present, English) at the expense of all

others. Following dominant discursive practice, Laoire (2008, pp. 203-204) discusses language shift, language endangerment, and language death in similar terms to those used when discussing the endangerment and extinction of biological species. Both Laoire (2008) and Gómez-Menjívar and Salmon (2018) treat these phenomena in relation to 'language ecology' and frame efforts to reverse these processes as 'language revitalization'.

The non-official languages of Belize are particularly vulnerable to language shift, language endangerment, and language death, given that the official language of the country is English, whose dominance over other Belizean languages is promoted by the full force of governmental institutions, colonial prestige, and globalized practice. This has had a predictably negative effect, not only on most Belizean languages, but also on the establishment of a Belizean identity. Currently, the government of Belize is trying to promote a national identity by means of a school curriculum that teaches about the different ethnicities present in the country. Because they once constituted the majority of Belizeans, the African descended Creoles and their Belizean Creole language have traditionally enjoyed higher levels of political power and prestige than other ethnolinguistic groups and their languages. Among all of the non-official languages, Belizean Creole stands out as the language that is most rapidly gaining in terms of number of speakers and as a marker of national identity.

Although the quest for a single national identity is problematic, the people of Belize themselves have already made pluri-lingualism and pluri-culturalism part of what it means for them to be Belizean. As is the case in a growing number of formerly colonized states in the Caribbean and elsewhere, new non-monolithic models for understanding language, culture, and identity at the national level are being considered by ethnolinguistic groups who want to acknowledge and valorize their ancestral languages within a framework of cooperation and

sharing with one another in a pluri-lingual pluri-cultural society. There is no group in Belize that sees itself as foreign or that wants to break away from the others. There are, however, groups that want to know more about their cultural heritage, such as the East Indians who feel that they may have lost many of their traditional lifeways over the generations since their arrival in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It seems that, for the moment at least, most of the minority ethnolinguistic groups seek social and economic mobility, rather than political power at the national level. This, however, may be changing, as the African descended Creoles, who once constituted the majority, increasingly lose ground to the Mestizos/ Spanish whose proportion of the national population is now roughly twice the size of that of the Creoles.

It is very important to note, however, that regardless of one's ethnicity, it is important that one project oneself as Belizean as a means to assert a national identity. In the case of the Garifuna, though self-identified with the Garifuna nation, the Garifuna dimensions of their identificational repertoires is complicated not only by the fact that the Garinagu are dispersed across several international borders, but also by the fact that they often do not inhabit contiguous territory, with several other ethnic groups occupying areas in between Garifuna communities or cohabiting with the Garinagu in the same community. This in turn complicates efforts among different Garifuna groups to join together in initiatives for language preservation, although some communities with the appropriate resources have access to technologies that can facilitate communication with distant Garifuna communities. In Belize, although the recognition by the Garinagu of their belonging to a Belizean nation helps them to foster positive relations with other groups as well as to foster national coherence, harmony, and unity, it may have a less positive impact on the Garifuna language itself, since, as do other groups, Garifuna are assigning ever

higher levels of prestige to Belizean Creole, which is currently spoken by most people in the country, where it serves as a lingua franca.

There is a history of rivalry between Garinagu and Creoles which may still impact language dynamics, as noted by Cayetano (2011):

Upon their arrival to Belize, the British colonizers welcomed the Garinagu refugees with grave suspicion after having heard of the ... Garinagu ... [resistance] against the British while defending their homeland, Yurumein – St. Vincent. The British sowed the seeds of prejudice and racial discrimination in the minds of the Creoles against the Garinagu who share a common African ancestry to ensure that the two would not unite against the British colonizers, a common divide and conquer rule technique. Regrettably, the tactic worked despite numerous interactions between the Creoles and the Garinagu in the Mahogany camps of Bomba and Maskal villages in the Belize District. (Sebastian Cayetano in Carlos Henrique Cardim & Rubens Gama Dias Filho, 2011, pp. 85-86)

This is reiterated by Rantala and Stahlh andske (1999), who state that: “There are some disputes between Creoles and Garifunas [*sic*] from the past that still colour the relationship between these two ethnic groups” (p. 30).

These rivalries notwithstanding, there has also been a long tradition of inter-ethnic cohabitation and cooperation in Garifuna communities, which has served as a foundation for governmental efforts to create a cohesive Belizean national identity. The choice of some Garinagu to speak Belizean Creole seems to be part of this process. According to Rantala and Stahlh andske (1999), there are other factors at play as well, such as marriages between Garinagu and Creoles: “Government is now working hard to unite the different ethnic groups in the

country to one common national feeling. Schools try to do so too. Nowadays, inter-marriages are getting more common and this is a sign in the right direction” (p. 30).

The Garifuna language in Belize

Although official pronouncements and policy can be helpful, the success of language promotion and maintenance efforts depends ultimately on the language attitudes of the target community itself (Ravindranath, 2007, p. 68). For this reason, the major responsibility for Garifuna language promotion falls primarily on the shoulders of the Garinagu themselves, especially on their ability to raise levels of acknowledgement and valorization of their ancestral linguistic practices. Academics who study Garifuna linguistic and cultural repertoires can also play an important role in this process if they are willing to move their research beyond the traditional activities of description and analysis toward an active engagement with the Garifuna community. For example, the task of a linguist working on the Garifuna language should be not only to document the language, but also to collaborate in its promotion as part of the general cultural agendas of the community.

Langworthy (2002) first presents a historical overview of the Garifuna language in the Eastern Caribbean, in Central America, and in the diaspora in the United States before proceeding to the main focus of his research, which is language planning and policy. He observes that although there are differences among them, all of the Garifuna communities in Belize are experiencing dramatic inter-generational language shift (De Pury, 2002). He cautions that any efforts to address this situation must reflect the particular circumstances of the particular community in question. In a community-based investigation undertaken by Ruiz Álvarez (2008), for instance, it was demonstrated that, while vertical transmission of Garifuna language from

parents to children may be decreasing, horizontal and diagonal transmission of the language among young people may actually be on the rise.

In any case, all of the Garifuna communities in Belize have expressed enthusiasm to one degree or another in relation to the idea of reversing language shift by teaching Garifuna to the young people. In this connection, attempts have been made to document the language and standardize its orthography (Cayetano, 1992). Even though Garifuna may be undergoing a process of language attrition in Belize, Ravindranath (2008) comments on its relative vitality when compared to other languages with which it has been assigned a close 'genetic' relationship by linguists:

Today, Garifuna is one of about 40 living Arawak languages. It is the only Arawak language currently spoken in Central America, and, despite the fact that it is moribund in many of the communities where it was once spoken, remains [one of] the language[s] with the largest population of speakers in the Arawak family, which itself contains the largest number of languages in South America (Aikhenvald 1999:65). (p. 140)

Globalization has impacted everyone in the world, especially in terms of language, culture, and identification. Apparently, five of the six main Garifuna communities in Belize have recently shifted from speaking Garifuna to speaking Belizean Creole. In her ethnography on the Garifuna community of Dangriga, the economic capital of the Stann Creek District in the south of Belize, C.L. Kanter (2011) reports that she was initially frustrated upon her arrival there when locals told her that Garifuna culture was no longer alive in the area. She attributes this trend to the globalization processes impacting Dangriga, which is related to the cash economy, the media, and tourism. Besides assessing why Garifuna is losing ground in Dangriga, she observes that this linguistic shift is perceived as a threat by the people, which suggests that there

is still a sense of belonging to a Garifuna speech community among the population. According to one of her interviewees, there are three factors that have brought about this shift: 1) Garifuna has stopped being the language of commercial and political life in Dangriga; 2) There has been an influx into Dangriga of non-Garifuna populations that do not speak the language, and therefore Garifuna is not being used in public as it used to be, so that the language is restricted in use to the home environment where it is also losing ground; and 3) Globalization has put pressure on the Garinagu of Dangriga to assimilate to dominant national and global linguistic practices and identities (pp. 32-33).

Among the communities of Belize where Garinagu make up a sizeable amount of the population, Hopkins stands out as one of the communities where the Garifuna language has been retained. Ravindranath (2009) situates Hopkins geographically and socially in the following way:

The village of Hopkins is located in the southern part of Belize, on the coast, about 20 miles by road to Dangriga, the closest town and the economic capital of the district (in the sense that villagers must go to town pay bills, do their banking, and do much of their shopping). The village has a total population of about 1700, almost a quarter of which is made up of school children aged four to thirteen. High school students must travel to Dangriga daily to attend school. (pp. 140-141)

While, for some Garifuna communities, the Garifuna language is used only by the elders, Hopkins village takes pride in the use of Garifuna among younger generations, the high prestige it has as the medium of communication, and the acknowledgement of it as being most people's first language (Woodbury Haug, 2001). Ravindranath (2009) points to language prestige and Garifuna self-identification as having contributed to this:

Instead of taking interviewees' responses to be indicative of their language dominance, which is difficult for anyone to judge even of themselves, I consider their response to this question to be indicative of their language attitudes, following McCarty et al (2006: 38), who recognize "that self-assessments of language proficiency are complex and problematic [but that] they are nonetheless important indicators of local perceptions of language use and vitality that have implications for language choices. "Everyone of twenty-five speakers listed *Garifuna*, some listed *English*, and fewer listed *Creole* as one of their three languages, a finding that I believe reflects differing degrees of prestige of the three languages, rather than a hierarchy of language proficiency or dominance on the community. (p. 126)

Though there are still many fluent Garifuna speakers to be found in Hopkins, it has not been spared completely from the linguistic shifts that have taken place in other Garifuna communities in Belize. While younger people are adopting Belizean Creole as their main language, the older people insist on being spoken to in Garifuna. Aside from some research on Garifuna grammar, Ravindranath (2008) presents an analysis of the social and linguistic forces that have played a role in language shift and maintenance in Hopkins. She explains the shift from Garifuna to Belizean Creole in relation to shifting language ideologies in the community, as attested to in her data on speakers' attitudes towards English, Belizean Creole, and Garifuna.

For the older generations of Garinagu in Hopkins, Belizean Creole has been seen as belonging to a specific ethnicity, the Creoles, while the younger generations have grown up in a country that is developing a national identity, and Belizean Creole is becoming not only the national lingua franca, but also a marker of that identity. While the older generations see themselves as Garifuna and then as Belizeans, the younger generations are apparently doing the

opposite. Some Garinagu attach Belizean Creole to shallow and dispersed cultures and identities, while they associate Garifuna language with deeper and richer cultural and identificational traditions. Ravindranath (2007, p.71) quotes Bonner on some of the reasons why adults and children feel ashamed of speaking Garifuna, including their perceptions that Garifuna somehow lacks usefulness, their reaction to the marginal status assigned to the language by outsiders, their lack of self-respect and self-esteem, and their perception of the higher status of Belizean Creole as a marker of national identity.

Despite these general trends toward more negative attitudes, Ravindranath (2007) points at Hopkins as a village where the Garifuna language is still fairly alive and is learned by children at an early age. Therefore, she urges researchers not to focus solely on the negative, but instead to broaden their focus to include the factors that help to maintain a positive status for language, which will be crucial in designing effective language planning policy for Garifuna. These more positive attitudes are inextricably intertwined with the often difficult history of the Garinagu in Belize, as summarized by Rantala and Stahlh andske (1999):

Garifunas [*sic*] have worked hard to maintain their place in Belizian [*sic*] society. Under the colonial time in the 19th century, Garifunas [*sic*] were neglected to own the land they had farmed for a long time. They were forced to serve as cheap and available labour force, but they resisted this enforcement. Today, Garifunas [*sic*] still try to maintain the unique features of their heritage. For example, the unique language is important is important to Garifunas [*sic*]. There has been much talk of bringing this language into teaching. (p. 25)

It is worth noticing that Rantala and Stahlh andske (1999) emphasize the strong links between Garifuna language and Garifuna ethnic identity, as well as the fact that when children begin their

schooling, they have a level of competence in Garifuna. Even children who may belong to other ethnic groups who grow up in some Garifuna communities may have some fluency in the language: “Even though a pupil may have another mother tongue than Garifuna, they also know the Garifuna language” (Rantala & Stahlhåndske, 1999, p. 31).

Since Garifuna is not included in the official curriculum, however, this competence is neither acknowledged nor built upon, with the transition being made to English as soon as possible:

Before Garifunas [*sic*] start school they are often quite unfamiliar to the English language, because the language used at home is Garifuna. In Infant I [class] the teacher explains in Garifuna and translates into English. In Infant II [class] the pupils know the English language very well. (Rantala & Stahlhåndske, 1999, p. 30)

Despite the fact that the curriculum has made little space for their language, many Garinagu have played an important part in formal education as educators throughout Belize. This point is made by Cayetano (2011):

... [T]hanks to the Jesuit priests who recognized the Garifuna intelligence, giftedness and versatility in languages and the disposition to work with other people the Garinagu males were recruited and trained as teachers and evangelists in the Catholic schools throughout Belize. By 1955, Garinagu teachers had become the backbone of the teaching profession throughout Belize. (p. 86)

Rantala and Stahlhåndske (1999) add that: “the Garifunas [*sic*] have a long history and experience teaching” (p. 29).

Citing the relevant UNESCO declarations, the Language Policy Statement of the Garifuna Nation (as quoted by Ávila 2009, p. 307) identifies the Garifuna language as the

language of the Garifuna nation, as bequeathed to them by their ancestors and hence as something that identifies them as part of a community with common roots, even though they may be dispersed throughout Central America and the United States. The Language Policy Statement includes the following in its goals and objectives: 1) establishing a group that will be in charge of assessing new vocabulary before it is incorporated into the language; 2) making accessible as much material in the language as possible (corpus planning); 3) encouraging Garinagu to speak Garifuna and use it as the main language in their homes; and 4) highlighting the role of elders in the community who can promote the acquisition of the Garifuna language. Those who are interested in the Garifuna language are also invited to contribute to its vitality through descriptive and analytic studies as well as through the production of texts and teaching materials in the language. The importance of promoting Garifuna language and culture in the schools is highlighted in the document, both for those of Garifuna descent as well as for those who have no Garifuna ancestry at all.

Linguists and others should not overlook all the efforts being made by the Garinagu to enhance the prestige of their language in the face of the threats posed by globalization. These efforts can be seen as the latest manifestations of centuries-old traditions of resistance and determination to preserve Garifuna identity. For example, even though the use of Garifuna language may be in decline, the language still plays a prominent role in cultural activities, as demonstrated by Wilcox (2006), who studied the construction of identity among the Garifuna population of Belize. Traditional rituals are still performed in the Garifuna language, regardless of linguistic competence of the younger generations.

Garifuna language, culture, and education in Belize

At some levels, at least, Belize seems to be finally recognizing the pluri-lingualism of its peoples as a valuable asset, with the languages of the different ethnic groups in the country being officially acknowledged by and included in the public education system. For instance, in the District of Toledo in southern Belize, where both Maya and Garinagu communities are present, certain elementary schools have incorporated their indigenous languages into their curricula. This is not always an easy thing to do, given that materials and teacher training are sometimes in short supply (Malone, 2004). That said, the population has generally been receptive and has welcomed the idea of incorporating their native languages into the curriculum. This is especially true where communities have been made aware of the fact that, aside from helping to validate and preserve local languages, the use of the children's mother tongue has cognitive, affective, motivational, and other advantages.

The cognitive flexibility and resourcefulness conferred by the use of non-Indo-European languages such as Garifuna alongside Indo-European languages like English or Spanish in the classroom may be even greater than those already documented in cases where two Indo-European languages are used as the languages of instruction (Bialystok, 1988). As Chin and Wigglesworth (2007) mention:

So far, all the studies discussed have focused on a restricted set of Indo-European languages. More cross-linguistic studies focusing on [non-Indo-European] languages ... will allow us to better assess the relationship between phonological awareness and bilingualism. What is significant in these studies is the suggestion of the potential link between bilingualism and phonological and word awareness skills. The fact that both sets of skills are implicated in early literacy (cf. Tunmer and Myhill 1984) means that the role that bilingualism plays in enhancing literacy development in early childhood needs to be

taken into account. In other words, if it could be conclusively shown that bilingualism is a crucial variable in promoting or accelerating early onset of literacy, it would have major implications for bilingual educational policies. (p. 69)

Challenges related to teacher training and teaching materials can be effectively overcome by increasing the involvement of community networks in the schools, with local elders and cultural actors working together with teachers and students to co-teach local language lessons and to co-create local language texts (Faraclas & Stringer, 1986). The involvement of elders is of particular importance to the maintenance of Garifuna, given the importance of the extended family among the Garinagu and the fluency that the older people in the community still have in the language. Thus, formal schooling, which has for centuries been one of the major threats to Garifuna and other indigenous languages of Belize, may finally be on course to play a more constructive role. This depends crucially, however, on assuring that local languages are given the attention deserved throughout both primary and secondary education, in order to avoid subtractive or dominant patterns of multilingualism, and promote additive patterns, as pointed out in Chin and Wigglesworth's (2007) discussion of Cummins' theories:

Cummins attempted to resolve inconsistencies in this area by proposing that lower levels of proficiency attained could explain the lack of advantage found for some bilingual populations. He hypothesized that there are minimum levels of competency which have to be attained before the benefits of bilingualism can set in. In this hypothesis, Cummins proposed two thresholds of language competence. He argued that to avoid negative effects from bilingualism, the lower threshold must be attained and that children at this first threshold will not experience negative or positive benefits from bilingualism. In Cummin's framework, the cognitive growth of children who fail to reach the first

threshold will be adversely affected. Those who attain the second threshold (high levels of bilinguals competence) will enjoy all the enhancing effects of bilingualism. (p. 67)

In her study of a bilingual Garifuna-English elementary school in Dangriga, Savrock (2009) notes some positive results. Chin and Wigglesworth (2007) contend, however, that the entire context of language acquisition and learning outside of the classroom must be taken into account:

The range of possibilities for raising children bilingually is both enormous and extremely variable, and there are many factors which may impact upon the successful acquisition, or not, of two or more languages. Language is not neutral. This means that some types of behavior are likely to influence the child's attitude towards the two languages in either negative or positive ways. Although all normally functioning children will learn the language of their parents and community in a monolingual setting without difficulty, this is not necessarily the case for bilingual children, and not all children learning two or more languages are raised in bilingual communities. Thus, growing up bilingual cannot be assumed, and there are many factors which contribute to its success. (pp. 40-41)

Over the past decades, efforts on the part of the Garinagu to acknowledge and valorize their linguistic practices have been accompanied by similar efforts to acknowledge and valorize their cultural practices, which they see as distinct not only from those of other groups in Belize, but also as distinct from other groups in the Caribbean and elsewhere in the Afro-Atlantic. As indicated above, the nature and urgency of these efforts have been to some degree determined by a rising consciousness of the degree to which individual Garifuna are assimilating to a generalized Afro-Caribbean cultural complex, which is mainly identified with the Creole community in Belize. Palacio (2007) comments on this phenomenon:

Why should we give our children African names when we could give them Garifuna names? As a result, we compiled a list of names that we shared far and wide with those who wanted to join us in giving the ‘appropriate’ names to the next generation. Why should we dance to Jamaican reggae at parties, when we have our own drums and songs? Why should we confine our religiosity to only the western church when we also have a vibrant spirituality? Who was going to document the technologies that were quickly disappearing as masters of our crafts were dying? (p. 23)

The distinctive historical trajectory of the Garinagu is highlighted by those who seek to promote Garifuna language and culture, with special emphasis being placed on the fact that, among all of the Indigenous descended peoples of island Caribbean, the Garinagu were the last to be militarily defeated, as well as on the fact that, among all of the African descended peoples of the Caribbean, the Garinagu were the only ones never to be enslaved, even after that defeat in 1797. Thus, Garifuna identities are increasingly linked in a conscious way to their resistance to the European colonial enterprise. As Leland (1999) points out:

The study of the Garifuna provides insight into a people whose history has been one of struggle and determination to survive at a time when very few peoples, or nations, were able to resist the onslaught of colonialism and slavery. Despite exile and subsequent Diaspora, their traditional culture survives today. It is a little known story that deserves its place in the annals of the African Diaspora. (p. 2)

In relation to these initiatives aimed at raising awareness concerning the history of the Garinagu, Sebastain Cayetano (cited in Carlos Henrique Cardim & Rubens Gama Dias Filho 2011, p. 87) notes that:

In a recent effort to preserve, promote and document the Garifuna Culture and its rich heritage, there has been the opening of three Garifuna Museums throughout the country; the first being the Luba Garifuna Museum founded by Mr. Sebastian Cayetano and family on November 5th, 1999. This was later followed by the Gulisi Museum of Dangriga in 2004, which was opened by the National Garifuna Council. Last was the Lani Barangu Luba Garifuna Museum in Barranco Village, Toledo, which opened in 2005 by Mrs. Rita Enriquez.

Just as is the case with Garifuna history, Garifuna music is strikingly different from the music of other groups in Belize, the rest of the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas. Very successful recent initiatives to promote Garifuna music, not only among the Garinagu themselves, but also on the global stage, have been particularly effective in changing attitudes and raising consciousness in Garifuna communities around the value and importance of Garifuna culture and language. Vietze and Edgar (2007, p. 2) identify world-renowned Garifuna musicians such as Andy Palacio and the Garifuna Collective as key figures in this process, whose humble beginnings Jenkins and Jenkins (1982) trace back to the mid-1900s. Until his death in 2008, Palacio acted as a catalyst for the preservation and celebration of Garifuna culture and language after years of relative neglect. In his work, Palacio (2007) explicitly links Garifuna linguistic, cultural and identificational practices with Garifuna history, reinforcing bonds among the Garifuna communities of Central America, North America, and St. Vincent:

The achievement of this group recounted in this essay lies in capturing that indomitable spirit of Joseph Chatoyer, the military leader in St. Vincent and his fighting men and women to preserve Garifuna identity. We might have lost our territory and sovereignty as

a nation in St. Vincent, but we have done much to uphold the peoplehood that our ancestors in the Americas and Africa struggled to form. (p. 24)

In the next chapter of this dissertation, I will examine the scholarly literature that touches on some of the most prominent themes to emerge from my research on the various initiatives undertaken by Garifuna cultural workers in Belize.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Language

Language Transmission and Attrition

The decline in the use of the Garifuna language over the past decades can be attributed to various factors, including some related to globalization, such as the substantial number of Garinagu who have migrated far from Garifuna-speaking communities, as well as the ever-growing penetration of the electronic media into the daily lives of virtually all Garinagu. The mass media in Belize broadcast in English, the official language. Formerly, some limited experimentation seems to have been done with the use of other Belizean languages, but these efforts now appear to be overshadowed by efforts to forge a single Belizean identity. That said, there are some local radio programs designed to teach local languages.

As the role of the mass media is steadily being eroded by social media, there are more opportunities for Garinagu to use Garifuna language online. The fate of a language is decided by its speakers. Certain Garifuna terms have been proposed to name new technological devices; for example, it is up to the speakers whether these Garifuna words are used instead of their English equivalents. In any case, the fact that such efforts are being made to update the inventory of words in Garifuna shows that there are Garinagu who want their language to keep up with the times. Such initiatives give the language a better chance of not becoming fossilized as tradition and folklore and makes it more appealing to young people.

Chin and Wigglesworth (2007) make the following general observations about language attrition:

While language attrition, or forgetting (Hansen 2001), is for the most part a psycholinguistic process which takes place at an individual level, it is strongly influenced by a number of social variables. Language shift however, occurs at the societal level and is usually the result of language contact. Across the world large numbers of languages have been lost as a result of contact between two or more languages, particularly where one language is dominant and is considered to be the prestige language. In such situations (for example, where the first language of an immigrant group is used alongside the language of the adopted country), there is always a danger that the minority language will be lost. To some extent this is related to individual language attrition as, when a community ceases to use its traditional and no longer passes it on to its children, there is imminent danger of the language being lost. In some cases (such as the immigrant example given above), this will not necessarily result in language death since the immigrant language will presumably continue to be spoken back in the home country. (p. 72)

According to Van Els (1986) there are a number of types of language attrition which depend on:

1) what is being lost, i.e., whether the endangered language is a first or a second language for most community members; and 2) where it is being lost, i.e., the environment in which attrition is occurring.

In the village of Punta Gorda, there are cases of bilingual first-language acquisition (Chin & Wigglesworth, 2007, p. 42) given the ethnic mix in that community. In the case of the Garinagu, the line between first and second language is often blurred, with many having complex repertoires which include several different languages. This indeterminacy is usually even more

pronounced when it comes to their experience with the Garifuna language itself. For example, there are Garinagu who live with extended family members who may prefer to express themselves in Garifuna language, while others might not be exposed to Garifuna in their own homes but encounter the language instead elsewhere in their immediate environment. One would be at a loss to assign these and other cases to one of the two main categories of attrition listed by Chin and Wigglesworth (2007), who state that: “The most common types of language attrition are ... the loss of a second language in a first-language environment, and the loss of a first language in a second-language environment. In these situations, attrition occurs naturalistically in environments in which another language or languages are dominant (Olshtain, 1989)” (p. 73).

In his anthropological linguistic study of the Garifuna community of Corozal in Honduras, Ruiz Alvarez (2008) challenges the applicability of traditional Western academic perspectives of family structure and language acquisition to the situation of the Garinagu. Garifuna children tend to live in extended families rather than nuclear families, and tend to acquire some, if not most of the languages that make up their repertoires via horizontal and/or diagonal transmission from peers, slightly older adolescents, aunts, uncles, elders, and/or grandparents, rather than via vertical transmission directly from their parents. Many of Ruiz’ observations and conclusions regarding the situation in Honduras correspond to the realities in a number of Garifuna communities in Belize as well. In this vein, Chin and Wigglesworth (2007) note that: “To become bilingual, a child must grow up in a bilingual environment. The question, though, of what constitutes a bilingual environment is a difficult one because the bilingual environments to which the child is exposed can vary enormously” (p. 44).

Ruiz Alvarez (2008) clearly challenges the notion that in order for a language to be effectively transmitted it has to be passed on from parent to child directly. Although it is often overlooked in academic studies, the extended family appears to play a fundamental role, not only in preserving the Garifuna language, but also in fostering bilingualism in Garifuna communities. This situation in which the extended family provides the main input in Garifuna can therefore lead to *sequential bilingualism* (Chin & Wigglesworth, 2007, p. 42). While the preference of parents in Corozal seems to be for their children to have Spanish as their main home language in order to avoid stigmatization, Garifuna is nevertheless not completely neglected, given that there are bilingual Garifuna-Spanish schools in the community. One can even conclude that, since most children in Corozal become fluent in Garifuna during high school, the language might function as a maturity marker, or a way of welcoming them into adulthood. Romaine (2007, p. 123), referring to King (2001), hints at this type of dynamic:

King (2001: 26) distinguishes between RLS [reversing language shift] and language revitalization, which can be understood as not necessarily attempting to bring the language back to former patterns of familial use, but rather to bring the language forward to new users and uses. In doing so, however, we must not deceive ourselves that the efforts directed at the latter will restore intergenerational transmission. There may be an increase in users and uses of language without intergenerational transmission, [...]

In Belize, the fact that members of extended families speak Garifuna might be seen as helpful in preserving the language. Nonetheless, studies indicate that Belizean Creole is rapidly becoming the default language used among Garifuna youth, while their exposure to Standard English is extensive via the media and at school. This means that in communities where most

daily interactions once took place in Garifuna, this is no longer the case. Even though such communities might still be considered trilingual, the relationship between Belizean Creole and Garifuna seems to have become one of *dominant bilingualism* or even *subtractive bilingualism* (Chin & Wigglesworth, 2007, p. 16), which may lead to the eventual demise of Garifuna in Belize.

Language Preservation

Even though it may be an endangered language, Garifuna still functions as a strong marker of identity. It is indeed a 'de facto separator' (Roberts, 2008, p. 437) since its native speakers are the ones who are able to articulate the 'real' or 'genuine' language. According to the Language Policy Statement of the Garifuna Nation, the Garinagu recognize the Garifuna language as the primary vehicle for the transmission of their culture and understand that its preservation will serve as a base for their social and economic development (Ávila, 2009, p. 307). This is the case not only for the Garinagu in Central America, but also for the diasporic Garinagu in the United States. Though Garifuna language and culture have been to some degree revitalized by the technologically-driven global popularity of Garifuna music and other traditions, many Garinagu, especially those of the older generations, still fear the death of their language and culture.

According to Izard (2004) there is a general consensus in Belize concerning the need and desirability of a national identity. This has not prevented, however, the establishment of associations based on ethnic identity as the National Garifuna Council (NGC) and National Creole Council of Belize. Among the main objectives of the National Garifuna Council is the preservation of the Garifuna culture through its language. To achieve this goal, various

publications have appeared on Garifuna language and culture under the auspices of the NGC. In addition, there is an agreement between the NGC and the Ministry of Education to hire itinerant teachers to teach Garifuna in the schools, where English is the official language of instruction. During Settlement Day celebrations on November 19th each year to commemorate the arrival of Garinagu in Belize, as well as during other NGC sponsored activities such as workshops, festivals, courses, etc., the distinctive history, culture, language, cuisine, music, and spirituality of the Garinagu are acknowledged, valorized, and mobilized.

Grant (2007) states that Garifuna is a North Arawakan language that has borrowed heavily from several languages, including French lexifier Creole, English lexifier Creole, Spanish, and Kalinya of the Cariban family. Morphemes that Garifuna has incorporated from Kalinya include the pluralizer *-kon*, bound postpositions such as *-rána* and *-uábu*, and the preverbal future of irrealis particle *me* (pp. 4, 6). Ghidinelli and Massajoli, as cited in Izard (2004, p. 103), observe that the Garifuna language is Amerindian in essence and differs from the original regional pre-Invasion Arawakan-Cariban contact language from which it descended, primarily in terms of European (especially French, English, and Spanish) lexical input and African phonological features due to contact among Garifuna speakers, Africans, and Europeans during the colonial era. Nevertheless, Mohr de Collado (2007, p. 70) states that, despite such contact, the Garinagu have maintained important linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires from the pre-Invasion era, such as their deep beliefs in their ancestors, and their casava-based diet.

Penedo and D'Amico (2001, p. 2) concur with almost all other authorities on the subject when they observe that while the language of the Garinagu is mainly Arawakan, it "reflects [the]

... biethnicity of the indigenous community in which they lived in the island of St. Vincent.”

This is despite the fact that over the colonial period, as Nancie Gonzales (cited in Izard 2004, p. 100) states, the African and Afro-Indigenous descended populations of the island showed significant demographic growth, while the non-Afro-Indigenous Indigenous descended population diminished.

Sybille de Pury (2002) comments on the history of the Garifuna people as well as their language. Though she does not deal with these topics in thorough detail, she provides enough insight to familiarize the reader with them. Besides highlighting the mixed Arawakan-Cariban nature of Garifuna, she also provides some examples of other native American languages that originated from pluri-linguality and language mixing. Such mixing is a phenomenon that is common in the Caribbean region, as illustrated in Yakpo's (2017, pp. 129-130) study of the syntactic changes that have taken place in Sarnami, a language of Suriname. Yakpo (2017) highlights how speakers of Sarnami are generally trilingual in Sarnami, Sranan and Dutch, the latter two being the dominant languages in the country. Besides being actively used by all generations in the Indo-Surinamese community, it is also the only colonial era diaspora language in the Caribbean that has maintained such vitality (Moore & Williams, 2008).

Using parallel examples from second generation immigrant youth in France, de Pury (2002) contends that in Belize, Garifuna youth are in fact assuring the continued vitality of their ancestral language by putting their own stamp on it. For example, young people are modifying Garifuna by incorporating elements of Belizean English lexifier Creole syntax. These same young people are also incorporating elements of Garifuna language in the ways that they speak other languages, including Belizean English lexifier Creole, the language which at present seems

to be posing the greatest threat to Garifuna in the country. Among the young people in Belize, as well as among the young people of the ghettoized suburbs of Paris, de Pury identifies a refusal to acquiesce to linguistic authority, accompanied by a readiness to insert their own innovative features into their linguistic repertoires.

In marked contrast to Moore and Williams (2008), who assert that the use of the Garifuna language is dwindling in Belize, Ravindranath (2008) describes Garifuna as a healthy and vibrant language there, although with a cautionary note that this may change if the current situation persists. After offering a brief profile of the language, its history, and its linguistic geography, Ravindranath's main focus is phonological, specifically variation in the production of /r/ in the village of Hopkins, which the author attributes to language contact. In 2008, Hopkins was virtually the only community in Belize where most of children were still learning Garifuna and were speaking it with other children.

In his seminal work on the Garifuna language, Douglas Taylor (1955, cited in Ravindranath 2008) describes the most common realization of the /r/ phoneme as a "tapped or mildly trilled apical [r]". By conducting a study of narratives related by 26 Garifuna speakers aged 6 to 65 in the village, Ravindranath (2008) demonstrated that in Hopkins, Garifuna speakers "mostly use a retroflex approximant of the American English variety" (p. 141). Noting that the tapped variant is used most by older speakers, and that the approximant variant is used most by female and younger speakers, Ravindranath (2008) concludes that the Garifuna language is evolving in Hopkins, and this proves that the language is still alive.

The Garifuna case is an excellent example of the possibilities and the challenges of transnational language planning. The Garifuna Language Preservation Plan is one of the main

focal areas addressed in Ravindranath (2007), where a series of objectives are listed. In the discussions of the Garifuna Language Preservation Plan in this and other sources, it is stressed that, while the general objectives of the plan itself are important for the whole Garifuna community, regional and socioeconomic variation requires some flexibility in implementation. Ravindranath (2009) addresses some of the main issues in Garifuna language planning, preservation, revitalization, and maintenance. Making reference to Grenoble and Whaley (2006), Ravindranath (2007) notes that globalization both hinders and helps language revitalization efforts. Even though it is widely recognized that globalization has discouraged many people from speaking their ancestral languages, it has also made many people more aware of the importance of resisting language attrition and other threats to ancestral linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires. Moreover, increased access to technology and travel due to globalization has allowed language communities separated by national borders to communicate with one another more easily.

The Language Policy Statement of the Garifuna Nation establishes a number of language planning goals. Referring to Hornberger (2006), Ravindranath (2007, p. 65) describes various spheres involved in Garifuna language revitalization. One sphere where the language is still quite robust is the religious sphere, but in others there has been significant language shift from Garifuna to Belizean Creole and/or English. While there is a consensus expressed in the document on the need for documentation, orthography, and instructional materials, it also mentions that each particular community has its own specific needs to be addressed.

Ruiz Álvarez (2008) points that although the vertical transmission of Garifuna language from parent to child has been interrupted in the Garifuna community of Corozal in Honduras, the

language is still being used by young people there. Because the coexistence of these two apparently contradictory phenomena cannot easily be accounted for by the standard models used by linguists to document and elucidate language decline, he decided to investigate language use patterns in Corozal to help explain the unexpected preservation of the language there. In what would normally be considered by linguists to be a subtractive bilingual situation, members of the older generations in Corozal usually speak Garifuna among themselves, while using Spanish to address the younger generations. Rather than resulting in the complete loss of Garifuna among the young people, however, transmission patterns in the community were somehow assuring the continued vitality of the language.

In order to find out why Corozal seemed to be bucking well established trends, Ruiz Álvarez (2009) conducted a research project there involving 40 households (some 10% of the households in the community, according to local authorities) and 5 groups of children between the ages of 7 and 13. All participants were from the community of Corozal, and in each household at least one member had either completed secondary school or was actively working toward a secondary diploma. Ruiz Álvarez (2009) highlights the fact that the population of Corozal is mostly young, with more than 60% being under the age of 21. Half of his informants who had attended secondary school in the past reported having experienced hostility in the school environment because of their Garifuna cultural and linguistic background. In order to help assure that their children would not experience similar treatment in secondary school, most of those who had encountered this type of discrimination in the past tended to use Spanish when speaking to the younger generation. According to one of the informants, this practice that was first introduced in the community by Garifuna professionals, who claimed that learning Spanish at home would ensure the younger generation an advantageous position in Honduran and global

society. Garifuna parents want their children to speak Spanish fluently given that, in Honduras, it is the official language as well as the main language of business, education, and social mobility. Hence, Spanish has become the primary language spoken among Garifuna children in Corozal.

That said, such patterns have not prevented the transmission of ancestral linguistic repertoires in Corozal as well as in other indigenous communities worldwide, where vertical transmission plays a less prominent and exclusive role than in non-indigenous societies, in favor of more diagonal and horizontal modalities of transmission via extended family and non-family relationships, such as from grandparents to grandchildren, from biological or practical ‘aunties’ and ‘uncles’ to younger people, from older children to younger ones, and from one member of the same cohort of children to another. While they may insist that their children master Spanish, Garifuna mothers have in no way abandoned their traditional role as culture bearers, so that they also insist that their children appreciate and valorize their ancestral linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires. Because the adults of Corozal continue to use Garifuna in every aspect of their lives, all community members grow up with significant exposure to and an ‘ear for’ the language, which gives children a head start when and if they decide to speak it on a regular basis (Ruiz Álvarez 2008, 2009).

Other examples of less vertical and more horizontal or diagonal transmission of indigenous languages can be found in the literature. For example, Guy Delorme and Jacques Raymond (2000) report on observations made by delegates at a meeting convened concerning the Inuktitut and Yup’ik Family of Languages. One delegate told the others about an interesting situation in which adolescents became role models for children in the acquisition of their ancestral language:

There was a delegate from a private philanthropic organization ... [that] funds Native language research in the United States. He was of Yup'ik origin. [...] and ... mentioned a Home School System they have in Minnesota, and he wondered whether this system could fit somehow in Canada. In Minnesota, Inuit teenagers quit school and lose interest in their first language at the same time. After this point, the community must be involved for the students to maintain their interest. Adolescents must find a way to be proud of their language. This starts at the family level and requires good speakers. Adolescents can become the role models for the young kids. A positive buzz must be created around them for language reinforcement to work past adolescence. (p. 250)

Language and Education

In order to contextualize our understanding of efforts being made to integrate Garifuna language into formal education, it is useful to consider similar initiatives being undertaken by other indigenous groups worldwide whose languages are endangered. The successes of the indigenous peoples of New Zealand and Hawaii in establishing language maintenance and revival programs such as immersion schools and language nests have served as an inspiration to many other autochthonous peoples in other countries. Johansen (2004, pp. 572-573) lists the following set of guidelines for carrying out such initiatives proposed by Kauanoe, one of the pioneers of the Punana Leo immersion school in Hawaii: 1) Learn the target language as a second language; 2) Organize a group of people to develop plans for instruction; 3) Look for people (from the community) who support language revitalization; and 4) Develop the curriculum locally, with an emphasis on training people to use the language in their daily lives.

Johansen (2004, pp. 566-569) discusses a Cochiti summer immersion program that started in 1996 in New Mexico, where all instruction was carried out orally, using no written texts. This emphasis on oral proficiency proved to be instrumental in attracting students to participate in the program as well as in maximizing their levels of performance, so that by the end of the summer, the students were starting to speak the language and using it with Cochiti speakers in their communities. In this context, there was clearly a high value placed on Cochiti language by the students in particular and the community in general, which was a positive factor that increased interest in revitalization efforts. Because most students saw Cochiti as a language that they needed primarily for oral communication, the oral emphasis in the classroom was well adapted to their immediate needs and avoided the often-alienating obsession with the written word that they encountered in the rest of their formal schooling in the dominant colonial system. Moreover, the most pedagogically sound manner to teach languages is to establish a solid foundation in oral proficiency before introducing reading and writing. Referring to the testimony of community members themselves, Johansen (2013) emphasizes that teaching indigenous languages involves an exercise in community-based intellect, which must take practical needs into consideration in the process of revitalization. In the case of Garifuna, music, religious practice, and other areas where the language is still seen as meeting such needs can be used as entry points in more comprehensive programs to preserve the language.

Hermes, Bang, and Marin (2012, pp. 386-387) note that Ojibwe communities in northern Minnesota and Wisconsin have witnessed an expansion of elementary/preschool immersion programs over the past decades, where the content and target language are thoroughly scaffolded in favor of the learners. These programs incorporate innovative elements, such as materials

produced by the learners themselves, as well as the acknowledgement and validation of several different dialects of Ojibwe in the classroom:

In this case, we set goals for both documentation and materials production. Because our process was an iterative one, we quickly incorporated insights back into the design of materials. For example, we reconsidered, the idea of recording *only* first speakers of Ojibwe. Heritage language learners, who outnumber speakers, were assigned an elder to work on recording long conversations to be transcribed for documentation purposes. Edited down, these same recordings were used to produce learning materials (including videos and flash cards for iPods). After a linguist suggested that *all* of the language generated at our camps was important, not just the fluent speakers within the same dialect, we started to record more broadly (Cowell, personal communication, July 2010) and to reconsider an earlier decision to produce materials that were exclusively done by those who learned Ojibwe as a first language. This is a prime example of how iterative processes in DBR methodologies enable and encourage innovative changes and particular insights into design considerations as processes unfold.

Younger voices, new uses, and ways of learning an endangered language became a living part of our language and so, too, did the documentation of it. Another example of challenging linguistic practice is about dialects. Second language-learning pedagogy generally advises against confusing beginning learners with exposure to different dialects, although in our case many fluent speakers are at ease speaking across dialects. The debate about crossing dialects continues, as first speakers of Ojibwe diminish in numbers and second language learners are forced to learn to bridge dialects. Some critical

teachers even question the idea of dialect difference and ask if this has become a constructed boundary creating barriers for revitalization across different communities (M. Nori, personal communication, August 2008). Although the idea of dialects has been an important one in the linguistics discourse, the speakers we brought together easily communicated across these nuanced differences, leaving our software with a model that represents shifting dialects. (p. 391)

The Lannan Foundation, an organization that has made indigenous language reclamation one of its funding priorities, sponsored a conference in 1998 on the theme of “The Critical Moment: Funding the Perpetuation of Native American Languages,” which attracted a number of people involved in immersion programs designed to revitalize Native American languages (Johansen, 2004, p. 568). One of the main conclusions reached during the deliberations was that preserving indigenous languages helps to enrich society as a whole.

Language and the Diaspora

Although the revitalization of Garifuna language and culture has proved to be a demanding task in their countries of origin, the Garinagu in the diaspora are also trying to preserve their ancestral language and culture. In some respects, their diasporic situation might be even more advantageous for accomplishing these tasks than that of the countries from which they have emigrated. For example, they may have greater access to technology, as well as greater motivation for self-identification and cultural awareness as Garinagu. Moulite (2016) has carried out research on how Garinagu in the diaspora are promoting the use of Garifuna language in the home in order to maximize continuous and naturalistic language learning and practice. One of Moulite’s (2016) interviewees encourages Garinagu living abroad to raise their children speaking

Garifuna to ensure that linguistic preservation is being fostered beyond the Caribbean setting. The interviewee notes that language acquisition in a more natural setting, such as the household, is more efficient than acquisition in a more formal context, like the classroom. Therefore, the task of preserving the language depends crucially on the members of these diasporic communities themselves in terms of their willingness to keep the language alive at home. Given their centuries-long traditions of linguistic and cultural resilience, it should not come as a surprise that the Garinagu are actively engaged in promoting their language and culture both in Central America and abroad. This resilience also manifests itself in ongoing efforts to incorporate new vocabulary into the language to accommodate new concepts related to technological innovations.

Culture

Culture Transmission and Attrition

Because of their Afro-indigenous hybridity, the Garinagu are more often than not depicted in the literature as linguistically, culturally, and ethnically unique (Stone, 2008). As argued in the previous chapter, however, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic/identificational hybridity have always been the norm rather than the exception in both the Indigenous Caribbean as well as in the Afro-Caribbean. That said, because the Garinagu find themselves on the fault lines of some of the fundamental ‘tectonic plates’ defined by the artificial conceptual oppositions upon which the hegemonic domination have been constructed in the colonial Caribbean, such as [‘Taino/Arawak’] vs. [‘Carib’] and [‘yellow’] vs. [‘black’], they do find themselves to some extent uniquely positioned in the region and beyond. According to Stone (2008), the Garinagu can be thought of as representing one of the world’s first truly modern populations from their

very ethnogenesis in the 17th century onward. Moving from the theoretical to the ‘facts on the ground,’ however, this hybridity has contributed to their marginalization and stigmatization, which has had an impact on inter-generational cultural transmission in Garifuna families and communities.

Because of their fierce resistance to colonialism, the Garifuna have been subject throughout most of their existence to constant displacement, to which they have responded with consistent resourcefulness and resilience. This was as much the case during their past experience as maroons and renegades on St. Vincent and as exiles on the Caribbean coast of Spanish Central America, as it is in their present experience as minority communities in the independent countries of Central America and as diasporic communities in the United States. Throughout all of their history, the Garifuna have maintained, renewed, and reinforced their ancestral cultural and identificational points of reference.

At present, Garifuna music and other cultural repertoires can be said to be undergoing a process of revitalization that has led to heightened acknowledgement and valorization of Garifuna culture, not only among the international audiences who are listening and dancing to Garifuna music in ever greater numbers, but also among the Garinagu themselves. Nevertheless, there seems to be an understanding in Garifuna communities that artistic production in itself is not a panacea for the damage done by colonialism, and that efforts in realm of popular music need to be complemented by similar efforts in other areas, such as ceremonial practices, language learning, etc., with the Garinagu in the diaspora sometimes leading the way.

Culture and Preservation

The scholarly literature contains considerable documentation of how successful cultural revitalization goes hand-in-hand with successful language revitalization. For example, McEwan-Fujita (2013, pp. 159-167) notes how the Gaelic languages spoken by eighteenth and nineteenth century immigrants from Scotland declined in use in Nova Scotia, Canada, especially from the 1930s onwards, and attributes this phenomenon, not only to a decrease in intergenerational transmission, but also to several other factors, many of them more cultural than linguistic. In order to reverse this trend, Gaelic speakers in Nova Scotia have organized a host of cultural and recreational events alongside Gaelic language classes, thereby encouraging the multi-dimensional use of Gaelic in meaningful cultural context outside the classroom. Another factor that brings heritage speakers of Gaelic together is their shared learning experiences. This multifaceted approach has been facilitated by the establishment of an Office of Gaelic Affairs in 2006, as a division within the Nova Scotia provincial government.

Attempting to shift away from a colonial lens and toward a more Garifuna cosmovision, Palacio (2006, p. 15) lists a number of factors that set the Garinagu apart culturally from other groups in the Caribbean region, many of which have contributed to the recognition by UNESCO in 2001 of Garifuna culture as a protected world heritage asset. Among these factors, he notes that though the Garinagu and their cultural repertoires emerged in the colonial Caribbean, they did so in resistance to, rather than as part of, the dominant plantation regime. Even when the Garinagu were finally defeated militarily by the British in 1798, they were not enslaved. Most Garinagu live in Central America, but they are not originally from there, and though they are phenotypically African, they are culturally Afro-Indigenous, and they proudly claim both their Indigenous Caribbean and West African ancestries and cultures.

In Belize, the National Garifuna Council (NGC) (2011) is a non-governmental organization that sees itself as being responsible for preserving Garifuna language and culture, especially among the youth. There are also governmental agencies that complement the activities of the NGC, including the Ministry of Rural Development and Culture and the Ministry of Education, which does some work to promote Garifuna language and culture in the schools. Recognizing the links between cultural preservation and language preservation (Rylander, 2010, p. 33), the NGC has associated itself with similar organizations devoted to furthering the cultural and linguistic agendas of the Garinagu in other parts of Central America, as well as furthering the cultural and linguistic agendas of the Indigenous-descended and African-descended peoples of the entire region, such as ONECA (Organización Negra Centroamericana). In addition to linguistic and cultural preservation, the NGC is devoted to promoting the economic well-being of the Garifuna people. Although the Garinagu in Belize might be economically better off than the Garinagu in other parts of Central America, they usually live in poverty-stricken areas.

Johnson (2007) points out that religion is not only a very important aspect of Garifuna culture, but that it is also one of the areas where their African heritage is highlighted. Traditionally, one's relationship with the ancestors is not interrupted by their death. They can receive messages from those who are still among the living and can be offended if ignored. Communication with the ancestors is the basis of the *dügü* (sometimes spelled *dugu*), one of the most important Garifuna rituals, one of whose primary functions is to reinforce family bonding, especially in the context of diasporic emigration. The *dügü* is organized and celebrated at the request of a family member who has passed away. This request is received by the living in dreams. Since it involves so much preparation, a *dügü* may take up to a year to organize. This gives the hosts time to inform relatives living abroad that they should make arrangements to

come to their homelands to participate in the ceremony. Besides fulfilling the ancestor's request, the *dügü* also reinforces family cohesion.

The *dügü* may last more than one day. Roessingh (2001) attended one such *dügü* and described it in vivid detail. Rooted in tradition, the *dügü* plays an important role in holding the community together. Therefore, while Garifuna culture and language are facing increasing endangerment, the *dügü* is maintained as a powerful marker of identity. The creative and subversive linguistic, cultural, and identificational hybridity practiced by the Garinagu themselves is reflected in their ceremonies as well. For example, when celebrating certain festivities that predate contact with Europeans, such as the *Yurumein* in Guatemala, the proceedings start with a Catholic mass in Garifuna. According to Jenkins, as quoted by Penedo and D'Amico (2001, p. 4), "the Garifuna language does not have an equivalent of the word 'music' referring to the sounds made by European musical instruments – when referring to their music they use the word *orému*, which means 'songs.'"

Despite the pressures on the survival of various aspects of traditional Garifuna linguistic and cultural practices, the *dügü* still seems to stand as a powerful and enduring marker of identity for the Garinagu. The conservation and celebration of events such as the *dügü* have also transformed and syncretized the forms of Catholicism practiced in Garifuna communities, so that traditional drums which were once stigmatized are now accepted as part of the mass. This openness of the Catholic church to the acknowledgement and valorization of traditional religious practices sets it apart somewhat from other Christian denominations in Belize and the rest of Central America.

Roessingh (2001) provides a very useful list of religious words in Garifuna with their equivalents in English, their definitions, and their implications for Garifuna cultural and social dynamics. Traditional Garifuna spirituality was looked down upon by the European colonizers, but some traditional Garifuna religious practices have syncretized well with Catholicism. It is very important to acknowledge the pervasive syncretism that typifies Garifuna religion. Many Garinagu who practice traditional Garifuna religion denominate themselves as Catholic, and while Catholicism still plays a very important role in the lives of a significant part of the Garifuna population, Sunday mass is accompanied by traditional drumming, and specific devotions to certain saints may date back centuries, to when their African ancestors were first converted to Catholicism, perhaps even before their arrival to the Americas. In any case, current Garifuna religious practices keep evolving and interacting in new spaces.

Culture and Education

In a work that aims to be comprehensible to all audiences, Twigg (2006) offers an accessibly formatted and extensively illustrated historical perspective on Belize. Each of the 17 chapters provides concise but comprehensive information on topics regarding the nation's history, accompanied by maps and timelines that summarize key events. Chapters related to ethnicity discuss the historical development of each group and current issues related to the country's rich bio-ethnic diversity. With 42 % of its territory protected for conservation, Belize is home to a huge natural landscape, which is interrupted by only two major highways, and includes one of the largest Barrier reefs of the world, 100 species of orchids, and sanctuaries for howler monkeys, baboons, and the red-footed booby.

In their study on ethnic diversity and education, Rantala and Stålhandske (1999) mention the full gamut of ethnic groups to be found in Belize but focus on the four main groups that comprise the majority of its 300,000 inhabitants: Creole, Maya, Garifuna, and Mestizo. They also describe the Belizean educational system, which is noted for its high standards, especially in subjects such as the sciences and mathematics. Primary education is free and obligatory for all children up to the age of 14. After completing primary school, the students take the Belizean National Selection Exam if they want to continue on to secondary education. English is the language of instruction. As part of their study, Rantala and Stålhandske (1999) observed a school located in south-eastern Belize, where 95% of the 313 students were Garinagu and the others, Mestizos and Creoles. All 10 teachers and the principal were also Garinagu. According to their observations, even though some students do not have Garifuna as their mother tongue, they know the language. One of their most interesting findings was that non-Garifuna pupils were blending with little difficulty into Garifuna cultural repertoires, so that this particular environment seemed to be providing a space for integration and multicultural cohabitation.

As a reader-friendly and well-illustrated text designed to be used alongside a documentary filmed in Belize, the *Garifuna Journey Study Guide* (Leland, 1999) is part of an initiative to further awareness about the Garinagu and promote and preserve their distinctive heritage, highlighting their unique socio-historical background. The author underscores the fact that this work is presented from an 'insider' perspective, thus giving voice to the Garinagu themselves. Besides being an informational source, it appeals to younger readers, as it is easy to for them to understand.

The first section addresses the question of the importance of studying Garifuna history, culture, and language. After providing information on where the Garinagu currently live in Central America, it makes a comparison of their previous and current social and economic situation, focusing on housing. Though short, the linguistic discussion also offers enough information to allow readers to grasp the idea of languages in contact. Another section focuses on the Garifuna diasporic communities in North America, noting that some 50,000 Garinagu live in New York alone, as well as considering the advantages and disadvantages of living abroad. This is followed by a section about music, food, religious festivities, and other important aspects of Garifuna culture. Most typical Garifuna dishes have cassava as the main ingredient, and this tuber is considered by them to be part of their cultural identity itself.

In his collection of essays by various authors on topics such as culture, history, spirituality, and gender relations, titled *The Garifuna: A nation across borders*, Palacio (2006) notes that most studies about Garifuna culture have been undertaken by outsiders. That said, he also observes that there has been a steady increase in Garinagu themselves conducting research on their own cultural repertoires, which has yielded studies that are more relevant to Garifuna communities. Such studies, which have become more feasible with advances in technology, have incorporated not only the greater detail, but also the deeper insights and the more nuanced understandings that result from methodologies where target group members move from the role of objects of research to collaborators in research.

Though Garifuna culture has been recognized by UNESCO since 2001 as World Intangible Heritage, the task of maintaining these cultural repertoires has not been an easy one in most Garifuna communities, which are normally situated in a highly pluri-cultural context.

Highlighting the connection between Garifuna cultural repertoires and resistance, Ávila's (2009) detailed historical account demonstrates how the Garinagu became a major nexus of cultural and political opposition to colonialism in the Caribbean from the 16th until the 18th century and beyond. This suggests that the Garinagu are perhaps better equipped than most to ensure that their cultural practices survive and thrive despite the pressures of globalization. Neglecting neither the Kalinago in St. Vincent nor the diasporic Garifuna in the USA, Ávila pays particular attention to Garifuna music in cultural preservation efforts, especially the connections between particular rhythms and religious traditions. Another section deals with issues related to Garifuna linguistic repertoires, with an emphasis on language planning and documentation.

Culture and Diaspora

Johnson (2007) discusses the relation between diaspora and religion, particularly regarding the process whereby diaspora engenders sacralized spatial horizons which correspond to the notion of 'roots' of cultural and identificational repertoires. Having undergone several diasporic events in recorded history, the Garinagu in Central America view St. Vincent as such a sacred ancestral place, while those who have emigrated to the USA during the 20th and 21st centuries have come to view Central America as a sacred place of origin. This attribution of religious significance not only to St. Vincent, but also to Mesoamerica is reinforced by the *dügü*, which regularly draws those in the diaspora back to the Caribbean. In the USA in general and New York in particular, Garifuna spiritual practices have been associated to those of other African descended diasporic peoples.

A very interesting point addressed by Johnson (2007) is the conceptualization of 'diaspora' itself as not merely as a social configuration that conserves traditions in new spaces,

but also as a more dynamic phenomenon, where participants are constantly entering and exiting, activating and re-activating cultural practices to different degrees. Adding to this dynamism, a diaspora might be something that in some places and at some points in time transforms itself in such a way so as to shift focus from the mythical and sacred places from which it emerged, to its more recent roots in its places of destination. In other words, diasporic peoples and their cultures can persist and grow in a given place of destination for a long enough period of time that they come to see themselves and are seen by others as being just as 'native' as any other group or culture in that same destination space. In the historical record, this has already happened at least once among the Garinagu, who were considered new arrivals in Central America in the 1800s, but who are now officially and unofficially recognized as an ancestral ethnicity in each Mesoamerican country where they are present.

Of course, the Garinagu have been impacted in a major way by the diasporas that both precede and follow that which took them from St. Vincent to Central America. We can, for example, speak of another earlier coercive and catastrophic diaspora that drove their enslaved ancestors from West Africa to St. Vincent, as well as the present-day diaspora that involves the movement of thousands of Garinagu from Central America to the USA. This current diaspora, which began primarily for economic reasons, has recently intensified and acquired a more coercive dimension due to the devastation inflicted on Central America by the policies of the ruling economic and political elites of the USA. and the multilateral institutions that serve their interests such as the World Bank/ International Monetary Fund. The policies of austerity imposed by these agents of neocolonialism have destabilized much of Central America, resulting in more discrimination against the Garifuna and other indigenous peoples by the increasingly impoverished and desperate Mestizo populations, the violent and often deadly invasion of

Garifuna and other indigenous lands by Mestizo settlers and elite business interests, and the intimidation and murder of those who oppose these invasions by the police, the military, and other agents of the state themselves, or by the state-sponsored gangs that terrorize the people of the region. The general result is a shift in the nature of diaspora from one of seeking economic asylum to one of seeking both economic and political asylum in the USA.

All of these diasporas are seen and processed by the Garinagu to one degree or another through a spiritual lens, which can serve to help mitigate the traumatic effects of these exoduses, as well as to help heal the psychic wounds that they have afflicted. As mentioned above, ceremonies such as the *düügü* serve to periodically reunite Garinagu in the diaspora with their families in Central America, and as the diasporic pressures intensify, *düügü* ceremonies have become much more widely and frequently celebrated than ever before in living memory.

This connection between diaspora and spiritual practices is explored in the documentary by A. Leland, titled *Yurumein* (2014), in which the filmmaker traces Garifuna history back to St. Vincent. *Yurumein* is the Garifuna name for St. Vincent, but nowadays *Yurumein* means much more than that. Poluha and Leland (2014) contend that St. Vincent/ *Yurumein* is seen as a utopian place of spiritual rest and genesis by the Garinagu, which is often intermingled with the concept of *sairi*, which is the Garifuna afterworld. Therefore, in this nexus between diaspora and spirituality, St. Vincent has taken on an enhanced spiritual significance as a destination for spiritual pilgrimage, that plays a key role in how the Garinagu are redefining themselves on a spiritual level. Finally, there is a tendency especially among the diasporic Garinagu, who are concentrated in urban centers such as New Orleans, New York, and Los Angeles, where there is

a significant African American presence, to view West Africa in particular or Africa in general as a similarly sacred ancestral site for spiritual pilgrimage.

Thus, the vibrant cultural revitalization process that has recently been initiated by the Garifuna nation under pressure from the diaspora has gone hand in hand with an equally vibrant spiritual revitalization process. Garinagu religiosity itself can be understood as deeply diasporic, in terms of its 'spiritual' displacement from traditional Indigenous and African spiritualities toward Catholicism, with the end result being a dynamically hybridized repertoire that incorporates all of those elements and more, particularly in the Central American context, where no spiritual practices that are not at least superficially shrouded in the trappings of the Catholic Church are tolerated by colonial and neo-colonial authorities.

Identity

Brukaber and Cooper (2000, p. 15) point out how the colonizing state has played a major role in the creation of mechanisms of ethnic identification and categorization:

But there is another key type of external identification that has no counterpart in the domain of self-identification: the formalized, codified, objectified systems of categorization developed by powerful, authoritative institutions. The modern state has been one of the most important agents of identification and categorization in this latter sense. In culturalist extensions of the Weberian sociology of the state, notably those influenced by Bourdieu and Foucault, the state monopolizes, or seeks to monopolize, not only legitimate physical force but also legitimate symbolic force, as Bourdieu puts it. This includes the power to name, to identify, to categorize, to state what is what and who is who.

The colonizing impetus behind many, if not most, of the ethnic and identificational categories that we commonly use to classify the peoples of the world cannot be denied, given how these categories were invented and then propagated by the social sciences, formal education systems, the media, and the other institutions managed by symbolic elites in the interests of ruling colonizing classes.

Taking into consideration the caveats just mentioned, it should be noted that there is a general consensus on the existence of a Garifuna ethnicity or even a Garifuna nationality. According to Rylander (2010, p. 17) a nationality exists when its members believe it does, when they believe that their personal identities are reflected within this larger national identity, and when these beliefs are shared by a group of people who want to perpetuate this particular notion of community. Another important feature is continuity. Having a national identity links a group of people historically. This type of historical national identity, according to Rylander (2010, p. 17), involves relations of obligation because of the sacrifices made by often mythical ancestors to establish and maintain the community in question. Another feature of national identity is what Rylander (2010) calls active identity, whereby the nation actually determines what it is and what it will become by projecting itself into the future.

As is the case for the indigenous peoples of both the Caribbean and West Africa, heritage and ancestry are very important among the Garinagu. For example, many Garinagu proudly claim to be the genetic and spiritual descendants of Chatoyer, a prominent Garifuna leader of the 18th century, through one of his descendants, known as Gulisi. Kinship is also very important for the Garinagu, whether in terms of immediate relations or through the more inclusive Garifuna concept of *iduheguo*, which encompasses all Garinagu wherever they live.

Where Garifuna ethnic identities can be seen as under threat in certain areas of Central America, cross-border Garifuna national identities are at times mobilized to help remedy the situation. For example, Davidoff (2008) reports that cultural and identificational continuity are under serious threat among the Nicaraguan Garinagu, in the face of a range of challenges, including economic migration, ethnic discrimination, lack of financial aid from the government, and lack of Garifuna language use in schools. Since 1996, however, with the active support of other Garifuna communities abroad, there has been increasing cultural and ethnic awareness in Nicaraguan Garifuna communities such as Orinoco. This awareness has been heightened by efforts such as the teaching of Garifuna language, music, and dance in the classroom. This solidarity among Garifuna communities worldwide is consolidated and expanded during the annual festivities commemorating the arrival of the Garifuna in Nicaragua on November 19, which are attended by Garinagu from many different Garifuna communities throughout Central America and the diaspora.

The contradictory set of forces that simultaneously reaffirm and threaten Garifuna ethnic and national identities are all in abundant evidence in Belize, where Cunin and Hoffmann (2013, p. 4), note that the recent initiatives that have been taken toward nation building since independence, as well as recent trends toward globalization, pose particular challenges. In their efforts to historicize this situation, Cunin and Hoffmann (2013) focus on the categories which have been used to categorize the peoples of Belize in census reports, beginning with the first census carried out under the British in 1816. In a general critique of how censuses are carried out in Belize and elsewhere, Anderson (2003, p. 166) states that “The fiction of the census is that everyone is in it, and that everyone has one- and only one- extremely clear place.” Between 1816 and 1840, the British compiled eight census reports, which focused on the racialized colonial

economy by making exclusive use of categories such as ‘whites,’ ‘coloured,’ ‘blacks,’ and ‘slaves’ (after 1835, “slaves” was replaced by “apprenticed labourers”), thereby essentially erasing all other ethnic identities, including those of the Garinagu and other indigenous Belizeans (Cunin & Hoffmann, 2013, p. 10).

Though the census of 1861 went some way to remedy this situation by expanding the number of categories included, this tendency was reversed in the censuses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Cunin & Hoffmann, 2013, p. 12) in an attempt to differentiate Belize as ‘British’ from neighboring ‘Spanish’ countries, as more and more Yucatec Maya began seeking refuge in northern Belize from the Caste Wars in Mexico and Guatemala from the 1850s and 1860s onward. Although racial categorization was eliminated from the census reports shortly thereafter, other sources of demographic information were established by the British, such as the *Handbook of British Honduras 1888-1889*, whose authors Lindsay Bristowe and Philip Wright refer to ethnic and racial categories such as ‘native,’ ‘Ladino,’ (also called ‘Spanish’ or ‘Spanish descent,’) ‘coloured’ or ‘Creole,’ and ‘Carib’ (Cunin & Hoffmann, 2013, p. 14). These categories were inserted into a hierarchy that equated ethnicity with ‘civilization,’ with the ‘Caribs’ being referred to as ‘savage nations’ who were described as being engaged in subsistence activities such as agriculture, hunting, and fishing, while the Creoles were referred to as being a vigorous race “of European and African descent,” who, by being closer to the ‘whites,’ were the group to be relied upon most for establishing the foundations for colonial society (Cunin & Hoffmann, 2013, p. 16).

Several censuses were taken of all of the British colonies in the region during the first eight decades of the 20th century, when Belize was still the territory of British Honduras. In the

documents pertaining to these censuses, such as those carried out in 1946 and 1970, we find remarks directed at Belize and Guyana that refer to their “less racially homogeneous” population, in particular their Amerindian populations, which distinguished them from the other British Holdings in the Caribbean (Cunin & Hoffmann, 2013, p. 18). This recognition of the indigenous presence in Belize, however, remained uneven under the British. For example, Cunin and Hoffmann (2013) comment on “the disappearance of the category Carib/Garifuna in 1960 and 1970 because this group only exists in Belize and is not considered important enough to be considered as a census category in the rest of the West Indies” (p. 18). Since Belize achieved its independence in 1981, there has been an emphasis on the country’s multi-ethnicity, and though the 1981 census largely followed the British model, the 1991 census was the first to be developed locally (Cunin & Hoffmann, 2013, p. 20).

The officially sanctioned ‘multiethnic’ identificational trope distinguishes Belize in its Central American context, with multiethnicity usually highlighted as a distinctive and positive characteristic by the Belizean government. But this multiethnicity is far more than a governmental slogan since it permeates all aspects of Belizean life. For example, Quoting Kerns (1989), Roessingh (2001, p. 31) observes that, in the area of religious practice: “The *arisaru*, the leader of the novena [in Garifuna communities], can be a man or a woman. He or she must have a good knowledge of Spanish, because ‘many people say that Spanish is more ‘effective’ than English for novenas.’”

Narrated in first person as a kind of travelogue, Premdas (2002) addresses the current diversity existing in Belize from the point of view of a political scientist who has done fieldwork on ethnic pluralism in countries like Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Nigeria, and Trinidad. He

describes Belize as being more ethnically diverse than most other Caribbean countries. During his time there, he went across the country collecting data from each of its major ethnic groups as well as exploring the conflicts which have arisen among them. Premdas' (2002) data include interviews with Dr. Palacio concerning the Garinagu, in which Palacio observes that the country's various ethnic groups are currently re-evaluating their status as Belizean, given the rapidly increasing contact and interaction among them.

Garifuna identities in Belize and the rest of Central America were acknowledged and re-affirmed when, in 2003, together with the cultural practices of Congo Kangs in the Dominican Republic, UNESCO initiated efforts to safeguard the Garifuna language, dance, and music of Belize as part of the intangible cultural heritage of its Afro-Latin American population (Davis, 2006, p. 72). These efforts were in part justified by the recognition that peoples of African descent in Latin America have experienced discrimination, marginalization, and relative lack of access to resources in all of the Latin American countries (Davis, 2006, p. 71). In fact, Anderson (2009, pp. 59-60) discusses how the terms *negro* and Garifuna are interchangeable in Belize even though there is another and larger African descended ethnicity in the country.

Because of their Afro-Indigenous hybridity, efforts by the Garinagu themselves to reclaim their identities have been to a certain degree more problematic than those undertaken by other minority groups in the region. Monsalve and Hagelberg (1997, p. 1220) confirm the biological hybridity of the Garinagu in Belize through an analysis of their genetic sequences, which suggest extensive African admixture with Indigenous peoples in the Caribbean. Palacio (2001) states that one of the main problems in this respect is that too many people are talking about identity in too many different ways, and each of them thinks that their perspective is the

only 'correct' one. He contends that since identity is a very broad and complex topic, one should be aware that different positions can be valid at the same time, and that when exploring the identity of a specific group, one should consider that every event in its history affects the formation of its identity in one way or another. Being Garifuna himself, Dr. Palacio applies these criteria to his own understanding of his ethnicity.

Despite their generally unassuming and unpretentious projection of identities that they and others associate with ordinariness and normalcy, Dr. Palacio (2001) highlights the distinctiveness of the Garinagu. For example, he notes that, even though they are raced by outsiders as black, they were never enslaved and played little role in the plantation societies of the colonial Caribbean. To the contrary, the Garinagu represented one of the most feared and persistent threats to the local plantocracies. This atypical and contradictory set of identificational points of reference is made even more complex by the fact that the Garinagu consciously trace their roots to both West Africa and the Indigenous Caribbean on the one hand, and to the island Caribbean and Central America on the other. As explained in the previous chapter, there are both Arawakan and Cariban elements in the Garifuna language. While the Catholic church has had significant influence over Garifuna Christian religious practice, African, Indigenous, and even Anglican traditions have also been integrated. This geographic, historical, social, and cultural diversity has given rise to an equally diverse array of identificational varieties and repertoires, all of which are enthusiastically claimed and embraced by most Garinagu. For example, certain Afro-Indigenous festivities such as the *Yurumein* in Guatemala start with a mass said in Garifuna.

According to Izard (2004) the diverse ethnic identities of the Belizean Garinagu are expressed through the ideologies of the two main social organizations that have been established to promote the interests of the Garinagu as an ethnic group. These are the National Garifuna Council (NGC) and the World Garifuna Organization (WGO). The former highlights Garifuna Afro-Amerindian hybridity, while the latter emphasizes the African roots of the Garifuna and links them with other African descended groups in the Americas. While the Garinagu at times stress their Indigenous heritage, at other times they may wear African clothes as a way of highlighting their African heritage.

Anderson (2009, pp. 24-25) states that the minority ethnic groups of Honduras constitute some 7.2 percent of the national population, and include Garifuna, Creoles (especially Bay Islanders), Tolupán, Pech, Misquito, Lenca, Tawahka, and Chortí. He identifies the *Organización de Desarrollo Étnico Comunitario* (ODECO, Organization for Ethnic Communitarian Development) and the *Organización Fraternal Negra Hondureña* (OFRANEH, the Black Fraternal Organization of Honduras) as key Garifuna organizations which have fostered the creation of entities that aim to help the indigenous and African descended populations of the country (p. 2). He also states that Garifuna *punta* has become so popular, that it has attained somewhat of an unofficial status as a national dance/music genre, noting that during the Honduran Independence Day celebrations of 1997, the performance that was applauded the most was one in which Mestiza high school students dressed like indigenous Hondurans danced *punta*.

Among the younger generations of Garinagu throughout Central America, the increasing popularity of Garifuna music has not always been accompanied by increased use of the Garifuna language. While the Garinagu are increasingly recognized by Central Americans as an Afro-

Indigenous community with its own language, Garifuna youth are often not willing to speak the language (Armando Crisanto Meléndez quoted by López García, 1993, p. 140, in Anderson, 2009, pp. 206-207). Anderson (2009, pp. 66-67) observes how the Garifuna language has been subject to stigmatization by Mestizos in Honduras, who categorized it as primitive, backwards, and unpractical. This stigma is also in evidence in Belize and the rest of Central America, where the Garifuna language is often associated with lower socio-economic status.

While such stigma represents a “push” factor away from the use of Garifuna language, concerns with social status and national identity represent a “pull” factor toward languages designated by Central American governments as national languages. Thus, there is significant pressure on the Garinagu in Belize to speak Creole as a way not only to increase their status in the nation, but also to express solidarity with Creoles to face an increasing ‘Spanish’ presence in the country, in other words, as a national identity marker (Moore & Williams 2008, p. 5).

The fact that most Garinagu in Belize are shifting their linguistic repertoires in many situations toward the predominant use of Belizean Creole indexes an identity shift from a more Garifuna to a more ‘Belizean’ identificational matrix (Palacio, 2001). Belizean Creole plays a key part in the process aimed by the Belizean government (Woodbury Haug, 2001), whereby the country is working to create a new cultural identity for the 21st century. While this process may to some extent help to reinforce national cohesion, one of its consequences is that the diversity of the different ethnicities of the country is erased and their particular needs continue to be ignored by the authorities.

Even though Creole has been designated as the national lingua franca of Belize, English remains the sole language of instruction in public schools and the language that enjoys the

highest prestige. The Belizean school curriculum does not consciously single out a specific ethnic group as being somehow prototypically Belizean, which indicates the extent to which the government is aware of the need to defuse any interethnic rivalries and to promote inclusive policies that celebrate how diversity contributes to the uniqueness of the country. On the ground, however, children are growing up in increasingly ethnically mixed situations. For example, Woodbury Haug (2001) highlights the inter-ethnic dynamics that typify the emergence of children's ethnic and nationalist identities in the village of Punta Gorda, focusing on how children come to terms with their identities and how this process is influenced by the school curriculum, teachers, and peers.

Punta Gorda reflects the country's multi-ethnic nature, with its 3,500 people (in 2001) belonging to at least six major ethnic groups recognized by the Belizean government. Woodbury Haug (2001) used a participant-observation methodology to collect her data in three schools, where she also conducted interviews with children and teachers about ethnicity and nationalism. Her findings show that although the Belizean government seeks to integrate all ethnic groups, each group is rigidly defined in the school curriculum. Thus, while a strict categorization process typifies the official discourse in the classroom, outside of school children are being exposed to many cultures in their multi-ethnic families and communities of practice.

Mwakikagile (2010) discusses the ethnicities of Belize via a multicultural perspective, while also providing a detailed geographical description of the country, which has extensive rain forest cover and over 570 square miles of lagoons. The northern part of the country is covered by flat with swampy coastal plains. In contrast, the south includes the Maya Mountains, which although relatively low in altitude, constitute a distinctive landscape. After offering a historical

background, the author addresses other topics. One of the topics that receives great attention is the ongoing increase of the Mestizo population, which problematizes and upends notions of ethnicity and identification in Belize. This influx of people from Guatemala has drastically changed the proportional balance among the different ethnic groups and has given rise to a heretofore relatively absent dynamic of branding one ethnic group, the Mestizos as ‘outsiders’ (Premdas, 2002). This threatens centuries-old processes of inclusion, which the government of Belize is trying to conserve through its promotion of an inclusive national identity that includes diversity.

Ramos (2008) discusses how the imposition of colonial languages such as English on the Garinagu has functioned in Belize, as it has elsewhere, as a tool for hegemonic domination. Staples Guettler (2019) studied how the designation of English as the official language of Belize, especially after independence in 1981, impacts the diverse ethnic groups in the country in different spheres of interaction, including education and the economy. Referring to Nichols (2006), Crooks (1997), Nixon (2015), and Rubinstein (1979), Staples Guettler (2019) points out that social norms vary between groups, with each one being impacted by the official language policy in different ways, stating that: “The people of Belize are diverse, the languages spoken in Belize are diverse, and the structure of power and values follow suit in their diversity” (para.10). For example, in reference to Medina (1998), she notes that Mayan people have a spiritual intimacy with their language, which is required for Mayan rituals because it functions for them as a link to the ancestors and divine forces.

During the course of a series of interviews throughout Belize touching on issues of identity, Premdas (2002) was told by recognized Garinagu leaders about the ethnic and linguistic

revivals underway among all ethnic groups in Belize. Most of the country's ethnic groups have a cultural council which advocates for their particular linguistic, cultural, and identificational recognition and rights. In the case of those ethnic groups that are raced as 'black,' like the Garinagu, these councils are to some extent active in combatting the deeply rooted colonial legacy of racism in the country as well. For example, after the Garifuna arrived in Central America in 1797, the racist gaze of the Spanish and British considered them to be, according to Holland (2008), "devil-worshippers, polygamists, and speakers of a secret language" (p. 2).

When asked about common characteristics among Belizeans, Garifuna artist Andy Palacio answered (In Premdas, 2002, para. 28): 1) the Garifuna musical genre punta rock; 2) fear of Guatemala; and 3) rice, beans, and chicken stew. Premdas (2002) states that, while Guatemalan expansionism brings with it a shared sense of menace that binds all Belizeans together, so does the English language and extensive bilingualism. This bilingualism cannot be described as simply diglossic because any given individual is likely to utilize different codes in many of the same contexts, often in the same exchange. Belize might not be immune to inter-ethnic conflicts, but that has not stopped most of the population from identifying themselves as Belizean, creating a solid foundation for the government's project of forging a national identity.

The Belizean context provides a social advantage for the Garinagu which is not commonly enjoyed by most Garifuna communities in other Central American countries. Professional improvement seems to be easier for the Garinagu in this multiethnic society, which in addition has a large African-descended population (Mohr de Collado, 2007, p. 72). As a consequence, a substantial number of Garinagu work as governmental officials, professionals, and businesspeople in Belize's capital Belmopan and elsewhere.

Identity and Preservation

In his study on ethnicity in Guatemala, which officially recognizes Ladino, Garifuna, Maya, and Xinca as ethnic groups, Simon (2015) encountered much confusion among interviewees concerning the ethnic label ‘Ladino’, which for some, means anyone who is not autochthonous, and for others means “white, rich, and living in the cities” (p. 61). The term ‘autochthonous’ is also applied in differing ways, with some limiting its scope solely to speakers of Mayan languages (Simon 2015, p. 64). When Simon indicated an interest in studying local cultures, interviewees assumed that he was focused on the Garinagu, since, among all of the non-Ladino population, the Garinagu are seen as having preserved their ethno-cultural markers, such as ancestral language and clothing, to a greater extent than any other group (Adams & Bastos 2003, p. 43).

Anderson (2009, pp. 68-69) states that there has been a shift among the Honduran Garifuna in terms of self-perception. While humiliated in the past for being raced as black, Garifuna people today embrace their African roots proudly, referring to one of Anderson’s interviewees, knowing that they [Garinagu] are not inferior to the ‘*indios*,’ (p. 68) preserving their unique traditions while facing adversity. He states that, although there is continual negotiation among the Garinagu between culture and language on the one hand, and socioeconomic advancement on the other, Garifuna identity seems to be less negotiable (2009, p. 49). Anderson (2009, pp. 63-64) describes how he was told in Sambo Creek, Honduras, by Garifuna people that local Mestizos rarely tried to learn the Garifuna language even though they lived in a Garifuna community. However, he states that what he saw in the streets in terms of interactions did not indicate any overt distance between the two groups. Anderson (2009, p. 212)

also states that Garifuna residents of Sambo Creek take pride in their customs, promoting their preservation for future generations. In addition to deriving pleasure from these efforts at preservation, they enjoy speaking the Garifuna language, pointing out that “It is not just that Garifuna are understood as culturally distinct; they are represented as culture-full, a people rich in traditions and customs inherited from the past, which endure in the present” (Anderson, 2009, p. 211).

Anderson (2009, p. 46) mentions how one of his interviewees, Doña Luz, used to speak mostly in Spanish to her grandsons, as do many parents, since at the time it was forbidden to speak Garifuna in the classroom. However, she changed her mind after listening to a radio broadcast advocating that children learn the Garifuna language. Because she still had a solid grounding in her Garifuna identity, it was not difficult for Doña Luz to understand the message being broadcast by those advocating for the preservation and promotion of Garifuna lifeways, as well as to accept the challenge that they were creating for the audience to do something in their day to day lives to make it happen. Since then, she started to speak Garifuna more at home. Anderson (2009) notes that, perhaps in part because of such efforts, most of the youth that he knew were acquiring Garifuna as a second language.

On the other hand, Anderson (2009) presents another example showing a contrast between two siblings regarding their perceptions of the Garifuna language. One of them was proud that his daughters were learning to speak the language, while the other did not care too much that his children were not learning the language. In the opinion of the latter, the Garifuna language did not offer any cultural capital in the labor market. This opinion was not shared by many people Anderson knew, even though many people did assume that learning the Garifuna

language required immersion for a certain time in a Garifuna community (Anderson, 2009, p. 46-47).

Returning to Belize, Gómez Menjívar and Salmon (2018) point out that little has been discussed about how a minority language undergoes language shift among other minority languages. Comparing the great linguistic diversity of minority languages in the Americas to the even greater biological diversity of the region, they raise the alarm about them becoming idealized museum pieces at best and facing extinction at worst (p. 1). They assert that the survival of these languages depends on four factors: 1) language prestige across social classes and generations; 2) authentic initiatives for protection and preservation; 3) a clear awareness of language as a fundamental aspect of individual and national identity; and 4) national investment in preservation and promotion (p. 9). Gómez Menjívar and Salmon's (2018) interdisciplinary approach makes their work stand out from other similar studies. For example, they identify the socioeconomic factors that have pressured language change in Belize, such as the transition from an agricultural/fishing economy to a service economy (p. 13), and point out that it is the promotion of Belizean Creole as a result of these and other economic and political factors which has, perhaps unintendedly, pushed Mopan and Garifuna languages to the threshold of extinction (p. 14). According to Gómez Menjívar and Salmon (2018), as minority populations have been attracted by economic pull factors toward touristic hotspots, this has had an effect on minority languages, causing their younger speakers to perceive Belizean Creole, and to a lesser extent Belizean English, as the ticket to economic advancement (p. 16).

According to Gómez-Menjívar and Salmon (2018), the Garifuna and Mayan communities in Belize had limited contact until 1838, the year when slavery was abolished in Belize and

throughout the British empire. The Crowns Lands Ordinance of 1872 prevented members of the Mayan and Garifuna communities from owning land, establishing segregated reservations for them instead. From Abolition onward, members of the Creole ethnic group in British Honduras served as intermediaries between Europeans and virtually all other ethnic groups, who were used as underpaid laborers in the logging industry, which expanded into the interior and south of the country at this time. In the logging camps and elsewhere, Belizean Creole started to be used as a *lingua franca*, a situation that has persisted up until the present day (p. 25). Even though the status of Belizean Creole was considerably enhanced after independence from Britain in 1981, the language is still perceived by many Belizeans as “broken English” and is associated with slavery and colonialism (p. 25).

When Gómez-Menjívar and Salmon (2018) carried out research involving a match guise test on how the perception of different varieties are perceived, they found out that the Belize City variety of Belizean Creole was more appealing to the listeners than that of Punta Gorda, with speakers using the Belize City variety being associated with traits such as ‘attractive,’ ‘educated,’ ‘eloquent,’ ‘friendly,’ ‘hard-working,’ ‘having a sense of humor,’ ‘intelligent,’ ‘polite,’ and ‘trustworthy.’ This comparatively high prestige assigned to the Belize City variety may be based at least in part on the perception that it has come under less influence from other Belizean languages than other varieties of Belizean Creole such as that of Punta Gorda, and therefore may be thought of as somehow ‘purer’ (p. 28). However, participants in the study also mentioned to the researchers that, besides that of Belize City, the best varieties of spoken Belizean Creole were to be found in the villages of the rural areas of the country, perhaps because those varieties might have undergone less influence from Standard English (p. 29).

The Toledo Maya Cultural Council was formed in 1978 to address the needs of the socio-economically marginalized and disadvantaged Mayan populations in the Toledo District of Belize (Gómez-Menjívar & Salmon, 2018, pp. 41-42). However, the more successful that efforts at greater integration of these communities into the national economy have been, the more detrimental they have proved to be to the survival of the indigenous Mayan Mopan language. In a survey carried out among Mopan members of the community of San Antonio in Toledo District, Gómez-Menjívar and Salmon (2018) found that, while Mopan and Standard English had relatively equal prestige across generations, the prestige assigned to Belizean Creole was steadily increasing among younger people, at the expense of Mopan. This may also be the case in some Garifuna communities such as Seine Bight, where increased integration into the national economy of Belize has occurred through increasing participation in the tourism industry (Gómez-Menjívar & Salmon, 2018, p. 58). When they asked Garifuna adults in Seine Bight about the languages that they used with their spouses, children, and grandchildren, they found that those over 50 years old reported talking to their spouse in Garifuna but also addressing their children and grandchildren in Belizean Creole. Some of them also stated that they speak to their children and grandchildren in Garifuna, but the children responded to them in Belizean Creole. When the participants were asked about which languages should be taught in schools, female respondents tended to stress the learning of English so that children might have access to better job opportunities, while male participants tended to state that Garifuna should be taught alongside English. Furthermore, a group of adolescents stated that there was no reason to speak Garifuna, and even less for it to be taught in school (Gómez-Menjívar, 2018, pp. 61-62).

In their actual observations of language behavior in natural settings on the ground in Seine Bight, Gómez-Menjívar and Salmon (2018) reported that, in almost every case, Belizean

Creole was used instead of Garifuna, with Belizean Creole rather than Garifuna being spoken by both younger and older people. Gómez-Menjívar and Salmon (2018, pp. 63-68) state that this is due to the Garinagu in Seine Bight being increasingly influenced by colonizing ideologies and belief systems, which see the maintenance of Garifuna language and culture as not offering any particular socioeconomic advantage.

One major source of these ideologies and belief systems is the mainly U.S. based tourism industry. Referring to Haugen (1972), Gómez-Menjívar and Salmon (2018, p. 69) refer to the concept of language ecology, in which any particular language is embedded in a complex environment which includes the other languages that it interacts with, both at the psychological level in the minds of its speakers as well as at the social level among individuals and groups. Gómez-Menjívar and Salmon (2018, pp. 70-76) list the following factors that affect the current language ecology of Belize: 1) degree of integration into the national ethos; 2) the cultural prominence of the Creole ethnic group and their linguistic and cultural repertoires; 3) questions of citizenship and foreignness; 4) the encroachment of tourism and private property; 5) the decline of traditional livelihoods; 6) the role of educational institutions; 7) the role of religious institutions; 8) generational differences; 9) gender dynamics; and 10) degree of bi- and multilingualism. These authors state that the stability of any particular language in Belize is in turn based on the stability of a set of 'pillars': 1) language policy and the mechanisms for its implementation; 2) passionate proponents of the language at the forefront of a language movement; 3) ideologies about the linguistic dimension of national identity; and 4) positive language attitudes based on the assumption that the language is vital for its speakers.

Despite the lack of scholarly work devoted to the subject, the growing linguistic, cultural, and identificational impact of Spanish speakers in Belize cannot be overlooked. Balam (2013) observes that Spanish has taken sufficient root in the country, that a distinct variety has emerged, which he refers to as Northern Belizean Spanish (NBS). To begin to address the absence of any work on the attitudes of NBS speakers toward their language as well as toward the other languages spoken in Belize, his study examines the attitudes of Mestizo adolescent and post-adolescent speakers towards NBS, Standard Spanish, English, and/or Belizean Creole, as well as toward code-switching among them. Building on past research by Koenig (1975), Balam (2013) notes that in Western Belize, a sizeable Mestizo population has embraced a Mestizo ethnic identity alongside a Belizean Creole linguistic, resulting in their embrace of hybrid identificational repertoires (p. 251).

In agreement with the results of Koenig (1975), Balam (2013) found that 50% of the Mestizos that he interviewed had negative attitudes towards the first languages of other ethnic groups, with 80% exhibiting negative attitudes towards Belizean Creole, and some interviewees finding the use of English to be 'irritating.' Surprisingly, 50% of Mestizos who were native speakers of Belizean had negative attitudes towards their own native language. Balam (2013) showed that NBS speakers considered NBS and Standard Spanish to be two different varieties, with adults showing more positive attitudes toward the former than the latter, possibly revealing a counter-identificational process against hegemonic varieties of Spanish. As one speaker explained, when NBS speakers cross the Mexican border and go to Chetumal in Mexico, it is acceptable for them to 'imitate' the Chetumal 'accent,' but as soon as they return to Belize, using the more standard-like Spanish of Chetumal is negatively perceived. While high school-aged

interviewees shared some of the adult perceptions of NBS as incorrect Spanish, they also expressed overtly negative attitudes towards standard varieties of Spanish (p. 258).

Balam (2013) observed that the greatest differences in attitudes toward code-switching were to be found between male adolescents on the one hand, and female post-adolescents on the other, since the former favored the mixing of languages to avoid being criticized by their peers, while the latter felt that avoiding code-switching between English and Spanish would not be pejoratively perceived by anyone (p. 260). In terms of their linguistic identity, all of the groups of interviewees indicated that they were proud of their variety of Spanish (NBS) and that although they might perceive it as ‘incorrect,’ they did not feel ashamed of it. In addition, they revealed that they felt proud when using different languages when travelling abroad, perceiving their multilingual identity positively, with adolescents claiming an NBS-Belizean Creole pluri-identificational repertoire (p. 262). The fact that some interviewees reported that, even though they may speak NBS, they spoke Belizean Creole when travelling to places like Mexico, suggests a generational shift since “This avoidance strategy is one which may be indexical of linguistic insecurity, an emerging change in language choice and perhaps the birth of a strong pan-Afro Belizean identity among the younger generation of Mestizo speakers in Northern Belize” (Balam, 2013, p. 263).

When asked about their predictions on the use of Spanish in Belize in the future, though many were optimistic about the continued use of Spanish in the country, many others claimed that it was being used less and less, and though there has been a continuous influx of monolingual Spanish speakers immigrating to Belize, such immigrants have always needed to learn Belizean Creole in order to integrate smoothly into Belizean society. It is also important to

note that the use of Spanish has been stigmatized because it has been associated with Guatemala's territorial claims on Belize; therefore, "the use of BK [Belizean Kriol] is perhaps reflective of the speaker's desire to assert their national identity, and to make it more socially salient than their ethnic identity" (Balam, 2013, p. 263). He also suggests that the existence and influence of identity-related sociocultural movements in Belize might have contributed to the vitality of non-standard varieties in the country, as well as to negative attitudes towards standard varieties, which are often associated with colonial oppression. Belizean Creole therefore could serve both as a language of Belizean identity at the national level and as a language of counter-identification against colonialism at the international level.

According to Key and Pillai (2006), the Garinagu are characterized by their cultivation of communal ties, which they call the 'fidelity system,' in which reciprocity is actively sought out in order to enhance group cohesion and devotion to the group instead of to the individual. An interesting dynamic took place during the first half of the 20th century between two villages, mostly Creole Placencia and mostly Garifuna Seine Bight. Besides not having a church, tavern, or store, Placencia did not have a school, so their children had to go to Seine Bight to attend school despite the fact that the Creoles would eventually become the dominant ethnic group (pp. 9-10). Key and Pillai (2006) emphasize that while the Creoles of Placencia and the Garinagu of Seine Bight were separated by only seven miles of distance (p. 10), they maintained certain boundaries. For example, during election season, mostly Anglican Placencia usually supported the United Democratic Party, while mostly Catholic Seine Bight usually supported the People's United Party. But with the expansion of tourism industry in the area, the two villages have cemented even more ties based on shared economic enterprises and interests (p. 15).

Agudelo (2011) identifies transnationality as one of the most interesting aspects of the Garifuna and their language, with substantial numbers of Garinagu living in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and certain parts of the US. Though divided by political borders, the Garifuna appear to have succeeded better than other ethnic groups in maintaining networks and preserving their culture and language. Although some communities have dedicated more effort to this purpose than others, it seems that, when required, almost all communities can be relied upon to join such efforts. Most Garinagu identify themselves with the Garifuna language whether they speak it fluently or not (Rylander, 2010, p. 18). Culture, according to Palacio, as cited in Rylander (2010, p. 31) has helped to foster a Garifuna national identity.

Agudelo (2011) highlights the importance of identity symbolism in these processes. Because the Garifuna people suffered exile from the island of St. Vincent and arrived as outsiders in Central America, this imposed a certain identificational cohesion on them no matter where they might have ended up settling in the region. In the Central American context, both their indigenous Caribbean and African roots could be tapped into in order to forge a transnational regional set of identities. Today, the Garinagu once again find themselves to be strangers in a new land, this time as a result of a migratory process to the US. Once again, a certain identificational cohesion is emerging among the Garinagu in places like New Orleans and Los Angeles, but this time in a new socio-political context where their African roots come more to the fore than their indigenous Caribbean background. In the diaspora, the Garifuna language continues to be an identity marker or a *de facto* separator (Roberts, 2008, p. 437) since native speakers are identified as those who are able to produce the 'real' or 'genuine' language.

Other aspects of culture play an important role in both ethnic and generational identification among younger Garinagu, such as *punta* music and its contemporary genre *punta* rock (Mohr de Collado, 2007, pp. 77-81). On his album *Wátina*, Andy Palacio (Andy Palacio and The Garifuna Collective, 2007) sings, in Garifuna: “Parents, please listen to me. Teach the children our language and our songs, our beliefs, and our dances.” Palacio is widely recognized for using his music to preserve Garifuna culture and language, which he considered to be under threat from the homogenizing forces of modernity and globalization in Belize. He also aspired to build bridges throughout Belize, the rest of Central America, and beyond, so that all Garinagu communities could identify more strongly with Garifuna language and culture (Moore & Williams, 2008, p. 5). When interviewed by Steward in 2007, he expressed the concern that he shared with other Garinagu about the decline in the number of speakers of the Garinagu language when he stated that “people were embarrassed that they couldn’t speak the language” (p.39). Thus, he used Garifuna in his songs, where he also immortalized important events in Garifuna history, such as exile from St. Vincent to make his listeners proud of their linguistic and cultural heritage.

Despite underscoring the transnational similarities to be found among the Garinagu across Central America, Agudelo (2011) also notes that the Belizean Garinagu are distinct from the rest in a number of significant ways. After their arrival in Belize, and some initial struggles with the administrative powers there, the Garifuna fairly quickly established a space which granted them more official recognition than they generally received elsewhere in the region. The Garinagu took full advantage of this space, converting it into an advantageous path for social recognition and mobility. Garifuna Settlement Day became a Belizean national holiday in 1977, before Belize attained independence, and has become a pathway toward inclusion in the national

Belizean identificational process. In response to campaigns spearheaded by Belizean Garifuna communities, the government of Belize has initiated a movement to coordinate initiatives by African descended communities throughout the Central American region.

Identity and Diaspora

There is a great deal of motivation among Garinagu throughout Central America and in the diaspora to research and write about their own ethnicity. Another positive trend is that Garinagu are publishing not only in English and Spanish, but also in the Garifuna language itself (Mohr de Collado 2007, p. 73). Many Garifuna immigrants to the USA told Mohr de Collado (2007, p. 75) that they were surprised when they arrived there because the Garifuna language was being used in a natural way within their diasporic communities, in contrast to the situation in many Central American countries. Perhaps it was because of the pressure to maintain their identity under the intense burden to assimilate exerted on minority groups in the USA that some Garifuna communities there have taken it upon themselves to maintain their use of the language. Another possible factor in the survival of the Garifuna language in the USA that was reported to Mohr de Collado might have been the increased intragroup cohesion that often comes about when a specific groups such as the Garinagu are marginalized in U.S.

Referring to research by Jerome Straughman (2007), Gómez-Menjívar and Salmon (2018, p. 35) point out that the great majority, some 75%, of the migratory flow out of Belize to the United States as of 2007 had consisted of only two groups: Creoles and Garinagu. During the 1960s, many Garinagu migrated to the USA for economic reasons, continuing a tradition of employment-driven outmigration that has characterized Central American Garifuna communities since their arrival there at the end of the 1700s. Mohr de Collado (2007) observes that despite

such outmigration and intermarriage with members of other ethnic groups over the past three centuries, not only have Garifuna communities experienced substantial population growth but, compared to other groups, they have managed to maintain important ancestral linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires.

Chaney (2012) explores the self-identification process of the Garifuna diaspora in the United States. Referring to previous studies related to the topic, he asserts that an immigrant's self-identification process must be negotiated in relation to the conceptualization the host society has of racial and ethnic categories, a conceptualization that sometimes differs radically from that found in the home country of the immigrant (p. 122). The largest Garifuna diasporic community is that of New York City (Chaney, 2012, p. 122). Because of their long and complex diasporic history and their multiple identities, the Garifuna can fit into many categories. Chaney contends that, in general, Garinagu in the U.S.A. choose their identities depending on the particular community to which they migrate. Chaney (2012, p. 126) observes that for the many Garinagu who are fluent in English, the integration process is somewhat easier than for others in the U.S.A. It allows them, for example, to easily interact and associate with diasporic West Indian communities.

Referring to a number of previously published articles, Chaney (2012) states that newly arrived immigrants to the US who are susceptible to be raced as Black usually emphasize their ethnicity/ nationality as a way to avoid the social stigmatization that impedes the social mobility of those who are assigned this classification in U.S. society (p. 123). Citing Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral (2000), Chaney (2012) observes that national origin represents a more important component of identity than race for Latin American immigrants, most of whom come from societies where racial categories have much more blurry boundaries than in the U.S.A. (p. 123).

According to Chaney (2012), “Honduran Garinagu ... reported that their language use (Spanish and Garifuna), clothes and comportment lead African Americans to categorize them ethnically as Latino rather than racially as Black” (p. 129).

Since, on census forms, Garinagu usually choose a number of different racial and ethnic categories such as “Black,” “Hispanic,” or “other” it is difficult to accurately calculate how many Garinagu live in the U.S.A. (Chaney, 2012, p. 127). While Guatemalan Garinagu living in the United States live mainly in New York, Honduran Garinagu live mainly in New York, New Orleans, Houston, Chicago, Washington, Los Angeles, and Miami, and Belizean Garinagu live mainly in Los Angeles. The Honduran Garinagu living in New York create bonds with other Spanish speaking groups there, such as Dominicans and Puerto Ricans, because of the linguistic and cultural repertoires that they share with them (Chaney, 2012, p. 128). Chaney (2012) states that in 2006 the Garinagu constituted 70% of Hondurans living in New York, and therefore had become the face of Honduras itself there, while Honduran Mestizos were more socially integrated with other Central American and Mexican immigrants (p. 128).

Chaney (2012, p. 122) focuses on the self-conceptualization of a Garifuna community in post-Katrina New Orleans as both Honduran and Latino, and on how, as a result, they experience similar positive and negative reactions from the host society as experienced by members of other Latin American diasporas. While the metropolitan areas in the American South witnessed an increase in Latino immigrants during the 1990s, New Orleans experienced a somewhat different trend until 2005 after hurricane Katrina, when many Latin American workers arrived to participate in the reconstruction of the city (2012, p. 129). One of Chaney’s (2012) participants identified herself as Garifuna in Honduras, sometimes as Latina in the United States, and always

Honduran in New Orleans (p. 130), which, according to Chaney, was a common answer among interviewees who reported that self-identification depended mainly on location.

The identificational profiles of Garifuna immigrants in New Orleans are a mixture of personal choice and the imposition of identities by the host society. Because the majority of the population of New Orleans is not even aware that the Garinagu exist, they automatically race the Garinagu as 'Black' or 'Hispanic' (Chaney, 2012, p. 130). One of Chaney's interviewees stated that, in New Orleans, he is usually perceived as African American until he speaks (Chaney, 2012, p. 131). The same interviewee contrasted New York City with New Orleans in the sense that there are more places to mix or interact with different people in the former, while in the latter, people live separately. Several interviewees pointed out that their ability to speak Spanish with other people from Latin America serves as a form of counter-identification to African Americans. When explaining how a member of her social network can switch between English, Spanish, and Garifuna, one of the participants in Chaney's (2012) study claims that the accompanying shifts in identities depend on the people being addressed. Chaney (2012, p. 138) also observes that, even though Garinagu stress their Latin/ Honduran identity, they do not deny their Garifuna identity or African ancestry, and that they are constantly negotiating their identities to best fit into each social setting that they encounter.

The Garinagu are appreciated by other Hondurans in New Orleans because of the sense of distinctiveness that they give to the perception of Honduras there, with Mestizo Hondurans showing interest in Garifuna culture and gastronomy to such an extent that they express a sense of national pride when Garifuna perform dances or play *punta* rock and buy Garifuna food and other products at events (Chaney, 2012, p. 134). Because of the good reputation of Hondurans as

hard workers, Garifuna immigrants are told by their compatriots to state their Honduran identity as it will provide them more job opportunities (Chaney, 2012, p. 137).

Technology

Technology Attrition, Transmission, and Preservation

The relationship between technology and culture is a dialogical one, with one influencing and shaping the other in an interactive process that has an important impact on the self-identification process of the individual. Though not directly related to language, there are certain current technologies that have helped to preserve the Garifuna culture, such as outboard motors that help fishermen catch fish for rituals, and refrigerators which help to preserve those fish (Johnson, 2007, p. 182). Technology can therefore help to ensure the linguistic and cultural resiliency of any given ethnic group.

In the area of linguistic preservation, for example, the electronic media have provided important platforms for the acknowledgement of the Garifuna language's existence, as well as for holding classes where Garifuna is taught as a heritage language to Garifuna descended people and as a foreign language to non-Garifuna descended people who may be interested in learning it. This technology-enabled increased visibility for Garifuna language has inspired individuals and groups worldwide to contribute in one way or another to its preservation. There have been papers written about the Garinagu in several languages, especially Spanish, English, and Garifuna itself, with researchers taking advantage of the internet to publish their work more quickly and in a much more widely disseminated format than was previously possible.

Needless to say, having academic texts available in Garifuna represents an important step forward, not only for the Garifuna language in particular, but for the indigenous languages of the Caribbean as a whole, moving them beyond the status of endangered folkloric museum pieces

and toward usage over a greater range of contexts and registers. Such increased visibility could help to boost demand among non-Garinagu to learn the language formally. However, any success in such efforts is only possible in as much the population contributes to them.

In her book titled *Learn Garifuna Now!*, which is accompanied by a CD, Luz F. Soliz Ramos (2017) states that in her youth in Honduras, “it was forbidden to speak Garifuna at school, where the language of instruction was Spanish” (p. xiv). After moving with her parents to the United States, where she learned English, she also learned Garifuna because her parents continued to speak their ancestral language. She was constantly told that Garifuna language was a ‘dialect’ resulting from a random mixture of different languages, and thus it was very difficult to write complete sentences in the language, and it was therefore not deserving of formal study (p. xiv).

As is the case with other linguistic communities whose languages are under threat, Garifuna speakers need to enlarge their cyberspace footprint in order to reach a broader audience, all the while being careful not to be taken advantage of by the corporate media. In their research work in both Honduras and the USA, Johnson and Callahan (2015) address the role of media in the context of indigenous cultures. More specifically, they assess how the media influence cultural perceptions. The media can help to create awareness of the multiple identities embraced by the Garinagu in Honduras and the diaspora as Black, Hispanic, Indigenous, American, etc., and to legitimize these multiple identities among the Garinagu themselves. Lévy, as cited by Johnson and Callahan (2015), states that cyberspaces created by online communities can facilitate the upending of mechanically and geo-spatially delimited understandings of culture, and instead promote movement across cultural, ethnic, and religious boundaries.

Scott (2016) conducted some action-research on the use of media by minorities such as the Garinagu to support community initiatives in Nicaragua. Under Nicaragua's Autonomy Law for the Caribbean Coast, enacted in 1987, the Garinagu and other ethnic groups have been given increased leeway to promote their cultural traditions and speak their native languages. Given the stigmatization that these groups have experienced over the generations, however, many traditional cultural and linguistic repertoires are disappearing. Consequently, there are community members who have dedicated themselves to rescuing these traditions. Scott (2016) mobilized a group of students to create digital profiles of such community members and to create digital media that could be used as teaching materials for Garifuna language. Scott (2016) states that choosing media as a resource goes along with the active involvement of community members and the acknowledgement, valorization, and mobilization of their cultural knowledge in its creation. This type of interactive approach ensures that the resulting digital resources, such as story-telling sessions, audio workbooks, and educational videos are of maximal benefit to community members.

Though internet access is still limited in some Garifuna communities, rapid progress is being made in extending coverage to even the most remote areas (Scott, 2016, p. 29). The fact that Garinagu are largely absent from the mainstream media (Johnson & Callahan, 2015, p.81) can in fact enhance their role in their own original media creation. It is crucial, however, that their output be archived in such a way that it will remain available for years to come. According to Scott (2016), one way to store this material is to upload it onto a blog, so that it is not only archived, but also becomes an immediately accessible resource. In this process, however, care must be taken to avoid scenarios where specific groups with more access to media become gatekeepers and/or monopolize collective identity.

Garifuna culture is already being spread globally through music, with the electronic media assuring the acceptance of Garifuna music as part of the world music scene. Frishkey (2011, p. 3) discusses the dialectic in world music between traditional genres and industrialized genres, which allow for the creative blurring of the local and the global:

From mainstream dance outfits like C&C Music Factory (U.S.) to British underground 'house' and 'trip hop' producers, a rotating line-up of female, and often African American, guests provided the vocals. The sound of heightened emotional expression in these vocals appeared to do the work of 'rescuing' the listener from the post/modern condition sounded in the machine-mediated beats. By effecting a simultaneous flight from and return to 'earth,' ... [these voices] soared above the present, introducing new possibilities for the listener, while ... [their] bodily basis lent flesh-and-blood to the proceedings. This notion of authenticity as encompassing seemingly opposing desires for the transcendent and the organic was rampant among trip hop fans

Frishkey (2011, p. 4) also observes how world music and local music are woven together by world music artists in ways that are emblematic of how indigenous identities seek their place in a globalized society. These performers are able to adopt multiple identities that appeal to both national and international audiences:

Nazarkhan has divided her time recording Uzbek folk music for labels that release folk recordings and urbanized music This practice of targeting audiences both 'at home' and 'abroad' has become standard for world music artists. For example, it is common for Senegalese musicians to release albums of homegrown *mbalax* in-country while reworking those albums for the global market, following the precedent of world music superstar Youssou N'Dour.

Gustavo A. Ramírez (2013) recognizes the potential of widely available technological devices such as cell phones not only for linguistic preservation in Belize, but also for narrowing the gaps between the older and younger generations, with the elders' greater linguistic knowledge complementing young people's greater technological knowledge. Cellphones facilitate communication with family members abroad as well as provide an additional platform upon which the Garifuna language can be used, both in well-established ways, such as nonformal oral communication among family members and friends, and also in new ways, such as text messaging, etc. The electronic media are also making Garifuna language and culture known to non-Garifuna audiences throughout the world.

Some Garinagu are currently taking advantage of the electronic media to promote the learning and use of Garifuna language. In an interview with Emily Ramírez, accessible via the Belizean Artwork Publishing channel on YouTube, she talks about *Magic Drums*, a book she wrote to help preserve Garifuna language and culture in which she uses Standard English as the matrix language, while incorporating a number of Garifuna words as well. She has made the book available in a digital version because she recognizes that adults, and especially children, are now regularly using computers and tablets, and it is imperative that those who are interested in promoting Garifuna language and culture keep up with the times. To avoid Garifuna language and culture becoming stagnant and falling into disuse, they must incorporate the latest technological terminology and media, as well as incorporate themselves onto the latest digital platforms.

Griffin (2015) lists some of the efforts being made to preserve Garifuna language in the US. She states that there are Garifuna language courses being taught in some universities and that the language is now being used in music, books of poetry, history, cooking, health,

traditional oral literature, dictionaries, and literacy books for teaching children to read and write. The entire Bible has been translated into Garifuna in both written and audio book format, and the Catholic church has created a program for promoting Garifuna language literacy. Griffin (2015) also states that there are now enough films being made in Garifuna to justify the organization of Garifuna film festivals in Los Angeles. One film about the endangerment and preservation of Garifuna language, titled “Garifuna in Peril” (2012), has 55% of its dialogue spoken in Garifuna.

Other efforts to promote Garifuna language include those of the Endangered Language Alliance (ELA), which broadcasts Spanish and indigenous language programming through ALCAL Latin Radio. Through these broadcasts, ELA creates awareness among speakers of endangered indigenous languages in New York, where multilingualism is common. *Umalali Garifuna* is one such ELA radio program which was started in 1991 and is currently hosted by Luis Baltazar, Julio Arzu, and Carlos Gotay, who cover a range of topics of interest to Garinagu worldwide. ELA has also provided support to Yugacure, an organization that seeks to revitalize Garifuna language and culture in St. Vincent. Joseph Flores, as quoted by Twigg (2006, p. 111) emphasizes the importance of recognizing the Garinagu as a transnational ethnicity rather than one divided by political boundaries, in order to achieve cohesion and thus facilitate the preservation of their language and culture.

Technology and Education

Even though it requires effortful devotion, native languages can make good use of digital technologies to advance educational purposes. For instance, Brand, Elliot, and Foster (2002) describe the efforts being taken toward the preservation of Sencoten, a native language of Canada. These efforts included the use of videos, images, and audio files mostly produced by

students and digitalized in partnership with computer programming companies. Interestingly, the paper mentions how Dave Elliot contributed to this language preservation project:

Realizing that, without a method of recording the language, it would eventually be lost, Dave began to write down Sencoten words phonetically. He soon discovered that, upon returning to read previously recorded words, he could not understand what he had written. Dave studied with a linguist and learned the International Phonetic Alphabet and other orthographies. However, there were problems with these writing systems. The main difficulty was that some of the complex sounds of the Sencoten language required numerous symbols to be represented, resulting in long and complicated words.

Dave decided to devise his own alphabet using only one letter to denote each sound. He purchased a used typewriter for \$30 and set out to make a Sencoten writing system accessible to his people. During the winter of 1977, the Dave Elliott Sencoten Alphabet was created. In 1978, the Saanich Indian School Board adopted the Dave Elliott Alphabet to help preserve the Sencoten language and history. (p. 246)

Several webpages support the learning of Garifuna language online. For instance, the Garifuna Institute (2016), which was founded to stop the attrition of Garifuna language, provides some helpful digital tools to make the language more accessible for both teachers and learners. Their homepage incorporates a trilingual English, Spanish, and Garifuna dictionary with translation capacity. In addition, the page includes a word-of-the-day section, bulletins regarding cultural and linguistic information, texts in Garifuna, and a link to an online shop which sells cultural items and didactic materials.

Academic literature from the beginning of the 21st century points to the fact that Garifuna language is still a marker of identity. This means that culture as well as language, though have

needed and still need efforts for their preservation, has not collapsed in a termination. The fact that the Garifuna language started to make its way in the digital domain contributes to assert its continuous update, together with the continuous struggle it has endured through centuries.

However, the revitalization efforts still comprise other aspects.

Chapter 3: Synthesis of Results

In this chapter, the key themes highlighted in Chapters 1 and 2 are reconsidered, explored and, expanded upon in light of what is actually being done on the ground to preserve Garifuna linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires.

Language

Language Attrition and Transmission

Many Garinagu are very conscious of Garifuna language attrition as well as problems related to Garifuna language transmission. Many see the status of the Garinagu as a marginalized group in Belizean society as one of the causes of these problems. The effects of this marginalization have many dimensions, one of which manifests itself in the form of negative attitudes, not only on the part of dominant groups toward the members of marginalized groups, their languages, and their cultures, but also on the part of members of these marginalized groups toward themselves, their ancestral languages, and their ancestral cultures.

Language stigmatization is fueled by such negative attitudes. McCarty and Romero-Little (2008, p. 167), when discussing how negative attitudes on the part of Navajo people have contributed to the erosion of their language, compare the situation among the Navajo to that found by Bonner (2001) among the Garinagu. There are some differences between the social position of the Navajo in the U.S.A. when compared with that of the Garinagu in Belize. For example, the Navajo have not experienced as much upward mobility in U.S. society as the Garinagu have experienced in Belizean society. That said, both the Navajo and the Garifuna languages are the object of negative attitudes, not only within the context of wider U.S. and Belizean society, but also within the Navajo and Garifuna communities themselves, and in both

cases, these negative attitudes have led to language erosion, as observed by McCarty and Romero-Little (2008):

These psychosocial dynamics have been documented for minoritized speech communities around the world. Writing of language shame among Garifuna children in Belize, Donna Bonner points out that the cause is not language per se, but rather the marginalization of Garifuna and the association of Garifuna ethnic identity with poverty and low social status. (p. 86)

Garifuna activists link language shift to identity shift in Garifuna communities. They discuss the migration of Garinagu out of their traditional communities and migration of non-Garinagu into traditional Garifuna communities in Belize, and link these phenomena to language attrition and disruption in language transmission. They underscore the pressure put on Garifuna who live outside of their traditional communities to conform to the norms of Belizean Creole language, culture, and identification. Some note that this pressure has been so great that, for some Garinagu, the only option has been to pretend that they are not Garifuna at all. Devonish (2010, p. 5) observes that the engagement of indigenous communities such as those of the Garinagu and the Navajo with the wider society is an important factor that leads to language endangerment, resulting from a process which at the beginning yields transitional bilingualism, but in two or three generations results in a situation where the dominant language replaces the marginalized indigenous language.

The scholarly literature on language attrition has been mostly written by European and North American linguists who erroneously take monolingualism mono-culturalism, and mono-identification as the 'universal' norm (Faraclas, 2012). For this reason, the theoretical models proposed by these linguists may have limited use for accounting for the Garifuna facts. In the

Caribbean, for example, where plurilingualism pluri-culturalism, and pluri-identification are common, the processes of language shift described above may not be seen by those involved as a zero-sum game, where they must choose between one language and another. That which results may actually involve the creation of a complex repertoire of linguistic competencies that include competence in varieties of both the dominant language and the marginalized indigenous language. Some Garifuna activists point out that this linguistic and cultural versatility is something that has characterized Garifuna culture for centuries, if not millennia.

Many indigenous peoples who have such pluri-lingual, pluri-cultural, and pluri-identificational traditions are often considered by outsiders to have ‘lost’ their ‘authentic’ indigeneity when they integrate some of the lifeways of the dominant culture into their repertoires (Houma Nation, 2012). In fact, however, this capacity and propensity for ‘border-crossing’ could be considered part of what it means to be ‘authentically’ Garifuna.

A major arena for the marginalization of the Garifuna language and the imposition of the dominant colonial language is the classroom. When the Haitian Revolution at the beginning of the 19th century obliged the propertied classes of the entire Caribbean region to replace the coercive domination of chattel slavery with the discursive domination of wage slavery, it became imperative to extend ‘universal education’ to the dominated classes in order to make them speak, think, and act in the image and the interests of the dominant classes instead of in their own interests. Since then, schools have been significant agents in the imposition of a single Eurocentric colonial language, culture, and identity on the children of the Caribbean, accelerating language shift from the children’s ancestral languages to the colonial language. In an anonymous article that appeared in *Caribbean Life*, Wellington Ramos (2008) summarizes the

impact of the educational system in the general Garifuna context and its effects on the Garifuna language:

As time went by, these [Central American] countries decided to set up an educational system where everybody must go to school and learn their languages. In their schools that were located in Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala all the various ethnic groups were learning how to read, write and speak Spanish and in Belize and parts of Nicaragua, English. This introduced new languages to the Garifuna people in these territories that they must learn for their economic, political and social survival. As a result of this, Garifuna people focused on learning how to speak, write and read these languages while neglecting their own Garifuna language. Most Garifuna people cannot write or read the words in their language because there were no schools in most of their communities that taught them how to read and write Garifuna. (Para. 5)

As in many other Caribbean societies, the imposition of the colonial language as the language of instruction and initial literacy in school has resulted in the children's indigenous or ancestral language being excluded from any use in reading and writing, and instead being relegated to use in informal contexts and to discuss informal topics. For example, it is not uncommon to hear Caribbean people conversing freely in their ancestral language, and then, as soon as the topic switches to something that has to do with school or any other formal situation, the language used switches to the colonial language.

The workplace has been another key arena for the marginalization of Garifuna language and identity and the imposition of the dominant colonial language and identity. Many Garinagu have been made to suffer serious consequences for speaking Garifuna at work and thus being identified as Garifuna. Some Garifuna activists point out, however, that recently, through

pressure exerted ‘from below’ by the Garifuna and other indigenous peoples, it has become more difficult for the authorities to condone official marginalization of indigenous peoples in government-regulated environments such as the workplace and schools.

As a result of such pressure from below, Caribbean governments have been obliged to incorporate indigenous languages and cultures to varying degrees in the school curriculum, with some even opting for increasingly pluri-lingual and pluri-cultural programs. Because language transmission in the Caribbean tends to be more complex than typically theorized in the European- and North American-dominated linguistic literature on language acquisition, however, efforts to replicate bilingual models developed in European or North American schools in the Caribbean have met with limited success.

Alby and Léglise (2006, p. 1) report on such programs in the relatively small (demographically) Caribbean territory of French Guiana, where a mosaic of ethno-linguistic groups including Amerindians, Creoles, Metropolitans, maroon descended Businenge, Haitians, Brazilians, Antilleans, and Chinese each constitutes a significant proportion of the population. The authors state that current language policy in French Guiana takes into consideration this linguistic and cultural diversity, and discuss efforts to promote the traditionally marginalized languages of French Guiana (pp. 2-7) by invoking their status as ‘regional languages’ which enjoy protection and promotion under the laws of the European Union, specifically the *Charte des langues régionales et minoritaires* (p. 5).

Alby and Léglise (2006, pp. 6-7) state that, since the 1970s, it has been especially crucial to take into account the languages spoken by children from Amerindian communities in the schools of French Guiana for a number of reasons, including increasing demands on the part of Amerindian communities for acknowledgement of the importance of their numerous and diverse

languages, and the spread of programs such as *Educación Intercultural Bilingüe*, which has sought to integrate indigenous languages into the school curricula in other South and Central American countries. Lescure (2005) and Puren (2005a) comment on the first attempts to implement such programs in French Guiana in the 1980s and 1990s, when Amerindian communities were denouncing the public education system which had been excluding their ancestral languages and cultures, resulting in high levels of alienation among Amerindian students. The public education authorities, under the auspices of *l'Académie de la Guyane* and with the support of Inspector Farraudière, recruited linguists to lay the groundwork for bilingual and bicultural programming.

Renault-Lescure (2000) notes that the model that emerged from this process differed significantly from those of neighboring countries, chiefly because it was based on teams of Cultural and Bilingual Mediators, rather than on a more fundamental re-orientation of educational policy and practice. These mediators were native speakers of Amerindian languages who were trained to work with Amerindian students for a limited number of hours per week during their first years of schooling, with the goal of fostering academic competence in their native languages as well as in French, the language of instruction and initial literacy. Whereas programs such as *Educación Intercultural Bilingüe* have as their stated objective the interlingual and intercultural education of students from all ethnolinguistic backgrounds in one another's languages and cultures throughout the years of primary school, the Cultural and Bilingual Mediators program is focused narrowly on Amerindian students and the early years of primary education. While the Cultural and Bilingual Mediators program might be appropriate to situations such as that of children from non-French speaking immigrant backgrounds in the

primary schools of metropolitan France, it is of questionable value in the pluri-lingual and pluri-cultural context of French Guiana, where it is operational in only 22% of the schools.

The Belizean context distinguishes itself in a number of ways from others in the region, but perhaps one of the most important differences is the extent to which a colonial era creole language, Belizean Creole, is not only acknowledged but also to some extent valorized as a key element in building a sense of Belizean identity and belonging. Schneider (2017) states that “original data form an ethnographic study on the indexical meanings of language in a multilingual and ethnically highly diverse context in Belize ... demonstrate that ascribing language to *ethnic* belonging does not necessarily work” (p. 8). Her argument focuses on Belizean Creole, which is currently recognized as the lingua franca of the country and an important part of a sense of *national* belonging among Belizeans themselves. Because of its status as a creole language, Belizean Creole is also seen by many a tool of resistance against Western ideologies of standardization (2017, p. 8) along with the many other Creole languages in the region.

Juxtaposing the colonial legacy in Belize with the multicultural history of the country, Schneider (2017) contends that monolingual structures are not natural, but instead are a consequence of the specific historic-political conditions that have prevailed in the colonial and neo-colonial Caribbean, where languages and ethnicity are linked as monolithic categories. Schneider’s multiplex approach visualizes overlapping languages, cultures, identities, and ethnicities in a dynamic, non-linear, multidirectional way. She sees the standardization and fixity which characterize modern language ideologies as a remnant of colonialism, which though artificial, still exert a strong influence on people in Belize and the rest of the Caribbean:

Yet, despite arguing that indexical meanings of linguistic categories are shifting and multiple, and that therefore we cannot pin down the 'essential' nature of such categories, signifiers that express linguistic categorization remain relevant in symbolizing social difference. Where national epistemes are constable due to social conditions, resources of multilingualism may still be ordered in categories, though not necessarily arranged in linear, hierarchical forms in the way the modernist, centralizing powers of the twentieth century hoped. (Schneider, 2017, p. 9)

Making reference to Escure (1997), Schneider (2017) states that most Belizeans grow up speaking at least three languages since in most families ethnic mixing is common, which also makes it difficult to track down specific ethnic loyalties (p. 10).

Demographically speaking, Spanish is the dominant language of Belize because of substantial immigration from Spanish-speaking countries in the region in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but it is Creole that serves as the nation's lingua franca. The use of Belizean Creole in this capacity is motivated by several factors. As an English lexifier creole language, Belizean Creole shares much of its vocabulary with English, which has for centuries enjoyed the status of the dominant language in the country. Since the ethnic Creoles were consciously cultivated as a local elite by the British, they eventually formed the dominant political class of the country.

Referring to Bolland (1992), Schneider (2017, p. 11), mentions the fact that Guatemala has questioned the legitimacy of Belize as a nation as an important additional factor that favors the promotion of Belizean Creole rather than Spanish as the national language. Because of their fear of annexation by Guatemala, many Belizeans, including those who have Spanish as their main ancestral language, find in Belizean Creole a way to differentiate themselves from

Guatemalans, with Belizean Creole becoming a way for Belizeans to highlight their ‘uniqueness’ (Schneider, 2017, p. 11). Schneider (2017, p. 12) carried out a survey in one village where she did some of her research and she found that, of the 155 interviewees, more than 60% stated that Belizean Creole was the language used at home, more than 50% said they used English at home, more than 40% reported they used Spanish at home, and though less than 10% stated that they used Garifuna at home, Garifuna was still spoken by a substantially bigger proportion of the population than any of the other eleven languages that were referred to by the interviewees.

Though some efforts have been carried out to change the negative conceptualization of Belizean Creole, such as those undertaken by the National Kriol Council, many informants still see Belizean Creole as a dialect of English and not as a language in itself. Belizean Creole is still associated with lower socio-economic class, and this is stressed by an economically advantaged elite in Belize which Schneider (2017) states that the population refers to as ‘Royal Creoles.’ Prototypical Royal Creoles are people of mixed African and other ancestry, whose children usually attend prestigious schools often administrated by U.S. religious institutions, and who gravitate towards American identificational patterns in their clothing, consumption, and even their linguistic behavior. Therefore, the higher the social class, the more typically disconnected one is from Belizean national values and the more connected one is to mainstream U.S. values. Therefore, Belizean Creole as a language is usually thought of in relation to English.

Though Schneider (2017, p. 14) refers to a local prestige associated with Belizean Creole, more overt prestige is enjoyed by English, which is linked in people’s minds with education and social mobility. But not all Belizeans have access to English, despite the fact that English is the official language of Belize and is the one in which most media is broadcast. According to Schneider (2017, p. 15), it is by means of Standard American English that social mobility is

usually achieved. The majority of the population, however, does not master this variety since it is not necessary for jobs in the local economy. In addition, Belizean Creole is strongly associated with people who are raced as black, which, according to one of her interviewees, is also a marker of being Belizean in the popular perspective. That is to say that someone in Belize who does not look either of African descent or of Latino descent is often assumed to be a foreigner.

However, being raced as white is no longer primarily associated with British colonists but instead with being a tourist, so that Belizeans who are more European-looking frequently need to prove that they are not tourists. One way to do this is speaking Belizean Creole (Schneider, 2017, p. 16). Moreover, as stated by Schneider (2017), “Kriol is simultaneously linked to constructions of class, race, and national belonging [so that the] kind of national identity that is indexed by Kriol does not necessarily include the Belizean upper classes” (p. 16).

Belizean Creole is popular even though it is used at home by only some 30% of the overall population, according to the Statistical Institute of Belize (2011). Beyond its ethnic associations, Belizean Creole prevails in the country as a language of unity. This status threatens other Belizean languages under the ideology of ‘one nation, one language’ to such an extent that, at a high school where Schneider (2017, p. 17) conducted her research, “virtually all students were eager to confirm - with a large smile on their faces - that they spoke Belizean Creole. This is despite the fact that the majority (about 90%) regard themselves as being of Mestizo ethnic background.” Because of this prestige, according to Schneider (2017, p. 17), there have been movements that subscribe to a European modernist ideology who want to make Belizean Creole a ‘real’ language with a dictionary and a grammar book. The National Kriol Council’s activities are covered by the media and their organization supports the use of Belizean Creole as a written language. Nevertheless, some of Schneider’s interviewees opposed the standardization of

Belizean Creole, saying that it goes against the very nature of the language which instead fosters individuality and creativity. According to one of her informants, Belizean Creole is different from what people in Belize refer to as Standard English or ‘proper English.’

Gómez Menjívar and Salmon (2018) point out that little has been discussed about how a minority language such as Belizean Creole can displace other minority languages. The language ideologies that promote Belizean Creole view the language as one that embodies “resistance to Western, modernist, colonial ideals of standardization, logocentrism, and linearity” (Schneider, 2017, p. 19). Belizean Creole has multiple meanings simultaneously (Schneider, 2017, p. 21) because of the different discourses it is associated with. While indexing national belonging and authenticity, Belizean Creole also indexes working class membership and is linked to racial subordination and slavery. All of this stands in juxtaposition to ‘proper’ English, which is the language of formality and the world outside of Belize.

Because Belizean Creole is still stigmatized in some ways, the language itself might eventually suffer from language shift. Salawu (2015) points out to the fact that, even in a context of broad plurilingualism such as in West Africa, language shift is evident in some ways:

Meanwhile, there are newspapers being published in indigenous languages of Africa, but are critically suffering from low awareness and patronage Coker (1968) says *Iroyin Yoruba* (Nigeria), established in 1945, was the widest read weekly in the 40s. Gradually, however, the people who are supposed to be the readers became more and more anglicized, and, therefore, jettisoned the reading of the indigenous language newspapers. Salawu (2006a) notes that the story of indigenous language newspapers rising and dying is the same across most parts of Africa. In 1930, there were 19 registered African language newspapers in South Africa. They included the isiXhosa *Imvo Zabantsundu* and

Inkundla ya Bantu. Today, most of those newspapers are non-existent. As recently as 1990s, there used to be newspapers in fifteen Ghanaian languages; today, there is none. (Salawu 2006b, in Salawu 2015, p. 7)

Salawu (2015) is aware of the decline of indigenous language presence in communication media. Undoubtedly, this is a negative effect of globalization, by which speakers reject their native languages in favor of the use of the colonial language, which they justify in the name of reaching larger audiences. The presence of these languages in the media dates back to the first half of the 20th century, indicating literacy in these languages at that time as well. While there are organizations devoted to language preservation in Belize, the Garinagu must rely mainly on themselves to foster linguistic transmission. Ramos (2008) reports on such efforts to preserve the language at an international level:

Under International Law it is the responsibility of all governments to facilitate, accommodate and assist the indigenous people like the Garifuna to preserve their languages. Most countries have signed on to these international agreements like St. Vincent, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Belize and the United States. Yet, they have no program in place for the Garifuna language and other ethnic languages. In order for we the Garifuna people to learn how to speak, write, read and analyze our Garifuna language in the countries where we live, we must do the following things; continue to speak and teach our language to our children at home, open schools in all of our communities to teach our people how to speak, write, read and analyze our Garifuna language, bring a case against the governments in all the countries where we live who signed Treaties, Conventions, ILO-169 and other International Agreements to teach our language in the schools, interact with Garifuna people who live in other communities and

countries to conduct language workshops and symposiums, establish an International Garifuna Language Institute (IGLI) with representatives from all the countries where we live to be responsible for the preservation, promotion and protection of our language.

(para. 6)

Language Preservation

Garifuna activists have stories of many personal initiatives regarding language preservation. Most are optimistic and have hope for the preservation of Garifuna language and culture. In order to achieve this, they actively participate in a number of projects, which, importantly, require the participation of the community, pointing out elders as being a very significant source for language transmission. In this regard, Hermes, Bang, and Marin (2012, p. 387) discuss the challenges of the transmission of the Ojibwe language in terms of being learned as a second language:

In part due to a lack of learning opportunities and materials, those who have acquired proficiency usually have learned through a combination of a master/apprentice method, language classes, and teaching. With only a handful of young proficient speakers (not all of whom are teachers), there is an urgent need to condense the alleged five to six years it takes to make a heritage language learner highly proficient (B. Fairbanks, personal communication, April 2012).

In Hopkins, though Belizean Creole is present in the village, the Garifuna language is still fostered by some members of the community, with the elders playing a very important role in terms of language transmission. Garifuna activists are committed to fostering and preserving Garifuna cultural repertoires. Their efforts have played a key role in teaching and transmitting these repertoires to the youth, and thus have been instrumental, not only in undoing some of the

stigmatization of all things Garifuna that has taken place over the past decades, but also in making Garifuna culture a very visible and emblematic symbol used by the government to promote Belize as a culturally diverse nation and tourist destination. These activists often make reference to their personal experiences to comment on the stigmatization of the Garinagu and their lifeways, as well as on the resilience which has typified the responses of the Garinagu to marginalization and their efforts to overcome it. To give up is not an option in their perspective, and they therefore see resilience as part of an ongoing process of identity reassertion.

One of the elements of this reassertion of identity is language. Though there might be a sense of language loss, there is still the recognition of certain places as strongholds of Garifuna culture. Kanters (2011, p. 45) refers to Palacio when identifying spaces of Garifuna cultural struggle which include home villages, urban areas, and global spaces. While many villages are prominently Garifuna, this may not be so obvious in urban environments. Dangriga is considered an urban space by Garifuna in some of these villages, though the only place in the nation that is generally considered to be a city is Belize City, which has traditionally been seen as a Creole-dominant setting. Globally, it is in the diaspora (and most prominently in that of the United States) where the Garinagu have to struggle to keep their culture alive. In terms of diasporic experience, the current wave of Garifuna out-migration from Central America is generally understood as the latest in a series of diasporic movements, which include the expulsion at the end of the 1700s of the great majority of Garinagu from St. Vincent to Central America. Interestingly, it was this diasporic wave of Garinagu that arrived in Central America at the dawn of the 19th century that kept the language and culture alive while they eventually faded away thereafter in their native St. Vincent.

However, in Belize at least, there seems to be a sense of cultural gradation depending on where one is from. As Kanters (2011, p. 46) states, “Being from Hopkins thus makes one more Garifuna than being from Dangriga, even when in both cases the parents are Garifuna themselves.” It is remarkable that this graded understanding of culture is not as evident in the context of current diasporic movements to places like the USA, but instead within Central America itself. This may point at both the significant loss of Garifuna linguistic and cultural repertoires faced by certain communities in Belize and the rest of the region, as well as to the potential role that communities which are identified as strongholds of Garifuna language and culture in promoting a Garifuna renaissance in the face globalization, Western ideologies, and other factors identified by Schneider (2017).

Pluri-linguistic contexts have been usually regarded by academics trained in the Western tradition through a lens which highlights rivalries and negative interference between languages, thus rendering invisible the actual cognitive benefits of speaking more than one language. Gauvain and Munroe (2012, p. 216) underscore the potential of language competencies in more than one language to complement each other in multi-lingual settings and classrooms. Even though Garifuna may not be the native language of all Garinagu, acquiring higher levels of literacy in Garifuna during adulthood has been shown to provide both cognitive and effective benefits, in accordance with the observations of Dehaene et al. (2010):

Yet, not to misconstrue our claim as one in which some peoples are inherently smarter than others, we suggest there is one area of cognitive functioning where all groups appear to be equal in both competence and performance, and that is in the use of spoken language. Languages, though varying greatly, are all highly complicated, yet all ‘normal’ individuals learn and readily speak their native tongues. Thus, to us the relevant

distinction seems to be that of equal potential versus the degree of realized competence and performance, and that is where, in this context, an invention like writing, makes some difference. As Macaulay [2011] has pointed out, even while stressing some of the disadvantages of writing, '[T]he writer has to guard against miscommunication by trying to avoid ambiguity or anything else that might mislead the reader' (p.164), and 'Written texts are static and durable. If you did not grasp something, you can go back and read it again' (p.163). In other words, writing and reading amount to an added-on cultural complex, what Tomasello [1999] might call a ratchet effect, a facilitator that enhances individuals' universal capacity for symbolic communication. Despite some cross-cultural research indicating that literacy is not necessarily transformative in its effects on cognition [Berry & Bennett, 1989; Scribner & Cole, 1981], recent research using magnetic resonance imaging suggests strongly that learning to read, even when literacy is acquired in adulthood, 'entails beneficial modification of cortical maps, including sharpened receptive fields and neuronal tuning curves...' (p. 1359)

Some Garinagu emphasize the importance of literacy for linguistic preservation and list various efforts being made in that direction by educators in Punta Gorda and elsewhere. They also observe that some promoters of the language have conducted Garifuna language quiz contests and that there was a TV broadcast on Dangriga Cable about Garifuna language teaching, as well as a radio broadcast on Hamalali Radio. They identify other examples of preservation, both linguistic and culturally, in the form of the Miss Garifuna contest, conducted entirely in Garifuna language.

When discussing the identificational factors, some Garinagu comment that when one is raced as Black but has a Latino last name, one is almost automatically assumed to be Garifuna.

They point out that the stigmatization and repression of Garifuna linguistic and cultural repertoires has had unavoidable consequences.

Although it has served in some cases to be a place where discrimination against the use of Garifuna has been experienced by some, the home has also been a place of refuge from discrimination against Garifuna for others. The family is not only a key locus for initial linguistic input, but it is also a locus for cultural input. Gauvain and Munroe (2012, p. 206) contend that it is very important to bear in mind that, in the Garifuna context, regardless of language proficiency, the culture is fairly alive and does not show any signs of fading away, and this cultural resilience has an impact on linguistic resilience as well:

When children participate in cultural activities, they are introduced to conventional ways of thinking and acting. Cognitive development is not determined by these experiences, however. The social world is a dynamic and mutually generated context in which children are active participants. Thus, children do not passively assume the cultural conventions that are introduced to them over the course of socialization (Gauvain & Perez, 2007). Rather, cognitive development emerges from the transactions children have with the symbols, tools, and members of their culture. In other words, these transactions do not simply expose children to external stimuli to which they learn to respond; they carry cultural meaning and as children engage in activities which construct, negotiate, and then carry forward this newly acquired meaning in their own actions. This process happens when the child works alone or with another person or persons aided by the tools and artifacts of the culture. It is a microgenetic process in that learning emerges over a certain period of time in a particular context. During learning children adopt, adapt, discard, or replace the conventional ways of thinking and acting of their culture.

Though many Garinagu are aware of the phenomenon of Garifuna language decline, they still point out other factors to consider that highlight its vitality. McCarty and Romero-Little (2008), when studying young Navajo adult perspectives regarding Navajo language proficiency, found that these young people's self-perception and self-evaluations tended to be higher than what one might estimate based on the academic literature. They also found, however, after administering diagnostic tests to measure these young people's proficiency in Navajo, that their self-evaluations were substantially accurate. This means that, in spite of the lack of evidence for conventional vertical Navajo language transmission, the language was still being learned by the younger generations. This compares favorably with Ruiz Álvarez's (2009) findings in terms of Garifuna language acquisition in Honduras, which pose similar challenges to traditional Western paradigms and models for language acquisition. McCarty and Romero-Little (2008) come to the following conclusions:

To the surprise of some school staff, formal tests of secondary school students' Navajo language abilities showed the youth's self- and peer- assessments to be on target, with 85 percent of students tested demonstrating age-appropriate proficiency on a local assessment administered in the spring of 2004. The divergent youth-adult responses in interviews nonetheless signify local perceptions of language vitality that have important implications for language choices. A bilingual adult who believes that the child to whom she or he is speaking has little knowledge of or is indifferent to the Native language is likely to address the child in English. For their part, youth may possess greater Native language proficiency than they manifest, "hiding" it out of shame or embarrassment. The net effect is to curtail opportunities for rich, natural, child-adult interaction in the heritage language and to reproduce a de facto language policy: "No Navajo spoken here." (p. 166)

As mentioned above, local perceptions of language vitality do have implications for language choice. Though cognizant of the fact that there is less traditional language transmission happening now than before, some activists are quick to also mention the fact that young people are now using the language in new non-traditional contexts, such as the international popular music scene and the electronic media that sustain it. In this way, Garifuna realities have extended to other contexts, such as the world stage, where Garifuna music is now well known. Thus, the increased 'horizontal' or 'vertical' linguistic input from Garifuna musicians may to some degree be compensating for decreasing 'vertical' input by parents in the home. Garifuna musicians have become role models for Garifuna youth today, and their cultural influence has linguistic ramifications.

One of the key persons involved in Garifuna cultural transmission in Belize is Joshua Arana. Arana is keenly aware of ongoing debates concerning the genesis of Garifuna culture and language, and adds that some of these competing theories could be reconciled to some extent by changing our gaze from one that insists on identifying a single source for Garifuna culture and language, to a gaze that allows for a multiplicity of sources within a pluri-cultural and pluri-linguistic matrix of factors whose influences extend from the pluri-cultural and pluri-linguistic repertoires and practices of pre-colonial peoples in the Caribbean and Africa, all the way up to the pluri-cultural and pluri-linguistic repertoires and practices of the Garinagu in the present (Heritage Education Network Belize, 2021).

This plurality may be enhanced or curtailed by technological developments, specifically those related to digital media. Though not available to the whole population, digital media still have a substantial and increasing impact on culture and language everywhere. Gauvain and Munroe (2012) highlight the important role that technology plays in contemporary society,

stressing that technology is not static. Instead, it is constantly undergoing processes of revision and updating, which have effects on language as well.

[A]s many individuals in today's society tend to understand, the vast collective knowledge possessed in the postindustrial world system is constantly undergoing both enlargement and a degree of revision, that is, it is subject to change and to continual questioning, processes often available through some mediated form. Here, it is worth noting that the lexicon of industrialized societies now includes a specific term, 'googled', to describe a way of looking up information when one does not know the answer first hand. (p. 216)

If used appropriately, technology might eventually end up being beneficial to the preservation of Garifuna cultural and linguistic repertoires and practices. Garifuna activists mention current efforts aimed at preserving and celebrating Garifuna culture where technology is already playing an important role, not just in acknowledging and valorizing Garifuna culture, but also in fostering self-confidence and personal growth. Neti Harwati (2018) summarizes some of the efforts taking place to preserve the Javanese language. Recognizing the importance of building self-confidence, some of the language teaching methodologies used in these initiatives not only incorporate aspects of Javanese culture, but also incorporate competitions in which students have to put maximum effort into learning and performance:

Local languages, as one of important elements of culture, need to be preserved and promoted in order to manage the possible negative effects of globalization. The central phenomenon upon which this was based relates to ... creative ways of teaching Javanese language Indeed, the teachers at SD Bernardus [elementary school] have introduced new forms of Javanese language teaching methods and they also play an important part in

spreading these trends. More specifically, the phenomena addressed included the use of realia, traditional games and songs to teach Javanese language and the support from the school principal as well as the local government to preserve this local language. The elementary school is located in a rural area and has a desire to maintain local values. As such SD Bernardus, clearly has been attempting to give a greater access to the students to learn Javanese language and culture through formal and informal patterns. It is hoped that the students will be able to learn local culture values. As young generations, they will become agents of society who decide what elements of culture should be maintained. (p. 41)

In this way, the younger generation is granted agency in cultural (and linguistic) transmission.

Some are concerned regarding the Garifuna linguistic situation in other countries, with Andy Palacio expressing his worry in a song, where he questioned who was going to carry the Garifuna culture into the future. Garifuna activists often acknowledge people close to them who insisted on transmitting the Garifuna language to the younger generation, a testimony of how some people are contributing to language preservation within their spaces. Reversing language decline might seem to be an uphill battle, but Garinagu activists see collaboration as a key means through which linguistic and cultural preservation can be achieved, not only in the case of the Garinagu, but for other indigenous peoples in Belize as well, and many of them have been vocal in raising the issue of language policy.

Many Garinagu emphasize that Garifuna people tend to be ‘versatile,’ which is pertinent to the issues of pluri-linguality, pluri-culturality, and pluri-identification addressed in this thesis, which argues that the Garinagu have drawn on multiple sources in the process of constructing their linguistic, cultural, and ethnic repertoires. We argue that this versatility predates European

Invasion, and has persisted throughout the post-Invasion era, adapting creatively to each particular set of circumstances in which the Garinagu have found themselves. This versatility has proved to be a very viable and successful strategy, allowing the Garinagu to survive and to thrive, with their numbers increasing from some 3,000 deportees to Roatan at the end of the 1700s to over 300,000 today, as well as with Garinagu playing a prominent role in the corps of interpreters on St. Vincent in the 18th century, and a prominent role in the formation of the professional classes of several Central American countries in the 20th century.

Many Garinagu are very aware of their historical, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic background, as well as of the fact that the Garifuna language is endangered. That said, there are still many people who speak Garifuna, and this makes it all the more urgent that educational programs (at all levels from primary to tertiary), materials production units, and other support systems be put into place now, while the language still has a decent chance of surviving.

Addressing the issue of technology, many Garinagu observe how it could be either beneficial or harmful, depending on how one uses it. Well used, technology provides an opportunity to promote the language and culture. In addition, it provides an opportunity to create language apps which may be tailor-made to the needs of both native and non-native speakers. An example of the potential harm that might be done by technology is its ability to distort the representation of the Garinagu by promoting non-representative characterizations of their linguistic and cultural repertoires. A simple though important step taken by some Garinagu, such as Roy Cayetano, is to encourage the use of Garifuna language in social media so that people have a chance to use it in the public domain on platforms that have a large audience.

During an interview conducted by DJ Labuga on the GAHFU YouTube channel in 2015, a listener asked Roy Cayetano what he thought about members of other ethnic groups who

exclude Garinagu for not speaking their languages. Roy Cayetano answered by encouraging speakers of Garifuna to share their language and saying that to restrict the use of Garifuna to the Garinagu in order for others to not understand what is being said, “is a recipe for it [the language] to die,” making reference to a spiritual principle which stipulates that when you care for something you must give it. “If we want our language to increase, we can’t keep it locked to ourselves.” In this way, Roy Cayetano appealed to generosity, encouraging his community to be open, recognizing that intermarrying and being inclusive is something that has characterized Garinagu for centuries.

Language and Education

The indigenous languages of the Caribbean have faced fierce opposition to their inclusion in academic research and teaching at universities in the region, due largely to the persistence of colonial and neo-colonial dismissal of indigenous peoples and their lifeways as ‘inferior,’ ‘backward,’ or ‘irrelevant.’ The Garifuna language has not been exempt from this tradition of colonial neglect. But in order for languages such as Garifuna to gain a foothold in universities and other levels of education, many Garinagu stress the need for thorough planning, including teacher training, effective language teaching methodologies, and materials. They also express their openness to input and support from governmental and educational institutions.

Guettler (2019, Para. 25) discusses how language and educational policy might be considered in Belize, especially in relation to the formal education system:

Policy change must happen so that the people ... can have social justice and equal access [through measures] that allow schools to teach students not only in English but also support teaching in the native languages represented in the classroom by offering opportunities for cultural celebration, historical exploration, and language study in efforts

to preserve the minority languages in the area ... [A]n educational policy that creates pathway opportunities for students to develop skills to become teachers could result in developing teachers with real training and expertise to continue to develop current and future students. Teachers in Belize without real educational training are a major issue in the Belizean educational system (Crooks, 1997). If students could have an option to train as a student-teacher, instead of leaving school to work, this option could create new prospects to develop Belizean people from the classroom as students to the classroom as teachers. Furthermore, these educational pathways could be developed such that students are empowered to learn how to teach in a variety of languages to a diverse student population.

Yet support from government and formal education is not sufficient for the protection of endangered languages because, in the final analysis, their survival depends more crucially on informal use. An optimal situation would be where formal venues such as school and informal venues such as the home complement each other in promoting the use of indigenous languages. Hermes, Bang, and Marin (2012) discuss how home and school discourses are often at odds with each other, even in the case of non-endangered languages. Teaching a language formally in the academic context cannot in itself be considered a panacea in language revitalization efforts:

The long-standing home-school cultural continuity gap is not just one of culture but also of discourses. Viewed in this light, revitalization programs conducted within the school context can only be expected to be a partial solution to language revitalization. Without socially situated contexts in which to speak the Indigenous language, schools can only attempt to create a one-way bridge to home. Immersion schools are not designed to teach adults to learn to speak the language at home, and things like standards and expert

curriculum knowledge limit the curriculum re-creation process, which is regulated by state control, unless it is a private school. In contrast, Ojibwe revitalization strives to reconnect the school, community, and land through the Indigenous language in very place-specific and localized ways. Would it be better to invent new Ojibwe words to describe educational, standardized concepts like “triangle” or to challenge the standards to accept the Ojibwe morphemes of shape? (p. 388)

Likewise, Romaine (2007) establishes that formal education by itself is not the solution to language endangerment. Using the case of Irish, she warns against neglecting natural environments for language revitalization.

Revitalization activities of these various types, however, will not save languages without firm community foundations for transmission. There is an important distinction to be made between learning a language in the artificial environment of the classroom and transmitting it in the natural environment of the home. Schools in Ireland have achieved most of what can be expected from formal language education, namely, knowledge of Irish as a second language acquired in late adolescence. They have not led to its spoken use in everyday life, nor its intergenerational transmission. Nowhere have language movements succeeded if they relied on the school or state to carry the primary burden of maintenance or revival. (pp. 124-125)

In a similar way to the assertion made by many Garinagu that we must not lose sight of the fact that the Garifuna language is still being used, Hermes, Bang, and Marin (2012) discuss the importance of taking in consideration that indigenous languages such as Ojibwe are still alive, as well as the importance of deploying indigenous cultures, lifeways, and views on interpersonal relations in language revitalization efforts:

The idea that Ojibwe and all Indigenous languages are *alive* extends and frames language work in a way that is not possible when we only imagine that our languages are dying or that language is simply academic content. In order to proceed with language projects, we start with an acknowledgment of that relationship and continue to remind each other throughout the collaboration of this grounding. This is done, for example, through humor, offering food and tobacco, leaving room for flexibility and spontaneity, or being ready to turn off cameras whenever an elder requests it. This framework of relationship and reciprocity is embodied in practices of inclusion rather than hierarchy and exclusion. (pp. 389-390)

Since language revitalization projects often go hand in hand with language documentation projects, there are many situations that arise where there is a clear need to prioritize revitalization over documentation. This is particularly the case with the elaboration of didactic materials, as noted by Hermes, Bang, and Marin (2012):

For example, producing educational materials that are able to be distributed and consumed by learners immediately can seem to be in direct competition with approaches that embed documented conversations for this project, the “documentation” perspective would drive us to record long conversations (one to three hours long), which then could take many hours to transcribe, annotate, and analyze. The more resources we devote to highly specialized transcription software and deeper linguistic analysis, the less time and resources we have for the creation of practical teaching materials, and the less accessible are the conversations for community consumption. The process of documentation and transcription specialization can systematically remove the language from use by community members, allowing only those employing high levels of academic discourse

the ability to engage with knowledge production. In this instance, the revitalization perspective suggests recording shorter conversational videos (or ones that could be edited to around three minutes) more quickly and, basically transcribed, putting them into a used-friendly format and then distributing them immediately for use in classrooms or by learners. (p. 390)

Everyone agrees that, with or without official support, the Garinagu have to rely mostly on themselves to foster their culture and language. Andrew Castillo, for example, works with a team of Garinagu who share this goal, such as some people in Hopkins who are teaching Garifuna to children and others. He also promotes Garifuna culture by inviting those Garinagu who live in urban areas to visit Garifuna communities from time to time. In a radio interview on station Love FM in 2021, Andrew Castillo explained Garifuna philosophy in this way: “what it basically means is each one for each one. In other words, we help one another. That is our philosophy, as a culture, as a people.” According to this philosophy, everyone must do their best to ensure that every Garifuna person feels at home in their community. Communal practices are still at the core of the Garifuna perspective. This surpasses borders, for example, when the NGC in Belize denounced the Honduran government for the kidnapping of Garifuna leaders there in 2020 (Channel 5 Belize, 2020).

In a television interview on Channel 5 Belize in 2019, Dr. Gwen Nuñez-González said that:

One of our challenges is that the younger generation were biological Garinagu, but linguistically they were not Garinagu; they're Kriol. So, they lost their ancestral language. And so, I ventured in fun ways. I said let me find creative ways of igniting the interest. And it's working.

Then, after stating that she used games as a teaching strategy, she presented *Iáwaiü*, a game that she had created with pictures. Dr. Nuñez-González is both operating manager and member of the Executive of the Board of The Yurumein Project, whose project mission is “to teach the Garifuna language to those who identify as Garifuna in all parts of the world, including St. Vincent and the Grenadines. We envision a people rooted in their identity, fluent in their language, competent in every aspect of their culture, and thriving in their daily lives” (The Yurumein Project, 2022). The project website presents timetables for Garifuna classes and activities and links to other social media networks where they have a page of the project as well.

Gotto (2021) reports on how the Garifuna language is taught as a second language in Punta Gorda, Roatán, in Honduras. These classes, which are offered every 15 days, include Garifuna music, which is, according to Gotto (2021), a good way to preserve Garifuna culture and make it attractive for younger people (p. 384). Though older people do speak Garifuna, the language has not been transmitted to the younger generation. According to the teacher who takes part in this initiative, the main goal is to assure that future generations still speak Garifuna in Roatán. The methodology of the class follows these steps: first Garifuna music is played, followed by alphabet practice, numbers, greetings, phonetics, a dialogue, and a vocabulary quiz. At the end of each class, homework is assigned on Garifuna vocabulary and more Garifuna music is played, this time in order to teach Garifuna culture as well as the language (p. 385). Gotto (2021, p. 386) believes that using music to teach youngsters shows the importance of music in Garifuna society, especially as a way to preserve culture. As a matter of fact, the author himself (Gotto, 2021, p.387) attests to how music helped him when learning Garifuna phonetics, morphology, and lexicon.

King (2018) describes Marine Conservation without Borders (MCwB) as a nongovernmental organization that “translates scientific ideas into oral languages that currently lack words to express such concepts” (p. 25). King (2018) states that:

MCwB’s mission is to bring conservation science to people in and on their own terms so they may more easily understand it and use it in their lives. This approach provides Indigenous and historically marginalized language groups new tools to foster civic engagement in conservation issues. (p. 27)

Robert C. “Robby” Thigpen, MCwB’s Executive Director, started to visit Belize in 2004, where he frequently observed that some of the children were having a hard time with their school assignments. Thigpen did not attribute this problem to the “difficulty of the subject matter, but instead ... to language differences between home and school, between the language people use to talk and that used in textbooks” (King, 2018, p. 25). MCwB is an example of how evolution and innovation need not be at the expense of tradition or indigeneity, and of how they can be mobilized together for the common benefit in a way that does not stigmatize anyone or anything, but instead contributes to the prestige of people and knowledges which have been stigmatized.

King (2018) asserts the importance of language in formal education projects such as the teaching of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), especially in the creation of neologisms:

Putting local languages in school curricula contributes to language and cultural preservation and engages students by elevating their languages and traditional ecological knowledge to an equal place with national languages of instruction and associated knowledge of conservation science Creating authentic and relevant neologisms is important because they are what bring together TEK with scientific concepts in the home language Robby explains that ‘these fishers know these systems intimately,’ but ‘their

traditional ecological knowledge does not always fully account for new and persistent negative external pressures. TEK and scientific knowledge are more powerful together. By bringing them together, people can begin seeing them as equally important perspectives in understanding locally designed issues and problems. In this way, our work functions as a leveling mechanism, flattening historically unequal relationships by explicitly placing communities' TEK and home languages on an even footing with national languages and institutions.” (p. 27)

Because the usual discourses on how endangered languages die have been focused on transmission to the younger generations, older speakers are often dismissed, even though adults may still regularly use the endangered language. Sometimes the focus of language preservation is exclusively on the younger generations, but access to information in ancestral languages must be available to the older generations as well. King (2018) suggests that:

people tend to reject new information when it is presented in a secondary language, especially when they perceive a negative bias and when that bias reflects poorly on their language or culture. Simply put, people tend to reject what they don't understand, especially when they see themselves poorly represented. Students who are more comfortable in their mother tongue may be perceiving language exclusion from a monolingual curriculum as a negative bias, thereby not engaging with subjects in the classroom or even rejecting the content outright. (p.26)

Culture

Cultural Attrition and Transmission

In relation to indigenous groups in Belize, Tanaka-McFarlane (2015) refers to Kroskrity (2000) in underscoring the dynamic plurality of languages, cultures, and identities at all levels, from the largest social units to the individual. As all members of any society have multiple social roles and definitions, they also adopt different linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires that are negotiated, foregrounded, backgrounded, etc. according to the speakers' social encounters. Language ideologies are very much linked to what Tanaka-McFarlane refers to as 'linguistic affects' or emotional understandings of language, which, according to the author, have been barely considered in the language documentation process (p. 50).

Tanaka-McFarlane (2015) observes such phenomena in Belizean Mopan and Q'eqchi Maya communities, where intermarriage may occur, resulting in mixed Mopan-Q'eqchi offspring. Referring to Tanaka (2012), the author claims that in Belizean Mopan communities, because of public school education and English church services, English literacy is relatively high. While Q'eqchi villages promote Q'eqchi literacy among their younger members, this is not so commonly the case in Mopan communities (2015, p. 142). Aware of Mopan language loss, a concern expressed most often by people involved in education is what they see as an apathetic attitude on the part of the Mopan Maya, which they contrast with the attitude of the Q'eqchi Maya, especially in relation to such events as Maya Solidarity Day that took place on June 22, 2014.

Three schools were chosen as pilot schools in a UNICEF sponsored project for intercultural bilingual education in Belize, those of the communities of San José and Aguacate for Mopan and Q'eqchi, and that of the Gulisi community for Garifuna (Tanaka-McFarlane 2015, p. 143). Unfortunately, Tanaka-McFarlane (2015) reported that, when revisiting the San José school, it was found that the intercultural bilingual program had been discontinued there.

The author claims that what is interpreted by outsiders as cultural and linguistic apathy, may be seen by the Mopan themselves as self-identification with Belize as a unified nation and with Belizean Creole as the unofficial national language. In fact, Belizean Creole is the main language used in the cinematic treatment of Mayan myth in “Curse of the Xtabai” (2012) a 100% Belizean produced film in which the Mopan Maya segments have been criticized by Mopan speakers as inaccurate (p. 144).

Referring to Wilk and Chapin (1990), Tanaka-McFarlane (2015, p. 144) notes that Belizean Mopans do not generally retain strong bonds with Guatemalan Mopans while Belizean Q’eqchi do retain family ties with Guatemalan Q’eqchi. On the other hand, while some Mopans do show active engagement in language culture and preservation, they often do so by adopting a purist ideology which stipulates that Guatemala is their homeland, and therefore, Guatemalan varieties of Mopan must be centered at the expense of Belizean varieties of Mopan. That said, the linguistic differences between them are fairly minimal (Tanaka-McFarlane, 2015, p. 144).

Orland Sho, one of Tanaka-McFarlane’s (2015) consultants, sang a song in Mopan Mayan at a live music event on May 24th, 2014 even though the audience was predominantly English, Creole, and Japanese-speaking. This was his first performance in Mopan, having previously performed only in English. Tanaka-McFarlane (2015) observes that

“my observations and many conversations and interviews I had with him to elicit his linguistic biography suggest that engagement in language documentation had a huge impact on his decision [to sing in Mopan] [since] the experience of participating in language documentation brought him back to the moments when he was learning language as a child” (p. 146).

Cultural Preservation

Garinagu are very sharp in recognizing the challenges that they face at any specific time. Nevertheless, they also know the benefits that result from these challenges. Sebastian Cayetano (in Amandala, 2006) states that:

I am very impressed and very happy that finally Belize has fully embraced the Garifuna culture, and I think it's one of our great achievements as a people and as a nation coming of age for the past 25 years The challenge now is for the Garinagu never, ever to abandon their language and their roots and to continue – the idea now is to teach the language and to teach the culture to all Belizeans and that way, we preserve everything for all of Belize and for the world. (para. 42)

Though Belizean Creole is making ever greater inroads into the daily lives of younger Garinagu, Garifuna culture is very much still alive in Belize, with cultural workers, especially young Garifuna performers, continuing to have a great impact on the country despite the fact that the Garinagu make up only a relatively small percentage of the overall population. There are six indigenous communities that live in and around the Sarstoon Temash National Park (STNP) in the Toledo District of Belize, the second largest park in Belize's system of protected areas. Five of these communities, namely Midway, Conejo, Sunday Wood, Crique Sarco, and Graham Creek have predominantly Q'eqchi populations, while Barranco, located on the coast, is the only one that is home to a predominantly Garifuna community (Ch'oc, 2010, p. 29). Ch'oc (2010) observes that these communities that live around the STNP "have ancestral and historical connections to the area, rooted in their economic, social, cultural, and spiritual well-being" (p. 29), and that the isolation this region has experienced has resulted in strong bonds between Garifuna and Q'eqchi Maya there since the Garinagu obtained permission to migrate to Belize in 1823.

The fact that the Toledo District has been the target of many failed environmental and natural resource management projects in the past had disillusioned many of the indigenous inhabitants of the region. Subsequently, these indigenous populations took the initiative to manage the SNTP, engaging in the scientific study of the area as a means to defend their ancestral ties with the land through the creation of the Sarstoon Temash Institute for Indigenous Management (SATIIM). SATIIM has provided opportunities for direct participation by these indigenous peoples in the area's management, and for the promotion of sustainable practices consistent with their cultural identities (Ch'oc, 2010, p. 33).

While the Garinagu have transformed their traditional land tenure system into the type of individual private tenureship which is promoted by the Belizean government, most Mayan groups have resisted this (Ch'oc, p. 30). Before 2007, Belizean law recognized neither Mayan nor Garifuna land tenure in this zone, classifying both groups as non-autochthonous newcomers. In the face of such discrimination, the STNP stands as an example of organization and collaboration. Continuous efforts are being made by the Garinagu and other indigenous peoples to unite to defend their interests over the past century.

Although the Garinagu have been grouped into a single ethnic unit, the fact that they are scattered among four Central American countries and in the diaspora means that achieving consensus regarding the ways in which they envision and create a common future at times represents a challenge. Therefore, the situation among the Garinagu in some ways resembles that of the peoples of Belize, where the quest for a national identity has been a long and arduous one. But while in Belize communities with very different linguistic, cultural, and ethnic repertoires find themselves within the borders of the same nation state, the Garinagu, who share many of the same linguistic, cultural, and ethnic repertoires, find themselves separated by the boundaries of a

number of very different nation states. Brukaber and Cooper (2000) discuss the extent to which what they call 'groupness' might be achievable in a nation such as Belize:

... relational connectedness, is not always necessary for "groupness." A strongly bounded sense of groupness may rest on categorical commonality and an associated feeling of belonging together with minimal or no relational connectedness. This is typically the case for large-scale collectivities such as "nations": when a diffuse self-understanding as a member of a particular nation crystallizes into a strongly bounded sense of groupness, this is likely to depend not on relational connectedness, but rather on a powerfully imagined and strongly felt commonality. (p. 20)

The Garinagu have never seemed to have many problems with feeling belonging and 'groupness' in relation to multiple collectivities simultaneously. Garinagu activists are of the opinion that, wherever their other group loyalties and identities lie, the Garinagu should practice and display Garifuna culture fearlessly, in spite of the centuries during which their lifeways were stigmatized in the past.

A good example of how Garifuna culture is being celebrated in such a way as to promote a sense of belonging is the *Wanáragua* competition, which is celebrated in Dangriga every year. Many Garinagu attest to the positive impacts that they have witnessed as a result of this cultural activity. Very significantly, the rules of the event have been designed in such a way that the *Wanáragua* tradition can be constantly passed on to the younger generations in order to avoid a transmission gap.

Wanáragua is sung in Garifuna, even by those in the competition who have not had the opportunity to fully learn the language. Frishkey (2011) observes how vocality, even in a foreign language, has a distinctive effect on both the singers and the listeners. For example, lyrics that

are strange or up to a certain point unknown to the listener, often help to foster personal growth and emotional pertinence:

... I posit that song, chant and stylised vocals are especially powerful tools for mediating limit experiences because of their double function as music and as utterance. First of all, the very act of uttering, propelled by the caring conviction underpinning its musicality, establishes a self in the world of sound and an ultimately human location for any utterance. Second, music establishes *affectively* that meaning permeates our world when coherence is just out-of-reach, partly by way of the distance *effected* in performance. Lastly, verbalization that is incoherent from the listener's perspective jars closed expectations open in order to forge new pathways out of paradigms no longer relevant to his or her current reality. Considering these elements together, we can better understand how exceptional musical vocality poetically represents limits of coherence as dissolvable, manifesting physically, emotionally, and conceptually as transformations that run the gamut from mild to disruptive. In whatever manifestation, I assert that the experience of 'others' though such vocality renders the self, in both an individual and collective sense, a productive referent that expands in possible meanings. So it would appear, then, that chief among the identities implied when vocal sounds are *strange* or *exceptional* ... is actually a growth of one's own identity *as an agent of meaning*. This is the promise of transformation within strange vocality that lies beneath exploitative representations attending world music. (p. 16)

In this regard, because *Wanáragua* promotes growth of identity among its singers and listeners as agents of meaning making (Frishkey, 2011, p.16), it has proved to be a powerful tool for cultural preservation. A number of Garifuna people are aware of the importance of cultural

preservation, which goes beyond culture itself, since for many indigenous peoples, becoming alienated from one's culture and traditions often leads to becoming alienated from one's land, labor, and subsistence.

As a matter of fact, providing some participation to the youth shares the responsibility and the task of language preservation. McCarty and Romero-Little (2008) point out the importance of taking into consideration young people perspective when conducting research on language shift dynamics:

Carefully listening to youth discourses opens up new understanding of language shift dynamics and new possibilities for language education programs and practices. We are hopeful that these possibilities will continue to unfold and that they will actively involve youth and the generation of young parents, not only as language learners but as language planners, researchers, and educators in their own right. (p. 170)

The Battle of the Drums is a case in point where the youth has become intensely and dynamically involved in the preservation and promotion of Garifuna culture. Many Garinagu are aware that one has to take into consideration that different approaches are necessary to address the diversity within the community. Though they recognize the difficulties involved, Garifuna activists are tenacious in promoting their culture in the traditional Garifuna settlements, inspiring optimism in those who interact with them in these initiatives. According to Means (2021, p.5), "the Garinagu have an opportunity to counter the varied forms of domination they experience through the active speaking of Garifuna and other Garifuna cultural practices."

Culture and Education

A number of Garinagu are concerned about the lack of participation on the part of some Garifuna youth in cultural activities, and they have devoted their efforts to the creation of

cultural activities designed to attract younger people. Because they realize that children play an important role in cultural preservation, they promote Garifuna language and culture among them. Even though Garifuna culture, in comparison to many other indigenous cultures, is acknowledged as being strong and alive, it has not escaped attack from those who have adopted a colonizing mindset, even in recent times. On March 30, 2016, a report in *The Reporter* newspaper pointed out an incident in which Pastor Scott Stirm referred to Garifuna spirituality as witchcraft. Garifuna leaders quickly responded in defense of their traditional spirituality. For example, in a televised news report on Channel 5 Belize, Mr. Cannon Jerris Valentine stated the following:

First of all, let me just say, I am not going into a back and forth with anybody about our spirituality, okay? But, your observation, I would like to extend your observation. Today, our children do not talk our language. Why? Okay. There are many things that our children do not do. Why? Because of imposition on our culture. And the imposition is very strong, very vehement. So that is one of the things that I'd like to say. But having said that, when it comes to talking about our spirituality, I speak from experience: I live it. I do it What I am hearing way out there, [is] not something that they have experienced. It is not something that they know, that they've seen with their own eyes, [it is] of second, third-hand knowledge. I speak from experience. I have seen, I have heard, I have been there. Okay.

Then, Dr. Roy Cayetano follows:

My own thinking is that...the gentleman is irrelevant And his marshalling Garifuna people to speak against their own people is evidence of a serious weakness in the socialization of our people, and the schooling that our people get. Whoever reported to

him was lying. And he perpetuated the lies. I will not characterize it in any other way.

But we have to look at the education of our people and make sure that action is taken to fill in some serious gaps that exist. I am one of those who believe that we have to take greater control of the education of our people. Our people, our culture, our language, our culture has been engaged, we can say, in an unfair competition with the knowledge and the languages, the knowledge and skills from the west. From the time the colonizers came, they established schools, and they established religions. And those are tools that they use to manipulate the minds, the thinking of the people and make them compliant.

We have been victims of that. (Channel 5 Belize, 2016)

Neti Harwati (2018, p. 37) makes similar observations regarding the encroachment of western religions, languages, and cultures on traditional lifeways in Indonesia and emphasizes the need to mobilize people at all levels in efforts to educate the youth in their ancestral practices:

The emergence of western-dominated international culture, the erosion of national identity, traditional values, languages, and cultures in Asian countries, therefore, can be the examples of negative consequences [of globalization]. Indonesia then needs to preserve and promote local cultures, for example local languages. Such an attempt can be initiated through the educational sector. However, it seems that the importance of preserving local languages at an elementary school level in Indonesia is a big unaddressed problem. Most research regarding language and education [has] focused more on the popularity of English among young generation, especially those coming from upper-middle social classes.

Performing the *dügü* is at the core of Garifuna spirituality and its preservation is a key aspect of Garifuna cultural resilience. Frishkey (2011) points out the tight relationship among

language, culture, and spirituality in the ceremony. For example, the climax of the ceremony is still performed in an African language, revealing the nexus between African and Garifuna spiritualities:

This three-to-four-day ceremony is held to appease an ancestral spirit (*gubida*) who feels strongly slighted by one of his or her kin. This neglectful family member subsequently suffers a physical affliction incurable by conventional methods, at which point the patient's family contacts a *buyei*, who may prescribe the production of a *dügü* after conferring with the afflicting *gubida*. The climax of the *dügü* is the *mali* section, during which time the *buyei* circumambulates the temple several times with her rattle and three drummers in order to 'draw down' the *gubida* into the proceedings. According to acclaimed *buyei* John Mariano, the *mali* song repertoire –comprising the most sacred songs of the culture- includes the only Garifuna songs in an African language, Yoruba, which is unknown to most Garifuna.

Thus, despite the opacity of the Yoruba language of the *mali*, most Garifuna intimately understand its status as an ancestral language tying their culture to the ancient past, and, therefore, its importance to bringing *gubida* into the ritual fold via bodily possession of their kin. In the cases of both the Warao *hebu nisayaha* ('curing hebu sickness') and the Garifuna *dügü*, spirits are made present through chanting and song unfamiliar to participants, performed or mediated by shamans. This vocality heals the disunity between cosmological and phenomenological orders that has materialized in a living body, the efficacy of which I attribute to verbal mystery and music widening the field of possible meanings, this enabling a visceral experience of meaning. (pp. 17-18)

The *dügü* ceremony is extremely important for the transmission and maintenance of Garifuna spirituality, community, language, and culture. Harwati (2018, p. 40) observes a similar nexus between education, spirituality, community, language, and culture in the Tritis community on the Indonesian island of Java:

... [T]he society in Tritis has been attempting to maintain Javanese language. The language is even used as a means of communication through cultural activities, such as *merti bumi*. “The term *merti bumi* came from Javanese words, which are, *petri/memetri* (maintain) and *bumi* (earth)” (Harwati, 2013, p. 32). This notion can then be defined as maintaining mother earth or nature, a ritual to maintain the harmony between nature and human beings. The ritual of *merti bumi* is held regularly on the Islamic New Year’s eve and has been handed down from generation to generation. In other words, the attempt to preserve Javanese language through cultural activities is in line with Hauser (1982) and Leicht (2013), who explain that there are always agreements within society on how and what elements of culture need to be maintained, changed, or promoted. In relation to the ritual of *merti bumi*, the interviewees in this study believe that teaching Javanese language can be considered as an initial step to introduce local cultural values to the students. Here, the author is not attempting to predict the future of Javanese language or even Javanese traditional ceremonies. It is important to note, however, that ... young[er] generations ... need to be aware of their duty to learn, practice, and preserve the ritual.

Identity

Marginalization, Monolithic Identity, and Pluri-identification

Even though interethnic marriages involving Garinagu are becoming more and more commonplace in Belize, discrimination and marginalization have persisted up until the present,

as have the tireless efforts of the Garinagu, both individually and collectively, to reclaim their rights and sovereignty. Interestingly, Prescod and Fraser (2008) point out similar processes of language loss and discrimination at work during the colonial history of the Caribs in St. Vincent, even before the expulsion of the Garinagu at the end of the 1700s. They note how, even before the Carib War, there was a process of exclusion taking place, specifically depriving Caribs of political participation:

Nonetheless, as we see it, the Carib situation was one where people of a particular ethnic and linguistic background were deprived of their linguistic rights and explicitly excluded from the political affairs of the territory where they were legitimate citizens. This was achieved chiefly by not making matters concerning the political and social process of nation building available to the Caribs in the language they could understand. In denying them access to the sociopolitical process, they were denied rights and recognition. This had implications for the Carib language and culture given the limited opportunities to interact with others. Any interaction with the British was expected necessarily to be in the English language or some version of it.

Despite occasional raids by Caribs who had escaped exile, the Caribs were no longer a major obstacle to the development of British society and economy [on St. Vincent]. Even so before this, there were strong pressures against the maintenance of traditional practices and there was no record, equal to the mine of documentation secured by the French, of the British attempt to learn or document Island Carib. The Caribs, therefore, were muted and by extension, so was their language. As a result, they were unable to preserve their linguistic heritage beyond the 19th century. This became so particularly with the expulsion of their main culture bearers in 1797. After the eruption of the volcano La

Soufrière in Saint Vincent in 1812, many of them had to be removed from areas in the north because of the effects of this volcanic eruption. They became dispersed, some of them even being forced to migrate to Trinidad then. In situations where the community remained intact in the period after emancipation they began to include freed Blacks. By this time much of the language had disappeared [in St. Vincent] although Ober reported that in the 1880s a handful of the older men and women remembered the original language. (p. 109)

Social exclusion has negative consequences on identificational processes and repertoires. Nas (2002) traces the genesis of such identity crises in the 21st century by making reference to Castells (1996-1998), who observes how globalization and technology have played an important role in the rise of reactionary ideologies:

This means that besides the [ancestral lifeways] conservation approach, which has merits of its own, UNESCO is addressing a more profound problem, namely, the search for identity in a changing world, where many communities are uprooted and searching for new certainties and worldviews. This problem lies at the heart of modern anthropological and development theory [which asserts that] new societal structures have evolved with digital technology and communication. These structures have acquired a network logic, and society is in the process of being transformed into a network society [in which] production, distribution, family, state, politics, and even crime (which is organized increasingly in criminal networks), and the worlds of finance, business, and communication in particular have already become intertwined on a worldwide scale. Globalization has engendered strong developments at the grassroots level, where communities are being uprooted by the influx of new worldviews related, for example to

religion (secularization) and family (different branches of feminism) and job loss due to the transfer of production units to other countries. According to Castells, this has evoked a strong search for identity at the grassroots level that takes the form of reactive and proactive social movements. Reactive movements such as the Aum Shinrikyo in Japan (known for its gas attack in the Tokyo underground) and the ... Militia [Movement] in the U.S.A. foster a resistance identity based on the feeling that people have lost control over their own lives. They revolt against the new social order and construct new identities around primary unities, territorial, religious, or ethnic. Proactive movements such as environmentalism also act against –in this case- environmental degradation, but they have developed some sort of a view on how society could be organized in a new and better way. What is important here is that globalization and localization are creating an identity crisis that generates new forms of identity. (p. 142)

Language and identification have a strong impact on each other. To understand why many Garinagu are shifting towards Belizean Creole, one has to address questions of language attitudes and prestige. Salmon (2015) reports on the relationship between language attitudes toward Belizean Creole and gender. Challenging the manner in which previous researchers have unquestioningly assumed Belizean English to be the prestigious variety in the country, Salmon (2015, p. 2) states that “We do not ask which gender uses more prestige items, but rather are prestige items even defined in the same manner?” Thus, while Belizean Creole may in many cases be accorded low overt prestige when compared to standard English, Belizean Creole is typically accorded high covert prestige. And although Belizean Creole is promoted as the national language of Belize, it is accorded little prestige in the education system, where its use is

officially limited to the explicit contrast of English and Belizean Creole forms, with the goal always being the improvement of students' competence in English, not Belizean Creole.

Salmon (2015) discusses two factors that have propelled the shift from Garifuna to Belizean Creole: 1) a desire by Garinagu to identify with Creole Belizeans as fellow African descended peoples, and 2) a desire by Garinagu to affirm a Belizean Creole identity in order to distinguish themselves from increasing numbers of Spanish speaking immigrants in the country. The data collected by Salmon (2015, p. 11) show that Belize City Belizean Creole is given higher prestige than that of Punta Gorda, by both men and women, which seems surprising, since the variety of Punta Gorda is seen as less traditional and closer to standard English than that of Belize City (p. 14). In line with Udz (2013), Salmon (2015, p. 15) clearly states that an optimal approach to promoting the recognition of Belizean Creole is to incorporate the use and teaching of the language at the primary and secondary levels. Similar interventions appear to be necessary for the other major Belizean languages, including Garifuna.

Referring to Haug and Haug (1994, p. 8) Mwakikagile (2010, p. 82) asserts that the entire Garifuna nation in Nicaragua, Honduras, and Belize has become linked on the internet. In fact, the Garinagu are known for their ability to become 'early adopters' of new cultural, linguistic, and technological repertoires. Gauvain and Munroe (2012, pp. 211-212) found that Garifuna communities on the whole, and Garifuna children in particular, exhibit more openness and ease in acquiring the skills necessary to make maximum use of new technologies from the industrialized world:

The four communities [under study] Garifuna in Belize, Logoli in Kenya, Newar in Nepal, and Samoans in American Samoa, differed geographically and linguistically and, at the time of data collection (1978-1979), had no contact with each other Community

adoption of elements from industrial societies scored both individually (e.g., radios in the home) and at the community level (e.g., postal stations, commercial accommodations), predicted better performance on all measures. In general, the communities that had adopted more of these elements, American Samoans and Garifuna, outperformed the Newar and Logoli children, and the rank correlation between community adoption and overall cognitive performance was perfect ... The unschooled 3-year-olds in Samoa and Belize, the two communities with greater presence of amenities common to industrialized societies, outperformed the Nepalese and Kenyan children of the same age.

Premdas (in Mwakikagile, 2010, p. 102) notes that the Garinagu with whom he had contact stated that their Garifuna identity is not necessarily placed over their Belizean identity but actually runs parallel to it. Observing that Belize is the most heterogeneous society in Central America, Mwakikagile (2010, p. 33) is in agreement with Joseph Palacio (2006) when he argues that Creole and Garifuna Belizeans need to unite in a common effort to value their African heritage, which has been stigmatized in hegemonic colonial and neo-colonial discourse.

Prescod and Fraser (2008) refer to Moreau de Jonnès to show that the precolonial plurilinguistic traditions and practices of the Garinagu persisted into the colonial era, at which time several European languages were also incorporated into Garifuna linguistic repertoires. A countervailing force to this tendency was exerted, however, by the role that the knowledge of indigenous languages could play in helping non-enslaved African descended peoples from being re-enslaved. As the rivalry between the French and the British for control over the southeastern Caribbean intensified during the 18th century, the indigenous peoples of the region found it less and less possible to avoid taking sides, resulting in the phenomenon of 'ethnic soldiering'

whereby the Garifuna who identified the British as more of a direct threat than the French, decided to ally themselves with the latter against the former:

Moreau de Jonnès, who fought alongside the Caribs and the Garifuna in 1795, reported that they understood French very well and even spoke it with ease (1895: 128). It is not difficult to understand why this is so. The Caribs had an understanding of the geopolitics of the region and in particular the enmity between the French and the English. The English appeared the more aggressive in their desire to acquire Carib lands. Being conscious of this, the Caribs forged alliances with the French and actually allowed a limited number of them to settle in St. Vincent. The French, in fact, assisted the Caribs in their struggles with the English in 1763 and 1795-96 and remained their trading partners throughout. ... The Garifuna, we have been told, in order to distinguish themselves from slaves opted to adopt the traditions of the Island Caribs, which probably included the language. This might also have applied to Maroons and others who wanted to set themselves apart from the slaves. (pp. 105-107)

Many Garinagu point out that previous generations, in order to survive after their expulsion from St. Vincent, had to avoid any explicit manifestations of being Garifuna because of the dominant discourses that have demonized African descended peoples in general, and the Garinagu in particular. Covert, and sometimes overt, cultural repression that the Garinagu have had to face in diaspora is a constantly recurring theme. They sometimes break down the resulting erosion of Garifuna lifeways into stages. First, homogeneous Garifuna communities were established in the diaspora. However, for economic reasons, and/or in the quest for economic opportunity, members of these communities had to reach out to other communities, which often led to assimilation and, eventually, in some cases, to the loss of traditional linguistic and cultural

repertoires. Finally, as if it were a wave effect, this assimilation process eventually extended back to majority Garifuna communities themselves.

As noted above, the economic dimensions of the marginalization of the Garinagu in Belizean society have been among the driving forces in the processes of linguistic and cultural erosion. Despite their industriousness and resilience, many Garinagu have found themselves facing almost impossible odds. As is the case for many indigenous peoples worldwide, land tenure is a particularly contentious issue, as the forces of globalization open their traditional territories to invasion by profiteers from outside. Hopkins, regarded by some as a stronghold of Garifuna culture is one such place, and Garifuna activists are committed to fighting against the alienation of Garifuna land there.

The constant struggle against discrimination also manifests itself in many official contexts. Even while contributing actively to the defense of their country, some Garinagu in the Belizean armed forces have found themselves discriminated against for speaking Garifuna. Such abusive treatment has left many Garinagu with an implicit sense of being excluded, not belonging. In any case, many Garinagu, regardless of the discrimination expressed against their Garifuna lifeways, have always been proud to uphold their ancestral traditions, not just by speaking Garifuna, but also by wearing Garifuna clothing.

Identity and Preservation

Garifuna musicians express how music plays a role of utmost importance in their lives, not just in terms of their careers, but also in terms of their own lifelong process of ever-increasing acknowledgment and valorization of their Garifuna cultural and identificational repertoires. Western culture has conceptualized musical theory in a quest to identify abstract, decontextualized ‘universal’ aspects of music, that is, the elements of music that are independent

of embodied physical, social, and cultural experience. Such a disembodied understanding of music allows for the contradictory detachment and distancing that some Garifuna musicians are able to maintain between their music and its cultural roots.

Another factor in the process of alienation is linguistic. While many young Garinagu can sing traditional songs, their limited command of the Garifuna language renders many of the deeper meanings being conveyed by those songs opaque. But as they continue to sing these songs, these deeper meanings find a way into their hearts, minds, and souls, even if they do not understand the literal meanings of the lyrics. Besides, since Garifuna language transmission typically occurs horizontally rather than vertically, these literal meanings may also become transparent for some as their mastery over the language increases during adolescence. Even for those whose Garifuna linguistic repertoires remain limited into adulthood, however, traditional music provides a strong sense of belonging and connection, as Frishkey (2011) observes:

For at least the past millennium of Western European history, music has been simultaneously embraced and denigrated for its ... ability to create both a feeling for and disruption of 'the letter of the Law', in line with the western metaphysical distinction between 'form' and 'feeling' and the privileging of 'form' as the locus of meaning. Moreover, vocality has been the demonstration of this ability *par excellence* in several contexts: in order to ensure that singing not overrun reason, Plato in the *Republic*, St. Augustine in the *Confessions* and Pope John XXII in 1324 all claimed that words render the voice sensical and so should anchor it at all times [On the other hand,] western popular music scholars have championed music's disruptive potential as a means of liberation from the strictures of social institutions (such as governmental and educational systems) and categorizations (such as race, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality), and many of

their discussions have revolved around singers and their contesting uses of the body in performance Hence, scholars' attention to the emancipatory possibilities of music through voice and body appears to stem in large part from the desire to turn to metaphysics on its head, privileging 'feeling' over 'form', or 'body' over 'mind'. (pp. 10-11)

The dynamic interplay between language competence, cultural engagement, ancestral worldview, and emancipatory agendas has been a topic of discussion for those who have engaged in struggles for indigenous language preservation and revitalization. King (2009, p. 97) focuses on such efforts in Maori communities in New Zealand, where the majority of Maori speakers are second language adult speakers. She states that this generation of second language speakers is necessary to produce a new generation of first language speakers. While second language acquisition theories focus on integrative (identificational) motivation versus instrumental (career-related) motivation, she finds these conceptualizations of motivation to be of limited use in understanding the motivations of second-language learners of revitalized languages. Based on her research in Maori communities, King (2009, p. 99-102) identifies four key aspects of motivation to revitalize Maori language: 1) a quasi-religious worldview, 2) New Age humanism, 3) connection with ancestors, and 4) engagement with a Kaupapa Maori philosophy. Some of King's interviewees observed that when they started to learn the Maori language, they started to experience spiritual growth as well, and that rather than feeling responsible for saving the Maori language, it is actually the Maori language which has been their personal salvation.

Concerning the success of programs aimed at second language acquisition of endangered heritage languages, King (2009, p. 106) mentions a number of both internal and external

motivational factors that, in her experience can prove to be of crucial importance, including: 1) the emergence of a group of 'language fanatics' or successful second language speakers who can serve as models and inspiration to others; and 2) heightened awareness among the population of the link between the endangered language and cultural identity. The inclusion of language fluency as fundamental to both individual and collective processes of identificational reaffirmation seems to be what mattered the most in the Maori case.

Here we revisit Brukaber and Cooper's (2000, pp. 7-8) understanding of "groupness" and its relationship to identity. They see identity as an effect of socio-political interactions, which constitute a constant cycle of reaffirmation and/or redefinition:

Understood as a product of social or political action, "identity" is invoked to highlight the processual, interactive development of the kind of collective self-understanding, solidarity, or "groupness" that can make collective action possible. In this usage, found in certain strands of the "new social movement" literature, "identity" is understood both as a contingent product of social or political action and as a ground or basis of further action.

The important part that historical narratives have played in such identificational processes among the Garinagu calls for coming to terms with a host of myths (see chapter 1 of the present work) and questioning the colonial basis for that mythology. For example, when Prescod and Fraser (2008, p. 100) consider the historical context of Garifuna ethnogenesis on St. Vincent, they show that the archaeological evidence does not correspond to the dominant narratives of Garifuna history that have been assumed to be true, not only by most academics, but also by many, if not most, of the Garinagu themselves:

Today, the term Island Carib would suggest the need to underscore the difference between the mainland Galibis and those who migrated to the islands and came in contact

with the Arawaks. Early writers would have it that the Island Carib men were a defiant force and soon caused the assimilation of the Arawakan-speaking Indians. However, according to Allaire (1980b), there is no archaeological proof that confirms that the Arawakan-speaking groups were conquered. Allaire contends that the exact opposite scenario may have occurred following the arrival of the Europeans in the Lesser Antilles. Thus, the colonial and neo-colonial academies have created and have continued to perpetuate understandings of indigeneity that serve to further colonial and neocolonial agendas, with little accountability to any empirical evidence, let alone any accountability to indigenous communities themselves.

All of this has had a devastating effect on indigenous communities, many of whose members attempt to distance themselves from their ancestral lifeways as much as possible, in a desperate quest for social mobility. Dobrin and Sicoli (2018), however, make reference to several studies that point out how language shift may not prove effective as a means for individual upward social mobility. In fact, the only mobility generally in evidence is toward assimilation instead of equality. Belize is in no way exceptional here, and much of the language shift occurring in the country can be attributed in no small way to ideologies that see the knowledge and use of ancestral indigenous languages as an impediment to full acceptance and participation in national society and the national economy:

People's linguistic practices become bound up with the unifying hierarchy of the state, such that linguistic differences "cease to be incommensurable particularisms" and instead come to be interpreted as inferior deviations from legitimate or standard forms of speech (Bourdieu 1982: 54). Imagine a cone on a three-dimensional graph: the further some form of linguistic expression diverges from the standard-language center, the further it falls on

the scale of value (Silverstein 2017: 135). It is this whole cultural system, which Dorian (1998), following Grillo (1989), calls an “ideology of contempt” for non-dominant languages, that has been exported by Europeans throughout the world along with their standardized languages at the top. The symbolic nature of even economically motivated shift is demonstrated by how often “marginalized groups remain marginalized” even after they shift: “There is no convincing evidence that the shift to another language or repertoire yields real –as opposed to imagined or desired- socioeconomic advantages. These ideas operate at the ideological level...[and] are in many contexts not grounded in real economic gains.” (p. 46)

The banishing of indigenous languages from contexts associated with social mobility is mentioned by some Garinagu in connection to a recent case of discrimination against the use of Garifuna language in Belizean banks. In this particular case, it was a Garifuna woman who was discriminated against for asserting her identity through her use of language. Prescod and Fraser (2008, p. 104), referring to Moreau de Jonnès (1895), discuss the role of women in Carib society, which challenges the agentless status usually attributed in the colonial and neo-colonial mythologies, which depict indigenous women as passive victims:

Firstly, we have every reason to believe that the women played a pillar role in the defence of the Carib nation. Although it has been made to appear that the Carib women were totally excluded from men's affairs, it must be stressed that at least one report points to the total involvement of women and girls in military affairs. According to Moreau de Jonnès, women and children were taught to bear arms and did it successfully in the defence of their land. He wrote about two young Carib girls, descendants of the mother of the chief of the Black Caribs, that these little Carib girls equalled the warriors' strength

and intrepidity despite their tender age (1895: 130). Later on, Moreau de Jonnès (177) made mention of the general firearm training of girls. The women's places in the society were well defined, but be that as it may, they were so omnipresent in the life of the men that it is difficult to believe reports that depicted them as entirely servile creatures. The men would take along one woman with them on expeditions. When the men went to the mountains in search of manioc or fruit, they took along their women and children as well (Moreau 1990: 117). Unless it can be proven that the men forbid their wives to participate verbally in these undertakings, then there is nothing to reveal that the women's presence among the Carib men was a purely passive one. As we see it, their mere presence would have presented as many opportunities to pass on their language as there could have existed.

The link between colonial mythologies and discrimination against indigenous linguistic and cultural practices is complicated, not only by discrimination based on gender, but also by discrimination based on race. Many community-based initiatives have been organized as a counterweight to such discrimination, including the Luba Garifuna Museum, which has been key for reaffirmation of cultural identity in Belize City. According to Means (2021, p. 6): “the continuation of Garinagu culture despite various factors negatively impacting relationships between them and other ethnoracial groups in Belize will ultimately be determined by a policy understanding of the complex nature of Afro-descendancy and the acceptance of Black Indigeneity.”

Identity and Education

Identities are closely interrelated with linguistic repertoires in Belize, but in ways that defy the neat one-to-one correspondence that is assigned to them in most of the scholarly

literature. Even today, the predominant theories in education, linguistics, and other social sciences automatically assume the colonial imposition of one language, one culture, and one ethnicity to any given community as the norm, rather than the exception. These biases persist despite the fact that, for almost all of human history and in the great majority of societies throughout that history, this has not been the case. In discussing their linguistic and identificational repertoires, a number of Garifuna activists problematize notions such as ‘native language,’ ‘first language,’ and ‘mother tongue’ in their particular situations, as well as in the case of Belize in general.

The colonial lens through which the indigenous peoples of the Americas and elsewhere have been assigned a ‘language,’ a ‘culture,’ and an ‘ethnicity’ has profoundly affected not only the ways in which non-indigenous peoples have viewed and interacted with indigenous groups, but more tragically, it has also heavily impacted the ways in which many indigenous groups have ended up viewing and interacting with one another. In order to understand how the Garinagu identify themselves, one has to understand how they have been consistently stigmatized by others, and this has exerted an influence on their self-perception. A number of Garinagu are very aware of the weight exerted by this stigmatization on previous generations, which has extended to the Garifuna language, whose current endangerment therefore comes as no surprise to them. Speaking about the proposal for an International Garifuna Language Institute (IGLI), Ramos (2008) identifies these and other reasons why the language is being spoken less and less, as well as reasons why the language needs to be promoted more and more:

This organization should be under the jurisdiction of the Garifuna Nation and it is a needed body to preserve the language, introduce new words, deal with all aspects of the language and to gain worldwide recognition. Once we establish the IGLI, the members of

this organization will be able to do a thorough evaluation of the current state of our language and make recommendations on how to improve, preserve and protect it. In the research I conducted, the late Vilma Roches-Joseph, a Garifuna scholar who did extensive research on our language, said that most of our people do not want to speak our language because of shame and low self-esteem. I also think that we should add the following reasons because it was not spoken to us in our homes which I experienced, acculturation with other ethnic groups, peer pressure in the communities where some of us live, nobody to speak the language with regularly, resentment from other Garifuna people like ourselves who know how to speak it and some of us do not see it beneficial for us to speak. We know what are the problems we face with our language, now is the time for us to come together and fix them. (paras. 8-10)

Garinagu are very aware of how much non-Garifuna people are involved in research regarding their language, society, and culture. While they are also aware that there are some Garinagu involved in Garifuna studies, they feel that they themselves should be more active in carrying out such research.

There is more than one perspective on the African origins of the Garifuna. Prescod and Fraser (2008, p. 101) mention theories regarding the arrival of African descended people to St. Vincent and the rest of the Americas long before the arrival of Columbus:

Even the provenance of the Blacks is a source of contention between historians and ethnologists alike, particularly since Van Sertima's contention that they came before Columbus. The early chroniclers (planters and administrators, but also explorers, seamen, and missionaries) have largely focused on a shipwreck for which different dates are given as the means by which Africans first came to St. Vincent and from whom the Black

Caribs descended. The early settlers chose to emphasise this in order to support their view that the Black Caribs were usurpers.

The question of Garifuna self-perception has become more complex over time, given the plurality of explanations concerning where they came from and who they are now. Brukaber and Cooper (2000, pp. 17-18) explore the complexity of the concept of 'self-understanding':

The term 'self-understanding,' it is important to emphasize, does not imply a distinctively modern or Western understanding of the 'self' as a homogeneous, bounded, unitary entity. A sense of who one is can take many forms. The social processes through which persons understand and locate themselves may in some instances involve the psychoanalyst's couch and in others participation in spirit-possession cults. In some settings, people may understand and experience themselves in terms of a grid of intersecting categories; in others, in terms of a web of connections of differential proximity and intensity. Hence the importance of seeing self-understanding and social locatedness in relation to each other, and of emphasizing that both the bounded self and the bounded group are culturally specific rather than universal forms."

Technology

Technology, Attrition, Transmission, and Preservation

When we speak of technology, we often limit ourselves to digital technology. But there are many new technologies that can be applied to areas associated with traditional Garifuna lifestyles, such as farming and fishing. A key question in terms of the adoption of new technologies by indigenous peoples is one of sovereignty. Traditionally, most indigenous communities have readily adopted new technologies, as long as they could maintain sovereign control over those technologies, that is, as long as those technologies were not allowed to take

control over them. One way of doing this has been to embed such new technologies in traditional lifeways and to insist that those new technologies are put to the service of traditional respect for the physical and social environments that ensure the well-being of all. Throughout their history, the Garinagu have proved to be particularly versatile and adept at finding a way to make new technologies work for them, rather than becoming slaves to new technologies. Garifuna activists acknowledge that there is more to be done regarding technology and Garifuna language preservation. Nevertheless, they stress that Garinagu have to know themselves better in order to know how to best use new technologies to preserve their language and culture. They also feel that it is important for Garinagu to have access to such new technologies to make sure that they can fully benefit from them.

It is worth noting that the status of indigenous languages is decreasing more rapidly than ever due to their general absence in the digital media, even those languages with millions of speakers, such as Hausa in West Africa. Salawu (2015, p. 6) states that there is a symbiotic relationship between language, communication, and media. Because of this, he asserts that the evaluation of language status, given a globalizing political context, has been transformed as the pace of change in the media has accelerated. One of the results of this trend has been that minoritization is now being experienced by language groups that used to be more powerful.

Salawu (2015, p. 14) comments on the absence of African languages in cyberspace:

“Regrettably, many African languages are not present in the cyberspace as many Africans are still not into using their languages for socializing online. It is then of little wonder that research into the use of African languages in the social and digital media are a rarity.”

In the end, it is up to the speakers of indigenous languages to turn technology to their own advantage. Guy Delorme and Jacques Raymond (2000) quote a Nunavut commentator who made a statement which shows the language dynamics taking place in cyberspace:

“We cannot stop the change; we have to adjust, find ways to use these new technologies and to not see them as roadblocks. There are reports now that say that 50% of the Internet content is English, but that it will go down to 8% soon. Let us not forget that it was 100% English at the beginning” (p. 254).

Even though Vyas (2019) notes with great concern that half of the world’s languages will have died by the end of the 21st century, he also points out that, currently, digital tools are in some cases enabling the preservation of these endangered languages:

That said, language activists and polyglots who speak these critically endangered languages are fighting back tooth and nail. Scientists believe that social media apps such as Facebook and YouTube might be our only hope today to preserve some of these quickly disappearing native languages in the online world In the present day, we are bombarded with language mobile applications like Duolingo. Countless other apps are dedicated to teaching individuals these indigenous languages that are quickly getting lost amidst the widely spoken ones such as English, Mandarin, and Spanish In addition to that, some apps even allow people to record their native language, translate it, and then share it with language preservationists and linguists K David Harrison ... believes that in the present times, small languages are heavily relying on social media tools such as text messaging, YouTube and much more to expand their presence and voice in the online world In the same vein, Professor Margaret Noori, the speaker of Anishinaabemowin and a Native American studies expert at the University of Michigan,

says that the indigenous nations of the US and Canada use Facebook heavily. Therefore, the technology essentially helps them in preserving their language and stay connected with it. (paras. 3-11)

Hermes, Bang, and Marin (2012) stress that language preservation requires active community participation, which means that the focus should be on real, everyday language instead of on formal language:

If the goal of revitalization is intergenerational transmission in heritage mother tongues (Fishman, 2000; Hinton, 2009), how can technology and other materials be used to create or re-create discourses that could be useful outside of particular “school talk”? Two essential steps for creating materials for revitalization are to produce them in the community, making heritage language learners an active part of the process, and to capture language in context rather than to artificially construct language for teaching. (p. 389)

Among indigenous groups worldwide, the Garinagu have been among the first to understand the importance of digital technologies and to take advantage of them in their efforts to promote Garifuna language and culture. When searching the term ‘Garifuna’ on YouTube in March of 2020, I was able to access more than 50 Garifuna channels on YouTube, including: 1) Garifuna Tv, which immediately lists 100 songs in Garifuna, English and Spanish; 2) Talento Garifuna, which showcases current Garifuna artistic production; 3) World E. G. G., which helps Garifuna to publish their work; and 4) Being Garifuna POV, which has among its videos an award ceremony where Roy Cayetano received acknowledgement for his work, and where he delivered his acceptance speech in Garifuna. When interviewed by DJ Labuga, Roy Cayetano

stated that “the Garifuna Proclamation was the first ever UNESCO proclamation of intangible cultural heritage” (GAHFU, 2015).

For the categories of relevance, upload date, view count, and rating of the top Garifuna YouTube channels, I obtained the results listed in Table 2, where the first five channels listed for each category are displayed in the order in which they appeared, each one with its number of subscribers and number of videos. The fourth channel listed in the relevance category was not related to Garifuna culture; therefore, a sixth channel was included on the chart to show the first five channels related to Garifuna culture in this category. A hyphen (-) indicates that no data was provided for the number of members or videos.

Table 2

YouTube channels related to Garifuna culture listed in March 2020.

Category 1: Relevance

Channel	Subscribers	Videos
Ofraneh Garifuna	588	79
AURELIO- Garifuna Honduras	126	9
The Garifuna Collective- Topic	360	35
Garifuna	Not related to Garifuna culture	Not related to Garifuna culture
Warasa Garifuna Drum School	40,400	433
Bodoma Garifuna	101	226

Category 2: Upload Date

Channel	Subscribers	Videos
Música Tradicional Garifuna	-	-

Garifuna Ridim	-	-
Garifuna Semety TV	2	1
Kids Teaching Garifuna Culture and Language	14	8
Garifuna Semety TV	1	1

Category 3: View Count

Channel	Subscribers	Videos
Don Juleon	34,400	1,665
Being Garifuna	3,640	140
GAHFU	2,520	518
The Garifuna Collective - Topic	360	35
GxVision	499	199

Category 4: Rating

Channel	Subscribers	Videos
Music from Guatemala, Vol. 2: Garifuna Music	-	-
Garifuna Nuguya	-	-
Garifuna Bayron Aquino	53	4
Garifuna Talent	94	16
Garifuna Garifuna	6	2

When sorting for relevance using YouTube search filters, the first three channels were Ofraneh Garifuna, Aurelio Garifuna Honduras, and The Garifuna Collective - Topic. Filtering by upload

date, heading the list were 1) Musica Tradicional Garifuna, 2) Garifuna Ridim, and 3) Garifuna Semety TV. When sorted by view count, the first three were 1) Don Juleon, 2) Being Garifuna, and 3) GAHFU. Sorting by rating, heading the list were 1) Music from Guatemala, Vol. 2: Garifuna Music, 2) Garifuna Nuguya, and 3) Garifuna Bayron Aquino.

When searching “Garifuna language” in March of 2020, the results sorted by relevance were more than 20. Few of them had the word “language” in their brief descriptions, though. The first three results for relevance were actually the only results listed for of the categories upload date, view count, and rating: 1) GAHFU (2.52 K subscribers, 516 videos), 2) garifunagospelmusic (10 subscribers, 5 videos), and 3) Kids Teaching Garifuna Culture and Language (14 subscribers, 8 videos). The Endangered Language Alliance website (2012) provides general information on Garifuna language, as well as a brief description of its overall structure. In addition, there are links to two videos where Garifuna language is spoken and a list of 146 words in Garifuna. It should be noted that this material was being compiled by members of the Garifuna diaspora living in the United States.

When browsing the Google Play website for apps, when I typed “Garifuna” as a search entry, only four results were related to Garifuna directly: 1) Garifuna App (designed by Jorge Crisanto); 2) Garifuna-English Dictionary (Garinet Media Network), 3) Garifuna Music (by Lawrence Nuñez), and 4) Garifuna (Caribe) (by Wycliffe Bible Translators, Inc.). Likewise, Amazon.com also provides four results related to apps when I typed “Garifuna” as a search entry, namely: 1) a Garifuna-Spanish Translation Dictionary, 2) a Garifuna-English Translation Dictionary, 3) a Garifuna-English-Spanish Translation Dictionary, and 4) Basic Garifuna.

The Garifuna Collective - Topic channel focuses on Garifuna music from Belize and features playlists by the Garifuna Collective, as well by Andy Palacio. The Don Juleon channel

brings together older and more contemporary Garifuna music, as well as informative videos about Garifuna music, alongside other Afro-Caribbean musical hits. The name of the GAHFU channel stands for Garifuna American Heritage Foundation United, Inc. This channel aims to provide not only Garifuna music videos, but also educational videos on topics such as Garifuna language. Their material appears to be updated continuously, including, for instance, a video about COVID-19 in Garifuna. The Warasa Garifuna Drum School channel presents mostly music-related videos, particularly videos that have to do with Garifuna drumming. It is an indication of the openness of Garifuna culture that lessons in Garifuna drumming are designed for both Garifuna and non-Garifuna learners. Garifuna Radio 89.1 FM broadcasts live from Sandy Bay, St. Vincent, and the Grenadines, with primarily contemporary Christian content.

Johnson and Callahan (2015) observe how some Garinagu in the diaspora have come to value their triple identity as Garinagu, Hondurans, and nationals of “their new host country” (p. 96). They note that technology has played a fundamental role in enabling them to maintain and update their Garifuna identity. Many Garinagu also recognize the importance of digital media, but they remind us that it is Garifuna music that more often than not plays a fundamental role in cultural and linguistic preservation. This is even the case when it comes to digital technologies, where key figures in the history of Garifuna music, such as Andy Palacio, still maintain a strong, albeit nostalgic presence.

For most Garifuna activists, music still plays a pivotal role in the promotion of Garifuna language and culture in the digital age, but they insist on the importance of making non-Garifuna foreigners, visitors, and tourists part of this process: Barnat (2017) comments on how technology has been key to the emergence of Garifuna music as a powerful force for the preservation of Garifuna language and culture, both in Garifuna communities in Central America and the

diaspora, as well as on the world music scene since the 1990s. She focuses on the *paranda*, one of the musical genres which has been responsible for the success of contemporary Garifuna music:

Since its apparition in recording studios, 'paranda' evolved into a modern form, appealing to the electrical instruments and characteristic sounds of popular music. Ivan Duran, a Belizean producer, has [promoted and released music by] Garifuna musicians from Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras It is actually its arrival at the recording studio that has helped the 'paranda' genre ... [not only to be preserved but also to] surpass its limits, melodically as well as rhythmically and harmonically Twenty years later, the poles of musical recording have become even more decentralized, with the presence of world music centers in Jamaica, Brazil, Mali, India, and even, though to a more modest level, in Central America ... [where formerly colonized peoples] constantly master new tools, which they adapt to the vision that they have of the world and the image they want to portray of themselves. (pp. 122-132)

Technology and Education

Garinagu activists point out the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating various technologies into their initiatives, and this extends to efforts in the area of education as well. While they acknowledge that, in the Garifuna context, technology has been a great tool for the commercialization of music, they also stress that in order to preserve the culture, there should be authentic cultural displays through technology. An example of the use of technology as a tool for language education can be found on the National Kriol Council website, which posts headlines in both English and Belizean Belizean Creole, explaining the differences between the two languages and showcasing cultural information as well.

Scott (2016, p. 29) offers the example of a video created by young Garifuna students in which the teacher used their fingers to teach the Garifuna word for each number. In addition, the students created a digital audio for an entire workbook. Scott states that such educational strategies could be incorporated into other cultural revitalization initiatives such as medicinal plant identification, documenting drum songs and dances, and recording culinary recipes. A key element in undertakings of this type is the active involvement of community members, especially the youth, who are more likely than researchers from outside of the community to make sure that the information that they collect becomes a part of a dynamic process of revitalization, rather than an academic treatise sitting on a library shelf.

Vyas (2019) mentions the use by indigenous peoples of apps such as Duolingo in their efforts at language preservation, which demonstrate how technology can be harnessed in the interests of these communities:

On the occasion of Indigenous People's Day last year, ... [Duolingo] launched courses in Hawaiian and Navajo, two languages that are on the cusp of extinction with doubts about regarding their long-term survival. Duolingo has been an avid supporter of the cause and has worked significantly towards preserving the profound cultural heritage of lost languages by promoting them on its platform. That said, Duolingo is not alone in this endeavor. Some other startups and companies are committed to helping these native languages live on long after their last few speakers are gone. (paras. 12-14)

Some Garinagu agree that apps such as Duolingo can be used to advance the cause of Garifuna language revitalization. They also emphasize the importance of writing in Garifuna as a way of countering the stigmatization of the language, and they generally acknowledge the use of

Garifuna on social media as another way to embrace ancestral identities using present day technologies.

Albeit the Garifuna language has faced institutionalized discrimination, Gulisi school proves that Garinagu have found their way to counterstrike this pressure. This goes together with the active cultural preservation efforts such as the *Wanáragua* competition. These constant struggles have influenced their self-identification process, which evolves as well as their resilience. The pluri-identification, present at their very ethnogenesis, expands across boundaries that go beyond their traditional geographic settlements. Furthermore, the cyberspace allows Garifuna activism to extend its culture and language to an audience that might have been totally unaware of its existence.

Chapter 4: Conclusions and Implications for the Future

The final chapter of this dissertation focuses first on the future of Garifuna linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires, and then on the implications of its findings for future research in areas having to do with language, culture, and identity in the Indigenous Americas and beyond.

The future of Garifuna linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires

Throughout this research project, the present investigator has been impressed time and time again by the determination of the Garinagu to preserve, maintain, and perpetuate their ancestral lifeways. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, efforts toward the revitalization of Garifuna linguistic, cultural, and identificational practices continue unabated. This is well illustrated by the vision, mission, objectives, and goals of the Yurumein project, which was launched in 2020 at the height of the health emergency. In the words of its leadership:

At The Yurumein Project, we envision a people rooted in their identity, fluent in their language, competent in every aspect of their culture, and thriving in their daily lives. Our mission is to teach the Garifuna language and culture to those who identify as Garifuna in all parts of the world, including in our ancestral homeland, Yurumein, St. Vincent, and The Grenadines.

The objectives of the SCEC/SVG Yurumein Project are as follows:

- ❖ To establish Garifuna language institutes in Belize as well as all countries where Garinagu reside.
- ❖ To honor our Ancestors and our Elders and keep Garifuna traditions alive.
- ❖ To teach the Garifuna Language, Music, Culture, Drumming, Poetry and Dance to the Garifuna Youth in Belize and St. Vincent and The Grenadines.

- ❖ To expose Garifuna Youth of Belize to the home of their Ancestors and to teach them their history.

- ❖ To secure Balliceaux on St. Vincent and The Grenadines as a sacred space for all Garinagu.

As our Yurumein Project advances, it is expected that:

- ❖ The Garifuna language will be prevalent in Garifuna communities countrywide.

- ❖ Our cultural traditions of honoring our Ancestors and Elders will be a regular occurrence.

- ❖ Students of Belize as well as St. Vincent and The Grenadines will be versatile in all aspects of the Garifuna culture, including speaking of the Garifuna language, singing Garifuna songs, dancing to the rhythm of the various genre of Garifuna music, playing the Garifuna drums, reciting Garifuna poetry.

- ❖ Belizean students as well as students in St. Vincent and The Grenadines will be able to articulate our history and clarify misconceptions when they arise. (The Yurumein Project, 2022)

The extensively annotated virtual tour of the Yurumein Project website, which we will now embark upon in the paragraphs that follow, provides a fitting summary of the key findings encountered throughout the previous chapters of this dissertation, while demonstrating that the Garinagu are uniquely positioned to achieve their goals of making their ancestral lifeways a living force in the present and future. This unique positioning involves the transgression of temporal-historical boundaries, of ethnolinguistic boundaries, and of spatial-geographic boundaries.

Temporally and historically, the focus of the Garinagu is not fixed on the past, but instead engages actively with the present and the future, in a way that does not see Garifuna heritage as something that is static and inflexible, but instead as adaptable and dynamic. Since the beginning of the colonial era, Garifuna history has been characterized by a succession of apocalyptic disruptions, each of which has been successfully confronted with creativity and resourcefulness that has consistently looked forward, and rarely backward. The enslaved renegades and maroons who washed up on the shores of St. Vincent during the 1600s and 1700s never allowed their memory of their unspeakably violent uprooting from Africa and elsewhere in the Afro-Atlantic to stop them from re-establishing their sovereign control over their lives and their lands in Yurumein, even if it meant adopting new indigenous Caribbean bloodlines along with indigenous Caribbean linguistic and cultural repertoires in the process. The indigenous peoples of St. Vincent who welcomed those renegades and maroons into their communities never allowed any backward-looking and exclusive notions of ethnic ‘purity’ to shut down their traditional inclusive openness and hospitality, even if it meant adopting new African bloodlines along with African linguistic and cultural repertoires in the process.

It could be argued that it is precisely this ability to move beyond a mechanical allegiance to some static notion of ‘tradition’ and the past, and toward a dynamic celebration and mobilization of ancestral ways in order to confront a radically new set of contemporary realities, that made the ‘Black Caribs’ one of the most viable and successful points of resistance to the onslaught of European colonialism in the Caribbean. And when, at the end of the 1700s, as the last indigenous group in the insular Caribbean to be conquered by the Europeans, the Garinagu faced a near-genocidal expulsion from St. Vincent, they dealt with this new apocalypse with the

same forward-looking resilience that had allowed them to survive and thrive through prior apocalypses.

Their forced removal from St. Vincent to Balliceaux to Roatan did not deter the Garinagu from breaking out of the confines of their new exile camps to establish a vibrant chain of new sovereign communities along the Caribbean coast of Central America that defied both the artificial colonial divisions that separated the Spanish from the British spheres of influence, as well as the equally artificial neo-colonial nationalist divisions that separate the nation-states of Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In the present era, diasporic Garifuna communities are continuing these traditions of adaptability and resilience in their new-found homes in North America and beyond.

To give readers a feeling for how the Yurumein Project is implementing its mission and objectives, we continue our virtual tour of the project website. At various junctures on the site, we are reminded that Garifuna language plays a pivotal role. For example, on the website, a link can be found to the registration page for the *Wayanuha Garifuna* classes that are sponsored by the organization, where it is mentioned that “the course is free. All we ask is that you commit to the course through to completion” (The Yurumein Project, 2022). The Tutors section of the site lists a total of ten Garifuna language tutors and assistant tutors, and the places where their classes are being held.

The importance of language is underscored elsewhere on the site by remarks such as the following:

Our general membership is comprised of vibrant individuals committed to the goal of retrieving, protecting, and preserving all aspects of the Garifuna culture with a particular emphasis on the Garifuna language. Belizean students as well as students in St. Vincent

and the Grenadines will be able to articulate our history and clarify misconceptions when they arise. (The Yurumein Project, 2022)

The “emphasis on the Garifuna language” mentioned above is no mere objective, but instead functions as both a guiding principle as well as a firm commitment to the vitality of the language in Belize as well as in St. Vincent. The Yurumein Project thus strives to perpetuate a transnational, pluri-identificational cosmopolitanism that is both an integral element in Garifuna traditional lifeways, as well as an integral element in contemporary, decolonial ways of thinking, speaking, and acting in the world. So, while postmodern and postcolonial theorists hypothesize about the importance of promoting diversity and cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 2006), the Garinagu should be recognized as already practicing what the academics are preaching.

The Garinagu remind us that, if we wish to transgress and transform the rigid boundaries established and reinforced by ethnocentrism and other systems of domination, we do not need to start from zero, as if cosmopolitanism were something new in human society. Instead, we need to acknowledge that the traditional cosmopolitanisms of the Garinagu and other indigenous peoples constitute a convincing set of evidence and inspiring proof that such boundaries are but a recent phenomenon in human history and have nothing to do with ‘human nature.’ Traditional indigenous cosmopolitanisms can also serve us as a diverse set of trans-/pluri-lingual, trans-/pluri-cultural, trans-/pluri-identificational, and trans-/pluri-ethnic practices which we can use as both building blocks and tools in the formulation of innovative strategies and tactics for shaping a more cosmopolitan present and imagining more cosmopolitan futures.

On the website, reference is made to a Tribute to Our Elders Ceremony, and there are a number of links to videos that depict different members of Garifuna communities being recognized for life-long achievement. The type of acknowledgement of, and appreciation for,

elders and ancestors that is given prominence in the discourse and work of the Yurumein Project is all too often interpreted by non-indigenous people as conservative and backward-looking, but upon closer examination, such prejudices are a projection of the deeply pathological inability of colonizing and neo-colonizing societies to come to terms with old age and death.

For many indigenous peoples, elders and ancestors constitute vibrant and dynamic forces that propel us in unforeseen, unpredictable, contradictory ways along multiplex paths that unsettle and upend simplistic understandings of temporality, rather than chaining us to the fossilized and reactionary lifeways of some mythical past that are all too often used by older generations to suffocate younger generations in the colonial and neo-colonial metropolises. The current rise of fascism in the name of ‘Making America (Britain, Russia, India, Brazil, Turkey, etc.) great again’ is a particularly poisonous manifestation of this tendency, which has nothing to do with respect for elders and ancestors, and everything to do with the internalization of hegemonic delusion and addiction.

The Yurumein Project website also lists the members of its Executive Body, which includes managing directors, an operations director, zone leaders, an executive secretary, and an executive finance director. Figures such as Joshua Arana and Dr. Gwen Núñez-González, who have been highlighted already in this dissertation, are part of this Executive Body, as is Mr. James Cordice, who is the Managing Director for St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The site also lists a number of committees, such as a Health and Hospitality Committee and a Sports and Infrastructure Committee, and also allows for the downloading of documents, videos, and contact information.

The “Identity” section of the website features two videos, the first of which is titled “Rearranging Misinformation on The History of The Garifuna,” presented by Ebu James Cordice

from St. Vincent and Dr. Gwen Núñez-González from Belize and moderated by Dr. Jeremy Valentine (The Yurumein Project, 2022). The second video is titled “Tribute to Our Garifuna Elders- Dangriga, Episode 1,” which features a panel about the renaissance of the *Wanaragua*, consisting of three pre-eminent spokespeople for the Garinagu, Cassian Núñez, Canon Jerris Valentine, and Baba E. Roy Cayetano, moderated by Dr. Gwen Núñez-González.

The “Events” section of the website lists events such as the “*Wayanuha* Garifuna Camp – Belize,” scheduled for August 1 until August 13, 2022; the “*Wayanuha* Garifuna Camp - St. Vincent and the Grenadines,” scheduled for July 1 until July 31, 2022; and the “Run for St. Vincent and the Grenadines,” scheduled for May 14, 2022. The “Media” section leads to a gallery of pictures and videos of activities which have taken place in a number of communities, including Dangriga, San Pedro Town, Orange Walk Town, Punta Gorda Town, Belmopan City, Belize City, and Corozal Town. The fact that the activities posted on The Yurumein Project webpage date from 2020 onwards proves that not even a pandemic is capable of deterring the Garinagu from their determination to achieve their objectives, and provides proof of the resilience that they have developed through the centuries, strengthened by the continuous struggles that they have had to face.

Undoubtedly, the willingness and skill with which the Garinagu have made use of current technological advances has played an important role in Garifuna language preservation by allowing for the diffusion of language teaching materials and YouTube videos that have been used to provide opportunities for listening to the language and learning it. In addition, the internet has played a role in cultural preservation by allowing for the documentation and archiving of cultural activities such as annual Garifuna Settlement Day and Battle of the Drums events.

Just as is the case with the Garifuna communities in other countries, the Garinagu in Belize have a plurality of identities and identificational repertoires: they are not only Garifuna speakers, but also English speakers in a country where English is the official language, and Belizean Creole speakers in a country where Belizean Creole is the lingua franca. They are not only indigenous people, but also African descended people. They are not only Belizean and Central American, but also Caribbean. This pluri-identification, which allows Garinagu to participate and often assume leadership roles in a broad spectrum of organizations for the promotion of the interests of indigenous communities, African descended communities, Central American communities, Caribbean communities, and Latin-American communities, becomes even more complex when one considers the pluri-ethnic nature of the families to which so many Garinagu belong.

The Yurumein Project adopts an inclusive and open approach in its work, which is aimed at everyone who identifies as Garifuna in any part of the world and does not limit itself to any biological definition of what it means to be Garifuna, with an awareness that intermarriage does not erase ancestry. The current campaign to link the Garinagu of St. Vincent and the Grenadines more strongly than has been the case in the past with the Garinagu of Belize and the rest of Central America and the diaspora is evidence of this inclusivity and openness, as is the campaign to declare the island of Ballicaeaux as a sacred site for all Garinagu. As Garinagu who are separated geographically by thousands of miles, but who are also linked historically, politically, and culturally as part of the Anglophone Caribbean, Belizean and St. Vincentian youth are coming together through initiatives sponsored by the Yurumein Project in the processes of strengthening and reviving Garifuna language, music, drumming, poetry, and dance. Securing

Balliceaux as a sacred space for the Garinagu fosters the spiritual links between Belize and St. Vincent.

The importance of this spiritual dimension to the revitalization of Garifuna linguistic and cultural repertoires is highlighted by Dobrin and Sicoli's (2018, p. 49) references to the assessment carried out by Alison Broach (2017) of revitalization initiatives in the Garifuna communities of Guatemala, which not only upend conventional understandings of the separation of 'spirit' and 'matter,' but also challenge traditional academic paradigms of transmission and critically reformulate questions concerning why linguistic repertoires should be conserved in the first place:

For the contemporary Garifuna community in Guatemala studied by Alison Broach, shift away from Garifuna is experienced as disruptive to communal harmony because it cuts people off from their dead ancestors, who continue to participate in social life by advising and reprimanding their descendants in Garifuna through dreams and ritual dances. This moral imperative for young people to listen to ancestors' voices has in turn influenced community efforts to address the problem of language shift as they experience it.

Revitalization workshops are configured like spirit possession rituals, with elders conversing with youth and offering them guidance in Garifuna in a familial setting, just as the dead do when they ritually connect with their living kin. As Broach (2017) points out, having a culturally significant population of speakers *who are also dead* adds a whole new dimension of complexity to the problem of assessing speaker numbers.

Official policy in Belize has perhaps created a more hospitable space for organizations such as the Yurumein Project to propose and carry out such bold and unconventional initiatives than in other countries where Garifuna communities are situated. Staples Guettler (2019) defends

Belizean diversity, highlighting its richness, which is celebrated not only by its people, but also by the government. For many in Belize, the successful implementation of the country's relatively open and inclusive policies concerning language and culture may turn out to have substantial benefits for each particular ethnic group, as well as for the country as a whole:

The diverse people and languages in Belize need to be celebrated, not just by tourists, but also by the Belizean people and Belizean government on a national scale. Such language policy changes could be vital in protecting from the threat of language endangerment or extinction to the people that help to make Belize a historically diverse country. Adopting policies that address language endangerment could be the conduit for this imperative change by developing Belizeans through respectful ecotourism targeted at cultural awareness and preservation, as well as education and language policy changes that create access to educational tools for the development and preservation of language diversity. Belize is a melting pot of cultures, and each deserving equality, social justice, recognition, and empowerment. Belize must preserve and maintain the unique cultural diversity that is the foundation of its history. Finally, the Belizean people must unite in efforts to be strategic in educational and language policy that supports the development and preservation of language diversity, attracting many culturally curious people from across the globe. (para. 27)

In this dissertation, we have demonstrated that the Garinagu have played a key role in initiating, promoting, and implementing all of these processes mentioned in the passage by Guettler above, and the evidence we have presented leaves no doubt that they will continue to do so in the future.

Implications of the present investigation for future research

Based on work that will appear in Faraclas, Alvarado, Ruiz Álvarez, Maxwell, and Sabio (in Prescod ed., forthcoming) we conclude that, in this dissertation, we have refocused, refined, and expanded a set of postcolonial lenses which were originally crafted to enable critical examination and questioning of how such categories as “Carib” and “Taíno” have been used to claim colonial domination over the Garinagu and other Indigenous peoples in the Greater Caribbean. We also conclude that these fresh readings have opened an array of possibilities and avenues for critical enquiry into issues that have to do with language, culture, and identity in general, and particularly as these categories apply to the Indigenous peoples of the Americas and beyond.

In the section below, we finalize this dissertation by presenting just one example of how these novel lenses might be utilized to engender promising new lines of research, based on Faraclas, Alvarado, Ruiz Álvarez, Maxwell, and Sabio (in Prescod ed., forthcoming). In this case, we outline how our critical questioning of the way issues related to Garifuna linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires have been addressed up until the present in the scholarly literature can assist us in a juxtaposing multifaceted array of sites for critical and unsettling intertextual dialog concerning Indigenous histories. This juxtaposition can be accomplished both along and among dimensions of place (the Island Caribbean/ the Southern Mississippi Valley/ the Gulf Coast/ the Orinoco/ the Amazon Corridor), time (‘prehistory’/ history/ the present/ the future) and disciplinarity (linguistics/ anthropology/ cultural studies/ archeology/ climatology/ economics/ history/ literature). So, we now use our findings concerning the Garinagu to expand our focus from the Garinagu to all of the Indigenous peoples of the Americas, and from the Caribbean to the entire Western Hemisphere.

The kaleidoscopic configurations of Indigenous languages throughout the region that extends from the Southern Mississippi Valley and Gulf Coast through the Island Caribbean, and then to the Orinoco/ Amazon Corridor, are indicative of inclusive, extensive, and complex networks of contact, cosmopolitan exchange, and cohabitation rather than of exclusive isolation, domination, or conquest. Because of their historically documented Afro-Indigenous hybridity, the Garinagu are usually depicted as linguistically, culturally, and ethnically anomalous. Based on our re-reading of linguistic, cultural, genetic, archaeological, and other evidence, however, we argue that cosmopolitan exchange and hybridity were the norm rather than the exception in the Indigenous Caribbean, as well as in the contiguous regions of mainland North and South America for thousands of years, long before the rise of any precolonial empires in the Americas or the arrival of the European Invaders.

Dominant colonial and neo-colonial discourses, together with the colonial gaze and the dubious ‘common sense’ that they have promoted among both the general public and academics, erroneously assume that, before European Invasion in 1492, the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean and the rest of the Western Hemisphere:

- 1) first arrived in the Americas via the overland ‘Clovis’ migration from Siberia, beginning around 11,000BC, and once in the Americas, generally moved North to South and West to East, rendering the Island Caribbean, Southern Mississippi/ Gulf, and Orinoco/ Amazon basins geographically peripheral;
- 2) did not travel over long distances and did not have the means for navigating seas and oceans; and

- 3) generally established isolated monolingual, mono-cultural, monoethnic communities, especially where overland travel was limited, such as the Gulf/ Mississippi, Caribbean, and Orinoco/ Amazon basins.

Master narratives and the colonial gaze also assume:

- 1) that the cultivation of major food crops, long distance trade, manufacturing, monumental architecture, cosmopolitan contact, etc. in the Americas began with the rise of sedentary agriculture-based empires or Eurasian-like 'civilizations,' first on the South Pacific Coast of Peru, starting with Caral ~3,000BC, followed later by Chavin ~1000BC and proto-Inca ~500AD, and then in Meso-america beginning with Olmec and proto-Maya ~1,500BC.
- 2) that because none of these empires extended to the Island Caribbean, Southern Mississippi/ Gulf, and Orinoco/ Amazon regions, these zones remained culturally peripheral and of marginal significance; and
- 3) that these 'great' empires mysteriously 'disappeared' before the Invasion of the Europeans from 1492 onward.

In the discussion below, we demonstrate how both fresh archaeological, linguistic, and other evidence on the one hand, and Garifuna history on the other, allow for radical re-readings of the Indigenous histories of the Island Caribbean, the Southern Mississippi Valley/ Gulf Coast, and the Orinoco/ Amazon Corridor. We also show how the Island Caribbean, the Orinoco/ Amazon and the Southern Mississippian/ Gulf evidence demand and suggest new ways of moving beyond linear, monolithic, monocausal, and monodirectional colonizing notions of migration, conquest, 'civilization', language, culture, and identification/ ethnicity that still predominate not only in public discourse, but also in much of our academic work.

As asserted in Faraclas, Alvarado, Ruiz Álvarez, Maxwell and Sabio (in Prescod ed. forthcoming), anthropologists have been forced to abandon the 'Clovis First' thesis that the first humans arrived in the Americas from Siberia in Northeast Asia via the land bridge that emerged across the Bering Straits from about 11,000BC onward, but the underlying North to South bias persists. A critical mass of evidence now indicates that humans were living in the Americas at least 25,000 years ago, and most probably arrived by sea, rather than by land, via northern routes along the coasts of the North Pacific, and via southern routes over the South Pacific.

For most of human history, rivers, seas, oceans, and other waterways have by no means been obstacles to exchange and contact, but instead have functioned more like super-highways, connecting people over thousands of kilometers. One of the first inventions by hominids was the boat itself, at a time depth of some 900,000 years ago in Southeast Asia/ Oceania, predating the emergence of *homo sapiens*. The earliest indirect evidence for the use of boats by *homo sapiens* comes from the Mediterranean some 130,000 years ago and Australia some 40,000 years ago.

As key waterways, the Caribbean, the Mississippi/ Gulf, and the Orinoco/ Amazon can no longer be isolated and marginalized in studies of the histories of the Americas. Linguistic evidence clearly shows that thousands of years before the start of European maritime imperialism, indigenous peoples had the scientific and technical means to move across not only the Indian Ocean, but also across the South Pacific Ocean, the biggest of them all. The seaborne movements of speakers of Polynesian and other Austronesian languages from around 3,000BC to 1,000AD can be traced more than half-way around the world across 25,000km of ocean, from Madagascar near the Indian Ocean coast of Southern Africa, to Easter Island near the South Pacific coast of Peru, just over the Andes from the Southern Amazonian region of Bolivia.

The area covered by these voyages includes the ocean routes from Australasia to the parts of South America where DNA evidence points to ancient links across the Indo-Pacific that predate the Clovis-related overland migration of peoples from Northeast Asia to the Americas starting circa 11,000BC that, under the colonial gaze, was assumed to be the origin of all indigenous peoples in the Americas. Recent analysis of the DNA of indigenous peoples of the Americas provides evidence of connections between peoples living today in the Indian and South Pacific Oceans with peoples in Southern Amazonia that pre-date Clovis migrations from North Asia by thousands of years. In his pioneering studies on Ancient DNA, David Reich (2018, p. 232) states that:

[Pontus] Skoglund found 2 ... [indigenous] populations ... from the [Southern] Amazon region ... that are more closely related to Australasians than to other world populations [and] weaker signals of genetic affinity to Australasians ... [elsewhere in] the Amazon basin We were initially skeptical ..., but the statistical evidence just kept getting stronger [and] also showed that these ... [links did] not arise as a result of recent migrations [since] the affinities we found had nothing in common with Polynesians. It really looked like evidence of a migration into the Americas of an ancient population more closely related to Australians, New Guineans, and Andamanese than to ... Siberians.

The first known cultivation sites for many major food crops, such as squash and cassava at ~8,000BC, chilies at ~7,500BC, and maize and peanuts at ~7,000BC, have been found on some 4,500 human-made mounds or islands in the swampy seasonally flooded plains of the Llanos de Moxos region, and nearby areas along the borderlands between Bolivia and Brazil in Southern Amazonia. The first known cultivation sites for potato and sweet potato at around 8,000BC and

cotton at around 6,000BC are found in the nearby South Pacific coastal areas of Peru. These crops were not first cultivated by settled peoples who lived in empires; instead, they were first cultivated by riverine non-sedentary peoples, and later spread along waterways northward by other non-sedentary peoples up the Amazon/ Orinoco corridor throughout the Island Caribbean, the Gulf Coast, and the Southern Mississippi Basin, and then into the rest of Central and North America. In their archaeological work in Belize, Kennett et al. (2022) have found that:

[The DNA of the] earliest people buried at ... [a pre-Maya site in Belize] 9600 to 7300 years ago [7,600-5,300BC], closely resembled that of [ancient] hunter-gatherers But after 5600 years ago [3,600BC], ... all [DNA samples] tested were most closely related to ... people who today live from ... Colombia to Costa Rica and who speak Chibchan languages [L]iving Maya have inherited more than half of their DNA from this influx from the south The ancient hunter-gatherers got less than 10% of their diet on average from maize But then, ... [from 2,600 to 2,000BC onward] the proportion of maize surged ... to 50%, ... providing “the earliest evidence of maize as a staple grain” [Maize] was partially domesticated as early as 9000 years ago [7,000BC] in SW Mexico, ... [but] it wasn’t fully domesticated until 6500 years ago [4,500BC] at sites in Peru and Bolivia [This] suggests the migrants brought improved maize ... from the south by 5600 years ago [3,600BC] [and by] 4000 years ago [2,000BC] it had become the keystone crop. This could explain why one early Maya language incorporates a Chibchan word for maize. (pp. 1-8)

The most recent syntheses of the work by researchers on ancient DNA by geneticists such as David Reich (2018), as well as the most recent syntheses of findings from archaeology and anthropology by anthropologists such as David Graeber and David Wengrow (2021), have

upended many of the fundamental assumptions that underpin the dominant narratives which frame our work as academics, and suggest that the Garinagu may not be as exceptional as they are usually made out to be in dominant academic discourse. These syntheses generally conclude that for the roughly 300,000 years that we as *homo sapiens* have been on the planet:

- 1) We have been constantly on the move, following complex, multidirectional trajectories over hundreds or even thousands of kilometers in a single lifetime, so that sedentary life has been the exception, rather than the norm.
- 2) We have been constantly in contact and constantly mixing with populations of *homo sapiens* and other hominids who are linguistically, culturally, and genetically different from ourselves, so that cosmopolitan hybridity and exchange have been the norm, rather than the exception.

Graeber and Wengrow (2021) systematically demonstrate:

- 1) that the cultivation of major food crops, long distance trade, manufacturing, monumental architecture, cosmopolitan contact, etc. did not in any conceivable way begin with the rise of sedentary agriculture-based empires from 5,000BC to 3,000BC in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, but instead had been well established and extensively practiced by non-sedentary, relatively non-hierarchical communities for tens of thousands of years beforehand;
- 2) that for most of human history, most societies have chosen NOT to adopt a sedentary, agriculture-based lifestyle because of the colonizing systems of hierarchy and domination that often, but not always, come with it; and
- 3) that many of the world's empires did not just mysteriously 'disappear,' but instead were dismembered by their own subjects, who ultimately rejected lifestyles of domination.

This would explain, for example, why Cahokia, which emerged ~1,000AD as the first imperial metropole of the Northern Mississippi Valley, was probably destroyed by its own people ~1,350AD, who thereafter made a conscious choice never to settle within hundreds of kilometers of the accursed site.

Archeologists have recently found it necessary to undertake a re-reading of the Watson Brake earth mounds (~3,400BC), which is the first confirmed monumental site in all of the Americas, and its successor Poverty Point earth mounds, both found in a key area of riverine contact and cohabitation between the Mississippi Valley and the Gulf. Similar, but less easily classifiable, earth and shell mounds are found in the same region that date from as far back as ~9,000BC. What all of these sites have in common is that they were located on major waterways and consisted of mounds that bordered plaza-like centers of seasonal contact among different groups of non-sedentary peoples from a catchment area of hundreds or even thousands of kilometers, who came together there not only to trade goods, but also to feast and exchange: a) news; b) cultural, linguistic, spiritual, political, and technical knowledges and repertoires; and c) family and clan members. Interestingly, many of these same activities involving different types of feasting and exchange typify large seasonal gatherings of other mammals, such as whales, dolphins, and elephants.

Therefore, in terms of monumental architecture, the Southeast of what is now the USA is by no means the cultural backwater that it is so often assumed to be in the literature. In fact, it was most probably the non-sedentary peoples of the Southeast who carried the plaza template for monumental architecture that would emerge as a key element shared by all of the 'great civilizations' of the Indigenous Americas (Caral, Chavin, Maya, Olmec, Toltec, Aztec, etc.) over

waterways from the Southeast/ Gulf region to the rest of the Western Hemisphere. Kassabaum (2019) notes that:

Prior to understanding the deep history of mound construction in the eastern US, archaeologists had ... assum[ed] that mound construction ... required stratified, agricultural polities We now know that ... mounds ... persisted as a form of public architecture for more than 5000 years, and that up until very recently, their builders sustained themselves by fishing, hunting, and gathering ... [and that] It is likely that only a tiny percentage of the activities at a given site would take place on the [mound.] Focusing on plazas and other “empty” places [between mounds] shifts the emphasis of discussions about social interactions Plazas were meaningful spaces of interaction, and a great deal of labor was directed toward their construction at some sites. (pp. 218-231)

Granberry (1993), Granberry and Winter (1995), and Granberry and Vescelius (2004) put forward a series of hypotheses on the pre-Arawakan and pre-Cariban connections between the Southern Mississippi/ Gulf and Orinoco corridor regions via the island Caribbean, including:

- 1) Casimiroid’ Tolan/ Macro-Hokan linguistic connections involving movements of peoples to/from Belize and Honduras (Tol/ Lenca) into and across the Island Caribbean (Ciguayo) from ~7,500BC, extending to Florida (Calusa) and Louisiana/ Arkansas (Tunica) in the Gulf/ Mississippi region; and
- 2) ‘Ortoiroid’ Waraoan/ Macro-Chibchan linguistic connections involving movements of peoples to/from Venezuela and the Guianas (Warao) into and across the Island Caribbean (Macoris) from ~5,000BC, extending to Florida (Timucua) in the Gulf region.

The evidence and frameworks that we have highlighted in this dissertation suggest a number of radical re-readings of Indigenous histories in the Americas, as expounded upon in Faraclas, Alvarado, Ruiz Álvarez, Maxwell and Sabio (in Prescod ed. forthcoming):

- 1) The interconnected waterways of the Southern Mississippi, Gulf, Island Caribbean, Orinoco, and Amazon basins constituted a 'mega-corridor' along which people, ideas, and goods could and did move with relative ease.
- 2) This mega-corridor was far from geographically marginal in the peopling of the Americas, but instead was a major nexus of movements of peoples in all directions.
- 3) This mega-corridor was far from culturally marginal, but instead was a zone of creativity, invention, and innovation in key areas from trade to agriculture to architecture.
- 4) The fact that the peoples along this 'mega-corridor' were not incorporated into the pre-Invasion imperial 'civilizations' of the Americas is not so much a sign of backwardness as it is a sign of wise and spirited resistance.

This is just one example of the type of research that could emerge from the reconceptualization of Garifuna linguistic, cultural, and identificational repertoires undertaken in this dissertation.

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