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ROOTS, RIGHTS, AND BELONGING: GARIFUNA
INDIGENEITY AND LAND RIGHTS ON HONDURAS' NORTH
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**ROOTS, RIGHTS, AND BELONGING: GARIFUNA INDIGENEITY
AND LAND RIGHTS ON HONDURAS' NORTH COAST**

By

Keri Anne Brondo

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

ROOTS, RIGHTS, AND BELONGING: GARIFUNA INDIGENEITY AND LAND RIGHTS ON HONDURAS' NORTH COAST

By

Keri Anne Brondo

This dissertation traces the production of Garifuna indigeneity and its effects on coastal landholding within the context of Honduran tourism development. The Garifuna are descendants of Africans and Amerindians (i.e., Carib and Arawak Indians) who settled along the Central American coastline more than 208 years ago. Garifuna identity has been created and recreated throughout their time on the coast - they have been positioned as *negro* 'others,' AfroHondurans, and autochthonous AfroHondurans. Today some groups are casting the Garifuna as indigenous. Using the community of Sambo Creek as a case study, I explore the creation and deployment of Garifuna indigeneity as well as the effects this recasting of identity has on non-Garifuna, who are now beginning to question their own identity and rights within the nation-state.

This dissertation contributes to research on Latin American indigenous mobilization in general, as well as makes three specific contributions to anthropological discussions. First, this case study contributes to theory regarding the production of identity categories by looking beyond the effects of identity construction on the people whose identity is being cast or recast (in this case the Garifuna) to how the new framing of identity impacts others who live within their communities (in this case Mestizos). I apply the concept of "place-making" (Malkki 1997) to show how actors are both producing and responding to Garifuna

indigeneity. Place-making is a tool used by Garifuna organizations and activists to lay claim to land by rooting the Garifuna, historically, into Honduran territory or more generally, into the Americas. It also serves as a tool to articulate the Garifuna place within the world. Place-making serves as a response to the production of Garifuna indigeneity by Mestizo residents of Garifuna communities who believe that they too have rights to local land. Some Mestizo residents use the identity label “indio” to root themselves into Honduran territory by claiming descent from pre-Columbian indigenous (“indio”) peoples.

Second, I discuss the disjuncture between Garifuna organizational representation and the interests of Sambo Creek’s residents. Garifuna organizations call for the recuperation of ancestral territories by linking the maintenance of indigenous identity to the ability to enact cultural traditions, which in this case frequently means fishing and agriculture. Organizational representation is problematic for two reasons: 1) Sambo Creek is a mixed community, comprised of both Garifuna and Mestizos. Representing the community under an indigenous rights discourse serves to exclude some of Sambo Creek’s residents; and 2) Sambo Creek’s youth are losing interest in pursuing traditional economic activities that constitute “cultural traditions.”

Third, this case study is one of the first that focuses explicitly on the gendered impact of land privatization in Garifuna communities. Traditional Garifuna land tenure systems are communal, with use rights passed matrilineally. In the last twenty-five years, Garifuna women have lost their ancestral cultivation plots through privatization to men.

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To my children.
And the children of Sambo Creek.
May your future be as beautiful as your memories of the past.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CABO	The Central American Black Organization
CADEAH	Comité Asesor para el Desarrollo de las Etnias Autóctonos de Honduras
CODETT	Committee for the Defense of Triunfo's Land
CONPAH	Confederación de Pueblos Autóctonos de Honduras
ESAF	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility
FHIS	Fondo Hondureño de Inversion Social
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IACHR	Inter-American Commission for Human Rights
IDB	International Development Association
IHT	Instituto Hondureño de Turismo
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INA	The National Agrarian Institute
LMA	The Law for the Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector
ODECO	La Organización de Desarrollo Étnico Comunitario
OFRANEH	La Organización Fraternal Negro Hondureño
ONECA	La Organización Negra Centroamericana
PPP	Plan Pueblo Panama
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
UFCO	United Fruit Company

UNESCO **United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organizations**

USAID **United States Agency for International Development**

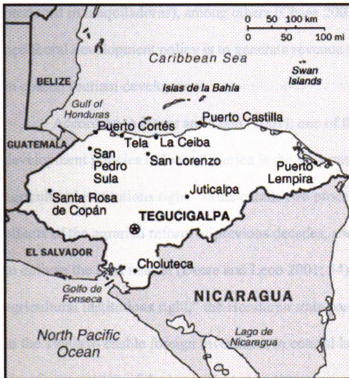
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

On August 14, 2003, after two years of Garifuna mobilization efforts ranging from a community-led land invasion to petitioning of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Honduran government turned illegally acquired ancestral lands back over to the Garifuna community of Sambo Creek. This act was the result of the successful production of indigenous rights on an international scale. The Garifuna are descendants of the intermixture of Africans and Amerindians (i.e., Carib and Arawak Indians) who settled along the Central American coastline more than 208 years ago. Throughout their presence on Honduras' north coast, Garifuna identity has been created and recreated. The Garifuna subject has been positioned as *negro* 'others,' AfroHondurans, and autochthonous AfroHondurans, and the recasting of their identity is linked to shifts in the coastal economy. Today some organizations and activists are casting the Garifuna as indigenous. In this dissertation, I trace the production of Garifuna indigeneity and its effects on coastal landholdings within the context of tourism development. Casting the Garifuna as indigenous justifies both their right to land, as well as has the potential to bring economic benefit to the nation-state, by selling 'indigenous culture' to tourists. Identifying as indigenous is a relatively new casting of Garifuna identity and this identity construction is only just beginning to filter out from Garifuna organizations, activists, and intellectuals to ordinary residents of Garifuna communities. Using the community of Sambo Creek as a case study, I explore the creation and deployment of Garifuna indigeneity as well

as the effects this recasting of Garifuna identity has on non-Garifuna, who are now beginning to question their own identity and rights within the nation-state.

Figure 1. Honduras with Major Cities



Source: http://www.exportinfo.org/worldfactbook/honduras_WFB.html

1.1 Neoliberal Development Policy and Agrarian Legislation

The Latin American development programs of the last twenty-five years have been labeled neoliberal because they are economic models rooted in classical liberalism, replacing state-led development programs with market-friendly approaches that emphasize free trade on a global market (Chase 2002). Many Latin American countries, Honduras included, racked up heavy external debt in the 1970s and 1980s. The World Bank and International Monetary Foundation suggested neoliberal programs to reduce state spending and address their debt

crisis. These programs included the privatization of national industries, the encouragement of competitive efficiency in agriculture, and the push for the production of nontraditional export crops and other products (e.g., materials produced in maquiladoras), among others (Chase 2002). Part of Honduras' neoliberal development policy is to generate revenue through foreign investment in coastal tourism development.

According to Deere and Leon (2001), one of the major thrusts of neoliberal development policies in Latin America is the governmental goal of "getting agricultural institutions right." This entails two processes: 1) dismantling the effects of the agrarian reform of previous decades, and 2) creating the conditions to enliven the land market (Deere and Leon 2001: 34). In an effort to "get their agricultural institutions right," the Honduran state passed new agrarian legislation in the 1990s to enable foreign investment in coastal land. The Garifuna claim a significant portion of the land affected by the agrarian legislation as their ancestral territories, but for much of their history, they have not held formal titles to those territories. The confusion over coastal land tenure has made it difficult to attract investment because foreign companies are hesitant to invest in regions with insecure tenure systems. Beginning in the 1990s, the nation-state started to issue communal land titles to Garifuna communities; these titles created legal boundaries (i.e., titles that could be upheld in court) between Garifuna territories and areas of potential investment. Yet the Garifuna argue that the titles are insufficient in that they leave out significant tracts of ancestral cultivation and

harvest land. This situation has produced a struggle to recuperate land in many coastal communities.¹

The community of Sambo Creek provides a lens into the coastal land struggle. Sambo Creek is a nationally defined “Garifuna community” and was granted a communal land title in 1997. While the community is historically “Garifuna,” there are a significant number of non-Garifuna people (Mestizos and foreign immigrants) living within the borders set up under the 1997 land title as well as within the community’s ancestral territory. These Mestizo and foreign immigrants include Canadian hotel owners, wealthy and politically connected Mestizo landowners and cattle ranchers, as well as poor Mestizo immigrants who migrated from the interior of the country in search of labor opportunities. Facing a severe land shortage for quite some time, the community spearheaded a movement to recuperate their lost ancestral lands. National Garifuna organizations assisted the community in their reclamation process.

There are two main organizations that represent Honduras’ Garifuna: 1) the Honduran Black Fraternal Organization (*La Organización Fraternal Negro Hondureño* or OFRANEH) and 2) the Organization of Ethnic Community Development (*La Organización de Desarrollo Etnico Comunitario* or ODECO). Each organization has a different outlook on how the Garifuna should interact with development policies and the land struggle. ODECO’s approach draws more on inclusion and integration into development planning and programs, while

¹ The struggle to recuperate ancestral territories includes more than just land, and the sea does hold significant meaning for the Garifuna. While there are also debates over rights to sea, my data collection centered on land disputes and I therefore focus solely on land in the dissertation.

OFRANEH emphasizes resistance to Honduras' neoliberal economic development model. OFRANEH's approach is part of what I consider to be a social movement critiquing one of the ideological bases of neoliberalism, a philosophy that emphasizes individualism and equality amongst citizens as opposed to collective and communal rights. Otero and Jugenitz (2003:504) have recently published on these types of social movements, stating that the goal of these movements is to redefine national agendas that privilege individual rights and ownership over collective rights and practices in a way that recognizes cultural autonomy. As I will show in later chapters, the discourse of indigenous rights provides the basis for this type of movement. While I believe both organizations are against individual landholding, only OFRANEH has embraced the discourse of indigenous rights to make their argument about Garifuna rights to coastal territory. In Sambo Creek, most residents preferred to work with OFRANEH on land issues.

1.2 A Post-structural Approach to Locating Identity

I have applied a poststructural approach to understanding identity and rights. Rather than taking Garifuna or Mestizo identities as primordially defined (i.e., emerging as an essence of being from within (e.g. Geertz 1973; Issacs 1975)), I am approaching identity as a social product (Medina 2004; Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Foucault 1979). Conceptualizing identity in this fashion means that peoples' identities are created through their interactions with others as situated and symbolic beings. Individuals become "subjects" by occupying positions with meanings attached to them and recognizing the meaning attached to that identity

category. For example, individuals who occupy the subject position of “Garifuna,” a category that is recognized as unique and “cultural,” begin to take meaning from their positioning within that identity category, as well as transfer meaning back to that identity category. These processes further validate the notion that “being Garifuna” means something significantly different than “being Mestizo” or “being Honduran.”

Medina (2004:12-13) argues that the process of identity formation involves the creation of subjects through discourse. Discourse refers to the practices that create the conceptual frameworks that inform people’s thoughts, words, and actions. The production of discourse happens through systems of control and rules of exclusion and inclusion (Foucault 1973). I am applying these concepts to look at the effects of the production of indigenous rights in the Garifuna struggle for coastal territories. The successful production of indigenous rights has served to reinforce and legitimize some identities while de-legitimizing others. Indigenous identity and indigenous rights are further legitimized each time ‘indigenous claims’ are recognized. Such claims are made possible via the backing of international conventions that verify the entitlement of indigenous peoples to particular resources. Each time the Garifuna make statements as indigenous peoples, and the more their claims are acknowledged *because* they are indigenous, the more indigenous they become.

Some Honduran Garifuna have recently embraced an indigenous identity, and they are now attempting to create a consensus that that they have rights to coastal resources that others do not. Categories of people, who are identified and

positioned in particular ways, receive differential access to resources and opportunities (see also Medina 2004:13). Garifuna activists are attempting to position the Garifuna population in a way that will increase their access and control over coastal territories.

This dissertation shows how Garifuna identity categories have shifted over time, and how these shifts are linked to the changing economic development approaches pursued in the coastal region. Both Garifuna and non-Garifuna have been involved in the creation of the Garifuna subject. Their identity categorization has changed over time, and their positioning has determined their ability to access and control local resources. The Garifuna were excluded from Honduran national identity for a significant part of their time in the nation-state. They lived in a region (i.e., the north coast) where the people were not considered “Honduran;” its population was a mix of “foreigners” (or non-Hispanics) who were involved in the banana industry in one form or another. Currently there are efforts to integrate the area and its people into the Honduran nation because both are seen as having economic potential. The area’s natural landscape and the Garifuna “culture” are being cast as tourism attractions.

Banks’ discussion of locating ethnicity aids in our understanding of the casting and recasting of the Garifuna subject. Banks argued that there are three basic analytical approaches to ethnicity and each is located differently. The primordialist approach treats ethnicity as an innate part of a human’s identity. The instrumentalist approach regards ethnicity as adopted strategically to achieve some specific end or as resulting from a set of historical and socioeconomic

circumstances. Banks argued that under both the primordialist and instrumentalist approaches, ethnicity is located within the ethnographic subject. Primordial ethnicity is located in the hearts of those studied, whereas instrumental ethnicity is located in their heads (Banks 1996:185). The third location for ethnicity is in the observer's head, and Banks' argues that this is the most honest approach a researcher can take. In these cases, ethnicity is an analytical tool that has been "devised and utilized by academics to make sense of or explain the actions and feelings of the people studied" (Banks 1996:185). The analyst then decides whether or not ethnicity is a useful tool for making sense of the actions of the people they study. Banks' further points out that the concept, once merely a tool for social analysis, is now mainstream and available for individuals and groups to appropriate for their own purposes. Those who were once the objects of studies - those who possess "culture" or were "ethnic" - have access to these concepts and are readily using them. These concepts have become instrumental in arguments about rights to resources.

In early studies of Garifuna society, the concepts of culture and ethnicity were located in the analysts' heads, and were used to help explain the actions of the people they were studying. In early Garifuna ethnography (e.g., Taylor 1951, Coelho 1955, Gonzalez 1959, 1969) anthropologists conceptualized culture as an adaptation or survival mechanism. In the 1980s, anthropologists began to recognize that the concept of culture was also located in the heads of the Garifuna and that it could be asserted to achieve specific ends. Gonzalez (1986: 63, 73) wrote:

There is reason to believe they may be moving toward a conscious development of their ethnicity in order to enhance their power within the body politic...[they] have been refining and redefining their ethnicity for 300 years. It really doesn't matter to them, nor to many others, that many of their "traditions" were born yesterday...

Gonzalez's commentary was informed by shifts in the field in the mid-1980s. Anthropologists were beginning to question structuralist approaches that assumed "a reality" could be located and documented by uncovering unconscious patterns of human thought (e.g., Levi-Strauss) or by analyzing economic structures (e.g., Marx), for example. Such approaches placed the "structure" at the center of analysis, claiming that it is what produces meaning, not individual actors. Practice theorists and poststructuralists, on the other hand, recognized that individuals, through their actions, shape the social and political structure, as well as take meaning from the system. With respect to analyses of Garifuna ethnicity and culture, poststructural writing has treated Garifuna identity as multiple, ever changing, and influenced by historical circumstances.

Anderson (2000) draws upon poststructural critiques of the notion of modernity and the newly placed emphasis on agency and auto-representation, to emphasize the way in which individual actors accept, inhabit, perform, and negotiate the social categories of "modernity" and "tradition." He writes:

My own approach...attempts to offer an ethnographic understanding of how the categories of the modern and the traditional are signified, occupied, performed and negotiated by social agents...No less than race, modernity and tradition are social categories through which social agents become interpellated and evaluated. Ethnographic analysis needs to examine how individuals or groups position themselves in relation to these categories, attending to the tensions and contradictions occasioned by the possibility of occupying and performing both, of "being" both traditional and modern. Current forms of identity politics among the Garifuna directly engage the categorical distinctions and associations surrounding modernity

and tradition. Garifuna have (re) “invented” their status as a traditional people, deploying and performing that identity to assert their cultural and territorial rights as “autochthonous” people within the nation...Discourses and performances of modernity and tradition overlap and crosscut one another in more complex ways than mutual negation... (Anderson 2000: 42-43)

Anderson (2000) details how a “new Garifuna identity” as something that is both “modern” and “traditional” is created and deployed for strategic reasons – in this case, to assert their cultural and territorial rights. When an identity diverges from “tradition,” poststructural approaches remind us that it is important to look at the historical circumstances responsible for these alterations, as well as to think about the implications for the people who identify as part of the “ethnic subject” that is being represented. The more the ‘new Garifuna identity’ is expressed through ordinary interactions and public expressions, the more valid that identity becomes. The question for anthropologists then becomes: who wins and who loses from these identity constructions? I agree with Anderson that contemporary Garifuna identity is both “traditional” and “modern,” but I would like to take his analysis further and document how the production of the Garifuna subject as ‘traditional’ or ‘indigenous’ (which is how some Garifuna are currently positioning themselves) reinforces and legitimizes that identity, while leading others to recast their own identities in response to the newly constituted Garifuna subject.

As this case study shows, some Honduran Garifuna are beginning to make claims to resources as “indigenous peoples.” With indigeneity comes increased rights, but it also produces new subject positions for Garifuna *as well as* non-Garifuna. Other (non-Garifuna) subjects in the Honduran state are beginning to frame their identity in response to the Garifuna “indigenous subject.” As Garifuna

attempt to reclaim ancestral territories that have fallen into Mestizo hands, Mestizo residents of “Garifuna communities” begin to question their own identity as subjects within the State. Do Mestizos have equal rights to coastal land? Some Mestizos argue that yes they do, explaining that they occupy a “truly indigenous” position, while denying the indigeneity of the Garifuna.

I employ the notion of “place-making” (ala Malkki 1997) to show how individuals and organizations territorialize their claims to coastal territories through stories of ancestral access, use, and control over those resources. The coastal land struggle is closely tied to notions of “belonging,” which is demonstrated through one’s ability to trace roots within the community in particular, and the national territory in general. Individuals and groups trace roots through identity construction, and the rights associated with particular identity discourses (e.g., *mestizaje*, indigeneity). “Identity” is a resource available equally to everyone. Therefore, individuals and groups with few economic resources, such as subjugated indigenous groups or poor “*indios*,” have equal access to its utility as do individuals with many economic resources, like politicians, Mestizo cattle ranchers, and Canadian hotel owners. As a result, individual actors can identify in strategic ways at specific times and places in order to strengthen their positions.

1.3 Organization of the Study

The dissertation consists of seven chapters, including this introduction. Chapter two describes the study area and methodology. It provides an overview of Garifuna origins and settlement on Honduras’ north coast. I introduce the

community of Sambo Creek, my primary fieldwork site, and OFRANEH and ODECO, the two principal organizations in which I collected data. In addition to serving as a descriptive introduction to the field site, the chapter details the methods used throughout the study, from data collection to analysis.

Chapter three provides the historical context for understanding contemporary identity politics as they interact with development policy on the coast of Honduras. In this chapter I trace shifts in the positioning of the Garifuna subject to the coastal economy. I show how the fruit industry and labor movement played a key role in defining the Garifuna place (or lack thereof) within Honduras' racial-ethnic hierarchy. I then describe how in the decades following the decline of the banana industry, the Garifuna became involved in recasting their identity as an AfroHonduran autochthonous people. Finally, I review current efforts to develop the coastal tourism industry and describe the changes to agrarian legislation that have enabled investment in this industry. I show how this shift in development policy is linked to the formation of Garifuna indigeneity.

Chapter four is a toolbox. In it the reader will find both my conceptual tools and those employed by the actors in the study. Indigenous rights and a (near) global consensus that cultural survival is linked to access to traditional territories have informed the Garifuna struggle. I review how the indigenous movement facilitated struggles for land rights by linking indigenous identity to the environment and to geographic space. I also develop the concepts of "place-making" and "history-making" which are strategies that organizations and individuals use to demonstrate their rights to coastal territories.

Chapter five looks at how the Garifuna have responded at the organizational level to coastal development strategies and the associated land struggle. I compare and contrast the two main organizations that represent the Garifuna, showing that each differs in its approach. I explore these distinctions through the comparison of organizational statements regarding the land struggle. I show that while both organizations are informed by global discourses of human rights and equality, OFRANEH is the only one that taps into the indigenous rights dialogue. I apply the notion of “place-making” to show how OFRANEH is articulating an indigenous place with the Honduran nation, and in so doing, they are resisting the forces of neoliberalism.

Chapter six puts a microscope on the Garifuna land struggle, looking specifically at the case of Sambo Creek and its struggle to recuperate ancestral lands. Within this chapter, I describe the processes through which land once held in common by the Garifuna has been transformed into private plots held by non-Garifuna. I emphasize the gendered impact of land privatization, showing that the land struggle is not just about Garifuna losing land to non-Garifuna, but about women losing land to men. Garifuna land is generally passed matrilineally, but in recent years, women have been losing their land through sale, theft, or trade to men. This chapter is also the place where I provide the details of Sambo Creek’s land invasions and the reasoning behind them. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of how changes in local livelihood strategies (do or do not) map onto the way in which Garifuna organizations represent contemporary interactions with land.

Chapter seven concludes the dissertation with a discussion of the effects of Garifuna indigeneity. I show how notions of race, culture, history, and “roots” feed into individual and group claims to land. Garifuna organizations and individuals employ “place-making” strategies to demonstrate their right to coastal resources based upon their cultural and/or indigenous identity. The successful production of international indigenous rights and passage of several international conventions that support those rights has enabled the Garifuna to make claims to coastal territories that others cannot. The notion of Garifuna indigeneity is taking on more validity at the international and national level, and it is beginning to filter out to communities. I demonstrate how the production of the Garifuna subject as indigenous reinforces certain rights, while causing other coastal residents to question their rights. Some non-Garifuna individuals are responding to the new Garifuna subject by drawing upon other identity discourses (e.g., an indo-Hispanic *mestizaje*) in order to “place-make” on equal footing with the Garifuna.

CHAPTER TWO

SETTING AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the data, methods, and setting drawn upon in this dissertation. I begin the chapter with an overview of Garifuna origins and settlement on the Atlantic coast. Next, I describe Sambo Creek, my primary fieldwork site, with special attention given to transitions in livelihood strategies and Garifuna traditional land tenure patterns and gender relations. I follow with a brief introduction to ODECO and OFRANEH, the two organizations that represent the Garifuna in Honduras. Finally, I review the methods for data collection, the sources of primary and secondary data, and the way in which I analyzed the data.

2.1 A Brief History

Garifuna origins are traced to the native Amerindians that inhabited the Greater Antilles and parts of the South American mainland as early as 200 BC. The two main groups of Amerindians were the Arawaks and Caribs from South America. While the Arawak economy was based on cassava (i.e. yuca) farming, hunting, and fishing, the Caribs were fisherman and warriors, but not agriculturalists. By around 1,000 AD, scholars theorize that resource scarcity forced some of the Arawaks to moved down the Sambo Creek River to the Caribbean Sea and its islands. The Carib Indians later followed the path of the Arawaks, first trading with them, and then eventually conquering the Arawak-speaking groups that were already living on the islands (Gonzalez 1988). The Caribs pushed the Arawaks onto smaller islands, taking Arawak women as wives

and either killing or enslaving the Arawak men. Descendants of the ensuing generations of Carib men and Arawakan women became known as the Island Caribs (Cayetano 1997).

There are at least three accounts of how Africans were integrated into Carib society: 1) as shipwrecked slaves, 2) as early explorers before Columbus, and 3) gradually over time as escaped slaves and free blacks. Many contemporary Garifuna leaders trace Garifuna descent to specific shipwrecks in the mid-17th century, including many who I have encountered. For example, I heard Santos Centeno García, a Garifuna historian, cite a Portuguese shipwreck during his speech at the 205th anniversary celebration of Garifuna presence on the coast at ODECO's headquarters. The advocates of this theory claim that the shipwrecked Africans who were destined for slavery swam to freedom on the island of St. Vincent where they became integrated into Carib society. The dates and the origins of the shipwrecks vary in all accounts that I have seen or heard, but what is important is that proponents of this theory point out that the Garifuna escaped slavery.

Some Garifuna scholars and intellectuals draw on Van Sertima's (1976) work to argue that the Garifuna were present on the islands of the Caribbean even before Columbus' arrival. Like the shipwreck account, the pre-Columbian account affords the Garifuna a history different than other Africans in the Americas: one in which they were never enslaved.

Ethnohistorians deny that there was a singular shipwreck that brought Africans to intermix with the Island Caribs. Gonzalez's (1988) research shows

that soon after their initial contact with Europeans, the Island Caribs began to absorb both European and African individuals into their society. These individuals were either captured or simply adopted into the Island Carib society. Gonzalez argues that the adoption of “others” was probably simply an extension of how they interacted in the past with other Amerindian groups. The extent of this integration eventually led to the creation of a new society that appeared to be racially and culturally distinct from the Island Carib. By 1700, or perhaps slightly earlier, this new society and culture began to be referred to by the British as the “Black Caribs,” as opposed to the “Red” or “Yellow” Caribs (Gonzalez 1988). The Black Caribs shared customs of the Island Caribs and intermarried with them. The Carib language served as a lingua-franca for the Africans, who came from several different tribes in Africa. From this base, the Black Caribs incorporated Yoruba, French, and English words into their Arawak-Carib vocabulary, producing the Garifuna language. Spanish words were later added into the Garifuna language.

The fertile land of St. Vincent attracted both the British and the French, who each wanted to establish plantations on the island. In 1719, French settlers began to set up small tobacco, cotton, and sugarcane plantations on the island, but did not attempt to force the Caribs off their land. The British wanted to set up large-scale plantations, which required removing the Caribs from the land. This conflict over land led to 32 years of war, with the French partnering with the Caribs against the British. By 1795, the British overpowered the Caribs, burning their homes, canoes, and crops, and in 1796, they finally surrendered. Upon surrender, the British separated the Caribs according to color, sending the “yellow”

(lighter-skinned) people back to St. Vincent, and deported slightly less than 2,000 Black Caribs (darker-skinned) to Roatan (an island off the coast of Honduras), likely separating family members from one another. The British made this distinction because they believed the lighter Caribs were of a different political and ethnic group than the Black Caribs, and thought them to be basically benign (Gonzalez 1988:23).

A large percentage of the Black Caribs who were deported to Roatan soon chose to cross to the Central American mainland, arriving first in Trujillo. Trujillo had been destroyed by English and Dutch pirates in the mid-17th century and remained nearly deserted for many years. By 1799, they had established their first two mainland settlements nearby the city of Trujillo (Rio Negro and Barrio Cristales). When the Black Caribs (now known as the Garifuna) arrived, there were over 340 blacks from other areas (including 300 “French Negroes” from Santo Domingo, 40 “English blacks” who were freed slaves, and other “free coloreds” perhaps from Grenada), as well as about 700 Mestizos and whites (Gonzalez 1988:53). At first the Spanish welcomed them because they offered labor potential, but they soon began to perceive of them as a security threat believing they might ally with the English and Miskito and the Spanish governor even recommended their expulsion (Gonzalez 1988). However, early on the Garifuna established themselves as anti-British as well as excellent warriors, boatmen, and workers; they united with the Spanish to defend the coast (Gonzalez 1988).

From Trujillo, the Garifuna spread along the Atlantic coastline and established settlements in Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and Belize. Gonzalez (1988) cites the move from Roatan to the mainland as the point of Garifuna ethnogenesis. She claims that as they moved about seeking a better life, they absorbed other people's culture traits and emerged as a "neoteric" society. Gonzalez's work reveals a more complex genealogy than that offered in the aforementioned accounts in that she makes a case for intermixture with West Indian, Miskito, and Mestizo peoples of Central America, in addition to their mixture with the Island Caribs.

Today, Honduras has the largest Garifuna population in Central America, estimated at approximately 250,000, or two percent of the country's population. Forty-eight² Garifuna communities dot the country's north coast. The Garifuna were present in the La Ceiba area (where Sambo Creek is located) by 1810 (Williams 2001). La Ceiba is Honduras' third largest city and the capital of the Department of Atlántida. The city's population is roughly 127,000. Today, the city serves as the heart of the tourist trade, having transformed from a banana exporting port to a link to the popular tourist destination of the Bay Islands.

² I have seen a variety of statistics on the number of Honduran communities. For example, ODECO documents report 51, OFRANEH reports 48, and Anderson (2000) reports 53.

2.2 Introducing Sambo Creek

Sambo Creek is located on the North coast of Honduras, 20 kilometers from La Ceiba. The community traces its history to 1862. Most Garifuna with whom I spoke relayed the same story of the community's founding: In 1862, the first Garifuna arrived by boat. They originated from the communities of Guadalupe and Santa Fe in the Department of Colon, traveling first to the Cayos Cochinos (Hog Islands), and then to what is now Sambo Creek. Local oral history recounts that upon arrival, the Garifuna came across one man (a Miskito man), whom they asked permission of to clear the land stay. Following this story, the man agreed, and so the community of Sambo Creek was born. Other Garifuna followed later, and it is estimated that 95% of the Garifuna population's parents have originated from other coastal communities like: Santa Fe, San Antonio, Trujillo, Irióna, Corozal, and Triunfo de la Cruz (this history is also documented in CCARC Informe 2002).

With its proximity to La Ceiba, Sambo Creek has witnessed significant changes in infrastructure, demographics and land tenure. The population has grown steadily over the last few decades. In 1981, McCommon (cited in Anderson 2000:88) reported a population of 1,196, stating that ninety percent were Garifuna and ten percent were Mestizo. In 1996, Anderson (2000:88) reported a population close to 2,500, with Mestizos comprising between thirty and forty percent. At the time of my research, Sambo Creek's population was estimated by the Central American and Caribbean Research Council to be roughly 5,000, at least forty percent of whom were Mestizo (CCARC 2002). This estimate included both

Sambo Creek residents living in country as well as those living abroad. At the time of my research (2002), the population currently residing in Sambo Creek was roughly between 2,000-3,000. My estimate is supported by a 2005 community census that reported 607 households and a total population of 2891 (Scheerer 2005).

2.2.1 Local Economy and Livelihood Strategies

Local economic opportunities have substantially decreased in recent decades. Throughout much of the 20th century, many of Sambo Creek's residents were employed by the Standard Fruit Company, working on its docks, railroads, on its fields, and as mechanics or carpenters in its workshops. But these jobs largely disappeared after the company restructured its labor force in the 1960s and then moved its shipping facilities out of La Ceiba in the 1980s (Anderson 2000). While fishing and agriculture had been important local economic activities of the past, they are now on decline. There are a variety of factors contributing to this decline including a growing remittance economy, lack of available land, and enforced fishing regulations in the Cayos Cochinos.

The Cayos Cochinos are a set of island keys located four hours away by *cayuco* (dug-out canoes) and one hour by motorboat. The area has historically been an important source of subsistence and cash economy for the Garifuna of Sambo Creek. In 1993, the government declared the area as a biological reserve and fisherman can now only fish with hook and line. There are now only about thirty men in Sambo Creek who are dedicated to fishing. Other employed men

work in construction, as hourly wage laborers in La Ceiba, and in the newly constructed hotels as wait staff.

For women, employment opportunities have become limited by the decline in agriculture, the abandonment of the banana plantations, and more recently with the lethal yellowing disease that followed Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and destroyed many of the coast's coconut trees (see Figure II).³ These factors have narrowed the products and spaces available for women to sell.

Figure II. Lethal Yellowing of Sambo Creek's Coconut Trees



Photo by Keri Brondo, 2002.

Vending had been an important economic activity for local women, who sold various products (e.g., fruits, *casabe*, coconut bread, and coconut pastries,

³ Phytoplasma ("lethal yellowing") follows wind damage and high humidity and is carried by insect hosts. Once infected, coconut and other palms die within three to six months of first symptoms (http://www.cicy.mx/dir_acad/cicly/main.html). There have been replanting efforts in some coastal communities, but at the time of my research, much of the coast looked like the image in the picture.

drinks) out of their homes as well as on the banana plantations. Some women continue to vend on a small-scale basis; others work in San Pedro Sula's *maquiladoras*, as household help in La Ceiba, or as kitchen and cleaning help in the local hotels. Yet all in all, economic opportunities at the local level are few and far between, and the vast majority of residents either rely on remittances from their families members who have migrated abroad or migrate themselves in search of labor.

Migration has long been a part of Garifuna society, beginning with seasonal migration in Central America in the 1800s and early 1900s, and expanding to include migration to the United States since the 1950s (England 2000: 93). Research on Garifuna migration (e.g., Kerns 1983, Gonzalez 1988, and England 2000) suggests that poverty was not a motivating force behind their labor migration until recent decades. Rather, the Garifuna have used migration to obtain industrial goods and supplement their already adequate subsistence economy (England 2000:93). However, in recent decades, neoliberal economic reforms have resulted in uneven distribution of land, which has negatively impacted the Garifuna subsistence economy. The subsequent result is that transnational migration is now necessary and in many cases remittances from abroad are the sole income for Garifuna families remaining in Honduras. The *Patronato* (i.e., village-level government) estimated that remittances from abroad serve as the only source of income for approximately fifty percent of households in Sambo Creek. Still others supplement wage labor with remittances. The Patronato's estimate is aligned with the data I collected: 59.57% of the households

I interviewed were receiving money from family members who had migrated to one of Honduras' major cities (i.e., Tegucigalpa or San Pedro Sula) or to the United States. In Scheerer's 2005 household census, she found that 49.9% of all households in Sambo Creek were receiving remittances on a regular basis, and 94.6% of the remittances were coming from the United States (Scheerer 2005).

Ethnographic studies on the Garifuna diaspora and transnational linkages show that Garifuna who do migrate abroad for work retain deep attachments to their natal communities (England 2000). Like the Garifuna immigrants England (2000) met from other areas of Honduras, Sambo Creek immigrants to New York City have formed a hometown association and soccer league. It is quite common for Garifuna to spend their working years in the United States, and return to their natal community upon retirement, and many elder Garifuna residents of Sambo Creek did just that.

2.2.2 Gender Relations and Traditional Landholding and Land Use

The migratory process in which more men leave natal communities than women has strongly influenced Garifuna society and culture such that women play important roles in the local economy, subsistence activities, and religious practices. Women are also responsible for teaching the language and cultural practices to future generations. Although it is generally expected for women to remain monogamous, men frequently have sexual relations with more than one woman, and it is not unusual for a man to have children by two or more women. Thus, many of the Garifuna homes in Sambo Creek consist of generations of

women and their children. The matrifocality of Garifuna homes and communities, with women forming the stable core of households and extended families (Kerns 1983, Gonzalez 1970), has meant that women have become central in Garifuna society.

Women have become central, perhaps by default. They seem not to have been so on their arrival in Central America, though that may only reflect the male biases of the eighteenth century European chroniclers. On the other hand, if one were deliberately to set out to “feminize” an entire sociocultural system, there could be no other way than to remove the institutionalized male functions. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, men alone hunted and fished, served as religious leaders, as warriors and as headmen. In the earliest days of migratory wage labor (eighteenth century) it was also a masculine endeavor, and one which led to both economic success and personal glory. But bit by bit these roles have been either removed from the Garifuna culture completely, or, as in the case of migration and religious leadership, women now participate as well. As one male informant put it in 1975 – there is nothing a man can do that a woman can’t do as well or better...A basic feminist argument today is that the overall status of women in a society is related to the nature of the roles that they are allowed to fill. The Garifuna case is almost a mirror image of what has more often happened to women since the onset of the industrial revolution. That is, the roles assigned to men have been deleted or diluted to the point that men as a class seem somehow less important than women. The general situation which remains has struck many observers, themselves members of a different kind of social order, as being “matrifocal” (Gonzalez 1988:8-9).

Within Honduras, Garifuna organizational leaders support Gonzalez, claiming that Garifuna gender relations surpass Mestizo gender relations. In 2002, Thorne (nd.) was told by OFRANEH leadership that, unlike *ladino* men,

Garifuna men ‘respect’ the views of women and work in a mutually supportive way around community issues...that when Garifuna women meet, men are not excluded, but are often present, playing a supporting role and encouraging women’s involvement.

Although it is true that women do hold a relative degree of power within the community, Sambo Creek has yet to have a female President of Patronato. Outside

of the political sphere, women do serve as the core of the community and children become obligated to their mothers more so than to their fathers. In Anderson's (2000:76) description of gender relations in Sambo Creek, he notes:

When husbands are present, women still maintain their own spheres of social and economic power, particularly when their children become working adults. Children (male and female), typically develop close relationships to their mothers, maternal grandmothers and aunts and acquire obligations to support them through financial or practical means (i.e., helping build or repair a house, clearing a garden plot). They almost always speak in terms of sending money to their mother or building a house for their mother rather than for their parents, or, certainly, their father.

Anderson's observations are in line with the data I collected five years later, with people speaking almost exclusively of mothers and grandmothers when providing me with home and property histories (these patterns are discussed in detail in chapter six).

A significant amount of scholarly research has focused on Garifuna women. Topics of research include their roles within the household structure (Gonzalez 1969, 1988, Helms 1981, England 1998), their participation in religious rituals (Jenkins 1983, Kerns 1983, Chernela 1991), and the impacts of migration on women's lives (Gonzalez 1969, 1988, England 2000). Significant emphasis has been placed on documenting and understanding Garifuna domestic organization, which according to Gonzalez (1969, 1988) adapted in response to the diverse economic activities of the Garifuna.

The division of labor had historically been that men fish and/or seek wage labor while women remain in communities and work in agriculture. As noted above, the search for wage labor has increased dramatically over the years and it

almost always necessitates migration. Although women also migrate in search of work, the fact that they assume primary responsibility for childcare means there are more women remaining in coastal communities than men. The women who remain in communities traditionally maintained responsibility for agricultural production, using the products for subsistence and occasional sale.

Historically, the Garifuna have practiced shifting agriculture, using fields for a certain number of years, and then leaving them fallow while the soil recovers and becomes fertile again (Bonilla and Paulaya, n.d.). The traditional gendered division of agricultural labor is as follows: men are typically responsible for preparing the soil through tilling, slashing, and burning, while women sow, care for and harvest the crops. That said, in practice, some men in Sambo Creek also participated in sowing, caring for, and harvesting the crops. Once harvested, women are solely responsible for the two-day processing of yuca, which involves peeling, grating, drying, and baking into *casabe* (i.e, cassava bread). Some women in Sambo Creek, most of whom were older, participated in cassava processing. *Casabe* production has as much social and cultural utility to the women's groups as it does economic or nutritional. Because relatively few people cultivate land in Sambo Creek, yuca is often purchased for the production of *casabe*. Lack of land and youth disinterest are of the two main reasons behind the decline of yuca cultivation.

The traditional land tenure system in Garifuna communities is communal landholding. All land, including that occupied by houses or other structures and cultivation land, is held under the patronato and use rights are passed through

inheritance. Little is written on Garifuna inheritance patterns, but the information shared by Garifuna residents in Sambo Creek suggests that use rights historically passed through the matrilineal line.

Honduras' Constitution recognizes Garifuna land rights under communal land titles. While improvements to the land (e.g., houses or other buildings) can be bought and sold by individuals within the community, the land remains inalienable and theoretically cannot be sold. However, land ownership in Sambo Creek is common. This is because much of the community's ancestral cultivation and harvest land does not fall under the constitutionally protected land title and therefore been transformed into private plots. Men have been the principal actors behind this transformation. Sambo Creek's residents speak of these ancestral lands as plots that were once held by their mothers or grandmothers. Today, Garifuna men, Mestizos, and foreigners possess private titles to many of these plots. This transformation calls into question traditional inheritance patterns – will Sambo Creek's women equally inherit land now that it has taken on a higher economic value? Chapter six elaborates this shift from matrilineal inheritance of use rights to private ownership.

2.2.3 Infrastructure Changes

In 1982, Carolyn McCommon (cited in Anderson 2000: 85) described Sambo Creek as a:

...traditional, rural, Black Carib village...there is no electricity, telegraph lines or sanitation service. Few houses have latrines or adjacent outhouses. Water is obtained from the river and hauled to homes in pans carried on individuals' heads.

In 2002, community members remembered these days well. Within the last two decades there have been major infrastructure changes. In the 1980s, the road was paved between La Ceiba and Trujillo, and La Ceiba subsidized electricity for the community. In the early 1990s, the municipality of La Ceiba built a potable water and sanitation system (Anderson 2000:86). Moreover, the majority of traditional *manaca* houses (mud walls with palm-thatched roof) began to be replaced with homes constructed of *bloque* (cinderblock). These new homes were typically financed through remittances. At the time of my research, the existing infrastructure included a paved stone street, health center, primary school, middle school, two Catholic churches and seven Evangelical churches,⁴ one communal center constructed with support of members of the community that live in the United States, a hotel in the urban area,⁵ and three hotels in the rural areas, two of which are on the coast. In March 2002, two months into my dissertation fieldwork, Barceló, a major Spanish resort chain opened a resort location on the beaches of Roma, which is less than two miles from Sambo Creek, and just slightly past the community's ancestral limits.

Despite these advances, there were still communication and travel limitations in 2002. Taxis from La Ceiba did not service the community. Most community members were reliant on the bus service to get to La Ceiba or elsewhere, although there were households that had their own cars or trucks. One

⁴ The role of religion and churches is not something I have sufficient data on and do not discuss in this dissertation. However, I will note that the influx of Christian (non-Catholic) churches in the area is likely linked to the decline in the practice of *dugu*, the ancestral religious rituals. Catholicism is tolerant of *dugu*, but other denominations find ancestral rites to be sacrilegious.

⁵ I use urban to refer to the paved road area, where the bus from La Ceiba services.

landline phone serviced the entire community; some people did have cell phones. Almost all households owned a television with cable.

There are also serious health concerns within the community. Despite the arrival of potable water, Sambo Creek still lacks facilities to treat the water with chlorine. Thus, a significant portion of community residents suffer from health problems directly related to deficient sanitation infrastructure. And although the community has a health center, it is not a 24-hour clinic, and the closest hospital is in La Ceiba. Malaria, gastrointestinal diseases, and other infectious diseases are prevalent in the community.

Constant migration has fed the rapid spread of communicable disease within the community, and HIV/AIDS is affecting the population. The Garifuna population as a whole has one of the highest levels of HIV/AIDS in the Western hemisphere. In Honduras, HIV prevalence in adults between the ages of fifteen and forty-nine years of age exceeds eight percent, and the rates in adults in their twenties are twice as high (UNAIDS 2004). Honduras' Garifuna organizations cite Sambo Creek as one of the most heavily affected communities, estimating that more than one-third of the community is infected. Despite efforts to increase awareness of the disease and how it is spread, shame and denial persist in the community. Although I did not include a focus on the disease in my interviews, many community members did note its prevalence to me. The HIV/AIDS epidemic has impacts on all facets of Garifuna life, including land use and management. The impact of HIV/AIDS on the Garifuna population has yet to be thoroughly explored and is an important area for future research.

2.3 Introducing Honduras' Garifuna Organizations

I affiliated with both OFRANEH and ODECO, the two organizations that represent the Garifuna in Honduras. OFRANEH is a grassroots support organization that was formed in 1977 and received official recognition in 1980. While it was formed to represent "AfroHondurans," a category that includes English-speaking blacks and the Garifuna, its leadership told me that it has since been transformed into an organization that focuses exclusively on Garifuna representation. According to literature from the organization, it stands for self-determination, autonomy, and protection of Garifuna territory and culture.

ODECO is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that serves as an intermediary between international aid agencies and Garifuna communities. ODECO was formed in 1992 (and received official recognition in 1994) by a group of ex-OFRANEH members who left the organization due to "differences in philosophies." ODECO represents both Garifuna and non-Garifuna AfroHondurans and has as its principal objective the "integration of AfroHondurans into the development process." Although ODECO does claim to represent non-Garifuna AfroHondurans, much of their programs are focused on the Garifuna. ODECO's leadership frequently noted their goal to transform the Garifuna from development 'objects' to 'subjects' actively engaged in the development process. The organization's strategies to achieve this goal include the empowerment of AfroHonduran communities and the advancement of local

abilities through education, capacity-building workshops and training, and the development of strong and efficient institutions.

Both of these organizations are also involved in transnational coalitions, through which they articulate their experiences as “blacks” who share the struggles of other African American communities. *La Organización Negra Centroamericana* or ONECA (the Central American Black Organization or CABO) is an example of this type of transnational alliance building. ONECA is an alliance comprised of 16 black organizations from across the Americas, representing seven different countries (Honduras, Guatemala, Belize, Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica, and the United States).⁶

While both OFRANEH and ODECO operate within Garifuna communities, ODECO excels in its international reach and funding. ODECO’s resources are far more robust than OFRANEH’s, which enables them to employ highly educated Garifuna staff. However, ODECO’s international recognition does not mean that they hold the most national and local power. It serves to note that OFRANEH’s international reach is on the rise, especially as of late. Both organizations have played a key role in pressuring the Honduran government to honor its constitutional commitments to grant Garifuna communities land titles. Both organizations are also involved in public education, consciousness-raising,

⁶ These organizations are: the National Garifuna Council of Belize, the National Creole Council of Belize, *La Organización Negra Guatemalteca* (ONEGUA) of Guatemala, the Black Woman’s Organization of Guatemala, *Asociación de Mujeres Garifunas Guatemaltecas* of Guatemala, the Nicaraguan Garifuna Organization, *Asociación de Desarrollo y Promoción Humana de la Costa Atlántica* (ADEPHCA) of Nicaragua, the Afro-Latin American/Afro-Costa Rican Woman’s Network, INSCA of Costa Rica, the Caribbean Project of Costa Rica, the Association of Friends of the Ethnic Caribbean Museum of Bocas del Toro of Panama, the Afro-Panamanian Response, the Afro Panamanian Woman’s Network, the Southern Diaspora Research and Development Center of Panama, the Coalition Garifuna US, and Hondurans Against AIDS of the United States.

political advocacy and lobbying. At the community level, the two organizations frequently compete with one another for support, and it would be incorrect to claim that one is more powerful than the other (see also Thorne n.d.).

While both organizations hold regular elections to constitute their board of directors, OFRANEH's leadership actually changes far more frequently than ODECO's. Since its foundation, Céleo Alvarez has maintained the President's seat in ODECO. Alvarez is a very strong leader and all other staff are answerable to him. ODECO also has women serving in very high-profile positions, and the organization's legal advisor is a woman. Karen Vargas is responsible for all ODECO's legal support work surrounding land rights and reclamations in Garifuna communities. I had the opportunity to interview both of these important leaders on multiple occasions, as well as to interview other staff within the organization. I also interviewed the top leadership of OFRANEH, as well as other staff members. Notably, women fill OFRANEH's two topmost positions.

My first contact with both organizations was in 2000, when I was present in La Ceiba to study the Garifuna language. In later years, ODECO supported my grant application for a Fulbright IIE, as well as gave me the names of some of their supporters in Sambo Creek to serve as entry points into the community. Both organizations are based out of La Ceiba, which made it relatively easy for me to visit them for interviews and the solicitation of archival documents because I was based out of Sambo Creek.

2.4 Data and Methods

The data I have drawn upon in my analyses was collected during thirteen months of fieldwork between June 2000 and October 2002 and over five years (1999-2005) of monitoring the Internet. Multiple methods of data collection were used, including interviews following a semi-structured protocol, unstructured interviewing, archival research, direct observation, and participant observation.

This dissertation draws upon 91 interviews with the following groups of people: Garifuna and Mestizo community members in Sambo Creek, tourism operators, hotel owners and staff in La Ceiba and Sambo Creek, organizational leaders and activists from ODECO and OFRANEH, officials from the Honduran Institute of Tourism, and officials from the regional office (i.e., La Ceiba) for the National Agrarian Institute. The majority of interviews were not tape-recorded, and therefore many of the quotations offered in this text are not verbatim and were transcribed from handwritten notes. Table I details the groups of interviewees, the interview location, format, and sampling method.

Table I. Formal Interviews

Interviewee Group	Interview Location	Sampling	Number of Interviews
Honduran Institute of Tourism	Tegucigalpa	Targeted	2
President of Patronato and Elders	Sambo Creek	Targeted	6
Community Members	Sambo Creek	Every 5 th household	55
Hotel Owners and Staff	Sambo Creek	Targeted	9
ODECO and OFRANEH Leadership	La Ceiba	Targeted	5
Community Activists	Coastal Garifuna communities (including Sambo Creek)	Targeted	5
National Agrarian Institute	La Ceiba	Targeted	2
Tour Operators	La Ceiba	Targeted	3
Tourism Marketers / Council of Tourism	La Ceiba	Targeted	2
Resort Management	Roma / La Ceiba	Targeted	2
			Total
			91

2.4.1 Tourism-related interviews

The Garifuna land struggle is situated within the context of actual and proposed coastal tourism development. In an effort to understand the perspectives of the various actors behind the promotion of tourism development, I conducted both interviews and archival research on coastal tourism development. I spent my first two weeks of fieldwork in the capital city of Tegucigalpa where I visited the Honduran Institute of Tourism (IHT) (formerly part of the government as the Ministry of Tourism). I interviewed two officials from the IHT and collected documents on the government's plans for coastal tourism development as well as

copies of the social and environmental impact assessments for the proposed development around La Ceiba, Tela, and Trujillo (i.e., the main coastal cities surrounded by Garifuna communities). The interviews with IHT personnel were open-ended and guided by a list of topics on which I wanted to learn more. These topics included: the history of the IHT (i.e., why it was no longer a ministry of the state); government efforts to promote tourism; coastal resort recruitment; specific tourism initiatives in areas nearby Garifuna communities and Garifuna responses to those initiatives; Garifuna mobilization against Article 107; Decree 90/90 (i.e., a law that enables foreigners to buy land for tourism development); the World Bank's involvement in tourism promotion; and social and environmental impact assessments.

I also interviewed sixteen individuals directly involved in the tourism industry in the La Ceiba area, nine of who were the owners, management, or staff at hotels in or within walking distance of Sambo Creek. Examples of the topics I covered with hotel owners include: why they chose to operate a business within or near Garifuna communities; how they involved community members in their tourism operations; and, how they obtained land in the area. Staff members were interviewed to garner information about their background, wages, and opinions about the impact local tourism development has on their home communities.

Within La Ceiba, I interviewed the area's main tourism operators and local tourism council, collecting pamphlets and other public publications at these locations. These interviews were also all semi-structured and open-ended and were focused on the marketing aspects of tourism on the coast, the government's role in

promoting tourism; and the variety of activities for tourists on the coast, among other topics (see Appendix A for an example of a guided question list).

2.4.2 Garifuna Organization Interviews

I interviewed officials from ODECO and OFRANEH on multiple occasions. The interviews always followed a semi-structured, open-ended interview schedule and I always requested to tape-record so that I could accurately represent organizational stances. ODECO leadership was not comfortable with recording, while OFRANEH was. The topics of my queries changed throughout the course of the research. Early interviews centered around gaining insights into the organizations' histories, objectives, programs and projects, stances on tourism development, and their mobilization against Article 107. As my research progressed, my questions became more nuanced inquiries into Sambo Creek's land struggle (see Appendix A for examples of these questionnaires). I also requested documents from both organizations on multiple occasions, and took whatever they chose to share with me. The types of documents I requested included clippings on Garifuna mobilization against Article 107; organizational statements and communications with the INA regarding the land struggle; court proceedings; maps and titling information for Sambo Creek, etcetera. I maintained contact with both organizations throughout my time in Honduras, although ODECO extended invitations to their functions more often than did OFRANEH. I also visited the regional INA office in La Ceiba, conducting brief interviews with two staff members.

2.4.3 Sambo Creek Interviews

I conducted seventy-three formal interviews with residents in Sambo Creek, but I spoke informally with significantly more. This total (73) consists of six interviews with the President of Patronato and community elders, fifty-five household interviews, three interviews with local activists, and nine with hotel owners and staff. I began the formal community interviews by seeking out the President of Patronato so that I could introduce myself, discuss my study's objectives, and talk about what I could provide for the community as a way to thank my hosts for their accommodation.⁷ I asked the President of Patronato to suggest five individuals who he considered knowledgeable about the community's history and important people for me to talk to before I began to sample the community.

After these initial six interviews, I sampled each geographic section of the community, interviewing an adult member of the household in approximately every fifth house, completing fifty-five household interviews. I chose to sample in this way because I was seeking representation from every section of the community, not necessarily a representative sample of adults. What I wanted to know was how individuals living in different geographic areas of the community experienced and thought about the land struggle. This was of interest because the

⁷ I planned to make a monetary contribution to the community's primary school, but the school director was concerned that cash would put undue suspicion on the school administration and suggested the transparency offered by donating actual supplies would better serve the community. Taking suggestions from the head of the parent's group in Sambo Creek, I equipped the school with a substantial amount of basic supplies (e.g., paper, pencils), art supplies, and musical recorders so that the school could implement new courses in art and music. (I also made a monetary contribution to the Garifuna organizations, asking that the funds be earmarked to aid in the land struggle.)

various settlements expressed class distinctions, but also because the surrounding areas of the community had unique histories in their transformation from cultivation land to living space. For example, *La Libertad* was donated to the community by the government and then the patronato distributed plots to families without homes; some areas of *Colonia Suazo* that were once cultivation land were purchased and privatized by well-off community members; and, areas of *Corinto* were usurped through Mestizo encroachment and are now home to Mestizos of varying wealth.

Within these household interviews, I sought representation by age, gender, and ethnicity. The way I enlisted participants was by approaching every fifth household and asking to speak with either a man or woman (rotating at each household) within one of three age groups (also rotating categories at each household). The age groups I sought to represent in the sample were: ages 20-29; ages 30-50, and over 50 years of age. In the end, I spoke with 11 individuals between the ages of 20 and 29, 24 individuals between 30-50 years of age, and 20 individuals over the age of 50. Let me provide the reader with an understanding of how the interviewee enlistment worked in practice. At the first household I approached, I asked to talk with a woman between 30 and 50 years of age. At the next house, I asked for a man from the same age group. At the third house, I asked to talk to a woman over 50, and in the fourth house, a man over 50. At the fifth house, I asked to talk with a woman between ages 20 to 29, and then at the sixth house, to a man between 20 and 29. I then repeated the process throughout the entire community. Only two households did not agree to participate and in these

events I approached their immediate neighbor to continue my sampling. When a household did not have an individual in the age group I was interested in talking to, I asked to speak with a person of the same gender in a different age group.⁸ Despite my attempt to rotate between men and women adult members of the household, Sambo Creek has far more women permanent residents than men, and I ended up with more women in the sample (35 women and 20 men). This is because in certain areas of the community there were several consecutive houses without a male resident. Rather than leaving out large sections of the community, I decided to interview the woman head of household.

Of the fifty-five participants, forty-two were Garifuna, ten were Mestizo, two were of mixed ancestry (Garifuna and Mestizo) and one was an English-speaking Black.⁹ I did not purposefully sample for ethnicity. I believed that since Sambo Creek is ethnically diverse, sampling every fifth household would accommodate my interests in obtaining representation by ethnicity. This strategy proved successful, as evidenced in Table II, which illustrates the household interviewees by ethnicity and then sorts ethnicity by gender.

⁸ Many households did not have individuals under the age of 30 (usually because they had migrated for work), which explains why my sample included only 11 individuals under 30, while it had a more balanced representation in the other two age categories.

⁹ "English-speaking blacks" are an ethnic group recognized by the Honduran state.

Table II. Sambo Creek Household Interviews by Ethnicity and Gender

Sambo Creek Household Interviews by Ethnicity (n=55)				
% Garifuna	% Mestizo	% English-speaking Black	% Mixed Ancestry	Total
76% (n=42)	18% (n=10)	2% (n=1)	4% (n=2)	100%
Female Household Interviewees by Ethnicity (n=35)				
% Garifuna	% Mestizo	% English-speaking Black	% Mixed Ancestry	Total
74% (n=26)	20% (n=7)	3% (n=1)	3% (n=1)	100%
Male Household Interviewees by Ethnicity (n=20)				
% Garifuna	% Mestizo	% English-speaking Black	% Mixed Ancestry	Total
80% (n=16)	15% (n=3)	0%	5% (n=1)	100%

Interviews with community members followed a semi-structured interview protocol that allowed for open-ended responses, and only two were tape-recorded. The topics I explored in these interviews included household demographic information; personal and community land use and land ownership history; knowledge and opinion of land laws, community land title, and the land struggle; interactions with and opinions of ODECO and OFRANEH; questions about community history, Garifuna history, and Garifuna culture; and questions regarding tourism development, among others (see Appendix A for a complete protocol). When interviewees brought up topics not treated on the protocol that I

believed would add to my understanding of the community, I pursued these topics with them by asking related follow-up questions. The interviews lasted between one and three hours, and took place in the interviewee's home or patio area. Due to the sensitive nature of my questions, I did not ask to tape-record the household interviews.

I employed a field assistant to aid with the majority of the community interviews. There were two reasons I selected my field assistant: he spoke good Spanish and he was of mixed ancestry. Rene (a pseudonym)¹⁰ was the son of a Mestizo woman and Garifuna man, both of whom have ancestral links in the community of Sambo Creek. Rene was as "neutral" as one could get in a community land struggle that at times was divided by racial-ethnic lines, and at other times, by class distinctions. Both sides of his family were well-liked, and neither side was politically active. He was also not well off, supporting his wife and five children on approximately \$100 a month (salary plus tips) and he did not receive remittances. Employing him to assist with the interviews did not seem to evoke too much envy amongst community members. After each interview (or series of interviews), I would return home immediately to transcribe the data. I would later meet with Rene to compare our notes and we would work to fill in any gaps.

After the household interviews, I conducted three additional interviews with members of the Land Defense Committee and Patronato. I also interviewed two local activists from nearby Garifuna communities who worked closely with

¹⁰ I have assigned pseudonyms to all community members referenced from Sambo Creek, except for those who were identified within the news media.

Sambo Creek's patronato, OFRANEH, or ODECO. The point of these additional interviews was to gain more detailed knowledge of Sambo Creek's land struggle and organizational support for their land claims from individuals active in the reclamation processes. All of these interviews were open-ended in which I used a topic sheet to guide our discussions. All were conducted without an assistant, and three of the five were tape-recorded.

2.4.4 Participant Observation and Direct Observation

In addition to conducting the community interviews, I also gathered data regarding positions about the land struggle through conversations with individuals I befriended in the community. My spouse and young son accompanied me to the field, and we rented a cabana within the limits of Sambo Creek, a five-minute walk down the beach from the urban center. Living in the area with a child enabled strong friendships to grow with the women of the community. I kept a field journal in which I recorded daily events and conversations. I also participated in a variety of community events as an observer and participant observer and took notes during and after these events. Examples of the types of activities in which I utilized participant observation as a method of data collection were baking *pan de coco*, hiking the mountain with friends to look for shrimp, and attending the local *feria* with my family. I employed direct observation in the community as well by taking notes on visual observations as I walked the community boundaries and when I attended the music and dance practices of a local dance troupe. I also attended a number of events organized by ODECO, including the 205th

anniversary celebration of the Garifuna arrival in Honduras. I took notes throughout the speeches at these events and wrote up fieldnotes regarding the conversations I had with other attendees.

2.4.5 Archival Research

The collection, review, and analysis of secondary data were essential parts of the dissertation work. Since 1999, I have been collecting documents on a variety of topics including changes in Honduran land legislation (and in particular, Article 107 and its' reforms and amendments); Garifuna activist statements regarding the land struggle and tourism development; tourism programs supported by the World Bank. These archives have come from a variety of sources, including Honduran newspapers, Internet articles, and documents given to me from ODECO, OFRANEH, Sambo Creek community members, the National Agrarian Institute (INA), and the Honduran Institute of Tourism (IHT). Table III details the array of secondary data I have analyzed, when and how I received it.

Table III. Secondary Data Sources

Type of Secondary Data	Time gathered	Archived by	Topic of Data
Newspaper Clippings from Honduran Papers	2000-2003	Self	Tourism
Newspaper Clippings from Honduran Papers	2000-2004	Self	Garifuna Communities
Newspaper Clippings from Honduran Papers	1999-2001	ODECO	Article 107
Pamphlets, Advertisements, and Promotional Booklets	2000-2002	Self	Coastal Tourism Advertisements
ODECO Internal Publications	1999-2002	ODECO	Organizational Objectives and Activities
National Agrarian Institute Documents	2002-2005	ODECO / Sambo Creek's Patronato / OFRANEH	Sambo Creek's Land Title and Maps
<i>Community Informe</i> by CCARC	2002	Sambo Creek Patronato	Community History, Economy, Land Problems, etc.
Public Court Documents	2001-2005	OFRANEH	Sambo Creek's Land Struggle
Social and Environmental Impact Analysis Reports	2002	IHT	Impact Assessments for Tourism Development in La Ceiba, Tela, and Trujillo
Internet Postings / Listserve Communications	1999-Present	Self	Garifuna Land Struggle
Public Communications	2002-2005	ODECO / Sambo Creek's Patronato / OFRANEH	Statements on Sambo Creek's Land Struggle
International Conventions and Covenants	2002-2005	Self	International Conventions Drawn upon by Garifuna in Land Struggle

2.5 Data Analysis

I typed fieldnotes on a daily basis and transcribed all interviews before leaving Honduras in October 2002.¹¹ Once I returned from the field, I transferred all of the files into Atlas-ti™, a data management program. I coded the data thematically, both inductively and deductively, and then generated content reports (i.e., long lists of cross-referenced quotations), which I used to write the substantive chapters of the dissertation. Examples of the themes I coded deductively were descriptions of the Garifuna land struggle in general, as well as specifics about Sambo Creek land invasions; opinions about Garifuna organizational representation; comments about Garifuna history and culture; thoughts about tourism development within the nation in general, and in the boundaries of Sambo Creek, in particular. Examples of themes that emerged during the data analysis process are those surrounding gender and land use. In particular, it was during my analysis that I began to note patterns in how landholdings were transformed from communal to private and how gender played into these transformations, and so I began to code for references to matrilineal inheritance, among other topics. I also used Excel as a means to quantify the results of interview questions.

¹¹ Before leaving the field, I also wrote an *informe* that provided an overview of the data I had collected from community members (see Appendix B). I left this with the President of Patronato for Sambo Creek and Corintu, the President of the Land Defense Committee, my research assistants, ODECO, OFRANEH, and three community members who requested a copy.

CHAPTER THREE

DEVELOPMENT ON THE NORTH COAST: THE MAKING AND REMAKING OF THE GARIFUNA SUBJECT

This chapter provides the context for understanding contemporary Garifuna struggles for land on the coast of Honduras. As I indicated in the introduction, it is only recently that the coast and its population have become valued by the Honduran State. For much of Honduras' history, the region was marginal to Honduras and the Garifuna were excluded from the nation-state. There are three time periods treated in this chapter. Each corresponds to shifts in Garifuna subject positioning. First, I review the rise of the banana industry, Garifuna involvement in the industry, and how the Garifuna became positioned as 'other' or non-Honduran as a result of an explicitly anti-black labor movement. Next, I discuss shifts in coastal landholding and control, explaining the processes through which the coast was populated by a significant number of Mestizo peasants. I describe how the Garifuna recast their identity during this time period, making explicit their uniqueness as AfroHonduran and autochthonous. Finally, I describe current initiatives to develop coastal tourism and changes in agrarian legislation that have enabled that development. This contemporary shift has created motivations for the Garifuna to redefine themselves. Both the Honduran state and the Garifuna themselves are involved in the making and remaking of the Garifuna subject. Today, they are being recast as indigenous peoples.

3.1 Garifuna Exclusion: The Black “Threat” and the Emergence of an Indo-Hispanic National Identity

The Garifuna populated Honduras’ Caribbean coastline soon after the British deported them from St. Vincent in 1797. As noted in the last chapter, they traveled from Roatan to the mainland by canoe, arriving first in Trujillo and then migrating via land and canoe both east and west along the coast. They were therefore present in Honduras twenty-four years before the nation’s 1821 independence. Table IV is a reproduction of data reported by Euraque (2003: 242) and provides estimates of the early Garifuna population. Drawing upon Honduran historical documents, Euraque estimates that the overall percentage patterns of Garifuna in the country ranged between one and five percent of the total population between 1797 and 1935.

Table IV. Estimates of Garifuna Population in Honduras, 1797-1935

Year	Estimate	% of Hondurans
1797	2,000	1
1801	4,000	3
1816	8,000	5
1910	14,466	3
1930	18,092	2
1935	22,979	2

Until the mid 20th century, the Atlantic coast was not easily reachable from the highlands, which was where the vast majority of the population and the governmental seat were located. This geographic isolation from the highlands contributed to the lack of political involvement and national investment in the region. Instead, the most important economic players in the development of the

Atlantic coast came from outside of the nation. For much of its early history, the coast was essentially a separate economy, and the state did not exert much influence over the region.

In the 1890s, the coast began its transformation into a central seat to US-owned banana companies and their plantations. In 1899, the United Fruit Company (UFCO) added Honduras as a new supply site for banana production, with the intention that the country would serve as an important link and spread the industry throughout Central America. The three major fruit companies that eventually came to dominate the Honduran coast were Cuyamel Fruit, which operated in the region of Puerto Cortes; the Vaccaros Brothers in the region of La Ceiba; and the United Fruit Company near Tela and Trujillo. The government granted them huge land subsidies for each kilometer of railroad track they constructed. While the government expected that the companies would eventually build a national rail system that linked the capital with the largely inaccessible Caribbean coast (Merrill 1993), they instead used the railroads to reach new coastal lands and transform them into expansive plantations. By the start of World War I, the banana companies had been granted 416,500 hectares (about 1,029,194 acres) of fertile land on the north coast (Ruhl 1984: 39). As a result, the three companies eventually came to control the majority of good land on the Caribbean coast, owning 75% of all Honduran banana groves. Bananas accounted for 66% of all Honduran exports in 1913, making the companies extremely powerful players in Honduran politics. During the first half of the 20th century, managers of the

United Fruit Company and the Standard Fruit Company were perceived of as exerting as much power (if not more) as the Honduran President (Merrill 1993).

The coastal region was difficult to transform into a primary source for bananas for a number of reasons. The area was full of swamplands that had to be cleared, lacked a labor supply, and was seen as lawless and isolated (Echeverri-Gent 1992: 277-79). Other than the Garifuna, few others lived in the region where the banana plantations were established. (Miskito settlements were in southeastern Honduras, bordering Nicaragua and not near the territories that were transformed into plantations.) The Garifuna, who had a reputation for being industrious, strong, and hard working, were incorporated into the fruit industry, hired to work as plantation laborers, dockworkers, and in railroad construction (Gonzalez 1988).

As the industry grew in success, corrupt officials on the coast began to expropriate large tracts of lands to either keep for themselves or sell to foreign companies. Burns (2005) cites an example from Trujillo in which Colonel Gustavo Alvarez, a local military commander, expropriated 2,000 hectares (apx. 4,942 acres) of Garifuna lands and distributed them amongst wealthy landowners despite Garifuna protests. I was told similar stories in Sambo Creek, which give a sense of how Garifuna territorial control was usurped during the 1920s and 1930s.

Between the 1870s and the 1930s, the north coast territories experienced major population growth. By the 1930s, twenty percent of the country's population resided in coastal departments (compared to less than five percent during the 19th century) (Euarque 1998:155). The Garifuna communities near the plantations soon began to suffer from Mestizo and foreign encroachment, as

people moved to the area in search of job opportunities. The companies also attracted foreigners from a variety of locations. British were hired into management, Arabs and Armenians became involved as merchants, and West Indians were hired as laborers.

The Black British West Indian population grew significantly in the late 19th and early 20th century, when the fruit companies expanded. People of African descent were considered the most effective workers in the industry because of their resistance to diseases like malaria, and they were known for having superior strength and endurance (Anderson 2000:131). The fruit companies favored West Indians because they were already skilled in banana cultivation, spoke English, had higher literacy levels, and were already acclimated to white authority and racism (Bourgois 1989). As such, West Indians were turned to in order to fulfill a perceived labor shortage, and they soon became the majority of Honduras' plantation workers. According to governmental reporting, in 1929, there were about 10,000 West Indian workers in Honduras (Echeverri-Gent: 1992: 283). Moreover, British officials noted that companies actively recruited more workers than they could employ, resulting in a labor surplus and competition between workers of different identities and nationalities (Anderson 2000).

Work in the banana industry soon became a critical area of employment for Hondurans, and the national elite began to pressure the banana companies to hire Hispanic Hondurans. When mining, one of the nation's other principal export industries (albeit quite small in contrast to banana exports), declined in 1910, the pressure to find jobs for Hispanic Hondurans increased (Echeverri-Gent

1992:298). The overabundance of West Indian immigrants became a point of contention between the Hispanic Honduran population, the Honduran government, and the fruit companies. With the companies recruiting more West Indian workers than they could employ, the Hispanic Honduran population began to perceive of them as stealing jobs from the “sons of the nation” (Anderson 2000:132). This growing resentment created a racist labor movement in which Hispanic Hondurans pushed for anti-West Indian policies (Echeverri-Gent 1992: 298).

The movement grew throughout the first half of the 20th century, becoming a widespread campaign against the immigrant blacks employed by the U.S. based fruit companies. Honduran papers were filled with letters and editorials protesting the presence of foreign blacks and calling for an immigration law to prohibit their entrance (Anderson 2000: 112-113). British colonial officials who were stationed in Honduras documented the growing anti-black sentiment. For example, in the British correspondence reviewed by Echeverri-Gent (1992: 300), British officials reported Hondurans declaring, “if the government doesn’t get rid of [West Indian workers] they won’t hesitate to do it themselves in bloodshed.” Another document noted:

...feelings on the North Coast are very strong against these coloured men, and a very strong article was recently published against the unwelcome immigration of coloured people, who, so the writer wished to point out work for less wages than the native workman, and consequently was robbing him of employment (Echeverri-Gent 1992: 300).

All levels of society singled black workers out; even artisans in Tegucigalpa protested against their presence (Echeverri-Gent 1992: 304). Froylan Turcis, an elite from Tegucigalpa published a series of editorials about the

“unnecessary immigrants” that cited the “danger” of racial mixture (Euraque 2003: 243). The concern over immigration centered on the perceived moral and physical threat that blacks represented as a ‘race’ (Anderson 2000). The following quote from one of the well-respected Honduran intellectuals of the time who was involved in the campaign against black immigrants is illustrative of this sentiment:

But there is something worse in this African importation. There exists, each time more effective, each time more growing, the danger that over the course of years Honduras will be nothing but a nation of *mulattos*. Because the herd of blacks that the companies import, today in one form, tomorrow in another, making use of all kinds of excuses, are degenerating in alarming manner the Honduran race (“Protección a los Nacionales,” *El Pueblo*, March 10, 1931) (quoted in Anderson 2000:113).

The national racist messages from the capital filtered down to the local level on the coast, influencing local officials and police in particular, who frequently harassed black workers (Anderson 2000:135). Echeverri-Gent’s (1992) historical review found reports of targeted racial violence. Great Britain maintained Foreign Offices in coastal towns to oversee their West Indian colonial subjects. While British authorities documented a series of abuses, they seem to have offered little direct (physical) protection to the West Indians. For example, in the 1910 “*La Masica*” incident, a Honduran officer and the men under his command gratuitously killed three and wounded three other West Indians who worked for Vaccaros Brothers. In 1912, a West Indian who refused to do forced labor in La Ceiba had a dead body “tied to his neck and both were dragged along by chain fastened to his hands” (British Report quoted in Echeverri-Gent 1992: 299). British authorities pressed these cases and formally demanded compensation for the death of its Colonial Subject in the latter incident. The case was submitted

to the King of Spain for arbitration and in 1917, the King ruled in favor of Great Britain (Echeverri-Gent 1992: 299). The courts found Honduran officials and the fruit companies at fault for the death. Great Britain likely expected that the Honduran government would suffer political and economic costs, which in turn would lead it to pressure local officials into improving their relations with the British West Indian labor. But the ruling did not have this outcome and the racially charged violence continued.

Moreover, several administrations attempted to curb West Indian immigration altogether as a means to eliminate the racial tensions. In 1914, British correspondence reported that the Honduran government planned to stop labor recruitment from the West Indies. In 1916, they threatened to deport West Indian workers, and in September of that year, the Ministry of War issued orders that no black workers were to disembark (Echeverri-Gent 1992). Then in 1917, the Honduran government requested that the UFCO repatriate its black labor force. The company refused, telling the Honduran government that if they wanted to deport the black workers, they would have to do so themselves. In 1921, President Lopez Gutiérrez prohibited the entry of black British subjects, stating that they were unfairly replacing Honduran labor (Echeverri-Gent 1992: 300-30).

In 1923, the *Federación Obrera Hondureña* (Federation of Honduran Workers or FOH), which was established by artisans from Tegucigalpa, introduced legislation which sought to prohibit the importation of Negroes, Africans, and coolies (East Indians), deport all those who had been brought in by the companies, and to issue identification cards to all “Negroes” and “coolies” (Euraque 1998:157,

2003: 244). The banana companies and embassies of the U.S. and Britain opposed the bill as well as subsequent bills that were introduced, and all failed to pass. However, Honduran officials supported the anti-black movement and the deportation of West Indians, and in 1924, several ships with West Indian immigrants were sent back to their ports of origin without allowing them to dock (Echeverri-Gent 1992: 301)

The movement against blacks gained significant momentum in this decade due to massive immigration of Salvadorans who came to Honduras in search of land and jobs. By the end of the decade there were over 12,000 Salvadoran immigrants, representing ten percent of the labor force. These immigrants were incorporated into the labor movement, serving as key activists united with Mestizo Hondurans as Hispanic Central Americans against West Indians. By the mid-1920s the movement became violent, resulting in armed mobs in the streets of Trujillo in July 1924. Strikes broke out on plantations with Mestizo workers threatening black workers with machetes if they did not leave the country. Two black workers were killed and many others were stabbed. British foreign officials began patrolling the area in an attempt to protect the black workers, because according to British historical records, these violent outbreaks appeared to have received support from Honduran local officials. The support of local officials made it difficult for the banana companies to pacify the strikers. In an effort to avoid a massacre, the companies boarded over a thousand black workers onto a Norwegian steamboat (Echeverri-Gent 1992). Tensions continued and in 1929, Hispanic Honduran laborers began organizing to “take matters into their own

hands” (British official quoted in Echeverri-Gent 1992: 303) in Trujillo, Tela, and La Ceiba.

By the 1930s, although racism did not disappear, two events caused the influx of “new blacks” to slow. First, the 1929 Immigration Law institutionalized racism by restricting the arrival of a variety of identified “races,” (*negro, árabe, china, turca, siria, Armenia, palestina, coolie*) by charging the immigrants heavy – and therefore unaffordable - entrance fees and deposits (Anderson 2000; Euraque 2003). At the same time, the depression and banana disease caused recession among the fruit companies, further slowing immigration. In the 1930s, much of the West Indian population was reduced; many returned home or migrated to other countries (Anderson 2000:136). However, the discrimination that was present against West Indian blacks on the coast certainly had an impact on the treatment and representation of the Garifuna. Unfortunately, despite the fact that the Garifuna played a major role as workers for the fruit companies, historical accounts of their relationship to the banana enclaves – as growers and landowners - are relatively few. Euraque’s (2003) research attempts to address this absence.

According to Euraque’s (2003) review of historical documents, the Garifuna were important pioneers in the coastal communities of Tela (the seat of UFCO administration), La Ceiba (the home of Standard Fruit operations), and Trujillo (a major United Fruit center) and were actually some of the earliest banana growers. He draws on new research that shows that by 1900, the Garifuna owned *ejidal* (community) land in Tela and it remained in Garifuna hands into the 1910s. Moreover, historical records from Tela cite some Garifuna by name as early

“capitalists,” owning much of the land occupied by other Garifuna and West Indians in the black area of Tela (Euraque 2003: 238). Similar reconsiderations of La Ceiba’s history have found that Garifuna also held significant economic power there from the 1870s through the early 1920s.

According to Euraque, the Garifuna were the first stable black population employed by the banana companies and their labor remained critical for longer than most other historical records suggest. Euraque states that although the Garifuna probably did not make up the majority of the 4,000 or so workers in the banana economy between the 1890s and 1910s, given their numerical presence on the coast, it is likely that their numbers in the industry were higher than early records stated. Specifically, he argues that the banana companies probably confused black West Indians with Garifuna in their official counts. In her account of Garifuna ethnohistory, Gonzalez (1988) also notes their importance in the banana economy between the 1890s and 1930s, but claims that in those later years, the Garifuna left plantation and dock work and returned to their communities, leaving the work to the newly recruited West Indians, Indios, and mixed-race Hondurans. Euraque agrees that there probably was an exodus of Garifuna labor beginning around the late 1910s and early 1920s, as it coincided with the Salvadoran immigration.

Euraque (2003:239) argues that given their coastal numbers, the “black threat” articulated in the 1920s labor movement and directed towards the British West Indians was likely an outgrowth of the internal and local threat posed by the Garifuna population to the national elite. Specifically, he argues that as the

original occupants of the rich coastal lands, the Garifuna were perceived of as a threat to the Hispanic Honduran growers who sought to extend their holdings in the 1910s and 1920s. Euraque claims that the threat of limited access to the coastal economy was one of the causes behind the creation of an Indo-Hispanic nationalist identity discourse in the 1920s.

In an earlier publication, Euraque (1998) argued that the creation of this indo-Hispanic nationalist identity was a reaction by Honduran elites to US domination of the coastal economy and the influx of foreign laborers.

The triumph of a Mestizo Honduras by the 1930s was the ideological result of a process of social and economic change that brought foreign capital and foreign immigrants to Honduras' north coast and threatened, on many levels, the elites' domination of their country. Elites and the Honduran state were too weak politically and economically to challenge or reject foreign capital; thus they attempted to reassert their dominance, at least in the ideological sphere, by asserting a national unity based on a homogeneous Honduran Mestizo race and excluding, in particular, the West Indian immigrants brought in by the banana companies but also the indigenous north coast Garifuna populations ...[and] by early twentieth century, *Mestizo* slowly came to represent a particular kind of "mixed" person, that is, a person of "Indian" and "Spanish" miscegenation and hence different from the broader range of miscegenation suggested by the term *ladino* (Euraque 1998:152,155).

In 2003, Euraque expanded his reasons behind the construction of this national identity to argue what I shared above: that it was also in response to the threat posed by the Garifuna as original occupants of coastal territories. The newly created national identity categories purposefully excluded blacks (West Indians and Garifuna) in order to maintain the position of power for Hispanic elites.

Two key symbolic events signaled this re-imagining and re-categorization of the nation's populace. First, in 1926, the Honduran legislature named the national currency the Lempira, after an indigenous leader who died resisting the

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Conquest, thus making an Indian a national hero and symbol of Honduran identity. Then in 1930, Honduras reflected this transformation in its official census data, declaring that the majority of the population was Mestizo. For Euraque (1996), these two events signaled the state construction of an indo-Hispanic nation, introducing a new pride in having an indigenous racial heritage and separating Hondurans as a unified group from both US and British elites. Importantly, this indo-Hispanic *mestizaje* denied and negated the presence of blackness within Honduras. Given their historical control over coastal territories, the State's positioning (or exclusion) of Garifuna subject identity in this fashion makes sense.

Since the beginning of the 19th century, the Garifuna had control over significant tracks of land in the coastal region. With the onset of the banana plantations, blacks – both the Garifuna and the imported British West Indians – held the corner on the coastal labor market because the US fruit companies perceived them to be ‘better workers.’ Anti-black resentment grew as Hispanic Hondurans felt they were passed over for employment in favor of ‘non-Hondurans.’ While elite Honduran politicians had an interest in seeing coastal land remain available for the banana companies (because they received economic support in return), they also had an interest in unifying the nation against the US companies who dominated the region. Euraque argues that the emergence of an indo-hispanic *mestizaje* that negated the presence of blackness in the Honduran Mestizo identity, while highlighting the contributions of Indians, was linked to elites attempts at exerting their power and control over the coastal economy. Once the coast became a major source of revenue, and other industries such as mining

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began to decline, elites turned their attention to the region. The Garifuna became a threat to elites because they owned prime resources, and because they shared phenotypic similarities with the black West Indians, they suffered discrimination from Hispanic Central Americans who were competing with them for high paying jobs in the banana industry. The denial of blackness in the Honduran national identity gave reason to deprive the Garifuna of land and commercial opportunities in coastal towns like Tela and La Ceiba. As blacks, they were not considered to be true members of the Honduran state. They did not 'belong,' and therefore did not have rights to the land.

The way in which the fruit companies classified the Garifuna further supported the notion that they were not true Hondurans. Employee statistics included five categories of workers: *Hondureños*, *Morenos*, *Italianos*, *Americanos*, *Negros Americanos y de Jamaica*, and *Diferentes Naciones*; the Garifuna were included as *Morenos*. This categorization meant that they were identified as a group *separate* from the Honduran nation, not as a sub-category (such as *Moreno Hondureño*) or as having a nation of their own (Anderson 2000:139). Hence, they were positioned in an ambiguous state, neither fully Honduran nor fully foreign (because their natal country was unclear to Mestizo Hondurans).

With the denial of a national identity and given the typical conflation of Garifuna with other blacks and the association of blackness as a signal of backwardness and a threat to the Honduran nation, the Garifuna occupied a precarious position of racial-cultural 'other' within the Honduran nation. They

remained at the bottom of both the racial and class hierarchies on the coast, below the racial-cultural class of the Mestizos and foreign immigrants who ran commerce and industry, and in a lower labor class than the West Indians within the fruit companies (Anderson 2000:140).¹²

3.2 Shifts in the Coastal Economy and Population: 1950s-1990

Although the banana companies, local elites and military did dominate significant tracks of coastal lands, the Garifuna were still able to continue cultivating their individual plots for the better part of the 20th century because the area's population density remained relatively low. During the 1950s, changes to the Honduran economy and corresponding population movements altered Garifuna territorial control. The banana companies began returning some of their lands to the government, while continuing to market the bananas grown by small farmers and peasant cooperatives on the returned lands. This arrangement both avoided the politics associated with direct ownership and placed all the risk of crop failure on the small growers, enabling the companies to simply make profits (Burns 2005). By the early 1950s, Honduras' economy began to diversify and for the first time in over half a century, bananas accounted for less than fifty percent of export

¹² There has not been sufficient research on how the Garifuna viewed their position in this time period. In his unpublished dissertation, Anderson (2000:142-144) cites a letter written by a Garifuna man named Sixto A. Cacho in which he identifies commonalities between the Garifuna and the Mestizo population. Cacho writes that the Garifuna share a history of racial intermixture that dates back to the pre-Columbian inhabitants of the Americas. His letter emphasizes the shared oppression of Garifuna and Mestizos ("*latinos*") under the fruit companies, and advocates solidarity of Hondurans against foreign domination (Anderson 2000:143). He points out that despite phenotypic similarities, the Garifuna share more in common with the Mestizo worker than with the West Indians, who were the "preferred workers" by the foreign companies and received the better jobs. Like Mestizo Hondurans, Cacho asserts the Garifuna as authentic Hondurans, and argues that they are entitled to the same rights and privileges.

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earnings (Merrill 1993). Other agricultural products, such as coffee and cotton became significant export crops.

Between 1930 and 1961, the Honduran population more than doubled, reaching 1,875,000. Between 1945 and 1969, 300,000 more Salvadoran peasants (about 7 percent of the Salvadoran population) migrated to Honduras in search of land and labor. By the late 1960s, these Salvadorans constituted twelve percent or more of the Honduran population. The mountainous nature of the country combined with the fact that a significant number of Hondurans relied on agriculture because there were very limited labor options, meant that Honduras began facing a land shortage by the 1960s. Families were forced to subdivide their plots for their children, and farmers with smaller plots were then unable to leave their fields fallow, which reduced the soil fertility and lessened productivity (Ruhl 1984: 39). By 1965, 63,120 rural families (26% of the total rural population) were landless. Land conflicts with the Salvadoran immigrants grew in the west of the nation, resulting in a brief war in July 1969 (Norsworthy and Barry 1994).¹³

In addition to the population growth, commercial agriculture began to expand in the 1960s and 1970s. Beef and sugar became major exports, causing land pressures to intensify (Ruhl 1984: 40). Cattle production more than tripled in the country between 1950 and 1980, and elite landowners expanded their coastal landholdings, exacerbating land inequities.

¹³ The war became known as the "soccer war" because it was triggered by abusive treatment of the Honduran team during a World Cup qualifying game in San Salvador. Although the war only lasted five days, it had serious effects, including Honduras' withdrawal from and the subsequent collapse of the Central American Common Market, as well as continued border incidents.

Without any government-directed land reforms in place in the early 1970s, poor Hondurans turned to illegal squatting as a means to gain land. There was growing unrest in the highlands as thousands of landless peasants engaged in illegal occupations on unused lands, attempting to push the government into resurrecting its agrarian reform laws that were passed in the early 1960s to redistribute land. In 1974, Hurricane Fifi destroyed 60% of Honduras' agricultural production and the banana companies abandoned many more of their plantations. The north coast became a resettlement area for landless and jobless Mestizo peasants, and the region experienced a major population increase.

Thousands of peasants were brought to the coast via the INA's Bajo Aguán colonization project. The banana companies abandoned the Aguán River Valley in the 1930s, and the INA brought 45,000 families to the region to work in cooperatives dedicated to bananas, pineapple, grapefruit, and coconut (Jones 1990). By 1978, nearly 30 percent of the 45,000 families had abandoned the area (USAID 1978), and many of them settled on land in the *Cordillera Nombre de Diós region* (Jones 1990). This mountain range is located in the department of Atlántida, bordering the coastal Garifuna communities. Sambo Creek's Garifuna residents, for instance, cultivated mountain land as recently as 1980.

3.2.1 Black Autochthony

Beginning in the 1950s, the north coast became a center for newly created labor unions and political parties that centered on protecting the proletariat class

(Anderson 2000:164).¹⁴ The newly defined labor movement championed workers' rights against foreign capitalist domination. It was at this point that the *negro* (Garifuna and English-speaking blacks) gained a voice in the labor movement (Centeno Garcia 1997; Anderson 2000).

In 1958, Honduras' first black organization, *La Sociedad Cultural Abraham Lincoln*, was formed. This organization closely identified with the civil rights movement in the United States and focused on combating racism in schools, public places, and in the workplace (Centeno Garcia 1997:84). The organization's identification with the United States political climate demonstrates the close ties Honduran blacks had with the United States. Garifuna migration to the United States grew immensely after the decline of the banana production, and returning migrants brought ideas back with them to the Honduran coast.

Unfortunately, the achievements of *La Sociedad Cultural Abraham Lincoln* were short-lived, as a military coup in the early 1960s forced "leftist" organizations to disband. However, its leaders continued to remain politically active on an international basis, forming transnational alliances on the basis of an African diasporic identity. Civil rights and black identity had become powerful political tools, and it was around this time when Honduran Garifuna began to identify and represent themselves as "AfroHonduran."

In 1977, former key leaders of the *Sociedad Cultural Abraham Lincoln* formed OFRANEH, one of the two Garifuna organizations discussed in this

¹⁴ The 1954 Great Banana Strike is often cited as igniting popular organizing in Honduras. The strike began when Honduran banana workers for United Fruit were refused overtime wages for loading a boat on a Sunday. Nearly 30,000 workers at other American-owned enterprises later joined them. The strike lasted for three months and eventually shut down 60 percent of the national economy (Norsworthy and Barry 1994).

dissertation. Garifuna activists began to call attention to the discriminatory practices of the Honduran political and economic elite, noting how the national elite had positioned the Garifuna as 'other' or non-Honduran, thus limiting their access to resources and opportunities. These activists began to recast the Garifuna subject in a way that made explicit their unique identity category (as 'black' and 'native') and their historical presence in Honduran territory.

In the 1980s, Garifuna identity took on a new form, and Garifuna activists began to cast the Garifuna as both 'black' and 'autochthonous.' Most dictionaries define autochthonous as either "native" or "indigenous," thus complicating analysis of the differences between the two. However, the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives a more elaborate definition of the word, explaining that autochthonous beings are "any of the earliest known dwellers in a region" or "human beings living in his or her place of origin." In Spanish, the word has the same connotations of deep rooted-ness to a particular place. An autochthonous identity signifies a "native" identity, but does not have the same racial connotations as indigenous, in that "indigenous" is typically used to describe the descendants of the original inhabitants of the Americas (i.e., those encountered by Columbus) (see also Anderson 2002:201). By the late 1980s, Honduran Garifuna realized that by asserting an autochthonous identity, they could make primordial claims similar to those of indigenous groups, while still maintaining their racial identification as black.

From this time period on, autochthony served as an umbrella identity under which all native peoples, regardless of phenotype, origin, and identity, can (and

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do) unite to make demands upon the government. The proposed Law for the Protection of Autochthonous Ethnic Groups provides an example. In July 1987, Garifuna, Miskito, Xicaques, Pech and English-speaking blacks proposed this law. Within it were a series of demands, including the reclamation and titling of lands, the right to control resources located within their territories, the right to bilingual and bicultural education, recognition of traditional forms of organization, and the guarantee of political participation in the National Congress (Anderson 2002:199). Although the Law for the Protection of Autochthonous Ethnic Groups did not pass, it outlined the key struggles of Honduras' autochthonous groups. The Garifuna experience as marginalized "other" is similar to that of indigenous groups, and therefore all groups share common goals and positions vis-à-vis national and international powers. The successful recasting of the Garifuna as black autochthonous peoples was solidified through the creation of institutionally-recognized government committees, including the *Comité Asesor para el Desarrollo de las Etnias Autóctonas de Honduras* or CADEAH (i.e., the Council for the Support of the Development of Indigenous Groups in Honduras) and the *Confederación de Pueblos Autóctonos de Honduras* or CONPAH (i.e., the Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Honduras), which was formed in 1992.

As I demonstrate in the coming pages, the Garifuna subject is being recast again. Today, some Honduran Garifuna are asserting that they are indigenous, as opposed to merely autochthonous. The production of this new subject identity is in response to both the effective production of an international indigenous rights

discourse and shifts in the Honduran economy that led the nation-state to adopt development policies that encourage the privatization of land.

3.3 Tourism Development in Garifuna Territory: 1990s and Beyond

It sounds like a strong statement, but Honduras is a country that does not have its own economic policy. The real policy comes from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the three main bilateral aid agencies, among them the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Economic debate...is not part of Honduran democracy... (Cadlerón, et. al. 2002:10).

Throughout the 1980s, Honduras was largely a puppet of Washington and US-directed policies. The state was surrounded by turmoil in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala, and it was selected to serve as a stable platform for U.S. interventionism in the region (Norsworthy and Barry 1994). Huge sums of US aid and military troops flooded the country, serving to maintain economic stability in Honduras, while enabling the US to conduct counterinsurgency operations to destabilize Nicaragua. When the United States withdrew their aid in 1989, Honduras' economy plummeted.

The economic mess that President Rafael Leonardo Callejas (1990-1994) inherited forced his administration to turn to multilateral lending institutions to fill the gap left by the withdrawal of US aid. The acceptance of these loans required that the Callejas administration cut the size of the public sector work force, lower the deficit, and enhance revenues from taxes. Despite his economic reforms, Callejas' administration grossly overspent in their final months of office, and the nation's fiscal deficit ballooned. The subsequent administrations of Carlos Roberto Reina (1993-1997) and Carlos Roberto Flores Facusse (1998-2002) continued efforts to meet the demands of multilateral lending agencies, and during

their terms, inflation and government spending reduced and economic growth was restored (Merrill 1993).

Although the country had made some gains in economic recovery in the late 1990s, Hurricane Mitch reversed these strides, crippling the national economy at the close of 1998. 7,079 people died in the hurricane, 10,072 disappeared, and 1,960,000 were displaced. 800 kilometers of road were destroyed, as were 169 bridges and 171,378 homes. 147,912 homes and 71 bridges were damaged. Ninety percent of the banana crops were lost. Poor rural households lost 30-40% of their crop income and poverty levels immediately increased from 69.2% of households to 74.6% (Morris, et. al. 2001). Garifuna communities were severely impacted by Hurricane Mitch. Six hundred homes were completely destroyed and 1000 were partially destroyed, affecting more than 15,000 families. Ninety-five percent of Garifuna crops were destroyed, and the majority of coconut trees died from the Lethal Yellowing disease that arrived in the wake of the hurricane (ODECO 2002). The economic cost to the country was \$3,308,000 or 59.8% of the country's current gross domestic product (Gass 2002). Thus, as Honduras entered the 21st century, its economy remained weak, and the country still suffered from huge external debt.

Honduras turned to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for help. In 1999, Honduras was declared eligible to receive bilateral debt relief under the IMF's Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. In order to achieve this relief, Honduras signed the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) (which is now known as the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility

(PRGF) Agreement) with the IMF. These programs focus on reducing state spending and encouraging foreign revenue through new development initiatives, including tourism.

Tourism has become Honduras' second largest source of foreign exchange. President Maduro's administration has made tourism development one of its priorities. 2001 was named the "Year of the Tourist," and since then the budget for the Honduran Institute of Tourism has been increased threefold. The government projected a more than 5% annual increase in tourism, and believed it would attract one million foreign tourists and generate 30,000 direct and 40,000 indirect jobs between 2002 and 2006 (Thorne 2004). The country began advertising tourism as the key to the advancement of the nation's economy, and the government established a joint police-military force to patrol the streets in major tourist destination cities. This special police force, known as "Balam" (or Jaguar),¹⁵ is one of President Maduro's "Zero Tolerance" initiatives aimed at reducing the massive crime problem that has resulted from the growing destitution of most of the population, and serves as a serious deterrent to attracting potential tourists. On the Ministry of Tourism's web page, President Maduro is quoted as saying:

Tourism has become one of the world's largest industries, and the revenues it generates have grown increasingly important for the global economy. That is why my administration has made tourism a priority, believing that the industry will not only benefit the country by creating new jobs and bringing in foreign currency, but also by strengthening our national identity, increasing development and competition, and giving Hondurans a higher standard of living. Our country is privileged to have an

¹⁵ The jaguar symbolized the guardians of ancient Maya temples.

extraordinary natural and cultural heritage...there are beaches of singular beauty, exuberant scenery, colonial towns and living cultures throughout the country...

Until tourism development became a priority, the north coast did not really factor into the State's consideration as an area capable of generating substantial revenue beyond that brought in through bananas. Honduras' tourism opportunities are commonly advertised under three broad categories: 1) the nation's "living cultures," which includes the archeological Maya ruins and Honduras' seven indigenous and ethnic groups, 2) eco-adventure opportunities, and 3) beachfront "fun and sun." The north coast is a region in which tourists can experience a variety of Honduras' best attractions: Caribbean beaches, eco-tourism in the area's mountain ranges, and Garifuna "living culture."

One of the initiatives funded under the World Bank's Honduran Poverty Reduction Strategy is the Sustainable Coastal Tourism Project, a four-year program approved in July 2001 aimed at "strengthening local and municipal capacity to manage and benefit from coastal tourism" (World Bank 2001). The project promotes a "participatory process" and local capacity building "through skills training in environmental management, tourism management, and entrepreneurship" (World Bank 2004). The objectives for local participation include the restoration of a "cultural tourism site" and the creation of "business opportunities, i.e. handicrafts, tour operations, and adventures travel" (World Bank 2004). As the principal ethnic group living in the coastal territories slated for this tourism development project, the Garifuna should theoretically have participated heavily in the development project, both in its planning and management, as their

territories (land and sea) and their “culture” are what are being appropriated for the economic betterment of the Honduran nation. Yet this has been a classic case of “participatory development” where the individuals most affected by the proposed development are invited to participate but the parameters of participation have already been established from above (see also Woost 1997 and Cooke and Kothari 2001).

I question the extent of Garifuna participation in light of the fact that World Bank funds are provided to municipality governments, not local governing structures (i.e., *Patronatos*). A municipality is essentially a city government, having its own democratically elected representative leadership. Several local communities (Garifuna, Mestizo, and mixed communities) fall under the jurisdiction of each individual municipality, and the Garifuna have little voice within this level of governing. The municipality holds the right to make decisions about Garifuna territories. Therefore, if a municipality wishes to turn Garifuna-occupied land into a national park, it can do so without consulting the Garifuna population. This has in fact happened along the coast, with the example of Tela Bay provided below. Moreover, despite the fact that Garifuna communities wish to maintain control over development processes within their territories (and communities now hold titles to some of their land), they are not given the means to manage local resources. Rather, the coastal municipalities of Tela, Omoa, La Ceiba, Trujillo, and the island governments of Roatan and Utila are receiving funds and direction from the central government and international agencies to “develop” and “manage” the resources found within Garifuna communities, and

“sell” those resources and local culture to tourists, while the community Patronatos and residents receive nothing more than the possibility of low-level income generation.

3.3.1 Privatizing Coastal Land

Before 1992, none of Honduras’ Garifuna communities held definitive land titles. The first titles to be granted to Garifuna communities were titles of occupation, issued by the INA in the 1970s. However, titles of occupation are not secure documents; they merely state that a group of people occupies the land, but they do not grant ownership of that land to those people. Titles of occupation include only the areas in which homes and community infrastructure are constructed. Thus, cultivation lands, harvest lands, and territories of spiritual significance are not included in the titles.

As detailed in this chapter, Garifuna territories have suffered from severe Mestizo encroachment. Mestizo cattle ranchers, politicians, and landless peasants have all moved onto lands once utilized by Garifuna communities. Yet although the Garifuna had been slowly losing control over their traditional land, it was still somewhat protected under Article 107 of the Honduran Constitution. Article 107 of the (1982) Honduran Constitution states the following:

The land belonging to the State, the municipalities, communities or private property located in the areas bordering other states, or in the littoral of both seas, in an extension of 40 kilometers inland and in the islands, keys, reefs, sand banks, (etc.) may only be owned, possessed, or had under any title, by Hondurans by birth or by companies formed entirely by Honduran shareholders and by institutions of the state... (Author’s translation from Spanish).

Because the lands occupied by the Garifuna all fall within 40 kilometers of the coast or keys, the article, by default, protects them from the threat of foreign ownership over that land. Yet savvy investors still get around this by pursuing joint ventures with Honduran partners.¹⁶

In 1990, recognizing that the constitutional prohibition of foreign property ownership was a barrier to the development of tourism and the economic potential of Honduras' coastal and island areas, Congress passed Decree Law 90/90 which enabled foreigners to purchase properties in areas designated by the Ministry of Tourism to be tourism zones. Under the decree, foreigners were authorized to purchase up to 3000 square meters for residential use in urban areas and unlimited amounts in urban or rural areas for tourism or other development projects.¹⁷ Since the passing of Decree 90/90, the purchase of land in coastal zones and the Bay Islands has boomed. People have also found legal means to get around the limit on 3000 square meters for residential properties, such as forming Honduran stock corporations in which they name Hondurans as the original shareowners. These

¹⁶ While Garifuna organizations and their media supporters often talk about Article 107 as if it was written to protect Garifuna lands, this constitutional article was not established to protect Garifuna lands. More likely, it was created to protect the nation's sovereignty after a century of wars with neighboring countries. Within the last century, Honduras has been at war with all three of its neighbors, the most recent of which was the infamous "Soccer War" in 1969. The constitutional prohibition against foreign ownership is therefore not new, existing in both the 1956 and the 1965 constitutions.

¹⁷ Individuals purchasing land for residential purposes must register their purchase with the Ministry of Tourism and complete construction of the residence within 36 months from the date of purchase or pay an annual penalty worth 20 percent of the value of the property until the construction is complete. Foreign individuals or companies interested in purchasing property for tourism or other development projects must complete an application with the Honduran Tourism Institute (IHT) at the Ministry of Tourism. The application procedure includes personal information, proof that a contract to buy a specific property exists, proof that said property is registered with the Honduran Tourism Institute, and a plan on how the proposed development project will generate economic benefits for Honduras.

Honduran owners then later endorse their shares over to the foreign owner and simultaneously appoint them as the sole administrator or president of the board of directors of the company.

3.3.1.1 The LMA

The passage of Decree 31-92, the Law for the Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector (*Ley Para La Modernizacion y Desarrollo del Sector Agricola* or LMA) in 1992 further facilitated the privatization of coastal lands. The LMA promoted foreign and domestic investment in agriculture by accelerating land titling and enabling land cooperative members to break up their holdings into small plots to be sold as private lands. The LMA was originally drafted by USAID, and had three principal objectives: 1) to eliminate state intervention in the agrarian sector; 2) to limit expropriations and promote private ownership; and, 3) to promote new foreign and domestic investment in agriculture (because the law was intended to increase the amount of secure (legally-titled) land available on the market). As a result, many small landowners suffering from economic hardship chose to sell their land to wealthier landowners and to the giant banana producers, who desperately wanted to expand their landholdings (Norsworthy and Barry 1994). The companies needed additional land to increase production and meet an anticipated new demand from the European Union (Merrill 1993).

The LMA clearly sums up Honduras' economic goals in this era, and defines the government's outlook on small farmers and access to resources. The

passage of this law effectively ended agrarian-reform legislation of the 1960s and early 1970s that regarded agricultural resources as fulfilling a social function, privileging instead the law of supply and demand. Juan Ramón Martínez, the former president of the INA who resigned from his post in opposition to this law, argued that it is:

...fundamentally a counter agrarian reform designed to halt land access by *campesinos*, derailing the capacity to develop their organizations either as unions or economically, and passes the management of the agrarian conflict from the government to private individuals (quoted in Norsworthy and Barry 1994:78).

The LMA legalized the process of land privatization in favor of investment, providing an impetus for increased privatization of Garifuna lands by foreigners interested in tourism and housing development. According to Garifuna activists, the lack of definitive property titles led national and international businessmen, military, and politicians to harass Garifuna into abandoning their lands as well as strategically declare ancestral harvest and cultivation lands for tourism development (ODECO 2002). (Titles to Garifuna lands only began to be issued in 1993.)

The landholdings of Miguel Facusse, a Honduran businessman and the uncle of former President Carlos Facusse Flores, provide an example of the struggles and violence surrounding coastal lands. Facusse has taken control over a significant portion of ancestral Garifuna territory. During President Reina's term, Garifuna organizations got the INA to sign an agreement for agricultural cooperatives in Limon. Despite this legal agreement, when the Garifuna of Limon attempted to use their land (about 80 acres), a man stopped them saying he "was

taking care of the land for Miguel Facusse,” who had African palms planted in the area. When the Garifuna went to court to remove Facusse’s watchman from the land, Facusse submitted a request for injunction in the courts to stop the Garifuna from removing him. The Garifuna retaliated by reporting the case to the Attorney General for Ethnic Affairs (*Fiscalia de las Etnias*), only to be met by four death threats and one murder attempt on the mayor of Limon (Griffin 1999).

3.3.1.2 Communal titling initiatives

Also in the 1990s, the Honduran government began to support the issuance of communal titles to Garifuna communities (discussed in more detail in chapter four). These land titles were not a goodwill effort of the State. Land titles are seen as leading to enhanced security of land tenure, thus promoting investment and rejuvenating the land market. Formal land titles are crucial because without security of land rights, it is difficult to attract foreign investors to enter new markets. Economists studying Honduran agricultural development (e.g., Lopez and Sanders 1992) have argued that the disincentive to invest in land that is not securely held translates into production inefficiency, meaning that the land is not meeting its potential in terms of market output. For Honduras to increase foreign capital investment in their coastal areas, they needed to rectify the coast’s insecure land tenure. As part of the Sustainable Coastal Tourism Project, the World Bank offered technical and legal support to address the problem of titling communal lands. In 2004, the World Bank increased their support, funding a \$25 million

Land Administration Program, which focused on massive regularization and registration of Honduran land.

3.3.1.3 Repealing Article 107

On June 8, 1998, in an effort to spur more foreign investment in coastal lands, the Honduran government announced its plans to amend Article 107 yet again. Garifuna organizations, fearing that they would lose both their occupied and unoccupied land, were outraged. On October 12, 1998 (Columbus Day), approximately 5,000 indigenous and Garifuna people protested outside of the presidential palace to block the potential amendment. They further demanded the release of imprisoned peasant activists, resolutions to a dozen murders of indigenous people reputedly killed by landowners, and their right to receive titles for their land (Griffin 1999). Police broke up the demonstration with tear gas, batons, and rubber bullets, injuring at least six. Two weeks later, Hurricane Mitch hit Honduras, wiping out entire communities, and further devastating the country's already weak economy.

Government officials used the economic impact of Hurricane Mitch as the final push to lead Congress to meet in a special night session on November 30, 1998. In this night session, while the country was still in turmoil from the hurricane and living under curfew, Congress voted to repeal Article 107. As would be expected, this repeal was met with severe protest from the Garifuna community. On January 25, 1999, several hundred indigenous and Garifuna people traveled yet again to the capital and protested outside of Congress against

the amendment. This protest received significant media attention, reaching beyond national viewers to international audiences. Garifuna organizations and supporters were able to capitalize on the international spotlight, highlighting the impact of the hurricane and linking the land struggle to global discourses on human rights and racial discrimination. Both print and web media featured stories of the reform of Article 107 and the counter-mobilization.¹⁸

While the Garifuna were receiving significant support for their mobilization efforts, Honduran government officials were dumbfounded. Officials from the Honduran Institute of Tourism told me that they could not understand why the Garifuna felt threatened by the reform in the first place. In an interview, one official said to me:

The reform of 107 was just to make things easier, so that if you wanted to sell, you could sell immediately, with no approval process [from the Ministry of Tourism]. It [the reform] didn't obligate the Garifuna to sell. No one said they had to. Because they already have their lands and the lands are communal, not individual. So if someone wanted their lands, they would need to get everyone to agree.

The officials I spoke with at the IHT thought the mobilization was unnecessary. They believed that the communal titles possessed by Garifuna communities were sufficient protection against the privatization of land. Although it is true that the majority of communities held communal titles, they represented significantly less land than the communities traditionally used; ancestral harvest and cultivation lands were therefore “unprotected” or “open” to foreign purchase.

¹⁸ In fact, this was how I first heard of the Garifuna land struggle – reading an Internet posting about the impacts the repeal of Article 107 could have on Garifuna territorial control. I later saw an article about it in *Chicago Streetwise*, a paper that I was handed on the street during the 1999 American Anthropological Association's annual meetings.

Garifuna organizations continued to mobilize through media and letter-writing campaigns. They used their position against both presidential candidates for the 2001 elections, first arguing that if Congress did not un-reform the constitution, they would influence their constituency to vote for the opposite party's candidate. Thus, on October 12, 1999, Rafael Pineda Ponce, who at the time was the Liberal party's presidential candidate and President of Congress, and fearing he would lose the 2001 election, succumbed to pressure from the Garifuna organizations and authorized Rodrigo Castillo Aguilar of the National Congress to sign an Act of Compromise with the Garifuna. This compromise declared that the proposed reforms for Article 107 would not be incorporated into the Legislative Agenda, and thus Article 107 would not be ratified. However, once the compromise was signed, Garifuna organizations did not switch their support to Ponce, arguing that there would be nothing to keep him from reforming Article 107 post-election. Throughout the presidential campaign, Ricardo Maduro, the National Party's candidate never wavered from this stance that he would not reform Article 107 during his presidency, which signaled to the Garifuna that his administration was not backing privatization and investment in coastal lands to the extent that Ponce's administration was. Maduro was elected President on November 25, 2001, and he has not gone back on this promise. Since becoming President, Maduro furthered his commitment to the Garifuna by signing an agreement with ODECO declaring his promise to make the Garifuna land problem a major priority. Yet despite the President's official commitment to not reform

Article 107, his administration has encouraged development initiatives that are further accelerating Garifuna land loss, such as the Tela Bay project.

3.3.2 The case of Tela Bay

Tela is the on again, off again, proposed location for the famous “Tela Bay” project. The Tela Bay saga provides a clear example of the direct negative impact the changes to agrarian legislation in the 1990s have had on Garifuna territorial control, while ironically promoting Garifuna culture as essential to the project’s success.

Since the early 1970s, the Honduran government has championed a proposal for a large-scale luxury hotel project modeled after Cancun. The objective of this \$450 million project is to construct 8 hotels with the capacity for 1600 guests, 124 residences, and 100 condos to rent, through investment by Canadian, Mexican, and Honduran businesses (TN 2000). According to the Honduran Institute of Tourism (*Instituto Hondureño de Turismo* or IHT) brochures, the high point of this development scheme will be the nearby Garifuna villages, especially Miami, which is currently a quiet Garifuna fishing village without electricity, roads, or latrines, and where the children still speak mostly Garifuna (in contrast to most other communities where the youth prefer to speak Spanish).

The Tela Bay project has been surrounded by controversy and conflict because the government secured the land slated for development through a series of abuses of power. One measure the government has taken was to re-classify the

land as national park land such that the government can now enforce regulations on land use; this has already occurred in Miami. Another way in which the government has secured land was through Decree 90/90. This amendment to Article 107 made it possible for the municipality of Tela to annex parts of Tornabe, Triunfo de la Cruz and San Juan as part of their urban area (despite strong protests of the Garifuna living there). Tela has since sold 220 hectares (about 543.64 acres) of what was once land held by these three Garifuna communities.

The Committee for the Defense of Triunfo's land (CODETT) filed a complaint with the Attorney General for Ethnic Groups against Tela for abuse of authority and for selling forty-eight acres of their land to *Inversión y Desarrollo El Triunfo*, a Honduran company interested in investing in the Tela Bay project. The land reportedly sold for sixty centavos (i.e., less than .02 cents) a square yard for beachfront property, which is clearly less than real value (Allison 2004). After filing the lawsuit against the City of Tela, three Garifuna leaders were killed, the houses of local activists involved in the land struggle were burned down, and Alfredo López Alvarez, a Garifuna activist outspoken on this issue, was arrested on charges of narcotic possession and trafficking. On December 13, 2000, OFRANEH filed a petition on behalf of Mr. Alfredo López Alvarez with the Inter-American Court Commission on Human Rights, accusing the State of false arrest for a crime he did not commit. The court admitted the case but has yet to reach a conclusion.

In 2002, officials from IHT reported to me that the Maltwood Cooperation, a Canadian company and the project's main investor, had pulled out of the project. I speculate that this may have something to do with the area's continuing turmoil over land, although I have no evidence to confirm this opinion. Despite the 2002 withdrawal, according to recent newspaper publications, the project is once again back on:

The on again off again Tela Bay Project now seems to be back on track after years of false starts and dashed hopes. The mega sustainable tourism project seeks to build a comprehensive, low impact, high end tourism development on state lands between the town of Tornabe and the village of Miami which borders the Punta Sal National Park. The mixed use development is seeking to attract major international resort players like Barcelo, Melia and Hilton. Time will tell whether the project actually sees the light of day. But one thing is certain...for the first time the project seems to have the full support of the executive branch of government which has made a decision to push along and support the project as part of its strategy to convert tourism into a major generator of jobs and hard currency for the nation (Allison 2004).

The Tela Bay project found new investment to move forward under the Plan Pueblo Panama (PPP). The PPP consists of massive infrastructure projects that are intended to serve as the foundation upon which free trade can be built and expanded to encompass the geographical area of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), including the expansion of highway systems, hydroelectric dams, *maquiladoras*, and tourism. The rezoning of the area under Decree 90/90 provided a legal loophole through which foreign companies could invest in this project.

In February of 2004, Roy Medina, the General District Attorney for the Public Ministry, contested Decree 90/90 in the Supreme Court, arguing that it violated Article 107 by creating a loophole through which Garifuna territory could

be purchased. This legal struggle had stalled the advancement of the Tela Bay project, which is proposed for untitled ancestral Garifuna territories. In January 2005, the Supreme Court declared it was not in violation of the constitution, thus sending a signal to the Garifuna that despite their visible resistance, the State was pushing forward with its development initiatives – initiatives that rely on the appropriation and exploitation of Garifuna land, sea, and ecological knowledge. Moreover, the decision reaffirmed the government's push for land privatization as a means to spur economic development. Garifuna leaders were outraged, and in their written responses they equated the impact this decision will have on Garifuna communities and culture with the 2005 Asian Tsunami. The following excerpts are from a statement by Miriam Miranda, OFRANEH's Vice President, which was published in *Honduras This Week*, a Honduran English newspaper.¹⁹

... the Supreme Court ruling concurs with the corrupt political party - the same party that 14 years ago harmed Article 107 of the National Constitution, by introducing the Decree 90-90... The re-initiation of the sacking of Tela by businessmen and politicians on lands expropriated from the Garifuna community once again demonstrates the corruption that prevails in the present administration.

The declarations of...the current Minister of Tourism...that "without the approval of Decree 90-90, there wouldn't be foreign investments," are totally false. Examples include Cuba and Mexico, where, without selling their national territory, strong investments in tourism have been achieved.

The abundance of irony is revealed in the Minister's statement that, "this decision shows that in Honduras, laws are respected because it is a country

¹⁹ The original statement reads as if it was translated from Spanish, but the English translation is of poor quality and the original Spanish version is not available. I therefore re-edited the English excerpts. The original English translation of this editorial appeared in *Honduras This Week's* January 17, 2005 Online Edition 3, by Miriam Mirandez. It can be located at: <http://www.marrder.com/htw/editorial.htm>.

of rights.” It seems that he lives in a fantasy country, where foreign investments will be respected, while the nationals hope that the law will not only be applied to common citizens, but also to those who have stolen from the national State Treasury, but yet remain protected by the justice system.

...The aberration committed by the Supreme Court is part of the prelude of an economic tsunami that approaches Honduras, guaranteed by the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, where, in order to encourage the growth of *maquiladoras*, they give away the nation’s land to the north...

... the Garifuna community prepares itself to undergo the attack of politicians and businessmen, who urge the auction of Honduras’ beaches. With the unavoidable arrival of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, we can see how the national territory has become part of the real estate market for foreign investors who are eager to acquire coastal land at low prices and in protected areas and biological corridors...

... The fictitious concept of development, which they define in terms of mega projects and the Free Trade Agreement, is not based upon the equitable distribution of the wealth. On the contrary, in spite of the economic growth obtained the previous year, there are signs that poverty is increasing every day, especially among the rural population.

Despoliation such as that in the Bay of Tela will be replicated throughout the North coast of Honduras, a country rich in biological and cultural diversity, and a country that has undergone an ill-fated destiny at the hands of a handful of foreign and unimaginative elite who are dedicated to profit and the systematic destruction of the natural resources.

Although the National Agrarian Institute has issued a series of titles to Garifuna communities, they are not a true guarantee of our territories since they do not include our functional habitat on which our subsistence depends. The farce perpetrated by the State in company of some supposed Garifuna leaders, has created a distorted reality of the legal situation of the communities. Despite the fact that the amount of Garifuna territory is so meager, Garifuna communities still suffer from multiple invasions by individuals who want to exploit the beaches for market income and the authorities do not prohibit these invasions or enforce respect for community titles.

OFRANEH has maintained a clear policy regarding our territories, which we consider to be something more than merchandise. In our Cosmo vision, the mother earth is something not negotiable and belongs intrinsically to the Garifuna community... We fear that the philosophy of individualism, which is expounded through Neo-liberalism, calls for the dissolution of our collective titles and the imposition of the concept of individual property,

and that this will intensify the pressures oriented towards the sale of the coastal strip.

OFRANEH's stance against neoliberalism, privatization, and market-oriented development initiatives based on concepts of free trade could not be more explicit than that expressed in the above statement. Two weeks later (on February 10, 2005) a second statement, this one authored by Wendy Gissela Velasquez, appeared in *Honduras New York*, a Spanish online newspaper.

In case you did not know it, it is true, a Tsunami or tidal wave in Japanese language, has occurred in the Afro descendant communities of Honduras. Luckily, this tidal wave has not cost the hundreds of thousands of lives as it did in Asia, but it could in the future. This tidal wave comes from the Honduran government.

As if it had not been enough to remove all blacks from government office, or to remain indifferent to what is happening in our communities, but now the harm to black communities has been confirmed with the ratification of decree 90/90... Article 107 already establishes that it is not possible to sell lands within 40 kilometers of the borders to foreigners. Now with the ratification of 90/90 anyone can buy those lands, which puts us in a frank disadvantage against the rich and powerful.

Being that our authentic beaches are pearls of nature, it won't take long for the buyers to impose their reign with their dollars out in front.

Our Afro descendant communities do not have the capabilities to defend themselves against these millionaires. That means the coasts of Honduras will be wiped out, just as the Tsunami destroyed Asia's coastline.

...it is important to remember that Honduras is a signatory of Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization, which declares protection of all indigenous and Afro descendant communities.

Moreover, the government knows well that they have lost control of the seas and the coasts, which is where the drug trafficking empire prevails. With 90/90, the government not only remains with their arms crossed, watching this happen, but also promotes and provokes it. With 90/90, the government also promotes contraband, because every millionaire will now have more than just his doors open. It hurts to know this is the type of government that we have, but thus it is. (Author's translation).

What these two statements show is 1) that OFRANEH and their transnational allies are explicitly against the development directions that are being pursued by the Honduran nation-state; 2) that they find the underlying philosophies of neoliberalism (i.e., individualism, privatization, and market-oriented growth) to be in direct conflict with Garifuna cultural survival, and 3) that they are involved in transnational alliances that enable them to share information and rally support beyond Honduras. In efforts to spread their cause, Honduran Garifuna are speaking tri-lingually (in Garifuna, Spanish, and English), both within and outside of the nation. They are calling upon global discourses and legal conventions with regard to indigenous and Afro descendant rights to make the case that the Honduran nation's actions will lead to cultural ethnocide, which according to UN conventions is the equivalent of genocide. Thus, according to these Garifuna activists – who notably, are both women - the future for Honduran Garifuna looks as severe as that which faces Asia's tsunami victims.

I bring out the fact that these activists are women in light of a statement Francesa Gargallo (2005) made about gender and Garifuna politics. She writes:

... we, as women, feel slightly apprehensive about politics because we identify it with practices of representative democracy from which we are left out. In fact, politics for Garifuna women rather than being a “man's thing” has a different feeling; it is a way to organize through actions that belong to a world that is neither feminine nor truly Garifuna. It is interesting to note that Garifuna women regard “politics” (or the dominant values that identify with it) only as something useful, such as a possibility to work or to showcase their artistic activities, and only after they have finished their work at home (Gargallo 2005:154).

Gargallo suggests that Garifuna women avoid “politics” because it is an arena that they do not identify with, finding themselves more closely associated with matters

of the home. If we take this as factual, one could easily extrapolate that since Garifuna communities are matrifocal, a woman's responsibility is not just to her household, but also to her community. Therefore, once community well-being becomes threatened, Garifuna women are forced into the "political." And so, in the case of this study, Honduran Garifuna women have been moved, by circumstance, into action to defend their land.

Yet while Garifuna women have indeed moved into the political, it serves to note that their organizing efforts have not engaged with the gendered dimensions of the land struggle and how shifts in coastal land ownership effect men and women differently. In chapter five, where I discuss Garifuna organizational statements and platforms regarding the land struggle, the reader will note this blatant omission. This could reflect the fact that mobilization is indeed relatively recent for Garifuna women and they are only just now sorting through their mobilizing strategies. But I think a more accurate explanation for this oversight is that it reflects a broader reality about the way in which indigenous rights struggles are framed. Generally speaking, collective action in indigenous movements is generated by an emphasis on shared ethnic identity, and gender and class differences are often ignored or overlooked.

3.3.3 Marketing Garifuna Culture

Despite the fact that their revisions of the constitution have resulted in the loss of significant tracts of Garifuna land, the government and IHT have used the Garifuna's unique culture to attract tourists and foreign investors. In discussing

Tela's potential to serve as a tourist destination the IHT noted, "the presence of the Garifuna culture, with their interesting culture and traditions, is a point in favor of tourism potential in the bay area" (author's translation) (IHT 1993). The Honduran government began promoting the Garifuna culture to the international tourism market in the early 1960s. In 1962, the national government sponsored the creation of the *Ballet Folklorico Nacional Garifuna*, a Garifuna dance troupe, which has since become nationally and internationally renown. In the 1970s, the city of La Ceiba and the national office of tourism sponsored a *Festival Caribe de Danzas Garifunas*, which was an effort to breathe new life into their annual *feria* (Anderson 2000:191). Since then, the local celebration has been transformed into an internationally famous Caribbean *Carnaval*, where the Garifuna performances are key parts of the celebration, including the coronation of a Garifuna queen. That just two decades before, the Garifuna were excluded from participation in this fair, but are now the central figures is testament to their growing visibility within the nation-state.

Garifuna culture is represented in national tourism pamphlets as a magical culture comprised of fun, food, music, and dance. Similar to what Anderson (2000:195) found in his research during the mid-1990s, all of the tourism materials I reviewed advertised the aspects of Garifuna culture that have become objects of Mestizo and foreign consumption: religion, music, dance, and food. The following excerpt titled "the Joy of Garifunas," which appears in the Honduran Institute of Tourism's *Destination Honduras* 2002 travel guide, is illustrative of the way Garifuna culture is represented and "sold" to tourists.

The ordered layout of the banana towns gives way to relaxed, beachside Garifuna fishing villages strung out along our entire north coast, home to one of the Caribbean's most interesting cultures. The Garifuna, whose fascinating history leads back to the wreck of a slave ship carrying slaves captured in Africa, conserve a unique language and culture, and maintain exotic chants, music and dances with the energy and rhythm of that distant continent...The first settlement of Garifunas was established here at Punta Gorda in 1797. These proud descendents of Carib Indians developed the coastal town and have retained their own language, lifestyle, music, art and religion. Punta Gorda is a lively mix of music and language, and visitors will often hear and see a kaleidoscope of festivities. And there doesn't have to be a special occasion: drumming and dancing are part of the celebration of life for Garifunas. Both children and adults can be found dancing and laughing in the streets, while wizened elders – amongst them women with heads wrapped in cloth or boasting jaunty hats – observe the proceedings from their stoops and easy chairs. Travelers needing a love potion or charm, or an herbal medicinal remedy, will find that the Garifuna are experts in trade and earnestly follow their age-old concoctions... (IHT 2002: 7, 74).

Tourists are provided with an image of happy, magical African-Indians living in a Caribbean paradise, excitedly awaiting the tourist's arrival. Interestingly, this excerpt stresses that the colorful culture performed for tourists today is made possible because the Garifuna have maintained their Indian and African traditions, remaining intact and unassimilated to the Mestizo nation – their “exotic chants, music, and dances” derive straight from the African continent and/or their Carib ancestors. Honduras can sell either the image of Garifuna as Indians, the Garifuna as Africans, or the Garifuna as both Africans and Indians: all three representations support the notion that the Garifuna are one of Honduras' “living cultures.”

Tourist businesses also profit off the Garifuna culture. The most successful tourist outfit on the north coast is “Garifuna Tours,” an Italian-owned organization that runs day trips to surrounding national parks. When I asked a staff member about the role Garifuna play in the organization and how they benefit from it, he

replied “it’s [the name Garifuna Tours] just a label.” None of their trips focus specifically on Garifuna culture or communities. In 2001, only one of their tours included a stop in a Garifuna community, which perhaps enabled some community members to benefit through the sale of refreshments or trinkets to tourists.

3.4 The Making and Remaking of the Garifuna subject

Since their arrival in Honduras in 1797, the Garifuna have been positioned and have positioned themselves within particular subject categories. The Garifuna historically controlled much of the north coast, with little interference from the political and economic elite. Their presence was inconsequential to the nation-state until the growth of the banana industry, when they entered into an economic relationship with the dominant classes of Honduran and foreign society as employees to them. Euraque (2003) argues that the Garifuna presence in the region and historical control over local resources as well as employment in the banana industry was a threat to the Honduran elite. As Hispanic Hondurans realized the economic value of work or trade in bananas, they began to make concrete attempts to deport blacks and limit their access to land and employment in the industry. Blacks were seen as stealing jobs from “the sons of the nation,” which led the political elite to spearhead a new nationalist identity. This new identity privileged indigenous and European heritages and not African heritage. The categories of *mulatto* and *ladino* disappeared from the census, both of which were categories of “mixed-race,” and categories in which the Garifuna had fallen in the past. The majority of the population came to be classified as Mestizo.

While Mestizo also means “mixed race,” this new identity category contributed Mestizo heritage to a combination of indigenous and European ‘races,’ and denied and African contributions. Blackness was denied as part of the national identity because blackness represented the foreign others (British West Indians) who held coveted positions in the banana industry. Thus, through the creation and deployment of this type of national identity, those in power attempted to maintain control over key coastal resources and limit the ability of blacks to access resources and opportunities. This new form of *mestizaje* attempted to eliminate class boundaries between Mestizos, unifying the elite with the poor, and supported the mobilization of poor jobless Mestizos against coastal blacks.

By the 1950s, the organized labor movement changed from an anti-black movement to one that explicitly addressed racial discrimination against blacks. This shift in the labor movement combined with the emergence of civil rights discourse created new articulations of identity and the Garifuna began to assert themselves as AfroHondurans, and therefore an equal part of the Honduran citizenry. As the banana companies declined and started returning land to the government, more and more inland Mestizo peasants were resettled to the coast through the national agrarian programs or migrated by themselves in search of land. The Garifuna had gained some voice as an ethnic minority in the nation and in the 1980s, they reached out to the country’s other ethnic groups who had also been subject to discrimination and exclusion, forming alliances on the basis of autochthony. Yet, by this time, the coastal population had exploded and Garifuna territorial control all but disappeared. Because Garifuna communities lacked

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definitive titles to their ancestral lands, when the Honduran government adopted economic development policies that privileged private investment and passed legislation to encourage privatization, Garifuna communities found themselves in a precarious position.

Although the movement towards free markets and free trade are nothing new in development policy, the scope and spread of these development approaches has increased substantially over the last twenty-five years, and today neoliberal development policies seem to be the only development approach for Honduras. While neoliberalism is a global ideology, there also exist global counter-ideologies. As Medina (2004) notes, individuals are not just passive recipients of identities, but are active agents who are engaged in conscious efforts to make sense of and negotiate the categories made available to them as well as create new categories for understanding. Some Honduran Garifuna are calling upon global counter-ideologies to contest the changes occurring on the north coast, and these counter-ideologies are not available to most others who comprise Honduras' poor. The successful production of an international indigenous rights discourse has enabled the Garifuna to once again recast their identity and attempt to reclaim lost rights and resources. The next chapter introduces the utility of indigenous rights as well as the tools I am using to understand the effects positioning of the Garifuna subject as indigenous has on Garifuna and Mestizos living in coastal communities.

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CHAPTER FOUR

INDIGENEITY, PLACE-MAKING, AND GARIFUNA LAND RIGHTS

The ideological underpinnings of neoliberalism – individualism, privatization, and market freedom – co-exist and contend with counter ideologies such as indigenous rights, human rights, and racial equality. At the same time that the Honduran state is implementing development strategies that are reliant on the privatization of resources once held in common by marginalized groups, the nation-state tells its citizens that they have constitutionally protected rights. These rights are elaborated upon in multiple international and national conventions and legal instruments. Indigenous rights has become an important tool in the Garifuna struggle for territories. I begin this chapter with a review of the rise of international indigenous rights and the link between indigeneity and territorial control. I then discuss the achievements and setbacks in the Garifuna land struggle. Lastly, I introduce the conceptual tools that I have employed to make sense of how both Garifuna and non-Garifuna are negotiating their rights along the coast. I explain the notions of “place-making” (Malkki 1997; Medina 1999) and “history-making” (Brown 2002), which I see as intertwined processes essential to convincing others of one’s right to land.

4.1 The Rise of Indigenous Rights

In the Garifuna struggle for land thus far, indigenous rights have been the most useful discourse and tool.²⁰ Indigenous rights are based on concepts of

²⁰ Honduran Garifuna organizations also assert Garifuna rights based on their identity as part of the African Diaspora. Like indigenous rights, there is also an increased international recognition of the

communalism, communal ownership and environmentally sustainable practices within the natural environment. The right to self-determination is the leading demand of the indigenous movement, but one that has been repeatedly denied by nation-states because of its underlying connotations of separate, independent sovereign nations. However, the way in which the term is employed by the international indigenous movement is based on international human rights law and implies the right to control one's own destiny. Hence it is a right that "benefits human beings *as human beings* and not sovereign entities" (Anaya 1996:75; emphasis in original).

Indigenous issues moved from confined debates in domestic spheres to international concerns in the 1970s. This shift was the result of pressure from indigenous peoples themselves. Beginning in the 1960s, a new generation of indigenous men and women who were knowledgeable of the human rights organs of international institutions began to draw attention to the historical marginalization and mistreatment of indigenous peoples by the nation-states in which they lived. From the late-1970s on, representatives from indigenous groups across the world began to meet regularly and appear before U.N. human rights bodies to make demands based on the rights protected by the International Bill of

racism and discrimination suffered by members of the Afro descendant populations and communities, as evidenced by the many United Nations resolutions, conventions, declarations and world conferences focused on combating racial discrimination and ethnic violence. The history of this form of international mobilization can be traced to the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Since then, other important conventions have followed, including the 1965 *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, the three separate decades declared "for action to combat racism" (1972-1982, 1983-1992, and 1994-2003), and the three World Conferences against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (1978, 1983, and 2001). Honduran Garifuna organizations actively participate in these global conversations, attending international conferences as well as national and regional preparatory summits on the topic.

Human Rights²¹ and those elaborated on in subsequent instruments adopted by the UN General Assembly (Anaya 1996: 45-46; Eide 1995:21).

The 1977 International Nongovernmental Organization Conference on Discrimination against Indigenous Populations in the Americas in Geneva, marked a historical moment in indigenous organizing, as it contributed to the formation of a transnational indigenous identity as well as established a pattern for coordinating indigenous peoples throughout the world to communicate their demands.

Indigenous activists began to engage with the meaning of indigeneity and set the stage for an indigenous movement. At this time, indigenous activists made the strategic decision to not ally with other struggles such as class struggles or labor unions, because they saw indigenous identity as a long-term platform on which to seek liberation, distinct from class-consciousness (Wright 1988:377).

Since this time period, indigenous communities and organizations throughout Latin America have come together both nationally and regionally, and now meet regularly to formulate common strategies regarding economic development, bilingual education, and the environmental impacts of natural resource extraction and climate change (Scher 2002). The most important international indigenous network is the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which was established in 1982 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Despite the fact that this group existed in the 1980s, indigenous

²¹ The International Bill of Human Rights includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR).

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organizing did not fully take head until 1992, the 500-year anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus to the Americas.

There were a series of summits in 1992 during which indigenous groups across the Americas united to protest the government celebrations of Columbus' arrival. Indigenous participants in these summits represented over 40 million people, all united by a common experience of five hundred years of social and political exclusion. The quincentenary protest of 1992 has become recognized as the defining moment in indigenous organizing. Since then, indigenous groups have had a much more significant presence in Latin American nations (Scher 2002). Indigenous peoples began to be recognized and honored at national and international levels. For example, within a year of the protest, Rigoberta Menchu, a Maya activist from Guatemala, received the Nobel Peace Prize and Victor Hugo Cárdenas became the first indigenous Vice President to Bolivia. The presence of indigenous peoples in positions of leadership and as global activists has widened international sensitivity to the experiences of indigenous peoples at national and local levels (see Anaya 1996, Wright 1988, and Niezen 2003 for more information on the history of the indigenous movement).

4.1.1 Indigenous Identity and Land-rootedness

Indigenous activism is based on the articulation of a specific meaningful relationship of indigenous peoples to their territories, behind which lies the ultimate political goal of the right to self-determination. The struggle for territory goes beyond land reform to include the right to communal land, environmental

protection, and control over development. The link between indigenous identity and control of territory has been credited to the UN-commissioned study on the “Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations.”²² The result was a multivolume work that special rapporteur José Martínez Cobo compiled and has become a standard reference for discussion of indigenous peoples within the United Nations system (Anaya 1996: 51). This report identified land-rootedness as the principal marker of indigenous identity (Lâm 2004). Cobo provided a working definition of indigenous peoples that linked indigenous peoples and their identity to territories.

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with preinvasion and precolonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sections of societies once prevailing in those territories or parts of them. They form at present nondominant 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 (Cobo 1986:1 quoted in Muehlebach 2001:421).

From that point on, international bodies officially recognized that the ability of indigenous people to survive is inextricably tied to their right to occupy their traditional territories and control local resources. Additionally, the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations was convened in 1982 to begin discussions of what later became the Draft Universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This declaration, which was first issued in 1989 and

²² This study emerged was recommended by the UN Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

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expanded in 1990, raised international consciousness of the issues indigenous communities faced, by advocating the right of indigenous groups to:

...develop their own ethnic and cultural characteristics; to protect their cultural practices and ceremonial, historical, and archaeological sites; to practice their own spiritual traditions; to promote their own languages; to name themselves and their communities; to have a voice in legal and administrative proceedings...; to control their own schools; to have access to the mass media; to gain recognition of their customary laws and land tenure systems; to receive restitution or compensation for lands that have been usurped; to enact a wide range of environmental protection; to actively participate in their own social and economic improvement with state support; to have autonomy in internal and local affairs...; to gain direct representation in the political affairs of the state; and to exercise autonomy in international and local affairs (Warren 1998: 7).

The rights outlined in this declaration have been confirmed through additional international declarations and conventions that have come out in the last fifteen years. These include: the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Declaration of San José and the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries. These passages have made the link between previously ratified international conventions on genocide and racial discrimination (e.g., the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the 1966 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination) and the necessity of territorial and resource control, claiming that the infringement of this right is a violation of human rights and ethnocide. Moreover, these declarations note that cultural ethnocide is effectively equivalent to genocide (Lâm 2004). Honduras has ratified all of the conventions

listed above, providing a legal structure through which indigenous groups can make their claims.

4.1.2 ILO 169

The 1989 Convention (No. 169) Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries of the International Labor Organization (commonly referred to as ILO 169) is the most concrete manifestation of increasing international responsiveness to indigenous demands. ILO 169 was written to pressure nation-states to enact special legislation for the rights of “indigenous and tribal peoples” to land, bilingual education, political and economic autonomy, and fair labor practices. ILO 169 was adopted in 1989 after years of discussions on revising the ILO’s Indigenous and Tribal Convention 107 from 1959.

ILO 107 was widely condemned as an assimilationist and racist document by indigenous peoples, human rights advocates and international jurists, and in serious need of revision (Uldall 2002). The revision of ILO 107 marked a conceptual transformation on the part of nation-states: moving from a view of indigenous populations as temporary societies that were doomed to disappear through acculturation to a recognition that they are permanent societies deserving of equal status to other nationalities within a country. Hence, ILO 169 is an instrument of inclusion (or the recognition that people have the right to different ways of living), as opposed to the integration instrument that was ILO 107 (Deere and León 2001: 59). ILO 169 therefore shifted the focus of Convention 107 from an integrationist perspective to something more in line with indigenous people’s

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needs and aspirations, recognizing their rights to self-determination. Cultural autonomy and difference is protected as a human right.

ILO 169 definition of the groups protected by the convention is rather loose, applying to tribal peoples, indigenous peoples, and peoples present prior to colonization who have continued to retain “traditional” cultural institutions. The Convention states it applies to:

(a) Tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations; (b) Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonisation or the establishment of present State boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions (www.ilo.org).

The preamble of ILO 169 recognizes the right of indigenous peoples to maintain control over their institutions, ways of life, economic development, and identities, languages and religions within their State’s frameworks (Anaya 1996: 48). Land is central because without control over territory, indigenous peoples have no control over economic development. Moreover, land is tied to the maintenance of cultural identity. The second part of the convention (i.e., Articles 13-19) deals explicitly with indigenous land rights (see Appendix C). Article 13 declares that governments’ respect the cultural and spiritual value that indigenous peoples attach to their lands, territories, or both, and in particular, the collective nature of that relationship. The remaining articles make clear that indigenous peoples be afforded their rights not just to land occupied by them, but also to areas that they had traditionally accessed for subsistence and other activities.

Governments are tasked with safeguarding and guaranteeing the protection of indigenous rights to ownership, and are called upon to adopt “adequate procedures...within the national legal system to resolve land claims by the peoples concerned” (International Labor Organization 2004).

4.2 Garifuna Mobilization for Land Rights

Honduras became a signatory of ILO 169 in 1994, ratifying it into law and creating a legal mechanism through which the Garifuna could make claims to territory both currently and traditionally occupied, as well as officially declared the state’s role in securing land rights for the Garifuna and ensuring traditional law and rights be protected.

Honduras’ ratification of ILO 169 convention was a direct result of the successful mobilization of groups who built alliances on the basis of a shared autochthonous identity. On October 12, 1992 (*El Día de la Raza*), indigenous and Garifuna organizations marched on the capital, making the first of many public calls demanding that the government ratify and implement the ILO Convention. The Confederation of Autochthonous Peoples of Honduras (CONPAH), ODECO, and OFRANEH, continued to lobby President Callejas’ administration. Finally, in 1994, under President Reina, ILO 169 was ratified into law. At this time, an Attorney-General of the Ethnic Groups (*Fiscal de las Etnias*) was established to represent and protect the rights of ethnic groups vis-à-vis the state and powerful private interests (England 2000). Article 1.2 of the Convention notes that, “...self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion

for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply.” Thus, despite the fact that some Hondurans argue that the Garifuna do not fit the category of “indigenous,” they do fulfill characteristics of an autochthonous group because they were present in Honduras before the Republic was formed, with particular traditions and customs that they maintain to this day. ILO 169 thus created a legal mechanism through which the Garifuna could contest neoliberal agrarian legislation, as the nation-state became tasked with recognizing collective rights. Garifuna leaders cite Honduras’ ratification of it as a defining moment for Garifuna land claims.

Although signing ILO 169 into national law served to legitimize Garifuna land claims, the INA did not aggressively work to title Garifuna lands. Between 1993 and 1995, and arguably only because of Garifuna lobbying, only fourteen of the forty-eight Garifuna communities obtained definitive titles. Moreover, the titles that communities received did not cover their historical landholdings, and any part of the community’s land that was deemed appropriate for housing construction or tourism development was redefined as property of the state under Decree 90/90. The Garifuna and the organizations that represented them thus continued their mobilization efforts.

On October 11, 1996, which is *La Dia de la Raza* (“the Day of the Race” or Columbus Day), several thousand Garifuna traveled to the capital city and staged a massive protest, demanding that the government take action to producing land titles for Garifuna communities. Protesters drummed, danced the punta, and shouted slogans such as “The earth is our mother” and “ A people united can never

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be defeated” (Anderson 2000:231). The protest has since become known as *La Primera Gran Marcha Pacífica del Pueblo Negro de Honduras* (the First Great Peaceful March of the Black Hondurans). Leaders of Garifuna organizations united on this day and met with President Reina and other government representatives. After only a few hours of negotiation, the Garifuna leaders emerged with a signed agreement to resolve the land problem.²³ This was the first agreement in Honduran history between the government and AfroHonduran communities. It established three streams of action: *titulación* (titling), *saneamiento* (regularization) and *ampliación* or *dotación* (extension). Land titling, or the legal documentation of a community’s possession of lands, granted through the INA, was the first process to begin. The process of *saneamiento*, or the procedure to determine who are the legal owners of lands within the community limits, is currently underway in a number of communities. This process is long and complicated because its goal is to determine which lands have been illegally occupied, and by whom. Unfortunately, land that was “irregularly” obtained, such as stolen lands or harvest lands that were obtained through squatters rights but are now held under a legal title, do not fit the category of “illegally occupied land” and therefore cannot be reclaimed under the *saneamiento* process. However, there are many illegally held lands that communities can reclaim. Oftentimes a large landowner will extend their land on all sides, constructing a private gate around the periphery and stopping community members from accessing the land. This has

²³ Anderson (2000:246) notes that although the Garifuna leaders announced that they would maintain the demonstration until the government complied with their demands, the basic terms of the agreement were likely settled before the protest. Anderson reaches this conclusion because the meeting did not last long and the leaders had already scheduled an event in the central park of the city for that evening in which the National Garifuna Ballet was to perform.

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occurred in Sambo Creek and is described in a later chapter. The process of *ampliación*, or authorizing more lands in favor of communities that require it for growth and development, has been requested by a number of communities, including Sambo Creek.

As a result of the October 11, 1996 march, the government allotted 1.7 million lempiras (US\$131,000) to the INA for work on the titling of Garifuna lands. On January 11, 1997, the *Instituto de Antropología e Historia* (the Institute of Anthropology and History) donated 200,000 more *lempiras* (US\$15,385). Since then, 38 more titles have been issued, totaling 52 Garifuna titles, including communal and cooperative landholdings. All the titles have been of *domino pleno* (definitive titles of ownership), and are communal titles, which means that the land cannot be sold and can only be passed through inheritance to members of the community. Table V details the titles by year.²⁴

²⁴ Source: The National Agrarian Institute of Honduras, January 2003.

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Table V. Garifuna Titles Issued by the INA, Period 1993-2002

Year	# of Titles	Hectares
1993	6	5,126.00
1994	8	7,910.02
1995	0	0
1996	0	0
1997	8	4,784.72
1998	9	3,284.07
1999	6	8,851.60
2000	7	1,850.67
2001	6	261.82
2002	2	932.47
Total	52	33,001.37

Despite what appears to be significant achievements in terms of securing land for the Garifuna, the land titles excluded ancestral lands. I argue that “place-making” (Malkki 1997; Medina 1999) and “history-making” (Brown 2002) are essential to the reclamation of these territories.

4.3 Place-making, History-making

Although globalization processes have led to the increasing recognition of indigenous and human rights, and national governments have been tasked with the protection and insurance of indigenous territorial control, territorial claims are only possible for people able to demonstrate their indigeneity. This takes place through “place-making” (Malkki 1997; Medina 1999) or “history-making” (Brown 2002). Demonstrating indigenous culture is essential.

The doctrines of indigenous rights are based on primordialist ideas. Indigenous identity is seen as something one is born with, and despite the

transnational nature of indigeneity in the 21st century, it is still linked to a place. That place may not be the physical space in which one currently lives; it can be a place from whence one's ancestors derived. Thus, even Garifuna who are "born dancing the punta" (in my informants' terms) to families in New York City, share rights similar to Garifuna born on Honduran soil, because both families identify as part of a culture whose ancestors are tied to a particular place.

Culture becomes a political asset through which people make place. As Coombe (cited in Muehlebach 2001: 418) points out, "the concept of culture has become a new virtue as much as it represents an old vice in anthropology." Across the world people mourn the fact that communities might "lose their culture." These sentiments are perpetuated by video documentaries about "disappearing cultures" and granting agencies that prioritize research focused on encouraging "cultural survival." Thus, those who can make the strongest claims to possessing a culture are more internationally empowered to protest local injustices. This holds true for Honduran Garifuna whose "culture" was showcased on an international scale in 2001. In that year they were put on the cover of *National Geographic*, as well as declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as having an "intangible cultural heritage."²⁵ According to the United Nations Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, an intangible cultural heritage is:

²⁵ Belizean Garifuna were the central actors in getting the Garifuna recognized as possessing an "intangible cultural heritage." Belizean Garifuna, "with support from Honduran and Nicaraguan Garifuna," sent a video documentary entitled, "The Garifuna Heritage" to the International Jury for the Proclamation by UNESCO of Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO 2001).

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..the practices, representations, expressions, as well as the knowledge and skills, that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage... [such an intangible heritage is manifested through] oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; traditional craftsmanship... The intangible cultural heritage is transmitted from generation to generation, and is constantly recreated by communities and groups, in response to their environment, their interaction with nature, and their historical conditions of existence. It provides people with a sense of identity and continuity, and its safeguarding promotes, sustains, and develops cultural diversity and human creativity (UNESCO 2005).

The international declaration that people who identify as “Garifuna” possess a cultural heritage that is in danger of disappearance and should be preserved legitimizes Garifuna claims to resources *if* they can demonstrate that cultural survival is incumbent upon continued access to those resources. While the UN recognizes that there are aspects of “culture” that exist beyond geographic space, they also note that “culture” is shaped through historical relationships to the environment. Like ILO 169, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage affirms that maintenance of cultural identity is tied to one’s surroundings. Thus, for Honduran Garifuna who are interested in maintaining control over particular territorial spaces, calling themselves “culturally unique,” having a special relationship to nature, increases support for their claims.

Malkki (1997: 56) argued that people often think of themselves as being “rooted” in a particular place and as having derived their identity from that “rootedness.” As a result, identity becomes “spatialized” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 3) and associated with particular territories. The processes of cultural territorialization (Gupta and Ferguson 1997) are essential in transforming a

geographic space into a place associated with a particular people. Thus, “place-making” involves actions to territorialize geographic space (Malkki 1997; Medina 1999).

Understandings about land, place, and cultural identity are derived from individual experiences, such that a geographic space acts as a bridge between one’s experience of identity and traditions, which are tied to rituals, and occur in specific locales (see also Occhipinti 2003). Bryon Foster’s (1987) analysis of the dugu ritual provides an example of Garifuna place making, in that he argues that what the ritual is really about is establishing rights to these territories.

Now, this symbolic emphasis on the earth was particularly appropriate for the emerging Garifuna society, for whom a homeland was absolutely the prime consideration. Land for maroon communities was the source of their fertility; it had been taken from them – or they from it – by slave traders. The Garifuna had won it back in another hemisphere. Without it, maroon societies like the Garifuna could not have existed as autonomous entities. And this source of their fertility was continually threatened by the European colonial powers...by constructing a ritual which portrayed the earth as the place of the dead the Garifuna were able to emphasize St. Vincent as the land of their ancestors and hence as their land. The Garifuna thus made the earth both a ritual symbol and a political one, for in ‘stating’ that the land was theirs, the dugu rite generated an ideology counterpoised to that of the colonizers, whose intention was to take that land in the name of their source of fertility – the British crown (Foster 1987:6).

The dugu ritual has been transferred with the Garifuna from St. Vincent to their mainland communities. The ritual can still be understood as a means to claim Garifuna rights to land. In Honduras, as in St. Vincent, the political and economic elite are attempting to take Garifuna land – land that they had ‘won back’ when they were exiled from St. Vincent. Foster (1987) also makes note of the dual arrival of Garifuna ancestors in the dugu ritual. Recent ancestors who have been

buried in the earth are brought out through traditional dancing, and more distant ancestors (from St. Vincent) arrive by boat from the sea. This ritual symbolizes Garifuna indigeneity, demonstrating their Caribbean and Arawakan roots. The ritual is a form of place-making; the Garifuna express a right to territory based on the fact that they descend from a particular region, not just the territorial boundary of Honduras, which to them is an artificial boundary set up by the European descendants who founded the nation-state. Medina (1999) argues for a similar case in which the Maya argue for indigenous status in Belize based on the fact that they are indigenous to the Central American region, not to the area that falls within the Belizean nation-state boundaries. Moreover, during the dugu ceremony, food products from the land (cassava) and sea (fish) are also given as offerings for the ancestral spirits. The performance of the dugu therefore also shows that the Garifuna need a particular place to enact their culture. ILO 169 and UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage affirm that right.

While I did not observe any Garifuna in Sambo Creek making the link between the dugu and their right to territory, I frequently observed people engaging in other place-making strategies, particularly, history-making. As Medina (1999: 126) points out, "the identity of people with territory is reinforced through constructions of history which account for and produce both people and place simultaneously." The construction of history therefore becomes central in legitimizing a people's rooted identity. This implies attributing and assigning particular cultural practices to a given geographic space. "History-making"

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(Brown 2002) then plays a role in reinforcing the link between territory, identity, culture, and a particular group of people. History-making refers to the creation and re-creation of history and is:

...an ongoing process of interpretation and reinterpretation in which historical accounts are constantly assembled and reassembled. 'Facts' may be added, dropped, reinterpreted, or forgotten; old themes may change or continue in new relationships in the contemporary setting (Brown 2002: 107).

Therefore, even though many Garifuna are now born in the United States, they can still trace their ancestors to a "rooted" place where their cultural traditions were once enacted. I argue that the processes of history-making and place-making are intertwined and overlapping in the Garifuna land struggle, and that women are central actors in these processes. History-making plays a key role in local land reclamations, as the Garifuna imbue territorial space with historical accounts of access, use, and conservation.

Therefore, people "make place" by recalling and reciting accounts of traditional practices, and in so doing, legitimize their course of action. By telling stories about abuses of power by Mestizo immigrants who settled on cultivation plots, Garifuna people are at once 1) place-making by linking particular cultural practices to geographic space, 2) demonstrating historical processes of exploitation and structural violence in which women's ownership and rights are usurped, and 3) legitimizing their actions – from local land invasions to international court proceedings – to reclaim lost Garifuna land. These stories need not have been lived by the storyteller – descendants can recount the stories or the stories could even be tales of abuse from as far back as the Carib wars on St. Vincent.

4.3.1 Place-making at the Organizational Level

Place-making can also occur at the organizational or social movement level. Drawing on Muehlebach's (2001) discussion of "place-making" at the UN, I argue that Honduran Garifuna organizational leaders are involved in place-making through the articulation of an indigenous identity. Muehlebach (2001) applies the concept to show how within the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations an indigenous identity is "spatialized" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:3).

Conceptualizing international indigenous activism in terms of the making of 'indigenous place' will enable us to understand how indigenous delegates have articulated their specific way of being-in-the-world, and of having a particular place in it. 'Indigenous' place' is, in the way it is articulated, distilled and generic, as it is used as a *conceptual tool* in transnational political practices, developed for political use and effectiveness... the 'indigenous' place' indigenous delegates talk about...is usually based on specific, often equally generic concepts of the environment and nature, and indigenous relationship to them..." (Muehlebach 2001: 416)

Instead of imbuing meaning into an actual geographic space, as is done by many Garifuna activists in the struggle for coastal territory, indigenous leaders also figuratively territorialize by articulating an "indigenous place" in the world. Although she is articulating "place" as a conceptual tool without a grounded space, Muehlebach does not mean to imply that people or the places they inhabit are "invented." Rather, she claims to apply the conceptual tool of "place-making" to point out what indigenous activism is really about: the control of territory (Muehlebach 2001:416). As noted earlier, indigenous activism is based on the articulation of a specific meaningful relationship of indigenous peoples to their

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territories, behind which lies the ultimate political goal of the right to self-determination (i.e., the right to control economic development and resource use within their own communities and the right to cultural difference).

I find the notion of place-making appropriate to conceptualize the Garifuna movement for the recuperation of lands for two reasons. First, what Garifuna leaders articulate at the organizational level is that which indigenous activists worldwide articulate: claims to self-determination based on the connection between a special relationship to the environment and cultural survival. Second, while the concept acknowledges that place-making is a political tool, it does not imply that a group of people “invents” or “re-invents” their traditions or culture, but rather notes that indigenous peoples worldwide articulate a particular identity that convincingly demonstrates a historical connection to territory, without debating over the “truthfulness” of said identity and associated traditions. The latter point is important because some Honduran Mestizos argue that the Garifuna are not indigenous.

4.4 Chapter Summary

As the review of the indigenous rights discourse has shown, there are two sides to the linkage between indigenous people and the environment. On the one hand, indigenous peoples are seen as requiring a particular place to survive because their ancestral territories are the place in which culture is practiced, sustained, and transferred to future generations. On the other hand, indigenous peoples are seen as having a special relationship to land, such that they are

responsible for its survival (i.e., the environment has remained unexploited because indigenous peoples engage in the sustainable use of natural resources). The next chapter shows how OFRANEH draws upon these two sides of indigenous rights discourses as they articulate Garifuna claims to land, while ODECO does not.

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CHAPTER FIVE

REPRESENTING THE GARIFUNA

Earlier I introduced the two key organizations that represent Honduras' Garifuna: the Honduran Black Fraternal Organization (*La Organización Fraternal Negro Hondureño* or OFRANEH) and the Organization of Ethnic Community Development (*La Organización de Desarrollo Etnico Comunitario* or ODECO). Resolving the land problems in Garifuna communities is a slow and difficult process, complicated by the fact that the two main Garifuna organizations have distinct visions for the future of Garifuna landholding and development projects on these lands. These two organizations differ widely in their approaches to the Garifuna land struggle, ideas about what constitutes "development," and the way in which they represent the Garifuna. This chapter illustrates the different approaches these organizations take on the land struggle in particular, and towards development in general through a series of comparisons of statements issued by ODECO and OFRANEH leadership. I conclude with a discussion of OFRANEH's approach as reflective of a larger indigenous rights critique that sees globalization and neoliberalism as attempting to enforce a separation of humanity from the environment.

5.1 Positions on Garifuna Land Rights

In a document given to me by Celeo Alvarez, the President of ODECO, in April 2002, ODECO's stance on the land struggle is revealed. The text of this document follows below. I have excluded the charts reflecting the status of land

titling (*titulación*), regularization (*saneamiento*), and extension (*ampliación*) in each Garifuna community and the review of the documents communities need to file for these processes.

THE LAND PROBLEM IN GARIFUNA COMMUNITIES, STEP BY STEP

1. Until 1992, all Honduran Garifuna communities with the exception of Trujillo, had titles of occupation for the land in which they were based.
2. In 1992, the national government passed the LAW FOR MODERNIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, under Decree 31-92; this action legalized the privatization of lands for investment, principally favoring foreign investment.
3. Due to the lack of definitive land titles, the Garifuna were harassed by national and international businessmen, military, and politicians, who wanted their lands, and strategically declared them zones for tourism development.
4. Between 1993 and 1995, 14 Garifuna communities received definitive titles, with the disadvantage being that these "titles" did not include the historical land of the communities, which is to say, the community lands were reduced drastically. Moreover, all of the urban parts of town or places where houses are constructed that were not included in the title are considered exclusive areas for tourism and therefore property of the state.
5. On October 11, 1996, the *Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones Negras de Honduras* held LA PRIMERA GRAN MARCHA PACIFICA DEL PUEBLO NEGRO DE HONDURAS in Tegucigalpa, the capital of the republic, leading to the signing of an AGREEMENT for the first time in history where the government promised to resolve the problem of titling (documenting the legal possession of land through the National Agrarian Institute), *Saneamiento* (the legal procedure that determines who are the legal owners of land and who have obtained land through irregular procedures), and *Ampliación* or *Dotación* (authorizing more land in favor of communities that require it for their growth and development).
6. The October 11th march achieved 1.7 million lempiras (US \$131,000), authorized to the National Agrarian Institute ("INA") on December 20,

1996. On January 11, 1997, the Honduran Institute of Anthropology and History donated 200,000 lempiras more, also for the process of titling the lands of Garifuna communities.

7. One of the people who has hoarded the lands in Garifuna communities is the businessman MIGUEL FACUSSE, who on June 26, 1997, received a WORLD BANK loan for 55 MILLION DOLLARS, to strengthen his investments in a project called the GRAN PROYECTO DE TRANSFORMACION "GPTN" [Great Project of National Transformation]. This project received unconditional support from the government, private business, and other privileged sectors of the country. This signifies that each day that passes is a day working against the Afro Honduran community's goal to achieve their legitimate right to land.
8. The Law for Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector declares that after three years of squatting without interruption, any Honduran over 16 years can claim it as their legitimate property. We ask, why then after 204 years, isn't the Garifuna community's right to their historical lands recognized?
9. Tourism investment in Honduras is already a reality, and an activity that we do not oppose, as long as the Afronhonduran communities participate at all levels as strategic partners in the process. We wish that the communities are the owners of their lands and the projects that are developed on their lands; the fight is just and if we are united, we can win.
10. This adverse situation, impells us to conduct forceful battles, including the promotion of a strong campaign of denunciation and international solidarity to pressure the Government to fulfill the Agreements to Title, Adjust, and Extend the territories of the Garifuna and black communities. On this particular issue, the President of the Republic, Ricardo Maduro, subscribed to a campaign commitment with the Afrohonduren Communities, through ODECO.

In 1797, the English exiled the Garifunas of St. Vincent from the land, and 204 years later, the main problem that faces us is the land; nevertheless the fight begins... we do not have to surrender.

Additionally, Hurricane Mitch caused severe material damage and human losses in AfroHonduren Communities. Six hundred houses were destroyed and 1000 partially-destroyed; more than 15 thousand families were left homeless; 95% of crops were destroyed; the coconut palms are now prone to die, being attacked by the disease called LETHAL AMARILLAMIENTO. Some of these communities like Punta Gorda,

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Pandy Town and Santa Elena, Santa Rosa and Barra del Aguan, located in the Departments of the Bay Islands and Colon, respectively, like other communities, lost many houses, as well as lost part of the equipment they need for fishing, one of the traditioanl income-generating businesses...²⁶

The AfroHonduran community is at a true crossroads. On the one hand, it is dealing with reconstruction after the damage caused by Hurricane Mitch, and on the other, it is fighting for the legalization of its land, while the Government attempts, through the National Congress, to reform Article 107 of the constitution to give away more of their rightful patrimony, LA TIERRA. This creates an unequal fight for justice; the state imposes justice upon the Black Community through its various organizations that do not even have representation from the Black Community, despite the fact that they constitute 10% of the country's total population.

In this challenge, the egalitarian application and practice of inalienable human rights, and national and international solidarity play a predominant role (author's translation from Spanish).

Celeo Alvarez Casildo
President of ODECO

"BUSCAMOS VOCES QUE ACALLEN EL SILENCIO"

In this document, we see ODECO linking the passage of the LMA with the loss of land in Garifuna communities (i.e., LMA is the 1992 law that enabled cooperative members to sell their plots as private lands). Alvarez makes a case for titling Garifuna communal lands, noting that powerful interest groups harassed the Garifuna because they lacked institutionally recognized land rights. Alvarez highlights Garifuna mobilization, especially that spearheaded by ODECO (see point 10), as leading to a governmental commitment to resolve the land problems faced by Garifuna communities. He notes the irony and contradictions inherent in the LMA (point 8), asking,

²⁶ This paragraph follows with a list of the number of houses destroyed and families impacted by community.

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[If Honduran law] declares that after three years of squatting without interruption any Honduran over the age of sixteen can claim it as their legitimate property, then why after 204 years, is the Garifuna community's right to their historical lands not recognized? (Author's translation from Spanish).

Following this statement, his remarks about tourism investment (point 9) suggest that ODECO is not against the privatization of land or the country's neoliberal development policies that rely on privatization and foreign investment, as long as the Garifuna have ownership over their own land and are equal participants in the development process. In the closing statement, Alvarez notes that Hurricane Mitch damaged the traditional economic activity of Garifuna communities, but he never links these activities to indigenous rights and cultural survival. The international discourse that is evoked is human rights. This position and representation of the Garifuna is quite different than OFRANEH's.

Below are two statements made by OFRANEH leadership to national powers, the first to President Ricardo Maduro in November 2002, and the second to the National Congress. These are prime examples of how OFRANEH calls upon the global discourse of indigenous rights, indigenous ecological knowledge, and international bodies such as the United Nations, to articulate their stance on the land struggle.

EXPOSITION BEFORE THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
RICARDO MADURO

November 13, 2002

INTRODUCTION

In spite of to having occupied the North coast of Honduras for more than 205 years, we, the Honduran Garifuna, lack official territorial recognition, which jeopardizes our nutritional security and the legal support that we need to guarantee our survival as a distinct people.

Of the 48 communities in which you'll find our population located along the North coast, 28 of them are within protected areas or tropical zones. This is a clear signal of the role that we have played in the conservation of natural resources and how our traditional knowledge is essential in the management of coastal and marine ecosystems.

Unfortunately, the lack of our territorial and ecological recognition has resulted in agricultural colonization, which is devouring our forest resources, leading to the destruction of our river basins and increasing our vulnerability to disasters caused by global warming.

Our people were severely affected by Hurricane Mitch and the tropical storms Katherin and Michelle, demonstrated by the degree of erosion to our channels, rivers, and tropics. And still to this day, effective measures have not been taken to solve the deforestation, the drying up the river basins, and the disappearance of forest cover vegetation.

The erosion of biodiversity and the destruction of ecosystems affect the development of the tourist industry, as it depends in great measure on the supply of this country's environmental and cultural wealth.

To date, Garifuna communities have preserved the traditional culture of our people, which was declared last year by UNESCO as "the cultural patrimony of humanity." At the same time that we have one of the lowest crime rates, we are a society that struggles against insecurity.

In order to be able to preserve our culture and the peace in which we live, it is essential that processes for territorial recognition be put in place, that we stop the sacking of marine resources, that we recover the coconut plantations, and further, that we confront the AIDS epidemic in an effective manner.

In the rich social fabric of our country, we can play an essential role in strengthening the processes of nature conservation and implementing new

ways of obtaining currency, such as tourism. For these reasons, it is highly appropriate that the executive authority offer support to guarantee conflict resolution, thus improving the relationship between the Garifuna society and the Honduran State.

Given this situation, it is urgent that the following demands of our communities are addressed:

DEMANDS

1. Solve the land problem in Sambo Creek: return the land seized by the Castillo family; they currently occupy 12 manzanas. The land is a clear example of the desperation and grave overcrowding in which they live.
2. Return the lands seized by Mr. Jaime Rosenthal in San Juan Tela. This is a case that was tried in the courts before in the city of Tela, and some of the leaders of this community have been jailed.
3. Solve the usurpation of 22 manzanas by the mayor of Tela in the community of Triunfo de la Cruz.
4. Provide the approval of funds from the National Congress for the *saneamiento* of the community of Punta Pierdras.
5. Register the property titles of the keys of Chachauate, Bolaños, and the community of Eastend in Cayos Cochinos.
6. Solve the problem of 30 Garifuna nurses, who a year and a half ago completed their studies and are still waiting for their titles from the Ministry of Health, and wish to be paid for social service as nurses in Batalla and Tocamacho.
7. Help initiate community tourism, based on a proposal from OFRANEH that was developed through consultation and discussion with the communities. Right now we are on the verge of inaugurating the first tourist footpath with financing by *la Cooperación Española, AECI*. (Author's translation from Spanish).

The next selection from a statement to the Honduran Congress builds on the previous. Analysis of the two documents follows.

PLAN BEFORE THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Black Fraternal Organization, OFRANEH, and the Garifuna communities of San Juan, Triunfo de la Cruz, Sambo Creek, Punta Piedra, Batalla, Tornabe, present the following to the National Congress.

Considering, that the Garifuna have been declared by UNESCO, as possessing an Intangible Heritage, in recognition of its culture (language, dance, oral tradition, architecture, Cosmo vision, spirituality, etc.)

Considering, that the Honduran government has undertaken the development of a poverty reduction program. And we recognize that the guarantee of land to the most vulnerable sectors of Honduran society is fundamental for the alleviation of poverty.

Considering, that the Honduran state has executed a political strategy to develop the tourist industry, as a means to generate foreign investment and revenue, and that the potentially rich zones for tourism development are the areas where the Garifuna communities are located, since one of the fundamental principles of the tourist industry is to guarantee the psychological and physical security of visitors.

Declaring, that for indigenous peoples, the concept of conservation and sustainable use of biological biodiversity is not an empty concept... These concepts, for native peoples, are intimately related to their spirituality and respect for the mother earth. Life, territory, knowledge, and collective rights are inseparable. Article 8j of the Convention on Biodiversity recognizes this fundamental principle.

Considering, that the Honduran state ratified ILO 169 in May 1994, an international legal instrument that recognizes the collective rights of indigenous and tribal peoples worldwide.

Considering, that the community of Punta Piedra has been facing a land possession conflict that for 10 years, which originated because a group of people from outside of the community took possession of the community's productive lands....(Author's translation from Spanish).²⁷

²⁷ This statement continues with specific demands to the Honduran state. I excluded the remainder because the excerpts I chose to include from the two documents serve to make my point. Providing the remainder of the second statement would be redundant.

The approach of OFRANEH is strikingly different from that expressed by ODECO. From the very start, OFRANEH highlights the Garifuna as a distinct culture, who exist with a special relationship to the environment and points out that the environment has deteriorated since they lost territorial control. Rather than emphasizing Garifuna “successes,” as does ODECO by listing the number of titles granted to communities, OFRANEH calls attention to the abuses in Garifuna communities,²⁸ noting the usurpation of lands and discrimination against Garifuna health workers. In the first statement, OFRANEH makes a series of specific demands to the government, including the resolution of outstanding unresolved land conflicts, the registration of Garifuna territories not yet titled, and governmental support for ecologically and culturally sustainable community tourism initiatives, such as low-impact footpaths, that OFRANEH designed in conjunction with heavy local level participation.

In both documents we see OFRANEH reminding the Honduran nation that the success of the tourism industry “depends in great measure on the supply of this country’s environmental and cultural wealth,” and that tourism relies on areas where visitors feel physically safe and psychologically fulfilled (Garifuna communities are presumed to provide this type of feeling). OFRANEH notes “to date, Garifuna communities have preserved the traditional culture of our people,” pointing out the international recognition (by UNESCO) of the Garifuna’s “intangible heritage” and “cultural survival.” They use the significance of culture to impel the government to listen to their demands, asserting that the proposals for

²⁸ ODECO does cite Facusse in Point 7 as hoarding Garifuna territories.

economic advancement are only possible with the “survival” of Garifuna traditions. They further note that, “in order to be able to preserve our culture...it is essential that processes for territorial recognition be put in place...” Resource control and cultural survival are inextricably linked. This argument is articulated in the language of indigenous rights. OFRANEH’s leaders are formally negotiating the changing environment by drawing out the link between cultural survival and the ability to maintain control over the conservation and management of natural resources and local tourism initiatives. They make clear that for the Garifuna:

...the concept of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity is not an empty concept...these concepts, for native peoples [like the Garifuna] are intimately related to their spirituality and respect for mother earth.

Like the UN indigenous delegates that Muelenbach (2001) describes, OFRANEH leaders are articulating an “indigenous place” as a conceptual tool in their political mobilization. This departs from the identity that ODECO articulates an international scale, and is largely linked to the way in which each organization approaches development and interaction with neoliberalism.

5.2 Competing Notions of Development

OFRANEH’s response to government development decisions has been to charge the Honduran government for human rights abuses and ethnocide, arguing that the effects of proposed “development” processes would put an end to Garifuna culture and lifestyle, displacing them from their ancestral territories, and leading to a loss of identity. Miriam Miranda, a key spokesperson for OFRANEH, is quite

suspicious of development as a concept and as a process. In our first encounter in 2000, I asked her how she defined development:

Development is difficult to define. It can, and most often does, destroy culture, customs, folklore, and spirit. I cannot give you a concrete definition. It is a complex concept. The popular definition is to change sustainably for the better, but the reality is that development can cause destruction. You have no way of knowing if it will be for the better. For example, many people think putting latrines in pueblos is development. It isn't enough. The communities need sustainability, education, food, etc. Some people think that the Garifuna communities that do not have electricity need to have it for development. But I disagree. Electricity isn't automatically development. Our communities have certain traditions because we do not have electricity. Women all gather together at night to talk beneath the moon. If you bring electricity to their community, they will stop, and this will destroy their traditions (Author's translation from Spanish).

Miriam's comments echo those shared by other OFRANEH affiliates who saw development as a direct threat to Garifuna identity and 'tradition.' Unlike OFRANEH, ODECO's board of directors did not engage in theoretical discussions over what it means to develop, or whether or not "development" was a necessary thing. In fact, ODECO named their organization a *development* organization, suggesting that either ODECO believes in a need for development, however the word might be defined, or like Gardner and Lewis (1996), they think since it is here to stay, the most beneficial approach for their organization is to work to redefine the concept in ways that are beneficial to the Garifuna. My feeling is that ODECO falls into the latter. Conversations about their split from OFRANEH in 1992, suggest that they find OFRANEH's refusal to 'work with the system' as negating Garifuna achievements in overcoming racism, discrimination, and marginalization. ODECO seems to be saying that the state system is here to stay,

so the Garifuna must work within its constraints. ODECO is therefore pushing for a place at the negotiating table – again, their goal is to achieve integration into development planning, and as they say, “transform the Garifuna from development objects to development subjects.” A look at their stated goals illustrates this point.

What are ODECO's Principle Objectives?

To provide for the integral development of the black community in Honduras (Garifuna and non-Garifuna).

To conduct actions aimed at the rescue, conservation, and strengthening of the national culture values, as manifested by the Garifuna and other ethnically Black Hondurans.

To plan, execute, direct, and evaluate work, actions, projects, programs, and plans, with the goal of increasing the social, economic, and political level of the Black Honduran community, through the help of national and international institutions and organizations.

To establish cooperative relations between communities and national and international organizations.

To train and organize members of small, self-managing businesses to combat unemployment, poor quality of life, massive immigration, and the abandonment of natal communities.

To train and organize women so they can be successfully incorporated as a force in national development.

To conduct preventative activities that protect children from malnutrition, abandonment, drug addiction, alcoholism, prostitution, and illiteracy.

To fight for the respect of Human Rights, conforming to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Republic's Constitution.

To help members in cases of catastrophe, in accordance with the stipulations presented in the Statutes and Rules.

To promote the creation and development of cooperatives, loans, and friendly help, to schools, libraries, technical training institutes, collaborative offices in hospitals, experimental fields, or sports and other

organizations dedicated to the professional and cultural aims of solidarity and welfare (provision).

To work for the rescue and conservation of the ecological equilibrium that benefits life (<http://www.caribe.hn/odeco/page2.html>; author's translation from Spanish).

ODECO maintains their position as a nongovernmental agency working to integrate the Garifuna as *partners* in development projects. OFRANEH, in contrast, seeks self-determination for the Garifuna, and the ability to fully *control* – from design to implementation - projects within their communities. I wish to compare the above statement of ODECO's objectives to a statement made by OFRANEH's President in response to a police raid of one of OFRANEH's key leaders' homes. Godsman Ellis, a Belizean Garifuna activist, sent out the following statement over the Human Rights Action email listserve (info@rightsaction.org). While the comparison shows that both organizations are involved transnationally – ODECO through their collaboration with international agencies, and OFRANEH with Garifuna activists in other countries - and that both organizations tap into international human rights discourses and networks, the comparison also demonstrates the key distinction between the organizations: their stances on neoliberal development policies and programs.

March 28, 2005

PERSECUTION OF GARIFUNAS

The OFRANEH (Honduran Black People's Fraternal Organization) denounces the raid of the home of Miriam Miranda. This is a clear case of persecution of the defenders of the ancestral lands of indigenous and black peoples.

The break-in took place on Friday March 25 (Good Friday), between two and three in the afternoon. Eight officers of the DGIC (Criminal Investigative

Division), some of whom were wearing hoods, broke into Miranda's home, with orders to search for stolen articles and weapons.

Miriam Miranda has a long history of involvement in the struggle for the defense of the rights of indigenous and black peoples, especially the rights of the Garifuna people and the defense of their land and culture. We therefore presume that this raid was a form of pressure to intimidate Miranda and tie the hands of OFRANEH, so that it becomes nothing more than one more NGO carrying out projects, like other NGOs involved with World Bank projects.

OFRANEH believes we are living in a very important historical period. The ratification of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States will speed up the process of economic globalization and lead to increased poverty, given the enormous gap that exists between our country and the North American Empire. As well, the traditional agricultural economies of our country will be undermined and there will be a huge increase in the number of campesinos who have no choice but join the migration to the North.

The raid of Miranda's home does not augur well, given that Miranda was not involved in any of the alleged activities named by the authorities. On the contrary, she has been recognized both nationally and internationally for her hard work and dedication to the defense of the rights of indigenous and black peoples.

Law enforcement in Honduras is suffering a regression. In fact, it has turned into a witch-hunt, much like it was in the eighties. With open warfare against the so-called maras (gangs) -- the children of neoliberalism --, we are very close to returning to the persecution of the popular movement that we saw in the past.

The Empire's attempt at economic globalization is a total failure and the situation will only get worse with the implementation of projects such as the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, the Plan Puebla Panamá, the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and the PATH (Land Administration Project of Honduras), all of which directly effect the future of the lands of our peoples.

Financial institutions such as the World Bank and the InterAmerican Development Bank are attempting to implement these projects. At the same time, wherever possible, they try to sow seeds of division in popular movements and buy their leaders.

The break-in at Miranda's home happens at a time when there is an attempt to divide our organization, financed by the office of the Nuestras Raíces Programme,²⁹ which comes under the FHIS (Fondo Hondureño de Inversion

²⁹ The Nuestras Raíces (Our Roots) Program was created in 1995. The program was developed in

Social) which in turn, is financed by the World Bank. In 2002, the programme was given the task of dividing the CONPAH (Confederation of the Native People of Honduras) and financing the now defunct CINH, also administered by the Nuestras Raices Programme.

At the same time, the state of Honduras, along with the PATH, have begun to put pressure on the Garifuna communities, through a project whose aim is to break up ancestral lands. Teresa Reyes, of Triunfo de la Cruz, was sentenced to preventative custody for the crime of defending a piece of land that has belonged to her family for years.

We hereby alert the public to the direct and indirect pressure to which the members of our organization are being subjected. We also denounce the deliberate attempt to divide us by a state organ financed by the World Bank.

This division could destroy our peoples' resistance movement and lead to the break-up and loss of our ancestral communities (author's translation from Spanish).

Issued in La Ceiba (Honduras), March 28, 2005.

Gregoria Flores
OFRANEH

While OFRANEH's President is not naming "development" per se, she is making a statement against the neoliberal development programs of the World Bank and InterAmerican Development Bank. Flores makes clear that in OFRANEH's opinion, economic development plans, such as the Central American Free Trade Agreement and Plan Pueblo Panama, and the establishment of the MesoAmerican Biological Corridor (a project to map and monitor land cover and ecological balance within the framework of sustainable economic development)

response to ethnic mobilization and protests citing the government for poor access to basic public services and inadequate infrastructure. The program was originally financed through domestic funds from 1995 to 1997, and beneficiaries received nominal pay to open and rehabilitate small tertiary roads and paths. The primary beneficiaries (72%) were Lenca. The World Bank was invited to finance the program under the Social Investment Fund Project (FHIS) in 1997. Ethnic organizations have consistently issued complaints regarding the lack of participation, information, transparency and political biased targeting (Traa-Valerezo and Rodriguez 2003).

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are direct threats to the rights of Garifuna people. Moreover, she recognizes the divisions in Garifuna leadership, denouncing, without explicitly naming, ODECO's history of working with international institutions to carry out local development projects. OFRANEH sees their role as an organization to speak out against injustices caused by economic globalization, situating themselves as part of a broader movement against neoliberalism. ODECO, in contrast, works within neoliberalism. As noted in chapter two, ODECO is involved in a transnational alliance called *La Organización Negra Centroamericana* or ONECA (the Central American Black Organization or CABO), which is a coalition of 22 organizations from seven different countries. Celeo Alvarez, the president of ODECO, is also the president of ONECA. ONECA holds yearly summits, the focus of which is the collective coordination around the shared social, economical, political, and ecological challenges facing Afro-American communities. Excerpts from their 2002 declaration reveal the approach that ONECA, and therefore also ODECO, take on development.³⁰

San Jose Declaration for the Eighth Assembly of the Central American Black Organization, December 5-7, 2002.

We, the AfroCentralAmerican organizations that belong to the Central American Black Organization...met in San Isidro de Coronado, San José, Costa Rica in order to reaffirm our determination and true conviction that we must be actors in our development processes; it is our right as citizens of various countries in the region and in the African diaspora.

Therefore we decided:

³⁰ The declaration is lengthy, and not all of relevance to the argument I am making. The entire document can be found at: <http://garifunaweb.com/oneca/oneca.html>.

To guarantee the highest level of participation for Afrocentroamerican communities in the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor Initiative.

To endorse the execution of the World Bank project to “Develop the Institutional Capacity for Central American Afro-descendant Organizations,” which is financed by the World Bank through the Central American Commission of Environment and Development (*La Comisión Centroamericana de Ambiente y Desarrollo* or CCAD), and in which ONECA will be the executor.

To guarantee that our communities participate as important actors under in the development models of the Plan Puebla Panama, the Free Trade of the Americas Agreement, and affirm that the communities rights are protected and respected.

To conclude the writing process for the Master Plans of Development for Afrodescendent Communities, and continue to pressure our governments so that these plans are incorporated into their programs and strategies of poverty reduction in Central American countries.

We support the actions of the organizations that comprise ONECA and support their effort to guarantee the right to land that has been ancestrally occupied by the Afro descendent populations in Central America.

To conclude the execution of the World Bank’s Project to Map the Afrocentroamerican organizations... (<http://garifunaweb.com/oneca/oneca.html>; author’s translation from Spanish).

ODECO is allied transnationally with other Garifuna people as well as other Afrodescendents. Their organizational stance is one that takes as a starting point that neoliberal development policy is a force that is not going to disappear. As such, they are working to incorporate the Garifuna as strategic actors in development processes, rather than protest their existence. OFRANEH, on the other hand, is an outright critique of development processes. ONECA’s declaration clearly states the way in which they believe the Garifuna should

interact with global development initiatives. Through ONECA, ODECO has formally endorsed these neoliberal projects (e.g., FTAA, PPP, and specific World Bank projects) and Honduras' neoliberal development approach.

5.3 Divided communities

The divisions among these organizations are also dividing communities, as is revealed in an excerpt from a letter written to Gregoria Flores by the President of Patronato of one coastal community (not Sambo Creek) in May 2002.³¹ The author of this letter shared with me that while he felt closer to OFRANEH, he saw the residents of his community torn by dual representation at the national and international level, and was therefore recommending a consolidation of the two organizations. The following are relevant excerpts from that letter.

It is important that you know that our Patronato, which represents this community, recently had a meeting with the objective of analyzing and discussing the future repercussions of the grave errors of our leaders; that all this [the land problematic, which is cited earlier in the letter] has been the result of egotistic attitudes, without concern for the magnitude of pain that this has been causing the majority of the Honduras' Black community, especially the Garifuna people.

Therefore our organization recommends the following:

1. To summon a joint meeting at the highest level with ODECO, integrating the distinguished Garifuna and recognizing the moral and spiritual solvency that they present in our communities.
2. To attempt to consolidate ODECO and OFRANEH, the organizations that represent the Garifuna communities, understanding the great damage that this [the existence of two organizations] is causing the Garifuna people. This division has manifested itself in the communities and now the common enemy already has knowledge of it, and therefore knows how to use it to their benefit and against the Garifuna.

³¹ He planned to send a copy of this letter to ODECO as well.

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3. We want you to understand one time for all, that the majority of our towns are already encountering total confusion and they don't know who to believe...
4. We close this letter, hoping that you will accept our petition in benefit of our people, and hope that we can speak in the same language that SATUYE, DUVALE, and BARAUDA urged us to (author's translation from Spanish).

This community leader reminds the organizations that they (affiliates of both organizations) are all Garifuna, evoking ancestral heroes, who are undisputed leaders of all Garifuna, to do so. Noting that communities are now divided in their allegiances, he is arguing that no one organization is truly representative of all Garifuna. The fact that there are two organizations, each headed by Garifuna individuals, yet with starkly different notions about the way in which communities should interact with development policies, tells us something: that the Garifuna, like all cultural groups, contain within them a great diversity of viewpoints. These variations have resulted in dual political organizing, and the organized politics of ODECO and OFRANEH tell us something more than just their stances on the Garifuna position in Honduras; they tell us about their ideas about the Garifuna place within the world.

5.4 Indigenous Place-making and the Politics of Morality

OFRANEH's politics adhere to what Muehlebach called the politics of morality. Drawing on Escobar (1992), Muehlebach (2001:425) argues that:

The politics of morality continues as part of a larger global trend in which social movements are forming 'not only [against a specific type of] politics and democracy, but [against] a whole civilizational design based on modern reason' (Escobar 1994:41)...indigenous 'place-making' has

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fundamentally challenged this design. Attaching ‘the nucleus of all civilizing rationality,’ namely the ‘denial of man that he is part of nature’ (1994:54), indigenous ‘place-making’ at the U.N. has made visible the multitudinous relations said to exist between indigenous ‘subjects’ and a meaningful entity – nature. Thus indigenous delegates have since their emergence on the global political scene insisted on the inseparability of two seemingly separable realms – ecology and ethnicity.

OFRANEH is involved in this broader struggle, critiquing the newly defined design of neoliberalism through “place-making.” A comparison of statements by ODECO and OFRANEH to the generalizations Muehlebach makes about indigenous delegates shows that OFRANEH has adopted the international rhetoric of indigenous leaders. Tables VI through VIII provide this comparison.

Table VI. Comparisons of Garifuna Organizations’ Adoption of Muehlebach’s Generalization #1

GENERALIZATION #1	OFRANEH STATEMENTS	ODECO STATEMENTS
“First, their claims always invoke the image of a cultural community investing in and living off a specific place, the land. Living a particular lifestyle in intimate interconnection with a specific place and without any unwanted interference is viewed as a people’s fundamental and collective right to self-determination” (Muehlebach 2001:424).	“In spite of having occupied the North coast of Honduras for more than 205 years, we, the Honduran Garifuna , lack official territorial recognition, which jeopardizes our nutritional security and the legal support that we need to guarantee our survival as a distinct people... Unfortunately, the lack of our territorial and ecological recognition has resulted in agricultural colonization.”	“The Law for Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector declares that after three years of squatting without interruption, any Honduran over 16 years can claim it as their legitimate property. We ask, why then after 204 years, isn’t the Garifuna community’s right to their historical lands recognized.”

What we see here is that while OFRANEH evokes the image of the Garifuna as a “distinct people,” ODECO simply notes their continued existence on these lands.

Table VII. Comparisons of Garifuna Organizations’ Adoption of Muehlebach’s Generalization # 2

GENERALIZATION #2	OFRANEH STATEMENTS	ODECO STATEMENTS
<p>“Second, the places with which indigenous delegates portray themselves as being meaningfully intertwined are either already, or on the verge of being destroyed, taken away, and/or polluted. The communities whose lives are portrayed as being inextricably linked to this place through quotidian practices thus claim their right to an (unpolluted) territory” (Muehlebach 2001: 424).</p>	<p>Of the 48 communities in which you’ll find our population located along the North coast, 28 of them are within protected areas or tropical zones. This is a clear signal of the role that we have played in the conservation of natural resources and how our traditional knowledge is essential in the management of coastal and marine ecosystems. Unfortunately, our lack of territorial and ecological control has resulted in agricultural colonization...And still to this day, effective measures have not been taken to solve the deforestation, the drying up the river basins, and the disappearance of forest cover vegetation. The erosion of biodiversity and the destruction of ecosystems affect the development of the tourist industry, as it depends in great measure on the supply of this country’s environmental and cultural wealth. To date, Garifuna communities have preserved the traditional culture of our people, which was declared last year by UNESCO as “the cultural patrimony of humanity.”</p>	<p>Organizational Objective:</p> <p>“To work for the rescue and conservation of the ecological equilibrium that benefits life.”</p>

OFRANEH makes a clear link between the Garifuna and the environment, extolling their environmental stewardship and calling attention to the ecological destruction of their natural resources by non-Garifuna. ODECO notes the importance of the environment and conservation for all human life, but does not note the Garifuna as managers of these resources.

Table VIII. Comparisons of Garifuna Organizations' Adoption of Muehlebach's Generalization #3

GENERALIZATION #3	OFRANEH STATEMENTS	ODECO STATEMENTS
“And, finally, in claiming the rights for “those that cannot speak,” a key trope that has been used for years is revealed – that of a natural world that means and embodies more to an indigenous people than merely the basis for the economic sustenance of the community. The relationship to territory is represented not only as meaningful, but as moral” (Muehlebach 2001:424).	OFRANEH has maintained a clear policy regarding our territories, which we consider to be something more than merchandise. In our Cosmo vision, the mother earth is something not negotiable and belongs intrinsically to the Garifuna community... We fear that the philosophy of individualism, which is expounded through Neo-liberalism, calls for the dissolution of our collective titles and the imposition of the concept of individual property, and that this will intensify the pressures oriented towards the sale of the coastal strip.	“We look for voices that have been silenced.”

In this comparison we see OFRANEH imbuing the territory with moral meaning, noting that it means more to the Garifuna than a cash income; it has a

spiritual value. ODECO's slogan shows that they are similar to indigenous leaders in that they speak for those who cannot.

As the above comparisons reveal, OFRANEH is involved in place-making through the articulation of Garifuna indigeneity. OFRANEH evokes the image of the Garifuna as a distinct people, drawing upon indigenous rights discourses that link indigenous identity to the environment, rooting the Garifuna - as indigenous peoples - to the land that has been and continues to be taken from them. They are fighting alongside of other indigenous groups for the right to self-determination and the control over their own destinies. ODECO, on the other hand, has as its goal, the integration of the Garifuna into development processes. They call upon human rights discourses to solidify their assertion that the Garifuna deserve equal participation in coastal development planning.

5.5 Self-Identifying as Indigenous

Throughout my fieldwork I remained perplexed as to why ODECO was not appropriating an indigenous identity, as such an identity seemed to me to offer them greater ability to network as well as to articulate the demands and needs of Garifuna communities. Often board members went out of their way to explain the difference between indigenous and autochthonous. I was told by one board member that the Garifuna were AfroHondurans, *not* indigenous peoples – that indigenous people were the Miskito, the Lencas, the Pech, etc. According to ODECO, the Garifuna were autochthonous, which oddly enough, they also used to describe Honduras' "indigenous" or Native American populations. When I

explained that I found it peculiar given that in other countries, notably Belize, the Garifuna identify as indigenous, one board member told me that I was confused; that in Belize, Afro-descendants fall into two groups – the Garifuna and the Creoles, and neither are indigenous.

Most dictionaries define “autochthonous” and “indigenous” as synonyms. Why then, does ODECO not wish to appropriate an indigenous identity? Some Garifuna affiliated with ODECO explained that the Garifuna were “more pure” than indigenous groups, inferring that the Garifuna did not ‘mix’ physically or culturally to the extent that Native American populations did. Others linked with ODECO suggest that they associate indigenous status with oppression and subordination. In addition to subordination, oppression, and marginalization, the word indigenous also conjures up notions of static culture, where change can bring nothing but harm. Are assumptions such as these behind ODECO’s avoidance of an indigenous identity? ODECO is pro-change in so much as it is pro-development, albeit in ways that incorporate local knowledge and resources. Perhaps an autochthonous identity is more open to change?

A conversation with Miriam Miranda of OFRANEH offers some insight into why some Garifuna leaders may still be hesitant to fully embrace the indigenous identity discourse, as debates over the meaning of indigenous have persisted in academic and nonacademic circles for quite some time. Before beginning our interview, Miriam asked to look over my set of interview questions. After reading the two pages of questions she said she would like to begin with a

question listed under the subcategory “other,” nearly three-quarters into the interview schedule.

This question interests me a lot -- ‘*como identifican los Garifuna s? Como indigenas, autóconos, ó los dos?*’ -- I believe it is hard to define indigenous. You must see this in your work as well. The Garifuna are not indigenous to Central America, but we do identify as indigenous as an *autoidentificación* (self-identification). I think this is important – that we choose to identify ourselves in this way. In 1992, when the year of the indigenous was celebrated, there was a lot debate over how indigenous is defined and what it was that makes a people indigenous. If you ask a Garifuna person if they are indigenous, they would say, ‘no; I’m *negro*.’ But they are culturally indigenous because they share the cultural traits of the indigenous Arawaks in this hemisphere. Our language is indigenous. We have the *pimiento* of indigenous peoples. Therefore, to say we are indigenous is a self-identification, and this is what is important. We are the only *negros* in Central America with our own language (author’s translation from Spanish).

By outlining the debates and disagreements over the true meaning of “indigenous,” Miriam sets the stage for the Garifuna as indigenous, demonstrating that what is important is that they choose to identify as indigenous. Miriam is likely aware of the fact that Article 2 of ILO #169 declares that self-identification is *the* key to determining whether or not a group is indigenous. Moreover, her comments reflect debates over scale of place in tracing indigeneity. Like the place-making strategies of the Maya in Belize that Medina (1999) discusses (i.e., that they argue for indigenous rights based on being indigenous to the region, not just to the territorial boundaries of Belize), Honduran Garifuna can make similar arguments to their indigenous heritage. As Miriam points out, the Garifuna share ‘cultural traits’ with the Arawkans of this hemisphere. The existence of the Special Prosecutor for the Ethnic Groups has facilitated the Garifunas’ official

recognition as an indigenous group. Eduardo Villanueva, the special prosecutor is quoted in England and Anderson 2004:16) as saying:

...indigenous is that which is original to this country, and the origins of this country are when it gained independence and set up its actual borders. So the Convention 169 favors those peoples who were already here before the formation of the state. In 1921 the Garifuna had already been here for many years. They came against their will, uprooted from their original country. This is a historical fact, and we cannot change that. But when I say indigenous I mean to include the Garifuna in this concept because *they were here when the state was organized....*

Although this quote reveals that the idea that the Garifuna are “indigenous peoples” is gaining higher levels of recognition, and some Garifuna activists are indeed asserting that the Garifuna are indigenous, my fieldwork in Garifuna communities found that an identification as indigenous has not filtered out to the larger Garifuna population.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter served to outline the way in which the Garifuna are responding at the organizational level to the nation’s contemporary development agenda. For over 208 years, the Garifuna have lived without legal titles on historically marginalized lands. Over the years, their lack of definitive titles resulted in the loss of traditional lands to more powerful groups, and this process was accelerated in the 1990s as the Honduran nation entered into an era of neoliberalism and pushed forward constitutional reforms that enabled privatization on previously protected lands. Globalization processes have enabled Garifuna organizations to draw upon national and international law and global discourses to pressure the Honduran state to reclaim traditionally owned resources. Yet the

Garifuna are not united in their approach to negotiating neoliberal economic development. ODECO's approach draws more on inclusion and integration into neoliberal processes, while OFRANEH emphasizes resistance to neoliberalism. The divisions at the organizational level are indeed reflective of the Garifuna community at large, which is verified in the President of Patronato's letter to OFRANEH.

The following chapter looks at the Garifuna struggle at the community level. The chapter reviews Sambo Creek's history with landholding and Mestizo and foreign encroachment on traditional lands, and the gender dimensions of increasing privatization of community lands. Using Sambo Creek's objectives in 2002 local land invasions, I discuss the disjuncture between contemporary livelihood strategies and organizational approaches to the recuperation of land.

CHAPTER SIX

SAMBO CREEK'S LAND STRUGGLE

The community of Sambo Creek is one in which Garífuna land tenure problems are the most pronounced. Houses are densely packed together in the center of the community, with younger generations building their homes in areas that were once family backyard gardens. Many homes house ten or more people, and the local cemetery has reached its capacity. There is no available land to build houses, to make a new cemetery, to plant crops, or to build community infrastructure. But what is really striking is that when you walk around Sambo Creek, you see many empty, gated lots. This is because so much of Sambo Creek's land has been sold to private investors who obtained land for a variety of reasons (e.g., retirement, real estate, ranching), or has been usurped through Mestizo encroachment.

Much of Sambo Creek's ancestral land is now in the hands of Mestizos who came to hold it through squatters' rights or "irregular" processes. Irregular processes refer to encroachment by powerful and elite Hondurans who obtained land through intimidation, trickery, or outright theft by gunpoint. Many irregularly obtained empty plots are now up for sale with asking prices far beyond what a local resident could pay. For example, in 2002, ¼-manzana plots (about .375 acres) in the most impoverished areas had asking prices of around \$10,000; one foreign landowner was asking \$100,000 for slightly more than two manzanas (three acres). As I indicated in chapter two, the majority of the community is unemployed and reliant on remittances. Those I interviewed who were receiving

remittances were sent about \$200 a month, and those who were working made approximately \$125 a month. Thus, for many residents, purchasing land is an impossibility. One Garífuna woman summed up the problem with the statement, “in order to have a home of their own, our children must wait for their grandmothers to die.”

The shortage of land pushed the community into a struggle to reclaim their ancestral territories. Sambo Creek’s land struggle occurred at multiple levels, from local land invasions, to the national legal efforts of OFRANEH and the INA, to the international threat of a court ruling by the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR). I begin the chapter by describing the processes through which “ancestral Garífuna lands” have come to be held (sometimes legally, sometimes illegally) by non-Garifuna. Next, I demonstrate that the privatization of ancestral land has been a gendered process, whereby Garifuna women are disproportionately impacted because patterns of matrilineal inheritance are being replaced by individual land transactions in which men are typically the beneficiaries. I then discuss the community’s 1997 communal land title and its associated problems. All of these details led to the 2001 land invasions in which “children of the community” attempted to recuperate their ancestral rights from “foreigners.” Finally, I discuss shifts in livelihood strategies and relate these changes to how Garifuna organizations are representing Garifuna communities’ interaction with the land.

6.1 Mestizo Encroachment and Garifuna Sales

Prior to the 1980s, Sambo Creek's settlement was restricted to a small plot of land between the beach and the railroad tracks. The railroad was built in 1910 by the Vacaros Bros. Fruit Company, when they established banana plantations nearby. (These plantations were abandoned in the 1920s when disease destroyed the crops (Anderson 2000)). From initial settlement through the 1930s, the Garífuna cultivated the majority of the land immediately surrounding the community. When the banana companies withdrew in the 1930s, work as laborers on plantations and docks largely disappeared for men, and women lost opportunities to sell food products and refreshments on the plantations. Wealthy Mestizos began to usurp the lands, including land used by the Garifuna for cultivation and harvest.

According to local oral history, a Mestizo associated with the National Party of the President and dictator Tiburcio Carías Andino (1933-1949) appropriated a large portion of the community's cultivation lands to use as a cattle ranch (see also Anderson 2000). The elder Garifuna residents (i.e., 70 or older) that I interviewed recalled the National Party representatives and La Ceiba police forcibly removing Garífuna farmers from these lands.

We Garifuna have always been fighting for our land. And it is in all Garifuna communities, not just Sambo Creek... In 1941 or maybe it was 1942, the government robbed us of our lands and then many others left out of fear of the political party. People who worked in the government – not the president, but people who worked for him – these people with money – they came and took the land from us. This [Colonia X] used to be full of cassava. It was all cassava... (*70-year-old Garifuna man*; author's translation from Spanish).

This land was ours, but the powerful bosses that live in La Ceiba saw us as less than them and they came with pistols, humiliating us, and said to leave our lands. They said to us, 'here is 5 lempiras; don't come back.' We were afraid and we left. We did not have documents, so we could not fight (74-year-old *Garifuna* man; author's translation from Spanish).

The appropriated lands included what are now known as Colonia Libertad, Colonia Suazo, and Corinto. Much of the land remained unused throughout the years, passing through the hands of cattle ranchers and other powerful outsiders.

Beginning in the late 1970s, community activists began petitioning the National Agrarian Institute (INA) for the recuperation of their illegally seized lands. During that time, Felipe Suazo, a wealthy *Garifuna* resident, bought a large portion of this land (i.e., what is now Colonia Suazo and Corinto) from a Mestizo owner who was threatened with losing the entire plot to the community.

According to McCommon (cited in Anderson 2000:87), Suazo divided and sold this land to individuals on the condition that they build cement homes with zinc roofs. The costs imposed by this conditionality prevented those who most needed land from obtaining it, and as a result, the area is starkly differentiated from the rest of the community, with large, well-built homes and gated yards of the well-off *Garifuna* (who are typically those who have worked for many years in the United States).

Interviews and informal conversations revealed that some poor *Garifuna* families lost their land to Felipe Suazo through a loan process. Six individuals told me that they heard stories of women signing over their family's cultivation plot to Suazo in exchange for food, medicine, shoes, or other necessary supplies. When they could not pay back the money they owed for the items, he took control

of the land. For example, one young man told me that his mother sold his family's land for 100 lempiras, so that she could buy his sister a pair of shoes, leaving he and his siblings without an inheritance. Wealthier Mestizos supported this history in private conversations, yet they made the case that Suazo's exchanges were fair.

People now say that they were robbed of their lands, but the truth is they weren't; they were paid the going rate. Let me give you an example of how this works. In 1991, I bought my house in La Ceiba for 90,000 lempiras, but now I could sell it for 500,000 lempiras. When I bought the house I thought it was expensive, but now it is worth much more. It is the evolution of the country – the value is increasing... Nobody stole their land. Nobody was robbed by force. Some people exchanged their land for food. Others gave it to a doctor so that the doctor would cure their baby. Now they say this was stolen. But it was a fair exchange...(author's translation from Spanish).

Wealthy Mestizos were not the only ones to move in on Garifuna cultivation land. Poor inland Mestizos seeking opportunities encroached upon other areas. Anna's story provides an example. Anna is a 64-year-old Mestizo woman who was not born in Sambo Creek, but has lived in the community for as long as she can remember. Anna and her family live on contested lands in Corinto (i.e., ancestral cultivation land). Anna's parents are both from the interior of the country, and like many other poor Mestizos, they migrated to the coast in search of a better life. They settled in the center of Sambo Creek around 1940. Like many older women from the community, Anna never received any formal schooling, and when she was younger, she sold fruits and bread on the banana plantations. Anna is ill now, with undiagnosed heart problems, and no longer works. She has five grown children; four left for La Ceiba, while one son and his family share Anna and her husband's plot of land. Anna's husband cares for cattle on a local ranch. His income is very modest, and they have few items of luxury in their home.

Anna and her husband do not have a title for their plot, and they do not have sufficient money to obtain one. However they both reported that they desired a private title because they feared they might lose their land to Garifuna community members. When I asked Anna how she obtained her plot she said,

I will tell the truth because I am a woman who does not like to lie. In those times [1964] my husband and I wanted our own house. We were living in a house in Sambo Creek that was someone else's, not our own. So my husband came here and cleaned this land and we stayed here. Some people said this wasn't our land, but there was a man named Manuel that we knew nearby and he said it was okay for us to stay. So we did. (Author's translation from Spanish).

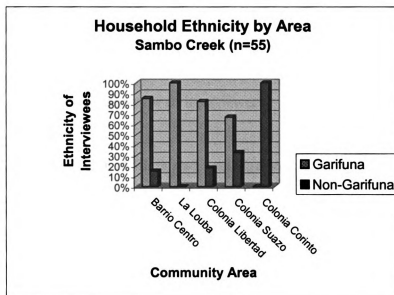
It is possible that due to the Garifuna practice of shifting agriculture, Anna, her husband, and other poor Mestizo immigrants mistook fallow fields as unutilized, thus transforming portions of ancestral farmland into places of residence.

In 1982, the community did succeed in recuperating some of their lost land. They secured rights under a communal title to what is now *Colonia Libertad*. The land was recovered via the National Agrarian Institute after several years of community petitioning (petitioning began in the late 1970s). The patronato was given authority to divide and distribute the land amongst landless community members, and Garifuna and Mestizo residents entered a lottery to receive individual plots. Although the land was originally envisioned to be dedicated at least in part to cultivation, it has become primarily a residential area (see also Anderson 2000). Today much of the land has been furthered divided and sold as private land.

Through the various avenues detailed above (i.e., theft, intimidation, sale, and immigration), Sambo Creek's ancestral lands have been transformed into

settlements and grazing pastures. These changes have demographic results. Although my sample was not a random sample, I do believe that I sampled a fairly close demographic representation of community composition by interviewing every fifth household. Figure III shows the ethnicity of the individuals I interviewed in the household sample, revealing the scope of Mestizo encroachment on ancestral cultivation lands.

Figure III. Ethnicity of Household Interviewees by Area



The comparison of ethnicity by section of the community shows that the early settlements (Barrio Centro and La Louba) were largely Garifuna. Eighty-five percent of the interviewees from Barrio Centro and 100% of the interviewees from La Louba were Garifuna. Areas of Sambo Creek that had historically been used for subsistence agriculture and harvest (Corinto) are now largely Mestizo. One hundred percent of the household interviewees in Corinto were Mestizo. Colonia

Libertad, the area donated back to the community in the 1980s, appears to be largely Garifuna (i.e., 82% of interviewees were Garifuna). Colonia Suazo, the area with the nicest homes, appears to have grown into a more mixed-ethnicity neighborhood (i.e., 67% of interviewees were Garifuna, while 33% were non-Garifuna), reflecting that the area has been largely privatized and sold to individuals who can afford to pay the market price.

Although it is probably accurate to state that Mestizos have taken control of the majority of Sambo Creek's ancestral cultivation and harvest land (i.e., Corinto), this does not mean that all Mestizos are recent transplants from elsewhere. As my household sample shows, there are Mestizo families who have ancestral roots in the community as well. Table IX depicts the birthplace and place of socialization for all interviewees.

Table IX. Place of Birth and Socialization for Household Interviewees by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Born and Raised in Community	Born Outside but Raised in Community	Born and Raised Outside of Community	Total
Garifuna	81% (n=34)	2% (n=1)	17% (n=7)	100% (n=42)
Mestizo	30% (n=3)	40% (n=4)	30% (n=3)	100% (n=10)
Other	67% (n=2)	0% (n=0)	33% (n=1)	100% (n=3)
Total	(n=39)	% (n=5)	% (n=11)	100% (n=55)

Of the ten Mestizo participants, three were born and raised in the community and four were born elsewhere, but grew up in the community. Thus, over 70% of the Mestizos I interviewed knew no other home than Sambo Creek.

I had heard plenty of stories about Mestizos robbing land, but was curious to see how this related to the way in which the people I interviewed obtained their land. Table X reports this data, showing the processes through which interviewees obtained their land and the price (if any) they paid for the plot on which they live.

Table X. How Households Obtained Their Parcel of Residence (n=55)

Land acquired through:	Count	Average Cost (in lempiras and dollars³²)	Time of Sale
Inheritance	18 (33%)	0	N/A
Donated (Colonia Libertad)	9 (16%)	0	N/A
Encroachment	2 (4%)	0	N/A
Sold by Suazo to Mestizo or Garifuna from other communities	2 (4%)	L 3000 (\$6000)	1982-1983
Sold by Suazo to Garifuna native to Sambo Creek	6 (11%)	L 1,522 (\$3044)	1978-1982
Sold by Garifuna (excluding Suazo) to Garifuna	3 (5%)	L 100 (\$200)	1960-1985
Sold by Mestizos (non-natives to Sambo)	5 (9%)	L 19,375 (\$140,662.50)	1995-1997
Unknown (includes 5 renters)	10 (18%)	0	N/A
Total	55 (100%)		

³² The cost in dollars was calculated using information about changes to the official exchange rate of the lempira, which was determined to be US\$1=L2 since 1918. In 1990, under President Callejas, the lempira was adjusted to US\$1=L4 and in December 1993, it fell to US\$1=L7.26. Thus, for sales that took place in the 1980s, I applied the exchange rate of US\$1=L2 and US\$1=L7.26 to sales that took place between 1995 and 1997. The lempira has steadily devalued since all the sales I reported, dropping for instance from US\$1=L14.839 in 2000, to US\$1=L16.433 in 2002, and to US\$1=L18.206 in 2004.
www.photius.com/countries/honduras/economy/honduras_economy_monetary_and_exchange~8536.html Last accessed: January 10, 2006.

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The table shows that the largest number of interviewees received land through inheritance. All eighteen respondents who lived on inherited land noted that the land was passed matrilineally (either from their mother or from their spouse's mother). Moreover, all eighteen of these individuals were Garifuna. Comparisons of the average purchase price for land reveal some interesting patterns. First, Garifuna individuals who sold land during the same time period as Suazo, set their prices lower than he, which suggests class distinctions within the community. Next, Suazo sold land cheaper to Garifuna who were native to Sambo Creek than he did to a Mestizo from Sambo Creek and a Garifuna from outside the community. In an interview with a Mestizo landowner (whose data is not included in the household sample) I learned that Suazo sold this person a plot in Colonia Libertad (i.e., the land recuperated in 1982) for 50,000 lempiras in 1999. These observations support what Garifuna community members told me about Suazo's sales: that he "looked after the Garifuna community" by buying their ancestral lands back from the Mestizo who claimed them and then selling it back to the Garifuna community at a low cost. Finally, we see that Mestizos from outside of the community are the only people who sold land in the last decade to the people I interviewed. In addition to regular market growth, land prices were also affected in the 1980s and 1990s by the devaluation of the lempira.

6.2 Women's Land Loss

It is important to consider the intersection of gender and landholding as we think about the community's land shortage and trend towards privatization. The reader should recall from chapter two that traditional Garifuna land tenure is

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communal landholding with individual families passing use rights to future generations. Moreover, Garifuna communities are generally matrifocal and matrilineal. The matrifocality of Sambo Creek is revealed through homeownership data (see Table XI).

Table XI. Homeownership by Gender and Ethnicity for Household Sample (n=55)

Question: "Who is the owner of this house?"									
Respondent Ethnicity	Home Owner			Living with Relative		Renting		N/A	
	Female	Male	Joint	Female	Male	Female	Male		Total
Garifuna	15	7*	4	10	0	3	0	3	42
Non-Garifuna/ Mixed Ancestry	2	4	4	0	1	0	0	2	13
Total	17	11	8	10	1	3	0	5	55
Total Female Homeowners = 55% (n=30 of 55)				Total Male Homeowners = 22% (n=12 of 55)					
93% (n=28 of 30) Garifuna Female Homeowners		7% (n=2 of 30) non-Garifuna Female Homeowners		58% (n=7) Garifuna Male Homeowners				42% (n=5) Non-Garifuna Male Homeowners	

* Three of the men who were reported as homeowners bought their homes from women, two lived on donated land (Colonia Libertad), and two others bought their land from Suazo and Fernandez.

As Table XI shows, women (in particular, Garifuna women) were reported more often than men to be homeowners. Female homeownership among Garifuna is further supported by the fact that three of the Garifuna men who reported themselves as homeowners said that they bought their homes from women.

In addition to direct questions about home ownership, I also coded the interview data to reveal patterns of matrilineality to see if the land people lived on was inherited through the maternal line. Of the twenty-six Garifuna female interviewees, fifteen (58%) reported living on land they inherited matrilineally.

Five women reported living on donated land in Colonia Libertad and three women who lived in Colonia Suazo said they purchased the land on which they live through remittances. All of the women who lived on donated or purchased land reported living in the homes of female relatives before obtaining their own plot. These figures further demonstrate the matrilineal patterns. However, time will tell if the trend towards privatization of land will lead to a decline in matrilineal inheritance and female homeownership.

6.3 Privatizing Cultivation Land

Like the land on which Garifuna families live, the community's ancestral cultivation land was held communally with use rights typically passed through the matrilineal line. It is therefore Garifuna *women* who have lost their resources through usurpation and privatization. Every Garifuna individual I interviewed reported accompanying their mother and/or grandmother to the mountain or Corinto area to tend to or harvest crops and fruits. While it is true that men also participated and continue to participate in agriculture, female ancestors were mentioned most often in stories of land loss. Seventy-four percent of my interviews contained statements like the following.

I remember very well going to the mountain with my grandmother. We'd go early, while it was still dark. We would cross the road and go through the woods to get to our plot. One day we got there and a man was there saying that it was his. He said that Valentin sold it to him for 70 lemps!. I was so mad, but I couldn't do anything because I was little. And my mom didn't do anything and neither did my aunt. I was so angry! For 70 lempiras! (*25-year-old Garifuna woman*; author's translation from Spanish.)

My grandma said that all that is here...all of these haciendas and where the hotels are now...it was all cassava. My grandmother planted yuca there

during her lifetime. But people came and threatened them, telling them that they had to leave or sell...they were scared and didn't know how to defend themselves... (*Garifuna woman age 32*; author's translation from Spanish)

After listening to such comments, I followed with direct queries for concrete examples of stolen lands. This 46-year-old Garífuna woman provided an example:

When I was a girl, we worked the land with my mother. This was a long time ago. We would get up at 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning and go to the other side of the road to collect the cassava, plantains, guineo... When I was around 39, I stopped planting. We had to stop because people moved in on the land and robbed us of the land. Sampson, for example. He was a teacher here in our school. [Therefore] we trusted him. He went around to all the parents of the school and collected our signatures, about 500 or so, asking us all for ten lempiras so that we could get [potable] water. We all agreed and we trusted him. But he ended up stealing the land from the people (author's translation from Spanish).

The story of Mr. Foráneos Caso Sampson tricking the community by alleging that community members were signing a petition to bring in external aid for local development projects was well known. Most of those whom I interviewed recalled this petition, saying Sampson went around to the mothers of school-age children, claiming that he would bring potable water to the community. Later, Sampson returned with documentation citing his ownership over a significant track of land in Corinto. This land is now private. The case of Sampson having obtained land through irregular processes, unlike the following, has yet to be taken up in court.

In 2002, at the time of my research, the most contentious conflict was over the lands of Castillo, a politically connected Mestizo who had illegally extended his holdings with private gates and hired a watchman to guard the land. Community members were prohibited from crossing the land to access the sea or

river. Many stories circulated in the community regarding how Castillo obtained the land. Abuse of power and authority, exploitation of Garífuna poverty, and racial discrimination were central themes in these stories. Marta, a 35-year old Garífuna woman had heard the story from her grandmother:

In the land of Castillo there was a Garífuna woman that was the original owner of this land. A neighbor's pig came into her lands and was destroying the land, eating her yuca. She hit the pig, but then the neighbor got mad at her and she became frightened, and ended up abandoning her lands out of fear. Afterwards, this neighbor took the woman's lands and passed the land it to their kids and then to their grandkids. Eventually the land was lost (author's translation from Spanish).

Notice that the original owner was cited to be a woman. Women were the central victims even in stories told by men. The following is an example.

Consesa Buity was the original owner. She did not have any money, and she did not sell the lands. What happened was that her husband died and she didn't have money to pay for his coffin. At that time a coffin cost 7.50 lempiras. Miguel Fernandez bought the coffin on loan for her land. But then Consesa died and her daughter was afraid of Fernandez, so she did not recuperate the lands. So after time Fernandez sold the land to Castillo, about 25 years ago. Flores was a lawyer and so he worked on the papers to do this process (author's translation from Spanish).

Stories such as these circulated among the community as to how Fernandez and then later Castillo came to own the land in Corinto. According to a report from the CCARC (2002), the land passed first to Suazo, the local storeowner and moneylender who later sold it to Fernandez.

The above stories and the accounts of Suazo's land ownership and subsequent sales to outsiders reveal that what is taking place in Sambo Creek is more complicated than Mestizos exploiting Garífuna through physical threat and political sway. Although it is true that much of the community's ancestral lands are now in the hands of Mestizos and foreigners, Suazo, a Garífuna man,

facilitated some of this transition. Stories of land loss center around women because land loss, whether to a Mestizo or to another Garifuna (like Felipe Suazo) is a process by which women have lost resources to men. For this reason, I believe women's stories should be made more central in the Garifuna struggle to recuperate land.

Although Garifuna women are documented throughout ethnographic writing as being more 'powerful' than Mestizo women, as their culture's migratory pattern creates spaces for women to fill important local leadership positions (Gonzalez 1988), the migratory pattern also leaves many women powerless. Women are left behind in large numbers to care for children while men travel for wage labor. For women who do not have partners working elsewhere who send back remittances, their most valued resource is their land. When a woman is faced with dire situations, like the need to buy her child food, shoes, school supplies, or medical attention, she will trade her only resource, land. Moreover, as women see land prices skyrocketing (by local standards), some sell their plots for quick cash.

6.3.1 Communal title, private lands

On August 27, 1997, Sambo Creek received a communal title of *domino pleno* (the highest level of land ownership) for 184.23 hectares. Previously, the only other title issued to the community was a title of occupation that protected just 41 hectares, issued by the INA in 1979. ODECO, who assisted in processing the legal paperwork for the 1997 title, worked for this 1997 title to protect Sambo Creek's residents from the potential threat of outsiders purchasing their untitled land for investment projects. ODECO leadership frequently reiterated the fact that

before this 1997 title was issued *all* land in the community was not legally protected. However, the residents of Sambo Creek have issued serious complaints over the limits established by the title. Their disapproval of the title has led the community Patronato and the Committee for Defense of the Land to issue a statement to the INA indicating that ODECO should henceforth not be granted the authority to represent Sambo Creek in any further land issues.

Like most of the titles granted to Garífuna communities, the 1997 land title did not include ancestral territory, which is estimated to extend beyond 1000 hectares, nearly ten times as much as what was granted in 1997 (CCARC 2002). Some areas of the community that have been occupied for well over a century and perhaps even since the community's foundation (e.g., La Louba or *el otro lado* or "over there") was completely left out of the title. About fifty Garífuna descendants in nine houses live in La Louba, all descendant from an 86-year-old Garífuna woman who inherited the land from her mother and now holds a private title. The families that live in this area reported to me that the municipality of Jutiapa is now asking them to pay taxes (whereas in the past they were considered part of Sambo Creek and under the jurisdiction of La Ceiba's municipality).

While traditional landholding in Sambo Creek is communal with the Patronato having the ultimate authority regarding its distribution and use rights, and many of the Garífuna I interviewed stated they preferred communal holding and use rights, the rules of communal holding only apply to land that *was not previously privately titled*. Unfortunately, much of the land had already been

privatized prior to 1997. My household interviews provide evidence (see Tables XII and XIII).

Table XII. Type of Parcel for Residence

Question: “Is your plot private or communal land?”	
Responses	Percent
Private	71% (n=39)
Communal	16% (n=9)
N/A (information not available or not applicable because the respondents were renters)	13% (n=7)
Total	100% (n=55)

Table XIII. Privatized Residence Plots

Question: “Do you have a title for the land?” If yes, what type of title? If no, do you have any documentation that the land is yours? What kind of document?	
Responses	Percent
Yes. Private title	42% (n=23)
Have letter of sale.	32% (n=18)
Have paperwork confirming the plot is theirs.	13% (n=7)
N/A (information not available or not applicable because the respondents were renters)	13% (n=7)
Total	100% (n=55)

These tables demonstrate the trend towards land privatization. The majority (75%) of interviewees reported living on private land, including people who lived in Colonia Libertad (i.e., the donated area of the community), and people who obtained land through encroachment. Many people have already gone through the legal process to obtain a private title, or have begun the process. For those who had not, many stated that they preferred to have a private title to their land than to have it held under a communal title. When asked why, I was almost always told “because private titles are more secure” and “no one can take your land if you have a title.” One Mestizo respondent reported that the reason he got a private title was “because the *negritos* wanted to take our land.” The two Mestizos who reported obtaining land through encroachment desired a private title, fearing that under the current land struggle they might lose their land to Garifuna residents.

I have demonstrated the processes through which some of Sambo Creek’s ancestral cultivation lands have been transformed into neighborhoods, and other areas were taken over by wealthy Mestizos. Some have placed cattle on the land, while others are simply holding it. The population continues to grow, and 56.3% of the local population is under 18 years of age (Scheerer 2005). There is no available land for these children to build their future homes. During the time of my research, a local movement, headed by the Committee for Defense of the Land began to educate community members about the limitations of the community land title, problems with privatization, and the struggle to reclaim ancestral lands.

6.4 Sambo Creek's Struggle to Recuperate Ancestral Lands

In June 2001, Luis Fernandez (known locally as “*Rasta*”), a young, charismatic man who had spent the last 13 years of his life in Belize, returned to his natal community of Sambo Creek and organized the *el Comite Pro-Defensa de la Tierra* (the Land Defense Committee) to head an effort to recover the community's ancestral territory. Based on their ancestral right, the group began a series of land invasions on what they believed were irregularly or illegally obtained and unutilized private land. Several small-scale invasions occurred in August 2001. None resulted in reclaimed land, because either the landowner produced a title or another community member testified to the group on behalf of the “foreign” landowner.

The largest and most serious case was that of Miguel Castillo. In mid-August 2001, community members invaded his land, constructing approximately eighty temporary dwellings in an effort to reclaim the land. Others soon joined the group, and according to a CCARC (2002) report, nearly the entire community, including women and children, turned out to protest on the land.³³ At the demonstration, the group burned the national flag, symbolizing the territorial right of the Garífuna to the land. Castillo's watchman notified the owner and in less than 24 hours (on the weekend) a judge heard the case and ruled for an arrest of

³³ A report by the Central American and Caribbean Research Council states that nearly 5,000 people were present at the protest. This would be nearly all of the population of Sambo Creek, including people living abroad. My interviews with those present at the demonstration reported far fewer, perhaps a couple hundred, which is still a substantial turnout.

the demonstration leaders.³⁴ The police used tear gas and force to pacify the group, arresting and detaining seven members of the community (six men and one woman). Several people were injured and one pregnant woman lost her baby as a result of police force. The detained community members called upon both ODECO and OFRANEH to aid in their defense. Community members reported to me that OFRANEH responded positively to their call. Drawing on an existing accord between the Supreme Court of Justice and the indigenous and Afro-Honduran populations which states that no indigenous or Garífuna person can be detained for land conflicts, OFRANEH was able to assist the community members in gaining their freedom.³⁵ The seven detained community members were released from prison within 24 hours. Yet the charges of usurpation remained against Rasta and OFRANEH continued their involvement in the case.

With OFRANEH's help, the community began the official judicial process to contest the lands held by Castillo, asking that he remove the private gates so that community members could pass through to the river and the sea. On August 17, 2001, the INA signed a compromise with Sambo Creek to work under the law to solve the problem. On August 20, 2001, the INA obtained Castillo's public note of sale and copies of the property register's inscriptions for his parcels. A representative from the INA then came to the community to measure Castillo's landholdings and determined that he had indeed gated off 8.89 more manzanas

³⁴ That the judge ruled at this time signaled that he was a friend of Castillo. Moreover, the details of this event were delayed from the news – and the judge was in fact a major shareholder in the news media (personal communication with local activist).

³⁵ *La Confederación de pueblos autóctonos de Honduras* (CONPAH) is credited for the establishment of this accord with the government.

than were registered to him. OFRANEH continued to provide legal assistance as the issue was brought to court, a process that was complicated by the fact that all of those involved as alleged past owners of the land (i.e., Castillo, Suazo, and Fernandez) had died within the same year (2001).³⁶ The following chronology was developed by OFRANEH in preparation for the court hearing.

Chronology of the Garifuna Community's Right to Land in Sambo Creek, La Ceiba, Atlántida.

From immemorial times, the Garifuna community has been based in the land that they justly claim as their ancestral territory. Currently, the community is faced with overcrowding due to the growth of its population.

1. The INA extended a title on August 27, 1997 for 184.23 hectares, a large part of which is occupied by people who are not from the community.
2. In 2001, the community solicited *amplicación* and *saneamiento* for its territory.
3. The lawyer Miguel Angel Castillo Cruz held land adjoining the Garifuna community; currently his heirs hold this land.
4. In accordance with Castillo's original titles, he acquired two plots located in Sambo Creek. One was for 8.53 manzanas (Asiento No. 52 Tomo 170), and the other for 32.25 manzanas (Asiento No. 7, Tomo 67). Castillo later combined the two plots into one.
5. Castillo, who died in 2001, acquired a third plot; which according to the original title was for 12 manzanas. This plot was sold to his wife for 20,000 lempiras (Asiento 86 Tomo 356), and now his heir, Rosa Elvira Licona Mandujano de Castillo, holds it. It should be noted that this plot had been acquired in 1987 from Mr. Enrique Augusto Miranda Navas for 425 lempiras. (Asiento 99 Tomo CXLIV).

³⁶ All three died of natural causes. A friend of the three deceased argued that their symptoms were brought on by stress over the land conflict, and Rasta told me that he had been outright blamed for Fernandez's heart attack.

6. Sambo Creek is claiming their ancestral right to the plots that they once possessed but are now held by Castillo's heirs. In La Ceiba's regional INA office, proof exists of the actions against the community that Castillo took during his life; he made two changes to the Property Register to extend the combined plots described in number 5, changing it from 40.25 to 50 manzanas, and then in the city courts he extended a third plot from 12 to 13.34 manzanas. (The deed in the Property Register is Asiento 72 Tomo 831, dated September 6, 2001 and authorized by the notary public Alberto Reconco Venegas). The registration of both extensions were after the community's solicitation to the INA and a criminal act committed by Castillo, who then brought charges against free members of the community in La Ceiba's courts and detained them...

7. ILO 169, regarding the rights of indigenous peoples, is a law that Honduras has signed and ratified. It established the obligation of the state to recognize the rights to land occupied and ancestral property – territories...the state is obligated to create measures for the protection of the forests and lands where indigenous people are situated.

8. We denounce the unjust legal force used by Castillo's heiress and the actions of the public prosecutor from the Ministry, both of whom have attempted to silence the Garifuna movement in recovering its right to their ancestral land.

As expressed in the above lines, Sambo Creek has turned to the INA, as the national institute with total mandate delegated by the state and constitution on all matters of land, agrarian reform, protection of the territories and forests of indigenous communities, and assuring the political and social justice in all land matters.

The Garifuna of Sambo Creek are backed by Article 18 of the Agrarian Reform: "The National Agrarian Institute will review the land files, in order to recuperate land which has been possessed in excess of what belongs to the individual, according to the original title; the interested party loses the right to improvements made to the land." It is noted that surplus is that which is not recorded in the Property Register, as in the present case... (Author's translation from Spanish).

As this chronology demonstrates, the investigation found that the public prosecutor falsified documents on behalf of the Castillo family, registering a deed to a third plot of land in September 2001, three months after the land invasion, and one month after the INA measured the land. The chronology cites ILO 169 as affirming the right of the Garifuna, as indigenous peoples, to reclaim the land expropriated by Castillo. The statement denounces corruption in the courts, and calls upon the state to work within the law and collaborate with the INA to properly research property transactions.

On November 7, 2002, OFRANEH issued the following press release in which they condemned the national authorities and announced their plan to file an international grievance with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) for the State's failure to protect the rights of the Garifuna as indigenous peoples.

PUBLIC STATEMENT

OFRANEH addresses the following to national and international means of communication, government institutions, Garifuna communities, the Attorney General for the Republic, the Supreme Court, and Honduran community in general:

The Garifuna community in Sambo Creek, La Ceiba, Atlántida, lives in an emergency situation as a result of the peaceful occupation carried out by the community on the a part of the land expropriated by the Castillo family. La Ceiba's public Prosecutor, Heriberto Martinez, knew of the situation but decided to split both plots on November 7, as a supposed mediation in the case.

However, upon arrival in the offices of the Public Ministry, Mr. Heriberto Martinez, in clear bias of the Castillo family, required the community to evacuate the 12 manzanas that they had come to peacefully occupy, corresponding to their right, claiming that the land of the Castillo family and that this fact was properly

documented, without having carried out an in-depth study to enable him to emit this opinion on the case.

Although the Public Ministry is an institution that can play a role in mediation and problem-solving, we believe that by no means should it emit reports in an irresponsible form that will do nothing more than conflict the situation.

We call on the Attorney General of the Republic and the supervision of prosecutors, to immediately dismiss La Ceiba's public prosecutor, Heriberto Martinez, for demonstrating an open violation of the Public Ministry's duties.

Due to the lack of will demonstrated by Honduran justice in assuring that the collective and ancestral rights of the Garifuna people are protected, we are obligated at this moment to file a grievance with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

We reiterate our support for the actions taken by the Garifuna community of Sambo Creek, convinced that it is a just fight. At the same time, we require that the authorities are competent and assure the physical and mental integrity of our community leaders and the community of Sambo Creek.

La Ceiba, Atlántida, November 7, 2002.

WE SUPPORT THE GARIFUNA COMMUNITY OF SAMBO CREEK'S FIGHT TO RECUPERATE THEIR COLLECTIVE AND ANCESTRAL RIGHTS! (Author's translation from Spanish).

Sambo Creek's Patronato and land defense committee also issued a statement on November 7, 2002, which read as follows.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

The Garifuna community of Sambo Creek, communicates the following to national and international government institutions, civil society, national and international human rights organizations, Garifuna communities, and the Honduran people in general:

In these moments, our community remains in the fight to reclaim our land and territory, as it is our ancestral right.

We had demanded a solution from the INA to resolve the serious overcrowding that our community lives in; but we had yet to see even a glimpse of a solution to our problem.

Given this situation, our community decided to peacefully occupy 12 manzanas that had been expropriated by the Castillo family.

We reiterate that our character is peaceful, however we also reached a decision to fight for our objectives, which is the fight for our ancestral rights.

We denounce the harassment and persecution of our leaders that was committed with the intention of causing us to abandon our fight; we hold the Castillo family accountable for any physical and mental pain that our community suffers.

Finally, we are making a call of solidarity to all Garifuna communities to support our fight.

Issued in the community of Sambo Creek on November 7, 2002
(Author's translation from Spanish).

Alfredo Lopez
President of Patronato
Defense Committee

Luis Fernandez
President of Land

While there are similarities in the statements issued, which is due to the close working relationship between Sambo Creek's Garifuna leadership and OFRANEH, there are also some telling differences. OFRANEH is more skilled at evoking international and national laws that protect Garifuna rights – as indigenous peoples – and in identifying the proper international legal bodies (i.e., IACHR) that they can turn to when the state fails to protect their rights. Like the organizational statements reviewed in chapter five, this statement is an example of place-making through indigenous rights discourses in that they call attention to indigenous peoples' right to communally held land. Sambo Creek's statement, on the other hand, evokes their historical presence in the community, the problems

they are experiencing due to Mestizo encroachment, and the peaceful nature of the Garifuna, which in some respect led to the land shortage. Sambo Creek's original residents abandoned their plots under circumstances where they feared Mestizo repercussions. In Sambo Creek's press release, the peacefulness of the Garifuna activists who occupied Castillo's land is juxtaposed with the forceful nature of the Castillo family, revealing a common distinction drawn between Garifuna and Mestizos.

Despite the INA's declaration that Castillo had illegally gated off 8.89 manzanas of community land, the Honduran court still ruled in favor of Castillo's heirs and Rasta continued to face charges of usurpation. OFRANEH broadened their mobilization efforts, filing a grievance with the IACHR and issuing press releases to international audiences. The following is a sample of the types of statements that were posted on various transnational virtual networks and distributed through a variety of email list serves

(<http://garifunaweb.com/ofraneh/ofraneh11-21-02.htm>).

PRESS RELEASE, Sambo Creek, November 21, 2002

The Honduran Black Fraternal Organization, OFRANEH, denounces the arbitrary and racist opinion issued by the Court of Justice of the Honduran State on November 13, to evict our Garifuna brothers of Sambo Creek, the ones that had recovered land usurped by the heirs of the lawyer Miguel Angel Castillo.

The speed with which the Court acted shows the clear bias of the Public Ministry, and the racist and corrupt nature of the members of the judicial apparatus, which ruled to evict without listening to the arguments that were presented by members of Patronato of the community and their Land Defense Committee, and without consulting the INA, the authority in land matters.

The problem of land tenure in the community of Sambo Creek is one of the most pressing in the north coast, since the lack of space to construct dwellings has created overcrowding of an urban character, eliminating any possibility of enlargement to the community, and condemning several generations to share one ceiling.

The community of Sambo Creek has a dramatic history with loss of its ancestral territory, first to the company banana plantation called “the Swiss Holding,” and when it abandoned the zone, Mr. Lorencio Fernández, chief of police of La Ceiba took possession of part of it as well as took over the functional habitat of the Garifuna community. In the case of the Castillo family, they acquired 40 manzanas of land, which mysteriously became 50 manzanas, a fact verified in the registration of the property and in the files of the INA.

Unfortunately those who are responsible for justice have opted to disregard the facts, obstructing the rights and harassing the Garifuna population for the purpose of promoting a feudal vision where the rule of law is linked to the economic prerogatives of the dominant elite in the north coast (author’s translation).

We require that La Ceiba’s Public Ministry and Court of Law immediately adhere to the rule of law and take up the case again, since we see we are now obliged to not only denounce the abuse performed in the community, but also we will begin an international accusation on the farce that has been performed with the issuance of communal titles to Garifuna communities, which in most cases, do not provide any more land to the communities and actually serve to do legal harm to them.

It is ironic that when the executive power is trying to sell its master project of housing development, housing is the problem the community is trying solve, and one of the most serious deficiencies in Honduras (author’s translation from Spanish).

Issued in the city of La Ceiba, November 22, 2002.

OFRANEH’s international activism on behalf of Sambo Creek set into action a series of events. On June 23, 2003, Rosa Elvira Licona Mandujano, Castillo’s heir, dropped her charges against Rasta and signed an act of conciliation

with the Patronato of Sambo Creek. And in August 2003, the INA issued a final title deed to the community, marking a historical moment in Garífuna mobilization. IACHR issued a press release recognizing the Honduran state's action to settle the claim.

IACHR PLEASED AT PRESENTATION OF TITLE DEED TO GARÍFUNA COMMUNITY IN HONDURAS

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights is pleased at the delivery to the Sambo Creek Garífuna Community, by the Government of Honduras, of a final title deed for a portion of its ancestral lands.

The Government of Honduras acquired the property claimed by the Sambo Creek Garífuna Community through the National Agrarian Institute (*Instituto Nacional Agrario*, or INA) and then transferred it to the community.

The IACHR recognizes the action taken by the Government of Honduras to settle the claim presented to it by the *Organización Negra Fraternal Hondureña*, or OFRANEH (Honduran Black Fraternal Organization), on behalf of the Sambo Creek Garífuna Community.

Washington, D.C., August 14, 2003

This is an example of Garífuna activism functioning at multiple levels, from the local land invasion, to OFRANEH's national legal assistance, to international activism and human rights courts. Without the crosscutting nature of contemporary mobilization – where indigenous groups can take unjust national rulings to international audiences - such a success would not likely have occurred. While the IACHR press release did not mention Garífuna indigeneity, OFRANEH's mobilization efforts on behalf of Sambo Creek were based on the Garífuna right to territory as indigenous peoples and their grievance was filed based upon that right.

6.5 Changing Livelihoods

Today, very few families cultivate the land in Sambo Creek. In addition to the land shortage, the increasing remittance economy and youth interests have also contributed to the decline in agriculture. Contemporary labor choices are reflected Table XIV, which details the primary occupations reported by Garifuna interviewees.

Table XIV. Contemporary Occupations for Household Sample in Sambo Creek

Reported Primary Occupation	# Women	# Men	Total
Agriculture	1		1
Fishing		1	1
Vending / craft production	1	1	2
Small business owner	1	1	2
Domestic labor in La Ceiba	4		4
Hotel staff	2	1	3
Religious work		1	1
Construction / Metalworking		2	2
Seamstress	1		1
University student	1		1
Homemaker	13		13
None / Reliant on remittances	2	4	6
Retired		5	5
Total	26	16	42

The table indicates that very few people work in “traditional” economic activities, such as fishing, agriculture, vending, or craft production. Those engaged in traditional labor were all older than age 50, with the exception of one young man involved in craft production. Only one woman mentioned agriculture as her primary occupation, and she noted that she cultivated for supplemental subsistence, not income. I did follow questions about current occupations with direct questions about whether or not members of the household cultivated yuca. While some households had banana, plantain, coconut, and other fruit trees on their land, only two of the households I spoke to reported having an additional plot of land where they grew cassava. Younger men and women reported work as wage laborers, small business owners, or they were reliant on remittances. Table XV reports past occupations for the thirty-two Garifuna individuals old enough to have changed jobs or have spouses who changed jobs.

Table XV. Past Occupations for Household Sample in Sambo Creek

Reported Past Occupation for Self and Spouse	# Women	# Men
Plantation work for Standard Fruit		6
Vending traditional food products (on plantations or La Ceiba)	9	1
Work on cruise ship		4
Domestic labor in La Ceiba	2	
Local fishing		2
Commercial fishing boat		2
Construction		4
Wage labor in Tegucigalpa or San Pedro Sula	2	3
Nursing	1	1
Total	14	23

The transition in livelihood strategies is clear. Before the 1950s, many residents were engaged in the banana industry as plantation workers or vendors. As bananas declined, the search for work began to take people out of the community. Men sought employment on cruise ships and commercial fishing boats or migrated to Honduras' larger cities to work as wage laborers, while women typically stayed in the area (although in recent decades many young women migrate as well). The trend of men leaving the community continues, with 73% of the Garifuna women (19 of 26) I interviewed without a male spouse or partner in their homes. Two of the nineteen women reported that their partners

lived with them when they were in the country. Of the seven who had men in their homes, three noted that they became permanent residents in the house only upon retirement from cruise ships.

Notably, not one person reported agriculture as a past occupation.

However, when asked directly if they ever *participated* in agriculture, all forty-two of the Garifuna interviewees responded that they did. All respondents (men and women) further noted that they cultivated with their female relatives (mothers or grandmothers). Table XVI details the reasons people in the household interviews believed there was a decline in agriculture.

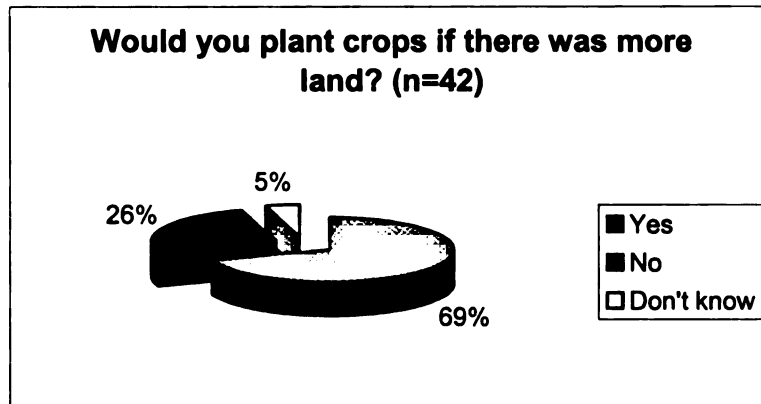
Table XVI. Household Interviewee Reasons for Decline in Agriculture

Question: Why do people in the community no longer plant crops? (n=55)			
Response	# Garifuna	# Non-Garifuna	Total
Land was stolen / lost to immigrants	31	1	32
Youth are not interested	6	3	9
People sold the land	5	3	8
Crop theft / Animals killed crops	7	1	8
People do not need to because they receive remittances from the US	3	4	7
Lack of water (not lack of land)	0	2	2
Total Reasons Mentioned	52	14	66*

* The total is greater than the sample size because some individuals mentioned more than one reason for the decline in agriculture.

Garifuna interviewees cited the loss of their ancestral land as the primary reason for the decline in agriculture. Non-Garifuna offered different reasons for the decline, including lack of water and the growing remittance economy. Both Garifuna and non-Garifuna recognized that contemporary youth are not interested in agriculture. Despite the near disappearance of agriculture in Sambo Creek, the majority of Garifuna individuals (69%) that I surveyed said they would plant crops if sufficient land were made available (see Figure IV).

Figure IV. Garifuna Interest in Future Cultivation



At the organizational level, the Garifuna struggle to reclaim ancestral territories is often articulated in a way that highlights cultural traditions such as fishing or agriculture. Yet fewer and fewer young people are engaging in these activities. Only a handful of the young women I knew in Sambo Creek made cassava bread; they may have helped their mothers when they were young, but today they are more interested in wage labor and education. The following excerpt is from a tape-recorded interview with a 19-year-old youth activist who was studying in La Ceiba. I followed this young man's political growth over three years (from the summer of 2000 until November of 2002), watching him go from a strong OFRANEH affiliation to an ODECO-supporter. We were talking about his hometown community, which is near Trujillo, and the shifts in the number of people who devote their time to agriculture. He told me that his grandmother and mother still planted, but that few others were doing it today. Victor's comments are illustrative of many Garifuna youth, including those who live in Sambo Creek.

Keri: Do the youth in XXX [his hometown] still plant?

Victor: The youth don't want to plant. For example, me, I go to XXX and I will be a community leader. I don't want to go to XXX to work the land. I want an office. I want a computer. And there are many more youth like me.

Keri: And in your experience with ODECO, they think that the youth want to plant?

Victor: They know that the youth don't want to plant.

Keri: Then what is the alternative in the eyes of ODECO?

Victor: For ODECO? Supposedly to motivate the youth.

Keri: To plant?

Victor: To have projects to motivate them to plant.

Keri: And fish?

Victor: And fish. We were talking in this past meeting last year about projects to do this year. I said, 'I don't think I will go to my community to plant. I think I will go to work with my community. But not in the mountain! I think I will go to create businesses.'

Keri: And is OFRANEH the same? Do they want to motivate the youth to plant?

Victor: OFRANEH in this moment looks to develop projects for adults, so that they can have crops.

Keri: Why do you think the organizations focus on motivating people in this way – in cultivation and in fishing and not in other types of jobs?

Victor: ...Because they always think in traditions and not in reality. Because the reality is we do not want this. We in the communities need more practical things and we [the youth] are going to fight so that they [the organizations] are in agreement with the demands and the necessities of the population. Why do they fight for the lands? I am going to fight for what is mine, yes - to have what is mine, and to be able to negotiate it. But I am not going to fight for things

that I am not going to occupy... These things [fishing and agriculture] are not what the priorities are now. These are what were years ago, when the majority of Garifuna communities were like this. Agriculture and fishing. But today is a different reality. Our reality is to have a better education. Our reality is a new technology....

Later on, we began to talk about the land struggle and the benefits of communal versus private land.

Victor: Ah, Keri. It's very interesting to talk about land tenure. In these times it is very difficult for a variety of reasons. We Garifuna are fighting for the land, and it looks good to me, and we have the right to recuperate them. But what happened? Now we don't want to work the Garifuna land. I proposed in a meeting with Celeo Alvarez, with ODECO, that the Garifuna land should be sold to investors for business, to people that would invest in the community.

Keri: And what was the reaction?

Victor: Of Celeo? He nearly died. He answered me very strongly, very angrily. He said, 'how could we trust the lands to unknown people in these departments?!' [states of Honduras]. But we don't work the lands!

Keri: Your proposal was to sell to investors?

Victor: Not to sell, but to negotiate.

Keri: To people from outside or from within the country?

Victor: To whoever invests first. But he doesn't want this.

Keri: Why do you think that is?

Victor: I don't know. It would be good to find out. We have this problem. We lack education. Why? Because the people in Garifuna communities do not have access to a high school. Why? Because we do not have money. Infrastructure. Bad infrastructure...I am going to talk specifically about my pueblo – Trujillo. Now we have a North American company that wants to bring a project, called 'Ciudad Flotante.' It's a floating city.

Keri: Yes, I've heard of it.

Victor: Oh you have? Okay, good. So, they want to invest, but it seems they also want to use a part of the communal land to have access to it. They asked to use the land that belongs to the community and the community said they want it, but ODECO is against it...Why don't they negotiate? You put in the capital; I'll put up the land. And of the earnings, we'll get this percentage. Don't you think this is the most logical?

Just as communities are divided in their support for Garifuna organizations, they are also divided in their opinions on development and land use. I wish to compare Victor's comments to Dilcia, a 25-year-old woman from Sambo Creek who was studying engineering in Tegucigalpa. While she also told me that she represented the majority of youth in her community in that she has no interest in agriculture, she had very different opinions on land investment and development initiatives.

Dilcia told me about a visit from World Bank representatives in which she described them as trying to "sell" the community on the privatization of social services (schools, water, health services, etc.). Dilica said the representatives promised the arrival of *maquilas* that would pay workers forty cents an hour. She recalled the World Bank representatives saying they were supportive of the Garífuna land struggle and wanted to assist them to resolve the land claims and administer land titles. When I asked her opinion of the meeting, she told me that she thought the real reason the World Bank wanted to help with the land struggle was because they wanted to "take over" the community's land, privatizing it in

order to facilitate the entrance of *maquilas*, not because they wanted to aid the community in gaining autonomy over their territories.

Dilica said she believed the World Bank was trying to “trick” the people of Sambo Creek into supporting World Bank programs and the PPP, and they were using the residents’ lack of education and desperate need for employment against them. She feared the privatization of community services, saying “How can we pay for schools and water, if we are making just 40 cents an hour? Our kids will not be able to get an education!”

The public communications issued by Sambo Creek’s Patronato and Land Defense Committee show us that what is most important in communities like Sambo Creek is the ability of the youth to have a place to call home, where they can choose the type of livelihood strategy that they find most suitable to their needs. And in fact, that is what Sambo Creek’s land struggle is really about. Despite the fact that the majority of interviewees claimed that people would plant crops if there were more land, this was not how people planned to use the land they recuperated. Table XVII shows how the interviewees thought the recuperated land would be used.

Table XVII. Plans for Recuperated Land

Question: “If the community is successful in recuperating Castillo’s land, how will it be used?”	
Response	# Responses
To build homes for children of the community	50
To build homes and plant crops	5
To build homes and community infrastructure	4
Don’t know	8
Total	67*

*Responses total 67 because this was a question I also asked in interviews with local hotel staff and activists (i.e., beyond the household sample of 55).

Only five people noted that the area would be used to plant crops, but all of these people mentioned that agricultural areas would be combined with housing. From what residents told me, the biggest problem the youth face in Sambo Creek is overcrowding, not necessarily the decline in agriculture. The most effective approach to extending community landholding in this era is to draw upon an indigenous rights discourse which links Garifuna cultural survival to territorial control. OFRANEH’s press releases suggest that they know this. Yet their approach does not necessarily map onto the community’s opinions about land use. ODECO’s approach is actually more in line with what community members told me in that rather than arguing for the Garifuna rights as indigenous people, they argue that the Garifuna are entitled to land based on their historical presence in the

community.³⁷ While they do not claim so themselves, ODECO's approach seems to draw upon the Human Right to Livelihood and Land, which was defined by the People's Movement for Human Rights Education (PDHRE)³⁸ as:

...the human right of all women, men, youth and children to a dignified and productive livelihood which enables them to live in peace, security, justice and dignity. All people have the fundamental human right to fulfilling, dignified work and livelihood, including equal access to land and productive resources, and to basic labor protections.

The notion of a Human Right to Livelihood and Land joins together the thrusts of several international covenants and universal human rights doctrines. PDHRE has publicized on their website the series of covenants that obligate governments to guarantee people the Right to Livelihood and Land.³⁹ A right to livelihood approach argues that people have the right to make a living however they so choose. I am not suggesting that OFRANEH's approach be replaced with a right to livelihood approach, as such an approach has yet to be successfully produced, recognized, and rewarded. But I do suggest that anthropologists pay attention to the effects the production of Garifuna indigeneity has on Honduras' other poor. The next chapter begins this analysis.

³⁷ Yet Sambo Creek prefers to work with OFRANEH, not ODECO, and the Land Defense Committee is comprised of Mestizos as well as Garifuna and these Mestizos agree that OFRANEH better represents Sambo Creek's interests.

³⁸ Shulamith Koenig, the 1988 founder of the movement won the 2003 UN Human Rights Prize.

³⁹ The primary covenant is ILO 169, and the other supporting doctrines are: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; The Convention on the Prevention of Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; The Convention to End All Forms of Discrimination against Women; and, The Convention on the Rights of the Child. <http://www.pdhre.org/rights/land.html>. Last accessed: January 10, 2006.

CHAPTER SEVEN
ROOTS, RIGHTS AND BELONGING: THE EFFECTS OF GARIFUNA
INDIGENEITY

“Discourse is not the expression of thought; it is a practice, with conditions, rules, and historical transformations” (Escobar 1995:216).

Drawing on Foucault, Escobar (1995) shows the power of discourse in creating social reality. Specifically, he argues that development was a historically produced discourse that created categories of being (e.g., “developed,” “underdeveloped,” or “developing”), and subject categories that became targets for ‘development’ (e.g., ‘small farmers,’ ‘pregnant women’). The creation and recognition of some subject categories serves to disqualify and make impossible other modes of being. Medina’s (2004) work takes this type of discourse analysis further. In her exploration of the sociohistorical production of identity categories within the context of Belizean economic development, Medina (2004) moves beyond documenting how subjects are positioned in particular categories and how their positioning provides them with differential access to resources and opportunities, to show how human beings are active subjects engaged in shaping the discourses that define their social reality and the reality of others.

Thus far, I have shown that the Garifuna subject has been created and recreated over time and that these manifestations are linked to shifts in the coastal economy. As the Garifuna subject is recast, so too is their access to resources and

opportunities. I showed how at first the Garifuna controlled much of the coast because the area was of little significance to the political and economic elite. As the banana industry grew and work in it became valued by Hispanic Hondurans, the Garifuna became victims of a racist labor movement against West Indian blacks. Blacks (in general) were seen as stealing jobs from Honduras' 'rightful' citizens (i.e., Hispanics). This led the political elite to spearhead an indo-Hispanic nationalist identity, an identity that purposefully excluded blacks. Such an identity supported the idea that the Garifuna did not 'belong,' and as such, they did not have rights to coastal territories. The Garifuna were never given titles to their land. The lack of clear land titles facilitated land loss through encroachment by poor Mestizo immigrants and theft by corrupt local politicians. By the 1990s, the majority of ancestral land had been lost to outsiders.

Today, tourism is one of Honduras' primary development strategies, and it receives support from the World Bank. Recognizing that unclear land tenure is a threat to securing investment, the World Bank supported a \$25 million Land Administration Program that focused on the massive regularization and registration of Honduran land. The land titling initiatives are now attempting to clarify Garifuna landholding under communal titles. Yet as this dissertation has shown, the issued land titles do little to address the land problems in Garifuna communities. Specifically, much of Garifuna ancestral territory had been usurped and communities like Sambo Creek are hugely overcrowded, with the majority of the population living in a small central area surrounded by underutilized private lots.

Escobar (2002) argued that neoliberal development projects take people out of the spaces and places of development. In Honduras' case, the regularization of land confines the Garifuna to small plots of communal land while their ancestral territory is privatized and their access to this territory is restricted through the construction of private gates and the use of watchmen. Yet as these processes take Garifuna people out of development, globalization has enabled the Garifuna to insert themselves back into these processes by offering new tools for resistance. The successful production of the indigenous rights discourse has enabled the Garifuna to position themselves in a way that could potentially increase their ability to reclaim lost resources.

Chapter four reviewed the production of international indigenous rights and the link between cultural survival and territorial control. The words and actions of indigenous activists from the 1970s through the 1990s led to the production, recognition, and international validation of indigenous rights. International bodies like the UN, ILO, and IACHR reaffirm these rights. In the context of Honduran coastal tourism development, the production of indigenous rights means that if the Garifuna are effective in demonstrating and convincing others of their indigeneity, their rights to resources and opportunities are reinforced, while the rights of Mestizos and other Honduran citizens are disqualified or denied.

Saying that the Garifuna are indigenous and doing so by drawing upon a discourse that has already been produced and recognized as "true" (i.e., the international discourse of indigenous rights) will have the effect of producing Garifuna indigeneity. OFRANEH appears to know this and has implemented this

strategy. Yet identification as indigenous has yet to fully filter into Garifuna communities. For instance, I asked individuals in my household sample if they identified as indigenous or autochthonous. This question typically took people off-guard, and most replied they were neither, but rather were *negro*. Only three Garifuna individuals that I knew in Sambo Creek described themselves as indigenous, and all three were local activists with connections to OFRANEH. What remains to be seen is the effects of the production of the new Garifuna subject as indigenous. While not many Garifuna are identifying in Sambo Creek as indigenous *yet*, they may in the future. Moreover, Mestizos who have encountered the new Garifuna subject are now responding to that category, by rooting themselves in the community through citing generational presence in the community and in the national territory.

7.1 Place-making in Sambo Creek

Long-term residents of Sambo Creek (both Garifuna and Mestizo) frequently cited *extranjeros* for privatizing beaches, gating the land, disallowing community members' passage to access the water or harvest fruit, and restricting women from selling bread or other products to tourists who visit the beach. Interviewees often called attention to the newly opened restaurants as examples of foreign immigrant attempts to privatize the beaches, some of which were owned by Honduran Mestizos. In addition to criticizing foreigners for introducing new forms of land tenure – specifically, they privatize and guard their lands, disallowing passage on land that was traditionally communal, foreigners are also

charged with the introduction of violence in association with protection of landholdings. Some foreign landowners (Mestizos included) who have come to own land in Sambo Creek employ armed guards to watch their lands and in the recent past, some of these guards have killed trespassers.

The 2001 land invasions led by “the children of the community” were efforts to reclaim ancestral land seized by “foreigners.” In Sambo Creek, “foreigners” can be Mestizos, and the application of the label “foreigner” can come from both Garifuna and Mestizos. A public bulletin from Honduras’ National Human Rights Commission that described police offenses committed during the 2001 Castillo land invasion provides an example of a Honduran Mestizo being labeled a “foreigner.” According to the bulletin, the detained activists:

...explained that the process to recuperate the land began last year with the recuperation of grounds held in the hands of a Canadian named XXXX and lands appropriated in an irregular manner by a group of French (author’s translation from Spanish).

Yet this woman was actually born in Sambo Creek, and her father, like other community men, even worked on the docks for Standard Fruit. She then spent most of her childhood in La Ceiba, and later lived in Canada where she met her husband. In an interview with the woman, she told me that community members sent a letter to OFRANEH declaring that a *francesa* [French woman] moved illegally onto community land. She was hurt by the fact that other residents frequently labeled her a “foreigner, “French woman,” or “Canadian” because she married a French Canadian man. While she admits that her parents raised her in La Ceiba, she claims her right to live in Sambo Creek because her parents did in

the past and because she was born in the community. She called explicit attention to the fact that her father worked alongside of many Garifuna men on the Standard Fruit docks.

A member of the Land Defense Committee and participant in the land invasion claimed to be the original owner of this plot. In an interview, the man told me that the land was his inheritance,⁴⁰ which he claimed in June 2001 upon his return from Belize. The plot of land was about two manzanas (approximately three acres), and he intended to share the land with other community members who did not have homes of their own. As they were clearing the land, he and his friends were approached and told that it had been sold. According to this man, the land had been sold without his family's knowledge, and this he noted, was the problem in Sambo Creek – that people are able to make transactions with lawyers, having them write up a deed and sell land that was not theirs to begin with. This member of the Land Defense Committee noted that despite his time in Belize, he was born in Sambo Creek and therefore had a right to reclaim his inheritance. What we see by comparing his story with the woman's is that both were making the same argument to demonstrate their right to land.

Not only do land conflicts revolve around tracing ancestral roots in the community of Sambo Creek, but they also extend to tracing roots in the nation-state. I would like to demonstrate this point through comments made by Maria, another Mestiza woman from the area.

⁴⁰ While inheritance patterns are generally matrilineal, there are exceptions and men do inherit land too.

They say this is their ancestral lands?! This is not their ancestral land – their ancestors are from Africa! If they want to recuperate land, go to Africa. This country's ancestors are *indios*, not Africans. The only people with any right to land here are *indios*. Just like in the United States - the Indians have right to land there... Like you in the US, your ancestors are in England, not the United States. The ancestors of the United States are the Indians, not you. That woman at OFRANEH, she said they are indigenous; that they are fighting for their ancestors' lands. But she had hair and dress of an African! They don't make any sense! What are they thinking – dressed as Africans and still saying this is their land? And the Rasta [the President of the Land Defense Committee] – he has long, *blanco*⁴¹ hair, and green eyes – the *indios* here don't have green eyes! I don't have green eyes – look! [widening their eyes]... They speak of African traditions – that's where their ancestors are. But they don't think like this... How can they say they are indigenous? ... (Author's translation from Spanish).

By identifying as an *indio*, Maria is appropriating the indo-hispanic mestizaje ideology and discourse to stress how she has greater entitlement to land than the Garífuna. This argument suggests that Mestizos have deeper roots in the country – stemming from Honduras' “truly indigenous” groups, those who were present pre-Columbus, whereas the Garífuna, have much shallower roots, with only a little more than 205 years (at the time of my research) in the country. Garífuna “true roots” are in Africa. Maria points toward eye color, hairstyle and the celebration of African ancestry as evidence of this connection. Both parties are place-making through identity discourses, each claiming roots and belonging to the community, either by first arrival in the actual geographic space of Sambo Creek or as first in the national territory. History-making therefore becomes central in place-making statements. But the history of Sambo Creek complicates place-making because it does not clearly demonstrate who was present first in Sambo Creek (Mestizos or Garífuna).

⁴¹ She used the word white (*blanco*) to describe Luis' (Rasta's) long dreadlock hair.

As mentioned earlier in the dissertation, the community traces its history to 1862, when the first Garífuna were said to arrive on the coast. Upon arrival, they met a Miskito (Sambo) next to the creek, giving rise to the name “Sambo Creek.” This history suggests that the Miskito reign extended throughout the coast, which is significant because both Mestizos and Garífuna can draw upon it to claim their “roots” in the community. Mestizos, as descendants of indigenous peoples can claim that they intermixed with early Miskitos on the coast, and Garífuna too can make this claim. While I have yet to see historical accounts that support a significant Miskito presence in Sambo Creek, this origin debate was a point made to me as a sidebar in a conversation with one of ODECO’s lawyers, suggesting to me that others have raised it in the land struggle. The complications that Sambo Creek’s origin history provide make recounting stories of ancestors’ interactions with the land all the more important. Recounting the presence of one’s parents – or even better, one’s grandparents – and their historical use of the land become compelling arguments in community place-making.

What I have presented thus far is the perspective of a wealthy, educated, and well-traveled Mestiza woman. Maria had also been confronted head-on with Garífuna claims to indigeneity and she seems to be articulating her identity in response to the redefined Garífuna subject. Yet poor Mestizos are also responding to the Garífuna subject through place-making strategies. Some of the poorer Mestizos I interviewed were feeling the effects of the production of Garífuna indigeneity and beginning to question their right to community territory.

Because Sambo Creek's 1997 communal land title is a "Garifuna title," some poor Mestizo and English-speaking blacks feel as though they have come under undue skepticism about their place in the community. Anna, a poor Mestiza immigrant who obtained land through encroachment on ancestral cultivation land, but has lived in Sambo Creek since the age of two, worries that her land will be usurped and redistributed to Garifuna residents. Margo, an English-speaking black, has yet to receive a statement from the Patronato that notes she is the rightful occupant of her lands. She suspects that her affinity with an alleged "foreigner"⁴² whose land was also targeted for recuperation in 2001 has placed her in a precarious position. Ema, a 57-year old Mestiza widower with a family history of at least 100 years in the community articulates the feelings of exclusion.

Supposedly the Patronato represents everyone. [But] if a Mestizo wants them to do anything for them, they have to pay them. If you're not Garifuna, to measure your land and authenticate it, you must pay the President of Patronato. [And so] I never talk to the Patronato. Yes, I'm not Garifuna, but I was born here. My dad was born here. I never attend meetings because I attended a meeting once and I didn't understand anything because it was all in Garifuna. When I want to go, I can't, because they speak in Garifuna and I don't understand what they are saying... (Author's translation from Spanish).

Holding meetings in a language that not all community members can speak is a form of place-making. This act sends a signal that "true" members of the community are Garifuna. Although I never attended a patronato meeting and cannot attest to whether or not this regularly occurs, I did frequently experience code switching at OFRANEH gatherings. Elsa, another woman with long-standing roots in Sambo Creek echoes feeling excluded by the Patronato. In

⁴² The man was born in Honduras, but is currently living in the United States. He is holding a beachfront plot for retirement.

response to a question about whether or not she has heard of OFRANEH or ODECO, Elsa said:

Yes, I have heard of them, but when they have meetings here, I don't go. I don't know what they do. When they have meetings, it's closed, between them. Just like the Patronato. When they meet, they do not take us into account. (Author's translation from Spanish).

Later in the interview, as I moved on to asking questions about her knowledge of the land struggle, she expanded on her confusion over being excluded from local politics, saying, "I don't know if I am India, Garifuna, or Mestiza. I've lived here forever. I think I am Garifuna." Despite feeling as though 'she was Garifuna,' which she says to signal her feeling as though she truly 'belongs' in the community, Elsa said that the only reason she knew anything about the land struggle was because she witnessed it by living in the community, seeing it on television, and hearing it on the radio, not because she was invited to participate.

Both Elsa and Rosa have deep roots in the community – each able to trace their ancestors' occupancy on their plot of land for over 100 years. Neither one comes from a wealthy family, nor are they friends with the more powerful Mestizo landowners in the area. The relationships they have with wealthier Mestizos are hierarchical working relationships, just as are the relationships between most Garífuna and wealthy Mestizos. Yet because they have similar phenotypic traits and do not speak Garifuna, they feel they are ostracized. While neither woman chooses to explicitly label their experiences as racism or racial discrimination, their words suggest discriminatory practices of Garífuna against Mestizos – "it's closed, between them;" "If a Mestizo wants them to do anything, they have to pay

them.” According to Antonio, a Mestizo male fisherman, Garífuna discrimination against Mestizos has always existed:

There have always been problems with *indios* –what we call ourselves – and the Garífuna race. They think we invaded their community and think all the land is theirs... in the early years of Sambo Creek, there were maybe 10-15 *indio* families, but that nowadays the *indios* outnumber the Garífuna. We’re maybe 55% of the population now (Author’s translation from Spanish).

While Antonio traces the roots of racism to the sheer growth in number of Mestizos, from Maria’s perspective (the wealthy Mestiza woman quoted earlier), racism emerged as a result the emergence of Garífuna organizations and charismatic leadership.

Yes, racism exists, but only on one side. They discriminate against the indios. Before there wasn't racism. It began with these international organizations. They brought racism here. Before there were no problems...

She continued by recounting something she heard from one of OFRANEH’s top leaders:

The woman [from] OFRANEH...she didn't care about indio deaths. There was a revolt in Tela and five died, and she said “some indios have to die in such struggles.” She only cared about the Garífuna who died. I ask you, on whose part is the racism?...But the indios are going to revolt [and] I am not the only one who thinks like this. They will revolt! They did it in Guatemala -- the civil war. I just need a few others to listen to me. Just like the Rasta – it only takes one person to start something like this. He was in front, and then others followed (Author’s translation from Spanish).

Maria believes that Garífuna organizations have brought discrimination into her community. She calls herself an *indio* and cites the Guatemalan civil war in which indigenous peoples are seen as rising up against Ladino powers. A self-identification as *indio* reveals that she traces her roots deeper than the Garífuna – to the region’s indigenous peoples; those present before the Garífuna arrival. She

is appropriating the Indo-hispanic national mestizaje identity discourse that was discussed in chapter five, a discourse that privileges the “Indian” and excludes blackness. While today the Honduran nation-state officially promotes its “multicultural” identity, which includes indigenous groups, AfroHondurans, and Mestizos, the continued use of “indio” as a local label both ascribed to and adopted by Mestizos in Sambo Creek emphasizes Sambo Creek’s Mestizos as having deeper roots in the nation. Maria identifies herself as separate from those in political power, whereas most Garífuna would probably lump her with the nation’s powerful Mestizo class. An appropriation of an *indio* identity enables her to place-make on equal footing with Garífuna place-making, which evokes their indigenous Arawakan roots and historical presence in the community.

According to some of those I interviewed who were active in the local movement to expand communal landholdings and reclaim ancestral lands, the ultimate goal is to remove all non-Garífuna who have illegally obtained lands, returning it to “the children of the community.” Recall the story of Anna, the Mestizo woman from chapter six who admitted to obtaining land in Corinto through encroachment. She has lived in Sambo Creek since the age of two. Is she a “child of the community?” Anna does recall that the Garífuna once cultivated the lands in Corinto.

People here don’t plant anymore because they sold their lands. This here [pointing to her plot and surrounding lands] used to all be full of yucu, but the people sold the land. The Garífuna don’t want to work anymore because they have spouses who live in the US and bring money to them here (Author’s translation from Spanish).

Anna expresses a hint of frustration with the local struggle to reclaim lands once cultivated. She, like many others, suggests that even if the land is returned, the Garífuna are not going to want to use it for the cultivation of traditional foodstuffs. She notes the irony in that many Garífuna have more resources than the poor Mestizos of the community, because there is far less out migration among the Mestizo families of the community. For many Mestizo families, their only resource is their land.

Although what I have presented in this chapter suggests that bleak, divided and perhaps even antagonistic race relations mark Sambo Creek, this is not fully the case. In fact, while some community members believe that the local government (i.e., patronato) should be comprised of only Garifuna individuals (and during my fieldwork the patronato was indeed all Garifuna), there are other strong local organizations that are mixed. The Land Defense Committee serves as a prime example. While the majority of committee members are Garifuna, Mestizos also collaborate with the committee. Carla, for instance, serves as an example.

Carla is a 27-year-old Mestiza woman who was born in Roatan, but grew up in Sambo Creek. She and her mother moved in with her grandmother, who was living in a house in the center the community when her mother and father split up. She lives on a plot of donated land in Colonia Libertad that her family received from the patronato back in 1983. She told me that the Land Defense Committee does not trust ODECO and prefers to work with OFRANEH, explaining that OFRANEH makes regular visits to provide workshops and informal lectures

(*charlas*) to community members which have helped them to develop their local abilities to fight for the recuperation of their ancestral lands. In telling me about the history of the struggle, Carla said:

We believe that we are poor now because we don't have *cocos* and we don't have land and we don't have any room to grow. You see the center here [pointing towards the center of the community] – how the houses are so close together. This is why we have so much illness in our community. This is why we are fighting for extension (*ampliación*), so that our kids can have a better future.

While Carla, like all interviewees, told me that the recuperated land would be used to construct homes for families living with their relatives, when I asked if she thought some might also be used for cultivation, she said:

I think so. OFRANEH gave us a *charla* about starting a cooperative there – to form a group of women who would work together on a plot of land. Everyone would be able to plant whatever they like – *yuca*, *cocos*, *plantanos*, and so on – and then everyone will benefit. [I ask: 'Would the women sell the produce?'] No. Everyone in the community could eat. Triunfo de la Cruz [another Garifuna community] has this. I went there and it is beautiful. They have crops and food and they don't have to buy their *yuca*, or cassava bread, or plantains. Not like here, where we have to buy everything. There – maybe meat, but nothing more.

When I asked Carla how she would like to see the community develop in the future, she responded:

I would like it to be like was before – when we could find land if we needed it. Because now it is very expensive and there is no place to buy here. If they [foreigners] want our land, they should go elsewhere...Another thing we are fighting for now is more order in the community. We want to put posts up to register everyone who comes and goes from the community. And if someone comes to visit, we want to have a person responsible for his or her behavior. For instance, if I want to go see Rene, the person at the post will bring me to his house and he will sign off for me...We are also fighting for the rivers and for green spaces. We used to be able to walk the rivers; now they are all gated. And the shoreline of our beaches. The same thing has happened there (Author's translation from Spanish).

Later on Carla told me how she appreciated the Garifuna culture – “it is beautiful because they have their own style of life, their own system of living, their own rhythm, and their own beliefs.” Carla’s comments suggest that she and her Garifuna counterparts share a common vision for the future – a future reminiscent of the past when the community held communal lands and relationships were characterized by reciprocity. Both the Patronato and Land Defense Committee members told me about the checkpoints that Carla mentioned. The proposal to put in these guard posts suggests that the debate over belonging in Sambo Creek is not a debate about whether or not Mestizos belong, but about which types of Mestizos belong. The Land Defense Committee sought land in order to redistribute among the “children of the community,” a category that included long-term Mestizo residents who had clearly expressed their alliance with the Garifuna (such as Carla). The source of division is therefore between Sambo Creek’s “children” and foreign immigrants. The term *extranjero* (foreigner) was used within Sambo Creek to mean people of a foreign origin (i.e., outsiders) – in practice that could mean a number of things, including 1) people who were born outside of Honduras, 2) wealthier Mestizos who were born outside (or even within) Sambo Creek but had used their power to usurp Garifuna lands, 3) people who were born in Sambo Creek but married foreign-born individuals, and, 4) people who were born in Sambo Creek, accumulated wealth while living in another country and then returned to invest in local property. Therefore, someone like the woman who was born in Sambo Creek but lived for many years in Canada with her French Canadian spouse was considered a “foreigner.” Unfortunately, the actions of some

wealthier Mestizos have caused poorer Mestizos to feel threatened in their own community, leading them to question their own belonging.

In sum, while Sambo Creek's residents at times speak of ethnic divisions, class is really the key distinction within the community. However, amongst Garifuna community members, class differences appear to be cut through by ethnic solidarity. I offer two examples as evidence. First, the data on Suazo's land sales shows that while it may be true that Suazo appropriated significant amounts of land within the community, he did then make it available to Garifuna individuals at a cheaper price than he did for non-Garifuna. Second, while the Land Defense Committee member mentioned earlier in this chapter lived in Belize for 13 years, he did not take on a "foreign" label upon his return. Class distinctions were not brought out between he and other "children of the community;" he was united within and across ethnic boundaries to reclaim lands usurped by "foreigners."

7.2 Theoretical and Practical Contributions

I wish to close the dissertation by reviewing three general contributions of this study, each of which calls for further research, followed by a discussion of what this case study offers anthropological theorizing about indigenous rights struggles.

First, this dissertation contributes to anthropological debates about the production of identity categories in that it looks beyond the effects of identity construction on the people whose identity is being cast or recast (in this case the

Garifuna) to how the new framing of identity impacts others who live within their communities (in this case Mestizos).

I showed how place-making can be both a tool and a response in the land struggle. It serves as a tool for Garifuna organizations and activists involved in the production of Garifuna indigeneity. At the organizational level, Garifuna activists adopt place-making strategies as tools to discuss the Garifuna historical presence in the geographic space of Honduras. They call attention to the fact that the Garifuna were present before the state's founding. Some Garifuna activists (particularly OFRANEH activists) have adopted the discourse of indigenous rights to not only strengthen Garifuna rights to land, but also to articulate a position regarding Honduras' development policies and programs. The ultimate goal of these activists is broader than the recuperation of land – it is the right to self-determination (or the ability to choose the path of development within one's own territories).

Place-making also serves as a response to the production of Garifuna indigeneity. Some Mestizos are responding to the newly created subject category of indigenous Garifuna (and the presumed rights that accompany this subject position) by tracing both their roots (historical presence) in both the community of Sambo Creek and in the nation-state in general. Mestizo residents who believe that they too have rights to local land place-make by recounting stories of recent ancestors (parents and grandparents) living and working on community land. Some Mestizo residents also use the identity label "indio" (what Garifuna call local Mestizos) to their advantage, using it to root them in Honduran territory by

claiming they mixed with pre-Columbian indigenous (“indio”) peoples. By identifying as *indio*, Mestizos position themselves on equal footing with Garifuna, who place-make by evoking their Arawakan (i.e., indigenous) roots. The assertion that Mestizos are also indigenous was not something I heard regularly in Sambo Creek, but as Maria, the Mestiza woman quoted earlier in this chapter said, the backing of one or two strong leaders could lay the groundwork for the production of a new subject identity. Following up on the effects of Garifuna indigeneity in Sambo Creek would be good especially given OFRANEH’s increased mobilization around an indigenous identity.

Second, the way in which Garifuna organizations represent Sambo Creek on a national and international basis and call for the recuperation of ancestral territories is by linking the maintenance of indigenous or ethnic identity to the ability to enact cultural traditions. “Traditions” frequently means fishing and agriculture. However, Sambo Creek’s youth, like youth in many Garifuna communities, are losing interest in these activities. Neoliberalism and economic globalization has transformed communities and no longer are people able to earn a sufficient livelihood on agricultural production alone. The youth recognize this.

While the indigenous rights discourse is the most effective tool available to Sambo Creek as they attempt to reclaim their lost land and address their land shortage, a right to livelihood approach might address some of the limitations of the indigenous rights approach. Specifically, a right to livelihood approach argues that people have the right to make a living however they so choose, serving to protect both Garifuna and poor Mestizos from land loss, as well as providing a

basis for younger Garifuna to utilize local resources in “untraditional” ways. A right to livelihood approach might also dilute some of the tension between poor Mestizos who fear “speaking out” in their natal communities because of the political dominance of the Garifuna. The Garifuna of Sambo Creek work with Mestizos who they consider rightful residents of the community; in fact, Mestizos are also active in the Land Defense Committee. Yet taking such an approach is a risk for organizations representing the Garifuna. Their international audiences and funding support are dependent on the very fact that they represent “indigenous” (OFRANEH), “ethnic” (ODECO), or “autochthonous” (ODECO and OFRANEH) people whose “cultural survival” is under threat.

Third, this dissertation is an important contribution to Garifuna ethnography because it is one of the first that focuses explicitly on the gendered impact of neoliberal development policies and agrarian legislation in Garifuna communities. My focus has been on the effects of new (since the 1990s) agrarian legislation that was passed to enable increased privatization and foreign investment in coastal lands. Using the case of Sambo Creek, I demonstrated that there are gendered impacts of land privatization in Garifuna communities, with women having lost their ancestral cultivation plots through privatization to men. I question what will come of matrilineal inheritance in the future as the nation-state continues to push to replace communal landholding with private ownership. Research to track how residence plots are transferred in future generations and to compare the number of male private landowners with female private landowners in Garifuna communities is necessary.

Finally, what significance does this case study of Sambo Creek provide for scholars interested in understanding the broader struggle for indigenous rights? Indigenous communities across the Americas are pursuing similar politics – “demanding and attaining national and international recognition of their identity and the legitimacy of their claims” (Jackson and Warren 2005). Most agree that the goal of indigenous mobilization is the right to self determination (see for example, Anaya 1996). According to Jackson and Warren (2005), the best way to achieve that end is through a strategy of cultural and historical recovery and revival, and the ability of indigenous groups to convince funding agencies and legislators that their claims are reasonable. The Garifuna of Honduras are pursuing this avenue in order to convince the Honduran nation-state of their entitlement to land. Their case is legitimated by the various international declarations and conventions that protect the rights of indigenous peoples to sustain their cultural identities; such conventions make clear that access to territories (land and sea) is key to the maintenance of cultural identity.

Yet what is notable in this case study is the degree to which Honduran Garifuna are confronting and negotiating representations of Garifuna identity that are being disseminated in other nation-states, and from Belize in particular. While there is a significant degree of scholarship on how transnational migration has linked Honduras to the US, and therefore to US political organizing, there has yet to be work on how mobilizations across Central American countries shape one another. Honduran Garifuna have formed alliances with Afro-American descendants of other nation-states, making a unified front to combat racial

discrimination and political disenfranchisement. ONECA (or CABO in its English acronym; discussed in chapter five) is one example of such mobilization. In addition to being part of transnational black organizations like CABO, Belizean Garifuna belong to the Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples (COIP) and the World Council of Indigenous People (WCIP). According to Izard (2005:189), the National Garifuna Council (NGC) of Belize had to defend its entry into the WCIP in 1992 and demonstrate the “Indianness” of Garifuna society because some member groups were reluctant to accept that the Garifuna (as “blacks”) could be considered Amerindians. Unfortunately, Izard does not tell us exactly what the NCG did to convince the WCIP of Garifuna indigeneity. Regardless, the admission of the Garifuna into the WCIP represents a significant symbolic move in understanding and conceptualizing indigeneity. The recognition that “blacks” can be indigenous amplifies the meaning of indigenous and forces us scholars to acknowledge the complexity of *all* ethnic classifications, including “indigenous.” Like other racial-ethnic categories, indigeneity is constructed and susceptible to change (see also Palacio, cited in Izard 2005: 189).

Anthropological literature on indigenous movements has moved beyond debating over degrees to which indigenous peoples are “traditional,” “modern,” or both, and now recognizes that indigenous peoples are “increasingly to be seen as transnationalized, urban, proletarian, border-crossing, bilingual and trilingual, and professional” (Jackson and Warren 2005: 558). The literature is also beginning to confront the fact that the criteria for admission into the racial-ethnic category “indigenous” are changing (as evidenced by the fact that the Afrodescendant

(“black”) Garifuna have been incorporated into the WCIP). While scholars are beginning to recognize these shifts, indigenous peoples themselves (or groups that identify as indigenous) are still faced with “others,” such as funding agencies and government institutions, that base decisions about access to resources on the ability of a people to successfully demonstrate their indigeneity. Thus, representations of “traditional” behavior are key (see also Plant 2002).

Palacio sees Garifuna indigeneity as inseparable from expressions of “traditional” behavior or “culture” (Palacio uses “culture” to mean behaviors, practices, and collective memories that are passed from one generation to another). In writing about the UNESCO Proclamation of the Garifuna “intangible heritage,” Palacio states (2005: 119-120):

...it is a truism that it was indigeneity and its almost unconscious preservation that made the Garifuna win the Proclamation. Being indigenous to the Garifuna means cherishing their cultural heritage, which has its foundation in St. Vincent. They may not appear to be as sanguine about land ownership, human rights, and political revindication, among other topics dear to most indigenous peoples in the New World. Indeed, in most cases these issues have not been sufficiently articulated and presented to the Belize Garifuna with the urgency they deserve. On the other hand, their culture remains embedded in their collective memory of genocide, exile, and loss of their island homeland. The corollary is a communal effort to preserve it and pass it to the next generation so that it will never again face the possibility of dying away.

While Palacio does recognize in a footnote that Honduran Garifuna have taken overt action with regard to their problems of land and economic livelihood, his comments accurately reflect the scope of Garifuna organization in Belize. Belizean Garifuna activists have historically mobilized around the fight to preserve cultural traditions, especially what Cayetano and Cayetano (2005:242) call “living

culture,” meaning language, dance, and music. The NGC of Belize was responsible for putting together the Candidature File leading to the UNESCO proclamation of the Garifuna’s “intangible culture.” As Cayetano and Cayetano (2005: 231) note, intangible heritage has gained international recognition as playing an essential role in national and international development and tolerance between cultural groups. Yet current global trends, such as mass tourism, cultural standardization, industrialization, environmental deterioration, and increased migration threaten the survival of such heritages (Cayetano and Cayetano 2005: 231). For these reasons, maintaining access to geographic spaces where such intangible heritage can be passed to future generations becomes all the more important. As the statements in chapter five showed, OFRANEH adheres to this argument, asserting that a symbiotic relationship exists between Garifuna environmental management, territorial control and cultural survival

While Belizean Garifuna activists were behind the UNESCO proclamation, according to Cayetano and Cayetano (2005:249), Belizean organizations have not attracted financing for the retrieval and safeguarding of the language, music, and dance of the Garifuna people. Nor has the NGC of Belize used the proclamation in its promotional efforts or fundraising activities (Cayetano and Cayetano 2005). On the other hand, Honduran Garifuna organizations, and OFRANEH in particular, have used the proclamation to attract support for the coastal land struggle, despite the fact that these organizations did not play a major role in putting together the Candidature File. This fact demonstrates the significant impact identity construction and mobilization in one nation-state can have on

mobilization efforts and eventual access to resources in another nation-state. The circumstances and struggles faced by Garifuna people vary depending on their national and regional context, thus resulting in distinctly “local” mobilization efforts. Contextual struggles lead the Garifuna to emphasize different aspects of their shared identity in national mobilization efforts. The manifestations of Garifuna identity in one nation-state shape possibilities for the Garifuna in other nation-states. The international declaration of the Garifuna as “indigenous peoples” and recognition of their “intangible culture,” both outcomes of Belizean mobilization, has opened new possibilities for Honduran Garifuna, who now have an internationally “legitimized” indigenous status. Until very recently, most of the literature on indigenous struggles has focused on the actors involved in mobilization efforts and the organizations themselves.

Understanding how the production, expression, and validation of indigenous identity in some locations and among some groups of people serve to alter the construction and expression of identity among other groups of people is an important point of future query in the study of indigenous rights.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES AND GUIDED QUESTION LISTS

Sambo Creek Household Interview Script

Interview # _____

Date _____

Time began _____ Time ended _____

Location of the
house _____

I. PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Gender
2. Ethnicity
3. Age
4. Marital Status
5. Do you have kids?
 - a. How many? / How old? / Where do they live?
 - b. Do any of your children help you economically? How?
6. Members of the household:
 - i. How many people live in this house?
 - ii. Who are they / what is their relationship to you?
7. Where were you born?
8. Where did you grow up?
9. If moved to Sambo Creek:
 - i. When did you move here / How old were you?
 - ii. Why did you move here?
10. Please describe all the jobs you have had in your life. [If for a company or boat: what was the name company?]
11. Please describe all the jobs your spouse / significant other has had.

II. HISTORY OF RESIDENTIAL PLOT / HOUSE

1. Who is the owner of this house?
2. How old is this house? / When was it built? / By whom?

3. Who is the owner of this plot of land?
4. How long have you/they had this plot of land?
5. How did you/they obtain the land?
 - a. If inherited, from whom?
6. If purchased, from whom?
 - a. How much did it cost?
7. Is this parcel of land private or communal?
 - a. If it is communal, what does this mean to you?
8. Do you have a title for this plot of land?
 - a. If no: do you want one? Why/why not?
 - b. Have you ever had problems because you don't have a title? Please explain.
9. How do you use this land?

III. OTHER LAND

Do you or any member of your household have any other parcels of land in the community? If yes,

- Where is it?
- How did you/he/she obtain it?
- When?
- If it was purchased, how much did it cost?
- If it was purchased, who did you/they buy it from?

IV. COMMUNITY LAND / ANCESTRAL LANDS

1. Do you know if there are any communal lands in Sambo Creek?
 - a. If yes, where?
2. What do you think is better: private or communal land? Why?
3. Do you know many people who still cultivate the land?
 - a. If yes, who?
4. Do the majority of people in Sambo Creek still cultivate? Why or why not?
 - a. When did people stop cultivating? Why do you think they stopped?
5. If there was more land to plant, do you think more people would?

6. What's your knowledge and opinion of the fight for the ancestral lands?
 - a. Why is the community fighting?
 - b. What organizations are helping?
7. If you win the lands, how will they be used?
8. If you win the land back, who can move onto the land?
9. Do you remember any stories of people invading the land? Please tell me them.
10. There is a law in Honduras that says that foreigners cannot buy land within 40 kilometers of the beach. This includes Sambo Creek. What do you think of this law?
11. In your estimate, what are the borders of Sambo Creek?

V. ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

1. Please describe the activities in which you participate, both within and outside of the community?
2. Do you go to Patronato meetings? Why or why not?
 - a. Who participates in Patronato meetings?
 - b. How are the meetings publicized?
 - c. Do you think they represent the community well? Explain.
3. Are you a member of OFRANEH or ODECO?
4. Do you participate in activities of OFRANEH or ODECO?
5. In your opinion, which organization helps the community?
6. What do you think the organizations should do for the community?

VI. COMMUNITY HISTORY

1. What are the biggest problems in the community?
2. What is most special about this community?
3. How has Sambo Creek changed in your life?

4. What kind of development would you like to see in Sambo Creek?
5. Tell me about the history of Sambo Creek.
6. Tell me about the history of the Garifuna.
7. How would you describe the Garifuna culture?

VII. TOURISM

1. What is your experience with tourism?
2. What impact does tourism have on the community of Sambo Creek?
3. What do you think about the hotels down the beach? What benefits do they bring the communities? What negative impacts do they have?
4. What would you think if a hotel like Barcelo wanted to open on the beach right by Louba? Explain.

VIII. OTHER

1. Describe your experience with Hurricane Mitch. How did it impact you, your family, and your community?
2. Your level of education.
3. Are you a member of a church? If yes, which?
4. Do you practice the ancestral religion? Please elaborate.

Entrevista # _____

Fecha _____

Hora _____

Hora de comienzo _____

Hora de finalización _____

La Ubicación de la
casa _____

I. PARTICIPANT / HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Genero
2. Etnía
3. Edad
4. Casado / Soltera / Union Libre
5. Tiene hijos?
 - a. ¿Cuántos? ¿/Qué edad? ¿/Dónde ellos viven?
 - b. ¿Cualquiera de sus niños le ayuda económicamente? Explica.
6. Los miembros de la casa:
 - a. Cuántas personas viven en esta casa?
 - b. ¿Quién es ellos/qué es su relación a usted?
7. ¿Dónde nació?
8. ¿Dónde creció?
9. If moved:
 - a. ¿Cuano movió usted? / Cuántos años tuvo?
 - b. Porque?
10. Describa todos los trabajos que usted ha tenido en su vida. ¿ [Si para una compañía o el barco: qué era el nombre?]
11. Describa todos los trabajos su esposo/a ha tenido.

II. LA HISTORIA DEL SOLAR RESIDENCIAL

1. ¿Quién es el dueño de esta casa?
2. ¿Qué edad esto es la casa? ¿/Cuándo se construyó? ¿/Por quién?

3. ¿Quién es el dueño de este solar?
4. ¿Cuán largo tiene /ellos tuvieron esta solar?
5. ¿Cómo obtuve este solar?
 - ¿Si heredado, de quién?
 - ¿Si comprado, de quién? ¿Cuánto costó?
7. ¿Esta solar esta privada o comunal?
 - a) ¿Si es comunal, qué esto significa a usted?
8. ¿Tiene un titulo para esta tierra?
 - a. Si no: usted quiere uno? ¿Por qué / por qué no?
 - b. ¿Ha tenido algunas problemas porque usted no tiene un título?
Explique por favor.
9. ¿Cómo utiliza esta tierra?

III. OTRA TIERRA

¿Usted o cualquier miembro de su casa tienen otros solares en la comunidad? Si:

- ¿Dónde está?
- ¿Cómo usted/él/ella lo obtuvo?
- ¿Cuándo?
- ¿Si era comprado, cuánto lo hizo costó?
- ¿Si era comprado, de quién lo compró?

IV. LA TIERRA DE LA COMUNIDAD/ TIERRAS ANCESTRALES

1. ¿Sabe usted si hay alguna tierra comunal en Sambo Creek?
 - a. Sí: ¿Dónde?
2. ¿Qué piensa usted es mejor: la tierra privada o comunal? ¿Por qué?
3. ¿Sabe alguien en Sambo Creek quien cultiva la tierra?
 - a. ¿Si sí, quién?
4. Conoce alguien quien todavia cultiva la tierra?
5. Recuerda un tiempo cuando la mayoría de la gente en Sambo Creek siembra la tierra?
 - a. ¿Cuándo pararon las personas cultivar? ¿Por qué piensa usted que ellos pararon?

6. ¿Si hay más tierra aquí en Sambo para cultivar, piensa que más personas hacen?
7. ¿Qué es su conocimiento y la opinión de la lucha para las tierras ancestrales?
 - a. ¿Por qué lucha la comunidad?
 - b. ¿Qué organizaciones ayudan?
8. ¿Recuerda historias de de personas que invaden la tierra? Dígame por favor ellos.
9. ¿Si la comunidad gana las tierras, cómo ellos serán utilizados?
10. ¿Si ustedes ganan, quién puede usar esta tierra?
11. Hay una ley en Honduras que dice que extranjeros no pueden comprar la tierra dentro de 40 kilómetros de la playa. Esto incluye Sambo Creek. ¿Qué piensa usted en esta ley?
11. ¿En su estimación, cual son los limites de Sambo Creek?

V. ACTIVIDADES Y ORGANIZACIONES

1. ¿Describa las actividades en que usted participa, dentro de y fuera de la comunidad?
2. ¿Va usted a reuniones de Patronato? ¿Por qué o por qué no?
 - a) ¿Quién participa en las reuniones de Patronato?
 - b) Piensa que el patronato representa bien la comunidad? Explica.
3. ¿Usted es un miembro de OFRANEH o ODECO?
4. ¿Toma parte en usted las actividades de OFRANEH o ODECO? Describa.
5. ¿En su opinión, cuál organización ayuda la comunidad?
6. ¿Cuales servicios piensa que las organizaciones deben tener para la comunidad?

VI. HISTORIA DE COMUNIDAD

1. ¿Qué es los problemas más grandes en la comunidad?
2. ¿Qué es muy especial de esta comunidad?
3. Como le gustaría ver el desarrollo de la comunidad en el futuro?

3. ¿Cómo ha cambiado Sambo Creek en su vida?
4. Háblame lo que sabe sobre la historia de Sambo Creek
5. Háblame lo que sabe sobre la historia del Garifuna.
6. ¿Cómo describiría usted la cultura de Garifuna?

VII. TURISMO

1. ¿Cual es su experiencia con turismo?
2. ¿Qué impacto tiene el turismo en la comunidad?
3. ¿Qué piensa usted de los hoteles en la playa? ¿Qué beneficios traen ellos las comunidades? ¿Qué impactos negativos tienen ellos?
4. ¿Qué usted pensaría si quiso un hotel como Barcelo querria abrir en la playa de La Louba? Explique.

VIII. OTRO

1. Describa su experiencia con Huracán Mitch. – El impacto a su familia y su comunidad?
2. Su nivel de la educación.
3. ¿Usted es un miembro de una iglesia? ¿Si: cuál?
4. ¿Practica usted la religión ancestral? Elabore por favor.

Hotel / Tourism Facilities Guided Questions

1. Tell me about the history of this establishment.
 - a. Why this type of business?
 - b. Why here
 - c. How you obtained land? From whom?
2. What services do you provide?
 - a. If hotel, get details on how many rooms, cost of room, how many can hold per night, who are the clientele?
 - b. If restaurant, get details on who designed the menu? Cost of items? Who are the clientele?
3. How do you market your business?
4. How many employees do you have? What do they do? What do you pay them? Where did you find them / where do they live?
5. Relationship to the nearby hotels / restaurants in terms of success levels.
6. What interactions do you have with the community of Sambo Creek? Expand.
7. What do you think about the government advertising Garifuna culture to bring tourists to the north coast?
8. Do you organize cultural events at your establishment in which people from SC perform? Explain.
9. What do you think of the tourism development on the coast?
10. What has been your biggest challenge with this business?
11. What obstacles do you see in the future?
12. What has been your greatest accomplishment with this business?
13. Do you charge taxes and pay them to the government? If so, how much? Would you agree to an increase in taxes if the gov't pushed for one?
14. The constitution says – what do you think?

SAMPLE GUIDING QUESTION LIST FOR OFRANEH LEADERSHIP⁴³

General:

1. Cual es la historia de Ofrañeh? [Cuando empecé? Quien empecé? Porque?]
2. Como reciba dinero para la organización? [Becas? – de quien?]
1. Usted trabaja en otra oficio ó solo para Ofrañeh? Con que frecuencia hay cambios en los miembros de la junta directiva?
3. Cuántos personas estan en la Junta Directiva?
4. La Junta Directiva son voluntaries ó recibe un sueldo?
5. Por cuantos años Usted trabaja con Ofrañeh?
6. Por cuantos años Usted es la Presidente?
7. Con que frecuencia hay cambios en la junta directiva?
8. Donde nació?
9. Cuantos años tiene Usted?

Su propuesta de ley para territorios de comunidades Garifunas:

1. Es basado en el modelo de la costa Atlántica de Nicaragua?
2. Cuando escribió esta propuesta? Para que?
3. Si ganan esta propuesta, entonces como va a estar para gente dentro de comunidades – es solo para la tierra o quiere independencia en todos maneras?
4. Y para comunidades mezclados como Sambo Creek – como esta ley va a afectar los ladinos?
5. Odeco apoyo esta propuesta?

La Tierra de Sambo Creek

1. La historia de la tendencia de tierra en Sambo Creek.
2. Historias de cómo la tierra fue robado en la comunidad. [Quien sacó? Cuando? Como?]
3. El papel de Ofrañeh en la lucha para la tierra.
4. El titular Viejo? El titulo de 1997? Quien pidió para este titulo? [Si es Odeco, como pidió sin apoyo de la comunidad? Sin apoyo de Ofrañeh?]

Otras -

1. Entiendo que el Banco Mundial visitó comunidades Garifunas. Porque? ¿Cuál era este proyecto? Un amigo de Sambo Creek me dijo que los representantes del Banco Mundial vinieran hablar con ellos y dijeran que desearon ayudar con su lucha de la tierra. Es verdad o ellos también tienen otros intereses?

⁴³ I visited both Garifuna organizations a number of times and have not included all the question lists in this appendix.

2. Tiene un comentario sobre el asesinato de Francisco José García Valle, el esposo de María Luisa Acosta, una líder en la costa de Nicaragua quien es una defensora de los Derechos Humanos en la región y de trabaja para tierras de las comunidades indígenas?
3. Yo leí informes del Central American Research Council. Porque ellos escribió estos informes?
4. Como identifican los Garifunas? Como indígenas, autóconos, ó los dos?
5. Cual es la opinion de Ofraneh sobre el turismo en la costa?
[Especisifcamente el proyecto de la Bahía de Tela y de la Bahía de Trujillo?]
6. Cual es la opinion de Ofraneh sobre la ciudad flotante (Freedom Ship)?

Solicitud de documentos -

1. Comunicaciones con INA sobre la lucha de tierra.
2. Mapas de Sambo Creek.
3. Copías de noticias sobre cuando la gente de Sambo Creek estuvieron en carcel el ano pasado?

SAMPLE QUESTION LIST FOR THE INA

- 1. Alguna persona me dijo que en 1995, INA pasó una ley que reconoce las tierras de las comunidades garífunas como comunales. Es verdad? Puede explicar este proceso legal a mi?**
- 2. How are the limits decided and why are they communal?**
- 3. Why is the title of domino pleno that they received in 1997 for less than what they say is their land?**
- 4. How did the title increase from 41 hectares to 184 hectares in 1997 and home it is still only for 184 when the community says they are entitled to more – saying they have more traditional ands?**
- 5. When did Sambo Creek begin soliciting for the title they have?**
- 6. Which organizations aided in the solicitation?**
- 7. How come they are communal titles but I am finding that the vast majority of people there has private titles or thinks that their land is private?**
- 8. Who can use/sell these lands that were granted in the communal title? Can Mestizos too?**
- 9. Do you know if women serve on the Patronatos in Garifuna communities? If so, where?**
- 10. What's your opinion of the community's request for Castillo's lands?**
- 11. Todos los grupos étnicos comenzaron a conseguir títulos de tierra en el mismo tiempo?**
- 12. Are all lands titled now in Garifuna communities?**

APPENDIX B

INFORME PARA LA COMUNIDAD DE SAMBO CREEK

INFORME PARA LA COMUNIDAD DE SAMBO CREEK

por Keri Brondo
brondoke@msu.edu
Michigan State University
Septiembre 2002

INTRODUCCIÓN

Parte de mis requisitos para mi título universitario en antropología, es conducir un estudio año-largo que pregunte a gente que vive en comunidades de Honduras preguntas acerca de su cultura, historia, propiedad de terreno, luchas de la tierra, turismo, e implicación en organizaciones nacionales. Pasé una buena parte de mi tiempo en Honduras que se entrevistaba con a gente en las comunidades Garífunas. Desde febrero de 2002, me he entrevistado con a gente en algunas diversas comunidades, así como la gente afiliada con las organizaciones ODECO y OFRANEH. También he repasado los materiales escritos con respecto a tierra y el turismo en la costa de Honduras, un área de Honduras que es casera a las comunidades Garífuna.

Mi foco académico ha estado en cuestiones de cómo las políticas de desarrollo internacional y nacional afectan a grupos culturales. Porque el gobierno de Honduras está promoviendo el turismo en un área habitada en gran parte por el grupo cultural de Garífuna (la costa atlántica), deseé hablar con los miembros de las comunidades de Garífuna sobre sus opiniones. Cuando comencé mi investigación descubrí que un problema grande que debe primero ser solucionado antes de que las discusiones del turismo podrían comenzar es el problemática de la tierra. Consecuentemente, comencé a pasar más energía que intentaba entender los problemas con titular de la tierra y las luchas para recuperar tierras ancestrales. El informe siguiente detalla lo que aprendí de la gente de Sambo Creek. Me entrevisté con ladinos y garífunas, porque Sambo Creek es una comunidad mezclada.

Porque no he terminado mi colección de datos o análisis de los datos, este informe es preliminar. No incluye toda la información que recogí - solamente el que vino de los miembros de la comunidad y de los materiales que yo recogí específicamente sobre Sambo Creek. Después de que yo termino con mi investigación y escribo el informe final para mi disertación, enviaré una copia a la comunidad en el año de 2004.

LOS PARTICIPANTES

Yo entrevisté formalmente a total de 60 participantes, pero hablé informalmente con muchos más que esto en Sambo Creek. Sin embargo, las 60 personas que hablé a me dieron el permiso de utilizar sus respuestas en este informe. Para proteger sus identidades, no utilizaré el nombre de nadie ni no daré los detalles de su carácter que pudieron dar su identidad.

Selección del participante: Comencé mis entrevistas buscando a la gente con poder política en la comunidad y las ancianas que estaba bien informada sobre la historia de la comunidad. Después de que estas 10 entrevistas, yo muestrearan cada sección de la comunidad, entrevistándose con a un miembro del adulto de la casa en aproximadamente cada 10 casa. Elegí las entrevistas de esta manera para conseguir una muestra representativa de la comunidad. Comencé con entrevistas en centro, después me entrevisté en la Colonia Libertad, entonces la Colonia Suazo, entonces en Louba, entonces en el centro por el cementario, y finalmente Barrio Laureles.

Descripción de la entrevista: Las entrevistas eran algo informales. Duraron típicamente entre una y dos horas. No grabé respuestas, sino anoté notas. En general las entrevistas ocurrieron en la casa del participante. Porque no hablo Garífuna, y mi español hablado no está como mi español escrito, tenía la ayuda de una ayudante durante la mayoría de las entrevistas. Mi ayudante ayudó el entrevistado y yo siempre que tuviéramos problemas de comunicación. Conduje un porcentaje pequeño solamente.

Las preguntas eran para la mayor parte iguales para cada persona, pero cada entrevista diferenció levemente del siguiente. Dependiendo de los asuntos levantados por el entrevistado, mis preguntas cambiarían a veces direcciones. Por lo tanto, no interrogaron todos los participantes todas las mismas preguntas. Debido a esto, en la sección en opiniones del participante, el número de respuestas no agrega siempre hasta el total de 60 participantes.

Demográficos del participantes: De las 60 personas entrevistadas, 24 era hombres y 36 eran mujeres. Esto demuestra la estadística comúnmente citada que muchas comunidades Garífunas tienen más mujeres el vivir allí permanentemente, porque sus esposos están trabajando afuera de la comunidad. 36 de los 60 participantes eran Garífuna. Los edades de los participantes eran: había 17 participantes bajo edad de 30; 23 entre las edades de 30 y 50; y 20 quiénes eran más viejos de 50 años.

LAS OPINIONES DEL PARTICIPANTE

La sección siguiente repasa las opiniones de participantes en un número de diversos asuntos. Ocasionalmente, la mayoría de gente conviene en un asunto dado; en otras veces, discrepan. Mi meta es ayudar a la comunidad en saber qué miembros de la comunidad piensan de situaciones contemporáneas en Sambo Creek. Porque los participantes varían demográfico por edad, género, y étnica, este informe debe ayudar a demostrar la variedad de pensamientos presentes en la comunidad.

I. La Problemática de la Tierra

Sambo Creek tiene muchos problemas con la titulación, el saneamiento, y la ampliación de sus tierras de la comunidad. Repasaré cada uno de estos problemas,

los participantes de la entrevista del conocimiento general tenían de estas situaciones, y la corriente lucha para solucionar estos problemas. Pero primero daré una *breve* historia del proceso de titular de la tierra.

La lógica y la historia detrás del título de tierra de Sambo Creek: Las organizaciones que lucharon para este título hicieron para que un número de razones, y ellas dicen que intentaron ayudar a las comunidades Garífunas, protegiendo sus tierras. Por muchos años, las organizaciones han estado luchando con el gobierno de Honduras para conseguir títulos a las tierras ancestrales de las comunidades Garífunas. En 1989, el gobierno de Honduras ratificó la OIT Convenio #169 en ley y éste ayudó a la lucha de Garífuna para la tierra de una manera magnífica. Esta ley garantiza y protege la tierra de grupos indígenas y autóctonos, asegurando la derecha de legalizar las tierras que ocupan y que ocuparon tradicionalmente. Algunos discuten que el Garífuna no sea indígena; otros discuten que sean. Pero cualquier manera, se protegen debajo del Convenio #169 porque satisfacen las características de un grupo autóctono en que estaban en Honduras antes de que la república fuera formada, con las tradiciones y las costumbres particulares que todavía mantienen a este día. Convenio #169 por lo tanto se aplica a los siete grupos étnicos en Honduras, de las cuales el Garífuna es una.

En 1996, Garífuna fue al capital para *La Marcha de los Tambores* a exigir que el gobierno trabaja para resolver la problemática de la tierra. Como resultado de este marcha, el Presidente Carlos Reina convino a el proceso de la legalización de las tierras. El trabajo continuado con el Presidente Carlos Flores y el Presidente Ricardo Maduro firmó recientemente una declaración para terminar el proceso. Pronto después de *La Marcha de los Tambores*, el gobierno asignó 1,7 millones de lempiras a INA y en enero de 1997, y el Instituto de Antropología e Historia donó 200.000 lempiras más. Todo de este dinero estaba para el proceso de titular las tierras de los Garífunas. A pesar de estos grandes logros hay todavía problemas con la titulación de las tierras de los Garífunas. Por ejemplo, el hombre de negocios, Miguel Facusse, acaparó las tierras de las comunidades Garífunas.

En junio el 26 de 1997, él recibió un préstamo del Banco Mundial para \$55 millones para consolidar sus inversiones en un proyecto llamado *Gran Proyecto de Transformación Nacional - GPTN*. Esta proyecto también recibida ayuda de gobierno y del negocio privado y de los sectores privilegiados del país. En un documento de ODECO, citan este ejemplo diciendo que, “esto significa que cada día que pasa es un día contrario a las aspiraciones de la Comunidad Afrohondureñas por materializar su legítimo derecho a la tenencia de la tierra.”

El Título de tierra de Sambo Creek: En agosto el 27 de 1997, Sambo Creek recibió un título del domino pleno, el grado más alto de la propiedad de terreno publicado por INA. El título está para 184,23 hectáreas, cubre principalmente a área urbano de la comunidad, y define los límites de la comunidad con las colindancias siguientes:

Norte: Playa de por medio con Mar Caribe o de las Antillas y Miguel Angel Castillo

Sur: Parte de los predios 68, 69, 56 del Mapa LR-42 de Jorge Guevara

Este: Río SAMBO CREEK, Miguel Angel Castillo Cruz, Adalberto Rodas, Victoria Ponce Palma, Jorge Guevara y Francis Alfredo Daniton

Oeste: Río Cuyamel y Ricardo René Ugarte

Muchas comunidades Garífunas como Sambo Creek recibieron títulos del domino pleno a sus tierras ocupadas. En el caso de Sambo Creek, el título de 1997 era su primer título del domino pleno. Previamente, la comunidad tenía solamente un título de ocupación que protegió solamente 41 hectáreas y fue publicado por INA en 1979. Las organizaciones que lucharon para el título de 1997 dijeron que hicieron para proteger las tierras donde los Garífunas están viviendo de problemas potenciales con los inversionistas o los terratenientes quien desean comprar las tierras costeras. Las organizaciones dicen que antes de que este título de 1997 fuera publicado, todas las tierras en las comunidades no fueron protegidas legalmente. Sin embargo, ha habido preocupaciones expresadas por Sambo Creek sobre el título de 1997.

Problemas con el título de tierra: Muchos de los líderes locales de Sambo Creek discuten que la gente que buscó el título en 1997 no consultara con los miembros de la comunidad antes de conseguir el título. Dicen que si hubieran consultado con los hijos del pueblo, habrían realizado que Sambo Creek es más grande que las 184,23 hectáreas que fueron tituladas. El presidente de Patronato tuvo que firmar este título que fue publicado a la comunidad, así que él debe haber sido informado. Algunos entrevistados han especulado que quizás él no leyó el título, y apenas firmado le, el pensamiento de él estaba para más tierra que publicaron. Desgraciadamente, ese presidente tiene puesto que muerto y por lo tanto no podemos conseguir sus propias palabras en el asunto.

El problema más grande citado por los entrevistados es que el título de 1997 no incluye todas las tierras ocupadas por los miembros de la comunidad, ni cubre sus tierras ancestrales. El área del *louba* ha sido ocupada históricamente por el Garífuna de Sambo Creek y continúa siendo, pero el título de 1997 no incluye su tierra como perteneciendo a Sambo Creek. Con entrevistas descubrí que el municipio de Jutiapa ahora está pidiendo que la gente en *louba* le pague impuestos en vez a municipio de La Ceiba. Este solo demuestra el problema con el título de 1997, puesto que los miembros de esta área de Sambo Creek pueden remontar su ascendencia para los centenares de años, viviendo en esa misma tierra, y perteneciendo siempre a la comunidad de Sambo Creek.

Tierras comunales. Otro problema grande en Sambo Creek con respecto al título de tierra es que es un título comunal. Esto significa que la comunidad en general es el dueño de las 184,23 hectáreas bajo título, y que el Patronato tiene el poder política de tomar decisiones con respecto a la distribución y al uso de la tierra. *Sin embargo*, el título indica que esta regla se aplica solamente a *la tierra que previamente no fue titulada privado*. En Sambo Creek, la mayoría de las tierras fueron privatizadas dentro de estas 184,23 hectáreas, antes de la aplicación el título de 1997. Por lo tanto, la ley de la tierra comunal se aplica legalmente solamente al porcentaje pequeño que todavía no fue titulado en 1997. Como tal, el Patronato no tiene el control legal sobre casi todas las tierras que fueron tituladas en 1997. Mis entrevistas dan la evidencia de la cantidad de tierra titulada dentro de estos límites.

Yo pregunté 56 personas específicamente si tenían tierra comunal o privada, y si tenían un título a sus tierras.

- 39 personas dichas que tenían tierra privada; 23 los dijeron tenían un título, 8 los dijeron tenían una escritura, y 8 los dijeron no tenían ningunos papeles, pero que la tierra sigue siendo privada.
- 9 personas dichas que su tierra es comunal. 3 de esta gente los dijeron todavía tuvieron que pagar para estas tierras. Estas 3 personas viven en Colonia Libertad.
- Otra 1 persona que vive en Colonia Libertad dijo que su tierra era tierra donada, pero que tenían un escritura a la tierra.
- 4 personas alquilan sus casas / tierra
- 4 personas no sabía responder a la pregunta. Esta gente no tenía ningunos papeles para sus tierras.

Otro problema es que incluso las tierras que no fueron privatizadas antes de que 1997 todavía se estén vendiendo como tierras privadas. Se parece que esto no se debe permitir legalmente porque las tierras son oficialmente comunales ahora y como tal, no para la venta sin el permiso del Patronato. Incluso se han vendido las tierras que la gente puede recordar como siendo donado por el gobierno para ser tierras comunales, tales como las tierras de Colonia Libertad. También, incluso después de el título de 1997 era publicada, la gente todavía están vendiendo tierras. ¿Cómo esto sucede? Los participantes me dijeron que si un individuo desea vender, solamente necesiten conseguir la tierra medida por el Patronato, traigan esto a un abogado, hagan que el abogado prepare la escritura, y entonces vaya al municipio para el título y a para pagar los impuestos. Aparece como si mucha gente ha hecho eso. He encontrado que esto es en gran parte debido al hecho de que la mayoría de la gente que vive dentro de Sambo Creek no realiza que existe un título comunal para su tierra. Mucha gente no tiene el conocimiento que no debe vender sus tierras. Dentro del año pasado, sin embargo, ha habido un

movimiento local para educar a miembros de la comunidad sobre sus tierras. El Comité Pro-Defensa de Tierra es en gran parte responsable de esto.

Crecimiento de la población. Una solamente necesita caminar alrededor de la comunidad de Sambo Creek para ver la necesidad seria del ampliación en esta comunidad. En el centro de la comunidad, las casas se construyen increíblemente cerca de una otra - a menudo en las áreas que eran los patios de las madres de una. De los 49 participantes que específicamente pregunté acerca de cuánta gente vive en su casa, las respuestas se extendieron a partir del 2 a 9 personas, con el promedio de 5. Sin embargo, todo el tiempo gente mencionaría cómo hay muchos hogares con 10 o más personas que viven en ellas. Además, el cementerio local se ha llenado a su límite.

No hay tierra para construir casas, para hacer un cementerio nuevo, para plantar cosechas, o para construir centros de comunidad. Pero la cosa triste es, cuando usted camina alrededor de Sambo Creek, usted puede ver muchos solares vacíos, cercadas. Esto está porque tanto de la tierra de Sambo Creek había sido vendida a los dueños privados. Ahora mucha gente tiene solares vacíos que ella es ahorro a retirarse o a vender. Algunos de estos dueños son la gente de Sambo Creek que está trabajando en los EE.UU. u otro país y va a retirarse a la comunidad y a otros dueños son de Honduras o son extranjeros. Los motivos de estos terratenientes no son claros para mí. Sé que algo está planeando vender sus solares. Sin embargo, la gente que posee solares de la tierra vacíos dentro de Sambo Creek está pidiendo un precio para la tierra que es lejana fuera de la gama posible de un nativo a Sambo Creek. Mucha gente desea \$10,000 o más para un solar de la tierra. Oí que alguien es pidiendo \$100,000 para su tierra. Cuando usted realiza que la mayoría de la comunidad no tiene trabajo y las que trabajan, gana solamente 2,000 lempiras al mes (aproximadamente \$125 un mes), usted realiza que este precio para la tierra está al lado de imposible. Esto es una cosa terrible a venir pasar, porque hay tan mucha gente de la comunidad que esencialmente se está negando su propia tierra porque no tienen dólares. Este problema de la población y la carencia de las tierras disponibles para las casas de la comunidad, centros comunales, y agricultura, es parte de la razón que la comunidad está intentando reclamar sus tierras ancestrales perdidas.

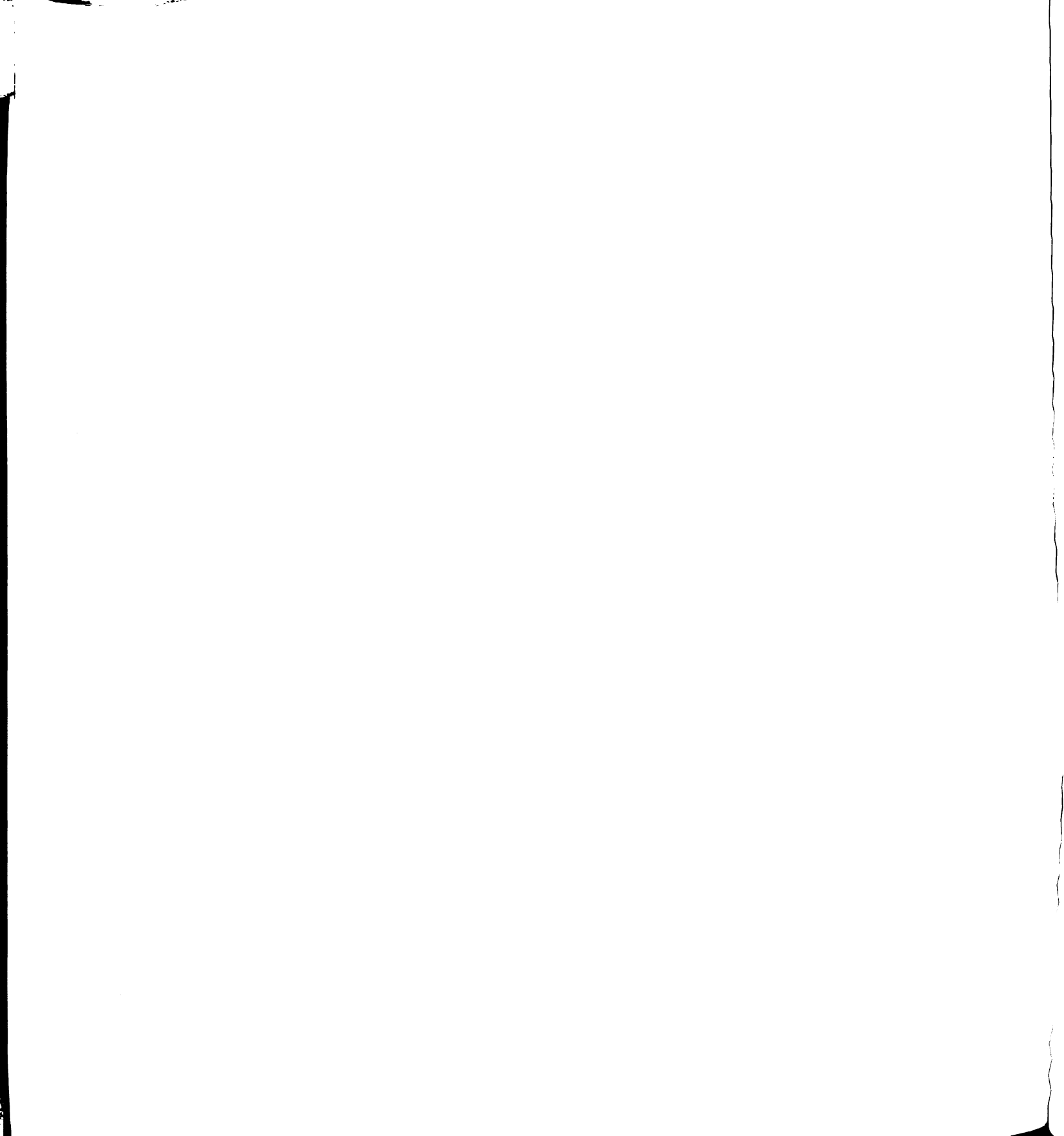
Tierras ancestrales. Según miembros de la comunidad bien informados y un informe por el Central American and Caribbean Research Council, los límites ancestrales de Sambo Creek son los siguientes: al norte con mar caribe y cayos cochinos, al oeste cerro Nombre de Dios, al este con el Río Ramirez, al sur con el Río Piedra. Esta cantidad de tierra está más que 1000 hectáreas, casi 10 veces tanto como qué el título de 1997 dice perteneciendo a Sambo Creek. La mayoría de los Garífunas entrevistadas puede recordar usando casi todas de estas tierras en el curso de su vida. Estas tierras fueron utilizadas para recoger la madera, para cosechar la fruta, para plantar cosechas, y para pescar. Casi todos los más viejos entrevistados habían plantado yuca u otras cosechas en el monte y los entrevistados más jóvenes pueden recordar acompañar a sus madres o abuelas al

monte para plantar y para cosechar. También, casi todos los entrevistados Garífunas recuerdan caminar hacia fuera al este y al oeste para recoger productos alimenticios o madera. La mayoría de los entrevistados ladinos no utilizaron estas tierras, sino que recuerdan que los Garífunas usándolas, así agregando ayuda adicional para la discusión que estas tierras estaban tradicionalmente y ancestralmente los territorios de los Garífunas. Pero en los últimos veinte años o tan toda esta tierra se ha privatizado. Mucha gente vendió lotes de tierras a los inmigrantes. Pero hay también historias de las tierras que fueron robadas de los miembros de la comunidad

Historias de tierras robadas. La mayoría de participantes podría recordar unas o más historias de las tierras robadas de las Garífunas de Sambo Creek. Las historias siguientes me fueron contadas durante entrevistas. La mayoría de estas historias estaba sobre terratenientes ricos y políticos quien robaron las tierras de fuerza (por la pistola) o con miedo que robaba las tierras. La mayoría de la tierra robada era la que la comunidad sembrada hacia el monte y en Corinto.

1. **Felipe Suazo** obtuvo una parte grande de tierra en Sambo Creek como préstamos. Alguna gente me dijo que cuando un miembro de la comunidad no tenía bastante dinero a pagar algo en la tienda de Suazo o necesitó un préstamo del dinero, la persona prometiera su solar de la tierra hasta él o ella le pagó el dinero. Firmaron un papel indicando que después de cierta cantidad de tiempo sin pagarlo, él tomarían la propiedad de la tierra. Según alguna gente, éste es cómo Suazo obtenido y vendido más mucho de la tierra de Sambo Creek, y que lo que ahora se llama Colonia Suazo fueron obtenidos de esta manera. Sin embargo, otra gente de la comunidad que vive en Colonia Suazo dijo que éste no es verdad y que Felipe Suazo ayudó al Garífuna. Esta gente dice que las tierras de Colonia Suazo “fueron robadas por los indios que pusieron sus vacas en las tierras” y que Suazo luchó para conseguirlas y entonces las vendió barato de nuevo a la comunidad
2. ***Foráneos Caso Sampson:*** Oí historias que estaban en conflicto en cómo él obtuvo su tierra. Él tiene tierras en qué ahora se llama Corinto. Toda la tierra que Sampson ahora ocupa era una vez donde los Garífunas cultivaron.
 - Este hombre era un maestro en la escuela de Sambo Creek. En los años 80s, Sampson solicitaron las firmas de muchos adultos de la comunidad, diciendo que él iba a utilizar la lista para solicitar proyectos locales del desarrollo, tales como agua potable mejorada. Los miembros de la comunidad lo confiaban en, porque él era profesor en la comunidad. Pero él no utilizó estas firmas para los proyectos y en lugar de otro usadas les para decir que el Garífuna que poseyó solares de la tierra en qué ahora se ha sabido como Corinto le dio estas tierras.

- Un hombre de la tercera edad dicho, “Sampson solamente compró una sola pieza de la tierra y después bloqueado de mucho más tierra que no tenía dueños. Esto es qué sucedió porque somos gente del color. Sampson no tenía ninguna tierra cuando él llegó, y ahora todo es el suyo. Sampson era un amigo el míos, y él me preguntó que ayudar al a conseguir la tierra, sino a me no deseó ayudarlo. Entonces, él buscó a otro hombre - Sr. Antolin Vuelto. Después de esto, no éramos amigos.”
 - Un hombre joven dijo eso: “Don Avencio puso sus vacas allí y las vacas mataron al yuca, y entonces la gente se fue. En el fin, las tierras fueron tomadas por Sampson.”
3. **Miguel Ángel Castillo:** He oído historias que estaban en conflicto en cómo este hombre obtuvo sus tierras - las daré todas aquí. Castillo tiene 40,7 manzanas registrados con INA. Sin embargo, Castillo tiene más que 40,7 manzanas bloqueada. Una persona lo dijo tenía 70 manzanas bloqueado apagado, pero más gente dijo que él bloqueó realmente ilegal de 8,89 manzanas. La comunidad está luchando actualmente, con la ayuda de OFRANEH, para recuperar esto tierra ilegal. Toda la gente mencionada en esta tierra (Castillo, Suazo, y Fernandez) todo muerto recientemente, así haciendo la lucha de la comunidad un poco más difícil.
- Un informe sobre la comunidad escribió por Central American Research Council dijo que Miguel Castillo obtuvo tierras pagando Felipe Suazo, un hombre nativo de la comunidad.
 - Una mujer dijo esta historia: en la tierra de Castillo era una mujer Garífuna que era un dueño de esta tierra. Un cerdo de su vecino vino a las tierras de ella y destruía su tierra, comiendo su yuca. Ella golpeó el cerdo, pero entonces el vecino conseguido enojado en ella y ella se asustó, y conclusión ella abandonándola las tierras por miedo. Luego, este vecino tomó las tierras de la mujer y pasó la tierra a sus hijos y después a sus nietos. La tierra fue perdida eventualmente.
 - Un líder de la comunidad me dijo que: Miguel Castillo compró las tierras de Avencio Fernández. Fernández las conseguido de Dorothia Ramos, el dueño original. Dorothia Ramos no tenía ningún dinero y ella no vendió las tierras. Qué sucedió era que su marido murió y ella no tuvo dinero a pagar el ataúd. Un ataúd costó en 7,50 lempiras. Avencio Fernández compró el ataúd en el préstamo para su tierra. Pero entonces Dorothia Ramos murió y su hija estaba asustada de Fernandez, así que ella no recuperó las tierras. Tan después de tiempo Fernandez las tenía y después vendido las tierras a Castillo hace 25



años. Fernandez era abogado y así que él trabajó en los papeles para hacer este proceso.

4. **Más sobre Avencio Fernández:** Fernández fue mencionado muchas veces por los participantes durante historias de tierras robadas.
 - Una mujer dijo, “mi madre dijo que Avencio Fernández tomara la tierra de los Garífunas. Él puso sus animales en los yucales y no podríamos trabajar más. Él hizo esto en Suazo y Libertad, pero la comunidad recuperó la tierra en Libertad.”
 - Un hombre de 74 años recordó a gente quien robó tierras. Él dijo, “esta tierra era de nuestras, pero los jefes con dinero que vivo en La Ceiba nos vio como menos que ellos y vinieron con las pistolas, humillándonos, y dicho salir de nuestras tierras. Para el miedo salimos de las tierras. Dijeron a nosotros, ‘aquí es 5 lempiras; no vuelven.’ La gente se fue para el miedo. Ahora faltamos mucho porque la comunidad está cambiando. Avencio Fernandez tiene un potrero en el otro lado de la carretera. Avencio Fernandez tomó mucha de las tierras y un Garífuna llamó a Lalo Fernandez ayudado Chamorro para robar estas tierras. Él solamente compró un pedazo pequeño de agua fría y ahora él tiene toda la tierra. Él era Secretaria de la Municipalidad y como Secretaria él podía conseguir los papeles para todas las tierras y porque los Garífunas no tenía documentos, no podrían luchar. Ahora estamos luchando para conseguir que es nuestras, porque éste estaba de los negros, esto estábamos de los pobres. Fernandez compró un pequeño pedazo y después bloqueó todos.”
5. **Senor Hugo:** Un hombre dijo, “yo digo la verdad - un hombre se llama Senor Hugo vino aquí con sus vacas y destruyeron las cosechas y la gente comenzó a abandonar las tierras.”

La lucha local de la tierra para reclamar tierras ancestrales. Ha habido intentos de reclamar tierras ancestrales por los líderes y los miembros de la comunidad. El año pasado, los miembros de la comunidad invadieron estas tierras y las comenzaron a limpiar para regresarlas a la comunidad y dividirse entre miembros de la comunidad. Estos invasiones eran fracasados porque algunas de estas tierras son sostenidos por la gente que tiene títulos de domino pleno. Los nuevos dueños fueron al municipio a luchar a la comunidad. Ahora la comunidad, a través del Comité Prodefensa de la Tierra y OFRANEH está luchando para reclamar sus tierras ancestrales con otros medios.

El caso más serio es de Miguel Castillo, quien ha bloqueado ilegalmente más tierras que él ha titulado. Cuando la comunidad invadió estas tierras, Castillo envió a policía para arrestarlo. El policía dejado del gas lacrimógeno en la

muchedumbre. Encarcelaron a siete personas - seis eran hombres y uno era una mujer, que terminó encima de perder a su bebé. La comunidad especula que su pérdida era debido a las heridas infligidas por el policía. OFRANEH asistió a la comunidad y los siete fueron liberados de la prisión en 34 horas. OFRANEH ahora está asistiendo a la comunidad en la lucha para reclamar todas las tierras ancestrales. El Patronato de Sambo Creek y de el Comité Pro defensa de la Tierra tienen documentos sobre las comunicaciones con INA y el proceso de esta lucha. Por esta razón, no repetiré los detalles aquí.

Conocimiento y opinión de la lucha de la tierra. La mayoría abrumadora de gente sabía sobre la lucha de Sambo Creek para reclamar las tierras. Muchos habían atendido a las reuniones del Comité Pro-defensa de la Tierra. La mayoría de la gente sabe en general donde estaban las tierras que la comunidad luchaba para y porqué ella luchaba para estas tierras. La mayoría también sabía que cuando reclamadas, estas tierras serían divididas entre los hijos de Sambo Creek quien ahora no tienen tierra. Cada uno entrevistado apoyó la lucha de la tierra y espera que la comunidad tiene éxito. Una edición importante para pensar sobre es que si se recupera la tierra, será dada un título comunal. Esto trae la pregunta si o no la gente que vive en Sambo Creek prefiere tierras comunales o privadas.

De las 39 personas pidió si prefieren tierras privadas o comunales, 19 los dijo específicamente prefieren comunal, 19 prefieren privados, y 1 dijo quisiera que la comunidad tuviera ambos. Esto es muy significativo porque refleja una división en la comunidad y es algo que los líderes de la comunidad deben tratar dado el hecho de que Sambo Creek tiene un título comunal para el área urbana y están buscando un título comunal para sus tierras ancestrales.

Los participantes dieron las razones siguientes en favor de la tierra comunal:

1. "La tierra privada siempre trae problemas."
2. "El comunal es mejor porque entonces no hay un dueño y cada uno puede tener acceso a él. Con privado, solamente el dueño puede tener acceso."
3. "Porque antes [cuando era todo comunal] nosotros no tuvimos que comprar. Y si alguien necesita la tierra, no hay problemas en conseguirlo."
4. "El comunal es mejor porque con comunal, si no tengo tierra y otra si tiene, pueden prestar a mí. Podría ir y construir. Con privado, no puedo."
5. "Quisiera comunal porque entonces hay más sitio de trabajar. Si tuviéramos un Patronato bueno, responsable manejar las tierras comunales, serían mejores que privados. Entonces podríamos crecer el yuca, maíz, y..."
6. "Si teníamos tierras comunales, nosotros podría realizar muchos proyectos. Si nuestras tierras fueran privadas, tendríamos que pagar impuestos y no podemos hacer esto, porque no tenemos una fuente del trabajo. No tenemos dinero."
7. "El comunal sería mejor porque los extranjeros que compran la tierra pusieron a veces las leyes que no están correctas, conduciendo a los problemas. Pienso que si fueran comunales, entonces solamente la comunidad puede vivir allí y habría menos problemas."

Los participantes dieron las razones siguientes en el favor de tierras privadas:

1. "La gente respeta más tierras privadas."
2. "Privada es mejor porque entonces nadie puede venir tomar su tierra." [Yo aprendí que mucha gente temió que sin un título privado, alguien podría venir toma su tierra.]
3. "Con los leyes hoy, es mejor legalizar."

Según lo mencionado previamente, un hombre dijo que la comunidad necesita ambos. Entonces la comunidad podría construir cosas como un centro comunal en las tierras comunales, pero la gente podría también tener tierras privadas.

La única recomendación que yo tengo en los términos de la lucha de la tierra es que cuando la comunidad gana la tierra y se titula comunal, el hecho de que es comunal y puede ser pasado solamente con herencia y no ser vendido, se debe comunicar a todos los miembros de la comunidad. Como mencioné antes, una mayoría enorme de gente no está enterada del hecho de que Sambo Creek tiene un título comunal a su tierra, y mucha gente continúa vendiendo la tierra.

Comunidad mezclada. Otro punto que debo hacer sobre el título es que dice específicamente "*a favor de comunidad Garífuna Sambo Creek.*" Señalo esto porque como las entrevistas demuestre claramente, Sambo Creek es una comunidad mezclada, con números casi iguales de ladinos y de Garífunas viviendo en la comunidad. Los dos grupos tienen una historia larga en el área y por lo tanto se dan derecho igualmente a las tierras de la comunidad. Se parece que no ha habido ninguna negación de tierras a los ladinos basados en el título de tierra y esperanzadamente la lucha para recuperar las tierras ancestrales va a continuar con cooperación entre todos los hijos de la comunidad y que toda tendrá igualdad de acceso a las tierras recuperadas.

Problema con los extranjeros y violencia en comunidad. El problema con intentar reclamar algunas de las tierras - específicamente esos solares llevados por las familias pobres - es que alguna de esta gente ahora ha estado viviendo en las tierras por veinte o más años, y es difícil de decir alguien que ha vivido en alguna parte para ése largo tiempo no es agradable allí. Alguna de esta gente son gente buena, honesta, y trabajadora. Puede ser verdad que ellos vinieron de a otra parte, pero muchas de ellos compraron las tierras que ahora ocupan y no intentaron y no trampearon a gente en la venta de sus tierras ancestrales

Sin embargo, hay los terratenientes grandes fuera de la comunidad, que se han dicho para haber trampeado a la comunidad en abandonar o la venta de sus tierras en los precios bajos muy. Para ser justas a la comunidad, las tierras que ahora sostienen se deben investigar para calcular fuera cómo las obtuvieron y de si se sostienen ilegal. La lucha para reclamar estas tierras se parece justa.

Hay también una cuestión de la violencia en la comunidad. Mucha Garífuna nativa de la comunidad me dijeron sobre cómo la violencia y la delincuencia ha crecido en los años desde que los extranjeros vinieron a la comunidad. Esta violencia está entre la juventud, y asociado con el abuso de la droga. La violencia también ha aparecido en la asociación con los terratenientes extranjeros, que han introducido diversas reglas a la comunidad. Por ejemplo, los terratenientes extranjeros traen sus propios conceptos culturales de la propiedad privada y de la protección de sus tierras, introduciendo nuevas ideas sobre propiedad de terreno a la comunidad. Estos dueños de tierra emplearán vigilancia para 'proteger' sus tierras. Ellos también autorizarán la muerte de intrusos en las tierras. He oído muchas historias sobre este fenómeno, y en un caso, un 'watchiman' matada alguien que pasaba en su tierra en Colonia Suazo. Esta violencia y nuevas ideas sobre la protección de la tierra no caben con la cultura, la tranquilidad, y los tradiciones de la comunidad y por eso la comunidad tiene buena razón de ser cautelosas de la entrada de extranjeros en su comunidad.

II. Artículo 107

El artículo 107 de la constitución de Honduras indica eso: Los terrenos del Estado, ejidales, comunales o de propiedad privada, situados en las zonas limítrofes a los Estados vecinos, o en el litoral de ambos mares, en una extensión de cuarenta kilómetros hacia el interior del país y las islas, cayos, arrecifes, escolladeros, penones, sirtes y bancos de arena, sólo podrán ser adquiridos, poseídos o tenidos a cualquier título por Hondureños por nacimiento. El artículo también dice que las tierras pueden estar adquiridos de sociedades integradas en su totalidad por socios hondureños y por instituciones del Estado bajo la pena de nulidad del respectivo acto o contrato. Por otra parte, el artículo dice que cuando estos destinos son proyectos para el desarrollo del turismo, deben ser aprobados por el Poder Ejecutivo en conformidad con una ley especial. El último párrafo del Artículo 107 dice que la adquisición de tierras urbanas está conforme a la legislación especial.

El artículo 107 es relevante a las comunidades de Garífuna porque están todas dentro de 40 kilómetros del mar. En noviembre el 30 de 1998, con todavía el país en los efectos horribles después del Huracán Mitch, el gobierno abrogó el artículo 107 en una reunión de la sesión del congreso en el medianoche. El país dijo que esto era una medida necesaria de traer la relevación monetaria al país del post-Mitch. Esperaban eso que abrirían la venta de tierras costeras animarían la inversión extranjera para el turismo y otros progresos. Las organizaciones de los Garífunas y los miembros de la Comunidad respondieron inmediatamente con protesta a esta reforma. Fueron preocupados porque las porciones grandes de tierra en las comunidades Garífunas no se titulan, y muchas tierras serían en peligro y se podrían perder a los extranjeros. Algunos líderes también temieron que la entrada del turismo en una escala grande va a causar el muerte de la cultura Garífuna. Una gran cantidad de Garífuna protestó en el capital y consecuentemente Presidente Flores acordado para no hacer cumplir la reforma.

En mis entrevistas pedí a participantes sus opiniones acerca del Artículo 107 y su reforma. Un líder de la comunidad dijo como la reforma del Artículo 107 no era algo que afectaron *solamente* Garífuna, pero que se parecía como solamente Garífuna, con OFRANEH y ODECO, luchara contra él. Él dijo que la lucha contra la reforma sería más fuerte si las cartas venían de todos los diversos tipos de Hondureños. Otro líder de la comunidad dijo cómo esta ley prohíbe la venta de tierras, pero que el problema no puede ser parado porque la mayoría de la tierra no está en las manos de la comunidad, porque todos se ha privatizado. Él dijo que si el Patronato tenía las tierras en sus manos, podrían prohibir la venta. Según él, esto es porque el Patronato está luchando para hacer toda la tierra comunal.

Mucha gente dijo que aunque la ley prohíbe a extranjeros de comprar la tierra en la costa, muchos extranjeros poseen la tierra. Esto es verdad y es hecha posible por las escapatorias en la ley. Por ejemplo, un extranjero que casa con una Hondureña puede comprar a tierra o a un extranjero puede entrar negocio con un Hondureño. También, cualquier área que se considere un área turística está oficialmente abierta a la compra extranjera, y las Islas de la Bahía, por ejemplo, se considera las áreas turísticas.

La presencia de extranjeros. De las 60 entrevistas, específicamente pedí a 47 personas sus opiniones sobre si o no quisieran si los extranjeros pudiesen comprar tierra en o alrededor de la comunidad. 2 personas (1 mujer Garífuna y 1 mujer ladina) no desearon comentar respecto a la pregunta. Los 45 restantes hicieron y sus respuestas siguen.

No desee a extranjeros: 14 personas (11 mujeres Garífuna y 3 hombres Garífuna) no quisieran que los extranjeros compraran tierra en o alrededor de la comunidad. Mencionan las razones siguientes de su opinión.

- Mucho tiene esta opinión porque el Garífuna no desea el turismo en sus playas. Discuten que los extranjeros deseen sus playas, pero las playas pertenecen a la comunidad. Una mujer también mencionó que la gente teme que si el turismo viene a la comunidad, empujen a la gente de la comunidad de sus tierras y no tener ningún lugar a vivir.
- Otra razón contra la venta a los extranjeros es que compran solamente un poco, y después roba el resto. Un líder local femenino me dio un ejemplo de un extranjero desde quien compró tierra de la playa en Sambo Creek y la tiene extendió su tierra más lejos. Otro hombre dijo que éste es cómo la comunidad perdió su tierra - los extranjeros vienen comprar un pequeño pedazo pero después ellos toman más y más hasta que se va toda la tierra.

- Otro miedo es que los extranjeros privatizarán las playas y las tierras. Un líder local femenino mencionó un número de ejemplos dentro de la comunidad donde los extranjeros han bloqueado las tierras y no permiten que la gente a pasar. De discusiones con la gente Garífuna he aprendido que este fenómeno está contra la cultura del Garífuna, que para los centenares de años ha vivido con el espíritu de tierras comunales y del sentido de la libertad de pasar en toda la tierra.
- Otra razón traída contra la venta de tierras es que la venta de la tierra va a causar la desaparición de las fuentes y de los costumbres del alimento. Por ejemplo, una mujer mencionó cómo los pescadores ir a los cayos y si ellos vendieran esta tierra, la comunidad no podría comer.
- Otra persona dijo que cuando vienen los extranjeros no ayudan a la comunidad y que vienen solamente hacerse ricos.

Desea a extranjeros: 25 personas (11 mujeres Garífunas, 6 hombres Garífunas, 5 mujeres ladinas, y 3 hombres ladinos) quisieran que los extranjeros pudieran comprar tierra en y alrededor de la comunidad. Las razones más comunes eran las siguientes:

- Muchos participantes dijeron que los extranjeros traen buenas cosas a la comunidad, especialmente trabajo y por esta razón estaban para la venta de tierras a los extranjeros. La gente mencionaría repetidamente el índice de desempleo y cómo trabajo es una necesidad de la juventud en la comunidad. Mucha gente mira a extranjeros como fuente del trabajo. ¿Un líder local dijo, “que puedo digo? No importo a mi si ellos traen negocios aquí, porque usted sabe el mundo esta globalizando.” Otro líder local dijo que “si no vienen los extranjeros, nosotros nunca cambiará, permaneceremos igual - sin trabajos y dinero.
- Dos líderes de la comunidad dijeron que no tienen miedo a la gente que tomaba sus tierras, como ODECO y OFRANEH advertido podrían ser un problema para la gente sin títulos de tierra. Uno de estos hombres dijo, “gente estaba asustado que la tierra de la playa sería tomada de ellos. Pero nadie tomará su tierra por la fuerza. Nadie le forzarán vender su tierra. Yo no tuve un problema con la reforma del Artículo 107. Si la gente desea vender su tierra, ella debe poder a vender.” El otro líder de la comunidad dijo casi exactamente la misma cosa. Pero él indicó que si alguien desea vender su tierra, está bien por él. Él

comentó cómo Artículo 107 está contra los extranjeros que compran tierra, pero eso no prohibió los Hondureños de comprar la tierra. Para él, sería mejor si los extranjeros podrían porque “ellos pagan dos veces más que Hondureños.” Este líder preguntó, “porque no permitir la gente aquí para ganar más dinero?”

Depende de persona: 6 personas (2 hombres Garífunas, 3 mujeres Garífunas, y 1 mujer ladina) dijeron que depende de las intenciones y de la personalidad de los extranjeros. Todos dicen que si la persona tiene buenas intenciones y viene ayudar a la gente y no lastimarla, entonces esta bien. Pero como una mujer precisa, “la gente aquí no acepta la idea de extranjeros de venir porque han traído desorden a nuestra comunidad en el pasado.” Un líder local había mezclado sentamientos. Ella dijo que el problema con los extranjeros que compran tierra de la playa es que entonces la comunidad no puede gozar de las playas. Pero ella piensa que si lo compraran específicamente para un proyecto del turismo, entonces de que sería buena para la comunidad porque les ayudaría. Sin embargo, ella dice que el problema es que la mayoría no compra tierra para el turismo.

III. Desarrollo del turismo

Pregunté a gente sobre si o no quisieran que el turismo aumentara en Sambo Creek. La mayoría abrumadora dicha que lo hacen. La mayoría de participantes dijo que tienen gusto de los turistas que visitan y quisieran que vinieran más de modo que pudieran vender sus productos o trabajar en la industria del turismo. La mayoría de gente los dijo desea el turismo porque el turismo genera el empleo. Pero, había algunas preocupaciones mencionadas por el turismo. Éstos preocupaciones vinieron generalmente de los líderes locales. Las preocupaciones y las precauciones que fueron expresadas eran:

- Que algunos tipos de turistas - específicamente, los ‘de mochila’ - traen drogas a la comunidad.
- El miedo de la gente puede perder sus playas a la industria turística y el acceso a la playa es un esencial parte de la cultura de Sambo Creek.
- Que la comunidad exige ser socios en la industria del turismo, no solamente como empleados en la industria.
- Que el turismo debe ser sostenible si se viene a la comunidad.

Una preocupación que tengo es que aunque es verdad que el turismo genera el empleo, también trae algunas cosas negativas con ella. Un impacto negativo posible es que los precios de la tierra continuarán levantándose si el turismo en escala grande llega a Sambo Creek. Por esta razón, es esencial que Sambo Creek soluciona sus problemas con la tendencia de su tierra antes de que la tierra se

privatice más y se comercialice, o bien dejarán los niños de la comunidad sin su propia tierra y playas.

III. Los problemas locales

Pregunté a 60 participantes lo que pensaron eran el problema más grande de la comunidad de Sambo Creek. Enumeraré las respuestas y algunos comentarios que fueron mencionados durante las entrevistas.

<u>Problema</u>	<u># de respuestas</u>
Ninguna tierra para plantar o para construir las casas	17
Desempleo y pobreza	10
Un hombre dicho: “Siempre estamos pobre, pero más antes, menos ahora. Pero seguimos siendo pobres, porque muchos hombres no desean trabajar, ellos solamente esperamos para la mujer para trabajar.”	
Una mujer dijo, “la falta de trabajo y dinero. Mucha gente necesita el trabajo y los que trabajan ganan poco dinero.”	
Un hombre dijo: “porque no hay ningún empleo, no podemos dar la educación a nuestros hijos y porque muchos hijos faltan la educación y el empleo, ellos roban.”	
Falta de la educación / de centros de capacitación	5
“En las casas, no educan los niños y usted puede ver en las calles que faltan morales. Toman malos hábitos y la adicción a la droga. Esto es todo debido a la educación pobre.”	
Salud - la desnutrición y infecciones del estómago	3
VIH/SIDA	4
Un líder local dijo, “Sambo Creek tiene una incidencia muy alta de VIH/SIDA. Pienso el problema esta creciendo porque los niños hacen relaciones sexuales en las edades muy jóvenes - 12 o 13 - y no creen SIDA es verdadero y los padres no educan a sus niños sobre el SIDA.”	
Adicción de la droga	5
Maras /corrupción de la gente/ la falta de morales	5
La Falta de la autoridad	1

Un hombre dijo, “la juventud esta perdiendo porque no hay vigilancia y autoridad. Los niños pueden vender drogas sin ningún problema. Necesitamos más vigilancia en el mar porque aquí es donde está el tráfico.”

Disunidad de la comunidad

2

Dos participantes dijeron la misma cosa y ambo dijeron que Corozal es más unido. En las palabras de una mujer: “El problema aquí es que no somos unidos. No diré es racismo, sino disunidad. Nos no unen para solucionar cualquier cosa, y pues tales nosotros no pueden prosperar. Corozal es muy unido- si usted tira basura en la calle, cada niño y adulto gritarán a usted. Pero usted no puede hacer eso aquí. Aquí la gente son muy egotista. Usted no puede decir cualquier cosa aquí.”

La falta de la motivación a estudiar o a trabajar para la juventud

1

“El huracán Fifi era el problema peor”

1

No puede pensar de un problema

6

APPENDIX C

ILO 169 ARTICLES REGARDING TERRITORIAL RIGHTS

ILO 169 ARTICLES REGARDING TERRITORIAL RIGHTS

- Article 13.1 Governments shall respect the special importance for the cultures and spiritual values of the peoples concerned of their relationship with the lands or territories, or both as applicable, which they occupy or otherwise use, and in particular the collective aspects of this relationship.
- Article 13.2 The use of the term ***lands*** ...shall include the concept of territories, which covers the total environment of the areas which the peoples concerned occupy or otherwise use.
- Article 14.1 The rights of ownership and possession of the peoples concerned over the lands which they traditionally occupy shall be recognized. In addition, measures shall be taken in appropriate cases to safeguard the right of the peoples concerned to use lands not exclusively occupied by them, but to which they have traditionally had access for their subsistence and traditional activities. Particular attention shall be paid to the situation of nomadic peoples and shifting cultivators in this respect...
- Article 14.2 Governments shall take steps as necessary to identify the lands which the peoples concerned traditionally occupy, and to guarantee effective protection of their rights of ownership and possession.
- Article 14.3 Adequate procedures shall be established within the national legal system to resolve land claims by the peoples concerned.
- Article 15.1 The rights of the peoples concerned to the natural resources pertaining to their lands shall be specially safeguarded. These rights include the right of these peoples to participate in the use, management and conservation of these resources.
- Article 17.1 Procedures established by the peoples concerned for the transmission of land rights among members of these peoples shall be respected."
- Article 17.2 The peoples concerned shall be consulted whenever consideration is being given to their capacity to alienate their lands or otherwise transmit their rights outside their own community.

- Article 17.3** Persons not belonging to these peoples shall be prevented from taking advantage of their customs or of lack of understanding of the laws on the part of their members to secure the ownership, possession or use of land belonging to them.
- Article 18.1** Adequate penalties shall be established by law for unauthorised intrusion upon, or use of, the lands of the peoples concerned, and governments shall take measures to prevent such offences.
- Article 19** National agrarian programmes shall secure to the peoples concerned treatment equivalent to that accorded to other sectors of the population with regard to: (a) the provision of more land for these peoples when they have not the area necessary for providing the essentials of a normal existence, or for any possible increase in their numbers; (b) the provision of the means required to promote the development of the lands which these peoples already possess.

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