UC Riverside
Diagonal: An Ibero-American Music Review

Title
Standing the Test of Time: Neo–Traditionalism as Neoliberalism in Garifuna World Music

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9h33k0bs

Journal
Diagonal: An Ibero-American Music Review, 6(3)

Author
Frishkey, Amy

Publication Date
2021-11-08

DOI
10.5070/D86355329

Supplemental Material
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9h33k0bs#supplemental

Copyright Information
Copyright 2021 by the author(s).This work is made available under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution License, available at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

eScholarship.org Powered by the California Digital Library
University of California

DIAGONAL
an ibero-american music review

ISSN 2470-4199
VOL. 6 NO. 3 2021

ESSAY

Standing the Test of Time: Neo–Traditionalism as Neoliberalism in Garifuna World Music

AMY FRISHKEY
Independent Scholar

Abstract

The encroachment of enclave tourism upon centuries-old villages of Afro-indigenous Garifuna along Honduras's North Coast presents but one example of neoliberalism's global ascendency during the 1990s. One way that the privatization of the commons materialized was in the commodification of "minority" cultural practices within nation-states -- what Charles Hale (2005) calls "neoliberal multiculturalism." Mark Anderson (2013) observes that this "marketing of ethnicity produces the promise of inclusion at the potential price of cultural and territorial rights" (ibid.: 277–78). Garifuna cultural practices are pivotal to the promotion of Honduras as a tourist destination; however, visitors encounter visual art, costumes, music, and dance as forms of entertainment while remaining segregated from surrounding Garifuna communities. As a result, their market value is as "symbolic capital" which traffics in stereotypes and apolitical narratives (ibid.: 291).

I argue that Garifuna music functions similarly as symbolic capital within the world music industry. I examine the success of Garifuna musical neo-traditionalism within this industry during the mid-aughts as contingent upon neoliberal marketing strategies akin to those implemented by the resorts built within Garifuna Central American coastal villages. Dale Chapman (2018) and Jay Hammond (2020) have noted a similar function for neo-traditionalism in present-day jazz scenes, whereby musicians mine past aesthetics and values for new forms of individual branding and new options for consumers. Moreover, the premium placed upon "timelessness" in these cases presents neo-traditional musical practices as a foil to musical styles too "untempered" and "common" (reminiscent of "the commons") in comparison. Central to the story of Garifuna world music is its development as a preferred alternative to punta rock, which arose circa 1979 as a dance genre driven by youths soon realizing local punta and paranda rhythms on keyboards and drum machines. In contrast, the production of recordings by the Garifuna Collective and Aurelio Martinez from the early millennium until today—dominated by acoustic instruments and featuring time-tested, respected musicians steeped in traditional storytelling—takes a page from the *Buena Vista Social Club* phenomenon of the late 1990s to generate global esteem for Garifuna music and culture.

Keywords: Afro-Latine/x, Afro-indigenous, Garifuna popular music, punta rock, paranda, world music, ethnicity industries, neoliberal multiculturalism, Andy Palacio, Stonetree Records, The Garifuna Collective, Aurelio Martinez

Resumen

La invasión del turismo de enclave en pueblos centenarios de afro-indígenas Garífunas a lo largo de la costa norte de Honduras presenta solo un ejemplo del ascenso global del neoliberalismo durante la década de 1990. Una forma en que se materializó la privatización de los bienes comunes fue en la mercantilización de prácticas culturales "minoritarias" dentro de los estados-nación -- lo que Charles Hale (2005) lo llama "multiculturalismo neoliberal". Mark Anderson (2013) observa que este "márketing de la etnicidad produce la promesa de inclusión al precio potencial de los derechos culturales y territoriales" (ibid .: 277–78). Las prácticas culturales Garífunas son fundamentales para la promoción de Honduras como destino turístico; sin embargo, los visitantes encuentran arte visual, disfraces, música

y danza como formas de entretenimiento mientras permanecen segregados de las comunidades Garífunas circundantes. Como resultado, su valor de mercado es como "capital simbólico" que trafica con estereotipos y narrativas apolíticas (ibid .: 291).

Sostengo que la música Garífuna funciona de manera similar como capital simbólico dentro de la industria de la música mundial. Examino el éxito del neotradicionalismo musical Garífuna dentro de esta industria durante mediados de la década de 2000 como supeditado a estrategias de márketing neoliberales similares a las implementadas por los complejos turísticos construidos en las aldeas costeras Garífunas de América Central. Dale Chapman (2018) y Jay Hammond (2020) han notado una función similar para el neotradicionalismo en las escenas de jazz actuales, en las que los músicos extraen la estética y los valores del pasado en busca de nuevas formas de marca individual y nuevas opciones para los consumidores. Además, la prima que se le da a la "atemporalidad" en estos casos presenta las prácticas musicales neotradicionales como un contraste con los estilos musicales demasiado "desenfadados" y "comunes" (que recuerdan a "los bienes comunes") en comparación. Un elemento central de la historia de la música mundial Garífuna es su desarrollo como una alternativa preferida al punta rock, que surgió alrededor de 1979 como un género de baile impulsado por jóvenes que pronto interpretaron ritmos locales de punta y paranda en teclados y cajas de ritmos. En contraste, la producción de grabaciones del Colectivo Garífuna y Aurelio Martínez desde principios de milenio hasta la actualidad—dominadas por instrumentos acústicos y realizadas por músicos respetados y probados en el tiempo, empapados en la narración tradicional—toma una página del *Buena Vista Social Club*fenómeno de finales de la década de 1990 para generar estima mundial por la música y la cultura Garífuna.

Palabras claves: Afrolatine/x, Afro-indígena, música popular de Garífuna, punta rock, paranda, música mundial, industrias étnicas, multiculturalismo neoliberal, Andy Palacio, Stonetree Records, The Garifuna Collective, Aurelio Martinez

In October 2020, Meagan Day published an essay for *Jacobin* Magazine analyzing neoliberal economic ascendency through the lens of 1990s romantic comedy films. She points out how, as the decade progressed, romantic entanglements in films like *Reality Bites*, *Empire Records*, and *Jerry Maguire* moved from asserting individuality against corporate interests to gladly surrendering individuality to those interests. In her view, the 1998 film *You've Got Mail* epitomizes the apex of neoliberal desire. It finds the owner of an independent children's bookstore anonymously exchanging increasingly romantic emails with the very mega-chain CEO whose bookstore opening across the street threatens to drive hers out of business. He inevitably succeeds. Once she discovers his identity, she accepts him for who he is, her struggle is over, and happiness ensues. Day writes:

> Kathleen wanders into Joe's now–operational chain store and discovers, despite her heavy heart, that the people inside are finding comfort and delight in its generous offerings. What is there to fear? Monoculture is culture nonetheless. She begins to soften, submit. Politics have been swept aside, and the love story can begin in earnest (Day 2020).

This essay investigates a similar trajectory within an Afro-Latine and Caribbean popular music sphere, driven by a small set of actors. A genre that I have termed *Garifuna world music* arose out of the efforts of a Belizean producer and independent label owner, Ivan Duran, to transform Afro-indigenous Garifuna popular music from being youth–oriented and local in scope to achieving cosmopolitan appeal and cross–border circulatory power. Duran succeeded by appealing to the neo-traditional turn at the start of the millennium within what Aleysia Whitmore terms the "world music genre culture" at the start of the millennium, launched by the success of the *Buena Vista Social Club*

album (2020: 47).[1] Duran's apolitical perception of its ensuing effects skews highly optimistic and informs the presentation of his artist roster as ahistorical cultural ambassadors. This occurs despite the fact that the majority of Garifuna communities today, located on the north coast of Honduras, face the dire threat of violence and disappearance by government entities whenever they resist neoliberal expropriation of their ancestral lands.

Since forming Stonetree Records in 1995 in his home country of Belize, Ivan Duran has prided what he calls its "backabush" sensibility, showcasing homegrown musical styles throughout Central America and the Caribbean and forging lasting relationships with musicians. His endeavor bears striking similarities to other independent labels within the Americas devoted to folk and vernacular expression. Duran's parents arrived to Belize as economically comfortable European immigrants and turned to promoting local writing and art through small businesses as a way to apply their outsider status and international connections to the benefit of their adopted homes. The founders of Folkways Records and Arhoolie Records—Moses Asch and Chris Strachwitz, respectively—had parents who undertook similar endeavors in the U.S. However, whereas these label founders followed their parents' examples by becoming music documenters and promoters, Duran embraced the producer's role of creating his own recording aesthetic and viewed Stonetree as a production house as much as a vehicle for music circulation (Duran 2007, 2011).[2]

Duran has devoted the majority of his production work to Garifuna musicians in Belize, Honduras, and Guatemala. These collaborations began in earnest with Andy Palacio, a Belizean Garifuna musician famous for a genre called *punta rock*. Punta rock arose circa 1979 in Belize and Honduras as a youth–driven genre realizing local *punta* and *paranda* rhythms first on guitars and drumset and eventually on keyboards and drum machines. It was the first popular music genre sung in the Garifuna language—in addition to English, Belizean Kriol, and Spanish—and became the theme music not only for Garifuna youth but also for the Belizean independence movement that culminated in 1981; eventually, it became a Central American regional dance music staple (Frishkey 2018: 220–260).

PUNTA ROCK EXAMPLE (See Supplemental Material): "Pompis Con Pompis" (Bottoms With Bottoms) by Aurelio Martinez Y Los Bravos Del Caribe from the album Cuentos y Leyendas (Tales And Legends) (2002). R Reflecting a common punta rock theme, romantic flirtation through dancing punta, the woman with whom Martinez is dancing tells him that, if that's how he dances, she will do anything for a "noche de amor" (night of love) with him. The title of the song refers to the suggestive "cock-and-hen" aspect of punta dancing.

---

*This essay was first presented on November 11, 2021, at the 87th Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society (virtual) as part of the panel "Por la humanidad (y con/tra el neoliberalismo): Exploring the Expressive Agency of Latin American Popular Musicians at the Turn of the 21st Century." Special thanks to my co-panelists, Adriana Martínez and Sarah Town, for their collaborative enthusiasm and illuminating discussions.

[1] In her book *World Music* & *The Black Atlantic*, Whitmore defines world music as "a genre culture defined by social practices and values such as multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and nostalgia for a pre-capitalist past (see Aubert 2007) […] this general definition most accurately encompasses the world music I have experienced and observed in my research" (Whitmore 2020: 8).

[2] As Strachwitz put it, "I don't see myself as a producer, more a song catcher," in response to a question about recording technique (Cartwright 2020).

Duran and Palacio's friendship led to Duran's production of Palacio's final punta rock album, titled *Keimoun* (Beat On). Following its release, they made a mutual foray into a traditional men's genre called *paranda*, a Garifuna-ized version of a pan-Latin American Christmas caroling song tradition. In 1995, the same year Duran founded Stonetree Records, Palacio introduced him to a tape recording of two parandas by elder parandero Paul Nabor from the southern Belizean town of Punta Gorda. Eighteen months later, Duran and Palacio spent approximately two years seeking out the few surviving paranderos living in Central American Garifuna villages to record their songs as a preservation effort (Duran 1999).[3] These recordings culminated in *Paranda: Africa in Central America*, released on Stonetree in 1999. The album introduced the paranderos and their beloved, time-honored repertoire beyond their home villages and was the first album to bring Stonetree notice in major press outlets (Eyre 2000). *Paranda*'s turn away from punta rock's synthesized sounds and dance club/party themes became the driving force of Palacio and Duran's collaborative efforts.

The timing of *Paranda*'s release dovetailed with a neo–traditional turn within the world music industry that received it. In 1997, the album *Buena Vista Social Club* was enjoying success at the top of the world music charts and on the Grammy circuit. It features a supergroup of Eastern Cuban musicians and veteran Havana performers whose careers peaked during the 1940s and 50s. The club of the album's title refers to an actual Afro-descendent *sociedad de color*[4] that operated in Havana from the 1930s until shortly after the 1959 Cuban Revolution and in which album participants and their contemporaries performed. A documentary in 1999 directed by Wim Wenders featured concert footage and interviews, and augmented the international recognition these performers received upon rediscovery. *Buena Vista Social Club* sold over five million copies (an extraordinary number for a world music release), won the Grammy Award for "Best Traditional Tropical Latin Album" in 1998, and was designated #260 of *Rolling Stone* Magazine's "The 500 Greatest Albums of All-Time" (Gonzalez 2004).[5]

The *Buena Vista Social Club* phenomenon not only kindled a Euro-Anglo interest in traditional Cuban music and Latin American music: it also provided a new template for success for the post–millennial world music industry. The components of this template include: 1) nostalgia for a "golden age"; 2) respect for tradition and elders (or the embrace of "living legends"); 3) individual personalities under the "brand" umbrella of a collective; 4) acoustic and organic–sounding instruments; 5) live-and-up-close recording techniques; and 6) an anti-market/anti-trend sensibility that exudes timelessness (Krüger 2016: 7; Whitmore 2020: 68–70).[6] In a sense, the industry had

---

[3] Similarly, blues musician Lightnin' Hopkins took Arhoolie Records founder Chris Strachwitz to hear Louisiana Creole musician Clifton Chernier perform in a bar in Houston, TX, in 1964. Strachwitz subsequently recorded Chernier and released his album *Louisiana Blues & Zydeco* in 1965, which introduced listeners outside of Texas and Louisiana to zydeco and resulted in a world tour and a Grammy for Chernier (Cartwright 2020).

[4] Sociedades de color were social clubs that protected and affirmed Afro-descendents in the face of the cultural hegemony of Cuba's Ibero-Spanish elite.

[5] It is one of only two albums on the list produced in a non-English-speaking country.

[6] The success of *Buena Vista Social Club* reflects Whitmore's observation that, "Despite world music's sonic diversity, African and Latin American musics often garner a disproportionate amount of attention in the world music scene" (2020: 50–51).

returned full circle to world music's initial emphasis on "roots": British creators of the world music category shared a love for regional and folk rock and a disdain for the electronic pop that became mainstream during the 1980s (Frith 2000: 306–7; Stone 2006: 60). As an example of how this orientation persists into the present day, producers for the label World Circuit, on which *Buena Vista Social Club* was released, make a point to fashion their finished products with a "rootsier" sound than on the initial demos. In the words of World Circuit's former press and publicity coordinator Dave McGuire, from 2011:

> [...] the demos that you get from them [African artists] are full of cheesy synthesizers and stuff. And we go the opposite way and put in more traditional rootsy-sounding instruments. [...] we try and make it more—almost what we would perceive to be—a rootsy sound (Whitmore 2020: 57).

Musicians recording for World Circuit also observed this penchant for older and acoustic sounds among North American and European audiences. For instance, Cuban guitarist Osnel Odit Bavastro, a member of the group AfroCubism, told ethnomusicologist Aleysia Whitmore that "Americans seem to have a yearning for the past—'the old Cuba'." Moreover, Senegalese drummer Mountaga Koité with Orchestra Baobab suggested to her that "foreigners may like Baobab's music because 'lots of people prefer listening to old things rather than modern things'" (ibid.: 133–34, 145).

Shortly following the release of the 1999 *Paranda* album, Ivan Duran joined forces with Jacob Edgar, at the time an A&R representative for the world music compilation label Putumayo. They began envisioning a neo-traditional group of Garifuna musicians who would take turns leading on songs and expand beyond paranda to include other traditional genres and rhythms. They decided to follow *Buena Vista Social Club*'s example in order to encourage an interest in Garifuna roots among younger Garifuna and among cosmopolitan fans of world music (Edgar 2008). As Edgar notes:

> We definitely used *Buena Vista Social Club* as inspiration, asking [ourselves] "Why did it sell 10 million copies around the world? What lessons can we learn? How did it appeal?" (idem.).

In 2001, Duran and Edgar formed a collective of seasoned Central American Garifuna musicians with Andy Palacio as the frontperson, eventually known as the Garifuna Collective. During the making of their first album, *Wátina* (I Called Out), Duran began gathering momentum for the group with showcases at world and roots music industry conferences like Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP), GlobalFest, and the World Music Expo (WOMEX) (Chanona 2002; Stone 2006: 71). These ventures were financed by Duran himself and helped along by government agencies administered by former Belizean Prime Minister Said Musa, such as the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH). The Duran family has close ties with the Musas and the People's United Party (PUP) with which they are affiliated, a party that followed the neoliberal line of placing private and specialty interests over public ones (Frishkey 2016: 78, 225–226, 285; Harvey 2005: 66, 76–77).[7]

The Garifuna Collective released *Wátina* in 2007 on Jacob Edgar's new world music label Cumbancha. Although over six years in the making, the perfectionism paid off: it won Andy Palacio and Ivan Duran near-unanimous critical acclaim from world music industry tastemakers. They captured the prestigious WOMEX award for that year and the #1 position on Amazon's Top 100 World

---

[7] I detail the negotiation of these tensions during Belize's 2007 Music Week conference, sponsored by the Duran-led Music Industry Association of Belize (MIAB), in my doctoral dissertation (Frishkey 2016: 284–291, 297).

Music Albums of All–Time list. With these accolades, Palacio finally achieved his long–time goal of opening the door to Garifuna popular music that veered closer to traditional practices than pop conventions. Although he cynically compared the world music industry to a cartel in an interview with me, he perceived its high valuation of authenticity as an effective vehicle for his message (Palacio 2007). Only two months after a homecoming concert in his birth village of Barranco, Belize, Palacio died suddenly of a massive stroke and heart attack at age forty-seven, on January 19, 2008. In the ensuing years, his friends and bandmates wrote tribute songs and released a stream of Duran-produced neo-traditional albums in the vein of *Wátina* that cemented the Garifuna presence within the world music circuit and Garifuna world music as a genre. These albums include *Umalali* (Voice) (2008) by the Garifuna Women's Collective (an all-female vocal counterpart to 1999's *Paranda*), the Garifuna Collective's follow-up to *Wátina* and tribute to Palacio titled *Ayó* (Goodbye) (2013), and *Laru Beya* (On The Beach) (2011) and *Lándini* (Landing Place) (2014) by Aurelio Martinez. These albums follow *Wátina*'s lead of revising songs originated by elder community members, writing from personal experience, and employing traditional acoustic instrumentation, rhythms, and responsorial group vocals.

GARIFUNA WORLD MUSIC EXAMPLE (See Supplemental Material): "Wamada" (Our Mutual Friend) by Aurelio Martinez feat. Youssou N'Dour from the album Laru Beya (On The Beach) (2011). The lyrics depict Andy Palacio swinging in a hammock in the afterlife, relaxing with his ancestors. A traditional dügü song provides the basis for "Wamada." Such songs are usually not recorded, confined to their sacred context, but Martinez believed it to be appropriate as a tribute to Palacio (Newyear, Duran, and Vietze 2011).

At this juncture, it is important to consider what these neo-traditional recordings omit. Ivan Duran's perspective on Garifuna musical tradition has been that it requires innovations in order to have staying power for future generations, but only innovations that act in the service of exemplarity. Therefore, the synthesized and reproduced sounds at large in punta rock and present in punta rock-paranda hybrids would qualify as inauthentic (Duran 2007, 2011). So would overly political topics that tie songs to a time and place. For instance, *Wátina* contained only one such song, "Miami," about a Honduran Garifuna village of the same name that faced internal divisions over selling land rights to private investors and represented one of the great land expropriation tragedies of the era (Ryan 2008; Frishkey 2016: 70–71). The majority of Garifuna world music recordings since the mid-aughts has stuck to stories of interpersonal and ancestral hardship, while resistance to government–sanctioned neoliberal development within Honduran Garifuna and indigenous territories has grown. Since a coup in 2009 overthrew Honduran progressive-moderate President Manuel Zelaya, murders and disappearances of land defenders have risen exponentially (Miranda 2021). Traditional Garifuna songs recall lament traditions, whereby misfortune, or *lamíselu*, is a central theme; this harks back to the deportation from St. Vincent Island in the Lesser Antilles to Honduras that was forced upon Garifuna ancestors by the British in 1797 (Frishkey 2016: 115). But the neo–traditional turn in Garifuna world music has not brought land grabbing—the most dire situation faced by Garifuna in over 200 years—into its purview of song topics; rather, interpersonal, familial, and intra-cultural strife has remained the focus with few exceptions, as in traditional repertoire at least a century old.

In his book *The Jazz Bubble*, Dale Chapman links the neo-traditional turn in U.S. jazz during the 1980s to the ascendency of neoliberal economics to status quo under the Reagan Administration. He points out that the establishment of hard bop as "neoclassical jazz" during this time involved

sweeping up formerly marginalized experiences and social risk-taking into market logic; this move allowed consumers to safely experience the thrill of creative risk, via improvisation, without getting carried away to the point of threatening the social order. Crucial to this narrative is contrasting free jazz and jazz-rock fusion to hard bop as unruly foils and the use of gentrification to make way for developers to build altars to neoclassical jazz in the form of concert venues (2018: 17, 28). Jay Hammond makes similar observations in his forthcoming article "Trad Jazz: Evicted Sound in New York and New Orleans," which outlines a sonic gentrification parallel to post-Katrina property gentrification: he describes a current trend of young musicians from esteemed music conservatories and elite colleges and universities moving to New Orleans and latching onto jazz recordings from the 1920s and '30s as "classic" performances to emulate; in the meantime, their live shows compete for venues and "Trad" status with those of long-term residents (2020). As Hammond puts it, "Like the displacement of poor and working people of post-Katrina gentrification, gentrification on Frenchmen St. is the eviction of tradition replaced by a dischronophonic and, yes, gentrified sound" (ibid.: 20–21).

The striking resonances between Chapman and Hammond's case studies and the effects of "world music genre culture" upon Garifuna popular music point to patterns in how the neoliberal project of privatizing the commons deploys multiculturalism, especially when it involves Black musical traditions. Partaking of the expressive cultures of nation-state minorities becomes a form of heritage tourism not only segregated from the complexities and intermixtures of community life but literally overtaking the territories of these communities. With the assistance of illegitimate governments since the 2009 coup, private resorts and charter/model cities encroach upon centuries–old Garifuna communities along the Honduran North Coast while freezing their music and dances in time to entertain foreigners (Anderson 2013; Loperena 2016; Miranda 2021).[8] Neoclassicism and neo–traditionalism provide the mark of the "eternal" that stands above reproach or questioning, a potentially totalizing move supporting the idea of neoliberalism's "inevitability" (Harvey 2005: 181–182).

---

[8] As described by Annie Bird, "The Charter Cities initiative cedes city-sized sections of Honduras to corporations or foreign governments to govern autonomously, indefinitely. Investors can make their own laws, build their own police force, administer services and regulate their economy" (Bird 2012). NYU economics professor Paul Romer, currently the World Bank's chief economist, conceived of charter cities as operating as private, autonomous units within countries and overseen by investors, bringing economic and cultural capital to economically poor regions through ventures such as urban development and resource extraction. In 2010, Romer turned to the Honduran administration of Porfirio Lobo Sosa (installed during the 2009 military coup), who expedited the legislation process and selected a coastal zone containing twenty-four Garifuna communities for charter city development (*The Economist* 2011). The effort stalled in 2012 after the Honduran Attorney General's office submitted their opinion to the Supreme Court that charter cities, known in Honduras as ZEDEs (Zonas Especiales de Desarrollo y Empleo), violate the sovereignty of the nation and the fundamental rights of its citizens; Romer himself also developed misgivings about the Honduran elite using charter cities undemocratically and bowed out of the project (Wallace 2017). However, current president Juan Orlando Hernández, then head of the Honduran Congress, was instrumental in spearheading Congress's replacement of four out of the five Supreme Court magistrates; subsequently, the new Court reversed the ruling, and Congress once again approved ZEDE construction in 2013 (Olson 2021). U.S.-backed company Honduras Próspera is creating the first ZEDEs in Honduras on Roatán Island, where Garifuna landed following their expulsion from St. Vincent Island in 1797, and on the North Coast just west of the port city of La Ceiba (Brustein 2021; Olson 2021). The majority Garifuna residents in both areas overwhelmingly oppose the project, which has moved forward without community consultation, and most believe they eventually will be expelled from their lands as long as the 2013 ZEDE law is in place (Molina 2021; Olson 2021). This law "gives the Honduran state the ability to expropriate land for the development or the expansion of each zone, which must be compensated, but cannot be challenged by landholders" (Geglia and Nuila 2021).

I want to close by addressing contradictions navigated by Garifuna world music's star performer, Honduran musician Aurelio Martinez. As a former representative of his home province in the Honduran Congress, Martinez has no misconceptions about his government's corruption and its lack of concern for the welfare of its Afro-indigenous and indigenous populations. In fact, he describes his music as a "weapon" against this state of affairs in recent interviews (Baker 2021; Contreras and Sayre 2021). But we also have to remember that, like Andy Palacio, Martinez performs a dichotomy between punta rock and Garifuna world music, toggling between punta rock dance parties within Honduras and U.S. Honduran communities with his band Los Bravos Del Caribe and internationally oriented neo-traditional shows—frequently on Euro-Anglo indie rock and jazz festival stages with the Garifuna Soul Band. Moreover, despite the fact that the Obama administration formally recognized the Honduran post-coup government, and subsequent U.S. administrations have continued providing financial aid to Honduran security forces despite the country's alarming record of human rights abuses against Garifuna activists, Martinez collaborated this year with the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Honduras to present neo-traditional-style songwriting workshops to Garifuna youth (Contreras and Sayre 2021; Miranda 2021).[9] In portraying punta rock as predominantly dance music for youth, the Garifuna world music narrative cannot easily account for the fact that, for instance, punta rock's emergence as a genre in 1979 provided the soundtrack to the independence movement in Belize and fostered the nation's embrace of Garifuna as a valued minority (Frishkey 2016: 79, 149–150). This narrative of punta rock's "commonality" versus Garifuna world music's "exemplarity" ultimately forces cultural ambassadors like Martinez—who choose the ethnicity industry as a medium—to support cultural resistors in word more than deed (Whitmore 2020: 48–49; Comaroff 2009: 16).[10] The deeply entrenched and geographically unlimited market ethic of neoliberalism ties their hands. However, Garifuna artists continue to emerge whose work complicates this narrative and to whom I dedicate my imminent research. In this essay, I name and describe a knot becoming slowly undone.

---

[9] It is worth noting that Ivan Duran provided music industry workshops as part of this endeavor, which was a four–month virtual program titled *Ritmos Unidos: Celebrando Nuestra Historia* (United Rhythms: Celebrating Our Story and History). Information about the program can be found here: https://eleanordubinsky.com/united-rhythms-ritmos-unidos.

[10] Aleysia Whitmore explains the ethnicity industry as follows: "In defining world music as a genre, I want to situate the genre's emergence in this larger ethnicity industry. The ethnicity industry is an umbrella category that elucidates the connections between products and industries often studied separately: cultural tourism, heritage products, and world music. After all, many people who engage with cultural tourism also purchase heritage products and participate in world music events as they search for traditional, spiritual, and socially conscious values that they believe are missing in their own societies […]. The Comaroffs argue that this industry sells cultural products and experiences, such as ethnic foods, clothing, and cultural tourism to people looking to identify, as the Comaroffs put it, as 'morally responsible, [and] multiculturally sensitive' (2009:16)" (2020: 48–49).

References

Anderson, Mark. 2013. "Notes on Tourism, Ethnicity, and the Politics of Cultural Value in Honduras." In *Central America in the New Millennium: Living Transition and Reimagining Democracy*, edited by Jennifer L. Burrell and Ellen Moodie, 276–295. New York: Berghahn Books.

Baker, Jessica Swanston (moderator). 2021. "A Conversation with Aurelio Martinez." sponsored by the University of Chicago Center for Latin American Studies, 21 April.

Bird, Annie. 2012. "The World's First Charter Cities in Honduras: From Neo-Liberalism to Neo-Colonialism." *Alliance for Global Justice*, 14 September. http://afgj.org/the-world%E2%80%99s-first-charter-cities-in-honduras-from-neo-liberalism-to-neo-colonialism.

Brustein, Joshua. 2021. "A Private Tech City Opens for Business in Honduras." *Bloomberg,* 27 March. https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-03-27/prospera-in-honduras-a-private-tech-city-now-open-for-business.

Cartwright, Garth. 2020. "'I'm a song catcher': 60 years of Arhoolie Records, the label for a lost America." *The Guardian*, 9 December. https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/dec/09/arhoolie-us-record-label-chris-strachwitz-blues-zydeco.

Chanona, Janelle. 2002. "Garifuna All Stars Return from Europe." Channel5Belize.COM, 7 November. http://edition.channel5belize.com/archives/16224.

Chapman, Dale. 2018. *The Jazz Bubble: Neoclassical Jazz in Neoliberal Culture*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Comaroff, John L. and Jean. 2009. *Ethnicity, Inc.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Contreras, Felix, and Anamaria Sayre. 2021. "'Music as a Weapon': A Discussion about Garifuna Music." NPR's Alt.Latino, 13 June. https://www.npr.org/2021/06/10/1005159259/music-as-a-weapon-a-discussion-about-garifuna-music.

Day, Meagan. 2020. "The Romance of American Clintonism." *Jacobin*, 21 October. https://www.jacobinmag.com/2020/10/youve-got-mail-nineties-films-rom-coms-capitalism.

Duran, Ivan. 1999. Liner notes to *Paranda: Africa in Central America*. Stonetree Records STR CD–018. Compact Disc.

———. 2007. Personal Interviews, Benque Viejo del Carmen, Belize. 27 April and 26 July.

———. 2011. Personal Interview, Benque Viejo del Carmen, Belize. 19 May.

Edgar, Jacob. 2008. Phone Interview. 7 March.

Eyre, Banning. 2000. "Review: Paranda: Africa in Central America." NPR's All Things Considered. 27 September. http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1111625.

Frishkey, Amy. 2016. "Garifuna Popular Music 'Renewed': Authenticity, Tradition, and Belonging in Garifuna World Music." Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Los Angeles.

———. 2018. "Punta Rock: A Musical Ethnography." In *The Garifuna Music Reader*, 1st ed., edited by Oliver N. Greene, 220–264. San Diego: Cognella Academic Publishing.

Frith, Simon. 2000. "The Discourse of World Music." In *Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, edited by Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, 305–322. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Geglia, Beth and Andrea Nuila. 2021. "A Private Government in Honduras Moves Forward." *NACLA*, 15 February. https://nacla.org/news/2021/02/12/private-government-honduras-zede-prospera.

Gonzalez, Mike. 2004. "Music, Dreams and Desire." *Socialist Review*, Issue #281 (January). http://socialistreview.org.uk/281/music-dreams-and-desire.

Hale, Charles R. 2005. "Neoliberal Multiculturalism: The Remaking of Cultural Rights and Racial Dominance in Central America." *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 28, No. 1: 10–28.

Hammond, Jay. 2020. "Trad Jazz: Evicted Sound in New York and New Orleans." Unpublished Paper.

Harvey, David. 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Krüger, Simone. 2016. "The Appeal of Cool in World Popular Music: Identity, Authenticity and Branding." Paper presented at the Annual Conference (What is Cool?) of the Department of Social and Political Science, University of Chester, UK (9 March). https://ljmu.academia.edu/SimoneKruger, uploaded 21 June 2016.

Loperena, Christopher. 2016. "Radicalize Multiculturalism? Garifuna Activism and the Double-Bind of Participation in Postcoup Honduras." *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* Vol. 00, No. 0: 1–22.

Miranda, Miriam. 2021. "Afro-Indigenous People in Honduras Are Being Forcibly Displaced. Washington Is Complicit." In *These Times*, 11 October. https://inthesetimes.com/article/garifuna-honduras-indigenous-peoples-day-human-rights-corruption.

Molina, Carlos. 2021. "Ceibeños protestan por anexión de puerto Satuyé a Zede de Roatán." *La Prensa*, 1 June. https://www.laprensa.hn/honduras/ceibenos-protestan-por-anexion-de-puerto-satuye-a-zede-de-roatan-honduras-FYLP1467543.

n.a. 2011. "Hong Kong in Honduras." *The Economist*, 10 December. https://www.economist.com/international/2011/12/10/hong-kong-in-honduras.

Newyear, Tristra, Ivan Duran, and Dimitri Vietze. 2011. Liner notes to *Laru Beya*. Real World Records CDRW180. Compact Disc.

Olson, Jared. 2021. “5 Black Men Have Been Missing for a Year. Their Community Wants Answers.” *VICE*, 3 August. https://www.vice.com/en/article/m7ekkn/five-black-men-have-been-missing-for-a-year-their-community-wants-answers.

Palacio, Andy. 2007. Personal Interview, Benque Viejo del Carmen, Belize. 25 July.

Ryan, Ramor. 2008. “The Last Rebels of the Caribbean: Garifuna Fighting for Their Lives in Honduras.” *Upside Down World*, 27 March. http://upsidedownworld.org/main/content/view/1195/1/.

Stone, Michael C. 2006. “Garifuna Song, Groove Locale and ‘World–Music’ Mediation.” In *Cultural Identities and Media Representations*, edited by Natascha Vittinghoff and Stefan Kramer, 59–80. Albany: University of New York Press.

Wallace, Arturo. 2017. “Qué son las ZEDE, los polémicos territorios con los que Honduras quiere convertirse en el Hong Kong de América Latina que marcan las elecciones en el país centroamericano.” *BBC Mundo*, 23 November. https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-42030850.

Whitmore, Aleysia K. 2020. *World Music & The Black Atlantic: Producing & Consuming African-Cuban Musics on World Music Stages*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Frishkey, Amy. “Essay: Standing the Test of Time: Neo-Traditionalism as Neoliberalism in Garifuna World Music.” *Diagonal: An Ibero–American Music Review* 6, no. 3 (2021): 65–75.