

DEVELOPMENT, “CULTURE,” AND THE PROMISE OF MODERN PROGRESS

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ABSTRACT

This essay investigates the key tensions that arise within Jamaica’s new cultural policy “Toward Jamaica the Cultural Superstate.” The argument presented in the paper is that “culture” is a tricky and potentially dangerous site upon which to hinge national development goals, even though the expansion of cultural industries may well represent a viable and potentially lucrative strategy for economic development. This is because invariably, “culture” cannot do the work policy makers would like it to do, and its invocation within policy spheres usually already signals a kind of developmental distress, a perceived need for retooling through a form of social engineering. In other words, “culture” (in the anthropological sense) reflects and shapes, yet cannot in and of itself solve the most pressing challenges facing Jamaica today.

In thinking through the links between cultural development and economic growth, we are confronted with a constant tension: culture as a set of symbolic goods vs. culture as a “way of life.” Attempts to institutionalize these links entrench us within another tension, that between cultural policy for economic development and cultural policy for social development. While the latter raises issues related to the preservation of national, regional, and local cultures as foundations for community identities, the former interrogates processes of modernization (and currently, globalization). Both directions are undergirded by a series of assumptions about the relationships between states and citizens, between leaders and “ordinary people,” and between values and economic productivity. In this essay, I want to explore some of these

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assumptions by thinking through the ways culture becomes mobilized through policy as an instrument of governance. To do this, and to raise questions about the act of cultural policy-making more generally, I will offer a critical ethnographic reading of Jamaica's new cultural policy, "Toward Jamaica the Cultural Superstate." Ultimately, I will argue that "culture" is a tricky and potentially dangerous site upon which to hinge national development goals, even though the expansion of cultural industries may well represent a viable and potentially lucrative strategy for economic development. This is because invariably, "culture" cannot do the work policy-makers would like it to do, and its invocation within policy spheres usually already signals a kind of developmental distress, a perceived need for retooling through a form of social engineering. In other words, while "culture" (in the anthropological sense) reflects and shapes the worldviews and institutional arrangements of this (or any) society, it cannot in and of itself solve society's most pressing challenges. That is, if we understand "culture" to be the totality of what people do, and not as some sphere of life that is separate from others, then we must understand it as ever-evolving based on changing experiences and contexts.

"Soft Power" and Cultural Governance

Foucault's notions of governmentality and biopower represent a rethinking of power as a field of multiple forces. In this view, the state is a contradictory ensemble of practices and processes of governance that manage both the subjugation of populations and the elaboration of subjectivities by naturalizing the arbitrary (1991, 2003). For Foucault, governance is not only enacted in the juridical realm of law and policy, but also through the various institutions that discipline populations to have particular understandings of belonging and deviance, and in so doing, to accept the social hierarchies that shape those understandings (see also Bourdieu 1984, 1998). Like Gramsci, Foucault is interested in the cultural dimensions of power — its unmaking and remaking — but he does not see civil society as distinct from political society. In other words, where Gramsci locates counter-hegemony within the public sphere of intellectual and (to some extent) popular artistic production, Foucault sees the power of the state as "capillary" (1979). For Foucault, there is no "outside," as the process of governance always shapes even the parameters of the imagination. Yet while the art of governmentality creates a particular configuration of possibilities,

subjects also work within this configuration to reshape it according to their own agendas. Thus, there is a sense of dynamism in relation to socio-political fields, within which actors at various levels both reproduce and re-produce relations of power, not only institutionally but also informally.

One of the ways that states become social actors in everyday life is through the establishment of national cultural narratives. That states "have actively engaged in the production of national fantasies of *communitas*" (Aretzaga 2003: 396) is amply demonstrated by the plethora of anthropological and historical studies of cultural policies, and the concomitant literature on cultural politics and cultural struggles.² As an aspect of governance, cultural policy formulation embodies a form of social engineering because it creates blueprints for the generation of ideal citizens. Within Europe and the United States, cultural policy formulation has often been viewed as legitimating social hierarchies through metaphors of "distinction" or "taste" (Bourdieu 1984). However, within postcolonial contexts there has been a sense that cultural policy-making is a form of counter-hegemonic practice geared toward reorienting national sensibilities away from European colonial aesthetic hierarchies toward a valuation of that which is seen to be indigenously generated. This has especially been the case for states that have maintained complex political ties to empire during the post-colonial period (e.g. Puerto Rico, see Davila 1997), but is also a more general phenomenon in which newly-independent states are faced with the prospect of defining cultural difference while maintaining significant political and economic connections. From the point of view of state officials, the emphasis here is on modernization with a difference. But citizens, of course, enact their own visions of cultural modernity both through and beyond the spaces made available to them by policy-makers.

Virginia Dominguez (1992) has evocatively suggested that the whole enterprise of post-colonial cultural policy development is not, as it has generally been perceived, a counter-hegemonic act. Instead it represents a continuation of a form of European ideological hegemony that positions "culture" as a sphere of life separate from other spheres such as political organization, economic production, and technological innovation about which one might also formulate policies. This separation, she argues, is

2 The literature on national cultures and cultural politics is too vast to list here, but for review essays, see Alonso 1994; Fox 1990; Foster 1991; Glick Schiller 1997; Slocum and Thomas 2003; Yelvington 2001.

what provides the basis for the consolidation of particular class interests in and through post-colonial development projects:

Cultural policies in [post-colonial] countries don't just describe what there is that the government, the elites, or even the nonelites seek to value; they usually prescribe a particular direction the country should take 'culturally' in order to correct for some perceived societal flaw, such as internalized oppression, technological backwardness, destructive ingroup fighting, or a lack of historical awareness (Dominguez 1992: 36).

In other words, in carving out a distinctive place for the elaboration of a cultural heritage, anti-colonial elites both cultivate a notion of cultural identity and legitimate structures of post-colonial political authority — two key dimensions of nationalist discourse that Percy Hintzen has already identified (1997). In this way, Hintzen argues, "national elites became the agents of modernity and the instruments of equality" (1997: 63) through a developmental discourse that masks post-colonial relations of power and undermines "the symbolic power of ethnic nationalism," which is essentially, in his view, a discourse of race (1997: 66).

Indeed, in Jamaica the tension between blackness and creole multiracialism has informed cultural politics from establishment of Crown Colony rule to the present. On one hand, the early movement to cultivate a local aesthetic and promote a new vision of cultural citizenship remained wedded to British institutions and to the idea that these institutions would socialize the population within values that had, by then, been constructed as uniquely belonging to the middle classes — discipline, temperance, collective work, thrift, industry, Christian living, community uplift, and respect for the leadership of the educated middle classes. On the other hand, it gave symbolic primacy to historical events and select cultural practices deemed relevant to the majority of the population. This two-step emphasized social modernization with a difference — the cultivation of "middle-class values," "respectable" family structures, community mobilization, and political participation would facilitate Jamaica's economic growth while the population learned to publicly value those aesthetic practices which had previously been denigrated by colonial authorities.

Elsewhere, I outline the connections between broader political and economic initiatives and the development of a creole multi-racial cultural nationalist project over time (Thomas 1999, 2004). Here, I will just mention that Seaga's first cultural policy in 1963

reflected an emphasis on presenting an indigenous cultural history (a "folk blackness") that was understood as constituting Jamaica's African heritage. This policy sought to increase access to participation in the arts and to provide an institutional infrastructure for the preservation and presentation of the folk music, dances, games, and foods that had come to represent Jamaica's African heritage. However, the emphasis on a folk culture did not necessarily extend to support for lower- and working-class black Jamaicans' efforts toward racial and economic justice and self-determination. While the government's legitimation of aspects of Jamaica's African cultural heritage broadened the public space in which notions of national identity could be debated, the actual process of privileging particular elements of Jamaica's African cultural heritage also marginalized alternative visions. The attempt to consolidate a nationalist state, to inculcate soon-to-be-ex-subjects with a sense of national belonging and loyalty that would naturalize new relations of authority, validated a particular kind of citizen and a specific vision of cultural "progress" and "development" that prioritized creole multi-racial integration around the model of nationalist "respectability". Thus, Seaga's 1963 cultural policy reflected an apprehension, on the part of the nationalist leadership, about conceding symbolic ground to aspects of black Jamaicans' cultural productions within a country stratified along lines of race and class. This was particularly important during the early years of independence when the government needed to mobilize the population toward accepting a particular strategy of political and economic development, and at a time when the ideologies and mobilizing strategies of other sectors of the population potentially threatened the integrity of political parties' vision of multi-racial modernization and economic growth through the implementation of industrialization programmes (Lewis 1950, 1955).

But this was not the only vision of progress available to Jamaicans at the time of independence or afterwards. Competing understandings of Jamaican identity and political struggle have been rooted in a sense of racialized (and to a degree, transnational) citizenship. Brian Meeks has conceptualized the jockeying for position between these two understandings of citizenship by noting that while leaders have tended to define social movements in relation to national or class identities, "the people have invariably redefined [them] in terms of race" (2000: 169). These conflicting positions are supported by different institutional spaces and are expressed through different cultural practices, and it is the struggle

between them that has shaped both the content of development policies, and the context within which they are conceived. For these reasons, we can think of the formulation of cultural policies as constituting what Toby Miller and George Yudice have called “a privileged terrain of hegemony”:

[Cultural policies] provide a means of reconciling contending cultural identities by holding up the nation as an essence that transcends particular interests. In keeping with the negotiated conflict that lies at the heart of hegemony, the cultural domain produces challenges from those sectors that the contingency of history has moved into contestatory positions (2002: 8).

Cultural policy-making, in this view, provides a space in which to devise ways to relate the past to the present, and to a more emancipated future. However, it also seeks to organize and discipline populations through suggested behaviours toward the realization of a collective national subjectivity. It mobilizes a cultural identity for the national body, but masks the ways that “identity is a source of equality and simultaneously an instrument through which social and cultural hierarchies are reinforced” (Khan 2004: 13).

Cultural Policy Studies

The emergence of cultural policy studies in the 1970s was facilitated by the global institutional framework of UNESCO, and reflected a concern with the relationships between economic and social policy-making and the elaboration of a cultural framework for development. This was especially the case for the states that became politically independent after World War II. On one hand, the funding of conferences dedicated to the formulation of cultural policies reflected a nationalist common sense that the territorial reach of states should bound some set of unique (and shared) cultural practices and visions, practices and visions that should be identified and valued (Marriott 1963). On the other hand, the 1970s flurry of cultural policy development betrays a recognition of the need to provide a kind of bulwark against the ill effects of modernizationist projects (Rostow 1960, Parsons 1951, Lipset and Bendix 1959), to protect “indigenous” aesthetic practices in the face of attempts to socialize people into an acceptance of a unilinear model of development that conceived of local cultures as “backward” but ultimately recuperable by their relocation to the categories of “heritage” or “patrimony.” Cultural policy studies gained a political agenda through cultural studies (and critical

anthropology), most particularly through the destabilization of the idea that cultures exist as stable knowable entities that provide the foundations for identities. Stuart Hall's oft-invoked phrase that identities are always processes of "becoming" rather than states of "being" (1990) worked to transform paradigms that viewed cultures as functionally integrated and unchanging through time.

In the contemporary period, cultural policy studies have generally been concerned with the place of cultural production within neo-liberal economic frameworks, mirroring UNESCO's 1996 shift away from viewing the state as primarily a supplier of cultural services to the public, and toward the privatization or localization of cultural services (Wise 2002). This changed context requires increased attention to issues of hegemony and difference *within* national communities, which has led scholars to investigate the diminished role of the public sector in formulating ideas about cultural "goods." For example, Javier Stanziola's (2002) analysis of how the shift toward empowering non-profit organizations in Chile has led to a more pluralistic proliferation of cultural expressions reflects a broader transition that has been occurring throughout Latin America. Where early government support for cultural development initiatives tended to take a paternalistic approach to culture that was rooted in colonial history and that therefore emphasized the creation of "high art," since the 1970s there has been a move to diversify cultural initiatives. This move broadened the scope of cultural manifestations that were now included within the realm of nationalist representations, and was itself the result of increased schooling and literacy rates, the emergence of economies of scale resulting from more diversified economic development, the introduction of information technology, and the expansion of urban growth (Stanziola 2002). Within the new context, the state works more collaboratively with an emergent non-profit sector — and, in the case of Puerto Rico and elsewhere (Davila 1997, 2001), a private sector.

Scholars interested in cultural policy have also begun to investigate the effects of cultural institutionalization. For example, Vincent Dubois (2004) analyzes the ways French cultural policy, institutionalized in the 1970s and 1980s, led to processes of cultural specialization, professionalization, and cultural "promotion" that turned the focus in cultural development initiatives from emphasizing "everyday" culture and local democracy to a more "technical" orientation, which in turn displaced local activists who had previously been at the forefront of these activities in favour of

a professional class of cultural arbiters. Institutionalization, within this context, also detached cultural mobilization from other sectors (youth, education, sports) and created new avenues for career specialization. For those who believed they could change social and political relations through cultural involvement, these transformations generated a broad sense of disillusionment.

More generally, cultural policy scholars have concerned themselves with how the context of neo-liberal globalization has transformed cultural policy formulation toward the identification of cultural products to sell (through various kinds of arrangements) in a competitive global market. This is not only the case in many Latin American contexts (Yudice 2003), or in the United States (where it is framed as urban renewal), but also in countries like South Korea, where beginning in the mid-1990s the establishment of cultural identity has been geared toward promoting “a sense of competitiveness within cultural industries in a global society” (Yim 2002: 40). During the 1960s and 1970s in South Korea, culture was positioned as a motivating factor supporting the government’s priority of achieving economic growth through an export-oriented industrialization strategy. Within this context, an emphasis on “traditional” values was seen to serve economic development. During the 1980s, when the growth strategy was reaching its peak, culture and the arts were re-conceptualized as solutions to social problems, and were mobilized in order to counter the effects of intensified materialism, commercialism, individualism, hedonism, and violence — “isms” seen as resulting from an influx of Western culture. Since the mid-1990s, the rationale for Korea’s cultural policy has been rooted in the exchange value of culture, and as such the government has sought to promote contemporary arts and popular culture as a means to encourage “the creativity of the people,” seen as an “important element of economic development in a knowledge-based information society” (Yim 2002: 44).

In the Korean case (as well as others that I’ve cited here), we see a move toward diversifying the cultural *content* of what can legitimately represent the nation, toward working with civic non-profit and private institutions to promote what is understood as “cultural development,” and toward finding ways to be economically competitive within the contemporary global situation. This is a process that has also occurred in Jamaica. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, for example, the Jamaican Cultural Development Commission began to move beyond an emphasis on preserving and presenting “folk culture” by co-sponsoring many of

the food festivals that were popping up in areas around the country and by spearheading the return of the Independence Day street dance. Beyond the specific actions taken in particular countries, however, more general questions have emerged, questions that have to do with why attention to "culture" takes on an urgency in particular moments and not others, and with how "culture" becomes seen as useful for "development" within specific contexts. These questions require that we look more closely at the ways interested links are posited between "culture" and "development," an issue to which I will return later in this essay.

Within the Anglophone Caribbean, the last two decades of economic crisis have eroded many of the previous gains in health and nutrition, literacy and education, employment and social services, gender empowerment and political stability (Barrow 1998; Dupuy 2001). Structural adjustment programmes have mandated repeated currency devaluations, which, alongside privatization drives, have resulted in a higher cost of living and an increase in poverty. Unemployment has escalated, especially among women and youth, and crime rates have skyrocketed, especially those related to drug trafficking and domestic violence. Caribbean nations, though rich in natural resources, are increasingly competing with each other, in addition to competing as a region with other regions. The key economic sectors — agriculture, mineral extraction, offshore assembly production, and tourism — are dominated by foreign firms and are dependent on external demand or foreign consumers for their services. As a result, the region is increasingly reliant upon exporting more of its work force to the United States, and at the same time it is becoming a magnet for illegal drug trafficking and money laundering (Dupuy 2001: 524-526, 529). Moreover, the shift to service- and information-based industries worldwide has increasingly encouraged female-generated labour migration at the same time that local opportunities for both women and under-educated and unskilled young men have contracted.

Since capital has become increasingly flexible and labour markets have become increasingly differentiated (within and across national borders), it has become more difficult for states throughout the Global South to provide for and socialize their citizens. As a result, many state functions have been redirected to new sites (Sassen 2000; Trouillot 2001). It has also become progressively more of a challenge for states to legislate the "cultural content" of the nation (Trouillot 2001). This represents a significant change from the

nationalist period, when cultural policy emerged as part of an attempt to provide institutional spaces that would help Jamaicans move beyond Euro-centric notions of cultural value at a time when many were worried about the extent to which the “pluralities” within Anglophone Caribbean societies hindered the creation of unified nation-states. The current context raises other concerns about the proliferation of violent crimes, about the paucity of avenues for economic development, and about a reassertion of racial and national hierarchies that recall earlier imperial moments. These are the concerns that shape the context for current efforts to reposition “culture” as useful for development.

“Toward Jamaica, The Cultural Superstate”

If context is everything, then it is striking that Jamaica’s new cultural policy is introduced with an epigraph, Claude McKay’s “If We Must Die.” This poem was written in 1919 following the explosions of urban violence against blacks in cities across the United States. The “Red Summer” of 1919 reflected white backlash to the various changes wrought by World War I, such as the massive migration of African-Americans from south to north (which increased competition for factory jobs and transformed residential neighbourhoods), the return of black veterans whose experience of discrimination in America was made more bitter by the fact that they had just returned from fighting a war that was justified in terms of freedom and democracy, and the re-establishment of the Ku Klux Klan whose violent intimidation campaign played on white rage and fear, sentiments that were stoked by popular cultural products such as the film “Birth of a Nation.” To begin with “If We Must Die,” then, is to draw parallels between the racial terrorism of the post-World War I period in the United States and the contemporary moment in Jamaica.

Indeed, the policy starts by outlining today’s context, listing increased crime and violence, drug trafficking and Americanization as some of the urgent challenges facing Jamaicans:

Jamaica must contend with the paradoxical opportunities and threats of globalization, the penetrating cultural presence of the United States with its influence on the cultural integrity and identity of our population, and the leadership role Jamaica must play in Caribbean cultural activities (9).

The sense that Jamaica has a leadership role to play within the Caribbean is underlain by a more general and profound disillusionment with a creole nationalist project that has collapsed

(Bogues 2002; Carnegie 2002; Meeks 1994; Scott 1999). Within this context, the domain of "culture" is held up as a way to get back on track, to rebuild a national community in the face of both internal and external threats. And the invocation of the term "cultural superstate," though nowhere defined in the policy, could perhaps be seen as a call to action in this regard.

The stated goals of the cultural policy are to affirm national identity and a sense of pride that is "founded in the historic courage and resilience of our people," to "foster the participation of all in national life and promote investment in national cultural development" (5), to "discover the things that make for peace and build up the modern life" (8); and to "reflect in its expression the notion of cultural excellence and international achievement that our people have established over the years" (8). The assumptions that undergird these goals are as follows: 1) Jamaica's social "chaos" is due, at least in part, to a lack of self-esteem and sense of belonging among the mass of (black) people; 2) this lack of self-esteem is due to the belittling of "things African" (and by corollary, "things Jamaican"), a belittling that is related to the persistence of colonial hierarchies of color and class as well as to contemporary global inequalities; 3) to develop self-esteem and a sense of belonging, it is necessary to engage people with events in their history and their cultural heritage with which they should identify; 4) higher self-esteem will result in greater national pride; and, 5) greater national pride will lead not only to a more productive economy, but will also strengthen people's ability to "live well together."

Culture, here, is seen as an active force, one that has the ability to transform both intimate and public domains:

Culture must therefore be used positively to motivate community action and enrich and animate community life so that they may willingly engage in nation building. It is the only means to achieve sustainable development (24).

Yet, this concept of culture — as a sphere of action that is separate from, and therefore able to autonomously influence, other spheres — raises some critical problems. Within the policy, culture is defined as "the way of life of a people," as "the dynamic reservoir of ways of thinking and doing accumulated over time" and "the knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, customs, traditions, distinctive institutions and its ways of making meaning in life" (Ministry, 9). Here, there is an emphasis on a holistic and dynamic definition of culture as "what people do" in all spheres of life. But this is an emphasis that is difficult to sustain. The policy goes on to also argue that

culture “is central to the definition of the basic unit of economic development — the individual and the human spirit — and the eventual unleashing of creative energies” (9-10). With this, we move from a generically anthropological definition of culture to an instrumental one — one, in fact, that links culture and economic development in ways that are reminiscent of mid-twentieth century modernizationist paradigms. In this way, “culture” becomes a problem to be solved, and at the same time, the basis for solutions. This is quite a lot of work for one concept to do.

In spite of a stated desire to maintain a holistic concept of culture, the new cultural policy often slips into more instrumentalist visions that maintain two rather static visions of culture. The first — culture as possession — usually manifests as commentary regarding cultural “loss” and pleads a “return to values.” This commentary positions Jamaican culture as an entity that is “under siege” by “foreign cultural influences” that are running rampant and unfettered. The second — culture as having purportedly “positive” or “negative” elements, or as UNESCO Representative Simon A. Clarke put it during the 1996 consultations in Kingston, as “either a help or a hindrance to overall development” — often maps specific cultural practices onto particular groups of people. In this way, racial, ethnic, and class antagonisms are coded through the language of culture, and are further obscured through discourses of multiculturalism. This slippage produces three tensions that provide an animating structure for the discussions of challenges and potential interventions throughout the new policy.

Culture is Dynamic v. Culture has Boundaries

This first tension underlies the assertions that there are “unique cultural manifestations and distinctive style that can be considered to be quintessentially Jamaican” (Ministry, 5), or that there is a Jamaican “cultural integrity” (9) that can be penetrated — and subsequently diluted and made inauthentic — by other (“foreign”) cultures. From this vantage point, “culture” needs to be protected by the government, which, it is argued, must

recognize, protect and promote all cultural expressions and products developed by the Jamaican people in the course of our history, including all forms of African retentions, European-based traditions, intellectual expressions and products, nation language, Rastafarianism, folklore, jerk concept, *et al*, including any form or expression notable or

recognizable as Jamaican and which would be a source of national pride and identity (17).

The sense here is that Jamaican culture is quantifiable and recognizable, though the terms of this recognition are unclear. On one hand, what is recognized is a sense of heritage — "our connection to our past" (29) — which, as the "reservoir of creativity in Jamaican society" (30), is to provide inspiration for action in the present. But the framing of culture as heritage always puts us in the bind of viewing change as loss. That is, if "heritage" implies that there exists a cauldron filled with cultural practices developed in the past that we can now draw upon to confront contemporary situations, then change must mean loss. This equation evokes a kind of Herskovitsian model of culture as a quantifiable series of traits that might be retained, reinterpreted, or abandoned, rather than a more processual view of cultural transformation that instead privileges people's own creativity and responsiveness to a broader context (Gilroy's "changing same," or Mintz and Price's "underlying grammatical principles").

But "heritage" is important in the cultural policy not only because of the kinds of insights past practices may bring to bear on the present, but also because it is a potential source of income. In assessing the extent to which public and private agencies have mobilized to showcase Jamaica's heritage to a global audience (by gaining recognition, for example, as a UNESCO World Heritage Site), the policy concludes that "there have been serious inadequacies as over the last few years we have failed to capitalize on our heritage product for economic advantage" (30). With this statement, heritage becomes "product," a commodity for sale in a competitive global marketplace, and as with all products, we must then be concerned with uniqueness and quality control. This raises the issue of "authenticity," a concept that comes up in several places throughout the policy. For example, it is argued that we must "assure authenticity" in relation to "traditional knowledge bearers" (30), that within the tourism industry we must promote a "more authentic cultural expression of the Jamaican people" (38), and that when training tourist workers, we must ensure "the authenticity of our product and information" (39). Whereas in an earlier moment, claims to "cultural authenticity" were "a crucial element in resistance to colonialism" (Khan 2004: 11), providing the tools to dismantle colonial assertions that black and brown West Indians were either culture-less or culturally inferior, these claims are now mobilized mainly within the frame of commodification. Yet

defining the “authenticity” of a particular product or practice is never a neutral proposition, but involves a process of external evaluation that, as many scholars have pointed out, is always interested and always reflects a political agenda (Jackson 2005).

The tension between viewing culture as either dynamic or bounded also emerges in relation to the policy’s approach to social engineering. It is argued that the cultural policy must “be concerned about the type of person we seek to shape through our culture, education and social systems” (10). The view of culture as dynamic is reflected in the statement that “we create the culture that simultaneously creates us” (10), yet a more and more bounded vision emerges as the policy outlines the need to “seek consensus on the Jamaican person that we need to create” (10). According to the policy, this person is ideally committed to national and regional development, should understand Jamaica and the region, should “assume his/her role in the unending process that is called human development” (11), should know the history of Jamaica and the Caribbean and should see him/herself both in national and regional terms, should be multi-lingual so he or she can be “competitive in a global economy” (11), should recognize “his/her place within the cultural diversity of Jamaica and thereby promote tolerance, respect for others, and peace in communities,” and should be “open to experiencing other cultures” (11).

The focus on developing particular kinds of citizens is where the policy is most explicit about its disciplinary objective. Here, the aim is to generate the sense that the state is not outside its citizens, but is imminent within each of us (Althusser 1971). This becomes more transparent if we raise the questions that haunt each of the above statements: How would a commitment to national and regional development be learned and subsequently manifested? What are the aspects of Jamaica and the region that must be understood? What is our role in the process of human development? What aspects of Jamaican and Caribbean history should be foregrounded? How do we come to find our “place” in relation to other sub-national communities, and does this necessarily breed peaceful respect? And finally, how “open” should Jamaicans be to “other cultures”? Which ones, and in what ways? None of the answers to these questions are givens, yet calling attention to the processes of naturalizing ideological positions into “common sense” also allows us to make visible how broader power dynamics shape the notions of appropriateness, “authenticity,” and

value that are institutionalized through the educational system and other civil society spheres.

These dynamics hide in commentary such as the argument that the cultural policy "must also reflect on the inflated, even destructive air of superiority or distorted sense of being by certain sections of our population, also as a result of slavery and colonialism" (8). To be sure, what is being quietly referenced here are the internal hierarchies of class and color that are so acutely felt by Jamaicans of all stripes, but rooting these hierarchies only in relation to historical processes of slavery and colonialism obscures the ways they are actively produced and reproduced in the present at multiple levels (locally, nationally, and internationally) and in various institutional sites.

Promoting Cultural Diversity v. Protecting Cultural Integrity

This brings me to the second of three tensions, that between the "promotion of cultural diversity as an important element of national identity" (9) and the sense that Jamaicans must be protected vis-à-vis those "foreign" cultural influences assumed to be deleterious to the cultivation of the ideal citizen delineated above. This tension is most evident in discussions about the arts and the idea of cultural loss or endangerment:

On one hand, communities benefit from contact with other cultures, receiving a kind of cultural stimulation and fertilization from this exposure and openness. On the other hand however, cultures in communities require special considerations and programmes for their development and may be endangered by the imposition or dominance of other cultures, especially those of more technologically advanced societies (10).

The policy thus suggests that there is an important equilibrium to be maintained between embracing cosmopolitanism and valuing that which is considered to be distinctly Jamaican, that there must be a way to be global on Jamaicans' own terms.

With the following statement, the policy also implicitly alludes to the global dimensions of racial prejudice and discrimination by defining those elements of Jamaican experience that should be privileged:

While not restricting our global capacity, there is a need to foster and promote as a means of priority our Caribbean and African international identity, while mindful of the importance of all other aspects of our diverse reality (14).

A delicate balance is being performed here, a two-step that seeks to privilege the histories, cultural practices, and experiences of black Jamaicans without undoing the creole model of national cultural identity. This issue arises again in the discussion of "excellence" (the assertion that Jamaica is *likkle but tallawah*). Excellence, the policy states, is the

reflection of the undying, unrelenting spirit of a people determined to rise from the ashes of enslavement to the prowess that was the history of their earlier civilization. It is the embodiment of that vigour and energy that fashioned the tales of protest and rebellion so notable in the pages of our history (18).

Here, "prowess" is attributed to Jamaicans' African heritage, which while unstated, is positioned as the fount not only of a history of protest and rebellion, but also of current achievements worldwide. By carefully privileging blackness in these two examples, diversity emerges within the policy as a problem in two registers — internally and internationally.

Internally, diversity is a problem of national inclusion or exclusion. The policy recognizes over and over again that Jamaica is "composed of several and varied communities, each with its own cultural characteristics" (9), and that therefore a national cultural identity must "include aspects of each community as they interact to create a common system of being, thinking and doing, and the individual's cultural identity will be based on his/her familiarity with the cultural characteristics of the community of which s/he is a part as well as in relation to the surrounding community/-communities" (9). The national motto is invoked to talk about the "historical reality" of Jamaicans who were "forced to discover ways and means to live together in relative racial and cultural harmony" (16). However, the problem that is identified within the cultural policy is that the diversity of Jamaica "can only be successfully expressed if each community is afforded opportunities to promote their specific and unique identity and expression" (16), but that "over the years our formal processes have emphasized our European past far more than our African, Indian, Chinese and other heritage" (29). Appeals to creolization, therefore, have not been seen to remove the conditions that have made possible a continued marginalization of (especially) cultural practices that are seen as "African" in derivation.

This is because, as most recent work on creolization has maintained, cultural mixing does not occur in a vacuum, but is

shaped by broader power dynamics (Khan 2001; Puri 2004; Sheller 2003). By emphasizing processes of rupture and creativity, and by stressing the development of a shared cultural and social repertoire that could provide the basis for a national identity, much of the early work on creolization tended to obscure the actual conflicts that occurred and power relations that shaped these developments (Bolland 1997; Price 1998). In fact, the process of creolization has taken place *within* historical and contemporary relations of domination and subordination at local, regional, national, and global levels (Mintz 1996; Mintz and Price 1992). These dynamic relations of power have constrained the extent to which the various visions, practices, and aesthetic norms of particular groups (in the case at hand, lower-class black Jamaicans) have been represented within the creole formation at any given moment. This is implicitly referenced by the policy when it calls for the government to "foster and promote opportunities for full expression of Jamaica's vibrant grassroots culture, recognizing the contribution of this sector to the dynamic Jamaican product that we now boast" (17). Here, we see a recognition that ideologies of creole-ness have tended to obscure actually existing (racial, class, and ethnic) inequalities.

Shalini Puri extends this point in her study of the centrality of notions of hybridity in Caribbean nationalist treatises more generally. "Discourses of hybridity," she argues, "perform several functions:"

They elaborate a syncretic New World identity, distinct from that of its 'Mother Cultures'; in doing so, they provide a basis for national and regional legitimacy. Second, they offer a way of balancing and/or displacing discourses of equality, which has led to their importance in many instances for securing bourgeois hegemony. Third, discourses of hybridity have been implicated in managing racial politics — either by promoting cultural over racial hybridity or by producing racial mixtures acceptable to the elite. For all these reasons, post-colonial nationalisms in the Caribbean have canonized nonthreatening hybridities such as those embodied at particular times by the callaloo, the creole, and the mestizo (Puri 2004: 45).

Puri suggests, however, that we might productively read hybridity discourses as manifestos, as hopeful visions of what Aisha Khan has identified as "democratic (equal) political representation, a cosmopolitan worldview, and therefore consummate modernity in a global context" (Khan 2004: 8). Indeed, this is the kind of reading that provides a basis for imagining that a cultural policy could make a difference in the ways people think about their relationships

to cultural practice, to each other, and to national structures of material and ideological power.

Because there is often an unwillingness to talk about these structures in explicit terms, the power dynamic shaping both cultural expression and the formulation of cultural policy is often displaced to dynamics occurring outside the purported cultural boundaries of the nation-state. In other words, if diversity is something that must be carefully managed internally, it is all the more critical to intervene to protect Jamaican cultural integrity from what is often portrayed as a foreign (US) cultural "invasion," while at the same time acknowledging how important particular cultural "interactions" have been:

Our cultural diversity has been enriched not only by the strong spiritual forces that have co-habited within our borders...but also by the constant interaction with foreign cultures over the years (16).

By privileging "interaction," the policy positions a particular sense of cultural transformation, one in which the partners in the process of cultural exchange are more or less equally positioned. From this point of view, it becomes important to call for the government "to provide and promote opportunities for Jamaicans to engage or interact with foreign cultures" (17), and to "provide for our people opportunities to experience the excellence of foreign cultural expressions through exchanges and co-production agreements both within our shores and in other parts of the world" (19).

However, this sense of interaction also feeds into a notion that cultures are bounded (that "foreign" cultures are not always already present within Jamaica), and that therefore there are instances in which cultural interaction would be perceived as a threat. This is what leads the policy to emphasize the development of stronger links between the educational system and cultural institutions in the section on "Culture and Education." It is posited that if there were a greater "cultural component in the school's curricula" (26) and if youth learned more about Jamaican history, then Jamaicans would be empowered "to participate fully in national development" (27). Again, this places the burden of social and economic development on "culture" rather than on, say, a good land reform or job creation policy.

What is even more critical, though, is the assumption that what underlies the "upsurge in violence and anti-social behaviour" (26) about which people are justifiably concerned is a cultural *absence*, one that is "aggravated by the extensive diet of foreign

influences provided to [youth] by an expanding cable market" (27). That youth are singled out as especially vulnerable is made clear in the following passage:

This [media expansion] has serious implications for a Jamaica whose population is essentially a young one, with more than 60% of the Jamaican population comprised of persons in the 0-30 age cohort. This group represents active participation in the cultural process. They watch more television, use the internet and consume certain cultural products like popular music, and are usually confronted with a wider range of social and cultural problems (27).

These issues resurface in the "Culture, Technology, and Media" section of the policy, where it is stated that:

One of the fundamental challenges of culture from age to age is the tension between traditional knowledge as promoted and upheld by societies and transmitted, largely through orature to the next generation as somewhat sacrosanct, and the quasi-sacrilegious embracing of new technologies by the now generation" (41).

The idea presented here is that "local cultures, especially in developing societies like Jamaica, are at risk of disappearing as the young embrace the new values and realities brought to their living room by way of these new technologies. Because of these technologies, our societies, and especially our young, are constantly bombarded by foreign influences and values" (41).

In these two areas, the policy links current "anti-social" trends in the behavioural patterns of children and youth in Jamaica directly to "worrying deficits in their social skills, personal integrity, self and national awareness," and relates these "deficits" to "declining parental care and supervision, the absence of positive role models and deficiencies in the formal and informal educational and cultural systems" (27). The argument here is that there is a direct correlation between "alternative communications media, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, and, increasingly, to crime and violence" (27).

That all of Jamaica's most pressing social problems are here attributed to US media is striking in the degree to which it rehearses Frankfurt School critiques of the centrality of mass culture and mediation to the social reproduction of domination. Moreover, the vision that youth are somehow endangered and uncritical consumers reflects an inability to think through the ways local hierarchies of power shape the assessment that "foreign cultural

influences" are solely negative. The fact that youth often symbolically occupy the contested terrain of nationalists' deferred (or even derailed) development dreams does not preclude them from elaborating their own. In other words, on one hand, current processes of globalization throughout the Caribbean have generated increased rates of violent crime, unemployment, and poverty at the same time as structural adjustment programs have reduced government expenditure on health care, education, literacy programs, and other social services thereby heightening conditions of instability for the majority of Jamaican families. On the other hand, contemporary neo-liberal capitalist development has also created new possibilities for realizing ambition, and new opportunities for advancing new or previously marginalized ideologies and practices regarding citizenship and subjectivity.

In Jamaica, for example, youth have actively (if not intentionally) worked to transform aspects of old colonial hierarchies of race and gender, in part through their consumption and re-signification of aspects of African-American cultural production and style, and in part through a renegotiation of public representations through the space of dancehall. Indeed, many of the young people among whom I have conducted research believe that the circulation of ideas, practices, and styles between Jamaica and the United States is reciprocal, if unevenly so. Because they felt that as much as America had influenced Jamaican culture, Jamaicans also influenced culture in the United States, they tended to have a somewhat different outlook than either the older generation of middle-class professionals or the generation of working-class Jamaicans politicized by the various social movements during the 1970s. Contrary to the dominant image of the culturally bombarded and besieged Jamaican, powerless either to resist or critique that which is imposed from "elsewhere" — the image often proliferated by those who disparaged the growing influence of the United States — these youth often asserted to me that David could not only challenge Goliath, but could also influence what Goliath listened to, how he dressed, and what he liked. In other words, youth *critically engage* the full range of cultural practices and mediations with which they come into contact.

Nevertheless, the antidotes to Jamaica's various social ills that are presented in the cultural policy are to "encourage the development of programmes that reinforce the attitudes and values relevant and necessary for social cohesion and peaceful co-

existence, devising as well policies and programmes to arrest the negative and dysfunctional cultural values and practices to which children and young people are increasingly and uniquely susceptible" (28), to "give direction and support to programmes that encourage children and youth to think creatively and to learn about diverse cultures in order to encourage national pride and openness to other cultures, nurture a sense of national identity and awareness and foster tolerance and respect and faith in one's own culture" (28), and to "strengthen and consolidate domestic experiences of local expression in order to reduce the impact of these foreign cultural products" (41). These formulations reproduce the idea that youth are particularly endangered, reflecting a more general problem – the inability to see their aspirations (expressed through their cultural productions and practices) as valid expressions of their understanding of their own social positions.

It is true that one of the hallmarks of the current period is that media is perhaps more central to the formation of social worlds and imaginative possibilities (Appadurai 1991). However, ethnographic research might help us to move beyond the panic that is palpable within the cultural policy by giving us a sense of how media operates within wider social fields, and allowing us to see "not only how media are embedded in people's quotidian lives but also how consumers and producers are themselves imbricated in discursive universes, political situations, economic circumstances, national settings, historical moments, and transnational flows" (Ginsburg et al. 2002). In this way, we might be more attuned to the processes of negotiation that surround media consumption, and less likely to position media as transcendently powerful.

Cultural Practices v. Cultural Goods

This last tension reflects the difficulty of reconciling an anthropological understanding of culture with a market-driven vision of cultural goods, especially in relation to what might be thought of as the "goals" of these two approaches. That there is tension between the competing notions of culture as a commodity that can be exploited for national development within the global marketplace, and culture as uncommodifiable and central to shaping the life-dynamic is acknowledged in the policy's section on Cultural Industries and Entrepreneurship:

One of the challenges that face culture is the tension between cultural practices or expression that form a natural base for the social and spiritual order of their community and the

translation of that knowledge/expression into tools/goods/-services/products for economic power and development (32).

The pervasiveness of the market-oriented vision within the cultural policy — and particularly in the sections on Cultural Industries, Culture and Trade, and Culture and Tourism — is the result of a new move whereby capitalizing on “culture” is seen as a strategy that might replace traditional industries (seen as in a phase of decline) in mitigating the effects of globalization.

The argument presented is that Jamaica’s cultural industries are potentially critical to new economic growth strategies and might, “if developed through greater and concentrated investment...provide a real alternative to failing traditional industries” (6). The contention that *Jamaicans* should benefit from exploiting their “culture” is justified through assertions that others (such as the US recording industry) *already are*:

It is ironic that our cultural products continue to be undervalued here at home even when they have crossed borders and established significant market niches in a large number of developed countries. Our products in music are played everywhere while many of our images, textiles, fashion, traditional knowledge and dances are the subjects of or have inspired documentaries, films, sculptures and art works in those societies (36).

The parallel to these observations lies in the policy’s recognition of the dual role of the Jamaican diaspora in relation to economic development. On one hand, the policy emphasizes that Jamaicans abroad should be included in “the processes, programmes and strategies geared to nation building” (14). On the other hand, the importance of what Louise Bennett called “reverse colonization” is also acknowledged, and the government is called upon to position “our cultural products, like our people, in the global markets of the world, to national economic, social and cultural advantage” (14). Again, the idea here is that Jamaica “exports” so many people who have made significant and publicly recognized contributions to the world in the realm of sports, art, academia, and science without those contributions redounding back to Jamaica.

The policy therefore promotes a kind of FUBU (“for us, by us”)³ initiative through which Jamaican cultural products and

3 FUBU is an extremely popular hip hop clothing brand that was started by four young African-American men in New York City, and that uses notions of community identity and solidarity both to define itself as different from the mainstream and to sell itself as a racially-specific commodity in a global marketplace.

Jamaican cultural industries would be supported and protected, even while taking advantage of new technologies and networks:

Now there is an even greater need to ensure that more of our stories are told, and by us...Our people need to see ourselves in film and on television, hear our voices on radio networks and through all communications media, to take the message as far afield as we would, based on provisions made through the global network (21-22).

Further, the policy argues that by encouraging cultural entrepreneurship among, in particular, lower-class youth, the cultural industries might play a role "in the reduction of poverty and violence and the promotion of youth employment in Jamaica" (7, see also Kelley 1997). Yet it is difficult to see specifically how this kind of entrepreneurship might be promoted and talent channeled (beyond encouraging participation in festivals like CARIFESTA and PANAFEST).⁴

Where the policy is clearer in this regard is in its discussion of cultural tourism. Here, the policy promotes the (environmentally-sustainable) development of heritage sites, the coordination of educational and cultural agencies in tourist areas, the marketing of "Jamaica's cultural goods and services" (40) within hotels and tourism centres, and the provision (for tourists) of "real opportunities to enjoy the people's way of life in communities, and experience the cultural traditions and expressions for which Jamaica is well known" (38). Yet two issues remain unaddressed. First, while the policy indicts the expansion of the all-inclusive sector for making it more difficult for smaller properties, restaurants, and craft vendors to stay afloat, these concerns are not addressed in the position statements. And second, international attention to Jamaica's high rates of violent crime makes its tourism industry vulnerable within a competitive region. How, within this context, will cultural tourism and cultural industries more broadly replace sugar, bauxite, bananas and coffee? FTZs and remittances? What does it mean, ultimately, to sell "culture" in a global marketplace? And what are the long-term possibilities and constraints of building an economy around this particular niche?

4 CARIFESTA is the Caribbean Festival of the Arts, first held in 1972 in Georgetown, Guyana, and is designed to showcase the creative and artistic skills of the member countries of CARICOM, as well as the wider Caribbean and its diasporas.

PANAFEST is a biennial festival of arts and culture that is held in Guyana that is designed to promote Pan-Africanism.

Conclusion

These questions bring us back to the initial concern with the purported relationships between cultural development and economic growth, and with the ways cultural citizenship is always mapped in relation to broader development goals. These are relationships that, as Michaeline Crichlow (2005) and others have pointed out, change over time as both state actors and state subjects reformulate their relationships to development initiatives. Post-independence cultural policy-making in Jamaica was geared toward *changing people's minds* about Jamaica's African heritage. This was done in order to shift ideas about relative cultural value that were institutionalized throughout the colonial period in the hopes of spurring economic development. While this project has been of critical importance, many of the people in the community where my research is based did not feel that the cultural project was sufficiently bolstered by an economic one. That is, they felt that the economic policies pursued since independence did not appreciably *change people's positions* within Jamaica's colour-class-culture nexus. Despite the various shifts within ethnic divisions of labour that arose as a result of policies pursued during the 1970s as well as later privatization initiatives, many community members felt that the lives of poorer Jamaicans remain institutionally structured in disadvantageous ways that were reminiscent of the colonial period. In this respect, valuing a cultural heritage could do little, as they didn't believe that the answer to their problems lay in plumbing the past for moral lessons.

What Alan Stanbridge's study of cultural policy in England shows us is that neither the economic model of cultural development (promoting the economic potential of the arts) nor the paternalistic model (promoting "excellence" in artistic expression) has been successful in transforming notions of cultural *value*, despite England's official emphasis on multiculturalism (2002). These transformations, while supported by cultural and educational initiatives, must ultimately be generated through real political and economic change on a global scale. Within Jamaica's current context, then, as Crichlow argues, it should not be surprising that people seem to be "interested in agendas which aid them in seeing through the state" (2005: 226), rather than those seeking to align them directly with particular state projects and visions.

Yet the new cultural policy continues to struggle with these issues, while also attempting to identify the spaces within the global

economy where Jamaican culture might find a market. Despite the various critiques I've made throughout this essay, the new policy *does* raise many important issues (several of which I've not discussed here, such as the importance of foregrounding environmental concerns in cultural development initiatives, and the need to strengthen copyright and intellectual property protections). Moreover, within the current global political economy, there seem to be few alternative avenues through which economic growth might be promoted. In fact, several other countries are attempting to begin harnessing the economic potential of what they are referring to as "soft power," a sort of Gramscian understanding of the ways particular kinds of cultural products — such as Japanese children's toys, cartoons, and *animé* — shape global cultural imaginaries beyond the conventional sense of political influence (Anne Allison, personal communication).

Yet, we would do well to reposition the development of self-esteem and national pride and the prioritizing of cultural industries in economic development as separate issues. There is a hazard to invoking "culture" as a vehicle for the cultivation of pride that would then presumably give people a greater stake in national economic futures. This is because it implies that "culture" is something more profound than "what people do," something that is merely a proxy for other identities and social positions (such as race, class, nationality) that then become naturalized. This is Walter Benn Michaels' (1995) argument against the way anthropologist James Clifford supported Mashpee claims to Native American status, claims that would then afford them particular land rights as delineated by the US government. In his attempt to destabilize assertions that the Mashpee claimants no longer participated in cultural practices that were thought to be "traditionally" Mashpee and therefore were not eligible for land rights, Clifford (1988) argued that because culture is not fixed, the legitimacy of cultural identities should not be judged in relation to the cultural practices of past generations. While this argument would appear to be in line with more general anthropological critiques of essentialism, Michaels argues that instead it propagates a different kind of essentialism. For Michaels, the danger of Clifford's argument is that it roots Mashpee-ness in something that *precedes* cultural practice, thereby also fixing relationships between people beyond sociality. In other words, culture is flexible and fluid, but if we can then say that there is something about Mashpee-ness that is transcendent, we are invoking biology, and therefore slipping into older essentialisms

that grounded racist assumptions and practice. When we imply that there are some things that are so fundamentally Jamaican that they shouldn't change, that they *can't* change, or when we assert that cultural change can be engineered to support other kinds of goals, we risk trafficking in similar assumptions. Positioning culture outside of practice, and more importantly, outside contexts of practice, forestalls a more nuanced and complex analysis of social process.

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