

ABSTRACT

Popular Music Production in Kingston, 1956 -2006.
Creative Genius, (Dis) functional Institutional Framework

Dennis Oliver Howard

Kingston the creative cradle of Jamaica has been largely responsible for the development of distinctive genres of popular music that have impacted on the global in significant ways, contributing to the international record and copyright industries. The capital city Kingston has been the cradle for most of the creativity and innovations in popular music production. This fact has allowed for the designation of Kingston as a creative city. The unique nature of popular music production in this *habitus of creativity* under conditions and motivations that are inconsistent with popular music production in the Anglo-American recorded music industry or any other region for that matter, has led to describing the city as the *creative echo chamber*, consisting of webs of creativity, where spatial agglomeration took place which facilitated high levels of innovations through transference of artistic and technological knowledge. The *Kingston* creative *echo chamber* has also initiated and compelled a rethink of intellectual property rights through the creation of versions and dub, rewritten the predominate popular song structure of Anglo - American recorded music through the deployment of alternative song construction; and has developed alternative income streams and value chain dynamics.

These achievements are done in a milieu of underdevelopment, fragmentation, non-economic motivations for recordings in an *open domain* employing a *multiple simultaneity production* modality. The developments also occurred in this *open domain* environment with little regard for copyright legislation and traditional value chain logic.

Questions thus abound on the variables accounting for and/or influencing the dynamic nature of popular music production in Kingston. This is particularly in light of the obvious deviation from North Atlantic models of cultural production and distribution. It is the position of this research that this anomaly can only be explained against the backdrop of the social, legal, economic, cultural milieu of the colonial and postcolonial period and the socio-cultural formations which marked the periods of distinct cultural production in which the developments were richest. The Jamaican music industry has clearly not escaped interaction with the global cultural industries. Arguably, the nature of the interaction has had both a positive and negative effect on developments within the industry. This has led to the creation of modes of production that are counter to the models of the music industry in the developed world. The organisational structures, modes of production and business models of Kingston music scene have been at the centre of hegemonic struggles and a site of hybridity, collaborations, unparallel innovation and *tek-no-li-gy process* along the black Diaspora trajectory. While the deficiencies of the models have had some debilitating effect on the development of the music industry in Jamaica they have also managed to create new business models and modes of creativity that have been adapted by and have changed the global music industry in significant ways.

Keywords: *Dennis Oliver Howard, Open Domain, creative echo chamber, multi spontaneity production model, Ruddock technique, Perry methodology*