



Cultural Heritage

and the

Knowledge Economy

the role and value of sound archives and sound
archiving in developing countries

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What is Cultural Heritage?

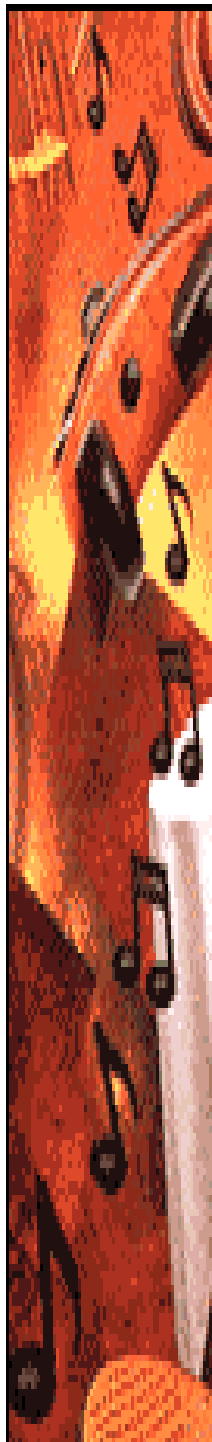
- CH is the artifacts and attributes that distinguish a society or a group from others
- CH is tangible and intangible – physical and non-physical – re/presentations of culture
- UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage defines the intangible cultural heritage *as the practices, representations, expressions, as well as the knowledge and skills, that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage*

and can be described as

memories, oral practices, languages, traditional arts, rituals, knowledge systems, values and know-how; it is the ancient knowledge, traditional knowledge and the knowledge that is past on from generation to generation

Sources:

UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. (2003)
Harriet Deacon. Subtle Power of Intangible Heritage. (2004)



Cultural Heritage

- Culture and cultural heritage is not fixed, a concept added to, morphs or lost over time
- Adorno and Frankfurt theory of culture do not see mass or popular culture as relevant or important
- Birth of emerging nations and post-colonial era has unsettled this concept of culture
- Globalization has privileged the local, making mass, indigenous or popular culture important aspects of the heritages of the world





Sound As Part of CH

- In oral societies sound/music were/are the main conveyers of heritage/memory
- Recordings of sonic expressions are main ways that history transfers from generation to generation
- Colonial history of suppression of cultural expressions of the 'Other' hegemonic forces forbade speaking
- Deacon locates the intangible culture in *[the] poor and often marginalised communities – knowledge that enriches our lives and must be safeguarded and past on to future generations.*



What is the Knowledge Economy?

... one in which the generation and the exploitation of knowledge has come to play the predominant part in the creation of wealth. It is not simply about pushing back the frontiers of knowledge: it is also about the more effective use and exploitation of all types of knowledge in all manner of economic activity.

Source: John Houghton. A Primer on the Knowledge Economy. (2000)



Knowledge Economy

- **General assumption that KE is grounded in ICT**
- **KE however applies to any economic endeavour which uses intellect as its principal raw material/input**
- **Creation of wealth is key – positions info professions centrally in the new economic order**
- **Within cultural sector, KE is often described as the Creative Industries or Cultural Industries**

Knowledge Economy

- **Creative industries fastest growing economic sector world wide**
- **In UK +2 million jobs and 7.3%GDP**
- **In India +4 million jobs and US\$2.3B**
- **In SA film contributes R2.2m or 2% GDP**
Crafts industries R2.2b or 14% GDP

sources:

HSRC (2008) report <http://preview.tinyurl.com/yjq83zq>

Govender (2008) <http://preview.tinyurl.com/yh73qa5>



Sound As Part of KE

- Indigenous and other sounds have become a global industry
- Sound used for recreation, entertainment, identity formation, nation building
- Sound recordings covered by other artists e.g. Jamaican John Holt's *The Tide is High* made popular by Blondie
- Sound recordings used in films as sound tracks e.g. James Bond's *Dr. No* filmed in Jamaica and used Jamaican artists and songs



CH and KE and the Information Profession in Developing Countries

- **Librarians, archivists, museologists and other information professionals in developing countries have a moral responsibility to ensure that all sound carriers and their modes of reproduction are saved for future generations**
- **A professional challenge to uncover, recover and discover the elusive oral heritage and traditions**
- **Need for cooperation across the board with all those who are likely to provide/have copies of this lost/buried heritage**
- **Dereliction of duty otherwise**



Jackie Opel's *You Can't Catch Me*

Kingston: Jamrec [1964?]

as a case study
of

Cultural Heritage and the
Knowledge Economy



Jackie Opel

- ♪ Born in Barbados
- ♪ Rose to prominence in Jamaica in the late 1960s – within and beyond C'bean
- ♪ Important Ska singer – member of ***The Skatalites*** – renown ska band
- ♪ Ska – musical signature of independent Jamaica (1962-4), Reggae's progenitor
- ♪ JO recorded over 100 singles
- ♪ Creator of **Spouge** – only music genre created by a Barbadian
- ♪ Important personality in the historiography of Barbados popular music but most of music outside island/region



Jackie Opel

- ♪ Recorded mainly in Jamaica – 45rpms format of the day
- ♪ *You Can't Catch Me* no known copy of the disc exists in B'dos – none found for sale in established or preowned market
- ♪ Listed in Coxson's discography – deep surfing of Internet postings yielded reference to the song
- ♪ MP3 file acquired from a Wales-based collector disc purchased in Kyoto, Japan (2007) who wrote:

the Japanese appear to be very much into their reggae and ska over there and there are a lot of good resources in Kyoto & Tokyo



Jackie Opel

- ♪ Absence of a sound archive reduces access to/availability of the sound heritage of Barbados
- ♪ International interest/market forces up price of 45rpm which originally sold for US\$5-10 can now fetch as much as US\$250+
- ♪ Extra-regional authorities on C'bean music and also owners of our sound heritage e.g. Ray Funk in Alaska has one of the largest collections of Caribbean popular music
- ♪ Stated policy of Gov't of Barbados to develop island's cultural industries
- ♪ No Caribbean counterpart to Hugh Tracey



Jackie Opel

- ♪ Producers Dodd and Yapp archives in a mess and issues of who owns the various rights unsettled
- ♪ Loss of revenue for country and his estate because legal ownership often not established and royalties not collected or disbursed to legal owners of the music
- ♪ Piracy/'re-assignment' of royalties a danger, esp. as we approach 50 years after his death
- ♪ Re-release of Opel track in Brazil in 1980
– 10 years after his death





Jackie Opel's *You Can't Catch Me*

an example of the cultural heritage
knowledge economy interface

Enjoy





THANK YOU!