

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI[®]

**Manufacturing Culture in Cuba,
An Ethnography**

Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Sociology and Anthropology

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts (Social and Cultural Anthropology)
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada**

March 2003

© Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier



**National Library
of Canada**

**Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services**

**395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

**Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques**

**395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada**

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-77936-X

Canada

ABSTRACT
Manufacturing Culture in Cuba,
An Ethnography

Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier

Since the beginning of the Revolution, Cuba implemented strong cultural policies. Effective and multi-leveled organizations were installed in order to manage, fund, promote, democratize and support the revolutionary popular culture. With the work of instructors and promoters attached to *casas de cultura* and other types of municipal departments, the state has been able to integrate its cultural policies at the level of the community. This thesis provides an analysis and an understanding of cultural policies applied to a few traditional popular groups located in Guantánamo, Santiago de Cuba and Bejuco. Since the fall of the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 1990s, the Cuban State was forced to adapt its socialist ideology and open the island to tourism and foreign investments. Once again, culture is put on display and politicized in order to counteract these threats to the socialist system. But members of popular groups are not passive when faced with the state's interventions in their traditional affairs. This thesis shows that traditions are invented, manufactured and put on stage to serve the state's desire to strengthen its hegemony.

The ethnographic film "State the Rhythm" is a complement to this thesis. It illustrates with concrete cases, many of the issues developed in this document.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Christine Jourdan for her incredible support and confidence. She is a model and a source of inspiration for me. Thanks to Homa Hoodfar for believing in my capabilities and for giving me the possibility to acquire experiences in teaching and conducting research. She reoriented my way of looking at anthropology. Thank you to David Howes for giving me the opportunity to participate to the *Culture and Consumption Project* at Concordia University. His help and support allowed me to conduct a fieldwork of 4 months in Cuba. Thank you to Bob White for transmitting his passions to his students and for exchanging ideas with me concerning this project. He always gave me insightful and precious comments. Thanks to Simona Bealkovschi for giving me the desire to continue the exploration of film production. In Cuba, thanks to my friends Alba Babastros Noris, Bernarda Sevillano and Virgina Jalice Rodriguez who helped me to meet informants, define my research problems and discover a part of their world. Thanks to Diane Boudreault, Robert Fournier and my brother Ézéchiél because they always have been there to listen to my fears and joys. Finally, I would like to thank my friend Mike Simpson for actively encouraging me in *every* step of this project.

Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
CHAPTER 1: Introduction.....	1
The Cuban Context.....	1
Thesis.....	3
Methodology.....	7
Division of the Chapters.....	14
CHAPTER 2: Cultural Policies and the Strengthening of the Nation-State.....	17
Politics of What?.....	19
Why Would a National Government Support the Implementation of Cultural Policies?.....	29
Cultural Homogenization and the Nation State.....	33
Cultural Production and the Economic Dimension.....	38
Tourism, Carnivals, Festivals and the Politics of Culture.....	40
CHAPTER 3: Cultural Policies in Cuba.....	51
The Struggle for a “New Man”.....	53
The Cuban State and Its Cultural Policy.....	59
Threats to the Cuban Revolutionary Culture.....	68
CHAPTER 4: Cuban Cultural Policies Applied to Traditional Popular Groups of Dance and Music.....	80
A Short Historical Background.....	82
<i>Casas de Cultura</i> and <i>Focos Culturales</i>	90
Cultural Tourism.....	107
Carnival.....	117
Foreigners and Parades.....	120
CHAPTER 5: Through the “I” of the Camera.....	124
The Camera in the Field.....	125
Process of Editing.....	131
The Final Product.....	135
The Film’s Afterlife.....	141

CONCLUSION.....	143
ENDNOTES.....	150
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	155
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Map of the main cities where the fieldwork has been conducted.....	166
Appendix B: Organization of culture in the province of Guantánamo.....	167
Appendix C: Organization of culture in the Municipality of Santiago de Cuba.....	168
Appendix D: Comparative parameters of the bearer and reproducer traditional groups.....	169

* * *

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Categorization of the traditional popular groups with examples taken from Guantánamo.....	93
--	----

Table 2: Number of tourists by year who visited the tumba francesa of Guantánamo.....	110
---	-----

Chapter 1: Introduction

This work has been highly influenced by diverse political and economic realities that emerged in Cuba from the beginning of the 1990s. Although one of the main priorities that I had established before leaving for the field was that my research would not become too political, I realized that politics in Cuba is pervasive in almost every sphere of society. The following lines describe the economic, social and political contexts in which I conducted fieldwork during the summer of 2002. It also gives the main argument discussed, developed and defended throughout the rest of the written thesis and illustrated in the ethnographic film “State the Rhythm”. Above all, this chapter outlines the fact that a closer understanding of Cuban cultural politics can teach us about the general conduct that a state may develop in order to counteract diverse economic, political and social forms of insecurity. Although the research has been carried out at the community level, I have come to induce the information to such a degree that I have been confronted by the general ideology behind the *national* revolutionary project in the domain of culture. It is this interaction between the local and the national levels that permits me to construct a more holistic perspective regarding Cuban cultural policies.

The Cuban Context

Since the beginning of the 1960s, Fidel Castro has headed a communist regime at the doorstep of the most imposing capitalist power in the world. Despite an American economic embargo, the Cuban state has been able to develop a functioning system based on equal distribution of resources and public services. Throughout the Cold war era, Cuba entertained close economic, cultural and ideological relations with the USSR. The communist Caribbean island rapidly became dependent on the economic revenues

brought by the sugar products sold to member countries of the Soviet Union, but these relatively prosperous relations were not to last forever.

Today, Cuba is undergoing major political, economic, social and cultural changes. These internal transformations were provoked by a harsh economic crisis brought about by the collapse of the Soviet Union. In fact, at the beginning of the 1990s, Cuba lost its main economic ally and soon after appeared the first signs of crisis. Fidel Castro announced that Cuba was undergoing a “Special Period”¹. Despite the fact that Cuba is slowly recovering from this economic turning point, the Special Period has changed the reality of most Cubans. In response to this crisis, Fidel Castro was pressured to change some of his policies to the detriment of the system’s principles. The Cuban State decided to open its doors to foreign investment and to decriminalize foreign currency in 1993, thus legalizing the possession of American dollars. For the first time since the beginning of the Revolution, Cubans were allowed to own and spend dollars. This measure, which aimed to stimulate the Cuban economy, instigated a deep restructuring of the revolutionary system. It also caused economic frustrations in a country where equal access to resources had been a priority. In fact, as American dollars began pouring into the country, social inequalities became pervasive between those who possessed dollars and those who did not.

Another response from the Cuban State in face of the crisis was the development of the tourist industry, which intensified from the end of the 1980s. In 1993, the tourist industry surpassed sugar as the largest source of hard currency in the Cuban economy. The government intends to welcome more than ten million visitors for the year 2010 if no natural disaster occurs and if the United States decides to lift its economic embargo (Acosta 1998). The tourist infrastructure has been developed and the industry has

become diversified in order to welcome an increasing number of visitors. Projects to stimulate various types of tourism, such as ecological and cultural, are put forward by state controlled agencies. Above all, tourism brought transformations within the population, as it became a direct means to access dollars –henceforth an essential survival tool for many Cubans. Tourism provoked the emergence of social problems such as prostitution and drug consumption, but it also created a space where Cubans and foreigners can meet, discuss and exchange ideas about the world and their respective political systems.

Due to its presence in the social spheres, but also because of the different economic backgrounds of the hosts and guests who interact with each other, tourism is an important source of change in Cuba. Other social changes brought on by the harsh economic crisis, have created frustrations within the population. In reaction to these disappointments and conflicts, the state has accentuated political repression (Domínguez 1994). For economic and survival reasons, the state had to open its borders to capitalist interests but, as a result, the revolutionary system is now at stake as pockets of capitalism have also emerged everywhere within the population, creating social, economic and racial disparities.

Thesis:

In face of such important transformations within the system and in the population in general, the state has had to develop means to insure that Cubans would still support the revolutionary project. The state has had to maintain its authority despite flagrant contradictions in its political discourse. In fact, ideological confrontations between foreign capitalist interests and the socialist character of the regime often cause inconsistencies in the revolutionary discourse of the state. One of the main strategies

used by the state to strengthen its power and the essence of “Cubanness” within the population is the manipulation of culture. This thesis develops the argument that culture became one of the main tools used by the Cuban State to fight against *perceived* internal and external threats endangering the existence of the revolutionary system. The famous Fidel Castro quote “El arte es una arma de la Revolución²”, illustrates the belief of the part of the state that culture has the potential to unite all Cubans under a common revolutionary national identity.

Shortly after the beginning of the economic crisis of the 1990s –labeled by Fidel Castro as the Special Period- authorities recognized the importance of a strong and united culture to counter growing foreign threats (Fernández Retamarol 1998; Rivas Rodriguez 2000; Prieto 2002; and others). Since the beginning of the 1960s, cultural politics have been part of the social project aiming at the construction of a national revolutionary identity in Cuba. Therefore, the use of culture as a tool to solidify state hegemony is not a new strategy. Moreover, in face of new social phenomena occasioned by major economic adjustments that have shook the structure of the system, it is expected that cultural politics will become increasingly important in maintaining and fortifying a counter balance to anti-revolutionary acts and thoughts inside and outside Cuban boundaries.

Another famous Castro quote “La cultura es lo primero que hay que salvar³”, demonstrates the state’s desire to maintain a revolutionary and democratic culture while it’s confronted with a harsh economic crisis and the ideological deterioration of its system. In fact, the access to dollars, the increase of the tourist industry and the political strength of the Cuban diaspora, have all brought challenges to a socialist state that was recently forced to open its doors to foreign capitalist investment.

The Cuban state zealously points to the United States as being the main worldwide cultural enemy and this is a fundamental part of its artistic, and more specifically in the present case, its cultural policies. The state encourages a form of cultural manifestation that upholds its ideology and encourages the development of a revolutionary culture⁴ through democratization. This implies popular and free access to any form of artistic expression such as dance spectacles and music concerts for all Cubans. The massive access to culture is reached through the diffusion of culture on television and in giant social, cultural and political protests such as festivals, carnivals and open tribunes. Democratization of culture also implies that Cubans can directly participate in cultural and artistic expressions such as taking a ballet course or being part, as an amateur, of a Haitian descendant dance and music group. This is what the official discourse of cultural policy refers to as “*masificación de la cultura*”.

The Cuban State has successfully created a complex and functional system of cultural management through the creation of diverse institutions such as the Ministry of Culture. State controlled organs are in charge of cultural actors from the community up to the national level. This Masters thesis demonstrates that the actors who take part in this popular culture are important to the promotion and construction of a revolutionary identity. They maintain revolutionary legitimacy in transmitting the regime’s ideology. At the same time, as will be discussed further on, there exists strong resistance within cultural groups to the state’s interventionist attitude.

This thesis explores the effects of cultural politics on a few dance and music groups located in the provinces of Santiago de Cuba, Holguín and Guantánamo. These groups all define themselves as representing Haitian, African-Haitian, Cuban-French and/or French-Haitian traditions. They are classified by cultural authorities as traditional,

popular cultural type groups. The observed groups are influenced, funded and maintained by the government and its municipal representatives. Day-to-day, they live the benefits and the disadvantages brought on by the implemented policies.

Cultural policies also model these groups so that they fit into a pre-conceived idea of authentic tradition and folklore. For instance, there are trained art instructors who join these groups in order to make sure that traditional popular culture is maintained, respected and remains unchanged. These groups are also asked to perform during carnivals, festivals and events occurring in other provinces. The state entirely funds all of their activities and it uses them for propaganda purposes in massive political meetings. At the municipal level, groups are under the direction of “*casas de cultura*” which are the municipal offices where popular culture is organized according to the revolutionary ideology. These offices are under the wing of the state and they work to create this sense of belonging to the Cuban culture.

Cuban traditional groups form the image of a mosaic culture and folklore that is today effectively marketed in tourist packages. Above all, they’re part of the Cuban cultural policy that aims to create a kaleidoscopic Cuban culture (such as the expression ‘Afro-Cuban’ would illustrate), but under the same revolutionary ideology –a common culture to counter foreign and internal hegemonic threats. The argument that through a strong *politica cultural*, the Cuban State regulates, manipulates, promotes and maintains traditional popular culture in order to strengthen the nation state is developed further in the present Master thesis. The state uses different direct and indirect propaganda methods to create a culture that is able, according to Cuban authorities, to resist American cultural invasion and counter other forms of internal and external perceived threats.

The present work shows that the concept of cultural politics is not limited to the Cuban case, but is a type of state regulation that is accepted and encouraged on a worldwide scale by international agencies such as UNESCO. Many countries decide to implement a strong and active cultural policy within their borders. But, as stated by Dominguez, "The fact that so many countries have cultural policies needs to be explained, not taken for granted" (2000:23). When analyzed, one may come to the conclusion that national cultural policies aim to create a sense of commonness in constructing and inventing a national culture. The nation states use this tool of control, which a priori may seem inoffensive, in order to strengthen both their authority and hegemonic power. The Cuban case is used in the present work to illustrate such cultural policies within a particular context and its repercussions at the community level.

Methodology

It is within a transitional atmosphere that I conducted 4 months of fieldwork in the eastern part of the island. During my stay, I mainly sojourned in the cities of Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo. These cities are located in two different provinces that respectively bear the same names. Despite the fact that these two provinces are culturally rich, they're economically poor compared to La Habana. Guantánamo is a city of 200,000 people and is located in the poorest province of the island. It's a fertile region populated by many Haitian and Jamaican descendants. The economy is mostly dependent on the cultivation and transformation of sugarcane. Before the Revolution, Guantánamo experienced a certain economic prosperity because of the visits of American soldiers from the naval base of Guantánamo where many Cubans and Jamaican descendants were paid with American dollars. The Naval base is situated approximately at 21km from Guantánamo, but today, due to old political tensions, there is no contact between Americans on the base and Cubans of Guantánamo. Santiago de Cuba is known for its

musical and cultural imports to the general Cuban popular culture. It's the second biggest city of the island after La Habana. Located at the extreme east of the island Guantánamo and Santiago de Cuba are economically underdeveloped, and while a few tourists visit these locations, they are not the main tourist destinations of the island.

During my fieldwork, I practiced different types of data gathering techniques and experienced concretely what it means to use anthropological methodology in the field. Although I had certain favorite techniques, informal interviews for instance, I also adapted my methodology to the context, the informants and the information I was seeking. I practiced simple and participant observation with two main groups, the **tumba francesa la Caridad de Oriente** in Santiago de Cuba and the **tumba francesa La Pompadour** in Guantánamo. Despite the fact that these two groups share the same Franco-Haitian tradition, they are independent from one another (these groups are discussed in depth in Chapter 4). They have common dances and songs, but their choreographies, their hierarchical structures and their organizations are different. I had the chance to meet and interview the president of the third existing tumba francesa that's located in a remote village called Bejuco in the province of Holguín. Unfortunately, I did not have the opportunity to observe the group in action since they usually meet spontaneously.

I first met the tumba francesa of Guantánamo during the summer 2000 while they were having an activity in their rehearsal room. Because of the richness of this cultural Cuban demonstration, I decided to look closely at the group and at the two other tumbas that still exist today in the context of a Master thesis. While in the field in the summer 2002, I realized that the tumbas have complex relations with the state authorities and their cultural policies. This relation of dominance and resistance between official cultural

policies and small dance and music groups became the focal point of my Masters thesis. I discovered that the tumbas often receive tourist groups for whom they perform their tradition. The timing of the activities, the rehearsal room set-up and many other aspects of the tumba francesa of Guantánamo have been changed in order to satisfy the tourist industry. These changes are very interesting as they show that there is a desire to attract tourists to their cultural demonstration. On the other hand, it is the state that promotes this activity to the tourist industry, implying that the members do not entirely control the management of their cultural representation.

While exploring the cultural policies in Guantánamo, I discovered other groups that experience similar realities in regard to cultural and state recognition, performance, tourism and tradition. I therefore closely explored these groups that also perform Haitian or Franco-Haitian, depending on their perspectives, types of dance and music. The three groups with which I conducted participant observation in addition to the tumbas francesas are all located in Guantánamo: *Lo Cosia*, *Gran moun lontan* and the professional dance troop *Ballet Folklórico Babúl* all have specific relations with the state organs. All of them are recognized by municipal cultural authorities to perform the traditional popular culture of the province of Guantánamo.

In the case of **Lo Cosia** and **Gran moun lontan**, many of their members are Haitian descendants and speak Creole, but they define themselves as Cuban and are fully integrated into Cuban society. However, they deeply feel that their tradition is Haitian and not Cuban despite the fact that most of them were born in Cuba and have never seen Haiti. On the other hand, their dances, songs and beliefs were transmitted to them by their parents and friends who migrated to Cuba from Haiti at the beginning of the 20th century in order to work in the sugar cane fields. In exploring the history and the reality

of these two groups, I realized how much traditional popular culture is political and how much the state is involved in cultural affairs. These two cases also allowed me to conclude that groups positioned under the wing of the state may benefit from such an interest, but they may also lose their spontaneity and independence. Ultimately, such an association between the state authorities and cultural groups may provoke conflicts related to power relations concerning who owns traditional knowledge.

The **Ballet Folklórico Babúl** is dedicated to performing the folklore of the province of Guantánamo – English islands and Haitian. All the constituents are professional dancers, singers or drummers and are paid by the state as artists. The director of the troop did extensive research to find “authentic” songs, dances and rhythms within the community. Primary research gives him the possibility of reproducing and staging these cultural and traditional groups. Babúl also performs the dance of the *tumbas francesas*, but it is a representation designed more as a show performed for the community and tourists. I have extensively discussed with Llewelyn -the director of this troop- the difference between performance and reproduction. It’s interesting to observe that such concepts can get blurred at times. But according to him, the troop is dedicated to artistic reproduction of traditional popular culture. This means that there’s an emphasis put on the aesthetics, quality and the development of the spectacle.

The exploration of these different groups added important elements of analysis that I would not have had, had I limited myself to the *tumbas francesas*. Since my focus was on the concrete effects of the cultural policies on dance and music groups, I believe that an exploration of diverse groups provided insightful data. It also allowed me to explore the different ways in which cultural authorities deal with tourism, cultural conservation, tradition maintenance and folklore creation. The fact that I conducted

fieldwork in 3 different provinces (Santiago de Cuba, Guantánamo and Holguín) allowed me to observe that the state has different types of involvement depending on the province and municipality. But despite these systemic and organizational differences, I was able, for instance, to draw general patterns and outline similar particularities in regard to how carnival and cultural tourism are coordinated.

I did extensive participant observation with these groups, as well as interviews and observation with cultural representatives who work in tradition conservation and maintenance. The information that I gathered from interviews with cultural authorities well illustrates the general official discourse commonly held at the community level. The cultural representatives often adopted a defensive stance and sought to justify their positions and work. These interviews allowed me to better understand what the stakes and the objectives of cultural policies were.

Because I conducted fieldwork during the summer, which is a holiday period for Cubans, I came into contact with the ambiance of the carnivals that are generally held this time of year. The main motivation for the traditional cultural groups that I observed is their participation in the carnival as a *comparsa* -the group is transformed and parades during the festivities. Therefore, my fieldwork was influenced by the fact that it was conducted at this period of the year, as their routine activities had been interrupted. Their workloads are higher because they must prepare themselves for carnival time, during which they compete against other traditional groups. Indeed, I would have gathered extremely different data had I conducted the same fieldwork during wintertime.

To assemble the appropriate data, I adapted different anthropological gathering techniques to the particular contexts I experienced. I did mainly simple observation the

first month and a half of fieldwork. This allowed me to better understand group structures and norms, to build my perceptions and to construct my pool of contacts. The more I spent time with the groups attending their practices and sharing activities with them, the more I felt that my presence was well accepted and respected. I observed and attended the rehearsals of each of the groups. I assiduously attended the activities of the *tumbas francesas* on a regular basis and occasionally went to the other groups' practices. The *tumbas* and the other groups had activities and practices at least twice a week, so I was extremely busy during my entire stay.

In the last two months fieldwork, I actively took part in the activities of the *tumba francesa* of Santiago de Cuba and made good friends and contacts among them. I participated in the carnival with a sister-group of the *tumba francesa* of Santiago called the **tahona**. This group is constituted of members of the *tumba francesa* of Santiago and people from the neighborhood, but it is not the *tumba*. Members of the *tahona* practice in the same rehearsal room as the *tumba* and the group has the same organizational structure, but they do have slightly different choreographies and instruments. In addition, the *tahona* only exists during the period of the carnival. The *tahona* represents the *tumba francesa* since it never parades in the carnival. The *tumba francesa* has a tradition of *baile de salon*, which means that the types of dances aren't well suited to performance in the streets⁵. As was explained to me, they do not have the same tradition, but the *tumba* and the *tahona* greatly influence each other.

I spent hours in their headquarters, observing and participating. This included long moments in which nothing important seemed to be happening and other periods in which I was under spotlights, dancing with them in front of thousands of people. In fact, since I actively took part in the carnival, I had to practice with the *tahona* every day

during the month of July, besides my normal attendance at the activities of the *tumba francesa*. In addition to being a complete learning process, participant observation provided me with the opportunity to develop abilities that I previously did not have. This included my capacity to analyze and understand when confronted with a real “life puzzle” where each cultural norm has its place within a society that I did not know well.

I conducted 24 systematic interviews with members of these groups and also with state representatives and workers in the tourist sector. I interviewed older people who belonged to these cultural groups in the past, or who remembered having seen and participated in the spontaneous festivities of Haitian descendants –*motompolo*, *gagá*- in the countryside during their youth. Most of the interviews were informal and semi-structured. I conducted two structured interviews, as these interviewees were relatively highly positioned in the government and work in the cultural sector, and I felt that it needed to be done in a more formal way. I recorded and filmed most of the interviews.

While in the field, I filmed more than 24 hours of footage with the goal of editing an ethnographic film as an accompaniment to the present written Master thesis. Chapter 5 is entirely dedicated to an examination of the process of producing this film - from the experience of having a camera in the field, to the editing and analysis of the final product.

The methodology used in the field allowed me to collect enough data to support the arguments that are developed in the next chapters. In fact, it provided me with the necessary tools to construct, within an anthropological framework, an understanding of my topic of interest. It also gave me the opportunity to review my initial expectations and adjust my research to new empirical realities. I now know from the present perspective

that it is the combination of many types of information gathered in the field and in documents that allowed me to construct a more holistic and visual analysis of the politics of culture in Cuba.

Division of the chapters

Cultural policies are extremely contextual in the sense that each nation state has a particular vision of what should represent their national culture. Before looking at examples of cultural policies taken at the community level, it is important to mention what is meant by cultural politics. **Chapter 2** is concerned with this general notion and its role in strengthening the nation state. The chapter attempts to answer the following questions: What cultural policies consist of? and Why does a state decide to implement an active cultural policy while another does not? The chapter comes to the conclusion that the idea of *perceived threat* is responsible for pushing certain states to implement strong and active cultural policies. Chapter 2 also explores the role of carnivals and tourism as means of articulating and affirming a national culture and identity. This chapter is more theoretical and there are very few references to the particular Cuban case. Despite the fact that I recognize in this chapter the active import of the population in general to counter such cultural policies, the idea of resistance is not developed in-depth, since this is an analysis from the perspective of state control. Chapter 4 develops in detail how Cubans cope with such forms of cultural intervention.

Once the aspect of the politics of culture is well integrated and understood in the current debate on cultural homogenization and globalization, **Chapter 3** is dedicated to why the Cuban State practices a strong and active cultural policy. What are the purposes and goals? What is the ideology behind Cuban cultural policies? Chapter 3 develops the idea that Cuban cultural policies are very complex since they integrate different views

and applications of the notions of culture and tradition. It is also demonstrated that the Cuban State uses culture in order to strengthen its revolutionary system against internal and external perceived threats. The fear of American ideological expansionism and the development of internal pockets of capitalism in the island push the state to act in the domain of culture in order to create and maintain a sense of “Cubanness”. Cultural authenticity is the tool used to counter ideological influences occasioned by diverse outside penetration such as the increase of the tourist industry. The Cuban State needs a strong nation state in order to counteract powerful forces that exert pressure that can transform and weaken its revolutionary system.

This analysis depicts a general idea of what the politics of culture in Cuba at the national level consists of. It also explains why the Cuban State decided to implement such policies. **Chapter 4** gives concrete examples of cultural policies with a few dance and music groups located on the eastern side of the island. The examples that are developed support the argument elaborated in the preceding chapters by presenting concrete and convincing instances of how the Cuban State has become embedded in traditional popular culture at the community level. Chapter 4 also outlines how members of traditional groups are not passive recipients of cultural regulations imposed by the state. In fact, they resist and exhibit open demonstrations of disagreement. Nonetheless, the state’s pressure is very strong and this chapter shows that it is often difficult to exist as a traditional cultural group without the supervision of state authorities.

Finally, **Chapter 5** is wholly dedicated to the process of producing the ethnographic film called “State the Rhythm”, that is a complement to this written thesis. The chapter discusses what can be understood from the film and how it is positioned vis-à-vis the written part of the thesis. The chapter reviews issues of ethics, perspectives and

analysis that are related to the complete and lengthy process of image and content transformation.

The arguments developed throughout these chapters allow me to conclude that in Cuba, cultural policies are complex tools that are embedded at the community level in order to integrate popular culture into the ideological struggles fought by the nation state. The Cuban State possesses strong tentacles that allow cultural authorities to control, maintain and direct a certain type of popular traditional culture that is transposed at the national level. This top to bottom approach integrates traditional culture in such a way that it comes to represent the revolutionary Cuban culture. This type of representation aims to solidify the sense of belonging to the nation as it provides the state with means of support in order to struggle against foreign ideological and economic invasions. Above all, cultural politics cements the structure of the state as it encourages and justifies its power to act in maintaining control over the nation. Ultimately, cultural politics aim to reinvent and recreate what was the socialist regime before the advent of deep social transformations brought on by the economic crisis of the 1990s.

Chapter 2: Cultural Policies and the Strengthening of the Nation-State

Since the creation of the nation state, there have always been attempts to uphold the physical boundaries of sovereign entities. Today, the notion of national culture and national identity are often used synonymously to refer to the idea of belonging to an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991), often represented by a nation state. Many efforts have been made by the state to reinforce, maintain and invent a culture that would unite and reassemble diverse cultures living within a constructed territory. With the organization of forums and conferences funded by UNESCO since the 1960s, the belief that national culture should be protected in the face of diverse types of threats emerged in certain nation states. Also, the idea that culture could become a tool of national control emerged. Despite the fact that some countries such as France and Canada have implemented strong cultural policies to protect, maintain and create a national culture, others such as the United States have not. What could explain that some countries decide to carry out strong cultural policies and others do not? Internal and external *perceived threats* to national autonomy are one of the main reasons why a state will decide to implement cultural policies.

Without diminishing the complexity of the underlined role of such policies, it is interesting to recognize the fact that active cultural politics may be developed in order to reinforce a shaken state. Despite the fact that the notion of perceived threat refers to multiple factors, it can be put forward that it is associated with processes or phenomena that endanger the strength and/or hegemonic power of the state on its population. These threats are more perceived than real in the sense that they are anticipated from the perspective of the state. Menacing phenomena that endanger the state authority are often associated with globalization –diminishment of the role of the state in face of corporate

rulers and international organizations, gradual elimination of borders, homogenization of culture, national invasion of foreign culture through extensive tourism, communication and foreign investments, etc. These are a few of the perceived threats to which I refer in the thesis as being external, since they are influential forces that appear to come from outside of national borders. Internal threats are phenomena that occur within the nation state itself. For instance, in Cuba there is a constant concern to eliminate pockets of capitalism that emerge within the population as a result of new state policies that favor foreign investments and the tourist industry. Internal and external threats are not fixed and both notions are often intertwined and blurred. This chapter is not concerned essentially with the division of these menaces, but more with the fact that internal and external threats are *perceived* as endangering state hegemony. It is unclear if cultural policies are a reactionary or an anticipatory measure implemented by state authorities. But we can agree with the idea that the implementation of cultural policies is related to the fact that a nation-state perceives its authority as being menaced. This chapter discusses and illustrates some of the phenomena that a nation-state may perceive as threatening.

Strong culture policies aim at maintaining, funding and controlling a type of culture that represents national heritage. The notion of culture is therefore targeted and politicized. In fact, the invention of a national culture implies its objectification and materialization by the official authorities. This is illustrated by the exhibition and performances of invented tradition (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983) and imagined folklore.

I will discuss these issues throughout this chapter and show that the diverse national cultural policies are not understood and implemented for the same reasons. They are highly contextual and should be analyzed through the economic, political, cultural

and ideological realities of each nation state. A closer look at what consists of cultural policies will establish the foundation for a further analysis of the Cuban case developed in the following chapters.

In this chapter, I use the examples of festivals and carnivals -which are highly coveted by tourists- as events articulating a national identity. In addition, to reinforce the national culture, these events allow the “imagined” traditional popular culture to perform in front of people living within the same nation as well as in front of foreigners and tourists. The creation of culture and its representations are important political acts, but they can also become an important source of income. The section concerning carnival and tourism serves as a theoretical understanding of certain issues such as authenticity and cultural tourism that will be applied to the current Cuban context in the following chapters.

Politics of What?

The concept of “politics of culture” is used to refer to different ideas associated with politics and culture. Does it have to be understood as politics of culture, cultural politics or culture of politics? It seems that there is no fixed expression in English to refer to the concept of *política cultural* or *politique culturelle* as it is respectively expressed in Spanish and French. I use the terms politics of culture, cultural politics and cultural policy(ies) as expressions to refer to state interventions directed towards the maintenance, creation and encouragement of a constructed culture. These policies are implemented to counter perceived threats. They are established to create a sense of unity and identity, and to democratize culture -to insure its accessibility. Policies can be implemented at the municipal, regional, provincial or national level, but have always as their goals the reinforcement of *national culture* and, by implication, the nation-state.

However, cultural policies are not only restricted to laws, policies and rules aiming to maintain and control culture. In fact, it has been demonstrated that cultural policy “is not a set of rules or recommendations per se, but an approach toward complex and mutable relationships, a way to think about issues, a set of tools for a *rapidly changing future*” (Bradford 2000:12; my emphasis). In other words, a cultural policy also involves a certain ideology of conservation and a belief that culture needs to be protected. However, from a concrete point of view, cultural policies are often depicted as direct intervention led by the state and its organs. While theoretically, the politics of culture are embedded within an ideology, at the practical level they are reflected by concrete rules and state promotional policies.

The concept of culture is often taken for granted and we rarely question its relevance. While the meaning of such a constructed concept provokes complex and deep debates in anthropology and in other social sciences, it is important to mention how it is perceived and utilized in the present work. I am mostly interested in popular culture and the fourth chapter is entirely concerned with the concrete impacts of Cuban cultural policies on popular dance and music groups that are categorized as traditional by the state. Despite the fact that this thesis is more concerned with the type of culture that could be labelled as artistic, I also refer to its larger meaning. As with Appadurai (1996:13), I like to think of culture as an adjective and as a reference to the idea of difference, but more specifically in the realm of group identity. This broad idea of culture is inclusive in the sense that it does not reject important aspects of differentiation identified by a particular group. Precise types of culture are encouraged by the state and its policies are the major consideration of the present chapter. On the other hand, from a practical point of view, I will basically limit my observational analysis to cultural

policies oriented towards the development of popular forms of artistic expression such as dance and music.

The terms culture and art are sometimes used synonymously when linked with politics and this association has been criticized by such authors as Dussault (1992) and Dominguez (2000). Many state policies directed towards the creation of a national culture are called cultural policies even if they are, in some countries, limited to an arts policy (literature, dance, music and visual arts). However, the “politics of art” has to be considered as a sub-category of the politics of culture since in some “nation-states” such as in Canada, cultural policies are implemented to control immigration and protect linguistic rights. Cultural policies are a very broad concept and depending on the country, it can be applied to various spheres of social life –education, publications, the mass media, etc.

For instance, there is a broadcasting policy in Canada called the “Canadian Content Regulations” or “CanCon”. This cultural policy controlled by the Canadian government since 1958 with the Broadcasting Act, limits the amount of US TV programs or pop music available in Canada over the airwaves. CanCon was designed to limit the proportion of US programs in Canada in order to create a sense of distinctiveness from the southern neighbour. In addition to fulfilling protectionist demands, CanCon is directed towards strengthening Canadian nationalism. These broad policies clearly identify the sources of “undesired” cultural influences and the state acts in order to counter them. The belief is that official cultural policies can counter cultural influences and can construct a distinct national identity.

The notion of culture in the expression of “politics of culture” refers to a materialized entity that is malleable, transformable and always changing –even if often recognized as ‘static and traditional’ by official authorities. This is why a cultural policy objectifies parts of “culture” that the state considers to be representing national identity. Tangible forms of cultural representations such as food, music or spiritual instruments and concrete historic sights - heritage - are taken as being part of culture. After being materialized, the culture is made into a commodity, labelled, packaged, commercialized, mediatized and nationalized. The transformation and manipulation of what is considered and accepted as culture are due to the belief that culture exists as a concrete entity situated outside ideological discourses. At the ideological level, culture can become a promotional tool (i.e. propaganda) when controlled by powerful entities such as the nation state itself. In other words, culture can be manipulated in order to embody the idea of national identity and serve as an entity under which is reassembled the population living within the national boundaries. It can be used as an agent of identification and it becomes, from the perspective of the state, a tool of mobilization.

Today, cultural policies imply “National visions, nationalist ideologies and national identities (...), and with them issues of unity, distinctiveness, self-esteem, and civility” (Dominguez 2002:23). This entire process of transformation is dependent on what Anderson (1983) recognizes as the role of imagination. Created by print capitalism or by new phenomenon such as electronic media, ways of transportation and new technologies, the imagined national and post-national (Appadurai 1996) communities are in transformation. It is essential to recognize the importance of imagination in these dynamic processes of identity construction. Hall (1996:316) outlines the imagined association between culture and nation:

A national culture is a discourse –a way of constructing meanings which influences and organizes both our actions and our conception of ourselves (...). National cultures construct identities by producing meaning about ‘the nation’ with which we *can identify*; these are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its presents with its past, and images which are constructed of it.

Therefore, the notion of culture is politicized and it is an important way to define and justify the existence of nation states. Nowadays, culture is a marker of identity, “something we can identify with” and a tool able to differentiate them from us. Today, we refer to national culture and identity as constructed entities to better imagine the nation state – it is meaningful in the sense that it provides a shared sense of sameness. There is an agreed consensus that it “is culture that defines a nation as the socially, economically, and politically situated product of the latter half of this particular century” (Dominguez 2000:29). In fact, the creation and the maintenance of a national culture became a form of political action and public concern (Kurin 2000). In other words, at the macro-level, culture came to possess the power to unify and divide and to create a sense of national distinctiveness vis-à-vis the rest of the world. Culture is nowadays the main reference to distinguish one nation state from another. Furthermore, it is a political tool for social and ideological control.

Many states⁶ recognize that culture is a fragile resource that *requires protection* and consequently, some national governments decided to implement cultural policies directed towards the maintenance, invention and protection of what they considered as representative of the national culture. This can be illustrated by the state’s funding of research and protection projects dedicated to “cultural heritage”. Today, the valorization of culture is reflected by the creation of Ministries of Culture and by general cultural institutionalization. The official discourse may refer to protection and importance of tradition, but beneath the surface cultural policies also aim to shape culture in order to

unify and strengthen the nation state - to install a form of ideological and social control. This reminds us that the politics of culture should not be taken for granted, but should be analyzed within appropriate contexts. For instance, one could question the fact that it is the state that is the most appropriate entity to protect and democratize national culture. In the Declaration of Bogota (UNESCO 1978) concerning the Cultural Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, the international community clearly identified the state as the authority that should intervene in cultural affairs: "It is the responsibility of the state to promote and support cultural development in accordance with the specific characteristics of each people, and to guarantee freedom of expression" (UNESCO 1978: web site). Therefore, cultural policies presuppose that the "government has a say in the shape of a country's culture and that nations are valued and identified by their cultural characteristics" (Dominguez 2000:23). The association between official culture and the state is probably due to the belief that national culture is the best way to define and justify the authority of *nation states*.

Serious international discussion about cultural policies began in the middle of the 1960s. In fact, it is at that time that the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) -composed by the international community - brought onto the table issues regarding the politics of culture, tradition and folklore. In addition to recognizing the fragility of culture, UNESCO outlined its importance to the development of a nation. As the Mexico City declaration of 1982 states, "Culture constitutes a fundamental dimension of the development process and helps to strengthen the independence, sovereignty and identity of nations" (UNESCO 1982: web site). Even though an agreement was reached in 1970 (Venice) regarding the threats that cultures face, a clear definition of what is meant by the notion of culture was only put forward at the beginning of the 1980s during the World Conference on Cultural Policies sponsored

by the UNESCO in Mexico. Culture has been defined as “the complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group” (UNESCO 1982: web site). The report clearly expresses the fact that culture serves as a tool of identity affirmation and promotion. The threats faced by culture are “technology, unregulated tourism and the penetration of foreign commercialized culture” (UNESCO 1970, in Wallach 2000).

Obviously, there is an important concern regarding the threats brought by globalization. In fact, UNESCO reports the danger that foreign cultures and new forms of technology can have on a nation: “The cultural heritage has frequently suffered damage or destruction as a result of thoughtlessness as well as of the processes of urbanization, industrialization and technological penetration” (UNESCO 1982: web site). Despite the fact that UNESCO underlines the importance of international cultural co-operation in national cultural protection, they believe that there is a danger of standardization brought on by the various repercussions of globalization. UNESCO also underlines the importance of international recognition and respect of diverse national cultures as a prerequisite to achieving peace and dialogue among nations. There is a clear orientation in UNESCO’s work since the 1960s to a push toward “global culturalism” (Dominguez 2000). This imposing universal spread of the notion of culture and the importance of protecting it can be illustrated by UNESCO’s sponsorship of two world conferences (1970 and 1982) concerning the politics of culture. Also, in the 1970s and 1980s, UNESCO published more than 45 country-by-country report booklets on the specific politics of culture. Reports were produced on socialist and non-socialist countries of Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

UNESCO's perspective on the protection of folklore and traditional popular culture is extremely relevant to this thesis, as it demonstrates the organization's understanding of culture. It is important to consider this perspective as it provides us with a broad idea of how the international community – composed of heads of states from different countries - thinks and behaves in regard to the promotion and protection of respective national cultures. In fact, it gives us good clues in regard to how a traditional culture is constructed and how it comes to represent national identity. Within this context, a traditional culture is seen as a static and current demonstration of the past and authenticity, which composes the nation state. Using the past and tradition as a way to legitimate official authority is not a new phenomenon, but this practice still creates concerns about how culture is manipulated and conceptualized. UNESCO defines folklore and traditional popular culture as:

The totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group of individuals and recognized as *reflecting the expectations of a community* in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means (UNESCO 1989: web site; my emphasis).

The report also provides examples of what should be considered folklore (music, dance, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, etc.) - accentuating the idea that culture is materialized. This definition of what is imagined to be part of a 'traditional' culture refers to the process of cultural objectification. Folklore is performed and put on display to strengthen the fact that a particular traditional culture still exists. This attitude reflects the belief that "in preserving the material forms and performance genres of a people, one preserves their culture" (Keesing 1989:34). Therefore, a form of materialized culture exists within the discourse that aims to identify what are the concrete elements forming a particular culture and tradition. In addition, the belief that tradition can be frozen in time and represented today as it existed before is misleading. It bears false temporal assumptions and ignores agency. In other words, there is no consideration that

performers are active agents and that, as other forms of culture, tradition is also a constructed imagined entity.

According to UNESCO, folklore is part of national culture and it must reflect the norms established by the community in defining what their folklore is. Above all, folklore is common to the whole nation since it is part of the national culture: “The nature of folklore is that it constitutes a component of cultural heritage common to local communities and to the nation as whole” (UNESCO 1999). This conceptualization again underlines that folklore and traditional popular culture – even if regional - represent the whole nation and that in this sense, they are political tools to unify and strengthen the nation state. Identifying a national culture with its folklore is commonly used for the promotion of tourism in many countries. For instance, one can think of the Mayan and Aztec cultures in Mexico and Guatemala or the *veillée à la cabane à sucre* in Canada. The reports concerning the protection of folklore also encourage the organization of regional, national and international festivals to promote and support the traditional popular culture (UNESCO 1989).

UNESCO outlines the “extreme fragility” of folklore and urges governments to safeguard and protect national folklore and to “act as quickly as possible” (UNESCO 1989). It is suggested that governments should collect, archive, conserve in museums, document and institutionalize national folklore before external threats cause it to disappear. This conservationist attitude towards folklore, traditional popular culture and culture in general has been largely debated and criticized in anthropology since the questioning of the relevance for a Boasian type of “salvage ethnography”. Boas developed an empiricist approach in which the role of anthropologists consisted of recording as much information as possible on cultures before they disappear due to

colonialism, assimilation and/or extinction (Erickson 1998). Such a perspective was criticized since it depicted culture as a static entity, frozen in time and without agency. An “ethnographic present” discourse is still found to a certain extent in the current work of UNESCO concerning culture in general and the protection of folklore. Ultimately, such a perspective depicts folklore and tradition as static entities that should remain unchanged and authentic through time and in the face of new social, economic and political contexts.

In addition, this conservative attitude illustrates how the international community generally defines and conceptualizes the politics of culture. Many critics (such as Lewis 2000) question the pertinence of applying cultural policies, since they are too traditional and they reflect narrow notions of art and artistic value. It also brings to light that cultural policies should not be taken for granted, since they may generate ideas of an objectified culture that is malleable but also static and preferably authentic. Above all, it perceives the principal players, which are the practitioners and the population in general, as passive recipients in face of diverse threats. This perspective presupposes that globalization is a threat to cultural development and that it cannot engender, without difficulty, new, creative and rich cultural and social phenomenon - as discussed by various authors such as Anarson (1990), Appadurai (1996), Arizpe (1996), Friedman (1997), Hall (1996), etc. I do not wish to judge the ideology found behind the politics of culture, but I believe that it is important to mention some issues behind its implementation. Cultural policies have a direct impact on how culture is disseminated and how diverse types of cultural groups affirm and identify themselves. We also have to keep in mind the reasons why a state would support the implementation of cultural policies, since it may partly explain why the policies are so conservative.

Why Would a National Government Support the Implementation of Cultural Policies?

Beneath the surface of a protective and democratic discourse, we may discover that one of the main goals in promoting a cultural policy is to strengthen the nation state in face of internal or/and external perceived threats. It has been mentioned by a few authors (such as Lewis 2000 and Crane 2000), that in face of globalization, national governments are pressured by two divergent forces. National governments have to take on the challenging role of “global culture gatekeepers” to protect the national identity in creating permeable boundaries. But they also have to encourage the national adaptation to new cultural development taking place in other countries, while protecting their internal cultural heritages (Crane 1992:162). They have to deal with diverse types of pressures coming from both inside and outside of their countries.

Faced with such a dilemma, national governments tend to react in one of two ways. The first approach is to reject any form of cultural policy, leaving cultural life to the interests of the free market. The second approach is to construct a cultural policy to maintain, protect and democratize a type of objectified culture in order to strengthen national autonomy. We may suspect that such a position would involve traditional notions of folklore, culture and identity. In referring to these two approaches, Lewis states that neither is “democratic nor dynamic” (2000:80). Therefore, national governments are imprisoned in an uncomfortable position and must make decisions regarding their orientation in the cultural domain.

Looking at North America, we can find examples to illustrate both approaches. In fact, Canada and the United States have different perceptions of how culture should be related to state organs. The case of the United States illustrates a rejection on the part of

the national government to even have a cultural policy. Social and cultural life is placed mostly in the hands of the free market. The United States does not have a Department or Ministry of Culture. In fact, it “does not have an institutional mechanism for developing, implementing, and debating a single coordinated set of policies perceived to be about the country’s culture and its national identity” (Dominguez 2000:29). In the United States there are national level, federally funded institutions in the domains of arts, mainly the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. But as Dominguez (2000) mentions, there is a danger to equate arts with culture. Also, these organizations do not provide a national institution that would focus on the development of cultural policies.

On the other side of the border, the Canadian government has worked on the development and implementation of national cultural policies. The provincial government of Québec also developed and still maintains a strong cultural policy that is highly oriented towards linguistic protectionism within the province. The Commission Massey-Lévesque, published in 1951, proposed a number of federal cultural policies that concerned three main objectives: national unity, strengthening of the Canadian identity and the democratization of cultural resources (Fortier 1998). Contrary to the United States, the Canadian government takes for granted that the state has a word to say in the shape of the country’s culture. In addition, it believes that the Canadian nation would benefit from cultural policies directed towards unity, identity and free access to culture. Again, there is the belief that culture is the factor of national distinctiveness and it comes to symbolize the identity of a nation as a whole.

Why such a difference in the implementation of national cultural policies?
Canada and the United States are both industrialized nations neighbouring each other.

This may be one of the reasons why Canada decided to develop a cultural policy. Handler explains that sustained government action in the domain of culture in Canada can be seen as a reaction “against the threat of other national cultures exerting international influence” (1988:81). The notion of “perceived threat” is often utilized to explain why a political system would opt to intervene in cultural affairs. These relative threats cause a sense of national instability and a state of crisis surrounding issues of national identity that will push the government to adopt cultural policies in order to strengthen its position vis-à-vis the rest of the world. As Dominguez clearly states, “it is the perception of weakness relative to other countries – however conceptualized and felt - that triggers and drives some official cultural policies” (2000:29). There are various types of perceived threats, some are internal and others external and international, but as we will see, they are often interrelated with the context of globalization.

We already know that nation states that are artificially created, integrate diverse ethnic and cultural identity groups. These groups can easily become sources of internal threats to national unity. Concretely, these perceived threats can take the form of “competition for state resources and political power, regional separatism, or even secessionist demands” (Keesing 1989:21). Dissidents or culturally diverse groups within a nation state can become the source of political and identity crisis. The Tamils in Sri Lanka is a good example of a minority ethnic group that organizes itself to demand an independent state of Ceylon in the north east of the island. This shows once more that cultural policies oriented towards defining a unified national culture are embedded in a highly political process.

Internal threats can also emerge as a reaction to new national, social and economic realities associated with globalization. For instance, Amit (1997) discusses the

process of nation building in the Cayman Islands. She explains that since the 1960s, there has been the extensive introduction of banking legislation and the development of the tourist industry. The sudden growth of the Cayman economy became dependent on foreign workers and tourist services. There is an increased sentiment that Caymanians are becoming “economically ‘second class’ in their own country” (1997:55). In the 1970s and early 1980s, Caymanian residents began to question the massive “immigrant invasion” into the island. Residents took the initiative to build cultural organizations and these were rapidly taken in charge by the government. Therefore, internal threats caused by immigration onto the island motivated some Caymanians to organize themselves and create cultural and historical archives and stimulate what was understood to be traditional Caymanian culture. Interestingly, Amit states that “it is this volatile mixture of *vulnerability* and legal privilege that provides the context for the development, over the last decade, of a set of national institutions mandated to interpret and promote Caymanian identity and history” (1997:56; my emphasis). In perceiving a real internal menace, residents, and soon after the government, institutionalized culture in order to redefine, maintain and protect the identity and culture of the island.

The example of the Cayman Islands can also illustrate the effects of external threats and how they become blurred with internal ones. As Amit puts it, Caymanians felt “a bit threatened by being overrun by outside influences from North Americans” (Amit 1997:56). In fact, if we look at the cause of perceived internal threats in a context of globalization, we may discover that many of the internal “problems” may be attributed to external factors such as cultural imperialism, free market, tourism, foreign media, massive waves of migration, etc. This shows how cultural policies are not limited to the nation anymore and can expand to such a point that they may include a broader region. For instance, certain European nations adopted cultural policies to not only promote and

protect domestic cultures, but European ones as well (García Canclini 2000). Above all, this shows that perceived internal and external threats are highly interrelated and that both have the power to motivate a state to adopt an active cultural policy. It is a mixture of recognized national vulnerability, weakness and perceived threats that drive governments to adopt cultural policies. These aim to strengthen the national identity and, by implication, the nation-state vis-à-vis the rest of the world. However, there are still questions that remain unanswered. For instance, what does it mean if a state does not have an active cultural policy? What does it mean if a country does not feel threatened? Does it signify that it already possesses a national consensus in regard to cultural issues? Many questions remain unclear, even if it seems that there is a common trend in explaining why official cultural policies are implemented at the national level.

Cultural Homogenization and the Nation State

A closer look at what lies behind the fear associated with globalization is essential to understand why a state may implement cultural policies. The following lines depict how globalization generates new fears and threats perceived by the nation state. I have already discussed some external threats but the following analysis is more directed towards how culture is manipulated by the official discourse in order to strengthen the nation state that is itself under pressure.

As mentioned above, there is a resistance - almost a survival reflex - that pushes many states to erect a barrier against global influences around the borders of the nation state. The state acknowledges the potential economic importance of opening to transnational markets, but it often recognizes diverse types of threats that such a liberal position would engender. One of the main perceived and anticipated fears of globalization is the *homogenization of culture*. The idea of homogenization has become

commonplace in many official discourses. There is also, in the discipline of anthropology, a discussion about what seems to be two poles of discourse between homogenization and heterogenization of culture within the context of globalization (For instances, Hannerz 1992 and Featherstone 1990, 1995). The threat of homogenization of culture brought on by processes of globalization has been generally exaggerated and, in the domain of anthropology, it is well accepted that a transformation towards one global culture has little chance of occurring (Featherstone 1990, 1995; Hannerz 1990, 1992; and others). As Featherstone explains, "The process of globalization (...) does not seem to be producing cultural uniformity; rather it makes us aware of new levels of diversity" (1995:14).

Authorities have used a discourse of homogenization in order to achieve certain goals that I explain in the following lines. The fear of homogenization, or so-called "Americanization", has been highly debated and academics such as Appadurai (1990, 1996), Friedman (1990 and 1997), Hannerz (1990) and others recognize that globalization is in fact creating new transnational cultural phenomena. The recognition of the politics of imagination and the role of agency in the construction of identity has fostered the development of the belief that culture is always changing in reaction to a multitude of factors. As Friedman argues, "all cultures have always been the product of import and a mix of elements" (1997:80). In understanding such a statement, we can wonder why many states such as Cuba and international organizations such as UNESCO advance the fears of homogenization. Appadurai notes that "the simplification of the(se) many forces (and fears) of homogenization can also be exploited by nation-states in relation to their own minorities, by posing global commoditization (or capitalism, or some other such external enemy) as more real than the threat of its own hegemonic strategies" (1996:32). Homogenization of culture is less probable than the generation of

an influx of cultural exchanges at the transnational level. Indeed, virtual, spiritual or practical contacts at the transnational level create new cultural phenomena contradicting the rise of a unique global culture. Therefore, the discourse of cultural homogenization may hide another perceived threat that is more related to the nation state itself.

Without denying that globalization may bring some global trends in the domains of food, clothes, language and music, we tend to forget that these “imported trends” are also indigenized within particular contexts. It is not the origin of the imported elements that teaches us about a foreign culture, but how “they are synthesised that is the specificity of a culture” (Friedman 1997:81). This is where various cultural variations arise that will engender cultural diversity at the global level. In feeding a fear of cultural homogenization, the state is in fact minimizing the threat of its own hegemonic power in addition to promoting the importance of strengthening, maintaining and creating a national culture and identity. Many authors recognize the fact that within a context of globalization the state is in decline (Friedman 1997), in erosion (Smith 1990) or in absolute downfall (Appadurai 1996). Appadurai claims that “the nation-state, as a complex modern political form, is on its last legs” (1996:9). Without agreeing entirely with this statement, I do believe that the state is currently under pressures that are novel in both their intensity and variety. The nation state’s waning influence causes insecurity and pushes the authorities to adopt severe policies of national strengthening. It is the fear of not being able to justify the pertinence of the nation state in a context of globalization that pushes a state to employ a discourse of cultural homogenization. Such a discourse will allow the state to develop more severe cultural policies in order to strengthen itself. As I have mentioned before, it is the national culture and identity that are nowadays the markers of political, economic and social differences between nation states. In fact, “As nation-states became increasingly drawn together in a tighter figuration of competing

nations, they faced strong pressures to develop a coherent cultural identity” (Featherstone 1995:89).

Then, cultural identity becomes a way to strengthen the state’s structure and justify its authority. There is in fact, in the post-colonial period, a tendency that pushes communities to unite themselves according to culture rather than nation. This movement labelled as ethnification and indigenisation (Friedman 1997) or culturalism (Appadurai 1996) has become transnational in the context of globalization, migration and mass media (1996:16). Appadurai defines culturalism as the “conscious mobilization of cultural differences in the service of a larger national or transnational politics” (1996:15). Culture becomes the unifying tool for intra-national groups that wish to extend their struggle outside the national borders. For instance, the independence movement of the Tamils in North and East of Sri Lanka and the Zapatista movement in Mexico receive help and support at the international level through mass media - the conflicts are extra-territorial. Friedman also states that it is the rise of de-territorialised, diasporic and sub-national identities that are “directly related to the decline of the nation-state itself” (Friedman 1997:85). Therefore, these transnational movements of people and identities have concrete and direct influences on the authority of the state.

Cultural demarcations become the aspect that is consciously used by culturalist groups in their respective struggle against the state or other “combatant groups”. I want to stress here that this struggle, generated by cultural demarcation, is also used by state authorities to reinforce and justify its existence. The politics of culture, aiming at the formation of a national cultural identity, are an example of how a state will encourage such cultural demarcation. Instead of being represented by localized guerrilla, or ethnic groups as Appadurai discusses (1996), a culturalist movement can also be promoted by

the state in order to strengthen its authority. In other words, the official authority will develop a “strengthening policy” in focusing on the maintenance and construction of a strong national culture. But the struggle remains a transnational concern, even if it is implemented within the structure of the nation state. In fact, the strengthening of a nation state is fuelled by global threats, by the fear of the end of the existence of the nation state. Mass media, migration, tourism and imperialism are perceived as global threats acting at the national level. The homogenization of culture is the state alibi that justifies the implementation of severe cultural policies. Cultural policies have as their goal the development of the national culture in order to strengthen the authority of the state threatened by globalization.

In addition to implementing cultural policies, the state has to maintain the sense of threat that can be created by globalization. There is an aspect of risk that is propagated by the state in order to justify its policies. As we will see in the following chapter, the Cuban State is very strong at fuelling a popular fear that aims to legitimate its policies that are nowadays largely contradicted by the opening of the economy to capitalism. Again appears the impasse that state authorities have to face. The state is also interested to opening its frontier to facilitate the capitalist exchanges. Therefore, it is the internal, but above all, the external threats to the nation state that will encourage a national government to implement a culture policy. A strong and unified national identity will strengthen and justify its existence. The discourse of homogenization has been used by states and international organizations in order to accentuate the fear of losing one's culture. But what lies behind this discourse is that losing a culture means weakening the nation state and its authority in general. This shows how complex the politics of culture are and to what extent such seemingly inoffensive practices can in fact prove to be highly political.

Cultural Production and the Economic Dimension

With the process of objectification of culture, the state came to identify what would be the appropriate representation of the tradition and folklore of the nation. In fact, as I have outlined in the section concerning the perception of UNESCO with regard to the protection of folklore, the traditional popular culture came to represent the whole nation. As Kurin states, “Songs, ballads, and folktales were invested with stronger meaning as they came to stand both metaphorically and metonymically for the nation of the whole” (2000:339). The folklore becomes a fraction of what would be considered the national culture. The type of traditional culture that the state encourages and supports is part of a highly political process. Tradition and its symbolism must establish the social cohesion of imagined communities. In other words, the state often needs to *invent* tradition in order to unite, assemble and control the population living within the nation state (Hobsbawn & Ranger 1983; Keesing 1989; Featherstone 1995). In fact, “The symbolic material of cultures –rules imputed to ancestors, rituals, myths- serves ideological ends, reinforcing the power of some, the subordination of others” (Keesing 1989:36). Therefore, the invention of tradition and its identification with the national culture is politicized.

As mentioned before, the state creates, encourages and supports cultural production in order to counter perceived threats and to strengthen its political and economic power within the nation state, and in face of the world. The politics of culture are complex and can address many goals and purposes. The cultural representations reinforce the unity of an artificially constructed community as they strengthen the differentiation between one nation state and the others. The state must decide which type of culture will be officially endorsed. It produces and creates national culture in order to

pursue its political goals. The state exploits the available tools and methods at its disposal in order to create an artificial sense of national unity – invented tradition, materialized culture and distorted history (for instance see Hall 1996).

In addition to being highly political, cultural production and representations have a strong economic dimension. Obviously, “There is money to be made by representing culture and using its resources” (Kurin 2000:346). Nowadays, many countries are dependent upon the revenues brought in by the commoditization of national culture. Tourism is the most striking example in which culture is commercialized, packaged, and sold. Cultural tourism is encouraged, funded and promoted by the state, which recognizes the importance for the national economy of such important revenues. Thematic parks, festivals, museums, historic sites, spectacles, etc. are organized to attract visitors. Folklore and tradition are also put on stage. The traditional groups identified as official bearers of the national culture are often called on to perform in front of tourists in order to show them an authentic image of the national culture. People belonging to these groups are not passive and they know that “economic power can be used to promulgate and preserve their culture and that their culture may be valuable for fuelling their economy” (Kurin 2000:347). In fact, members of traditional popular groups react to new opportunities offered to them. This reaction has to be perceived as a normal process of adaptation and of cultural change. As Keesing (1989) argues, traditional culture is put on display in order to show to people living in the country, but also to foreigners, that the tradition still exists - that it is still authentic. However, these manifestations are not an authentic reproduction of a non-temporal heritage. “Traditional popular” culture is often asked to perform in festivals and in public spectacles to strengthen the national sense of identity. In that sense, the production of culture is political and economic, since a strong

objectified national culture has the potential to earn revenues in addition to strengthening the national identity.

Tourism, Carnivals, Festivals and the Politics of Culture

In the following section, I discuss how festivals and carnivals - mostly the ones found in the Caribbean - can generate a sense of national identity. These festivals are part of the cultural policies of each nation and their purpose is to stage national identity. For instance, in Jamaica there is a Festival Commission sponsored by the state, which aims to organize and promote the Jamaican festival. In the UNESCO booklet on the politics of culture in Jamaica, we read that “The festival was conceived as an annual report to the nation on all its phases of national achievement” (Institute of Jamaica 1977). In other words, through the festival - which is held during the anniversary of Jamaica’s independence day - tradition is promoted as a reminder of national heritage and culture. Traditional popular culture becomes an active tool to promote and strengthen the national identity: “The Jamaican Festival has been conceived in terms of mass participation and a search for Indigenous folk material and human talent in an annual cultural event” (Institute of Jamaica 1977). It is also important to mention that these festivals are very important in the promotion of tourism, as they depict the essence of national identity. Cultural performances such as rituals are staged and transformed for the sake of being integrated into the lucrative and imposing global tourist industry. The state becomes a very active agent in promoting and staging a national culture for the tourist industry. This section is important since it is highly relevant to the current Cuban situation in regard of Carnivals and tourism. A broad overview of such issues will help us to better understand the concrete Cuban applications developed in the following chapters.

Since the 1950s, there has been extensive tourist industry development at the international level. Many of the Caribbean islands' national economies rely on this type of industry. For instance, as we have seen in the Cayman Islands, "The economy relies almost entirely on the inflow of foreign capital generated by the tourist and offshore financial sector" (Amit 1997:53) and by the 1960s, Antigua was experiencing an "almost total reliance on the tourist trade" (Manning 1978:197). The Caribbean abounds with nation-states that adopted the tourist industry as a major economic sector for the development of the nation. The reason for the development of a tourist industry is economic since it generates capital and employment. There was a hope that it would generate economic prosperity and development. Stronza explains that, "As aid money was channelled south, the modernizationists of the 1970s applauded tourism as a powerful catalyst for helping the Caribbean and other areas "take off" into a flourishing service-based economy" (2001:8). Despite the fact that we could argue against this statement, we have to admit that many nation state of the Caribbean continue to further develop the tourist industry as a means of generating economic revenues.

Festivals and carnivals "are now widely recognized as one of the fastest growing types of tourism attractions" (Crompton & MacKay 1997:429) and "one of the three major categories of tourism attraction" (Getz 1991 in Crompton & MacKay 1997:429). In the Caribbean, "major Carnival celebrations now take place in more than a dozen Antillean territories" (Manning 1978:191). This is not a phenomenon limited to the Caribbean, since as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett mentioned, "mass tourism has grown in the postwar period, festivals of all kinds have proliferated with the explicit intention of encouraging tourism" (1998:61). Carnivals in the Caribbean are the place and time of the year where dance, music and other types of artistic manifestations are concentrated and performed both for the locals and the national/international tourists. Carnivals often

allow the audience to take part into certain festivities such as parades. There are also local, national or international (from the diasporas) groups that perform during the carnival in spectacles and contests. The tourist industry influences the local carnivals and festivals in the Caribbean. These carnivals and festivals are commodified and staged not only for the tourist industry, but also for the locals.

The numerous roles of culture (of the host and the tourist communities) in this form of industry are complex and constantly changing. What the tourist consumes is not permanent and the industry has to face the different types of interests and adjust its market to the tourists' demands. There is no doubt that the culture of the tourist is affecting the cultural production of local people (Craik 1997:123). Also, the ferocious competition with other tourist destinations in the world forces the state to develop an array of activities, performances, etc. that will suit the diversity of the industry's demands. Some authors explain that a range of developments such as the commodification of culture, the increase in the consumption of culture by a wider range of people and the rise of tourism as a mode of spectacularized and global consumer culture have created a new infatuation for cultural tourism (Craik 1997; Bandy 1996).

Cultural tourism refers to 'travelscape', or 'vacationscapes' (respectively Tilley 1997:74 and Stronza 2001:5) "where cultural sites, events, attractions, and/or experiences are marketed as primary tourist experience" (Craik 1997:113). It is often seen as a benign type of tourism (Craik 1997; Smith 1989) and associated with a sustainable form of development. For instance, Wilson (1996) discusses the notion of sustainability in cultural tourism. He writes that a sustainable approach to culture can prevent "the perceived corruption of local culture by the tourist/host encounter" and promote "positive self-images regarding personal identity and cultural values" (Wilson 1996:76). Cultural

tourism is also associated with the process of learning and education through the discovery of other cultures. Craik writes that cultural tourism consists of "customized excursions into other cultures and places to learn about their people, lifestyle, heritage and arts in an informed way that genuinely represents those cultures and their historical contexts" (1995 in Craik 1997:121).

Cultural tourism is motivating communities or other groups of people to produce and stage their heritage, ritual (of any kind) or other types of performances for the tourist industry. In other words, cultural tourism provides an audience for cultural performances and "local culture itself is treated as a commodity *sui generis*" (Greenwood 1989:173). The cultural manifestations are often transformed or simply created by the local people for international tourists. This is where the notion of 'authenticity' comes into play. In fact, cultural tourism can imply a search for 'picturesque' and 'local colour' (Smith 1989:4; Greenwood 1989:173), authenticity (MacCannell 1976, 1973) or can become an egocentric pursuit (Craik 1997).

Obviously, the construction of an image or a representation based on the "local-colour" of a nation-state is an important strategy to adopt for the tourist industry in order to attract as many tourists as possible. The "local-colour" is tied to national identity since it promotes "traditional and authentic manifestations" in order to attract tourists within the country. The host communities have to develop artistic and cultural manifestations in order to please the tourist. In many cases, tourism, instead of creating a homogenization of cultures, has created a certain form of revival of those cultures. The cultural manifestations motivated by the tourist industry can be considered as "non-authentic" but they are part of a changing cultural process of affirmation and identity. On the other hand, it is true that "it is the 'past' and 'tradition' that is being put on display" (Tilley

1997:74). These cultural manifestations are feeding an expected image of the "other". The heritage, the past and the tradition of a people are put on display, but only from a contemporary understanding of them and for the purpose of generating capital. In talking about native cultures, Appadurai explains "They are oppressed by the international market for the objects *once* iconic of their identity, which are *now* tokens in the drive for authenticity in metropolitan commodity culture" (1972:37; my emphasis). From that point of view, it seems that both the tourists and the host communities are duped by the generation of authenticity. I do not wish to discuss the term "authenticity" here, but I think that it is important to outline its utopianism, in the sense that defining what is culturally authentic is an impossible task and a non-relevant pursuit. Cultures have always been in contact and from that perspective the exchanges brought by globalization are not entirely new. It has been suggested that no population, even isolated ones, "was ever truly incarcerated in a specific place and confined by a specific mode of thought" (Appadurai 1972:37). We often tend to forget that people are not passive recipients of cultural influences, but are instead active participants in the construction of new cultural meanings. On the other hand, we have to recognize that the scope of the phenomena brought by the process of globalization has no precedent. Contacts and influences that occur at the international level have never reached such a scale and intensity.

In the Caribbean as elsewhere, the carnivals produce a sense of unity and commonness. They allow thousands of people to experience a shared event that proudly stages their national identity. Numerous studies have been conducted on the possible relationship between rituals and cultures (for instance, see Turner 1982; 1984). In using a 'Geertzian' perspective, Greenwood (1989) explains the notion of public rituals. He writes that these are "dramatic enactments, commentaries on, and summations of the meanings basic to a particular culture" and that they "serve to reaffirm, further, develop,

and elaborate these aspects of reality that hold a particular group of people together in a common culture" (1989:174). Therefore, rituals are seen as unifying a group of people who share certain common values, beliefs, practices, etc. There are many types of rituals: secular, religious, urban, regressive, collective, etc. We can include different types of "social meetings" under the term rituals such as carnivals, festivals, celebrations, commemorations, festivities, etc. Each of these forms of celebration shares certain common properties associated with the notion of ritual. In the context of a tourist industry, rituals such as carnivals and festivals are often perceived as commodified, in the sense that rituals "come to be evaluated primarily in terms of exchange value, in a context of trade, thereby becoming goods" (Stronza 2001:10). Far from losing all their meaning though, those 'commodified rituals' possess their own symbolic autonomy (Manning 1978:199). Performances and other types of cultural manifestations allow groups of people to come together to experience a collective consciousness that is constantly changing. This collective consciousness can be expressed in various ways and can grow and be transformed into a national (Bossen 2000), ethnic (Manning 1978) or pan-national (Cohen 1998) identity.

One major player in constructing the national-identity through cultural manifestations such as carnivals is the state. The state has to face the fact that "opportunities for promoting tourism around cultural attractions has expanded enormously, and partnerships between the unlikely bedfellows of tourism operators and cultural producers have been encouraged" (Craik 1997:121). In the Caribbean, the state is largely exploiting the "Creole" and the "transcultural" image of the Caribbean to attract international tourists. At the same time, this image is also creating a uniform type of pan-Caribbean identity based on music and dance. As explained by Matthews & Richter, the state has "played a key role in framing ethnicity for tourism, partly as a way to build

national solidarity, and partly as a strategy to attract foreign tourists” (Stronza 2001:11). In other words, the state builds a sense of unity by creating and encouraging a national culture, even if the country includes diverse cultural groups. This process is undertaken in order to strengthen the national identity within a particular context in which this cultural unity “sells well”. The state participates in the construction of a “discourse of pluralism, of unity in diversity” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:76-77). It creates a general image of the national identity by including the local, ethnic, traditional and/or cultural essences. Obviously, “the growth of tourism as an industry has been accompanied by growing governmental interest in its fortune” (Craik 1997:133). One of the main reasons why a state will decide to turn its economy in the direction of the “tourist market” is because of its highly lucrative potential. In the Caribbean, tourism offers the possibility of having an alternative to a mono-economy based on the exportation of sugar.

It is clear that tourism adds a new factor to any state engaged in nation building because the industry “implies an expanded cultural role for the state” (Wood, in Bossen 2000:129). The choice of what kind of cultural manifestation will be put on display is already a first statement to define a particular national identity. The state has to organize and construct favorable contexts for the industry and must also manage to fit the demands of the tourist. Bossen writes that “The state may furthermore become organizer of cultural reproductions (e.g. museums, national parks, cultural centers) and the licensing authority concerning the authenticity and quality of products sold to tourists” (2000:128). There is an objectification of culture and its various manifestations that are promoted by the state. As explained by Craik, “governments increasingly have redefined arts and cultural production in industry terms, as sizeable economic sectors (...) with value-added export potential” (1997:135). The state is confronted with a search for commercial identity and diversification of its industry for different types of tourists.

Then, the state is shaping the national and in the case of the Caribbean, pan-national identities by choosing which part of their culture will be commercialized and developed for the tourist industry. This choice can sometimes be in opposition to what people want to put on display. As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett explains, “festivals organized by dominant cultural institutions such as museums and state folklife programs or funded by state and federal agencies share a performance discourse that often stands in contrast (if not in opposition) to the ways communities stage themselves” (1998:73).

As have pointed out earlier, the image that corresponds to the Caribbean islands is associated with music and dance. These artistic manifestations and performances are staged during carnivals. Looking at tourist brochures or tourist magazines about the Caribbean, one can observe a clear emphasis on the commercialization of a multiplicity or creolity through carnivals. For instance, the French tourist magazine *Îles* dedicated an entire issue to the Caribbean (September-October 2001). The articles found in the issue focus on four Caribbean regions: Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic and the Colombian Caribbean. All the articles emphasized the Caribbean celebrations of music and dance. Furthermore, in one article entitled “Danse avec l’Afrique, la culture du métissage” the author looks at the 21st Festival of the Caribbean that was held in Santiago, Cuba⁷. The article explains that this Caribbean event was made up of colorful dances in the rhythm of Afro-Cuban music. The article makes a clear link between the dances and the Caribbean identity. It says that for the direct descendants of the black slaves, the *yoruba* (dance) conserved their religious meaning. For others, these dances fulfill a fundamental place in the Cuban identity”⁸ (Gall 2001:56; my translation). The image that a state or a group of states wish to promote can be observed in this type of tourist reportage. More concretely, this image can also be noticed in tourist brochures and in general, throughout the tourism marketing.

It is also important to mention that a pan-Caribbean image has been created for the tourist industry. As I have discussed before, the festivals and carnivals encourage the development of a national identity, but also a pan-national one. This can be observed here through the images that are carried, for instance, in tourist brochures. The tourist market creates this image, but the nation-states of the Caribbean also encourage and maintain it by financing and promoting cultural performances for the tourist industry that conform to the multiplicity of the Caribbean.

The creation of new identities in face of tourism shows that the host communities are not passive recipients and executors of the tourist demands. In fact they constantly react and exchange with a diversity of cultural influences. Manning (1978) explains that the state and the tourist industry are not the only players in the construction of this new identity. Quite the contrary, "while Carnival embodies cultural themes which are related to political nationalism and the tourist economy, it is not controlled by either of these influences" (Manning 1978:199). Manning emphasizes that the people who participate in Carnivals are the real agents of construction of this identity. Stronza (2001) also believes that the host community is not a passive agent in the elaboration of an identity within a tourist industry. Stronza needs to be quoted at length:

Even in cases where local hosts are changing aspects of their identity or their lives to appeal to tourists, they may not necessarily be losing their culture or their ability to judge for themselves what is spurious and genuine. To the contrary, local hosts may feel empowered by interactions with outsiders to redefine who they are and what aspects of their identity they wish to highlight or downplay. In the midst of reviving the past or inventing traditions, locals may be quite conscious of the fact that they are presenting cultural displays to tourists and not exposing the truly meaningful symbols and rituals of their private and "backstage" lives. (2001:13)

Stronza (2001) shows that the culture of the host community, as some authors would insinuate, is not inactive and receptive. Some rituals are staged for the tourist

industry but they do not lose their meanings for the participants. On the other hand, we cannot deny that the meaning of these “revived past and invented traditions” has been transformed due to new economic, political and social contexts. It can happen that a group of locals no longer identify themselves with the rituals that have been adapted for the tourist industry. But there are many forms of resistance towards tourism (Silver 1993:310) and in that sense the host community is still active in constructing a collective consciousness. In the Caribbean Carnivals and Festivals, participants stage their cultural performances through music and dance, creating an image exploited by the tourist industry, but also by its participants and the state, who jointly create a sense of a regional, national and pan-national identity.

Cultural policies are political, as their aim is to strengthen national identity and justify the existence of an artificially constructed nation state. With diverse tools, the state creates and encourages the invention of tradition, the staging of folklore, the distortion of history, etc., in order to create a sense of national unity. Globalization has brought various types of pressures that may destabilize a nation state, but cultural policies seek to strengthen its authority. Culture is manipulated since it has come to be identified with the identity of the nation itself. Culture is therefore a major aspect that allows the distinction of one state from another, in addition to maintaining hegemony within its own borders.

The cultural policies have been globally developed since the 1960s with the conferences organised by the UNESCO. Different reasons motivate a state to implement, or not, a cultural policy. However, common trends shared by states that have adopted a cultural policy can be observed. It consists of perceived internal and external threats and

a sense of weakness vis-à-vis itself, a neighbour state and the rest of the world. The entity of national culture and identity is artificially constructed. Cultural policies commodify culture in the sense that they delimit, within an official discourse, what is considered representative of the national culture: festivals, traditional dance and music, folklore, heritage sites, etc. In addition to being highly political, cultural policies are economic, since commodified culture can be sold to foreigners. Cultural tourism is the best example to illustrate how national culture can become a lucrative enterprise. The example of festivals and carnivals in the Caribbean has shown that such rituals can, in conjunction with tourism, be part of the construction of a national identity. Additionally, tourism is akin to consuming an official culture –at best authentic - that is promoted, maintained and funded by the state. Although people are also active in the construction of their national culture, the state still possesses the principal tool to maintain the imagined community.

The “control” of culture is complex, contextual and aims to reinforce the nation. On the other hand, the state also encourages a national culture that has the potential to bring money into the domestic economy. In the following chapter, I will show that the Cuban government has created a national culture in order to counter the perceived imperialist expansionist threat, which has the potential of distorting the ideology of the Cuban Revolution. Finally, the Cuban government is today dependent on the tourist industry and, through the development of cultural tourism, the state is able to attract tourists while retaining its national autonomy. Above all, the Cuban case clearly shows that the idea of national culture, which could be perceived as inoffensive, may in fact become a huge political and economic tool of control.

Chapter 3: Cultural Policies in Cuba

El arte es un arma de la Revolución
Un producto de la moral combativa de nuestro pueblo
Un instrumento contra la penetración del enemigo⁹
(Taken from the First National Congress on Education and Culture, La Habana, 1971).

The Cuban State has found itself in a delicate position since it partially opened its economy to capitalist investments in order to survive a harsh economic crisis. This opening has caused many social changes, and has forced the state to justify its policies to a population accustomed to an anti-capitalist discourse since more than 40 years. Indeed, new social changes have occasionally caused disappointment and frustrations among the population, which is increasingly confronted with economic, social and racial inequalities. In order not to lose control of the system, the Cuban State actively promotes cultural policies and aims to strengthen, maintain and re-create the revolutionary identity. This sense of belonging to the Cuban community on the island is essential in order to maintain the Revolution, which is at risk of disintegrating. The cultural policies implemented by the Cuban State are oriented towards the development and the maintenance of a popular traditional culture that will support the Revolution.

Despite a strong revival and intensification of the cultural policies since the beginning of the 1990s, these regulations have always been present in the discourse of the Revolution. The Cuban State has been able to maintain, since the 1960s, a sense of danger, urgency and threat that pushes Cubans to defend their revolutionary culture. In this chapter, I look at what a Cuban revolutionary culture refers to. This type of culture is based on socialist, and more particularly, Marxist-Leninist principles of what should be the “new man”. I also discuss the ideology behind the politics of culture of the Cuban State and how Castro, -head of the Cuban state- Hart Dávalos, -ex-minister of culture today in charge of the heritage of José Martí- and Prieto -writer and current minister of

culture- have been able to construct strong cultural policies. According to the official discourse, Cuban culture is potentially in danger of disappearing because of threats brought by globalization. More particularly, the revolutionary Cuban identity is endangered because of American imperialism. The Cuban State also maintains a cultural politics because the Revolution and its whole system are at stake.

Perceived threats are not only caused by American cultural invasion and globalization but also by policies implemented by the state such as, promotion of the tourist industry, decriminalization of the possession of foreign currency, and creation of two parallel consumption markets. Despite the fact that the Cuban State was confronted by the most serious economic crisis since the beginning of the Revolution, ideological efforts were put forward in the domain of culture in order to sustain the promotion of the system. The state struggles to recreate the socialist character of the Revolution “as it was before 1991” within a current economic context that increasingly reposes on foreign capitalist investments.

After 1995, the state decided to intensify the formation of cultural promoters and instructors in addition to encourage and develop new projects for the municipal departments of culture. For example, the state distributed TV sets and VCRs in every municipal department on the island. A closer look at each of these points allows me to claim that cultural policies in Cuba are mainly intended to strengthen the Revolutionary state. The cultural policies justify the authority of the regime in maintaining and promoting its ideological perspective. The points developed in this chapter are further developed in chapter 4 with concrete examples of how cultural policies are applied at the local level on traditional artistic popular groups.

In this chapter, I refer to studies produced by Cuban researchers, speeches of political leaders, and reports of assemblies. A look at these texts, which are considered as official references by Cuban authorities, can shed light on the perspective of cultural institutions. It provides information about the official orientation that the state wishes to give to cultural policies. It also outlines the complexity of the ideological system that has been installed in order to promote social projects and cultural policies. As we will see in the next chapter, these policies which may seem severe, give the opportunity to thousands of people to participate actively in artistic and cultural exchanges. There is an extremely rich cultural diversity and popular artistic production in Cuba and this is mainly due to the work of thousands of Cubans but also to the funding of the sole cultural promoter: the State.

The struggle for a “new man”

When Fidel Castro and the rebels entered in La Habana in 1959 and proclaimed the triumph of the popular revolution, Cubans had the opportunity to construct a new type of society. The idea of the creation of a distinct system based on socialism emerged at the beginning of the 1960s. One of the main goals of the revolutionary leaders was to create a different type a culture characterized by distinct social values unlike those which prevailed before the Revolution. In the official Cuban discourse, there is a clear distinction between the periods before and after the Revolution -a clear line dividing the past and the future. Before going into details concerning this division, it is important to look at what is meant by revolutionary culture and by “new man” since it is this type of expression that is promoted in the cultural politics. In other words, cultural policies aim at developing a particular type of culture that supports the revolutionary processes. This choice on the part of the state is made in order to insure that the imagined and/or promoted culture adequately represents the revolutionary ideology.

Right at the beginning of the Revolution, leaders clearly stated that some aspects of Cuban culture had to be transformed. As stated in UNESCO's booklet concerning the politics of culture in Cuba, "Culture should be an activity directed to the formation of the new man in the new society" (Saruski & Mosquera 1979:20). The task of constructing the new ideal man—in the general sense of man and woman—is directly linked to the building of a socialist system (Saruski & Mosquera 1979). The construction of a "new man" was supposed to aim at creating a type of socialist revolutionary man holding social and community values. Many concrete efforts have been made by the Cuban State at the beginning of the 1960s to transform the "Cuban man" into a "new man" (see Fagen 1969 and Bunck 1994). In fact, revolutionary leaders believed that this transformation was essential for "the new institutional order, and the regime spares no energies in its pursuit" (Fagen 1969:2). The "new man" often symbolized by the image and ideology of *el Che* Guevara became a central element of the Cuban revolutionary politics. In the book entitled *El socialismo y el hombre en Cuba* (1988) written by Ernesto Che Guevara, the author explains how important the creation of a "new man" is in the success of popular revolution.

In his thoughtful work on the pre-revolutionary Cuban culture, Pérez Jr. (1999) states the fact that it was difficult in the 1950s to distinguish what was the "Cuban" from the "American" in the popular culture. However, the revolutionary group, lead by Castro, identified exactly what was acceptable to become a part of the Cuban culture in creating a distinction between socialist and capitalist cultural imports. Every aspect of the Cuban life that was associated with capitalist values was directly associated with the American influence and therefore had to be transformed. Capitalist values were a reminder of the oppression lived by Cuba since colonial time. In that sense, revolutionary leaders were

able to create a dichotomy between what was the American part of the Cuban culture –and this part had to change irremediably. Pérez Jr. also states that to challenge the North American aspect of the Cuban culture, as did the revolutionary leaders was to challenge what it meant to be Cuban (1999:12). Although I do not agree entirely with Pérez Jr.'s perspective, his position does illustrate that revolutionary leaders were engaged in a major redefinition of what was considered at that time to be the Cuban culture.

The Cuban State did try to implement beliefs and values associated with socialism, but above all, the new regime has been able to create the idea of a “revolutionary” system. It is surprising to think that after 40 years of existence, the Cuban system is still labeled as “revolutionary” by Cuban authorities, although nowadays the regime is often associated with the status quo. Despite all, at the outset, the revolutionary leaders aimed to create a new culture in line with socialism. In referring to the early years of the Revolution, Fagen writes that “The Cuban leaders themselves view the revolutionary experience as a culture-transforming process” (1969:17). In other words, the creation of a new culture was essential for the construction and maintenance of a revolutionary socialist state.

This tendency to radically change culture within the context of revolution is not limited to the Cuban case. Although it is recognized that one of the priorities of the Cuban Revolution was to transform cultural patterns, other socialist revolutions such as that of Nicaragua, also made efforts to alter the national culture. In many concerns, the Nicaraguan Revolution has followed the path of the Cuban Revolution. And as with the Cubans, the Sandinistas directed their cultural transformations “toward correcting the cultural distortions of the past, building upon the cultural givens of the present, and looking toward a vital and democratic cultural future” (Whisnant 1991:192). The relation

of the past with the present and the future is important in defining the revolutionary process.

It is well-known that before the Revolution, Cuba was a paradise island for the rich North Americans who enjoyed what was prohibited or socially unacceptable in their own country, such as drinking alcohol, gambling and having relationships with prostitutes (Pérez Jr. 1991). With the Platt Amendment (1901-1934), Cubans have been confronted by the omnipresence of American investments and interests in the island. In fact, after the war of Independence against Spain, the Platt Amendment enabled the Americans to restrict Cuban sovereignty in foreign affairs. The amendment was signed in exchange for the withdrawal of the American troops in the island after the War of Independence. In 1903, the Reciprocity Treaty tied the island's trade into a dependent relationship and an Agreement on Coasting and Naval Stations was signed in order to create Naval bases such as the one in Guantánamo, still in operation up to this day. From Independence (proclaimed in May 1902) up to the end of the 1950s, Cuba was lead mostly by corrupted and dictatorial regimes supported by the American government.

Cuba was certainly not what could be considered an independent and autonomous state. According to the official discourse, when the revolutionary guerillas took control of the government at the end of the 1950s, they brought to an end years of exploitation, dictatorship and imperialist occupation. Such a sudden break is what produces major changes in the social, economic, political and cultural sphere of this society. This is what makes the idea of a revolution – “a struggle against an *ancien régime*, prosecuted in the name of natural laws of progress by a nation which has emancipated itself from the traditional forms of power” (Touraine 1991:123). The idea of “natural law” gives a

certain authority to the revolutionary government that is considered to be both natural and legitimate. The revolution is therefore depicted as something inevitable.

Also, a revolution, as Touraine (1991) mentions, involves an aspect of struggle against an *ancien régime*. In Cuba, the notion of struggle is prevalent and has come to the point where it is integrated in the everyday vocabulary – as with consumption for instance (see Boudreault-Fournier 2003). The concept of struggle and fight –*la lucha*– were used by Fidel at the beginning of the Revolution, and remained an important concept in the policies of propaganda. Above all, the concept of struggle was primordial in the construction of a revolutionary culture. The revolutionary Cuban nationhood emerged from the acknowledgment of a history of struggles against slavery, colonialism and imperialism. This history of struggle was, and still is, used by the revolutionary government in order to legitimize its policies and its search for a utopian nation that has never been achieved. As Fagen explains,

Over the last decade, the Cuban people have been called upon to struggle against colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism, counterrevolution, bureaucratism, sectarianism, discrimination, illiteracy, absenteeism, low productivity, and much, much more. Although the tactics and targets change, the *lucha* itself, with its emphasis on personal and collective sacrifice, never ceases (1969:11).

The concept of struggle is also an important tool used in the official discourse since it maintains a sense of danger, sacrifice and threat. It also brings the idea that people have to be active and to believe in the Revolution in order to counter different types of internal or external threats. I will discuss in the next section why the perception of these threats is maintained by the state. But it is important to outline the fact that the notion of struggle has been at the center of the Cuban strategy to create and sustain a state of uncertainty and urgency of action. This discourse is essential to justify the constant sacrifices that the Cuban population has to commit in order to construct the

socialist revolutionary society. In addition, the transformation of the new citizen and his constant struggle is important in order to reach the utopian Cuban society (Fagen 1969). *La lucha* is nowadays part of what would be considered the Cuban revolutionary national identity. In the report of the First National Congress of Education and Culture, we can read that “*Las luchas independentistas de nuestro pueblo afianza la cultura nacional portadora de características propias, y a la vez, capaz de asimilar los elementos culturales universales*”¹⁰ (1982:54; my emphasis).

In such a context of struggle and fight against repression, culture rapidly became an important political tool. The popular history abounds with revolutionary heroes such as José Martí, Máximo Gómez, and the Maceo's brothers who fought against colonialism. Fidel and the members of his guerilla became the revolutionary vanguard who is now in charge of a Marxist-Leninist system. It is from this point of view that the revolutionary leaders integrated culture in their common struggles as they become the pillars of the Cuban identity. The Cuban ex-Minister of culture, Hart Dávalos, writes that culture is “la que se nutrió del pensamiento radicalmente revolucionario de los independentistas y la que debe incorporar, también, el pensamiento antiyanqui de los mejores reformistas del siglo pasado”¹¹. He further states that it is such a revolutionary culture that “nos sirven de escudo en el enfrentamiento ideológico al imperialismo norteamericano”¹² (1989:25). In other words, the revolutionary government fights the same repressive forces that the national heroes had fought for at the end of the 19th century. It is therefore natural that the revolutionary government continues the struggle in their name for contemporary international threats.

Many spheres of the society became politicized and culture was among the most important tool for the construction of a revolutionary nationhood. In fact, it is important

to mention again that Cuban identity was reshaped to the extent that it had to be seen as the antithesis of the pre-revolutionary identity. The politicization of diverse spheres of society “is a common characteristic of radical regimes to break down the boundaries between domains of behavior by politicizing as many of them as possible” (Fagen 1991:15). Culture as with many other spheres of the society –such as education, commerce, health, groups of women, etc.- became institutionalized and put under the control of the state. In other words, every instituted entity came to be considered as revolutionary tools. Even the “new man” had to become a political man, someone working actively for the construction of a socialist nation.

Therefore, according to the Cuban government, the Revolution has been able to put in place, shortly after 1959, cultural policies aiming at the transformation of the Cuban identity. This transformation, successful or not (Bunck 1994), was used in order to strengthen the popular revolution. It was also primordial to insure the general participation in the process of constructing a utopian Cuban socialist society since “sin la participación consciente del pueblo en el proceso de la elaboración de la política cultural, está no tendrá ningún éxito¹³” (Hart Dávalos 1978:310). The role of the state in the process of cultural transformation is central and it was strategically able to use and manipulate culture -and more particularly in this case, the artistic domain of culture- in order to support its social ideals.

The Cuban State and its cultural policy

In the last section, I looked at the transformation of culture and the creation of a “new man” and a new socialist society. In this context, the notion of culture was used as a general concept including many spheres of social life such as education, values, ways of living and thinking, etc. This analysis allows me to deepen, in this section, the

ideology and the actions of the state in regard to a segment of the notion of culture, which includes diverse types of popular artistic and cultural forms of expression. It is important to mention that arts are a very powerful tool of control, and is used by the state in order to uphold its revolutionary policies. Despite the fact that Cuban cultural politics are broad and can be applied to many spheres of the society, I limit the analysis to the domain of culture that involves cultural and artistic manifestations. It is also important for the purpose of this thesis to focus on cultural policies oriented towards traditional and popular artistic forms of expression because the following chapter is mostly concerned with the concrete application of such policies on a few 'traditional' groups of dance and music. I want to outline the fact that the term tradition does not have the same meaning in Cuba as in North America. It is not seen as something that has disappeared and performed as a revival form of expression by a very small minority. Traditional culture in Cuba is very alive and this is a reason why it is labeled "popular".

In this thesis, culture tends to be depicted as a utilitarian tool in the sense that the argument develops the idea that culture is manipulated in order to satisfy state's desires to solidify its regime. Indeed, culture is not essentially utilitarian since it emerges spontaneously within the population independently of state interests. Even without its conceptual borders, the notion of "culture" is not basically utilitarian. On the other hand, the state acknowledges and exploits its potential of control over the population. Although the Cuban State possesses a strong utilitarian perception of culture, I believe that it also recognizes the face value of the Cuban culture in general, which is known worldwide for being creative, rich, original and influential. To a certain extent, this is something that the Cuban State cannot control. Many art forms in Cuba are performed as artistic and cultural manifestations and their values are recognized as such by cultural authorities.

However, one of the main Cuban State's motivations behind the implementation of active cultural policies can be explained by the belief that culture is the weapon of the Revolution (First National Congress of Education and Culture 1971, quoted in n.d. 1982:57-58). The answer of Hart Dávalos to the question, "Why do we need culture?" illustrates well the general philosophy behind promoting a national culture. Hart Dávalos answered: "La necesitamos... para ayudar más a la Revolución¹⁴" (1988:6). Culture is therefore seen as a tool for the strengthening and maintenance of the Revolution. In addition, the Cuban culture came to be equated with revolution, "La tradición de la nación cubana y la unidad del país pasan, necesariamente, por lo que representan la Revolución y Fidel¹⁵" (Hart Dávalos 2001:243). The Cuban State created a culture based on the socialist and revolutionary principles.

The use of culture as a tool of political action in support of the socialist system started shortly after the beginning of the Revolution. As I mentioned before, there is a clear division between before and after 1959 in the official discourse. The state bears a critical look at the situation of popular culture as it was before the 1960s. At the time, the state was not directly involved in the domain of popular culture, which was left to the interests of the capitalist market. In an official report, Saruski & Mosquera explain that in addition to ignoring the popular Cuban culture, the state and the imperialist powers actively "uproot(ed) our country's cultural values, to falsify its history, to crush and disfigure our finest national traditions, (and) to hamper cultural exchanges with the rest of the world" (1979:16). In fact, the establishment of a socialist state is seen as having been the savior of Cuban culture. Although the revolutionary government recognizes that the base of the Cuban culture emerged at the beginning of the 20th century with the struggle for independence, it is only with the advent of the revolutionary policies that the Cuban culture appeared to have taken form.

One of the pillar figures recognized by the revolutionary government is the social scientist Fernando Ortiz who is described in the official discourse as the third “discoverer” of Cuba – Columbus being the first and José Martí, the second. According to authorities, Ortiz has been the first who recognized the richness of the Afro-Cuban culture. In the 1920s-1930s, the first efforts to study the Cuban traditional popular culture emerged in diverse Study Centers. Also, many schools of arts were created in order to teach different types of artistic expression. However, the revolutionary government claimed that these schools were limited to a section of the population that was economically advantaged (Saruski & Mosquera 1979). Also, the traditional popular culture which came to be perceived, after the Revolution, as being the base of the Cuban culture (Millet & Brea 1989) was not valued. Popular culture was repressed as it was seen to not represent the interests of the “foreign oppressor” (Saruski & Mosquera 1979:12).

In fact, it is only with the triumph of the Revolution that “inició una nueva etapa: la de rescate de nuestra cultura tradicional¹⁶” (Léon 1982:187). For the first time, popular culture at large was taken in charge by the state. The revolutionary government became the main actor in cultural affairs. It institutionalized culture in creating diverse types of state bodies at the national and municipal levels such as the *Casas de Las Americas* (1959) and the *Consejo Nacional de Cultura* (CNC; 1961). In 1976, the revolutionary government created the Ministry of Culture in combining the CNC, the *Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos* (Cuban Institute of Arts and Cinema Industry) and the *Instituto Cubano del libro* (Cuban Book Institute). The Ministry became the official and centralized tool that controls, maintains and promotes Cuban popular culture. The national government also organized diverse meetings to discuss issues related to culture,

education and the arts. The most important forums in which the formation and the elaboration of the Cuban cultural policies have been discussed are: the Congress of Education and Culture (1971), the Constitution of the Republic (1976; a chapter is dedicated to education and culture) and the First and Second Congresses of the Communist Party (1975 and 1980). All of these events were organized by the state apparatus and were supported by the Communist Party.

Apart from these reports, the main historical document relating the importance of the construction of strong cultural policies as a defense for the Revolution is the discourse written by Fidel Castro called “Palabras a los intelectuales¹⁷” and pronounced in front of intellectuals, artists and professionals in 1961, La Habana. We can find in this document the base of the philosophy that directed the state in cultural affairs. In fact, the discourse demanded the participation of the audience in the support of the revolutionary project. It refers to rights of expression and the role of the artist and its arts as actors in the construction of the socialist system. Castro clearly stated at that time that artists have total freedom to express themselves, but within the Revolution, “Dentro de la Revolución: todo; contra la Revolución ningún derecho¹⁸” (1977:17). Poetically, Castro also declared that “Nosotros apreciamos siempre su creación a través del prisma del cristal revolucionario¹⁹” (1977:31). These two quotes show the extent to which the state planned to be involved in cultural affairs.

From the beginning of the Revolution until now the state is prevalent in the cultural domain. We can contend that it implemented very strong and active cultural policies. The state created bodies at various levels of government to deal with cultural matters. The state took control of popular culture. The national government believes that culture is deeply involved in the process of economic and social development –as also suggested

by UNESCO. The official discourse of the Cuban State claims that “Because of the socialist character of its political and economic structure, the State has overall responsibility for cultural development, as part of the general development plans” (Saruski & Mosquera 1979:23). Therefore, in this case, the state argues that it is part of its role to take charge of cultural domains and, more specifically, the popular forms of expression. The purpose of such a stranglehold on culture was to ensure the development and the popular support of Cubans in the Revolution. Today, it aims at maintaining the popular and traditional forms of artistic expressions. In creating a revolutionary socialist culture, the state has greater abilities to solidify its hegemony. It is important not to forget that cultural policies allowed the development of a vibrant and rich popular culture that permitted many people to participate in cultural forms of expression.

According to the official discourse, the state does not have a “repressive” and limiting cultural policy. On the contrary, it is the source of artistic manifestations. Also, there is no apparent contradiction with the fact that the state “promotes artistic freedom but only within the Revolution”. State policies are seen as cultural stimulators and liberators for the masses. It is said in the political discourse that the state “guides and encourages the development of mass culture, which includes a flourishing amateur movement, and promotes the interest of the people in all forms of cultural expression” (Saruski & Jaime 1979:23). Therefore, in the official discourse, culture is not depicted as essentially utilitarian.

The Ministry of Culture is considered the official political tool that controls, guides and maintains the development of the popular culture. It is the tool of the state in charge of the establishment and maintenance of the cultural politics (Hart Dávalos 1989). There is also a direct relationship between the Ministry of Culture and the revolutionary

policies installed by Castro. Hart Dávalos writes that the authority that the Ministry of culture possesses is comparable to the “Autoridad ideológica, moral, política, revolucionaria, esa que ejerce Fidel sobre nosotros²⁰” (1989:9).

With the creation of the Ministry of Culture in 1976, other state organs at different levels of the government were installed. These different levels of cultural organization all follow the official ideology of the state, and particular attention is given to ensure that municipal and regional organs stay coherent with the general national politics (Hart Dávalos 1983). These regional organizations are under the supervision of *the Poder Popular*²¹'s Local Executive Committee. There is a complex structure of organization that has been constructed at the regional level. They are not entirely free to act as they want, but must follow the directive of national authorities. It is through these decentralized processes that the state is able to create a sense of national commonality and belonging. In addition, all these cultural organizations are supervised by political organs that are in charge of broader issues such as education, local administration, political representation, etc.

One of the main goals of the national cultural politics was the elimination of the existing dichotomy between high and low types of culture. The state wished to actively involve the masses in cultural activity. This democratization or *masividad* of culture is part of the socialist revolutionary policies oriented towards popular participation in, and the free accessibility to artistic expression. From the beginning of the Revolution, it is said that most of the efforts were oriented towards the eradication of classes and the democratization of culture (Saruski & Mosquera 1979:15). It is through the work of different state organs that culture came to be popularly transmitted. It is true that such a vision of culture brings some concerns. If we think about it, such a position implies the

idea that in a class stratified system, the masses do not have access to culture and therefore do not have a culture. But in reality, Cuban concerns have to be seen as a preoccupation for mass accessibility to all cultural domains. It also bears the idea that classes or economic income should not restrict the masses to certain types of cultural and artistic forms of expression. In addition, such a general control and accessibility of culture increases the possibilities to transmit the state ideology.

Cultural policies oriented towards democratization have changed depending on different national and international contexts. It has been able to adapt itself in front of new contexts in order to make sure that the population in general has access to culture –and the ideology of the state. As explained in an interview by Fernando Rojas, the Director of the National Center for Community Culture, many tools are used to culturally educate Cubans of tomorrow. These tools are:

tribunas abiertas, las mesas redondas instructivas e informativas, las clases de la universidad para todos, los esfuerzos de la televisión educativa, la reanimación de las casas de cultura, dotadas de televisores y videos para difundir materiales audiovisuales, las tareas de extensión de los museos y bibliotecas, la vinculación a los programas de prevención social, y la formación de trabajadores sociales e instructores de arte²²” (De la Hoz 2000:6).

These tools, methods, and technologies are used by the state in order to make sure that its ideological message circulates at the local level. Artistic education is also very important to create this sense of accessibility. Art schools, located in different regions of the country, are open to everyone and art instructors are trained to work within the community. Despite the fact that I will mostly develop an analysis at the community level in the next chapter, I want to outline here that cultural policies are highly oriented towards the massive participation and the elimination of a class-based culture. Since the beginning of the Revolution, there has been an emphasis, as I explained before, to reorient Cuban culture and to save from quasi-extinction the popular traditional culture.

In a written declaration, the Ministry of Culture explains that research is undertaken in order to “rescatar las tradiciones culturales y valores artísticas de las comunidades²³” (1982:67; also León 1982 and Millet & Brea 1989). The emphasis is put on the maintenance and encouragement of the popular traditional culture which is, according to state authorities, at the base of the Cuban culture.

The cultural rescue is done through education, but above all by ethnographic research, in the line of Fernando Ortiz. Research centers are organized and tools of consultation are funded by the state –such as the *Atlas del Folklore*– in order to create a scientific study of the traditional popular culture. The scientific research, inscription and reproduction of the popular traditional culture reflects the modern discourse of the cultural policies in the sense that science –as a reliable tool to acquire knowledge– is able to rescue the Cuban popular tradition. It is important for Cuban authorities to save and reproduce the tradition since it represents the roots of the Cuban culture (Millet & Brea 1989; León 1982). The traditional popular culture becomes a symbol of the authentic national identity and a political tool. This type of culture also adheres perfectly well to the socialist ideology of the state. Cubans who perform or are part of a traditional group for instance, are amateurs or *portadores* (bearers) as they call them in Cuba. This means that the members do not need to be paid to perform their traditional culture since it is part of their identity. Cultural manifestations that are classified as traditional often possesses African roots, which implies that it was originally a type of culture that was performed by the poorest class of the society. It is also believed that the traditional form of popular culture is the most authentic, the one that represents most accurately the essence and the roots of the contemporary Cuban culture.

Therefore, the popular traditional culture is taken in charge by the different state organs since it is what defines the authentic Cuban identity. In addition to being encouraged and supported by the state, the popular traditional culture is reproduced by professional groups paid by the state and studied by research centers. Traditional culture is propagated so that every Cuban knows, practices and recognizes its existence. For instance, carnivals and festivals are the main events where traditional popular culture is shown to the masses. It is supposed to be freely accessible and the carnival is a way to express the national unity through the representation of traditional culture. Carnivals are the most important events for many Cubans and despite that a major part of this type of event is reserved to festivities, there is also an important section of it that is dedicated to “cultural events”. Everyone can have access to carnivals and anyone who wishes to actively participate in a traditional group is welcomed²⁴.

Cultural policies in Cuba are complex and involve many issues related to the state ideologies and to its political and economic relations with other countries in the world. The state installed measures in order to strengthen the national culture, but one may ask what the perceived threats that push the official organs to adopt robust cultural policies are. The national government wants to protect the traditional popular culture from disappearing. In the official discourse, it is the Revolution that rescued this type of culture, since before 1959, nobody except capitalist interests cared for its promotion. So if the state rescued the traditional culture, what are the current fears, threats and weaknesses that encourage accentuated efforts to control culture?

Threats to the Cuban revolutionary culture

The Cuban economy recuperates from a harsh economic crisis that devastated the country at the beginning of the 1990s. It is not exaggerated to advance that for the first

time since the beginning of the Revolution, Cubans have lived through their worst economic crisis. Many changes were brought in reaction to the crisis such as the decriminalization of the possession of foreign currency, the development of a tourist industry and the opening of the market to foreign investments. These transformations created pockets of capitalism everywhere in the island, and the state was confronted with a population more and more frustrated in regard to its policies. How can a socialist state explain and justify such drastic transformation and reorientation of its economy towards capitalist interests? Some would argue that the Cuban State did not have the choice but to open its economy to capitalist investments, but on the other hand, this new orientation appears to contradict the essence of the socialist revolution. In fact, the process of *dollarization* created disparities, and to a certain extent, the accentuation of class and racial divisions (Mesa-Lago 1995; Bell Lara 1999). Frustrations are engendered by the fact that some own dollars and others do not in a context where such a hard currency is almost essential to survive.

In face of emerging pockets of capitalism, the state reacted in diverse ways. One of the main actions was to strengthen its political power. The political repression strategy of the 1990s “was designed to set clear and narrower boundaries for the lawful public debate and also to contain what the regime viewed as the negative consequence of the needed market opening. Above all, it was intended to prevent the spread to Cuba of international trends toward political opening” (Domínguez 1994:16). Many Cubans were arrested for political reasons and repression was intensified. Another technique used by the state was to accentuate the cultural stranglehold in order to strengthen the Cuban revolutionary identity and the nation state in general. Cultural policies aim to re-create and re-invent the Revolution in the new economic context. This re-creation involves a

manipulation of the Cuban discourse in order to transmit the image of an unshaken *socialist and revolutionary regime* despite the increase of capitalist interests in the island.

The reconstruction of strong cultural policies was not intensified at the beginning of the 1990s but rather after 1995, when the economic situation allowed more investment in the cultural domain (personal interview with Guillermo Artilés Fernández²⁵, August 2002). About more than 4 400 instructors, soon graduating from the Art School, will start working at the community level by 2003 (Rivas Rodríguez 2001). In 1970, there were 10 *casas de cultura* -which are state agents of culture at the level of the community. In 2001, there are more than 300 to 400 *casas de cultura* located everywhere in the island (Rivas Rodríguez 2001). There is an obvious intensification of cultural policies and this is in reaction to the repercussions brought about by the economic crisis. Castro declared, at the peak of the economic crisis that “la cultura es la unica cosa que hay que salvar²⁶” (Reported by Fernández Retamarol 1998). This illustrates one more time that despite the harsh economic crisis, efforts at the ideological level were made in order to maintain the strength of the Cuban national identity. This was seen as essential in order to maintain the regime and to fight perceived internal threats.

Such a strategy oriented towards the political repression and the increase in cultural development and promotion shows that the revolutionary state perceived different types of threats that could attain the structure of the system itself. One of the main perceived threats is the development of internal resistance due to growing capitalist interests. This menace has grown in the 1990s with the introduction of elements of capitalism. There is thus a struggle to fight against “capitalismo en su propio terreno²⁷”, “Se trata de hechos culturales que debemos defender si no queremos sufrir la desastrosa transición (o regresión) al capitalismo²⁸” (Fernández Retamarol 1991:n.d.). These

pockets of capitalism provoke resistance to socialism and ideological changes. Cultural policies are oriented towards the strengthening of the revolutionary discourse to insure that Cubans still believe in the Revolution and in the system in general.

In addition to an internal capitalist menace against the Revolution, there is the perception that globalization has the potential to destroy the national Cuban culture. The threat of globalization is intertwined with the menace of internal capitalist forms of resistance. But here, globalization is used in the official discourse as a tool to feed the fear of cultural disappearance and to justify the action of the state in the political, economic, social and cultural domains. In a discourse presented at the 7th Congress of the UNEAC, Fernández Retamarol reports the words of Castro who states that “Un problema terrible (...) que estamos padeciendo es el de la agresión a nuestras identidades nacionales, la agresión despiadada a nuestras culturas, como jamás ha ocurrido en la historia, la tendencia hacia una monocultural universal²⁹” (1998). He also refers to Castro when he explains that globalization destroys culture and that it creates its homogenization, “No se trata de un mundo que combine la riqueza y la cultura de muchos países, sino de un orden mundial que, por definición, destruye la cultura, una globalización que destruye inexorablemente la cultura³⁰” (Fernandez Retamarol 1991). This opinion is also shared by the ex-minister of culture Armando Dávalos Hart and the current Minister of Culture Abel Prieto. Although the term globalization is not often defined by the Cuban authorities, the discourse gives the idea that external influences can destroy national culture and transform it into a homogenized worldwide culture. In other words, globalization has the potential to eradicate the authority of the state by unbounding the national culture.

The control, encouragement and maintenance of the national culture are seen as the way to counter these threats. The current Minister of Culture, Abel Prieto, names the so-called “global culture” a “pseudo culture” represented by Bush and Rambo (2002). But he explains that because of the “multiplicación de nuestros empeños en los campos de educación y la cultura³¹” (Prieto 2002:18), Cuba is more prepared than any other countries to resist the avalanche of global invasion. In this quote Abel Prieto justifies the measures taken by the state in the domain of culture and education in stating that they are the factors that preserve the Cuban culture. There is a clear emphasis on the importance of culture as a tool to counter globalization and hegemonic power. It is important to mention that the term globalization often refers to imperialist threat, the menace of the American culture.

Although this generalization of globalization or homogenization of culture with Americanization is common (Featherstone 1995; Appadurai 1996), in Cuba, it also bears strong political and ideological consequences. As we know, Cuba is under the economic restriction of a long lasting American embargo. There is only a limited amount of products from the United States that enter in Cuba. There are no McDonald's, no Levis stores, and Coke is only sold in dollars, mainly to tourists. But there is an ideological war against imperialism, against the United States. The American hegemonic power is portrayed as the source of most of the problems that Cuba encounters today. In a document relating the decision taken at the National Congress on Culture in 1971, we can read that “La amenaza de agresión militar del imperialismo yanqui contra Cuba no es una especulación; ha estado presente a todo lo largo de nuestro proceso revolucionario³²” (1982:57). The United States are a military, and above all, an ideological threat to the Cuban culture. The struggle against the United States is present in the official discourse and also in the media. I would not go too far in stating that there is a veritable mechanic

of ideological attack and obsession in regard to the United States. Justified or not, this obsession fuels many policies and helps to explain the decisions, errors and actions of the state.

Many methods and tools are used in order to counter the hegemonic threat, and culture is a main one. In fact, many forms of artistic and cultural expressions are used in order to solidify the notion of the national Cuban revolutionary culture. Since the case of the little boy Elian González who was found alive in a boat on the coast of Florida, the state has created a new form of protest against imperialism with the goal of reassembling and uniting the Cubans of the island. The case of Elian has brought huge repercussions in Cuba and the little boy who lost his mother in this tragedy became the hero, the symbol of the Cubans and the symbols of struggle against imperialism. The state put in place what would become the new tool for reassembling Cubans under a common cause: the open forum. These are defined as “actos políticos culturales³³”. There is, since the case of Elian, a desire to concretely integrate the arts in the political propaganda. Rivas Rodríguez explains that

comenzó la batalla por la liberación del niño Elian González, en la que valoró de imprescindible e imposible de enumerar, el papel de la cultura, de los artistas cubanos, que junto a todo el pueblo crearon un movimiento de masas que provocó un vuelco sin precedentes en la opinión pública de Estados Unidos con respecto a Cuba³⁴ (2000:9).

The open forums are held in rotation in different regions of the island. This means that there is an open forum held every week in at least one different region of the island. These events are broadcast live on television. People must attend to the open forums, in fact it is mandatory for workers to do so. Huge amounts of people are assembled in front of a stage where discourses are given by state representatives. Most importantly, open forums are composed of local artists and traditional groups of dance and music. These groups and professionals stage their arts in order to support the state and the nation in

general within a common cause. The case of Elian was very powerful in the sense that the little boy came to be identified with the struggle of the Cubans against the Americans. The dispute arose when the family of Elian living in Florida wanted to keep the little boy with them even if his father was still alive and remarried in Cuba. It was a peaceful, ideological and inoffensive way of countering the Americans. In addition, Cubans won the cause –Elian was sent back from Florida to his father- so the Cuban State used that case in order to strengthen its image and to show to the population that it can win against its enemies.

Since the case of Elian was settled, the state had to manufacture another common cause to unify the population. One case was not enough, and the state still had to maintain the constant feeling of threat and attack from the United States. The new state scapegoat concerns five Cubans that are today imprisoned in Miami because of accusations of terrorism. The term terrorism is popular in the general current international discourse and Cuba recuperated the term for its own purposes. For instance, the United States are depicted by Cuban specialists as a terrorist state in round tables entitled “Who are the real terrorists?” which are diffused every night on TV. The five prisoners –Antonio, Fernando, René, Gerardo and Ramón- are new heroes, symbols of the fight against imperialism. They are identified as good Cubans fighting for the national defense and not as terrorists, as the United States label them. Their families are now public symbols giving conferences and public appearances, demanding the release of their loved ones. Again, arts are staged in order to support the cause. In fact, the *tribuna abierta* uses and manipulates an official type of art which supports the policies of the state. We can see how much artistic expressions can become political and how the Cuban State believes that arts and culture in general possess the power to counter hegemonic forces, to reassemble Cubans under the same flag and to reinforce and justify

the authority of the state. As it is often proclaimed in Cuba, “El arte es un arma de la Revolución”; Un producto de la moral combativa de nuestro pueblo” (57); “Un instrumento contra la penetración del enemigo³⁵” (n.d. 1977:57-58).

The United States is identified as the main enemy of Cuba because of what it represents, but also because of what it does to Cubans. Its culture is also seen as a menace since, according to the official discourse, Americanization is the synonym of cultural homogenization. Hart Dávalos also identifies a few ultra-rightist groups of the United States –the Jesse Helms Congressional Club; the Heritage Foundation; the National Rifle Association and the Fundación Nacional Cubano Americana- which struggle against the national Cuban identity (2001:235). It is interesting to outline the fact that in the official discourse, enemies of Cuba do not attack the socialist system but rather the Cuban identity and culture. Hart Dávalos admits that American rightist groups plan to destroy the Revolution but he specifies that the most serious menace is their desire to “extinguir a la nación [cubana]³⁶” (2001:235). Hart Dávalos accentuates the fact that the opposition groups and forces aim at destroying the essence of the Cuban identity, not just its political system. In this sense, the menace becomes emotional and passionate for Cubans rather than political, institutional and/or systematic. In the same type of discourse, the Cuban identity becomes associated with the Revolution and the socialist system. This reminds us of the fact that the state manipulates and uses culture as a way to make the Cubans aware that there are threats that can be countered by the cementing of the national culture. But in reality, this has to be understood as a tool to solidify the hegemony of the revolutionary state.

Threats are often perceived, invented and maintained by the state discourse and apparatus. These created and imagined menaces are manipulations and they allow the

state to reinforce the sense of commonality and unity among its people. Some phenomena associated with globalization are in reality well accepted by the state, even though they could cause a threat to the national unity.

An example of such a position has to do with the development and the encouragement of the tourist industry. Tourism may bring social problems such as prostitution but it is still highly encouraged and promoted by the state in order to generate revenues. As Domínguez explains, “Even more difficult to manage politically was the fact that some activities necessary for the promotion of tourism are sharply at odds with the social norms that the regime had sought to promote in the past” (1994:15). Tourism can provoke social, political and economic consequences that could act against the revolutionary discourse of the past but it seems that the Cuban State does not stop the increasing influx of foreign visitors. On the contrary, the Cuban State has encouraged the development of a tourist industry since the end of the 1980s. The tourist industry also exploits the traditional popular culture of Cuba in order to attract tourists.

The national government knows the potential for a strong culture to attract international visitors and create a demarcation with the sister islands of the Caribbean that also depend on tourism. Cultural tourism in Cuba is totally under the control of the state authorities. In other words, it is the official organs that promote, protect and encourage diverse types of popular traditional culture for the tourist market. In addition to carnivals and festivals, which are highly touristic, cultural sectors also promote artists, music and dance groups that perform for tourists. It is surprising to notice how much the Cuban State, which bears a position that is quite conservative if not resistant vis-à-vis external influences, is so open to cultural tourism.

At the 9th International Congress for the professional formation in tourism (La Habana, 1991), Hart Dávalos stated that the most important in the development of a cultural tourism is to “asegurar la autenticidad y la representatividad de la imagen de nuestra cultura, en la obras destinadas al turismo³⁷” (1991 n.d.). This quote illustrates how the state is preoccupied with the conservation of an authentic traditional popular culture. This position is not exceptional in the sense that tourism is often recognized to engender pernicious effects on the local culture. At first sight, it is conceivable that a state may desire to preserve the traditional culture as unchanged as possible. In his discourse, Hart Dávalos identified one main negative effect of the development of tourism on culture. As he claims, a negative effect that can bring tourism is a “apreciación distorsionada de nuestra identidad cultural, si la imagen ofrecida al turista no es auténtica³⁸” (1991 n.d.). The protection of the traditional popular culture is important but above all, an appropriate image of what consists the Cubanhood as to be adequately transmitted. The state authorities do not necessarily see tourism as the cause of social problems, but rather as a means of developing culture. This is despite the fact that the state knows quite well that such an economic activity can generate resistance against the system –in causing social problems, accentuating the economic gap between those who have access to the tourist industry and those who do not, allowing a space where opinions and critics of the system can emerged, etc. Rather, the official discourse assures that the promotion and the commercialization of culture engendered by the development of tourism stimulates cultural activities (Hart Dávalos 1991). It also casts the Cuban culture abroad and feeds international support and sympathy for the regime.

The tourist activity is nowadays the main economic revenue of the island, and the survival of the Revolution depends on the maintenance of an economically and ideologically autonomous socialist state. In fact, the main reason why Cuba would

develop a sector of the economy that is so dangerous to the revolution's well-being, is that it needs the tourist industry's revenues to maintain its power. Tourism has the potential to develop the economy, to strengthen the national autonomy and to generate considerable amount of hard currency. On the other hand, the state has to counter the pernicious effects of such a potentially destabilizing activity. The consequences of tourism on the Cuban population are slowed down by strong involvement of the state in economic matters, but above all, by its control and manipulation of the Cuban culture. For economic and survival reasons, the state has to encourage the development of a tourist industry in the island –as other types of economic sectors- but it does not leave its effects crawling in the streets of Cuba. The state counters the threats brought by tourism in accentuating its cultural policies and assuring that its consequences will be controlled and limited. But such a struggle is urgent and as Castro argues, the “massification of culture” needs to be intensified in a brief lap of time (in Rivas Rodriguez 2000). The threats identified by the state are real -or believed to be real- and the system is literally at stake. But since the existence of the Revolution depends on the development of a tourist industry the national government finds itself confronted with difficult choices.

I have shown in this chapter that clearly, “la identidad cultural es un elemento de enorme potencial revolucionario³⁹” (Hart Dávalos n.d.:24) in the sense that the national culture -including the traditional popular forms of expression- is promoted, encouraged and developed by the state for political purposes. Cultural policies aim at forming a sense of commonality through the involvement of the masses and through the free accessibility to any types of art expressions. The state tried to create a new political and socialist man and used culture to strengthen the revolutionary process. Today, the Cuban State manufactures and maintains diverse types of threats that endanger the national identity and in turn, the revolutionary system.

As we have seen in chapter 2, there is a pseudo-threat of cultural homogenization that is promoted by state authorities in order to justify their cultural policies. In other words, the state uses a threat of homogenization in order to maintain the importance of constructing a distinct culture. In Cuba, there are such perceived threats and it is strongly maintained in order to justify its hegemonic power and its strong policies. There are also more concrete internal menaces and they seem even more dangerous since they arise in reaction to the new economic orientation taken by the state. The national government is therefore fighting against the fall of its own revolutionary system and the main technique to counter it is the manipulation, invention and construction of a national culture.

Cuba is not the only nation state in this ideological and cultural battle. On the other hand, since the fall of the Soviet Union, Cuba finds itself on the other side of the fence. The revolutionary government still struggles for a communist state, led by a forty-four year long revolution plunged in a sea of capitalist sharks. The fight against the downfall of the system in such a critical context accentuates *la lucha* against enemies that are clearly identified in the official discourse. In the following chapter, we will look at the cultural policies at the local level and I will show how, using concrete examples, that the state manipulates and encourages a type of culture that fulfills its own needs of stability, power, control and legitimatization.

Chapter 4:

Cuban Cultural Policies Applied to Traditional Popular Groups of Dance and Music

We have seen in the previous chapters that cultural policies are complex and contextual. In Cuba, there are strong and alive cultural policies that aim to maintain, encourage and control a certain type of culture that came to be identified with the national identity. In constructing different types of internal (i.e. emergence of pockets of capitalism within the population) and external threats (i.e. homogenization of culture), the state justifies its involvement in cultural affairs. But we now know that such an interest turns the attention of the nation away from the hegemonic role of the state as it solidifies its systemic structure. These ideas and speculations are also very abstract and it is important to position them within concrete cases.

This chapter shows that the state is involved in Cuban cultural affairs at the community level and that it has even come to be part of the tradition itself. In fact, today many traditional popular groups sing about Fidel as if the Revolution had existed for centuries. The Revolution and its discourse have been in the popular life long enough to create such invented tradition that depicts the socialist system as their natural cultural saviors. It is true that the state funds and encourages cultural groups in providing them with a space to meet, and costumes for their performances in front of the community. The state organizes carnivals and is the main cultural promoter for the tourist industry. On the other hand, one could question the static character that the state attaches to notions of popular culture and tradition.

Through different examples taken directly from a few groups of dance and music classified as traditional, I show that the state is actively involved in the cultural

maintenance and/or development of a certain type of popular culture. These concrete examples demonstrate that the Cuban State is using popular culture, as a tool to defend the Revolution against perceived menaces. Culture becomes an agent of political stability. But, the examples that follow also demonstrate that members of traditional groups are not passive recipients of regulations imposed on them by state authorities. In fact, they resist in diverse creative ways and are able to keep control of their tradition despite the strong involvement of cultural authorities in their affairs. In this way, Cuban culture is negotiated through a dialogue between the state's cultural representatives and members of popular groups.

It is important to mention that there are regional variations of cultural policies in Cuba. In other words, the state organizations that are in charge of cultural matters at the regional level do not all follow the same structure. Although they are all under the supervision of national authorities, they do differ in their goals and applications. For instance, the provinces of Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo do not share exactly the same organizational structure regarding the control and management of popular culture (See Appendices B and C). One of the main reasons for such differences is population density. A look at the differences between each region can teach us about the various forms of adaptation on the part of the state when confronted with regional particularities. Also, some regions illustrate the role of the state in certain cultural domains better than others. For instance, it is easier to understand the role of the state in the sector of cultural tourism in the province of Guantánamo, because there are only two main organs that intervene in this domain, which are the *casa de cultura*⁴⁰ and Artex⁴¹. On the other hand, in Santiago de Cuba, there are many groups that can promote cultural manifestations for the tourist industry such as the *Casa del Caribe*, the *casas de cultura* (there are many), the *dirección de focos culturales* (Direction in charge of cultural groups), Havanatur and

Cubanacan (tourist enterprises partially owned by the state), etc. Therefore, in Santiago de Cuba, there are many official and less official groups that promote cultural manifestations in the tourist sector. These regional differences are also illustrated when we look at the organization of carnivals and activities, the funding of certain accessories such as musical instruments and costumes, the attribution of art instructors to certain groups, etc. However, of these regional particularities, it is possible to generally identify how and why the state is involved in municipal cultural affairs.

Finally, the fieldwork that allows me to discuss these issues was conducted exclusively in eastern provinces of Cuba which are highly different from the regions surrounding La Habana. I cannot make any comparison between my data and the region of the capital since I have not been able to conduct extensive fieldwork in the western provinces. Therefore, the following analysis has to be perceived as a partial understanding of the implementation of cultural policies in the eastern part of the island on a few traditional cultural groups, proceeding the economic crisis of the 1990s.

A short historical background

During my stay in Cuba, I mostly look at two main groups both categorized locally as *tumbas francesas*. The *tumba francesa* of Santiago de Cuba is called La Caridad de Oriente and the one in Guantánamo is familiarly referred to as La Pompadour (officially named Santa Catalina de Riccis). There is also a third *tumba francesa* situated in the countryside near Sagua de Tánamo called Bejuco but I did not have the occasion to visit it when the members were assembled. In 1955, there were more than 40 *tumbas francesas* in the regions of Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo (Tamames 1961, in Eli Rodríguez et al. 1997:261), but today, only these three *tumbas* exist. While I do not want to describe in great detail the origins and the composition of the *tumbas francesas*, it is

important to outline some historical facts since they allow us to better understand the significance of this symbol to the national Cuban government. Most of the researches about the tumba francesa that I consulted up to today are descriptive studies (for instance, see Tamames 1955; Alén Rodríguez 1977, 1991, 1994; Petro 1996; Eli Rodríguez 1997, etc.). For one reason or another, there are very few analytical and contemporary studies of these artistic manifestations.

Each tumba francesa has a different history but it is agreed that they emerged in Cuba due to the influence of the “French” immigrations. These so-called “French” immigrants were actually Afro-Haitians, freed men and French landowners from Haiti. Two main waves of “French” migration explain the presence of Haitian descendants in contemporary Cuba. The first wave occurred at the end of the 18th century as a consequence of the Haitian Revolution. Many French, free blacks and slaves⁴² emigrated to the eastern part of Cuba, mostly in Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo (Tamamès 1961: 12; Debien 1974:48; Martinez 1999). The French immigration to Cuba from Saint Domingue reached 18 213 by January 31, 1804 (Hall 1971: 126). According to other sources, more than 30, 000 Haitians immigrated to Cuba by the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century (Guerra 1971: 212). It is important to specify here that the French slave owners who migrated to Cuba also brought their slaves with them (Alén 1991: 79; 1977: 193; Martinez 1999: 77; Carpentier 1946: 129; etc.). Therefore, Haitian slaves or “negroes franceses” came into contact with Afro-Cuban slaves often on the coffee and sugar plantations.

The French and their slaves initially emigrated to the eastern part of Cuba because of its close geographic location to Saint Domingue but also because it allowed the French masters to buy fields at a good price compared to those located near La Habana (Alén

1977: 196). The quality of the cultivable land in the West of the island is very different from that of the East. As Knight explains, "In many respects, eastern Cuba was the very opposite of the western sector. Except for the areas around Guantánamo and Santiago de Cuba, the area was mountainous, the soils were poor, the farms were small, and the economy was mixed" (1970:43). This explains the low price of the land in the East and it also outlines why the French settled in this part of Cuba. Also, the Cuban colonial situation enabled the French refugees to recreate a way of living similar to the one they had adopted in Saint Domingue. As Debien explains, the French refugees "stayed primarily because they found there something better than shelter; they found a chance to build a new colonial homeland" (1974:33). The French refugees from Saint Domingue formed the first French settlement in Cuba that participated in the formation of the Cuban economic prosperity (Debien 1974:33).

In short, the first wave of migration was provoked by the Haitian Revolution. Many of the French owners and their slaves moved to town and brought what they thought to be French cultural practices with them. The slaves of the French owners who simply became labeled as "French" by their Cuban compatriots were the basis for the formation of the *tumbas francesas* in Cuba. Although *tumbas francesas* could be found in the countryside, most of them emerged in small cities and towns where French refugees settled (Alén Rodríguez 1997:112). Generally then, the *tumbas francesas* and the *cabildos* can be said to be an urban phenomenon (Turner 1977:310).

Most of the Cubans who still speak Creole today are children or grand-children of Haitians who immigrated at the beginning of the 20th century. This corresponds to the second wave of Haitian migration to Cuba. At that time, Haitians migrated to Cuba in order to work in the sugar cane industry. The labor wages were higher in Cuba and there

was more opportunity to work than in Haiti. During this wave, the Haitians mostly migrated to the eastern part of the island for distance and economic reasons. Again, most of the Haitian descendants who identify themselves as such and who still speak Creole originate from this second wave of migration. There are a considerable number of people identifying themselves as Haitian descendants in Guantánamo and Santiago de Cuba. Many of the Haitian descendants of Guantánamo are members of traditional groups such as Lo Cosia and Gran moun lontan.

The tradition brought by the first wave of migration supposedly is still alive within the tradition, dances, songs and the general organization of the tumba francesa societies. While in the field, I observed that the members of the tumbas francesas did not necessarily identify themselves as descendants of Haitian immigrants. In fact, most of them do not define themselves as such, despite the fact that the state authorities still want to believe that one of the main characteristics of the tumba francesa is that the knowledge of the dances and songs is transmitted from generation to generation. Some songs are still sung in Creole or patois but none of the members speak Creole so we can wonder to what extent singers understand the lyrics. Although the tumbas francesas are not composed of Haitian descendants, the members believe that they transmit the Franco-Haitian tradition.

Historically, the tumba francesa institutions emerged as associations of mutual aid, protection and recreation composed of slaves and free men. In Cuba, this sort of association was generally called “*cabildo*”. In other words, the tumbas francesas were types of *cabildo*⁴³. The *cabildos* have been transformed by historic and socio-economic pressures. For instance, during the years 1870-1880, the *cabildos* were changed to *sociedad de socorros y mutuos*⁴⁴ by the Spanish colonial authorities. Through its history, the *cabildos* were controlled and regulated by the civil government that determined

which of the associations had a legal status. The *cabildos* or *sociedades* were tolerated and regulated by the Spanish authorities because they provided some forms of slave population control. First, they were giving support for the newly arrived African slaves (*bozales*) by helping them to learn Spanish and integrate in the Cuban society (Moore 1977:16). And secondly, “they maintained separate ethnic identities among the slave population, and thus decreased the likelihood of mass uprisings or conspiracies” (*ibid*). The *cabildos* regrouped slaves and free men originating from the same African geographical ethnic area. In that sense, colonial authorities believed that confrontations would be diminished by limiting inter-ethnic contacts. Alén Rodríguez explains that the *tumbas francesas* differed from other *cabildos* on this point since they “admitted slaves from many very different African ethnic groups: their only common trait consisted in being, or having been, slaves of French masters” (1994:112).

In addition to providing assistance, mutual aid and protection to their members, *cabildos* are also known to have helped in preserving African or “Afro-Cuban” religious practices, rituals, dances, chants, etc. As Alén Rodríguez points out “The great significance of the *cabildo* as an institution was the preservation of many African customs and traditions that slowly worked their way into the aesthetic projections of the individual of the New World” (1994:110). In fact, *cabildos* were not only mutual aid societies but were also bearers of Afro-Cuban rituals, beliefs, practices, etc. These institutions developed a sense of “Africness”, that later gave form to the *cubanidad* or the *afrocubanismo* which can be observed today (Moore 1977:16).

Understanding the history surrounding the emergence and development of *cabildos* in Cuba is important to comprehend this thesis because it shows that these institutions, which became rich sources of cultural manifestations, have always been

under strict control of official authorities. These associations have been regulated in order to maintain the economic stability of the island. The landowners of Cuba did not want to experience a slave insurgency as the one that Haiti had experienced. At the end of the 19th century, Cuban authorities ordered that every *sociedad* or slave group be regulated by the colonial Spanish Act of Associations (Alén 1977:200; 1991:78-79). As reported by Tamames, “En enero 1887 cuando el Gobernador General decreta que todos los *cabildos* deban ser inscriptos bajo la ley de asociaciones se les cambiaron los nombres⁴⁵” (1955:26). The *sociedades* or slave groups had to be identified with a Catholic Saint to be ‘legal’ or to have the right to perform and organize festivities. The civil government implemented laws of control in order to restrict the unofficial cultural, religious or political meetings of slaves and freed men. These reunions could have caused pockets of resistance among the oppressed population. Despite numerous attempts to control such insurgencies, it is recognized that *cabildos* have been the meeting point of revolutionaries before the war of Independence. It was also a place where discussion about Independence took place. For instance, the famous *mambises*⁴⁶ -Maceo (two brothers), Bandera and Moncada- are known to have belonged to the tumba francesa La Caridad de Oriente in Santiago de Cuba.

The tumbas francesas, and *cabildos* in general, never became religious institutions *per se*. Their members certainly had religious beliefs but *cabildos* were not directly responsible for organizing and promoting such activities. Obviously, people were getting together and sharing religious ideas and beliefs, but the *cabildo* was not a place of cult, such as a church for instance. As with many *cabildos*, the tumbas francesas had a particular hierarchical structure composed of an elected King (also called president) and Queen. Members had to pay monthly fees that were accumulated to financially help their peers who were in need for medical drugs, school fees or different

types of debt. The tumbas francesas societies were mutual aid groups that also organized festivities and some also had an educational purpose.

With the founding of the Cuban Republic in 1902, the tumba francesa societies had to adjust to new socio-economic conditions. Eli Rodríguez et al. explain that “durante la neocolonia o periodo republicano, algunos grupos asentados en zonas urbanas constituyeron sociedades de tipo mutualista^{7m}” (1997:261). At the beginning of the 20th century, Cuba began to receive substantive international investments. Sugar trading with the United States became very important and this new socio-economic context directly influenced the artistic and folkloric manifestations on the island. The artistic manifestations became a way among others to attract Americans and other international investments. In the 1940s and 1950s, Cuba was ravaged by corruption, prostitution and poverty at the same time that it became a treasure island for North American tourists. The tumbas francesas were also influenced by the tourist industry, “los juegos ilegales fueron impuestos a todos los centros de agrupación social, dentro de los cuales, los de la tumba francesa no fueron una excepción (...) esto les estorbaba al desarrollo normal de sus bailes, fiestas, y demás actividades^{48m}” (Alén Rodríguez 1977:207).

With the Cuban Revolution of 1959, the tumba francesa societies were placed under the control of the *Consejo Nacional de Cultura* (National Council of Culture). At this time, only the tumbas francesas of Guantánamo and Santiago were still in operation (Alén Rodríguez 1977:208). The Cuban Ministry of Culture organized representations performed by the tumbas francesas in prestigious theaters in La Habana and Santiago de Cuba. Also, “se ha trabajado por la asimilación de nuevos miembros o la reincorporación de antiguos^{49m}” (Alén Rodríguez 1977:208). Therefore, the Revolutionary government intended to preserve the tumbas francesas societies and traditions as being part of the

Cuban cultural kaleidoscope. As a result of the Revolution, the *tumba francesa* societies lost their mutual aid function: the Cuban government took charge of them, provided them with costumes, a room to practice, organized activities in different cities and provinces, etc. They became folklorized and democratized in the sense that they were put on stage as a marker of identity for the Cuban community in general.

It is important to outline that not all Haitians and their descendants integrated the *tumbas francesas*. In the countryside, Haitians performed and still perform to a certain extent cultural manifestations that were influenced by the Haitian migrations. The *motompolo* and the *gagá* (dances and festivities taking place during the Holy Week) are examples of such manifestations that took place in Argeo Martínez –a small village dependent on the sugar industry situated near Guantánamo⁵⁰. I have been told that these performances do not exist anymore. Ceremonies of voodoo were also performed in the countryside. In Guantánamo, there are two groups that still perform dances, songs and music of Haitian tradition which are *Lo Cosia* and *Gran moun lontan*. These groups are composed of a few Haitian descendants who speak Creole and some Cubans who dedicate themselves to the performance of Haitian dances, rhythms and songs such as voodoo, *éliancé*, *igbo*, *congo*, Haitian meringue, *gagá*, and types of *danse de salon*. While in the field, I also observed a professional troop of dance called *Ballet Folklórico Babúl* which reproduces the regional ethnic tradition of the province. Despite the fact that the troop aims to perform these traditions in front of spectators, it is extremely important for the director of the troop to stay as faithful as possible to the group's tradition. Dancers and musicians come from the region and are paid by the state in order to propagate the cultural essence of the region to the population in general. But none of them define themselves as Haitian descendants.

Casas de Cultura and Focos culturales

When the Ministry of Culture was created in 1977, state organs at the regional levels, such as the *Poder Popular* and the CDR⁵¹, were also organized in order to support a form of intervention in the cultural domain. The *casas de culturas* became responsible for the maintenance and propagation of a revolutionary culture. The *casas de culturas* are very powerful at the regional level and they are composed of professionals who work to democratize culture (*masividad*). Cultural promoters work directly within the popular Cuban culture at the level of the community. For instance, they organize art workshops for children and teenagers, festivals for traditional groups, exhibitions for artists, etc. Generally, in Cuba, it is understood that the national culture's base is found within the popular culture. An official document emitted by the Ministry of culture states that the national culture is "de raíz eminentemente popular, patriótica y ant imperialista"⁵² (1988:37). Therefore, the *casas de cultura* work at creating, maintaining and stimulating a type of culture that is in accordance with the principles of the Revolution. In fact what renders a traditional group, a manifestation of a revolutionary popular culture, is that it is under the supervision of state organs. It is thus interesting to note that the current strategy of cultural control by the Revolutionary state bears some similarities with that of the Spanish colonial authorities in the 19th century.

The *casas de cultura* have many roles and purposes at the community level but I limit my analysis to its influence on traditional groups of dance and music. The *casas de cultura* controls and provides technical, artistic and material help to traditional groups of dance and music. In the municipality of Guantánamo for instance, there are cultural promoters who work with the *tumba francesa* and with the traditional Haitian group *Lo Cosia*. There are also other traditional groups in the countryside. In Santiago de Cuba, it is not a *casa de cultura* that is directly involved with the *tumba francesa* but a branch of

the Municipal Direction of Culture called *Focos culturales* (or cultural groups). The *casa de cultura* of Guantánamo and the *focos culturales* of Santiago de Cuba effectuate similar tasks in regard to traditional popular groups. The reason why it is not a *casa de cultura* that is directly involved with the tumba francesa in Santiago de Cuba is that the city is more densely populated than Guantánamo. Therefore, different types of state organs intervene in various cultural domains. This is simply a matter of task distribution since they share similar goals. The *casas de cultura* in Santiago de Cuba is more concerned with interventions dedicated to children and amateurs than with traditional groups.

One of the most important roles of the municipal cultural organs is to classify the groups that exist within their jurisdiction. This categorization is highly political and static since it classifies groups within certain idea of what should consist of a traditional culture. First, the terms tradition and folklore are attributed to types of performances that emerged in the past such as manifestations influenced by the African slave deportation or by Jamaican and Haitian migrations. There is a strong temporal dimension (invented or not) to the notion of tradition. These traditions may still be alive in the sense that they still are fully embedded in the practices and beliefs of certain Cubans but they originate in the “past”. Above all, these traditions have been transmitted through generations. Even if the factor of transmission through generations is not entirely necessary to define what is a tradition, there is the popular belief that most of the time, members of a traditional group share strong relations of co-sanguinity (for instance, see Vergés Martínez 1998).

The state bears an idea of which groups should be considered traditional and how they should look. Cultural authorities often base their analysis on books and descriptive studies –those of Fernando Ortiz for instance- in order to cement an idea of what is the

authentic Cuban tradition. The report on the *casas de cultura* written by the Ministry of Culture defines a traditional dancer as an individual who performs dance manifestations of social or family tradition that is inscribed in the popular traditional culture (1988:68). Tradition must be recognized socially and there is a strong popular understanding of what is a tradition. For instance, while in the field, I noticed that people had a clear idea of which groups were considered as traditional in their municipality. It is a preconceived idea of what a tradition should consist of, that is responsible for the official and popular categorization of certain groups within this category. The term tradition also has an ethno-cultural dimension (Vergés Martínez 1998). The expressions of Haitian, Afro-Cuban or Jamaican traditions are used in order to refer to certain cultural manifestations, groups, beliefs, culinary habits, ways of talking, etc.

Therefore, in addition to having a temporal dimension, the idea of tradition in Cuba can also bear an ethnic connotation when it is associated with the concept of popular culture. The tumba francesa La Pompadour, Lo Cosia and Gran mou lontan are considered to be traditional popular manifestations because their traditions emerged in the past and because they represent a Haitian-Cuban form of expression. This classification may be constructed, but it is used by cultural authorities in order to categorize groups nonetheless.

However, the classification of traditional popular culture is not so simple, and within the category of popular tradition, there are subcategories. These sub-categories are important bureaucratic classification tools that define the kind of attention that a municipal organ would attribute to a particular traditional group. This is where the sub-categorization becomes political since it qualifies which group is advantaged for activities, funding and attention. Also, the categorization –and sub-categorization- of

tradition is relative and artificial since it is imposed on the groups. In Table 1, I use examples of cultural groups from Guantánamo to illustrate the different subcategories. The different types of classification illustrate adequately the intensity in which the state is involved in cultural matters. It is important to outline once again that these divisions are superficial and serve as control and bureaucratic tools. For political reasons these terms may change and be adapted. Traditional groups are divided in two categories: cultural bearers and cultural reproducers (Table 1; and for comparative parameters, see Appendix D).

Table 1:
Categorization of the traditional popular groups
with examples taken from Guantánamo.

Traditional Popular Groups			
<i>Portadores</i> (cultural bearers)		<i>Reproductores</i> (cultural reproducers)	
Laic activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tumbas francesas of Guantánamo and Santiago de Cuba - Lo Cosia, Haitian descendant group, Guantánamo 	Religious activities	Professional artists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ballet Folklórico Babúl, Guantánamo 	<i>Aficionado</i> (Amateur artists) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gran moun lontán, Haitian descendant group, Guantánamo

Cultural bearers are defined as the groups (or individuals) that are the creators and “holders” of the Cuban culture. Tradition is often transmitted through generations and the individuals who are members of these groups share common beliefs, practices and knowledge. The individuals perform the tradition because it is part of their cultural heritage. The performances are in accordance with a type of tradition that is recognized by the group and by the society in general. Cultural bearers are their own consumers in the sense that their aim is not to perform publicly, although they may parade during the carnival. Their manifestations –laic or religious- are mostly ceremonial and/or of

celebration type. This is the type of group that is prioritized by the *casas de cultura* and by official cultural organs in general, with respect to attention, technical help and diverse types of funding. The report written by the Ministry of Culture concerning the role of the *casa de cultura* states that the bearer groups constitute important social nucleus,

a partir de los cuales pueden estudiarse y preservarse múltiples factores socio-históricos, etno-culturales, materiales y artísticos de diversa índole por lo que debe priorizarse su investigación y atención sistemática en coordinación con la Comisión Nacional para la Danza Folklórica y el Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Música Cubana⁵⁹ (1988:21).

Cultural bearers are important sources of cultural information and they represent an authentic form of the Cuban culture. Social scientists inscribe the traditional manifestations of cultural bearers and above all, they refer to descriptive documents in order to judge if a bearer group corresponds to the tradition. Traditional groups have to conform to established schemes of references. Cultural authorities at different levels of the nation assure that the groups are following these lines of conduct.

Cultural reproducers are amateurs and professionals who reinterpret, diffuse and adapt the performances of the bearer groups, in order to perform in public. There is an importance given to the resemblance of the reproduction to the authentic cultural manifestation. The reproduction has to keep the most significant essence of a bearer group or of a particular tradition. On the other hand, since reproducers perform in front of a general public, the artistic character of the performance has to be accentuated. Reproducer groups are not necessarily composed of co-sanguinity affiliations, and knowledge of dances, rhythms and songs are usually not transmitted through generations. They are taught to the amateurs, who perform for the pleasure, interest or hobby, and to the professionals, who are paid by the state in order to perform and diffuse the traditional popular culture among the population. The amateur groups are not as valorized as the bearer groups since they do not directly symbolize the authenticity of the Cuban culture.

They are not the main transmitters of the Cuban culture but they still have an important conservation role.

These divisions are well defined theoretically but in the field, it is not always easy to perceive the criteria of categorization. As I have mentioned, they bear a crucial political dimension as illustrated in the following example. Gran moun lontan used to be within Lo Cosia but due to a dispute, the details of which remain obscure to me, Lo Cosia split 8 years ago into two groups that are Lo Cosia and Gran moun lontan. Lo Cosia has existed as a bearer group supervised under the *casa de cultura* for 22 years. On the other hand, Gran moun lontan is not recognized as a bearer group by state authorities. They are classified as reproducers. The reason why the group Gran moun lontan is not recognized as a cultural bearer is because only one bearer group of Haitian tradition is allowed to exist in the municipality of Guantánamo. If the members of Gran moun lontan –who are in fact ex-members of Lo Cosia- want to be recognized as cultural bearers, they have to rejoin Lo Cosia. Since the group Gran moun lontan is not on good terms with the *casa de cultura* (they left Lo Cosia which is under the state's supervision), they found themselves without any structural, material and general support.

In Cuba, the right to associate is very strict. It is stated in the Cuban constitution that no independent group is allowed to meet. In fact, all groups have to be under the supervision or wing of a state organ. A Cuban cannot initiate a group without the approval of state authorities. In addition to this restriction, a newly formed group that possesses the same goals as a group already under the supervision of the state cannot exist. For instance, if there is an organized group of women in one municipality, there cannot be a second. The rationality behind these regulations is that if one wants to be part

of a group of women for instance, she should join the group that already exists, the group that is already under the supervision of the state.

The members of the group Gran moun lontan do not consider themselves as cultural reproducers. I have been told by cultural promoters working at the *casa de cultura* of Guantánamo that the group Gran moun lontan is considered as reproducer (amateur). But when I mentioned it to the director of Gran moun lontan, she was literally offended. For them, this categorization is a matter of credibility and they do not agree with the title that the municipal authorities have given to them. In fact, there is no apparent reason why Gran moun lontan should be considered as reproducer since their performances seem to fit into the definition of a bearer group. Most members are Haitian descendants and speak Creole, and therefore the knowledge they possess of the dances, rhythm and songs were transmitted to them by their parents. Some of the older members were even born in Haiti. They are the sole consumers of their cultural production and their performances reflect their belonging to a common identity. So what could explain the rejection of the cultural state representatives in regard to Gran moun lontan?

It is important to specify that Gran moun lontan is not an independent group. As I have explained above, such a thing only exists with difficulty in Cuba⁵⁴. When Gran moun lontan emerged as a group, the members decided to place themselves under the supervision of the Association of the Haitian Descendants in Guantánamo. This association is under the supervision of the state and by deduction, Gran moun lontan is attached to the state regulations. For the members of Gran moun lontan, this alliance with the Association of Haitian Descendants was essential in order to exist. On the other hand, not being under the direct supervision of the *casa de cultura* occasions numerous disadvantages. The group does not have a place to congregate and perform. They meet in

an abandoned theater, without a roof or electricity. An electric line with a light bulb that they carry with them is the only source of light in this large theater room (without seats). Gran moun lontan does not receive any funding for the costumes and instruments, nor is it delegated a cultural promoter. This means that when there is a festival or an activity in another municipality, Gran moun lontan cannot participate because the members do not have the means to pay for transportation, shelter, food, etc. In Cuba, the most important and motivating factor for being a member of a traditional group is to perform at the carnival and to be able to travel in vicinity municipalities in order to perform with other groups in front of a public. It is also very important for traditional groups to receive recognition and to be known within the population. Members of traditional groups are not paid to perform so they have to hold jobs on the side in order to survive.

On the other hand, Lo Cosia receives funds to travel to other municipalities during cultural weeks and festivals⁵⁵. For instance, in July 2002, Lo Cosia went to the Festival del Caribe in Santiago de Cuba for a period of one week in order to perform in theaters and parades. The total travel expenses were paid by the state. For reasons of budget, only one group of Haitian tradition from Guantánamo had the opportunity to go to the Festival Del Caribe. Obviously, the *casa de cultura* chose the group that first, is under its supervision and second, that is categorized as a bearer group –they represent the authentic Cuban culture. In the month of July, Aurora Pie, the director of the group Lo Cosia explained to me that the *casa de cultura* would never admit that another Haitian group becomes more important than her group. The group has been under the supervision of the *casa de cultura* for a long time and the other Haitian groups have to be considered as daughters of Lo Cosia. This shows how the group categorization is embedded in the discourse of the members themselves. It also becomes a source of tensions and conflicts.

The help given by the state to traditional popular groups is essential since it provides them with means that facilitates their existence as an organized group. For instance, the cultural organs of the municipality of Santiago pay an employee to maintain the house where the members of the tumba francesa practice. It is not a big salary (120 Cuban pesos per month, the equivalence of \$USD 4,70) but it allows Andrea, the director of the tumba, to take care of the organization and preoccupations that are involved in leading a bearer group. For her, it is a full time job. In addition, the group does not have to pay rent for the house and it belongs to them alone. The state also provides them with costumes and accessories. Every group that is under the supervision of the state in Cuba receives similar support. They also occasionally have the opportunity to travel and perform in other municipalities, an activity which they could never afford without the help of the state.

However, this help is very limited and can have a pernicious effect since it renders the members and the traditional popular groups dependant on state funding. On the other hand, it can provide motivations and the minimum necessary in order to perform their tradition. Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo are very alive culturally and there are constant social and cultural activities organized for the population. There are for instances, theater troops that perform in the streets at night, in the poorest neighborhoods with a minimum of lightning and sound support. This kind of activity is very popular and it draws an impressive amount of people. The bearer groups receive help from cultural authorities but in exchange, the state expects that the groups will be active within the community, that they will propagate the traditional popular culture.

The tumba francesa of Guantánamo is also considered to be a bearer group but because it is a different type of tradition, it does not enter into conflict with Lo Cosia and

Gran moun lontan. In addition to being a Franco-Haitian tradition, it performs *bailes de salon* and it is recognized as a Cuban manifestation. In fact, the tumbas francesas do not exist in Haiti. The tumbas francesas can therefore be classified as a bearer group since they are not perceived as bearing the same tradition as Lo Cosia and Gran moun lontan. In practice, there are obvious contradictions in the classification of the traditional groups. As I will discuss later, revenues brought in by the development of cultural tourism may also generate contradictions and inconsistencies in the classificatory system of the state. The political aspect partially explains why some groups can become “mis-classified”.

In controlling traditional groups, the state assures that the tradition performed by bearer groups follows scientific criteria that have been established by diverse cultural organs. Atlases of the traditional popular culture and Cuban music have been produced after years of work in cities and in the countryside. These are the official cultural references for state authorities. The state also rates traditional popular groups within hierarchical categories: Municipal (C), Provincial (B) and National (A). The National category includes groups that attained a superior level of art quality. This type of group is better funded by the *casa de cultura* which assures its visibility around the country. A dance reproducer group of Franco-Haitian and Afro-Cuban traditions called *Jagüey*, composed of students from the University of Guantánamo, has gained national and to a certain extent international recognition. The group *Jagüey* is an example of a reproducer group classified as National (A) in the province of Guantánamo.

In addition to classifying the groups in certain categories, the state assures that the traditional groups respect the recognized form of tradition. One of the most direct ways to apply this artistic and cultural regulation is to form art instructors. The role of the art instructor is not limited to traditional groups but can be related to art classes with

teenagers, modern dance rehearsals, etc. Their role is to democratize popular culture at the community level. They have to make sure that the majority of the population has access to cultural and artistic production. The democratization of culture or the *masividad de la cultura*, as it is called in Cuba, can be reached using various approaches by involving the population in cultural projects or by creating performances and exhibitions which involve the work of amateurs and in some instances of professionals.

The use of art instructors may vary from provinces to provinces but the increase of new graduated cultural workers imply that they will be more and more present in the *casa de cultura* within the following years. In Guantánamo, there is one dance instructor that is associated to the bearer groups Lo Cosia and the tumba francesa. He works for the *casa de cultura*. The tumba francesa also possesses a promoter of cultural activity who also works for the *casa de cultura*. This person is a professional who makes sure that the tumba does not perform only for tourists but that it possesses activities for the members themselves, in order for it to remain authentic bearer -and not a reproducer- type of performance. Therefore, there are two cultural promoters who work full time for the tumba francesa in addition to a woman who is hired by the *casa de cultura* to maintain the room where they practice in good condition. The conservation of tradition is the main task of these cultural workers. They have a static vision of what tradition should consist of since they have to make sure that nothing gets transformed over time (by tourism or by the incorporation of new members for instance).

Conflicts may arise between cultural workers and members of traditional groups. It is not necessary to be part of a bearer group to become an art instructor. This means that when an art instructor is attached to a group such as Lo Cosia, he or she may not have any concrete idea of what a Haitian traditional group consists of. Most of the time,

dance instructors refer to their books and academic learning, in order to literally correct the performances of the cultural bearer. In other words, a dance instructor has the task of correcting and showing members of a bearer group what is the real and authentic form of their own tradition. One can imagine how such control may cause conflicts. The problem is that such involvement in the traditional affairs of a group is controversial for many of its members. Some old members have performed in these groups all their life. It is hard for them to understand, and with good reason, that a young student who is not even involved with the group, dictates them how to perform their tradition supposedly alive and adaptable.

Art instructors do not have bad intentions with regard to traditional groups, but from my observations, I can tell that they are rarely appreciated by the members, even if they are part of the group. Members of traditional popular groups have no choice but to accept such cultural workers because the group is under the supervision of the state and thus has to obey its regulations. In addition, the bureaucratic aspect involved by the *casa de cultura* concerning the traditional groups is so heavy that someone has to work for the group to take care of such formalities. Both the president of the tumba francesa of Guantánamo and the director of the group Lo Cosia revealed to me, in the context of interviews, that the dance instructor was incompetent with regard to their tradition⁵⁶. The director of Lo Cosia told me that the art instructor had helped her incredibly with the dancers but that they have problems of communication. She says that the art instructor does not listen to her and that he does not understand her tradition. The director of Lo Cosia was very emotional when she explained that since he says something to the dancers and that she shows something else to them, they do not know what to do anymore and it creates confusion. She recognizes that the dance instructor helps her for the meetings with the CDR, the *Poder Popular* and with all the bureaucracy concerns.

The problem, according to her, is that since he does not know her tradition, he imposes changes and transformations on the group that she would not have brought.

During the period when the economic crisis in Cuba was at its peak, the state had to find another way of controlling traditional popular groups, since it could not afford to hire new professional art instructors. Also, in some remote municipalities, it is impossible for municipal organs to assure that a state cultural representative is available. Cultural institutions decided to develop a system in which natural cultural promoters would replace a professional art instructor. These natural cultural promoters are in fact leaders in the community or in the traditional group. The state identified these leaders and gave them the responsibility of acting as an intermediate between the group and the cultural institutions of the municipality. In Sagua de Tánamo for instance, there was no art instructor to take charge of the tumba francesa of Bejuco. This tumba francesa is located in a remote area where there are no roads, no electricity and no telephone lines. The *casa de cultura* of Sagua de Tánamo identified an old woman in the community of Bejuco called Josefa Noble Robles who is a member of the tumba francesa, and asked her to become the representative of the tumba francesa for the *casa de cultura*. In addition, they named her the queen of the *sociedad*. During an informal interview that I conducted with her, she told me that before the *casa de cultura* asked her to perform these tasks, there were no real leaders or queen of the tumba francesa of Bejuco⁵⁷. The *casa de cultura* has created a false tradition in inventing a queen because it is a characteristic that the other tumbas francesas have or had in the past. In other words, official research stipulates that the tumbas francesas are composed of a queen and therefore cultural workers of the *casa de cultura* of Sagua de Tánamo thought that it would be normal that the tumba of Bejuco possesses one too. In reality, cultural workers used this characteristic to strengthen their power of action within the group and within

the community of Bejuco in general. I have been told by a few cultural workers that in general, the project of the natural cultural promoters did not work as well as they expected. Since 2000, there has been a return to the formation of professional art promoters and instructors.

As I mentioned before, the tasks of the art instructor may vary from one municipality to the other. I want to outline here that in Santiago de Cuba, there is no dance instructor assigned to the *tumba francesa*. Cultural workers at the *focos culturales* of Santiago were outraged to learn that in Guantánamo, dance instructors were attached to bearer groups. As I have been told, the *tumba* of Santiago already possesses a natural cultural promoter who is Andrea, the director of the *tumba*. Then, there is no need for a dance instructor. On the other hand, there is a cultural promoter that is in charge of the *tumba* of Santiago. She is paid by the state to organize activities and meetings for them. She has to make sure that the *tumba* holds activities for its members and the community in general. The authentic tradition of the *tumba* has to stay alive. There are therefore variations between municipalities, but we can admit that in general, there is a common tendency of direct supervision and control over the traditional popular groups.

However, the members belonging to the traditional popular groups are not passive when faced with such controls. There are many forms of resistance and ways to avoid the regulations of cultural authorities. For instance, Andrea, the director of the *tumba* of Santiago, told me that they usually do not accept to go to the activities organized by “*cultura*”, a general term for the municipal department of culture. She said that sometimes, she just goes to where the activity is supposed to be, without informing the members, waits, and tells the cultural worker that it seems that the members are not going to come. As Andrea explained to me, the members of the *tumba* are not paid to be

part of the group, so *cultura* cannot oblige them to participate to the activities organized by the cultural institution. On the other hand, I observed that when tourists are expected to come, all the members are present since they may be able to earn tips in American dollars.

Andrea recognizes the fact that the municipal department of culture tries to control and direct them. She says that *cultura* tries to change things but that they do not totally control them. For instance, in 1974, cultural authorities from Santiago decided to change the name of the *tumba francesa* *La Caridad de Oriente* to Maceo-Bandera-Moncada. They changed the name of the institution because this new label refers to three important Cuban heroes who fought against Spanish colonialism and who were members of the *tumba francesa*. In changing the name, cultural authorities wanted to inscribe the fact that the *tumba francesa* was a revolutionary group since some members helped to win the war for independence. Andrea told me that they never use that label and that they never recognized it. She said that if they accept to change the name, they produce a variation with the tradition, and they do not want to do that. Also, Andrea considers the *tumba francesa* as a *sociedad* (traditionally organized at the image of a *cabildo*) but since a few years, cultural institutions had changed the category of *sociedad* to *focos culturales* (cultural groups). These are bureaucratic and superficial changes that were made because, according to cultural authorities, the term *sociedad* was too restrictive and that it excluded the community. With the adoption of the term *foco cultural*, the state authorities believed that it opened the *sociedad* to people living in the neighborhood who do not necessarily belong directly to the tradition but who would wish to join the group. This strategy is part of the state's desire to democratize culture and to render it as accessible as possible. In that sense, cultural authorities assure that the bearer group plays a role within the community.

Another example of a form of resistance can be found in the internal hierarchical structure of the tumba francesa. For instance, the tumba francesa of Guantánamo is composed of a president and an administrator. Every month, the members of the tumba have to pay 1 peso each for the common account of the institution³⁸. The administrator who is in charge of the account is not related to state authorities but has been elected, as the president, to carry out this task. The money that is accumulated is reserved for celebrations that are organized by the members on specific days of the year such as Mother's and Father's days. The members of the tumba can freely decide what they want to do with the accumulated money. The tumba francesa is thus not totally dependent on external and official intervention in their internal affairs. The president is elected every 4 years and anyone who wants, can run for the presidency. Only the members of the tumba francesa have a right to vote. The president is not working for the *casa de cultura* but is a member of the tumba. He is in charge of defending the rights and demands of the tumba in front of official cultural authorities.

An important figure of tradition and respect of the tumba francesa of Guantánamo is the Queen. This maternal symbol is very important for the members since, in addition to being the oldest member of the tumba, she is a representative of the ancestors and of the importance in maintaining alive the tumba's tradition. She does not have a specific political role, but is a powerful symbol in herself representing the importance of keeping the tumba francesa alive in spite of, and in parallel with political interventions. The president and the queen are leaders who do not work within the *casa de cultura*. They are important actors who strengthen and affirm the needs of the tumba to cultural authorities. There is thus a process whereby requisitions can be put forward by representatives of the group. Therefore, there are diverse sources of internal resistance and discussion; a

continuous dialogue between members of the group and state representatives. The members are active participants, and despite the apparent rigidity of state authorities, members of traditional groups are able to express their points of view regarding of certain issues. On the other hand, we cannot deny that they are part of a system which is deeply involved in cultural affairs.

Considering examples of how the *casa de cultura* and cultural institutions at the municipal level in general classify and interact with traditional popular groups, it is possible to understand that the Cuban State struggles to maintain the type of popular culture that it wishes to construct at the national level. Traditional popular groups represent the revolutionary culture since they are under the supervision of the Cuban State's municipal organs. The municipal authorities assure that the traditional groups adhere to the philosophy of cultural democratization in involving them in massive cultural manifestations. Traditional popular groups are invited to perform during open forums where anti-imperialist discourses and slogans for a socialist Cuba are pronounced. The popular traditional groups are also controlled by a subtle revolutionary ideology that has been able to become part of the organization of the group in itself. The popular traditional groups are now dependent on the government to survive and they recognize their affiliation with cultural authorities. They even sing and dance for Fidel, the savior of the popular culture. On the other hand, members of popular groups find various ways of resisting state interventions in their internal affairs. They manage to benefit from the system and to reject regulations that they do not agree with. Therefore, the state encounters subtle but effective forms of resistance at the level of the community.

Haitian descendant groups and the tumba francesa are part of the national culture since they are a symbol of the kaleidoscopic and transcultural essence of the Cuban national culture that the state wishes to strengthen. In his famous work, *Cuban Counterpoint*, Ortiz, the third discoverer of the island, states that "the real history of Cuba is the history of its intermeshed transculturations" (1940:98). "Ethnic" traditional groups -Afro-Cuban Jamaican, Haitian, Chinese, etc.- illustrate the blends and cultural inter-exchanges that was created through time, the richness of the current national Cuban culture. In addition of giving the particular taste to the national culture, this essence of "Africness" and "Caribbeaness" is also a tool that allows the state to attract cultural tourists. In that sense, popular culture is used in order to support the system currently shaken by an economic and ideological crisis.

Cultural Tourism

As we have seen previously in Chapter 2, tourism and carnivals⁵⁹ are intimately related in Cuba as in other islands of the Caribbean. But before going into detail about these two variables, it is necessary to look at them separately.

In Cuba, cultural tourism is supervised, directed and controlled by official cultural institutions, and mixed enterprises. The Cuban authorities emphasize the importance of presenting the authentic Cuban culture to foreigners (Hart Dávalos 1991). The state authorities do not see from a bad eye the effects that tourism could have on culture. Despite a few negative consequences, it is believed that tourism can generate cultural revitalization. Authorities claim that tourism can actually provoke cultural programs that aim at developing traditional culture. The tourist industry "puede producir en la promoción y comercialización de la cultura un verdadero vuelco de la actividad, de generadora de gastos, a fuente de ingresos⁶⁰" (Hart Dávalos 1991, n.d.). The cultural

revitalization that may engender the development of the tourist industry has to be realized under the supervision of the Minister of Culture, the *Direcciones de casas de cultura*, and the *Atlas de la Cultura Tradicional Cubana* so the traditional culture stays authentic.

On the other hand, the state authorities believe that the traditional culture should not be dependent on the tourist industry. The state recognizes that tourism could produce a de-naturalization of popular culture if it is only oriented towards the tourist industry. Hart Dávalos (1990, 1991) asks how a country in economic need, can open its boundaries to the intensive tourist industry and keep the strength of the Republic? The answer, according to him, lies in the national authenticity expressed through the arts and culture. Hart Dávalos believes that the authentic representation of the Cuban nation through art and culture in general ensures the fact that the system remains in place. He puts enormous importance on art and culture as agents to strengthen national culture in face of a foreign invasion disguised in tourism.

As we have seen earlier, Cuba needs revenues from the tourist industry to maintain the revolutionary regime. But on the other hand, and even if the authorities do not admit it overtly, this type of industry may provoke threats for the internal order of the country. Hart Dávalos also recognizes the fact that foreigners can have an influence on the Cuban culture but he argues that the only method to resolve this pervasive dilemma is to develop the industry of Cuban music, theater, the Cuban literature, etc. (1990, 1991). Again, culture becomes the savior of the national Cuban identity on the condition that it maintains its authenticity -that it stays *as it was before*. Concerning the traditional popular groups of dance and music, this conservation despite tourism and other threats is achieved by increased intensification of supervision, control and regulation.

The idea that traditional groups, more particularly, the bearer groups, such as the tumbas francesas, should not exist for the sole purpose of performing their ceremony in front of tourists, is very strong. Traditional groups should stay an authentic representation of the Cuban national culture. This approach to tradition in regard to tourism involves different methods of limiting the impact that tourism may have on bearer groups. On the other hand, the groups represent the authentic attraction that tourists are searching for while on the island. Therefore, targeted bearer groups have to be organized in such a way that they can welcome an important amount of tourists in a comfortable space and at a reasonable price and time. Originally, the members of the tumba francesa were meeting once in a while, on a non-regular basis. Their spontaneous ceremony consisted of nightlong festivities. In more recent times, the members of the tumba were getting together every Saturday night to perform their dances and music. But since they began in receiving tourists, they started to meet every Tuesday and Saturday morning. They had never held activities in the morning before. This schedule is very inconvenient for some members who work during the day and who can no longer participate to the activities of the tumba. This change occurred because tourists visit the tumba francesa of Guantánamo in the morning and usually on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Also, their dances became less spontaneous since they had to construct a general and constant pattern for all the representations. Their performances had to be adapted so as to receive spectators.

To counter these traditional changes, the state authorities oblige the members to perform their dances and songs even if no tourists come to visit them. The members of the tumba francesa may know in advance if foreigners come to visit them. The agent of Artex in Guantánamo may receive news from Havanatur's office, located in Santiago de

Cuba, to inform that tourists are supposed to visit the tumba on a precise day. But if he does not know on time or if a guide decides to stop at the tumba francesa without informing the agent in Guantánamo, the members have to be ready to perform. I cannot argue that the tumba francesa welcomes a gigantic number of tourists (See Table 2). But since Guantánamo is a relatively small community where the tourist industry is minimal, the tumba francesa is certainly the main touristic attraction in the municipality and the neighborhood villages. In fact, Guantánamo does not have at this time, any famous touristic attractions. The reason why tourists stop at the tumba francesa of Guantánamo is because the city is located on the road between Santiago de Cuba and Baracoa, two popular touristic destinations. The travel agencies need an activity in the middle of the trip so the tourists can relax and have a pause for lunch. The tumba francesa was chosen for such a task.

Table 2:
Number of tourists by year who visited the tumba francesa of Guantánamo.

1996	886
1997	1329
1998	2411
1999	2289
2000	1878
2001	993
2002 (from January to may)	300

Source: Ernesto Chacón Domínguez, Commercial agent for ARTEX, Interview, 3rd of June 2002.

There are only two main tourist packages that officially offer a visit at the tumba francesa of Guantánamo and they are sold by Havanatur in France and Spain. They are called "*Todo Cuba*" and "*Recojamos Cuba*". There has been a diminution of the sale of these packages in Europe and this may explain why there has been a decrease of visitors since 1999⁶¹.

There are also guides from other companies or with different types of tourist packages that decide, without advising, to stop at the tumba francesa while on the road to Baracoa. However, the tourist activity at the tumba of Guantánamo cannot be compared to popular destinations of Cuba such as Varadero, Cayo Coco, or La Habana. But, for a small community such as Guantánamo, few visitors may represent an attraction for the neighborhood and an important source of revenue.

The cultural authorities in general believe that tourism can influence bearer groups. To minimize its effects, they encourage bearer groups to perform their tradition as if tourism does not exist. There is a cultural agent working at the *casa de cultura* of Guantánamo who attends every activities of the tumba. Her main responsibility is to make sure that the activity takes place even if no tourists come. If tourists come, she counts how many they are and collects some information about them for statistical purposes. The *casa de cultura* believes that the members of the tumba francesa have to perform since they do not depend on tourism to exist. On the other hand, it is well known that the tumba francesa never held activities on a regular basis, twice a week and in the morning, before the existence of the tourist industry in Guantánamo.

The role of the cultural agent is inscribed in the idea that tourism should not direct Cuban culture. One of the fundamental roles of the workers from the *casas de cultura* is to avoid foreign intervention in the essence of what constitutes the Cuban culture. In regards to tourism, the *casas de cultura* “y otra instituciones deben ser exclusivamente destinadas para el enriquecimiento cultural de la población y en ningún caso como opcionales para el turismo internacional⁶²” (Rivas Rodriguez 2001). In other words, the institutions themselves should not become tourist intermediaries between the cultural

groups and the tourist agencies. Although the *casa de cultura* of Guantánamo is directly involved with the tourist industry within the municipality, it has been able to keep its distance from tourist agencies and to dedicate its policies towards the maintenance and conservation of the authentic popular and traditional Cuban culture.

According to cultural authorities, members of the *tumba francesa* should not be paid for performing their tradition. In fact, when the *tumbas francesas* perform for tourists, the members do not receive any money for their work. For instance, at the *tumba francesa* of Guantánamo, tourists have to pay \$USD 3 for the representation. However, they do not pay directly to the members of the *tumba francesa*, but rather they pay to the travel agency and Artex which are owned (or partially owned) by the state. Sometimes the USD\$ 3 fee is included in their package deal. Therefore, tourists do not have to deal directly with the members of the *tumba* since it is the travel agent that recuperates the money. Artex gives a percentage of the money to the *casa de cultura* of the municipality of Guantánamo. This percentage which comes from the work of the members of the *tumba* is not directly returned to them, but is distributed to the popular culture of Guantánamo in general. In other words, there is a redistribution of the revenues won by the members of the *tumba* to the groups or projects of the municipality. This redistribution is clearly influenced by the socialist character of the system which promotes equal access to and distribution of resources.

But such a repartition may frustrate some members of the *tumba* who complain because they never recuperate the efforts of their work. They would like to receive money and they also think that some improvement should be brought to the group as a whole, such as new costumes, renovations of the house where they hold the activities, new instruments, etc. To counter the fact that the members do not receive any form of

payment from the tourists, they pass a hat at the end of the ceremony in order to collect what the tourists wish to donate. However, this practice is quite tricky because it is against the law. It is prohibited for a bearer group that performs in front of tourists to “beg” for money or to pass the hat. A group can receive a fine of USD \$1500 for having asked a *propina* (tip) to tourists. I never have been able to confirm if this regulation is a myth or a reality but this belief is ingrained and feared by members of a few groups that I met.

The reason why the state imposes such a regulation is because it wants to keep the traditional popular groups as bearers of their tradition and this should not be a waged work. Strict regulations limit “direct” forms of revenues coming from the tourist industry. It is believed that cultural groups should not become mere commercial objects sold to foreign visitors. This is the reason why cultural authorities oblige traditional popular groups to act as if tourists did not exist. On the other hand, this utopian search for authenticity is derisory since it is known that tourism influences the host community. The state struggles so the traditional culture does not detract from authenticity. Cultural authorities have to deal with the fact that tourists desire authenticity and that the only way to achieve it is through the commercialization of traditional popular groups. In fact, they have the potential of generating important revenues within the cultural touristic industry.

The state also encourages professional dance troops to perform an interpretation of Cuban traditional culture in front of tourists. In promoting such a spectacle, cultural authorities limit the repercussions brought by tourism. For instance, in Guantánamo, the Ballet Folklórico Babúl is a dance troop that aims at reinterpreting and representing the traditional popular culture of the region of Guantánamo. They perform dances of the

tumba francesa, of the traditions brought by immigrants from the English spoken islands of the Caribbean and Cuban popular dances in general (salsa, meringue, mambo, etc.). In an interview with the commercial agent of Artex, Ernesto Chacón Domínguez, I learned that Babúl also performs in front of tourists. He said that Babúl only performs in front of Germans because they are colder people in general and did not like the intimate atmosphere of the tumba francesa's headquarters. They prefer the dramatic and sensational character of a spectacle given on a stage. In addition, they do not relate to the Franco-Haitian culture of the tumba francesa. Babúl provides them with an exotic representation of diverse influences that shaped the contemporary Cuban culture. According to cultural authorities, for French and Spanish tourists, the tumba francesa stays the more appropriate way of transmitting the authentic Cuban culture.

The tumba francesa of Santiago does not have an official agreement with *cultura* regarding tourism. They do not receive tourists on a regular basis like the tumba of Guantánamo. On the other hand, in Santiago, there are different types of solicitors who ask the members of the tumba francesa to perform in front of foreigners. The solicitors may be Havanatur or Cubanacan which are tourist agencies. It can also be research centers such as the *Casa del Caribe* or any other types of institutions like the *Alliance Française*. Finally, a solicitor may be an independent person who was able to build contacts and who possesses direct arrangements with tourists groups. These independent cultural promoters are popularly called the *jineteros intelectuales*⁶³. The worst solicitors according to the two presidents of the tumba francesa of Santiago are the cultural state organs. According to the presidents, cultural state organs do not provide their groups with any motivational attributions such as money or food and beverages. But when a generous solicitor asks them to perform in front of tourist or international student groups,

they do the necessary since they know that they may receive dollars and good treatments for their work.

Regional cultural authorities are embedded in traditional group affairs, which include the tourist industry. Bearer groups are important targets for the development of cultural tourism since they represent the authentic Cuban culture and visitors are avid of such cultural manifestations. As we have seen earlier, the state encourages traditional groups to act as “if the tourist does not exist” in order to limit foreign influences. In encouraging and maintaining an image of authenticity, the state recreates and reinforces the tourist gaze. Cultural authorities promote the authenticity of traditional culture and this is particularly what tourists are searching for. Performances that are organized at the rehearsal room of the tumba francesa of Guantánamo offer an authentic cultural experience.

MacCannell (1973 & 1976) focuses his analysis of tourism on this quest for authenticity and develops the front versus back distinction of a tourist place previously brought by Ervin Goffman. MacCannell explains that the tourist (he admits that there are some exceptions) is in constant search to come into contact with the locals through entering these back places. In other words, tourists want to experience authentic cultural experiences. The “staged authenticity” (MacCannell 1973 & 1977) refers to the desire of the tourist to cross borders between the front and the back regions. MacCannell writes that “The empirical actions in tourist settings is mainly confined to movement between areas decorated to look like back regions, and back regions into which tourists are allowed to peek” (1973:598). However, it is important to mention that according to MacCannell, even if a tourist reaches the back stage, “a touristic experience is *always* mystified” (1976:599: my emphasis).

The state promotes the idea that tourists should go where the popular culture is located and not vice-versa. This perspective aims to diminish the influences that a change of environment could have on the tradition of popular groups. But again, the state reinforces the tourist gaze. For tourists, a visit to the tumba francesa is an incredible authentic experience since they are brought in the tumba's headquarters, which is located in a poor neighborhood of the city. They can interact with the members (even if they are not encouraged too) and appreciate a cultural production manifestation that is performed directly in front of them (there is not even a stage). The state encourages a type of authentic culture that is searched for the tourist.

The tourist industry is aware of this almost mythic quest and the marketing of authenticity is dominant in tourist brochures and advertisements. Indeed, the tourist industry 'plays' with the front and back stages in trying to recreate and make the tourist believes that he or she is in fact experiencing the back stage of a culture. But why is it so important from the part of the state to maintain this utopian authenticity? Authenticity becomes an answer to issues related to cultural homogenization, it is seen as a sort of immunization against outside diseases. In maintaining authenticity the state assures that the traditional culture stays untouched by external influences brought by tourism for instance. An authentic Cuban culture will not become Americanized nor homogenized. A discourse prioritizing authenticity allows authorities to counteract the perceived threats of homogenization. It accentuates the fact that Cuban culture has to be different from others and has to support the revolutionary regime. Even with the intrusion of foreigners, Cuban popular culture has to stay authentic in order to assure its systematic support to the Revolution.

Carnival

Carnivals are perfect popular occasion for the state to strengthen its authority within the population. In this sense -and definitely in Cuba- carnivals are political manifestations where the feeling of belonging to a nation is strengthened. In Cuba, the Carnivals are also cultural events within which the popular groups of dance and music perform in front of the masses.

Carnivals are events that are organized and funded by political organs such as the *Poder Popular* (Government elected at different levels of the nation), the Communist Party of Cuba (the sole recognized political party) and the local CDRs (Centers for the Defense of the Revolution). In comparison with a Carnival in other Caribbean islands or South American countries, Carnivals of Cuba do not display any types of private investments. There is no publicity funded by private enterprises that sponsor the Carnival. The only company that provided money for the Carnival of Santiago de Cuba in July 2002, was the beer company Crystal, which is partially owned by the state. Also, this type of beer publicity is almost exclusively oriented towards the tourists since it is a very expensive beer compared to the other local companies, and only the ones who possess dollars can purchase such an alcoholic beverage.

In Santiago de Cuba, there is a museum of the carnival. The exhibition, which has not changed since the 1980s, can teach us about the role that the state attaches to the carnival as a tool to consolidate the socialist system. The section "Before the Revolution" of the museum explains how the Carnival was dependant on liquors and beverage sponsorships (such as Bacardí's rum, Hatuey's beer and Canada Dry's soft drink) in order to exist. A visitor can read on a sign that such a sponsorship demonstrates the political and financial support of enterprises, more specifically in the domain of liquors.

The section “Since the Revolution” of the museum explains that such a private sponsorship is not allowed anymore and that the Carnival, with the advent of the Revolution, became a rich source of cultural, artistic and national representations. A sign displays the following information: “Si en mucho el carnaval del pasado reflejó la miseria y la dependencia económica, hoy es evidente que refleje (...) la distribución socialista de los bienes que los trabajadores crean día a día, firmes y seguras del futuro que construyen⁶⁴” (Museum of the Carnival, Santiago de Cuba). In other words, the carnival became a symbol of the state’s efforts to democratize culture. From a private event, carnivals became people’s celebrations due to the labor of the Revolution.

Other changes were brought in order to make the carnival an appropriate illustration of the ideology of the state. For instance, in comparison with other Carnivals of the Caribbean, the Carnivals in Cuba are not constructed around the election of a “queen”. In 1961, the Carnival commission decided to change the name of “queen” for “Estrella del Carnaval⁶⁵”. They believed that the “queen’s” title did not correspond with the revolutionary principles. The contest was not only based on beauty traits of the participants but on their revolutionary support and devotion. Since 1971, the Carnival Commission of Santiago de Cuba decided to eliminate the contest of a star of the carnival since it conflicted with the Cuban traditions (Museum of the Carnival, Santiago de Cuba).

Carnivals are public events where Cubans can see different groups and cultural manifestations parading in the streets. According to cultural authorities, the carnival is part of the politics of cultural democratization or *masificación de la cultura*. This term refers to the intensification and the propagation of culture at the popular level in working at the community level. Culture has to be accessible to all Cubans. The propagation of a

national culture is assured by the municipal organs such as the *casas de cultura* and by diverse public programs implemented by state authorities. For instance, there is a new TV channel called “Universidad para todos⁶⁶” which aims to give free courses on diverse topics such as Chemistry, Cuban History and Culture, English language, etc. This state initiative is based on the same desire to democratize culture.

For members of *comparsas*⁶⁷, the carnival is a period when one can directly enjoy the effervescence and excitement of festivities. On the other hand, for the members of traditional groups, the seven days which composed the Carnival, represent also a lot of work, walking and stress. Carnivals are constructed as competitions within which the *comparsas* try to attract the attention of a jury mostly composed of officials and social researchers from the *Casa del Caribe*. There are different categories of groups and each of them competes between each other. There is no significant reward for the winners except the symbolic recognition of being the best group of the year.

Municipal cultural organs supply every member of traditional groups –and other types of associations- with costumes, accessories and shoes⁶⁸. Traditional groups draw their costumes with the help of designers hired by the municipal state organs. There are also professional couturiers who make the models chosen by the groups. Since the costumes of all the groups in Santiago are made of the same fabric, it is ironic to watch the parades and notice how much all their dresses are similar. There is a gigantic mechanic and organization that is dedicated to the advent of the carnival; thousands of people work at its success. Every thing is creatively recycled and transformed in order to render a particular atmosphere of *fiesta* and magic to the festivities. Cultural authorities also pay every musician belonging to the groups in addition of a choreographer and the president(s). The carnival is dependent on the generosity of the state authorities. For

instance, at the beginning of the 1990s, when the economic crisis was at its peak, the carnival was cancel for a few years. The institutions in charge of the coordination of the carnival did not have any means to carry out the festivities so the parades were cancelled. The state is the sole agent in charge of carnivals in Cuba.

These events taking place in every municipalities of the island are important political tools because they are very popular events that are under the total control and dependency of cultural authorities. Also, carnivals create a sense of commonality and “Cubanness” that is essential for the strengthening of the Cuban nation pride. Many symbols, discourses, signs and propaganda tools are put on stage and displayed all along the carnival period. The ideology of the system is extensively propagated by diverse methods of diffusion. The state ideology is embedded in the structure of the carnivals and it has been able to create a popular tool that aims to regenerate the passion of the Cubans for their revolution. The carnival of Santiago de Cuba takes place during the national holidays recalling the historical invasion of the Moncada barrack by Fidel and a small group of rebels in 1953. This failed and violent protest gave birth to the revolutionary group called 26-J that would successfully overthrow Batista in 1959. The 26th of July is a national holiday, which falls right in the middle of the festivities. In addition to the carnival’s normal schedule there are many manifestations of the revolutionary and heroic Cuban history. Carnivals allow thousands of Cubans to live simultaneously an event that proudly stages the national identity, history and culture.

Foreigners and Parades

Cuban carnivals attract a growing number of visitors. The carnival in La Habana and the one in Santiago are nowadays important tourist attractions in the island. Many Europeans and North Americans come to Cuba during the time of the carnival in order to

enjoy the festivities. Again, the state recognizes the revenues that such a cultural event can generate. The state promotes and encourages foreign visitors to attend cultural parades. Special spaces are constructed for “visitors only” who pay USD\$ 5 to sit in a stage strategically situated in front of the jury committee. The tourists who decide to pay the fees are therefore the ones who can see and hear the best since the groups perform their whole representation only in front of the jury. In other words, most of the Cubans cannot see the groups performing. They can only catch a glimpse of the groups walking in lines toward the jury space.

The Cuban State needs the revenues brought by the development of cultural tourism since it helps to maintain its national economic autonomy. The state is very active in promoting the development of cultural tourism in rendering carnivals, authentic representation of the Cuban culture. Carnivals allow the Cuban State to construct a local flavor based on festivities, dance and music, which is sold on the tourist market. As I have mentioned in Chapter 2, in addition to creating a sense of national pride –and in this case, of revolutionary fervor- carnivals also construct a sense of pan-Caribbeaness that is accentuated by the commonality of such an event in this region of the world. There was a group from Puerto Rico at the carnival of Santiago 2002 which attracted a lot of attention because of the richness of the costumes. They are invited by Cubans authorities in order to perform at the carnival. This effort was fruitful since the group was among the most beautiful ones and it attracted much attention from the Cubans. Therefore, carnivals often tend to assemble rather than divide and the Cuban State uses the popularity of the event to strengthen the notion of “being apart of” and “sharing a common identity”. Obviously, the state uses this time of gathering in order to rally Cubans under the revolutionary system. In this context, tourists are also involved but the state struggles to limit the

influence that foreigners could have on the population in constructing a payable enclosure restricted to them.

The Cuban State managed to integrate its ideology at the base of its national culture, which lies in manifestations of popular tradition. With strong involvement in municipal cultural affairs, the state strives to control any form of traditional representation. Traditional popular groups that were looked at in this chapter are examples of municipal formations that are in constant relation or opposition to the intervention of cultural organs. Although they are classified as traditional by cultural institutions, which implies that they are perceived as transmitters of an unchanged past tradition, they are actually able to adapt themselves to new economic and social realities such as the intensification of touristic activities. Members of traditional groups are not passive and they resist state interventionist actions. Sometimes, they are even able to impose and maintain their conditions and restrictions. On the other hand, pressures are intense and it is almost impossible for them to totally reject decisions and actions brought by state representatives.

Cultural policies in Cuba are very strong at the community level because of the diverse types of cultural institutions that dedicate themselves to the conservation and maintenance of the traditional popular culture. The Cuban State has a broad vision of what is the authentic Cuban culture, and traditional groups are only one facet of its cultural policy. On the other hand there is an intensification of the attention dedicated to traditional groups because they are a symbol of stability and cultural richness that the state uses in order to struggle against perceived threats to its regime. To maintain a policy of authenticity, the state counteracts perceived menaces brought about by globalization, such as the feared homogenization of culture. From the perspective of the Cuban State,

cultural homogenization refers to the internal development of capitalist sentiments and subsequently to the collapse of the revolutionary system. An authentic culture prevents foreign influences from penetrating the Cuban nation by strengthening the national identity of the population. The control of culture at the community level is a subtle manufacturer, but it functions as a strong tool of state manipulation.

Chapter 5:

Through the “I” of the Camera

This chapter reviews the process that led to the production of the ethnographic film “State the Rhythm” which complements this written thesis. During the 4 months that I stayed in Cuba, I used the camera extensively as a tool to record visual data. I always had had in mind that the images would serve for the production of a film. Now that I have passed through this long and intense procedure, I am able to shed light on diverse aspects that are now embedded in the final work. In the following section, I consider some of these aspects and explore what the film can express that the written word cannot. I acknowledge the concerns that a camera may create in the field and the ethical issues that using such a tool may involve. I have always hoped that this ethnographic film, which illustrates the arguments developed in this thesis, would give a voice to the Cubans that I met. But I now realize that it is also my voice that I is heard when they talk.

“State the Rhythm” is an ethnographic video concerned with the state’s involvement in cultural affairs at the community level. The film considers four members of traditional music and dance groups of Guantánamo and Santiago de Cuba. The four members discuss how the Cuban State intervenes in their cultural affairs, and how they have developed ways of resisting certain regulations imposed on them. Some members recognize that the state helps in certain respects such as during the time of the carnival. The film outlines the fact that Cuban cultural policies are complex, direct and embedded in the popular culture at the community level. They are also shaped by new social realities occasioned by the development of the tourist industry.

The four individuals discuss certain regulations that have been imposed on them, such as the delegation of a dance instructor by cultural authorities. Additionally, the film is concerned with the idea of tradition, and how it is objectified and transformed by various factors such as the state's involvement, but also by ordinary changes occurring over time. The film also clearly outlines the Haitian presence in the eastern part of the island. There are very few Haitians from Haiti who live in this region but there are many Haitian descendants who still transmit songs, dances, food practices, language, etc. belonging to their tradition. These cultural particularities are still alive and some are also encouraged and funded by cultural authorities.

The camera in the field

The use of the camera in the field was a new experience for me. I saw the camera as an effective data gathering technique with which to communicate my findings through a visual medium. Although I carefully examined many studies in practical visual anthropology, I could not have expected that such a medium would bring so many dilemmas, surprises and discoveries. In fact, the extensive use of the camera in the field really affects the way that one conducts fieldwork. It becomes an important tool that generates different ways of gathering data and experiencing the field.

I filmed interviews, groups in action, and many other aspects of Cuban life. I collected more than 24 hours of footage to produce a final version of 48 minutes. The use of the camera in the field influenced my relation with the informants since it became an integral part of my Masters project in Cuba. In fact, "If visual images and technologies are part of the research project, they will play a role in how both researcher and informant identities are constructed and interpreted" (Pink 2001:21). Furthermore, Pink states that "An ethnographer with a video camera is a person with a video camera, the

camera becomes part of its user's identity and an aspect of the way he or she communicates with others" (2001:79). In Cuba, I always had the camera with me, people were used to see me carrying it around and filming whatever I desired.

The camera in Cuba is relatively well accepted and people have been in contact with this kind of technology before. They are generally aware of how it works and what it does. On the other hand, the video camera provokes reactions that the photographic camera does not. The video camera is seen as a more technologically advanced medium and is often associated with television. In addition to being inscribed as a moving image, the voice of the informants and the general context is also captured. Being recorded with a video camera has been for most Cubans that I met, a relatively new and special experience. They loved to look at each other after having been recorded and commented on the way they acted, moved and spoke in front of the camera. A few informants refused that I film them because they were too shy or not dressed well enough to be recorded as such.

I have always been sincere with the informants regarding the camera. I asked permission to use it to the people involved as much as possible. The first day that I arrived at the rehearsal room of the tumba, I showed the members that I had a camera and I asked if it was possible to film them. Many showed reluctance at the beginning because I wanted to film their rehearsals. They preferred that I wait and film them when they have their costumes and when the choreography is perfect. But I explained to them that it was the whole process of cultural production that interested me. I tried to explain my research to them in detail but I am conscious that defining what a visual anthropologist is may seem strange and abstract for many of the informants. The more I used my camera,

the more it became something acceptable, and people seemed to get used to it progressively.

On the other hand, the camera affected my relations with people. Informal interviews became more structured once the camera was taken out of the bag. It definitively changes the way people act and it also influences the information that the informants were willing to reveal. In fact, some informants did not want to repeat what they just confided me two minutes before I turned on the camera. The use of the camera in the field creates a constant stress since, if the camera is off when something happens, it is like if in reality the event never occurred. I consider the footages as words and a scene as a sentence. If I do not have words to express what I want to say, I cannot construct sentences nor I can “show” what I want to demonstrate. It is possible to write words and construct a written argument with accurate information but one cannot create a video without visual words. Indeed, a visual medium does not provide the same information as a written document.

A subjective visual tool such as an ethnographic film can express with images and sounds, a portion of the reality that the filmmaker wants to depict. In my case, the film aims to give a semblance of justice to these artistic and cultural manifestations since such visual support allows active and sensorial, but still subjective, forms of representation. Visual anthropologists and other professionals often thought that it was possible for the filmmaker to become invisible while in the process of filmmaking – that the camera offered the possibility of being objective. They thought that the camera could become an eye that would allow the anthropologist to record reality before it disappeared. Mead (1997) explains, following Boas, that the camera allows the anthropologist to record what the words cannot transmit; she believed that the camera is an objective tool.

However, it is now accepted in the domain of anthropology that “Filmmakers influence events by their very presence” in the field (Barbash & Taylor 1997:57). The camera, as the producer(s), is not objective.

Before I left for the field, I wanted to produce an interactive research with the informants. I wished to actively involve, if possible, some Cubans in my project -to conduct a participatory research. As MacDougall writes, I imagined that I could “imprint directly upon the film their own culture” (1995:125). However, I realized that such a project would be harder than I thought in such a short laps of time, so I decided to conduct a more traditional type of anthropological research. Despite the fact that the project became personal, it was very important for me to have feed back from the members of the tumba who I had filmed. They also told me that they would appreciate it if they could watch the footage. More than once, I went to the home of the presidents of the tumba of Santiago and I showed them the footage. Many members were also there to watch.

Knowing that I would have to show the footage to the informants influenced what I filmed. I knew that they would watch it and I had to make a balance between what I knew they wanted to see and what I wanted to record. This was sometimes a difficult process. For instance, when the tumba francesa of Santiago had visits from tourists, I was interested to see how the tourists reacted in regard to the ceremony but the members of the tumba were curious to watch how good they had performed. These were two different perspectives and I had to deal with them by filming both aspects –the group and their audience. Also, at the end of the fieldwork, I organized a small celebration in the rehearsal room of the tumba of Santiago. We prepared a lunch, beverages and bought rum. We invited all the members of the tumba to come and watch the footage I had

collected on their group. We brought a television set in the headquarters of the tumba and organized a mini-theater session. I believe that they greatly appreciated the experience. They often reacted and laughed at each other when one appeared on television.

Using the camera in the field provided me with the opportunity to capture visually a part of my experiences. Surprisingly, I became very critical of the way that I captured the images. From a technical perspective, I noticed my weak points and tried to change or adapt them to increase the quality of the footage. For instance, at the beginning of the field I was very shy and uncomfortable to film people. During interviews, I often had my camera placed on my knees, hoping that the interviewee would forget about it. I rarely used my tripod because it gave a sense of formality that I wanted to diminish as much as possible. I always had to be very alert to the fact that although the camera was positioned on my knees, the images that I filmed still had to be visually interesting.

The ethical dimension while in the field was an important concern for me. After reflection, I decided not to use the ethical consent form that I had carefully prepared for the “filmed informants” before leaving for the field. I realized that in Cuba, the act of signing an ethical consent form may bring a sense of “officiality” and “state control” that I did not want to be associated with. For these reasons I did not make the interviewees sign the form. On the other hand, everyone that I interviewed knew about my research and fully accepted to participate. It is unbelievable to notice that when confronted with concrete situations, it is the instinct that really takes decisions. I would not hesitate to state that according to the context in which I conducted fieldwork, I made the best choices to insure my security and that of my informants.

From an ethical perspective, it is also important to outline the nature of my status while in Cuba. Due to bureaucratic complications, I never have been able to receive a study or research visa before leaving for the field. I therefore conducted and filmed interviews without the appropriate visa. Someone in possession of a tourist visa cannot conduct research during his or her stay. Fortunately, I never had problems with state representatives. In addition to stress, the sole disadvantage occasioned by this type of visa was that I often had to present myself as a “tourist-interested-in-Cuban-culture”. I therefore lost some credibility in front of potential informants. The way that I defined myself while in the field often depended with whom I was making new acquaintances. Generally, I had the tendency to present myself as a “student-conducting-research” to members of traditional groups and as a “tourist-interested-in-Cuban-culture” to state representatives.

During the fieldwork, I had good contacts with both state representatives and members of traditional groups. I cannot deny that I often tended to take the side of the traditional group members, since it is with them that I was most of the time. I was receptive to their forms of resistance and I agreed with many of their claims. I was more suspicious towards state representatives since I thought they had a passive perspective of tradition and culture in general. Also, I did not agree with them on many issues. Although I have been able to maintain good contacts with both sides and to develop relationships with a few state representatives, I realize that the management of both relations combined at the same time was difficult. I never said to state representatives that I agreed or disagreed with what they revealed to me. I believe that I kept my perspective ambiguous and this is why such relationships became possible.

I consider that ethical concerns are very important issues to take into account while in the field. I am also aware that filming people creates issues related to objectification and anonymity. Nonetheless, I decided to follow my visual project to the end and to edit the footage. I believe that I was sincere with the informants regarding what I did in Cuba and I think that all of them are extremely rich sources of cultural and artistic information. In fact, I am very proud to show some of the members in my film since they speak to the audience. It is a way for me to make people hear what they have to say, and this is something they would probably never have been able to do without the camera.

On the other hand, there are some limitations related to freedom of expression caused by the political Cuban context. My topic rapidly became political and I am conscious that it was sometimes difficult for the informants to express themselves freely in front of the camera. In fact, many of them did not tell me the exact same information and opinion in front of, and behind the camera. But I respected their position and never pushed them to talk to me about topics that they did not want to discuss in front of the camera. I realized while in the field that theory and practice are two different entities and that sometimes, faced with concrete situations, it is the intuition of the anthropologist that is the most important reference to judge ethical concerns.

Process of Editing

I began editing the film 5 months after my return from Cuba. Editing a 48 minutes final video product from at least 24 hours of footage was a considerable challenge for someone like me who had previously no practical and technical knowledge in video production. Since I filmed with a digital camera, I edited the ethnographic video with the help of the program Final Cut Pro, version 3. Before beginning the process, I

carefully read the “Bible⁶⁹” of the program and slowly started to play with the applications. Despite a few misadventures that occurred to me while in the process of editing, I realized how much digital technology has certainly revolutionized the world of filmmaking –more accurately referred to as videomaking. But above all, I came to the conclusion that the process of editing is subjective and highly artistic –in the sense that it involves the combination of visual images and symbols. Editing is also an essential part of filmmaking since it is this process that gives the essence to the final product. The film editor should definitively be considered as an influential actor in the process of giving meaning to the discourse of a particular film product. Unfortunately, the process of editing has often been taken as a simple cut-and-paste type of action. Indeed, the process is much more complicated and involves deeper analysis and vision of what the final product is supposed to radiate.

Playing with images and arranging them so as to offer information can become subtle and tricky. Manipulating images gives a sense to the film and stimulates certain types of reactions. For instance, the use of a specific image within a certain context can reveal the perspective of the producer. Then, the process of editing becomes highly subjective and meaningful. Indeed, the choice of images is the first subjective decision that the editor-producer will have to assume. Many images have to be eliminated from the final video production. Obviously, one of the main objectives of the producer is that spectators receive some form of information from the images. In the context of a thesis, the video had to reflect the research that had been conducted in Cuba and developed in the written document. I also wished that a more general type of audience could appreciate the film.

It always has been important for me to show in the video the dialogue that exists between cultural representatives and members of cultural popular groups of dance and music. Because of their preponderance, these exchanges had to be inscribed within the structure of the film itself. For instance, one can vision the constant relationship between the members and the representatives of the state throughout the film. It is shown how both sides respond differently to similar concerns. Indeed, both parties may have contradicting opinions, perspectives and interests. The fact of inserting both perspectives one after the other accentuates this sense of dialogue and relationship. Therefore, editing becomes an important process of creating effects and a particular meaning.

I have been confronted by thousands of choices while editing the video. Each of them was influenced by contextual, artistic, symbolic, technical, ethical and academic concerns. Each was a subjective decision that is now inscribed in the final product. For instance, I have decided to keep the original sound track of the footages in order to respect as much as possible the ambiance of the music to which I was most of the time in relation with. I did not include any external audio devices.

In addition, I decided to construct the film in such a way that narration would not be necessary. It was important for me to allow the film to transmit messages on its own. This choice influenced many decisions since the selection of the original footage and the order in which they were juxtaposed had to produce the information I wanted to convey. In other words, the film had to be constructed in such a way that the audience would understand the information I wanted to transmit without using any form of narration. In my case, this was one of the biggest challenges for the process of editing. This choice influenced the final product since I had to incorporate images that were not absolutely

necessary for the content of the argument but essential for the audience to grasp the context and who the characters were.

Another important factor to acknowledge while in the process of editing a film is the importance of rhythm. There are different perspectives on how fast or slow a film's rhythm should be in order to keep the interest of the audience. However, it is important to keep in mind that a relatively constant rhythm stimulates the audience's attention and creates a sense of continuity. A constant rhythm reinforces the discourse developed in the video since it clarifies the argumentation and the given information in general. Therefore, the rhythm of the video acts as a metronome that needs to be followed in order to reinforce the message of the film.

I tried to keep a relatively moderate rhythm but it is not always constant throughout the film. In fact, I voluntarily chose to reduce the rhythm of the first part of the film since I wanted to accentuate the fact that the daily life of the members of the tumba francesa of Guantánamo is very slow compared to other daily rhythms. In fact, I visited them numerous times and I always felt the same slow impression. Despite the music that plays very loudly, it seems that nothing happens. Men play dominoes, women comb their hair and the whole neighborhood seems to be sleeping. It was important for me to accentuate this sense of inaction and I used the rhythm of the film in order to emphasize this atmosphere.

The way that a film is constructed can teach us about the intentions of the producer. In fact, editing is a whole process that gives meaning to footages. It is dedicated to the construction of a relevant and meaningful argumentation that makes sense both for the producer and the audience. The use of images in order to transmit a

message is very subtle and powerful at the same time since it gives a visual illustration to support the message transmitted by the producer. Often, the message is underlined and inscribed within the structure of the visual document in itself. Therefore, the audience actively analyses the structure, symbols and rhythms that were constructed in order to transmit and support a specific intention.

The final product

“State the Rhythm” is divided in five main parts. First, there is the introduction where Felicia Lafimen sings a song in Creole. This part gives the tone to the film in introducing the fact that there are Haitian descendants who speak and sing Creole in Cuba. The atmosphere is dark, calm and it is raining outside. This context gives a very different image of what one could expect from Cuba; there is no sun, nor beaches. One could understand that I wish to give another perspective of the Cuban case; a viewpoint that has been rarely showed and discussed.

The second part of the film is concerned with the visit of a few tourists to the tumba francesa of Guantánamo. As I have discussed before, the rhythm of this section is slower. The film shows the particular ambiance of the group and the neighborhood before the arrival of tourists and how they prepare for their performance. Outside of the house, a few members discuss about money and other family concerns. This scene highlights the fact that the tumba francesa is a social club for many members who have known each other for a long time. Then, the tourists arrive and the rhythm of the film gets faster. The men tidy up the dominoes’ table and the members prepare for the performance to take place. Even the music becomes more active and noisy. Tourists arrive in a car of the travel agency Havanatur. They enter in the headquarters and the spectacle begins. The film shows a short version of the spectacle which normally lasts for

about 22 minutes. An old woman passes the hat at the end of the performance and the tourists leave. It seems that inside of the house of the tumba francesa, everything is calmer as if the tourists had never came. The president asks what should be done with the tip that tourists gave and the members decide to keep it in a common account with the rest of the money that they had collected for a while. The president of the tumba francesa, Orlando Matos Fernandez, is interviewed regarding the tourist activity at the tumba. He explains that although many tourists come to visit them, they do not receive any money from the state or the travel agency. The money is given to cultural authorities and the members do not receive any wages for their work. The only way that they can get money is by collecting tips. As explained by the president of the tumba, state authorities prohibited this practice.

This part of the film shows how the state is involved in the development of the tourist industry and how at the same time it fights to limit its influence on cultural groups. This reaction creates frustrations for the members, who have the impression of working for nothing. On the other hand, the state believes that since the members of the tumba francesa naturally perform their culture, and that they are classified as a bearer group, they should not be paid for dancing in front of tourists. Here appears the conflict that exists between the revolutionary ideology and the interests of the members of cultural groups.

The second part ends up with daily life images taken from Guantánamo and giant signs on which quotes of Fidel Castro are inscribed: "Culture has to be saved first", "Art is a weapon for the Revolution", "Revolution is the daughter of culture and ideas". These quotes show how culture is embedded in the revolutionary design and how it is an important tool to reaffirm the Cuban identity and to strengthen the Revolution.

The third part of the film is dedicated to an informant named Aurora Pie who is the director of the Haitian descendant group called Lo Cosia in Guantánamo. Her group is under the supervision of the municipal department of culture (*casa de cultura*) since the beginning of its existence. She first suggests that the different groups of Haitian descendants are often in a state of confrontation between each other within the community. Some receive more state's attention, while others receive less. She shows that there are many divergences and disputes between the different groups. For instance, she says that Gran moun lontan has stolen two musicians and two dancers from her group. The group Gran moun lontan is not recognized by the state authorities and it does not receive any official attention. On the other hand, the film shows how this group is spectacular and alive during a ceremony performed in the middle of the night, in a closed down theater located in a poor neighborhood of Guantánamo. This part also illustrates the dilemmas that emerged between Aurora who defends what she believes to be her tradition, and the dance instructor who has been attached to the group by the municipal department of culture. Then, there is an exchange of opinions between Aurora and the dance instructor. Definitively, both do not share the same perspective about what should be done of the tradition.

The fourth part takes place in Santiago de Cuba and is mostly concerned with the relationship between the tumba francesa of Santiago and the municipal department of culture. The presidents of the tumba francesa, Andrea Quiala Venet and Flavio Figueroa Padilla, are interviewed and they explain how, despite the fact that they are under the supervision of the municipal department of culture, they are not totally under its control. This part clearly shows that members of cultural groups are not passive in front of the state's cultural interventions and that they resist it in different ways. This part also

outlines the involvement of the state in the carnival's organization. The members of the tumba of Santiago recognizes the fact that the state cultural authorities help them in giving a small salary and costumes in order to perform for the carnival. Again, the state is embedded in the cultural affairs at the level of the community. But the members do not passively accept state's interventions. They react to it, and resist what they do not agree with. It is interesting to notice the reaction of Flavio who, with affection, gives a sign to Andrea after she clearly identifies the municipal department of culture as the solicitor that they do not want to deal with. She explains that the municipal department of culture does not treat them well so they threat them accordingly. There is a strong complicity between the two presidents and it is interesting to observe how they try to denounce something that affects them without affirming it too directly. They know that they are saying something in front of the camera that they should not denounce the state so openly. Unfortunately, the film only gives a small portion of this complicity that was prevalent during the whole two hours' interview. But again, the process of choosing images among many others is part of editing.

The last part of "State the Rhythm" takes place in a small community that is totally dependent on the sugar industry called Argeo Martinez, which is located at approximately 15 minutes from Guantánamo. The tranquility of this place contrasts with the noise of the carnival and the city of Santiago de Cuba. It is a very different ambiance. The last part opens with images of houses that are in fact ancient slave barracks. These barracks have been transformed and people still live in them. Then we meet the colorful Hilda Simón Gómez who is a Haitian descendant. She is not part of a Haitian descendant group of Guantánamo, but she remembers very clearly celebrations of *gagá* and *motompolo* that took place in the community years ago, before the Revolution. These spontaneous cultural manifestations were taking place during the Holy Week and were

performed by Haitians from neighboring communities. Her memories are still very alive and she sings and dances right in front of the camera to illustrate her words. The film only shows one of her songs but she sang for more than one hour during the interview. It is interesting to point out that the camera has a stimulating effect on her and that she does not feel shy at all to express herself freely. The Haitian tradition is a very emotional topic for her and she became very sad at the end of the interview. She said it reminded her of her parents who have died. This part outlines the fact that even before the Revolution, the tradition of the Haitian descendant was alive. It suggests the idea that despite what some cultural representatives seem to think, the popular traditional culture is something that changes. Even without the support, technical help and funding of the state, the popular traditional culture exists. It is outside of state's control and it cannot be materialized.

The end of the film shows a sugarcane field filmed from the window of a bus. Superimposed on the image of the field is the very strong voice of a singer who is a member of the state's rejected group, *Gran moun lontan*. The sugarcanes are a very important symbol because they are the major economic source of revenue in the region. The development of the sugar industry in the island explains why there are Haitian descendants in the region today. As I have mentioned before, Haitians migrated at the beginning of the 20th century in order to work on the sugarcane fields. The Haitians descendants that still exist today in Cuba come from this wave of migration. Sugarcanes also symbolize the period of slavery that existed in Cuba. Even today, the underpaid sugarcane workers are seen as the lowest type of occupation and the work conditions are known to be very harsh. The lyrics of the songs depict the difficult conditions of working in the sugarcane fields. There is thus a strong link between the image of the sugarcane fields and the theme of the song. The closure is dedicated to the Haitian presence in the

island. I wanted to emphasize the richness of their history, tradition, and popular culture, in addition to demonstrate them my acknowledgement and respect.

Seen as a whole, “State the Rhythm” can be analyzed through diverse perspectives. Although many symbols shown in the film are clear to me, it is indeed the audience that has the last word on its content. I realize that my perspective and the one of the audience will never be the same. The production of this visual support has been an emotional process and the final product is the result of two years of intense work. I understand in detail the opinion of each character and above all, I know what I chose not to include in the film. In fact, the audience will never see the 23 hours of footage that I decided to eliminate from the final version.

The film and the written thesis are independent of each other at the same time that they complement each other. The film shows elements that the written document does not. There is definitively a type of intensity that is reached in visioning the film that will hardly exist in reading these lines. “State the Rhythm” is a visual product that is ethnographic –it concerns cultural issues that are observed through an anthropological lens-, observational –it has some link with what it represents-, artistic –it involves the aesthetics of juxtaposing chosen images- and subjective –it is a *personal*⁷⁰ production that involved a huge amount of questioning and decision making. As Asch & Asch point out, “Audiovisual records may provide valuable observations but they are not free of the personal and cultural biases of their creator” (1995:337). It is from that perspective that “State the Rhythm” has to be appreciated.

The film's afterlife

There are always details that have to be fixed when one is editing a film. The procedure of editing is indefinite. It seems that a visual text is over only when the producer decides that he or she is tired of the project and judges that the quality of the message that he or she wants to create is satisfying. I had to take this decision and I now have to assume the last version of the film. I have to admit that when I took the decision and watched the film again, as it was in its last version, I felt something that was very close to satisfaction and pride. The last version of the film illustrates what I wish to transmit to the audience. I believe that it is subtle and perspicacious. It is definitively not a “fast-food” type of film since the audience has to work in order to capture its essence. I assume entirely the final version of “State the Rhythm” and I would not have any difficulty to defend each section, word and image.

It has been a fear for me to imagine the critics that I could receive in showing the film to a general audience. A film is public, and it is well known that it has the potential of reaching many people. I am conscious that my film is going to be viewed more than the written Master thesis will be read. I have to accept that some people will like it and others will not. But I recognized now that the most important is that I can assume its entirety and its integrity. From an ethical perspective, I am comfortable with the relations that I had with the informants and I believe that the film has been produced in a context in which I prioritized respectful and non-oppressive exchanges.

However, because of the context in which the informants live, I am obliged to hope that they will not have the occasion to watch this film. They live in small communities and some of their opinions presented in the film, if seen publicly, could cause conflicts between members of different groups and between members and cultural representatives.

I may be wrong, but I believe that this film could fuel already existing dilemmas within the community since everybody can see and hear what the others think and criticize without having the possibility to defend each other's point of view. However, I provided them with the footages that I filmed on each of them and I hope that one day, or another, they will understand my choice.

“State the Rhythm” is a visual text that has been filmed during the summer of 2002 and which illustrates a part of the research developed in this written thesis. Without using direct theoretical concepts and anthropological notions, the film teaches us about cultural politics, tradition, cultural manifestations, identity and “Cuban culture” from an applied perspective. The richness of filmmaking (or videomaking) resides in the fact that such concepts present in a film are illustrated, applied and contextualized in a meaningful and audio-visual way. They are not taken out of the film as such but part of its whole essence that has been manipulated and constructed in order to convey a certain type of information.

It is now time to push play and to discuss what all this means for the audience...

CONCLUSION

Because of systematic changes brought by Fidel Castro within the Cuban society in general, the Revolution has been labeled, since 1959, as “cultural”. A newspaper in support of the revolutionary project published less than one year after the famous entrance of Fidel and its guerilla group in La Habana, an article in which we can read that the cultural development of the population is embedded in the essence of the Revolution:

estamos en presencia de un proceso de actos de cultura, de desarrollo cultural, de popularización de la cultura que cada día se propone algo y cada día algo realiza... que van de lo musical a lo artesano, teatro popular y de masas, cultivo espiritual de los niños de pueblo, etc.⁷¹ (Muñoz 1959:n.d.).

The journalist also states that “Ese propósito general y esas actividades concretas en que se realiza, indican que está comenzado la revolución cultural⁷²” (Muñoz 1959:n.d.). Since its beginning, the Cuban Revolution has been depicted by the general discourse as the process that will lead to systematic cultural transformations –in the broad sense. Archives, discourses and reports of assemblies show that culture always has been a priority to the Cuban Revolutionary State. Efforts have been dedicated to the creation of a “new Cuban man”, a citizen that would support the socialist revolutionary scheme of the new regime (the creation of a “new man” was also at the base of the Soviet Union’s nationalist policies of the 1920s (Smith 1990)).

From the 1960s up to the end of the 1980s, Cuba has been able to develop solid and advantageous economic relationships with the Soviet Union. In the context of political division brought by the Cold War, Cuba has been barred from the American economic market. Up to the end of the 1980s with the help of the Soviet camp, Cuba managed to satisfy most of the population’s needs and to create a system entirely based on public services despite the economic blockade. It is well known that Cuba has

increased the level of literacy, quality of life and life expectancy in the island. The revolutionary regime also helped and supported other revolutions that had a socialist character in many parts of the world such as in Nicaragua and Angola. The socialist ideology of the regime always has been at the source of policies and projects developed by the Cuban State. During this period, cultural policies were directed towards the strengthening of the socialist and revolutionary regime.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, new economic and political situations have pushed the Cuban State to look for the development of alternative markets and industries. This drastic reorientation engendered an economic crisis within the Cuban population, generally referred to as the "Special Period". To counteract such a crisis principally based on the decrease of the exportation of sugar, the Cuban State decided to develop the tourist industry and to open its borders to foreign investments. This major decision conflicted with many principles and values previously praised and promoted by the revolutionary socialist regime. Transformations within the system were brought under order to facilitate the entry of foreign currency and investment within the island.

Although the regime flirts with the idea of promoting the Cuban market to foreign investors, this opening is still very limited. The regime tries to keep control of foreign investments and limits the effects of private interests on the social gains that have been obtained since the beginning of the Revolution. On the other hand, the opening of the Cuban market to capitalist interests, while small, has fostered social transformations within the Cuban population. In fact, dollars became a necessity and only a portion of the population has access to this rare commodity. Stratification has appeared between those who possess dollars and those who do not within a society that has struggled for socialist and egalitarian values since the early 1960s. Even people who firmly support the

Revolution are constrained to question the new reality of the Cuban society and this is what the current cultural policies aim to counteract. Cultural policies are these days not just concentrated on the maintenance and strengthening of the socialist regime, but also on re-inventing the Revolution, as it was before the state opened its borders to capitalist interests.

Today, efforts are put forward by Cuban authorities in order to counter various internal and external phenomena threatening the hegemony of the state and the revolutionary socialist regime. Once again, culture is one of the tools used by the state bodies in order to counteract perceived threats to the power of the state. In an interview conducted in February 2002, Abel Prieto, the current Minister of Culture, reminds the words of Fidel Castro “Sin cultura no hay libertad posible⁷³” (Tabares 2002:24). During the same interview, Prieto also mentions a quote from the hero José Martí, “Ser culto es el único modo de ser libre⁷⁴” (Tabares 2002:24). Prieto qualifies these two quotes as key sentences of the Cuban cultural policies. References to words pronounced by the head of the state and by the 19th century hero of independence illustrates how today, cultural policies and the general cultural management is fundamentally based on revolutionary principles. In other words, the current ideology behind the management of culture in Cuba is in direct connivance with the ideology of the state and its representatives. In addition, it shows that culture has to serve revolutionary roles since it is the only way to achieve freedom.

The promotion of a revolutionary national culture is very important for the state in order to strengthen its socialist character and to justify certain of its policies. Different media (all owned by the state), discourses and activities aim at feeding a sense of revolution, struggle and independence. We have seen that national cultures are

constructed and materialized entities that serve the purpose of the “nation-state”. As Featherstone explains, “National cultures have usually emerged alongside state formation processes in which cultural specialists have reinvented traditions and reshaped and refurbished the ethnic core of the people” (1995:80). It is important to remember that this quote does not only apply to Cuba, but to most “nation-states” in our contemporary world. Cultural politics are also commonly implemented by many states in order to manage cultural manifestations, heritage and production (as shown by numerous reports on cultural policies funded by the UNESCO). Cultural policies should also be questioned in other countries than in Cuba.

Cultural policies have been implemented at all levels of the Cuban society. As I have shown in previous chapters, the state has been able to develop local official bodies that attempt to integrate cultural policies within the popular culture at the level of the community. Local bodies in charge of such an integration are usually the *casas de cultura* and other cultural departments such as the *Foco Cultural* in Santiago de Cuba. There are art instructors who work in these cultural departments and who are in direct contact with the cultural groups. This thesis has been restricted to an analysis of cultural groups classified as popular and traditional. But it is important to mention that the *casas de cultura* and other cultural departments deal with other forms of “culture”, such as professional artists and amateur children.

In Cuba, all the groups that are classified as traditional have to be under the supervision and control of a municipal department of culture, a *casa de cultura* or an organization that is officially recognized by the state. In Guantánamo, technical and artistic help are provided to the traditional groups that are under the supervision of the *casa de cultura*. This means that the traditional groups are attached to a dance instructor.

This person acts as a cultural guardian who makes sure that the traditional culture is conserved and maintained. From what I observed, the role of the dance instructor and his or her vision of what is “the” authentic tradition, may create conflicts with members of popular groups. Cultural bodies at the level of the community possess a static vision of tradition and this may conflict with the desire of certain members to transform, maintain or adapt their performances. Cultural organs possess an idea of what tradition should consist of and the state promotes its stability and authenticity in order to solidify and confirm the expected image of what is composed the Cuban culture.

The revolutionary regime provides traditional groups with rehearsal rooms, costumes and supervision. To follow its project of cultural democratization, the state also allows cultural groups to travel and visit other cities so they can perform in front of Cubans. There is a very complex, subtle and effective system of cultural management at all levels of the country. This system aims at integrating cultural performers within the struggle for the Revolution. In having the popular culture on its side, the state insures that it can use it to fight against perceived internal and/or external threats. Since the event of Elian González, the state uses traditional popular groups to rally the population. Indeed, the state provides traditional groups with means and supervision but this management has the purpose of insuring the loyalty of the popular culture to the state’s system and ideology.

Carnivals are cultural manifestations manipulated by state authorities in order to strengthen the Cuban fervor for their national identity. Today, carnivals are also tourist events in the main cities of Cuba such as in Santiago and La Habana. Most cultural groups participate in celebrations in order to compete with each other. Carnivals are perfect events for the promotion of cultural tourism since members of popular groups

parade with costumes and music in an atmosphere of entertainment and celebrations. The increase of tourism in such events does not contradict the idea that carnivals are nation-builders (Manning 1978; Cohen 1998; Bossen 2000). This idea strongly applies to the Cuban case since the state is the sole promoter of the event.

There is a “dialogical” relationship between how the state depicts culture and how it is experienced by members of traditional groups. The state possesses a theoretical conception of culture based on official research while members hold a practical perspective of what their tradition should consist of. The system of classification imposed by the state and types of regulations assuring authenticity are based on a “scientific” definition of tradition and descriptive studies produced by social researchers. On the other hand, members of traditional groups learned how to dance and sing their tradition from their parents and from the community that surrounds them. Both perspectives are most of the time exclusive since state representatives are not performers and members do not generally develop a theoretical understanding of their own cultural practices. This ethnography of cultural policies was concerned with this perpetual dialogue: member’s resistance and state interventions.

The film “State the Rhythm” illustrates this dialogue as it accentuates the fact that members of traditional popular groups are not passive recipients in face of cultural policies. They have different ways to cope with state’s interventions. They are also able to take what they need from the cultural authorities and reject some policies that they do not feel comfortable with.

Culture enables the Cuban State to maintain stability but since the partial opening of national borders to foreign investments we could claim that the Cuban national culture

is more recently used to re-invent and re-create the system of the past. With the accentuation of social and racial disparities caused by new economic policies, the purist character of the socialist revolution has been blackened. In addition to serving as an agent of political stability, culture is now re-inventing the socialist system “as it was before” in order to maintain the systemic authority of the regime. References to Fidel, Martí, *Che* and other heroes of the past aim at reinstalling this essence of Revolution and socialism that has been partially lost since the beginning of the 1990s. But how long will “culture” be able to maintain an ideology that does not any longer reflect the Cuban reality?

ENDNOTES

¹ *La Period Especial*. Expression found in a speech by Fidel Castro and published in the newspaper *Granma*, in October 1992.

² Art is a weapon for the Revolution.

³ Culture has to be saved first

⁴ As would suggest another Castro quote, “Dentro de la Revolución: todo; contra la Revolución ningún derecho” (1977; Within the Revolution: everything; against the Revolution: no rights), cultural manifestations have to follow the revolutionary ideology.

⁵ *Baile de salon* refers to dances that are suited for performance in a room. This label comes from the fact that the slave masters were dancing in the *salon*, the living room. It is a more prestigious type of dance than the ones that are performed in streets. Because of this, the *tumba francesa* does not perform during the carnival. The *tahona* is an adaptation of the *tumba*. It is therefore dedicated to parade an adaptation of the dances of the *tumba*, in the streets, during the carnival.

⁶ For instances, see the 45 country-studies and documents on cultural policies funded by UNESCO and published in the 1970s and 1980s.

⁷ The article does not mention when this Festival was held. According to me, that “omission” gives the impression to the reader that Cuba is constantly moving to the Afro-Cuban rhythm under the hot sun of the Caribbean. The tourist will be submerged in a perpetual context of festivities and “regressive behaviors”.

⁸ “Pour eux, les danses yorubas conservent leur caractère religieux. Pour d’autres, elles occupent une place fondamentale dans l’identité culturelle cubaine”.

⁹ Art is a weapon for the Revolution / A product of the combative moral of our people / An instrument against the invasion of the enemy.

¹⁰ The struggles for independence of our people reinforce the unique character of our national culture, which is also able to integrate foreign cultural aspects.

¹¹ ... inspired by the radical revolutionary thoughts of the leaders of the independence movement. It also has to integrate the anti-Americanism character borrowed from the best reformists of the last century.

¹² ... serve us as a shield against the ideological confrontations of the North American imperialism.

¹³ ... the project is not worthwhile without the conscious participation of the people into the process of elaborating cultural policies.

¹⁴ We need it to help the Revolution.

¹⁵ The tradition of the Cuban nation and the unity of the country necessarily reflect the Revolution and Fidel.

¹⁶ ... a new step began: saving our traditional culture.

-
- ¹⁷ Words to the intellectuals.
- ¹⁸ Within the Revolution: everything; against the Revolution: no rights.
- ¹⁹ We always appreciate your creation when it is through the prism of the revolutionary crystal.
- ²⁰ Ideological, moral, political and revolutionary authority that Fidel exercises over us.
- ²¹ The *Poder Popular* is a form of decentralized government that meets in provincial and national popular assemblies. In this case, the members are elected at the municipal level. Although the only recognized political party is the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), these assemblies are constituted of elected municipal representatives.
- ²² ... open forums, instructive and informative round tables, classes offered by the University for Everyone, work realized by the educative television, resurrection of the municipal departments of culture which nowadays own television sets and VCRs in order to diffuse audiovisual texts, expansion of libraries and museums, elaboration of preventive social programs and formation of social workers and art instructors.
- ²³ ... save cultural traditions and artistic values of the communities.
- ²⁴ An indirect evidence is that I participated to the Carnival of Santiago de Cuba during the summer 2002 with a group called La tahona.
- ²⁵ Guillermo Artiles Fernández is the vice-president of the National Council of the *casas de cultura*. The interview was conducted in his office in La Habana.
- ²⁶ ... culture is the only thing that has to be saved.
- ²⁷ ... capitalism in its own field.
- ²⁸ There are cultural accomplishments that we have to defend if we do not want to suffer the transition (or regression) towards capitalism.
- ²⁹ A terrible problem that we are suffering from is the aggression towards our national identities, a merciless aggression to our cultures, as never occurred in the history; the tendency towards a universal monoculture.
- ³⁰ It does not refer to a world that would combine the wealth and culture of many countries but of a world scale system that fundamentally destroys culture, a globalization that inexorably destroys culture.
- ³¹ ... multiplication of our unremitting efforts in the campaign of education and culture...
- ³² The threat of a military aggression of the American imperialism against Cuba is not a speculation; it exists since the beginning of the revolutionary process.
- ³³ Cultural political protests.
- ³⁴ ... The essential and impressive role of culture and the Cuban artists who joined the population during the struggle for the liberation of the boy Elián González created a mass scale movement that provoked an unprecedented turnaround in American public opinion in regard to Cuba.

-
- ³⁵ Art is a weapon for the Revolution / A product of the combative moral of our people / An instrument against the invasion of the enemy.
- ³⁶ ... extinguish the Cuban nation.
- ³⁷ ... assure the authenticity and the accurate representation of the image of our culture in the works destined to tourism.
- ³⁸ ... distorted appreciation of our cultural identity if the image offered to tourists is not authentic.
- ³⁹ ... cultural identity is an enormous element of revolutionary potential.
- ⁴⁰ The *casas de cultura* have a very important role at the regional level in planning events and supervising cultural groups. Ironically, Cubans simply refer to this institution as "*cultura*".
- ⁴¹ Artex is an enterprise owned by the state, which designs and produces objects and souvenirs for the tourist industry
- ⁴² In Cuba, all of them were referred to as *francés*.
- ⁴³ *Cabildos* were a form of brotherhood during the Spanish colonial time.
- ⁴⁴ This expression refers to a Brotherhood or a society of mutual aid.
- ⁴⁵ In January 1887, when the General Governor ordered that every *cabildo* had to be registered under the Law of Association, they all changed their names
- ⁴⁶ Term to refer to slaves and freed men who revolted against the Spanish colonialism. It is also associated to the term *maroon*.
- ⁴⁷ ...during the neocolonial or the republic era, certain groups established in urban areas constituted the societies of mutual aid.
- ⁴⁸ The illegal games were imposed on all the social groups, and the tumba francesa was not an exception. This affected the normal development of its dances, celebrations and also its activities
- ⁴⁹ ... efforts were made in order to recruit new members and reincorporate old ones
- ⁵⁰ The *gagá* and the *motompolo* were also performed in other villages located in the countryside of the eastern provinces.
- ⁵¹ The *Poder Popular* is a form of government at different national levels. The representatives are elected every 4 years. The CDR is the local organ of the Communist party. It refers to the Committee for the Defense of the Revolution.
- ⁵² ... of popular, patriotic and anti-imperialist roots.
- ⁵³ ... from which it is possible to study and preserve numerous socio-historical, ethno-cultural, material and artistic factors of diverse nature. This is why its research and systematic attention has to be prioritized with the coordination of the National Folkloric Dance Commission and the Research and Development Center for the Cuban Music.

⁵⁴ In fact, there exist independent groups in Cuba that are mostly concerned with Human Rights issues. However, they are subjected to harassment and severe repression from the part of state authorities.

⁵⁵ Since the economic crisis of the 1990's, state funding to traditional groups and culture in general has relatively decreased. However, Lo Cosia is still advantaged in comparison to Gran moun Iontan.

⁵⁶ I conducted the interview with the director of Lo Cosia the 5th of June 2002 at her home in Guantanamo. The 26th of June 2002, I met the president of the tumba francesa of Guantanamo at the headquarters of the group for an interview.

⁵⁷ I met Josefa Noble Robles at the *casa de cultura* of Sagua de Tánamo, the 7th of August 2002. She was miraculously in visit to Sagua. It was impossible for me to go to Bejuco, where is located the third tumba francesa because there was no available transportation at that time.

⁵⁸ During the Spanish colonial time, members of *cabildo* also had to pay minimal fees to a common account. This money was used to help members in need or to give gifts for their birthday. This is the essence of a brotherhood: to help members who are in need.

⁵⁹ I use the term carnival instead of festival in this context because they refer to two different types of festivities in Cuba. A festival is not a competition and is not particularly limited to groups of a delimited community. Carnivals are held in every city annually. Groups within a community perform in parades to show their ability. It is a competition. There are festivals in Cuba such as the annual *Festival del Caribe* hold in Santiago de Cuba, but since I have to restrict my analysis I decided to concentrate on Carnivals.

⁶⁰ ... can produce, in promoting and commercializing culture, an absolute reversal of the activity, generating expenses and creating revenues.

⁶¹ I have been unable to find out why these packages became less popular. During an interview, Ernesto Chacón Domínguez, the commercial agent of Artex in Guantánamo, told me that he also ignored why there was such a decrease of visitors.

⁶² ... and other institutions has to be exclusively devoted for the cultural enrichment of the population and in any case, as an intermediary for the international tourism.

⁶³ The prostitutes in Cuba are called *jinetera*. The expression "*jinetero*" is also attributed to Cubans who aim to get money from tourists by diverse ways. A *jinetero intelectual* is someone who transmits cultural knowledge of diverse kinds to foreign visitors in exchange of dollars.

⁶⁴ As much as the carnival of before reflects misery and economic dependence, as much as today, it mirrors the socialist distribution of goods, coming from the daily efforts of the workers who believe in the future that they construct.

⁶⁵ Star of the Carnival

⁶⁶ University for everyone

⁶⁷ Refer to groups of dance and music that parade during the Carnival of Santiago de Cuba.

⁶⁸ Members have to pay for the shoes but the price is quite low (USD\$0,70).

⁶⁹ The book that I used as a reference was written by Richard Schrand and is called "The Complete Reference: Final Cut Pro 3" (2002). There are also many other references to the program Final Cut Pro available on the market.

⁷⁰ In this context, *personal* refers to a particular individual and cultural background.

⁷¹ ... we are in presence of a process of cultural character, cultural development and democratization of culture. This process grows and becomes more concretized everyday. It includes music, craft industry, theater for the masses as it also comprises the spiritual development of children in the countryside, etc.

⁷² The general purpose of the project and concrete activities that are put in place, show that the Cultural Revolution has begun.

⁷³ Without culture, freedom is impossible.

⁷⁴ Being cultivated is the only way to be free.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ACOSTA, Dalia
 1998 "Development-Cuba: Tourism, the Industry of Next Century".
<http://www.oneworld.net/ips2/jan98/cuba.html>
- ALÉN Rodríguez, Olavo
 1977 "Las sociedades de tumba francesa en Cuba". *Santiago* 25:193-209.
- 1991 "The Tumba Francesa Societies and their Music" in *Essays on Cuban Music*. Edited by Peter MANUEL. Lanham: University Press of America.
- 1994 "The Afro-French Settlement and the Legacy of Its Music to the Cuban People". In *Music and Black Ethnicity: The Caribbean and South America*. Edited By Gérard H. BÉHAGUE. Miami: North-South Center Press.
- 1995 "Rhythm as Duration of Sounds in *Tumba Francesa*". *Ethnomusicology*. 39(1):55-71.
- AMIT-TALAI, Vered
 1997 "In Pursuit of Authenticity: Globalization and Nation Building in the Cayman Islands". *Anthropologica* 34:53-63.
- ANDERSON, Benedict
 1983 *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.
- APPADURAI, Arjun
 1972 "Putting Hierarchy in its Place". In *Rereading Cultural Anthropology*. Edited by George E. MARCUS. Durham: Duke University Press.
- 1990 "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy". In *Global Culture: Nationalism, globalization and modernity*. Edited by Mike FEATHERSTONE. London: SAGE Publications, p. 295-310.
- 1996 *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota.
- ASCH, Timothy & Patsy ASCH
 1995 "Film in Ethnographic Research". In *Principles of Visual Anthropology*. Edited by Paul HOCKINGS. New York: Mouton de Gruyter, p. 335-360.

- BÁEZ, Luis
1983 *Cambiar las reglas del juego*. Interview with Armando Hart Dávalos. La Habana: Editorial letras cubanas.
- BANDY, Joe
1996 "Managing the Other of Nature: Sustainability, Spectacle, and Global Regimes of Capital in Ecotourism". *Public Culture* 8:539-566.
- BARBASH, Ilisa & Lucien TAYLOR
1996 *Cross-Cultural Filmmaking*. Berkeley : University of California Press.
- BELL LARA, José
1999 "Cuba into the Twenty First Century". In *Cuba in the 1990s*. Edited by José BELL LARA. La Habana: Editorial José Martí.
- BOUDREAULT-FOURNIER, Alexandrine
2003 "A Life's Struggle: Politics of Consumption in a Socialist Country". Forthcoming.
- BOSSEN, Claus
2000 "Festival Mania, Tourism and Nation Building in Fiji: The Case of the Hibiscus Festival, 1965-1970". *The Contemporary Pacific* 12(1):123-154.
- BRADFORD, Gigi
2000 "Introduction". In *The Politics of Culture: Policy Perspectives for Individuals, Institutions, and Communities*. Edited by Gigi BRADFORD, Michel GARY & Glenn WALLACH. New York: The New York Press, p. 11-14.
- BUNCK, Julie Marie
1994 *Fidel Castro and the Quest for a Revolutionary Culture in Cuba*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- CARPENTIER, Alejo
1946 *La musica en Cuba*. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Economica.
- CASTRO, Fidel
1977 "Palabras a los intelectuales". In *Política cultural de la Revolución cubana*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, p. 5-47.
- COHEN, E.
1998 "'this is de test': festival and the cultural politics of nation building in the British Virgin Islands". *American Ethnologist* 25(2):189-214.

- CRAIK, Jennifer
1997 "The Culture of Tourism". In *Touring Cultures*. Edited by Chris ROJEK and John URRY. New York: Routledge, p. 113-136.
- CRANE, Diana
1992 *The Production of Culture*. London: SAGE Publications.
- CROMPTON & McKAY
1997 "Motives of Visitors Attending Festival Events". *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(2):425-439.
- DEBIEN, Gabriel
1974 *Les esclaves aux antilles françaises, XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles*. Basse Terre: Société d'histoire de la Guadeloupe.
- DE LA HOZ, Pedro
2000 "Para que el hombre y la mujer crezcan por dentro: Actualidad y perspectiva del trabajo sociocultural comunitario". *Granma* (La Habana), 10 de diciembre, p. 6.
- Dirección de Cultura Masiva, Ministerio de la Cultura
1982 "Antecedentes de la cultura popular masiva; Cuba: 1902-1978". In *La cultura en Cuba socialista*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, p.63-89.
- DOMÍNGUEZ, Jorge I.
1994 "Leadership Strategies and Mass Support: Cuban politics before and after the 1991 Communist Party Congress". In *Cuba at a Crossroads*. Edited by Jorge F. PÉREZ-LÓPEZ. Orlando: University Press of Florida, p.1-18.
- DOMINGUEZ, Virginia R.
2000 "Invoking Culture: The Messy Side of 'Cultural Politics'". In *The Politics of Culture: Policy Perspectives for Individuals, Institutions, and Communities*. Edited by Gigi BRADFORD, Michel GARY & Glenn WALLACH. New York: The New York Press, p.20-37.
- DUSSAULT, Gabriel
1992 "Politique culturelle ou politique artistique? (ou: Faut-il appeler un chat un chat?). In *Pouvoirs publics et politiques culturelles: enjeux nationaux*. Montréal: École des Hautes Études Commerciales de Montréal, p.67-64.

- ELI RODRÍGUEZ, Victoria et al.
 1997 *Instrumentos de la música folclórico-popular de Cuba*. Volume 1. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.
- ERICKSON, Paul, A.
 1998 *A History of Anthropological Theory*. Ontario: Broadview Press.
- FAGEN, Richard R.
 1969 *The Transformation of Political Culture in Cuba*. California: Stanford University Press.
- FEATHERSTONE, Mike
 1990 "Global Culture: An Introduction". In *Global Culture: Nationalism, globalization and modernity*. Edited by Mike FEATHERSTONE. London: SAGE Publications, p. 1-14.
- 1995 *Undoing Culture: Globalization, Postmodernism and Identity*. London: SAGE Publications.
- FERNÁNDEZ RETAMAROL, Roberto
 1998 "Cultura es, para nosotros, el rostro coherente unitario, de una sociedad". *Documento Cultura y Sociedad*. Plenario del Congreso 7 de la UNEAC. *Granma* (La Habana), 7 de noviembre.
- FORTIER, André
 1992 "Le pouvoir fédéral –des actions culturelles dont la somme forme peut-être une politique". In *Pouvoirs publics et politiques culturelles: enjeux nationaux*. Montréal: École des Hautes Études Commerciales de Montréal, p.97-108.
- FRIEDMAN, Jonathan
 1990 "Being in the World: Globalization and Localization". In *Global Culture: Nationalism, globalization and modernity*. Edited by Mike FEATHERSTONE. London: SAGE Publications, p. 311-328.
- 1997 "Global Crises, The Struggle for Cultural identity and Intellectual Porkbrelling: Cosmolitans versus Locals, Ethnic and Nationals in an Era of De-Hegemonisation". In *Debating Cultural Hybridity*. Edited by Pnina WERBER & Modood TARIQ. London: Zeb Books, p. 70-89.
- GALL, Emmanuelle
 1989 "Danse avec l'Afrique, la culture du métissage". *îles* 77:56-59.

- GARCÍA CANCLINI, Néstor
2000 "Cultural Policy Options in the Context of Globalization". In *The Politics of Culture: Policy Perspectives for Individuals, Institutions, and Communities*. Edited by Gigi BRADFORD, Michel GARY & Glenn WALLACH. New York: The New York Press, p.302-326.
- GUERRA, Ramiro
1971 *Manual de Historia de Cuba*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.
- GUEVARA, Ernesto Che
1988 *El socialismo y el hombre en Cuba*. La Habana: Editorial Política.
- GRENNWOOD, Davyd J.
1989 "Culture by the Pound: An Anthropological Perspective on Tourism as Cultural Commoditization". In *Hosts and Guests*. Edited by SMITH, Valene L. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, p.171-186.
- HANDLER, Richard
1988 *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. London: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- HALL, Gwendolyn M.
1971 *Social Control in Slave Plantation Societies*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press
- HALL, Stuart
1996 "The Question of Cultural Identity". In *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies*. Edited by Stuart HALL, David HELD et al. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers, p.595-634.
- HANNERZ, Ulf
1990 "Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture". In *Global Culture: Nationalism, globalization and modernity*. Edited by Mike FEATHERSTONE. London: SAGE Publications, p. 237-252.
- 1992 *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of meanings*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- HART DÁVALOS, Armando
1978 *Del trabajo cultural: Selección de discursos de Armando Hart Dávalos*. La Habana: Ediciones Políticas.

- 1988 *Defender la Cultura Cubana es defender a la Revolución*. Dirección de Divulgación, Ministerio de Cultura, La Habana.
- 1989 El Ministerio de Cultura ante el reto de un más amplio desarrollo cultural de Armando Hart Davalos. Dirección de Información, Ministerio de Cultura, La Habana.
- 1991 “Intervención de Armando Hart”, La Habana. Palacio de las convenciones, IX Congreso Internacional y asamblea general de la asociación mundial para la formación profesional túristica”.
- 2001 *Ética, Cultura y Política*. La Habana: Centro de Estudios Martianos.
- n.d. *Cultura e Identidad Nacional*. La Habana: Dirección de Información, Ministerio de Cultura.
- HOBBSAWN, Eric & Terence RANGER
1983 *The Invention of Tradition*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- HOWARD, Philip A.
1998 *Changing History: Afro-Cuban Cabildos and Societies of Color in the Nineteenth Century*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- Institute of Jamaica
1977 *Cultural Policy in Jamaica*. Studies and documents on cultural policies. Spain: UNESCO.
- KEESING, Roger M.
1989 “Creating the Past: Custom and Identity in the Contemporary Pacific. In *The Contemporary Pacific*, Vol. 1(1 & 2), Spring & Fall: 19-42.
- KIRSHENBLATT-GIMBLET, Barbara
1998 *Destination culture: tourism, museums, and heritage*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- KNIGHT, Franklin W.
1970 *Slave Society in Cuba during the nineteenth century*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- 1997 *General History of the Caribbean*. Volume III: The slave societies of the Caribbean. Edited by Franklin W. Knight. London: UNESCO Publishing.

- KURIN, Richard
2000 "The New Study and Curation of Culture". In *The Politics of Culture: Policy Perspectives for Individuals, Institutions, and Communities*. Edited by Gigi BRADFORD, Michel GARY & Glenn WALLACH. New York: The New York Press, p.338-356.
- LEÓN, Argeliers
1982 "El folklore: su estudio y recuperación". In *La cultura en Cuba socialista*. La Habana: Editorial Letras Cubanas, p.182-193.
- LEWIS, Justin
2000 "Designing a Cultural Policy". In *The Politics of Culture: Policy Perspectives for Individuals, Institutions, and Communities*. Edited by Gigi BRADFORD, Michel GARY & Glenn WALLACH. New York: The New York Press, p.79-93.
- MacCANNELL, D.
1973 "Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings". *American Journal of Sociology* 79:3:589-603.
- 1989 *The Tourist*. London: MacMillan.
- MacDOUGALL, David
1995 "Beyond Observational Cinema". In *Principles of Visual Anthropology*. Edited by Paul HOCKINGS. The Hague: Mouton.
- MANNING, Frank E.
1978 "Carnival in Antigua (Caribbean Sea): An Indigenous Festival in a Tourist Industry". *Anthropos* 73(1-2):191-204.
- MARTINEZ Gordo, Isabel
1999 "La vie du créole Haïtien à Cuba". *Études créoles* 2:77-82.
- MEAD, Margaret
1995 "Visual Anthropology in a Discipline of Words". In *Principles of Visual Anthropology*. Edited by Paul HOCKINGS. The Hague: Mouton.
- MESA-LAGO, Carmelo
1995 "Prospective Dollar Remittances and the Cuban Economy". In *Cuba in the International System: Normalization and Integration*. Edited by Archibald R.M. RITTER & John M. KIRK. London: Macmillian Press Ltd. p. 36-57.

MILLET, José & Rafael BREA

1989 *Grupos Folklóricos de Santiago de Cuba*. Santiago de Cuba: Editorial Oriente.

Ministerio de Cultura

1988 *Lineamientos, Funciones principales y Principios organizativos básicos para el perfeccionamiento y desarrollo del trabajo en el sistema de casas de cultura*. Centro Nacional de Aficionados y Casas de Cultura.

MOORE, Sally F. & Barbara G. MYERHOFF

1977 "Secular Ritual: Forms and Meanings" in *Secular Ritual*. Edited by Sally F. Moore and Barbara G. Myerhoff. Assen/Amsterdam: Van Gorcum.

MUÑOZ, Honorio

1959 "La Revolución cultural ha comenzado". In *Hoy*. La Habana. 21st of October.

ORTIZ, Fernando

1947 *Cuban Counterpoint*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

PÉREZ Jr., Louis A.

1999 *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

PETRO, Alex

1996 "Remarques sur la musique des *tumbas francesas* de Cuba" in *Créoles de la Caraïbe*. Edited by Alain YACOU. Paris: Karthala-CERC.

PINK, Sarah

2001 *Doing Visual Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications.

PRIETO, Abel

2002 "Rambo y Bush y su imperio pertenecen al pasado". Tabloid especial #21.

RIVAS RODRIGUEZ, Jorge

2000 "Buscar maneras atractivas de educar y elevar el nivel cultural de la sociedad". III Encuentro nacional de directores municipales de Cultura. *Trabajadores*, 18 de septiembre, p.9.

2001 "Integración como estrategia". VI Encuentro de Directores de Cultura. *Trabajadores*, 7 de mayo, La Habana.

- SARUSKI, Jaime & Gerardo MOSQUERA
 1979 *The Cultural Policy of Cuba. Studies and documents on cultural policies.*
 France: UNESCO.
- SILVER, Ira
 1993 "Marketing Authenticity in Third World Countries". *Annals of Tourism Research* 20(2):302-318).
- SMITH, Anthony D.
 1990 "Towards a Global Culture?" In *Global Culture: Nationalism, globalization and modernity*. Edited by Mike FEATHERSTONE. London: SAGE Publications, p. 171-192.
- SMITH, Valene L.
 1989 *Hosts and Guests*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- STRONZA, Amanda
 2001 "Anthropology of Tourism: Forging New Grounds for Ecotourism and Other Alternatives". *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30(1):261-283.
- TABARES, Sahily
 2002 "No se puede dirigir la cultura simplificando". Interview with Abel PRIETO. In *Bohemia*. 8th of February, 94(3):24-29.
- TAMAMES, Elisa
 1955 "Folklore cubano: La poesia en la tumba francesa". Tesis de grado. Universidad de la Habana.
- 1961 "Antecedentes sociologicos des las tumbas francesas". *Actas del Folklore* 1(10-12):25-32. (Capitulo II de la tesis).
- TILLEY, Christopher
 1997 "Performing Culture in the Global Village". *Critique of Anthropology* 17(1):67-89.
- TOURAINE, Alain
 1990 "The Idea of Revolution". In *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*. Edited by Mike FEATHERSTONE. London: SAGE Publications, p.121-141.

TURNER, Victor W.

- 1977 "Variations on a Theme of Liminality" in *Secular Ritual*. Edited by Sally F. MOORE and Barbara G. MYERHOFF. Assen/Amsterdam: Van Gorcum.

UNESCO

- 1978 *Declaration of Bogotá*. Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean. Bogotá, 10-20 January 1978.
http://www.unesco.org/culture/laws/bogota/html_eng/page1.shtml
- 1982 *Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies*. World Conference on Cultural Policies Mexico City, 26th July – 6 August 1982.
http://www.unesco.org/culture/laws/mexico/html_eng/page1.shtml
- 1989 Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore adopted by the General Conference at its twenty-fifth session. Paris, 15 November 1989.
http://www.unesco.org/culture/laws/paris/html_eng/page1.shtml
- 1999 Protection of Folklore. UNESCO/WIPO Regional Consultation on the Protection of Expressions of Folklore in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Quito, 14-16 June 1999.
http://www.unesco.org/culture/copyright/folklore/html_eng/quito.shtml

VERGÉS, MARTÍNEZ, Orlando

- 1998 "Rasgos significativos de la Cultura Popular Tradicional cubana". *Del Caribe* 27:30-33.

WALLACH, Glenn

- 2000 "Introduction". In *The Politics of Culture: Policy Perspectives for Individuals, Institutions, and Communities*. Edited by Gigi BRADFORD, Michel GARY & Glenn WALLACH. New York: The New York Press, p.1-14.

WHISNANT, David E.

- 1991 "Sandinista Cultural Policy". In *The Politics of Culture*. Edited by Brett WILLIAMS. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.

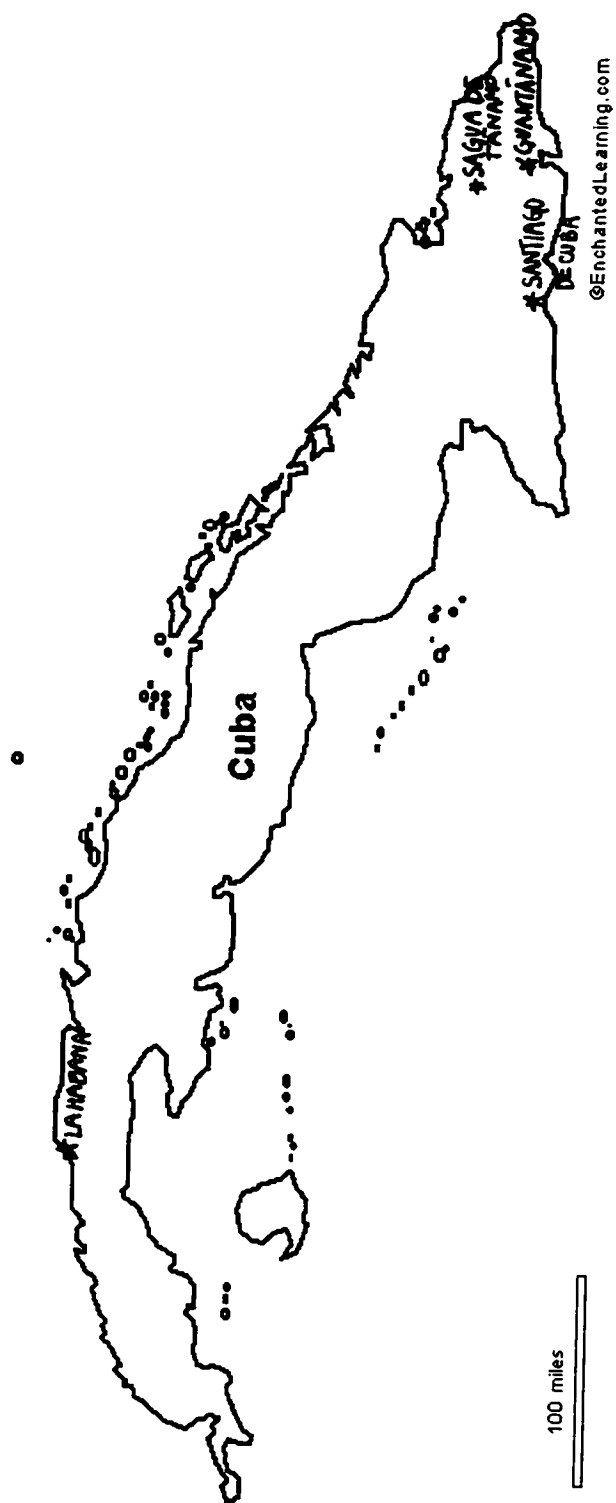
WILSON, David

- 1996 "Glimpses of Caribbean Tourism and the Question of Sustainability in Barbados and St Lucia". In *Sustainable Tourism in Islands & Small States: Case Studies*. Edited by Lino BRIGULIO et al. London: Pinter, p.75-102.

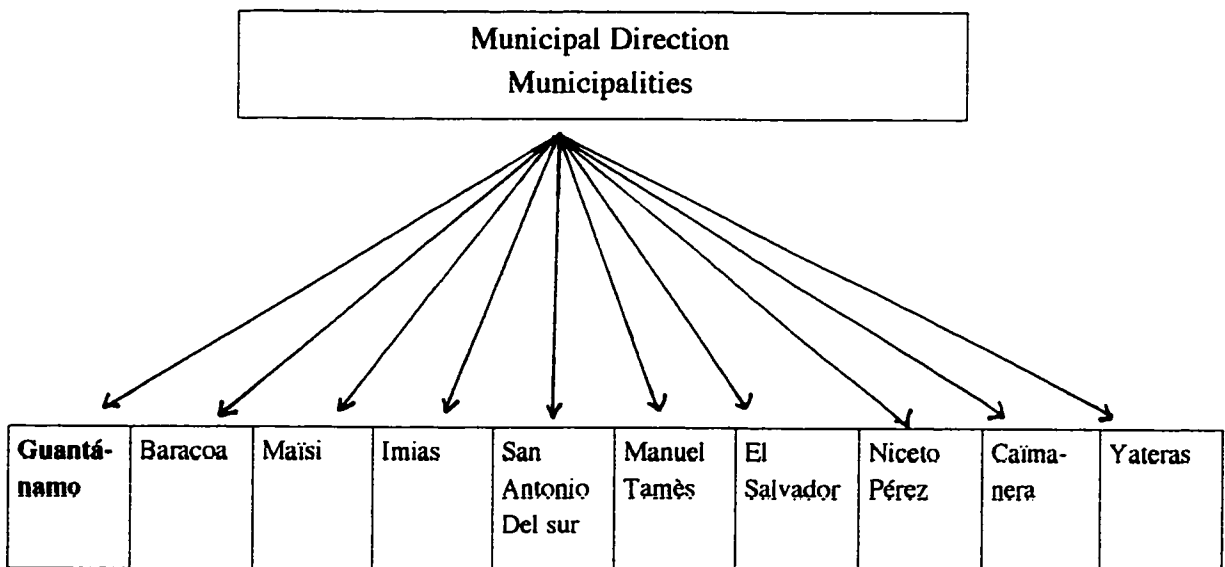
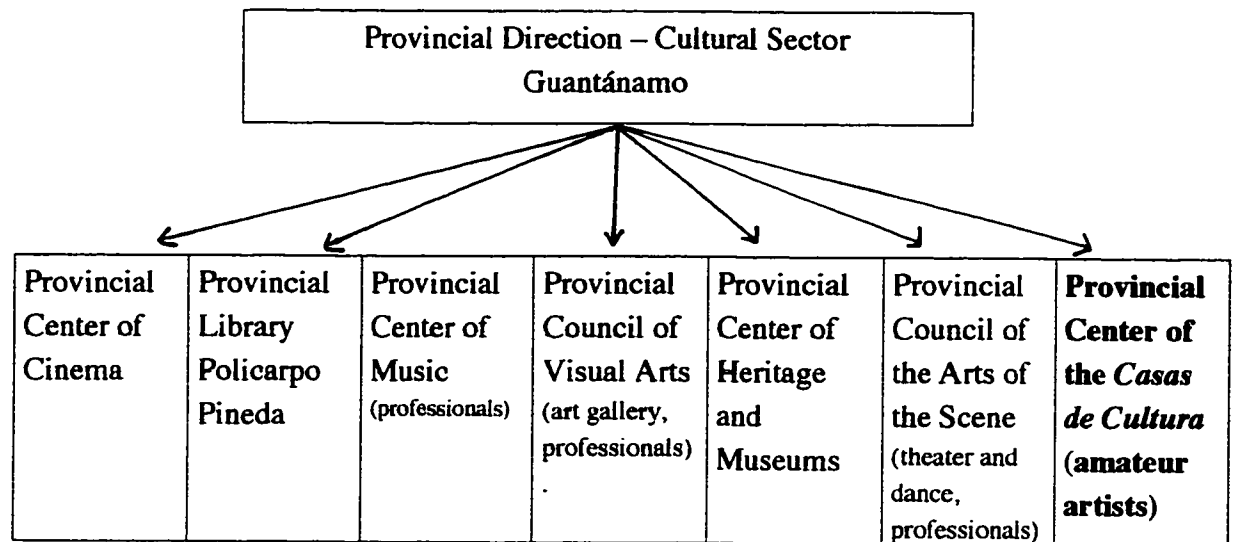
n.d.
1977

“La actividad cultural”. In *Política cultural de la Revolución cubana*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, p. 51-64.

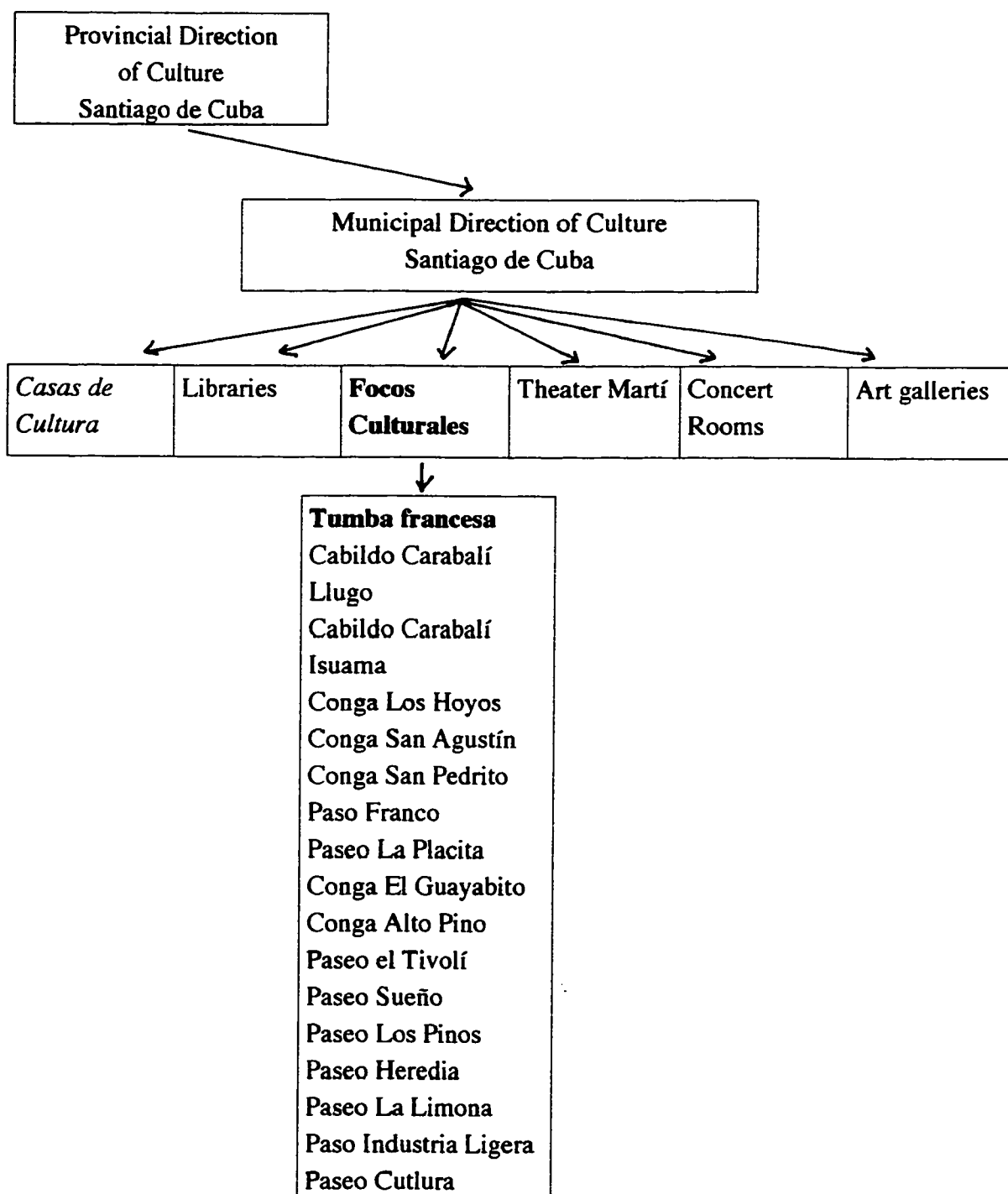
Appendix A: Map of the main cities where fieldwork has been conducted.



Appendix B: Organization of culture in the province of Guantánamo



Appendix C: Organization of culture in the Municipality of Santiago de Cuba



Appendix D: Comparative parameters of the bearer and reproducer traditional groups
(Source: Llewelyn De la Hera, summer 2002).

Bearers		Reproducers	
Religious activities	Laic activities	Professional Artists	Amateur Artists

Bearer groups and/or performers of traditional popular arts	Reproducer groups and/or performers of traditional popular arts
1- Its production is determined by the collective process of creation that can be modified and transformed in agreement with a multitude of individual imports socially recognized.	1- Its production is determined by the critical assimilation of the collective creation of the bearer groups.
2- The principal goal of its cultural manifestations constitutes a family, individual and/or social necessity. The objective is to satisfy functional and aesthetics demands vehicle by the vital process.	2- The principal goal is to satisfy aesthetic demands through artistic manifestations.
3- Its realization responds to an empirical consciousness of cultural goods. The practical and general acquisitions are transmitted from one generation to the other.	3- Its realization responds to a scientific consciousness. The practical and general acquisitions are based on a rational and realistic type of knowledge.
4- They constitute real bearers of traditional popular culture since they are embedded in the manifestations that they practice.	4- Their function is to reproduce traditional popular arts in such a way that it conserves the more significant aspect of the cultural manifestations.
5- Its social imports are predominantly ceremonial or of festivities.	5- Its social imports are predominantly representational – through staging.
6- Its character is complex because of the multi-functionality of the religious or laic activities.	6- Its character is artistic.
7- The creators are their own consumers.	7- The majority of its consumers are not creators but spectators.
8- It manifests a general and precise reflection of the creative cultural values acquired.	8- It reflects a partial and synthesized reflection of the reproduced cultural values.
9- The activities obey to a temporal dimension that varies.	9- The activities obey to a systematic and official program.

10- The special relations found in the celebration obey to a stable character. The place where is performed the activity does not vary.	10- The special relations found in the programs are unstable. The place where is performed the activity varies.
11- The level of development is conditioned to the modifications and transformations that historically influenced the popular tradition.	11- The level of development is determined by the continuous betterment of the artistic quality.

* * *