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# The hybrid state:

## Crime and citizenship in urban Jamaica

### ABSTRACT

In inner-city neighborhoods in Kingston, Jamaica, criminal “dons” have taken on a range of governmental functions. While such criminal actors have sometimes been imagined as heading “parallel states,” I argue that they are part of a hybrid state, an emergent political formation in which multiple governmental actors—in this case, criminal organizations, politicians, police, and bureaucrats—are entangled in a relationship of collusion and divestment, sharing control over urban spaces and populations. Extending recent scholarship on variegated sovereignty and neoliberal shifts in governance, I consider the implications of this diversification of governmental actors for the ways that citizenship is experienced and enacted. The hybrid state both produces and relies on distinct political subjectivities. It is accompanied by a reconfigured, hybrid citizenship, in which multiple practices and narratives related to rule and belonging, to rights and responsibilities, are negotiated by a range of actors. [*citizenship, governance, crime, dons, neoliberalism, Jamaica, anthropology of the state*]

**O**n May 24, 2010, Jamaican security forces invaded Tivoli Gardens, the West Kingston neighborhood ruled by the island’s most notorious “don,”<sup>1</sup> Christopher Coke, better known as “Dudus” or “the President.” Since August 2009, the United States had been pushing unsuccessfully for his extradition on drug and arms-trafficking charges. For over nine months, the Jamaican prime minister, Bruce Golding, and his government had been stalling and attempting to influence the U.S. position on the matter. Following increasingly harsh criticism from the political opposition, civil society organizations, and the media as well as diplomatic pressure from the United States, in mid-May 2010 Golding was finally persuaded to change his position. After the initiation of the extradition process and the warrant for Dudus’s arrest were announced, armed men inside Tivoli Gardens began to erect barricades from old cars and fridges, wooden pallets, and debris, effectively blocking the entrances to the neighborhood. On Thursday, May 20, some four hundred residents of Tivoli Gardens and adjacent Denham Town, dressed in white, walked out in a peaceful and apparently highly organized protest march opposing the move to extradite Dudus. The following Sunday, the gunmen launched preemptive strikes, attacking four police stations in West Kingston and killing two police officers in an ambush in East Kingston. On the same day, the prime minister declared a state of emergency for sections of the capital city, and on Monday, May 24, police and military forces mounted a counteroffensive, forcing their way into Tivoli. One soldier died, and at least 73 civilians were killed by the security forces. Dudus, however, managed to escape. He was finally captured after remaining elusive for a month, probably on the basis of intelligence. He was extradited soon after, and in June 2012, following a guilty plea, he was sentenced to 23 years in U.S. federal prison.

In this article, I seek to extend our understanding of citizenship, governance, and the state under neoliberalism by focusing on the complicated relationship between the Jamaican state, dons, and the urban poor. These various actors have been joined in a system known as “garrison politics,” a type of electoral turf politics achieved through communal clientelism. On the basis of their role as brokers between politicians and inner-city residents, dons came to preside over politically homogenous enclaves, or “garrisons.” In these marginalized urban areas, they have increasingly taken on functions and symbols associated with the state. The system of urban order

provided by dons such as Dudus is popular among socially and economically marginalized Jamaicans, to the extent that they are willing to march out in protest, and even to engage in armed confrontations with the state, to defend it. How can we understand the authority and legitimacy of Jamaica's dons, and what insights can this case offer into the ways the state and citizenship are being reconfigured?

In exploring these questions ethnographically, I argue for an analysis of donmanship through the concept of a "hybrid state." The hybrid state is an emergent form of statehood in which different governmental actors—in this case, criminal organizations, politicians, police, and bureaucrats—are entangled in a relationship of collusion and divestment as they share control over urban spaces and populations. Extending recent scholarship on variegated sovereignty and neoliberal shifts in governance, I consider the implications that the diversification of governmental actors has had for the ways that citizenship is experienced and enacted. I show how the hybrid state exists in a mutually reproductive relationship with a hybrid form of citizenship, in which multiple practices and narratives related to rule and belonging, to rights and responsibilities, are negotiated from the ground up.

Basing my discussion on fieldwork I conducted in Kingston from 2008 to 2012, I give an illustration of a hybrid state and a hybrid citizenship. I carried out research in several neighborhoods in Downtown Kingston but worked most closely in a West Kingston neighborhood I call "Brick Town." Until recently, this neighborhood fell under the leadership of a prominent don I refer to as "the General." This don was associated with a gang I call "the West Side Posse," which dated back to the 1940s and had strong connections with one of Jamaica's two main political parties. In addition to this neighborhood-based research, I held numerous interviews with politicians, policy makers, bureaucrats, NGO workers, businessmen, police, and a number of smaller dons.<sup>2</sup> Drawing on this fieldwork, I show how governmental actors from bureaucrats to the police loosen their grip on parts of the national territory and citizenry as they enter into partnerships with dons, and how inner-city residents negotiate rights, responsibilities, and participation within the resulting political order.

### Hybrid states

I use "hybrid state" to refer to the entanglement of multiple governmental actors. In the case of Jamaica, this hybrid state mainly involves two systems of governance—donmanship and the "formal" bureaucratic state—that are often seen as separate or even mutually exclusive. The hybrid state is an emergent formation that develops from the interaction between these two systems of governance and the actors associated with them (dons, politicians, bureaucrats, police): It is a new system of governance, even as

its constituent parts remain recognizable. While a heuristic distinction can be made between formal and nonformal governmental actors, between state sovereignty and social sovereignty, the hybrid state is that system of governance that emerges from the entanglement of these forms of political authority.<sup>3</sup> It cuts across public–private boundaries and combines elements of redistributive, market, and predatory logics.

Much recent attention has gone into how processes of neoliberalization have led to a diversification of governmental actors and to the shifts in the logic of governing that occur as nonstate actors take on state responsibilities. Specifically, various authors have examined the ways in which state sovereignty is being restructured in relation to private actors such as corporations and NGOs. Focusing on Africa, for instance, James Ferguson notes the emergence of "a form of government that cannot be located within a national grid, but is instead spread across a patchwork of transnationally networked, noncontiguous bits" (2006:40). He identifies a sorting of territory into two types of spaces with distinct forms of governance, contrasting the economically valued, mineral-rich enclaves, which are governed and secured by oil or mining companies, with the "residual" space of the continent, where humanitarian NGOs have increasingly taken on the role of the state to provide governmental services.

Ferguson's account depicts a weakening of state capacity in the face of neoliberal globalization processes. In contrast, Aihwa Ong (2006) shows how state policies in Asia actively encourage spaces of political and economic exception as a technology of rule. She shows how the Chinese state has employed zoning technologies—rezoning the national territory through a system of enclaves both within and beyond mainland China—to pursue economic reform and political integration. These zoning technologies enable a controlled form of capitalist transformation that extends rather than erodes the power of the state, generating patterns of "variegated" or "graduated" sovereignty.

These authors emphasize the extent to which the concept of a homogeneous national state, which penetrates a sovereign territory and incorporates its people uniformly, is a fiction. Whereas this fiction was actively pursued under the state developmentalism that characterized many post-colonial nations in the mid-20th century, it has taken a less prominent place in the context of neoliberal policies that promote the diversification of governmental actors. Analyses of the resulting variegated sovereignty have tended to take on the perspective of states and corporations to explain specific governmental strategies and their spatial consequences. However, they offer a more limited view of the workings and implications of such hybrids on the ground and of the active role that less powerful groups may play in imagining, representing, and enacting their relationships with these governance structures.<sup>4</sup>

Work done within the growing field of the anthropology of the state has explored the possibilities of studying ethnographically how “the state” is produced and contested through everyday practices and discursive constructions. Following Philip Abrams’s (1988) distinction between the “state-system” and the “state-idea,” authors such as Akhil Gupta (1995) and Timothy Mitchell (1999) have proposed a two-pronged approach. Anthropological studies of the state, they contend, should focus on the mundane techniques of government and everyday practices of local bureaucracies as well as on the more abstract, translocal representational effects through which these practices become associated with an autonomous, impartial state. Along similar lines, Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat (2001) focus on what they term “languages of stateness,” distinguishing practical languages of governance (such as the monopolization of violence within a given territory, the production of knowledge on the population of that territory, or the development and management of the economy) from the symbolic languages of authority (such as the institutionalization of law or the materialization of the state through permanent symbols, including buildings and uniforms).

More recently, a number of anthropologists have begun to focus their attention on what happens when new sets of actors assume these governmental practices, these practical languages of governance. Veena Das and Deborah Poole, for instance, call attention to the margins of the state: “sites of practice on which law and other state practices are colonized by other forms of regulation that emanate from the pressing needs of populations to secure political and economic survival” (2004:8). Michel-Rolph Trouillot also points to the “*déplacement* of state functions ... away from national sites to infra-, supra-, or transnational ones” (2001:132). Consequently, our ethnographies should be attentive to capturing “state effects” in a range of sites. This involves studying how statelike institutions and practices produce what Trouillot calls “isolation,” “identification,” “legibility,” and “spatialization” effects—creating publics, interpellating subjects, classifying and regulating collectivities, and producing jurisdictions with territorial boundaries. Similarly, David Nugent argues that, as “governmental forces are becoming increasingly disentangled from state structures” (2004:214), our challenge lies in focusing on the wide range of forces that rely on governmental techniques to order and discipline national populations. Drawing on his own work on mid-20th-century Peru, he demonstrates how the governing capacities of APRA, a political party that was outlawed and went underground, were greater than those of the military government itself. Having developed a secret organizational structure that was highly specialized and differentiated, APRA displayed greater efficacy in identifying objects of regulation, monitoring their behavior, and using this knowledge to control them, achieving what Nugent terms “subaltern governmentality.”

The case of donmanship in inner-city Jamaica, I suggest, enables an analysis of a language of stateness—a system of governance and authority—that is neither hegemonic nor subaltern but a hybrid mix of both. I am especially interested in the ways that inner-city residents relate to this hybrid state, how they narrate and perform relationships of mutual obligation. I argue that such a hybrid state both produces and relies on distinct political subjectivities: It is accompanied by a reconfigured citizenship, in which a range of actors—including both politicians and dons—are central to structures of rule and belonging. In their interactions with these various governmental agents and in their imaginations and representations of these governance structures, the urban poor can, to some extent, negotiate relations of citizenship. These new forms of statehood and citizenship are mutually reproducing phenomena: The hybrid structures and techniques of governance both shape and are reinforced by populations that understand themselves as members of overlapping political communities.

Below, I give a brief historical overview of how Jamaican dons, state actors, and the residents of inner-city communities became joined in the system known as “garrison politics.” I trace the transformation of this system toward what can be understood as a hybrid state, interpreting the systematic linkages between dons and “formal” governmental actors as an illicit form of public–private partnership that emerged in the context of neoliberalization. I suggest that Jamaica’s garrisons can be understood as enclaves that are subject to the outsourcing of state functions and central to a form of sovereignty that is noncontiguous. I go on to explore how this entanglement of citizens, state, and criminal leaders has been reshaping citizenship, focusing on new sources of citizenship rights and responsibilities, and taking into consideration the active role that persons play in negotiating, alternating, and combining their relationships with different power structures.

### From brokers to partners-in-governance

The spaces over which dons preside are urban Jamaica’s socially and economically marginalized neighborhoods. The dons’ status as gatekeepers and power brokers developed in the context of Kingston’s sociospatial divisions, where access to urban space is organized according to socioeconomic, ethnoracial, and party political belonging. The social distance that separates the so-called ghettos and garrisons of Downtown Kingston and the spacious, well-guarded “residential” areas of Uptown is connected to a history of racialized exclusion. The recent emergence of a darker-skinned middle class notwithstanding, the legacy of colonialism and slavery is still evident in a correlation between class, skin color, and urban space. Downtown residents are disproportionately poorer black Jamaicans, while lighter-skinned brown Jamaicans of mixed or

ethnic-minority descent are overrepresented in elite and middle-class Uptown circles. Historically, postemancipation Jamaica has been characterized by “differentiated citizenship” (Holston 2008), a thoroughly inegalitarian citizenship regime that distinguishes between different categories of citizens on the basis of descent (primarily class and color; cf. Austin-Broos 1994) and distributes rights and privileges along these lines of differentiation.

Kingston’s urban rupture along lines of class and color is cut through by violent political fissures, often referred to as “political tribalism.” In Downtown Kingston, the two main political parties—the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) and the People’s National Party (PNP)—had, and to some extent still have, clientelist relationships with their constituencies through “garrison politics.” In the 1960s and 1970s, both the PNP and the JLP created party-loyal “garrisons” by concentrating supporters in new housing developments and distributing money, jobs, and weapons through the community strongmen (or “dons,” as they came to be called) to protect and strengthen their political strongholds.<sup>5</sup>

This garrison system began to change in the 1980s. An economic recession, a growing debt burden, and IMF-induced neoliberal structural adjustment programs (SAPs) stressing cutbacks in government expenditure and in public-sector employment reduced the politicians’ power to distribute material resources to their constituencies.<sup>6</sup> The local political henchmen, the dons, were able to locate new viable sources of revenue, both transnationally in the narcotics trade, and locally in extortion rackets, construction business, and the entertainment industry. This has meant a shift in the relationship between politicians and dons. With the expansion and solidification of dons’ national and transnational networks and their increased financial independence, their negotiating power vis-à-vis politicians grew. Whereas the dons initially served as clientelist brokers, trading community votes for political pork, with the advent of structural adjustment they came to replace members of parliament (MPs) as community patrons who distributed largesse (Sives 2002, 2010). As programs of deregulation and privatization diminished state ability to provide services such as health care and social and physical security, the opportunity emerged for dons to expand their role even further, to go from being patrons to corulers.<sup>7</sup>

State and criminal actors remain intertwined and interdependent, although this relation is dynamic and varies in intensity across the city. While certain state actors combat the power of the dons, others continue to rely on them and obstruct their criminal investigation and prosecution. In addition, dons’ role and impact vary significantly across inner-city communities, depending on, among other factors, their economic base, the nature of their organizations, their attitude toward politics, and their political, social, and business connections (Figueroa et al. 2008).<sup>8</sup> On the

whole, dons continue to function as important inner-city gatekeepers for politicians, government agencies, and bureaucrats. The garrison-politics system of clientelism that has been described by various authors is still operative: Dons provide political parties with access to electoral blocs in exchange for lucrative government contracts. Yet, as I demonstrate below, the more successful dons have gone beyond being brokers and local patrons to being partners-in-governance. They draw on their own funds and their access to the means of violence, and the residents of their communities rely on them for the provision of “public” services such as welfare, employment, and security.

These recent developments necessitate an understanding of the entanglement of criminal organizations and state actors that goes beyond clientelism. As David Scott notes, “The old clientelistic dependencies and obligations are unraveling; they no longer produce the same governing-effects of rule” (2003:21). The relationship between dons, bureaucrats, and politicians can be understood as central to a hybrid form of statehood, in which a range of state duties have been *de facto* outsourced to dons. This form of statehood, characterized by the prominence of multiple governmental actors, is most evident in the deprived spaces and impoverished but unruly populations of urban Jamaica’s garrisons. From welfare provision to infrastructural project management to policing, dons take on state responsibilities in the inner city effectively and efficiently. In return, they demand a steady flow of state funds and a measure of political protection. Often faced with a limited range of choices, state actors divest the responsibility of managing certain populations and spaces, subcontracting these tasks in a nontransparent and unstable process of quasi privatization.<sup>9</sup>

While the authority wielded by dons is often interpreted as a failure of the Jamaican state, if their rule were not accompanied by so much violence, their “success” at governance might be considered a measure of the state’s success in adapting to the exigencies of neoliberalism.<sup>10</sup> These transformations of institutionalized power can be understood to a certain extent within the context of neoliberal shifts in governance. The incorporation of donmanship as an essential part of a hybrid state began in the 1980s, through the coincidence of a less resourced, less developmental state (following the debt crisis and roll-back neoliberal policies of structural adjustment) with more-resourced, more-independent dons (through transnational narcotics trade as well as increasingly professional local endeavors in extortion, construction, and the entertainment industry). From the 1990s on, bureaucratic-criminal links became elaborated as partnerships that were framed or justified by state actors in the neoliberal terms of cost efficiency, decentralization, and community participation that are propagated by international financial institutions, bilateral donors, and NGOs.<sup>11</sup>



## Public-private partnerships

Criminal actors such as Jamaica's dons have sometimes been imagined as heading "parallel states" (Barrow-Giles 2011; Goldstein 2003; Leeds 1996). However, the various unstable yet enduring coalitions between governmental officials and criminal organizations (cf. Heyman and Smart 1999) make it difficult to separate formal state governance and the rule of criminal dons. As dons became increasingly incorporated into the governance of inner-city areas, their function expanded from mobilizing voters to realizing government objectives and projects in the inner city. There are a number of contexts in which the links between dons and state institutions take on the form of illicit public-private partnerships. Dons, politicians, and bureaucrats all operate within historically established patterns of interaction, each facing a range of constraints in mobilizing their agency. Their collaborations are the outcome of complex power struggles between various politically and economically interested actors: They may emerge through those actors' conscious strategies or as less intentional side-effects of neoliberal shifts in governance.

The de facto outsourcing of government responsibilities may take place as a direct consequence of state retrenchment, with an emphasis on cost efficiency. As Anthony Harriott notes, "The collusion between the political parties and organized crime is not just the outcome of materially self-interested motivations; it is an adaptation to state incapacity that permits co-rulership of the communities of the urban poor" (2008:9). In other contexts, it is the neoliberal emphasis on participatory development, decentralization, and community-based project management—promoted in Jamaica through World Bank loans, bilateral donors, and NGOs—that frames this redistribution of power. As Finn Stepputat observes, "Outsourcing creates kinds of slippery interfaces where boundaries and loci of decision-making, responsibility and accountability become unclear" (2012:118). Politicians and state actors use dons to pursue public goods as well as private interests, while dons use officials, in return, with the same objectives—politicians, bureaucrats, and dons have come to form a mutually expedient symbiosis in which sovereignty is shared and capital accumulated (cf. Heyman 1999; Lund 2006). The entanglement of dons with official state actors and institutions means that, paradoxically, donmanship can extend and fortify the reach (if not necessarily the legitimacy) of the latter. Here, I give a brief overview of some of the different contexts in which partnerships between these different governmental actors are developed.

The best-known cases of outsourcing occur in the realm of policing. It can be argued that the provision of law and order in Jamaica's inner-city communities is no longer primarily a state responsibility. With rates of theft, rape, murder, and other forms of violent crime high in Down-

town Kingston, the most established dons are lauded by residents for their role in maintaining order and delivering justice more speedily and effectively than the state. Have state actors, including the security forces, effectively withdrawn from these areas and ceded their policing to dons? This certainly appeared to be the case in Tivoli Gardens, where the murder rate was said to have dropped to nearly zero under Dudus, and where the relative security residents enjoyed was attributed to the iron hand with which he ruled over the area. Indeed, as the Jamaican security forces entered Tivoli after the events of May 2010, they found what appeared to be a room where informal court sessions were held and punishment administered (Matthews 2010). There are strong indications that this informal provision of security and justice was encouraged by state actors. A senior officer in the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), with extensive experience in West Kingston, spoke of his work in the area as follows:

From time to time you have to work with these leaders. Not that you're compromising or anything but they have access to the communities . . . What we try to do in instances is to actually use them, we task them so they actually end up doing some of our work. For example, if you go into a community and you realize that you're having certain type of crimes, you might have people being shot . . . you just say it to someone that "listen, you are in charge of this community, so the next time we hear that someone get shot, we coming for you." So rather than we policing to protect, they're actually policing themselves, because they know that if you're in charge you can prevent things from happening. If somebody is raped and we say "listen, the next time it happens we'll see you." . . . So we task them to reduce certain acts that you cannot on your own reduce, because you'd have to have eyes and ears in every corner, so you actually task them.<sup>12</sup>

This cooperation in terms of security reflects the incapacity of the JCF to effectively police inner-city neighborhoods and is an acknowledgment that dons are "in charge" there. In addition, it indicates a conscious move toward the privatization of security in these areas, in which residents are tasked with policing themselves.

In addition to the police force, other government agencies maintain collaborative relations with dons, making use of their less formal channels to pursue the public good. A senior administrator of the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (KSAC), the local government district encompassing the capital, provided me with the following example. The duties of municipal officials include oversight of markets, and in 2001, when the KSAC sought to refurbish the downtown market district, which falls partially within the Brick Town neighborhood, the administrator decided not to tender the public works contract. Instead, he chose to pursue

the legal route of “forced account process,” channeling J\$3 million (out of a total budget of J\$20 million) to Brick Town’s General and to a Tivoli Gardens Dudus affiliate, who then provided equipment, material, and labor. He explained to me that working with them meant quicker and cheaper results and allowed more money to flow to the laborers themselves:

If a big company had gotten the job ... they would have to pay the don and they would have to pay some other people and then what would trickle down to those people who had to do the work is a fraction of what they would have gotten when we negotiate ... We got more for that \$20M than if we had gone through the route of tendering ... we cut out time because that process is also very timely.

This high-ranking administrator’s forthright comments illustrate how working with dons is narrated as a way to improve efficiency in government spending.<sup>13</sup> However, such decision making in bureaucratic circles is never straightforward. Rather, it reflects the necessity of dealing with the realities of Kingston’s variegated sovereignty and shows the fine balance between making expedient use of the dons’ influence and not having the choice of operating outside their power.

Many officials justified working with dons as following from their effective role as local leaders and representatives. One cabinet minister emphasized that dons had to be dealt with as representatives of the people, even if they were not democratically elected area leaders and they relied on violence. He pointed to other political figures who could not be seen as truly representative yet were recognized as leaders:

You will never find Barack Obama is truly representative of every American ... Beatrix, she is the Queen of the Netherlands and I am sure at least 30 percent of the citizens of the Netherlands don’t really recognize it, but yet she is the head of state and she has the army. So how different is she than an area leader with a gun in his waist? She has the army so if you don’t like her she’s going to throw you in jail and if you dare speak against her you are charged for treason ... I’m saying whether it is by birth, whether it is by force, whether it is by free will, it is the representative of the people that has come forward and you’re duty-bound to deal with that person.<sup>14</sup>

The channeling of influence and resources to dons is also facilitated by development organizations and poverty alleviation funds.<sup>15</sup> I spoke to employees of one such government-established organization, which I call here the “Poverty Alleviation Fund” (PAF). PAF funds small-scale community-based projects, with a current emphasis on infrastructure upgrading in marginalized urban areas in combination with various social services. One PAF employee described to me the role individual dons may play in project

implementation: “In the mediation and conflict resolution package that we are offering, [the don] was very instrumental in the mobilization of the community members, he was helping to get the program running.” Her colleague concurred: “We have to recognize that these persons, as strange as it may seem, they are stakeholders. Because they can determine how best the activities that we implement are implemented in the communities, because they have this sort of particular influence.”

In addition, like other similar organizations, PAF relies on a participatory approach called “community-based contracting,” which mandates that communities contribute 5 to 25 percent of the total costs of a project, in cash or in kind. In inner-city communities, this contribution generally comes in the form of security, provided by the dons, who in turn claim an off-the-books percentage from the PAF-funded project contractors. A third staff member explained: “We rely a lot on [the dons] to keep it going and they do have their arrangement with the contractor to make this done. We don’t know about it as far as we are concerned, but they are essential in terms of keeping the works going and to complete the works on time.” While PAF staff emphasized that leadership dynamics vary significantly between areas, the mechanisms described here mean that state projects and funds reinforce dons’ leadership position and increase their income.

PAF staff are well aware that the “arrangement with the contractor” is extortion enforced by threats of violence. Extortion is not the only way that the threat of violence plays a role in project management. Hugh, a manager at a government agency located in Downtown Kingston, described how contractors responsible for executing his agency’s projects locally would be approached by a representative of the don and pressured to hire the don’s men, whether they were skilled workers or not. If the contractors did not comply, the work would have to stop. In rare cases, contractors were murdered, although government employees were very rarely killed. While organizations like PAF acknowledge that the threat of violence underpins their negotiations, for them, working with dons is a give-and-take process. These arrangements are less than ideal compromises, but they present a pragmatic way of reaching inner-city populations, where circumventing the dons’ power is not feasible. The benefits for PAF are that residents are mobilized effectively, that the projects run smoothly, and that dons’ activities are to some extent contained within official structures.

Under the banner of a participatory approach, Jamaican state officials may outsource decision making and implementation to private stakeholders. In some cases, these stakeholders are community-based organizations or NGOs, and, in other cases, they are dons: These are the concrete processes through which the hybrid state comes about. Exposing the developmentalist fiction of a

homogeneous, contiguous territory uniformly under sovereign state rule, Jamaica's hybrid state relies on systematic linkages between criminal, political, and bureaucratic actors, who share control over urban populations and spaces. This is similar to the graduated sovereignty and citizenship that Ong describes as an effect of "varied techniques of government [that] rely on controlling and regulating populations in relationship to differentiated spaces of governance" (2006:77). In Jamaica, criminal organizations take on the role vis-à-vis the state that authors such as Ong (2006) and Ferguson (2006) ascribe to transnational corporations and NGOs.<sup>16</sup> The existing scholarship sometimes implies that these transitions in governance represent clear-cut strategic decisions. However, the Jamaican case shows how these shifts are the unstable outcome of complex, historically structured negotiations, of ongoing power struggles between dons, politicians, and bureaucrats who are engaged in relations of collusion and competition. Police officers, administrators, politicians, and development workers enter into partnerships with dons to achieve short-term improvements in access or efficiency or to preempt violent conflicts. In the long run, however, these compromises result in lasting alterations to the system of governance.<sup>17</sup>

### Hybrid citizenship

Like other forms of governance, the effectiveness of the hybrid state relies not only on coercive practices but on citizens' voluntary compliance as well (see, e.g., Burchell et al. 1991; Rose 1999). The entanglement of multiple governmental actors—criminal organizations, politicians, and state bureaucracies—is productive of altered political subjectivities: The hybrid form of statehood is productive of a hybrid form of citizenship, which in turn normalizes the hybrid state. The legitimacy dons acquire can be understood by examining their provision of what are understood as "public" goods and services in marginalized urban areas. Yet, equally importantly, dons also enable citizens to experience and enact a shared belonging to a larger, institutionalized power structure. From the perspective of inner-city residents, this form of allegiance is not experienced as necessarily competitive or mutually exclusive with other forms. James Holston has emphasized "the possibility of multiple citizenships based on the local, regional and transnational affiliations that aggregate in contemporary urban experience" (1999:169). While, at times, obligations to the dons' system conflict with obligations to the formal Jamaican state, many residents in Brick Town and other inner-city neighborhoods appeared perfectly capable of maintaining multiple, intersecting allegiances: to a don, to their own neighborhood, to one of the two main political parties, and to Jamaica as a nation. These allegiances can be recognized as distinct, yet they overlap and intersect in ways that sug-

gest they are the constituent elements of an emergent hybrid form of citizenship.

Consistent with Dominique Leydet's (2011) understanding of a citizen as "a member of a political community who enjoys the rights and assumes the duties of membership," those populations that reside within Jamaica's ghettos and garrisons recognize themselves as members of the overlapping political communities of donmanship and of the Jamaican state. This is a reconfigured citizenship, in which inner-city residents narrate and negotiate rights and duties in relation to multiple governmental actors. While individual dons figure prominently in the concrete relations they have with residents of one neighborhood, donmanship has also moved beyond these local, personalist relations to become consolidated as a generalized structure of governance, an abstraction similar to the state itself.

As my research in Brick Town and other parts of Downtown Kingston showed, this formulation of citizenship involves inner-city residents who make rights claims at multiple sites, who perform citizen responsibilities within different registers, and who engage in multiple, overlapping forms of political participation. On the basis of a discussion of these three dimensions of rights, responsibilities, and participation, I elaborate on this hybrid formulation of citizenship below, demonstrating how it is characterized by contradictions and entanglements; it is fed by cynicism, disillusionment, and greed as well as by hopeful pragmatism and everyday struggles for survival.

### Equal rights and justice

Citizen rights typically offered by the state in the form of services and resources (such as police protection, judicial system, health care) are perceived by many inner-city residents to be available only to certain Jamaicans: the lighter-skinned, wealthier inhabitants of Uptown Kingston. Dons and their seconds-in-command take on a number of functions in terms of this social provisioning role. They have established a social security system, offering residents in need financial support, for instance, for health or education purposes. In addition, they regulate labor, assisting with access to employment, a scarce good for those living in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Young men can find employment within the dons' own organizations, but more often dons may connect residents to jobs in the formal sector, either by assisting with a "link" to the local MP or by pressuring locally operating businesses to hire them. What emerged during my research as the dons' primary service-related function, however, is their provision of physical security and an alternative form of justice (or, at least, conflict resolution). They provide protection and dispense punishment in neighborhoods where the police are seen as unreliable, indifferent, corrupt, and trigger-happy.



In Brick Town, various residents attributed a similar role in providing “community justice” to the General and lamented the deterioration of security in the neighborhood since his imprisonment. This came out clearly in a conversation I had with Mikey, a 30-year-old small businessman, who was still a fervent supporter of the General. Thieves could now operate with impunity, he told me, because even if they were fingered, the man in charge was no longer there to dispense justice: “Them can say: nobody cannot do nothing ‘cause the man who is supposed to deal with it like that is not there.” Such thieving could never have happened before the General went to prison: “If the leader say ‘no stealing,’ it’s no stealing, you understand.” The importance of extralegal private security, such as that provided by dons, has been sketched for many other cases, especially in contexts where the police are seen as ineffective, unreliable, or corrupt (e.g., Buur 2003; Davis 2010). What struck me about Mikey’s narrative was how he used a discussion of “community justice” and security to emphasize the General’s commitment to equal rights. Mikey spoke highly of the evenhandedness with which the General would deliver his verdicts:

The General is an advocate for equal rights and justice, that man split the justice right down the middle. Everyone is equal. No matter where you’re from, whether you’re inner-city, country, poor, rich—‘cause you know that man is straightforward. Like how Marcus [Garvey] would want you to educate yourself and rely on no one, so him [the General] deal with him thing: equality for everybody.

According to Mikey, a leader is someone who is, in the first place, fair: “If me and him [gesturing toward a man sitting nearby] have a dispute, then you’re not supposed to take him side though you and him might be cousin or family ... You just know say justice is justice.”

Mikey’s description of the General’s commitment to equal rights and “splitting justice down the middle” echoed the way I had heard many people throughout Downtown Kingston speak of Dudus. Ricky, a teenager in Olympic Gardens, had spoken with similar enthusiasm about the impartial manner in which Dudus maintained order in Tivoli: “It don’t matter whether you are him cousin or him brother—if you disrespect the order, you get sorted out!” One major difference with the formal justice system is, of course, that one man determines what is fair and just rather than an institution. There are indications, however, that “community justice” is undergoing codification and institutionalization, with standardized punishments for certain crimes and a system of local courts in which groups of elders preside along with the don (Duncan-Waite and Woolcock 2008:27–29).

These depictions of dons as extremely fair and unbiased leaders need to be situated within inner-city residents’

experience of the formal justice system as deeply unequal and prejudiced. It is widely held that state agencies such as the police and the judiciary discriminate against people who live Downtown, against those with a darker skin color and who speak Jamaican Creole rather than English. When inner-city residents portray the General or Dudus as being committed to fairness and equality, they are contrasting a nonformal system that offers some form of equal rights and impartiality with a formal system that is known to be corrupt and biased. The don-led, nonformal system of justice and security, then, is narrated as advocating and guaranteeing “equal rights and justice” to a greater degree than the formal system. In addition, to a lesser extent, dons’ activities in providing welfare and employment are also construed as guaranteeing citizens’ social and economic rights more effectively than the state.

This is not to say, however, that residents of neighborhoods like Brick Town do not perceive themselves as rights-bearing citizens who can lay claim on the Jamaican state. Quite the opposite—in the various Downtown communities where I worked, I encountered a consistent sense of entitlement among residents as marginalized Jamaican citizens, a sense that it was the duty of the Jamaican government and of politicians to help the urban poor. That most inner-city residents also perceived the state as sorely lacking in this regard did not diminish their conviction that its role is to provide such assistance.

This view of their relationship with the state is evident in street protests. Jamaica’s repertoire of protest, especially by the poor, is characterized by roadblocks and marches in which indignant participants brandish handwritten cardboard placards. Watching the evening news, on which these protests are an almost daily feature, I came to understand the ritualized nature of the demonstrations, with protestors waving their signs at the photographers and television cameras that invariably gather to cover these marches. While the street protests address a range of issues, from deficient infrastructure and service delivery to inflation, tax hikes, and police brutality, nearly every demonstration includes signs on which the words “We want justice” are scrawled.

Hume N. Johnson, pointing to the interdependence between Jamaican popular protest and the mass media, notes that “popular protest, as broadcast by the news media, is often the only means through which political representatives and other bureaucrats are alerted to the concerns of their constituents” (2008:163). While I find her characterization of the protest performance as “histrionics” problematic, I agree that the street protests of the Jamaican poor suggest “the need to be affirmed as a citizen who is important and who possesses rights deserving of recognition” (Johnson 2008:174). Street protests are rarely aimed at anyone other than state actors, narrating a relationship of entitlement, obligation, and neglect in which politicians

and bureaucrats are held to be responsible for improving the plight of their constituents. By drawing on the language of rights and justice, the (urban) poor utilize protests as a site for voicing their claims on the state, narrating a relationship of rights and belonging. It is not the case, then, that inner-city residents have turned exclusively to the don for service provision and the protection of their rights—they continue to articulate a claim to rights, a series of entitlements to welfare and protection, on the basis of their status as Jamaicans, and specifically as poor Jamaicans.

### **Responsibilities: Taxes and respect**

With donmanship as with the formal Jamaican state, inner-city residents assume certain duties as members of these larger political communities. In the case of the dons, these duties are primarily financial and take the form of paying “taxes,” as extortion is broadly known. These taxes target anyone who wishes to conduct business in the don’s territory, from the smallest market vendor to the mid-level private bus route operator to the largest Jamaican corporation.<sup>18</sup> These “taxes” can be seen as a form of citizenship obligation, balancing the don-based system of (allegedly equal) rights. While this money may end up being the don’s personal income, residents conveyed a sense that taxes are somehow reinvested in “public goods” (such as welfare and security), although only within the space of the don’s territory. Like formal state taxes, paying the don’s taxes is an important responsibility citizens have toward the local governance structure. Many of those subject to paying these nonformal taxes were reluctant to use the term *extortion*, applying it mainly in cases in which taxation was considered excessively high (in the case of greedy dons) or illegitimate (e.g., when freelance extortionists claimed to be associated with the don).

I sat down on a corner in Brick Town to speak with Ludlow, an elderly man who had spent most of his life in the area. Initially, he was somewhat cautious in his discussion of the community’s affairs, in part because we were in earshot of Trevor, one of the current “corner dons,” men who are connected to the larger don but control a smaller section within the community. As Trevor moved off, Ludlow spoke more freely about the past leadership of Brick Town, arguing that the General was a bad don because he was too greedy. This statement—similar to many other inner-city residents’ comments about good and bad dons—reflects the extent to which donmanship as a system is no longer in question in Jamaica’s marginalized areas. The individual dons, however, can be good or bad, a blessing or a curse.

The topic turned to “taxes,” more generally, as I asked Ludlow to describe how the system worked in the neighborhood. He started by telling me, “The extortion thing, I’m not into it, no sir. You work hard all your life to build up your

business and every week you have to give a man money and him no contribute much to it. People have to work for them living. Yeah, it’s bad-minded people who extort, you know.” I asked him to explain who would be affected, inquiring whether, for instance, the Rastafari owner of the cook-shop near us would have to pay extortion fees. He told me this was not the case: “Well the Rasta now, the Ras not going to be extorted, ’cause a man will come and him will give them a food and thing, you know.” To give away food for free to the leaders of the community, then, did not count as extortion. Extortion was what took place at the Chinese and Syrian-owned wholesale shops on the main streets, he told me. “What about the market people, like vendors?” I asked him. “You call that extortion?” he replied. “I don’t know,” I asked, “what do you call it?” “Them just pay for a space,” Ludlow explained. “Because, alright: government no collect no market fee. ’Cause government supposed to go round and collect market fee, ’cause when me grow up people collect market fee. That no happen again. So maybe you have to say them extort them . . .,” he concluded reluctantly. “But you just call it a fee?” I proposed. “Yeah, them collect a fee,” he answered, sounding relieved. I asked Ludlow what the vendors got in return for the fee. He explained that they would not have to worry about security: “Nobody can come do them nothing. Them pay them a little, a bill a day. Nobody not going to really worry you, but you have to pay. So me wouldn’t really call the market thing extortion. It’s a market fee. The extortion now, that’s what happens at the wholesale and business place.” Similar to conventional taxes, Ludlow saw the fees paid by “little people” as an accepted cost of business, a duty that entitles one to conduct one’s affairs in a certain area. In addition, from Ludlow’s story, one might surmise that, rather than continuing to engage actively in competition with the dons, the government had in fact ceded the fee collection and management of these market spaces to them.

Some residents did resent the way dons like the General imposed their taxes. Keith, a long-time West Kingston resident in his late fifties, who had spent about a decade abroad, saw the General’s income tax—which he claimed was 25–50 percent—as excessive, especially given the don’s other sources of income, and felt that taxing little people rather than focusing on the “big boys” was unfair:

The General, Dudus, the whole of them, when the [government] contract is issued out, it’s always the dons. You know don will get the contract and him get a lump sum of money. But you have the man who works . . . when you get your little pay you still have to give the don money outta your pay, and me no like that neither, ’cause them done get money already from the contract. So them shouldn’t even take money from the man who works ’pon it . . . I think them shouldn’t take nothing from the man who them give the work to work. Just keep on taxing them big boys who do the big work

'cause them can afford it, 'cause eventually them will make back all of them money there.

Demonstrating the ambivalent fashion in which different actors engage with the hybrid state, Keith's disapproval, which was linked to his broader rejection of the General's rule, did not in fact imply a denunciation of extortion as a whole. Rather, his criticism sounds very similar to a demand for progressive taxation, in which it is acceptable to "keep on taxing them big boy them." In many conversations with inner-city residents, I found an acceptance of nonformal taxes. Most of those who discussed these payments with me did not speak of them as unjust. Rather, they referred to them in a matter-of-fact way, accepting them as part of life, but complaining in some cases that the rates were unreasonably high. In this sense too, extortion fees resemble formal state taxes—something one complains about but ultimately has to accept—and whose payment can be understood as a comparable form of responsibility citizens accept vis-à-vis the prevailing governance structure.

The broad acceptance of the don's taxes does not mean that inner-city residents reject all responsibilities toward the formal state. While many people expressed a strong conviction that state taxes amount to "fighting poor people," I still witnessed a clear sense of the duties that Jamaican citizens have toward the state. I found this to be most clear in terms of an obligation to pay respect to formal state actors. This performance of respect may be a largely symbolic act of deference, but it is one that is taken seriously by citizens and state officials alike.

A well-known example of this social contract relates to the public smoking of marijuana "spliffs," a common but formally illegal practice. As various residents explained to me, and as corroborated by the policeman quoted above, everyone understands that there are more serious crimes than smoking "ganja." However, if you are smoking on the street and a police officer passes by, you must hide the spliff behind your back until he or she is out of sight. Not to do so is an overt sign of disrespect, and the officer will be compelled to arrest you or suffer a serious loss of face. Conversely, while police officers may smell the smoke of a hidden spliff, they will generally ignore it as long as the offense is not demonstrative.

I experienced a similar negotiation of duty and legality while getting a street-side pedicure in Brick Town's market district. A section of the neighborhood functions as an open-air beauty parlor, with dozens of women specializing in nail decoration or in custom-made wigs or false eyelashes. The police had been making raids in an attempt to move vendors off the main streets, but I had not realized that the beauticians were being targeted as well. Tisha, the woman who was giving me a pedicure on the curb of the main street, jumped up nervously at one point as a police van passed by, but neither of us noticed as two po-

lice officers walked up to us on foot. As the female officer searched my handbag and told me I was going to be taken to the police station to set an example, Tisha began to apologize to the male officer, exclaiming repeatedly, "Sorry baba, sorry! I never see you, I never see you!" After a large crowd of beauticians and shoppers surrounded us, protesting against any arrests, and as Tisha and I continued to apologize, the officers relented and let both of us go. Significantly, in Tisha's negotiation with the policeman, she did not apologize for the transgression itself, which constituted her livelihood. Rather, she expressed contrition for having allowed this transgression to occur visibly, in full sight of the law. On seeing the police approach, beauticians and customers should pretend to be engaged in other activities, however obvious it may be that they are in violation of the rules. Our carelessness—our apparent flaunting of illegal behavior—came across as blatant disrespect, provoking the police to threaten arrest.

The obligations marginalized urban Jamaicans feel toward formal and nonformal governance structures differ. Being part of a political community led by a don entails understanding oneself as a taxable subject with financial responsibilities. While this interpretation of fiscal obligation indicates an erosion of the Jamaican state's monopoly on taxation, residents of Brick Town and other inner-city communities still see themselves as duty-bearing citizens vis-à-vis the formal state. These duties, however, tend to be more symbolic than financial and involve performing as visibly respectful and law-abiding citizens in relation to representatives of the state.

### *Parties and participation*

In addition to regulating rights and responsibilities, systems of citizenship also depend on citizens' voluntary political participation. Understanding *political* in the broader sense of the word, participation entails social practices that range from voting, signing petitions, and protesting in public space to pledging allegiance and celebrating state holidays. Such rituals and traditions, whether they support or oppose the current regime, serve to bolster the governance system within which the regime operates. In what can be considered the performative elements of citizenship (Gordon and Stack 2007), acts of political participation allow citizens to demonstrate a collective allegiance to a system of rule and belonging (as well as to its people and its territory).

Inner-city residents continue to participate in practices that sustain the formal state: they vote, they hold protest marches, and they engage with various forms of state-sponsored nationalism (see Thomas 2004). Despite expressing a large measure of cynicism toward politics, many continue to enjoy party-political activities. Sharon, a resident of a PNP-affiliated community in Central Kingston where

I conducted research a few years ago, described to me the excitement of going to a PNP political rally. Everyone makes sure to wear their finest orange clothing, and the fun starts in the buses chartered to transport supporters to the venue. In addition to the general entertainment and the food and drinks offered at such an event, the singing of the party anthem is a special moment: "When they play the party anthem, shivers just run down your spine. You put your hand over your heart and everyone is singing . . . it's so beautiful!" Sharon and two of her friends demonstrated this by singing the first lines of the PNP anthem, "Jamaica Arise."

Dons also draw on or encourage forms of political participation comparable to those used by political parties. In particular, dancehall reggae parties held in honor of dons encourage powerful sensations of community, allowing participants to see themselves both in relationship to one another and to a larger, institutionalized political structure, reflecting and reinforcing subjectivities in which dons feature prominently.<sup>19</sup> The organization of such street parties is an important way for stigmatized ghetto neighborhoods to earn income and to put themselves on the map in a positive way. Tivoli Gardens, for instance, had become well known for Passa Passa, its street dance. This weekly event, which was held from 2003 until the 2010 incursion, was popularly associated with Dudus. Another famous Tivoli dance was the annual "Jim Brown Memorial Dance," in honor of Dudus's father, the former don Lester "Jim Brown" Coke.

Brick Town also hosts an annual event dedicated to the local leadership, the West Side Posse Dance, which I attended in late April 2010. Stone Love, a well-known sound system, was playing hit after hit, and hundreds of people were packed into the streets, with the crowd including residents from Brick Town as well as from other Downtown neighborhoods. In between songs, Jamaican sound systems interact with the public through call-and-response. In this case, Stone Love's DJs made numerous "shout-outs" to the community's former don. As they shouted, "Big up Father General!" into their microphones, those assembled responded with loud cheers of approval. Their shout-outs to the General were followed by big ups to Dudus, who was said to be at the dance as well. At another point, in what seemed to be a contradiction, one of the Stone Love DJs called out, "Big up all of the police inna the place!" Later, I realized he did so to recognize the presence of the police, who had just shown up.

Daniel M. Goldstein (2004) has pointed to the political functions of spectacular public performances in marginalized neighborhoods. In his analysis of the performative practices involved in a local festival and in mob violence against thieves in urban Bolivia, he demonstrates how such public spectacles do more than just strengthen internal solidarity. They also serve as a medium of external communication, shaping perceptions of the neighborhood and its

residents, who insist on inclusion within the wider city and the national state. Street dances celebrating or commemorating dons can be analyzed along similar lines. However, the solidarity they enable between participants is not limited to the neighborhood. Rather, dances such as the West Side Posse Dance represent a standardized locus for experiencing collective belonging to a translocal system of rule, a system that extends beyond the neighborhood and beyond one don such as the General. By cheering both for the General and for Dudus, those who attend the dance legitimate a system of rule and belonging that goes beyond one don, one gang, or one neighborhood. Both the leadership being honored and the public engaged in the honoring are not restricted to the local neighborhood. While the spectacle of these inner-city dances can be read as residents' claims to inclusion in the city and the nation as rightful citizens, I suggest that they also communicate allegiance to a more complex structure of belonging. Events such as the West Side Posse Dance and the Jim Brown Memorial Dance are acts of political participation that allow individuals to see themselves in relationship to the system of donmanship. However, as the "big up" to the police demonstrates, commitment to dons does not preclude the recognition of other forms of authority. Rather, the shout-outs that characterize these dances render the various forms of authority compatible.

The streets of Downtown Kingston feature enactments of participation in, and allegiance to, multiple formulations of citizenship. Whereas political rallies and street protests signal a performance of allegiance to the democratic political system, participating in dancehall parties in honor of dons indicates membership in a different kind of political community. The entangled character of these political subjectivities is evident during elections, when voting behavior is affected by a mix of deeply felt party-political loyalty and the pressure exerted by the don and his organization. The difficulty of disentangling these subjectivities was demonstrated even more clearly by the hundreds of West Kingston residents who marched out peacefully toward Gordon House, the seat of the Jamaican parliament, to protest the government's decision to extradite Dudus, the island's most powerful don.

## Conclusion

Over the last few decades, dons have become unmistakably central actors within the political order that characterizes urban Jamaica's "garrison" neighborhoods. In these spaces, they have taken on many of the functions and symbols generally associated with the (developmentalist) state. Yet many needs, such as education, health care, and garbage collection, cannot be met by dons alone, although they may provide financial support for these purposes. In these and other domains, formal state actors and agencies remain



important governmental actors. Inner-city residents still expect them to provide such services, even though the obligations they feel in return are limited to rather symbolic practices. Even the police, though regarded with suspicion, are seen as usual or necessary in certain contexts. It is, therefore, possible to give a “big up” to the police just after having done the same for two of the country’s most infamous dons.

Given the importance of the dons to the island’s electoral politics and bureaucracy, their authority cannot be understood outside the formal state. The system of donmanship seems similar to Carolyn Nordstrom’s “shadow networks,” which “are not comprised by states themselves, neither are they entirely distinct from, or opposite to, states—they work both through and around formal state representatives and institutions” (2000:36). Yet my case leads me to a somewhat different conclusion than that reached by Nordstrom, who argues that “states and shadow networks exist simultaneously, each phenomenologically different, each representing distinct forms of authority and politico-economic organization” (2000:36). In the case of Jamaica, it has become increasingly difficult to understand the formal and nonformal systems of rule and belonging as distinct. In practice, urban governance is achieved through the hybrid state, a political formation that connects different governmental actors and mechanisms.

I have argued that the hybrid state exists in a mutually reproductive relationship with a hybrid formulation of citizenship, in which multiple practices and narratives related to rule and belonging are negotiated by a range of actors. Like other forms of identifications, these multiple citizenship allegiances sometimes appear contradictory but often overlap and intersect. When voting behavior and party-political loyalty reflect and reinforce acceptance of a politically connected don, or when citizens use their democratic right to protest the extradition of an authoritarian ruler, the hybrid nature of this form of citizenship becomes evident.

Jamaica’s hybrid state can be understood in part in relation to the neoliberal reengineering of political spaces and populations. However, even as processes of neoliberalization have shaped its emergence, the hybrid state is not purely neoliberal; it combines elements of redistributive, market, and predatory logics. In so doing, it reflects the coexistence and intertwining of different political projects, including the democratic socialism of the 1970s as well as the neoliberalism that followed. Rather than following from a straightforward form of top-down outsourcing, Jamaica’s hybrid state and hybrid citizenship are the unstable, ambivalent outcome of an ongoing power struggle that takes place at different sites, from the street corner to the boardroom. The contemporary assemblage of governmental actors is not necessarily a happy marriage between residents, dons, bureaucrats, and politicians. Rather, it reflects both the agency of the various actors and the differential

constraints they face within contexts of coercion and reciprocity. Residents operate within parameters set by the formal state and the dons. Dons face the constraints imposed by the formal state and by a need to garner loyalty and legitimacy; formal state actors are constrained by economic deficits, electoral imperatives, and international political pressure.

Julia Elyachar calls for ethnographies of power that “observ[e] the transformations underway in historically constituted forms of institutionalized power” and that focus attention on “the forms of power that are emerging at the interstices of the state” (2003:598) and other organizations such as NGOs or international financial institutions. The case of Kingston’s dons allows a discussion of how forms of power and belonging are communicated, negotiated, and transformed. In analyzing donmanship not so much as an alternative to, but, rather, as entwined with, the formal state, I have elaborated the sort of statehood that emerges when different forms of political authority meet and mingle.

## Notes

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1. Dons, also known as “area leaders,” are neighborhood leaders who are often linked to criminal organizations. Glaister Leslie defines dons as “male civilians who exercise control over a gang or a community [and who] are central figures in Jamaican organized violence” (2010:21). Different types of gangs should be noted here; Horace Levy (2009) emphasizes the distinction between criminal and community gangs. Dons tend to be more closely associated with criminal gangs, but I generally avoid referring to their form of leadership and governance as “criminal.” While the majority of dons are presumed to be involved in criminal activities, Kingston inner-city residents as readily apply the terms *criminal* and *illegal* to the practices of politicians as to those of dons. While using more neutral terms and discussing the more benign aspects of these leaders’ form of rule—which is always nondemocratic and often brutally violent—may be interpreted as “romanticizing” dons, I have chosen to engage primarily with this emic framing in terms of legitimacy rather than legality.

2. I spent a total of 12 months in Kingston in the context of this research. I was introduced into Brick Town’s social world by a man I call “Roger,” one of the General’s relatives, with whom I had worked several years earlier during a different research project. Roger introduced me to a number of individuals associated with the Brick Town leadership as well as to several politicians and bureaucrats. I gained access to other politicians, bureaucrats, NGO workers, and minor dons through my own professional and personal network. Doing research in Brick Town in relatively free and safe circumstances would, however, have been much less feasible if Roger had not vouched for me.



3. I use the terms *formal* and *nonformal* with caution and as heuristic devices. These terms are often reified, whereas the argument outlined in this article attempts to challenge conventional dichotomies of state and nonstate. While I argue here that both the state and citizenship can be seen as hybrid—and that the central role of dons within the political system renders any demarcation between a formal and informal state problematic—residents, politicians, and government officials all tended to interpret dons as ontologically distinct from the “formal” political system. It is important to emphasize, however, that many people did not necessarily equate formality with legitimacy, justice, or impartiality.

4. James Ferguson describes the work I engage with here as “explicitly non- or supra-ethnographic” (2006:4). While Aihwa Ong (2006) includes more ethnographic work on how citizenship rights are claimed, this work is not always very detailed and focuses mainly on elite actors such as NGOs, skilled professionals, and university students.

5. For more on garrison politics and its role in fostering donmanship, see Stone 1980; Harrison 1988; Figueroa and Sives 2002; Sives 2002, 2010; Rapley 2003, 2011; Harriott 2008; and Leslie 2010.

6. See LeFranc 1994 for an overview of the consequences of the structural adjustment measures taken in the 1970s and 1980s.

7. There is no evidence of dons providing or procuring justice, employment, or basic public goods such as free electricity and water until the 1980s. The first reports of their assuming this larger role within the space of the garrison surfaced at that time and increased in the following decades (Harriott 2008; Harrison 1988; Sives 2002).

8. Various middle-class and upper-class individuals, including professionals and entrepreneurs, have important Downtown connections that they maintain through personal and institutional links. These ties can both undermine and strengthen the Uptown–Downtown divide. A well-known example is that of a prominent lawyer and politician who had long-standing professional and political ties to a JLP garrison community. These links were consolidated personally, as he was the godfather to that neighborhood’s don. In addition, his daughter was rumored to be pregnant with a child fathered by another JLP-affiliated don. However, these personal links, which transgressed hierarchies of class, color, and space, either went unmentioned or were treated with great delicacy in the media, reflecting the extent to which such hierarchies are still upheld. These hierarchies may also be key to explaining why the individuals holding the roles of dons, politicians, and bureaucrats tend to be different; there are very few instances of individuals holding several of these social roles, either simultaneously or consecutively.

9. In other circumstances, faced with pressure from the United States, they may choose (reluctantly or otherwise) to distance themselves from a specific don, as in the case of Dudus.

10. In fact, as Enrique Desmond Arias and Daniel M. Goldstein (2010) point out in their discussion of “violent democracies” in Latin America, binaries of state success and failure are not very useful in explaining the pervasiveness of violence in everyday life. Rather, they argue that the everyday presence of violence can be understood as intimately related to processes of economic liberalization and the extension of formally democratic institutions in the region.

11. State actors openly acknowledged these linkages in on-the-record interviews, voluntarily offering justifications expressed in these neoliberal terms.

12. Interview, March 2011. See Jaffe 2012a.

13. Interview, May 2010. See also *Jamaica Gleaner* 2001. In this newspaper article, the town clerk responds to the suggestion that working with the dons reinforces their power and ability to run multimillion-dollar extortion schemes by pointing to the quality of

the results: “They are the area leaders and we must work with them . . . We got value for money. There was no extortion. They didn’t hold us up with a gun and say you must give us the work and we were pleased with what work was done and we invite anybody to take a look at what was done.”

14. Interview, April 2010.

15. Interview, April 2011.

16. See the work of Dennis Rodgers (2006) for a related perspective on criminal gangs as governmental actors in Nicaragua. He notes an ontological equivalence between state and nonstate forms of social order and focuses on shifts in the uses of violence by both the Nicaraguan state and gangs. However, his work does not identify any systematic linkages between these different actors, nor does he suggest that a hybrid state might be emergent in Nicaragua.

17. See Arias 2006 for a similar analysis of political–criminal networks in Brazil.

18. In contrast to the United States, where gang wars are over drug sales, the violent conflicts between Jamaican dons and their organizations have often been over extortion turf, especially where lucrative market districts or popular transport routes are involved.

19. See Jaffe 2012b and Sneed 2007 for more on how popular-culture expressions such as street dances both represent and reinforce the power of social sovereigns.

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