

The Foundations of The Brave Republic: Research-Creation Paper

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Abstract

The Brave Republic is both artwork and inquiry: a speculative framework that treats culture as structure and imagination as method. Conceived from the Caribbean yet informed by global traditions of thought and design, it explores how the arts and social sciences can be reassembled into a dynamic cultural system. This paper reflects on the development of *The Foundations* — a document produced between August 2024 and August 2025 — as an exercise in research-creation. It situates The Brave Republic as a hybrid exercise: rooted in the lived experience of the region, enriched by interdisciplinary study, and tested through collaboration with artificial intelligence. Rather than a finished model, it proposes a active methodology — one that invites scrutiny, adaptation, and collective authorship.

Introduction

The Brave Republic began as a question: *what becomes possible when a people choose to design their identity with a vision reaching hundreds of years into the future?* From this question emerged the idea of this cultural experiment and research practice.

The project is shaped by multiple vantage points. I draw from anthropology, political theory, design, philosophy, and the arts. As a Caribbean citizen, I come from a geography still young in its independence, its histories marked by slavery and colonial rule, yet alive with possibility. The Caribbean is perhaps the newest of cultural spaces — still forming, still building. It is precisely here that imagination carries particular weight: the work of scrutinizing and inventing futures cannot be postponed.

Methodologically, the Republic is hybrid. It blends the discipline of academic inquiry with the openness of creative process, relying on iteration, reflection, and speculation. Lacking the institutional resources to convene every specialist, I turned to artificial intelligence to tap into the world's knowledge. In dialogue with Orrizon, my AI collaborator, I tested arguments, mapped concepts, and refined language. This process generated its own rigor: a constant act of cross-examination, where ideas had to hold against both machine logic and human intuition.

What emerges is not a fixed system, but a framework in motion: a constellation of spatial visions, symbolic economies, cultural philosophies, and speculative exercises. Each is an artefact; together, they suggest how culture might be treated not as ornament or backdrop, but as the very architecture of a society.

Methodology — Hybrid Inquiry and Process

The process that became *The Brave Republic* began shortly after my return from Morocco. Being in another space made it clearer how the Caribbean continues to wrestle with its identity — young, unfinished, and still forming. That awareness became the spark for this work.

From there, the project unfolded through iteration. Notes and sketches gradually developed into fragments, which in turn became *The Foundations* — a catalogue of ideas drawn from the Republic's vision.

Without the institutional framework of a research team, I turned to the resources within reach: time, reflection, extensive reading, and lectures across many disciplines. Artificial intelligence became part of this process, not as ornament, but as a partner in dialogue. With Orrizon, my AI collaborator, I tested arguments, mapped concepts, and refined language. This interplay of sources — academic, creative, and technological — created its own rigor: a constant act of cross-examination where ideas had to hold against both machine logic and human intuition.

This hybrid approach — part inquiry, part creative experiment — gave the Republic its form. It is neither wholly academic nor purely artistic, but a living framework where imagination itself functions as method.

The Framework — Miniature Case Studies

Spatial Visions

Architecture is treated as both shelter and symbol. Its forms draw from Barbadian Chattel houses, Japanese joinery, and African traditions of geometry — structures designed to move, adapt, and endure. The result is not a blueprint for buildings alone, but a meditation on how space reflects identity: resilient, flexible, and never fixed.

Reverence

The Ocean is not backdrop but presence — a figure from cultural life. It embodies memory, sustenance, and change, shifting form through performance, image, and ceremony. In dialogue with music, it becomes animate; in imagery, it becomes emblem. Its role is to remind the citizenry that what it venerates, it will also protect.

Value

Polyp\$ is a speculative currency tied to the state's Exclusive Economic Zone. It frames natural space as economic space, anchoring value not in extraction but in preservation. Its existence as an on-chain experiment signals how finance might serve ecological and cultural stewardship rather than erode it. More than a medium of exchange, it is a prompt to ask what wealth should secure.

Structure

Governance is approached as cultural design. It studies systems of governance past and present — not to copy them, but to ask what principles endure. The focus is on balance, adaptability, and collective responsibility. In this light, systems are not the machinery of politics but the choreography of fidelity: the agreements, visible and invisible, that determine how people live, decide, and imagine together.

Continuum

A Culture is the people's true constitution. It binds memory to philosophy, and creativity to collective life. It refuses to be defined solely by external forces, yet it thrives on exchange. The project's stance is one of deliberate composition: weaving influences into a pattern that is unmistakably its own, an identity shaped not by purity but by intention.

Imagination

The Brave Republic entertains a speculative reversal: what if influence flowed outward from the Caribbean to set the terms of global culture? This is not domination, but a reframing of possibility — an experiment within the larger experiment. It asserts that influence begins with imagination, and that to declare a different center is already to begin creating one.

Culture as Constitution

Taken together, these six case studies suggest a single premise: in *The Brave Republic*, culture is not decoration or backdrop, but the foundation on which all else rests.

Architecture, economy, governance, and philosophy are not separate domains; they are cultural expressions, each articulating how life might be lived with purpose.

The modules show how interdependence is essential. Spatial visions draw their strength from adaptability; reverence insists that protection follows from veneration; value ties wealth to preservation; structure frames governance as belonging; continuum holds identity as deliberate composition; and shift demonstrates how imagination itself can alter centers of power. Each stands on its own, but none make sense in isolation. The Republic exists in their constellation.

This interdependence reveals underlying principles. The first is **adaptability**: nothing is fixed, everything is made to shift with circumstance. The second is **preservation as progress**: to protect culture and environment is itself an act of advancement. The third is **exchange without erasure**: influence and contact are inevitable, but identity is safeguarded by deliberate composition. And finally, there is **imagination as method**: the speculative is not frivolous; it is the testing ground for futures that may yet be built.

In this way, *The Brave Republic* is not simply a catalogue of ideas but a challenge to how culture is often positioned. It rejects the notion of culture as secondary to politics or economics and instead treats it as the constitution in practice — the invisible framework that determines how a society understands itself and acts in the world.

Conclusion — The Republic as a Living Framework

The Brave Republic is not a finished model. It is a foundation, a framework in motion, and an invitation to imagine how culture might be treated as the architecture of society. Its modules — spatial visions, reverence, value, structure, continuum, and shift — are not solutions but experiments. Each suggests how a people might approach identity not as inheritance alone, but as design.

The work matters because it insists on the necessity of imagination, especially in cultural spaces still young, still forming, and still defining themselves against the weight of history. In the Caribbean, as elsewhere, the future cannot be left to drift; it must be conceived, tested, and shaped. This project proposes that culture — its symbols, philosophies, and practices — is the ground on which such futures can be built.

Above all, the Republic remains open. It is an ongoing experiment that seeks conversation and collaboration. It does not ask for belief, only for engagement: a willingness to examine how the act of deliberate cultural design might open new possibilities for life together.

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Biography

Jaryd Niles-Morris is a multidisciplinary creative and student of culture based in Barbados. His practice bridges photography, design, film, and speculative inquiry, exploring how imagination and identity can be deliberately shaped.

As a student, he draws from philosophy, political thought, design traditions, and lived Caribbean experience, treating learning as an ongoing process rather than a finished state. His project — *The Brave Republic*— combine visual art, cultural research, and emerging technologies to propose new ways of thinking about postcolonialism, value, and belonging.

Jaryd approaches his creative practice with both experimentation and method, incorporating dialogue with artificial intelligence alongside readings and cross-disciplinary study. He is committed to creating work that resonates while contributing to global conversations on culture, imagination, and the futures we build together.